

## OPPORTUNITIES ARISING IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT IN RELATION TO THE MIGRATION

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**Abstract:** The migration as a phenomenon connected with many social topics can cause many challenge in education and in employment as well. The aim of our research is to analyse the possibilities, challenges and best practice used in the educational system internationally during the integration of the migrants. On other hand, we tried to summarize domestic experiences learnt from the practice during the last years. The situation of the migrants entering and leaving the educational system can be radically different from the status of those people who born (and partly raised) abroad. The recognition of prior learning outcomes can help these people but it can generate other debates on the nature of the validated knowledge, its usefulness or convertibleness. Additional purpose of this article and the research done is to gather the most important information, practices and challenges about the labour market presence of the migrants. During this part of the research, we paid special attention to the discrimination the migrants are facing up to, its causes and the treatment methods currently used. To present the certain aspects of migration, which is a highly relevant social phenomenon, is very important because this will give an objective and scientific approach to the investigated issue. In the article we are focusing on the motivating factors of the international migration with special regards to the actual situation in Syria and in their neighbourhood countries (including Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey). Before starting any discussion about the successful integration of the migrants in the labour market or in the educational system we have to pay attention for their living conditions in those counties where they usually stay before their arrival in Europe. Based on surveys done by the OECD we analysed the thoughts of the migrants regarding to their career and schooling perspectives with a comparison to the Hungarian students. During the literature review we found several publication about the openness of the students studying in the Hungarian higher educational system. The surveys showed that the openness of the people depends on the completed level of their degrees: the higher is the completed level the people will become more open-minded. Other literature showed that the migrants are facing many challenges during their integration in the labour market. In the article we are sharing the best integration practices used by the migrants.

**Keywords:** immigrants; integration; discrimination; labour market.

## **1. Introduction**

Migration has been already at the forefront of the Hungarian common talk for the third year in a row. Since the migration crisis broke out in 2015, a continuous interest can be experienced on the part of the general public and politics as well. The interest in this topic is well-indicated by the fact that the word “migrant” was continuously highly sought during the last half year and an excessively high interest could be measured in the topic on the week between 11 and 17 March 2018 (Trends, 2018). Both the international public opinion and the scientific community have paid attention to the change in the Hungarian viewpoints related to the migration, among which they have also emphasized the serious modifications in the content of certain laws affecting migrants (Kallius et al., 2016). Over the past years, it has become visible that the EU countries provide different responses to the questions related to the migration. It is not at all certain whether there is such an opinion among the several radically opposing ones which can be considered as solely welcome and successful.

Aim of the article is to examine the migration phenomenon in global, European and Hungarian contexts, from educational and labour market aspects.

## **2. Background of migration phenomenon**

In order to understand the migration phenomenon, we should also be aware of what strategies are considered by the persons involved in the migration themselves when making decisions to choose the migration and what geographical directions they try to move to. According to Ritecz (2016), the migrants detectably try to flee different terrorist acts when leaving their homes and the largest share of them strives to stay in the homeland, as far as possible, and to reach a safer place as so-called internal migrants. Insofar as it is not possible then the large number of them decides to escape to abroad but they most commonly seek temporary homes only in neighbouring countries, hoping that they can return to their homes after the problems triggering off the migration are solved. At the same time, it can be also observed if the refugees hit the road and have the courage to try to start a new life far from their motherland and choose Europe as destination then they generally try to reach the most developed western and northern countries of the European Union; they are at most in transit in the eastern and southern countries, thus in Hungary as well. (Kocsis et al., 2016) States with quite different preparations can be found at some stations of the migration process and these ones do not provide the same treatment and reception for the migrants and refugees. For instance, during the war in Kosovo, the people en masse fled towards Albania and Macedonia while these countries had not even applicable legislation relating to asylum application. (Donev et al., 2002) Nevertheless, it is the fact that the most asylum applications were proportionally submitted in Hungary in the EU in the first quarter of 2015. While there were 365 asylum seekers per 1 million inhabitants according to the EU average, the following pieces of asylum applications per 1 million inhabitants were registered: 239 in Greece, 905 in Germany, 224 in France, 251 in Italy, 1141 in Austria and 1184 in Sweden. At the same time, 3322 asylum applications per 1 million inhabitants were

registered in Hungary in the first quarter of 2015. Obviously, this does not mean that fewer migrants came to the countries being at the beginning of the list; they did not just simply submit their asylum applications there. (Guild et al., 2015)

In our treatise, the collective term “migrant” will be used for all persons who come from third countries and stay in the territory of our country, regardless of whether their legal status is refugee, applicant for refugee status or asylum. For instance, the following persons have been excluded from this category: those who stay in our country using the opportunity based on the freedom of establishment and movement; EU citizens; furthermore those pupils and students who come from third countries to Hungary in the framework of mobility for learning purposes. There is a system by means of which the EU countries have tried to select the humanitarian migrants coming from war zones among the economic refugees, according to criteria based on the Geneva Convention. Ördög (2013) described this system as quite old-fashioned and practically unsuitable for solving the tasks emerging. At the same time, as it is also indicated in the study of Kováts (2013), the migrant population living and appearing in Hungary has extraordinarily heterogeneous characteristics therefore there are no such things as unified labour market strategy or study strategy in their cases. It must be emphasized that, from the aspect of success of both the education and work, it is essential how the migrants are able and willing to assimilate culturally, to learn and get to know the language, culture and norms of the host country (Horn – Kónya, 2016). Naturally, this process should not lead to that the migrants will lose their cultural identity; the headline target is that they can retain their own identity and traditions but it should be achieved that they will also take into account the own habits of the host country when practising their culture.

### **3. Educational aspects**

In order that the migrants coming to Europe can undergo a successful social integration, they should be integrated into such social systems of paramount importance as labour market or education. Unfortunately, those hot spots were already known before the migration wave of 2015 which have been fundamentally determining the success or failure of the integration since then. Those migrants who would like to continue their interrupted studies (for instance, children of school age) should have access to the formal education in any case. Based on the study of the Southern Great Plains Region Social Research Association (2009), success of the educational process is jeopardized by several circumstances among which those language difficulties must be highlighted which in merit damage the integration process and the study success. When the German Immigration Law was adopted in 2005, Germany, which is perhaps the most affected country, already paid particular attention to overcome of the language difficulties in the course of migration processes. Namely, a training system was established, separated for adults and children, in which 600 German lessons as foreign language and additional 30 lessons of German social and culture studies are provided for the immigrants. The training is mandatory and completed by an exam. The German Federal Government and the provincial governments have already spent an amount exceeding EUR 1 billion on the program until now (Friedery, 2016)

By examining one of the characteristic countries of the international migration i.e. Syria, it can be seen that the Syrian education system had fundamentally functioned well until the period before the civil war since the primary education had been

practically accessible for everyone and continuation of the secondary studies had been considered to be almost general. Literacy rate of population was 86%. However, the civil war drastically changed the educational situation in the country: more than quarter of the Syrian schools was destroyed during the war acts as well as the Syrian children and their teachers were frequently direct targets of direct attacks committed by different militias and armed groups. As an effect of the process, 2.4 million children had to escape from the country only in 2016. Among 350 thousand Syrian people coming to the European Union in 2016, there were approximately 131 thousand children and each of them needs education and training in the European states giving them protection. (Wofford – Tibi, 2017) Nowadays, it is estimated that approximately 3 million Syrian children of school age are left out of education. Most of the Syrian refugee children of school age live in Lebanon. Their number exceeds the number of the Lebanese children of similar age that's why a system of forenoon-afternoon alternating education has been introduced in the country, in order to remedy the capacity problems of education system. However, despite all the efforts, the number of refugee children dropping and falling out of the school system is very high albeit the training and education could play a key role in Syria's recovery and the establishment of a calm and well-balanced social system once, as it was ascertained by the researches as well (Peters – Besley, 2015). It can be declared that the Lebanese public service systems, including the education system, are far too overloaded and the drastic growth in population of the country causes problems even in the operation of such basic services as supply systems of drinking water or electricity (Ostrand, 2015). Overall, it can be also seen that the Syrian children living in refugee camps go to school with a greater chance than the migrant children accommodated outside the camps. In addition, it can be also seen that the Syrian children still participate in the primary school education whilst lots of them are taken out of the secondary schools by their parents; chiefly because the children's employment has to contribute to the their families' prosperity and subsistence. In light of this information, perhaps the fact is not surprising either that the school-leaving rate is higher in case of boys than girls (Berti, 2015). The integrator potential in the higher education system should be emphasized even if the rate of qualifications exceeding the educational attainment required for a job is extremely high among the migrants (Hárs, 2013). Whereas it is difficult to calculate because it is difficult to decide what knowledge or competence the migrants are utilizing during their work. However, it seems to be unequivocal that the graduates doing non-intellectual works can be considered as overqualified. In case of the survey carried out according to the abovementioned criteria in 2013, the migrants were the worst ranked among all the assessed social groups since 17% of the graduated employees born in the third countries were not able to or did not want to find intellectual jobs. This is overall more than twice of the 7.2-percent rate of the Hungarian citizens born in Hungary which was assessed between 2007 and 2012. The reporting of data of OECD (2018) brings an additional perspective to the image; this reporting has summarized the career progressions and prospects of those children whom we consider as ones with migrant background. According to the data reported, 26.62% of the children with migrant background living in Hungary think that they have chance to complete tertiary education which can be regarded as a good proportion. The result of a survey carried out in Germany is that only 25.73% of the ideas of similar children living there are along these lines, the results of Belgium amount to 16.27% only while a very low result, namely 8.83% has been measured

in case of the neighbouring Austria. Average of the European Union has reached 36.95% in this issue. It can be also seen that the children with migrant background living in Hungary are expressly optimistic compared to the children born in the country since 40% of the latter hope to complete tertiary education while more than half of the children with migrant background have similar hopes.

The problem is also strengthened by the fact that the Hungarian education system may not be ready for educating migrant children or, in case of other school types, migrant adults. Previously, it was the task of schools operating near the refugee camps to provide education for the migrant children of school age but the competent authorities had several obstacles to overcome when fulfilling the right to education (under a certain age: educational obligation). A part of the schools operating near the camps did not receive migrant children at all who were therefore obliged to commute to other town areas or even other settlements in certain – especially unfortunate – cases in order to continue their interrupted studies. During the previous détente of migration wave before 2015-2016, those problems could not be remedied either which had arisen in relation to the education. It can be acknowledged that the education system and administration of a host country shall cope with the lack of appropriate professionals as well as the weaknesses in the field of linguistic knowledge and intercultural competences and this is quite a long process. As it was mentioned previously, the migrant children's different socialisation and psychological problems also make the integration process significantly difficult (Illés – Medgyesi, 2009).

#### **4. Labour market aspects**

Success in the labour market, which has key importance in managing the migration wave, can be hardly interpreted without appropriate qualifications in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The formal knowledge being obtainable in the education system is of critical importance from the viewpoints of integration and labour market success because the migrants' qualifications, skills and innovative abilities are of paramount importance so that they can find jobs in such business sectors which have significant great added value and are knowledge-intensive for the nation economy (Máté et al., 2016). Namely, in short, those migrants are capable of being successful in the labour market and therefore those migrants are able to become self-supporting in Europe who complete education with the appropriate quality and level in their homeland or in the migration target- or transit country reached.

From the aspect of judging the immigration and migration, the following factors are of priceless importance: the immigrants' and migrants' behaviour relating to work and how it appears in different media. In this view, different communication counterpoles can be seen well which have great influence on the public opinion and from what aspect the media approaches the migration situation. (Bernáth – Messing, 2015) By their relation to work, the migrants can influence the opinion about them. If the host countries' citizens see that the migrants appear as employees or at least job-seekers in the labour market (or they establish own undertakings) then the image of self-supporting migrants trying to influence their life and existence into positive direction can be strengthened in the citizens' mind. On the contrary, the image of migrants being not interested in work or demonstratively refusing work is able to induce a general negative public atmosphere against the entire migration phenomenon. An additional perspective is brought to the nature of image forming in

the host countries' citizens by the fact that the migrants damage the chances of employment, working conditions and wage prospects of inhabitants born locally.

It is considered that step zero of labour market integration is to assist the migrants obtaining basic information at all about the area they came to. The necessary information is very divergent: cultural, health and housing information as well as ones with economic nature can be found. For example on the Greek island of Samos, at the initiative of Startupboat, such a special homepage was launched with the cooperation of local corporate partners which provides a superb collection of vital information for the migrants coming to the island (Holmes – Castañeda, 2016).

There is a widespread anxiety about that the migrants will seize the jobs of the host countries' employees. Based on Oláh et al. (2017), young people who worked in parallel with or before their studies are more concerned about that the migrants seize their jobs than those who have not worked previously.

In the short term, immigration has just a very small impact on the labour market situation of domestic employees. Employees' success in the labour market mostly depends on what competencies they have. Having regard to the fact that the existence of the required competences was not peculiar to the migrant labour force coming to Europe according to several published surveys, it is unlikely that they would be able to seize the domestic workers' jobs or to find jobs more successfully than the workers born locally. (Bördös et al., 2016) Surveys (Akgündüz et al, 2015) carried out in Turkey's regions bordering on Syria have proved that the presence of refugees, who live in huge refugee camps in border regions near their motherland, has materially no impact on the employment rates. This partly means that the Syrian migrants were not able to become integrated into the labour market in Turkey i.e. they do not emerge as employees. On the other hand, it also means that the employers operating in the affected regions were capable of reacting on the migrants' presence and offering such jobs which can be pursued with low levels of education or in case of absence of knowledge of Turkish language. In addition to the general lack of competences, the absence of the appropriate knowledge of language should be emphasized in case of migrants coming to Hungary. However, this problem is country-specific; the migrants coming to the UK are presumably less affected. In addition to the presence of key competences, it would be indispensably required that the migrants can verify their qualifications. However, this is often difficult because the refugees are rarely unable to carry their certificates. But if they yet met this criterion, there would be a condition of acknowledging the qualifications: contact should be made with the relevant operators of the issuing country (authorities, educational institutions) and certain national certificates should be issued. For instance, it is almost certain that the refugees fleeing Syria in war cannot meet this condition (Mélypataki, 2017).

Presence or lack of the appropriate qualifications greatly influence what jobs the migrants can pursue. In the United Kingdom with several forms of migration that new employees partly coming from within the EU or third countries try to reach, a detailed survey (Nickell – Saleheen, 2015), commissioned by Bank of England, has examined the impacts of the migrants' presence on the wages. Based on the results, the migrants' presence had negative impact only on those wages which can be reached by the skilled labour force carrying out productive work and unqualified or trained employees working in the services sector. A 10-percent growth in the number of migrant employees' results in a 1.88-percent decline in the wages of the employee

groups affected. It does not matter whether the migrant labour force comes from within or outside the EU.

The migrants' legal status in the target countries greatly affects their wages and chances in the labour market as well. For example in the Netherlands, the asylum seekers are in an especially vulnerable position because their status is uncertain, their future is questionable and it is unpredictable how long their asylum application last and what outcome will be. These circumstances largely make the employment difficult. Moreover, in this situation, the migrants are driven to undertake worse jobs under worse conditions. According to the researches, the migrants undertaking jobs in the Netherlands can close their salary gap during almost 15 years, compared to the non-migrant workers with similar qualifications and experiences. The migrants ingoing in the framework of family reunion are in a slightly more favourable position but they also appear in the labour market with a major disadvantage. (Bakker et al., 2017).

A similar trend was measured in Norway as well (Bratsberg et al., 2014), where the migrants also need one or one and a half decades in order to reduce their salary disadvantages compared to the persons born in Norway. This process is also contributed by the fact that, according to the surveys, the migrants undergo a significant assimilation process during these one and a half decades which obviously has positive effect on their chances in the labour market.

In one of the most popular target countries, namely Germany (Beyer, 2016), considerable income differences can be measure with regards to the wages reached by the locals and the migrants. A migrant without German writing skills and German qualification gets a wage 30% less than the workers having the aforementioned skills. The good German writing skills decrease the difference by 12% and the German qualification by an additional 6%. Beyond these points, it is true that the income difference decreases by 1% per annum as time goes by but the migrants' wages will never be totally equal to the wages of workers born locally.

In the labour market of Sweden (Lundborg, 2013), it was also measured in what position the migrants are compared to the people born locally, in relation to the unemployment and time spent as unemployed. Based on the survey, the migrant employees generally get jobs after a long period of waiting after entering the Swedish labour market; the persons born locally can get jobs much earlier. In addition, it should be also emphasized that the migrants can never reach the employment rate which is peculiar to the locals. However, as time goes by, the migrants are able to close up slowly (as the period spent in Sweden goes by) (at the beginning, they can reach a 70-percent proportion compared to the employment rate of persons born in Sweden which strengthens to 90% during 10 years) but they are not able to catch up with the appropriate indicators of workers born in Sweden.

Jordan can be also considered as a country affected by the migration wave started from Syria but the problems are differing from the above-mentioned ones here. Jordan, due to its geographical situation, is directly involved in the remedy of the humanitarian- and refugee crisis caused by the Syrian war. Syrian migrants had come into the country in large numbers whose presence significantly overwhelmed the Jordanian supply systems. The country was able to provide increasingly fewer public services for the migrants; this had the effect that the impoverished migrants, who had already consumed the prices of their few rescued valuables mostly, tried to enter the labour market of Jordan as employees in larger numbers. The Jordanian government have chosen a specific way after sensing the rejecting attitude of the

Jordanian people in addition to the growing employment demand from the Syrians' side. Namely, the Jordanian government has decided to theoretically allow the migrants escaping from Syria to get jobs and not exclude them from doing so but the permissions required for the legal employment is given to the applicant migrants only in a very low rate. By this, the grey economy is strengthening near the refugee camps i.e. a significant part of the Syrian migrants acts as black workers. (Francis, 2015) A similar situation has been also formed in Turkey where the presence of the Syrian refugee employees has a significant impact on the operation of grey economy which is called informal sector as well (the following activities are meant by informal sector: enterprises operating in a way unauthorized by the authorities or work performed by workers employed by announced companies in an unannounced way.) According to the surveys, a considerable rate of the Syrian refugees living in Turkey works as illegal worker and moreover the child labour is not unprecedented (for instance, in the textile industry). (Korkmaz, 2017)

Despite the above, based on the results of OECD (2018) survey, the children with migrant background are expressly optimistic with regard to their own career image since 74.11% of the children interviewed in the survey as sample think that they will work as manager, professional or associated professional in the course of their adult lives.

As an effect of the circumstances making the migrants' employment difficult, this stratum is considered as one of the groups which are particularly jeopardized by unemployment. Based on Constant et al. (2009), throughout the EU, one of the most common discrimination reasons can be linked to the origin and moreover this kind of discrimination is peculiar both to the public sector and private sector. In addition, it can be observed that there is also so-called employment discrimination to the detriment of the migrants. It is peculiar to this discrimination form that the affected employees are often employed as black workers (namely, without announcement) as well as the migrant employees can specifically often get dirty, dangerous and stressful jobs only. (Juhász et al., 2011) Among the effects strengthening the discrimination, the latent or open xenophobia should be emphasized. As an effect of this, the general attitude to the immigration has changed in Europe (Dajnoki – Kőmíves, 2016). While the European people still had mostly positive attitudes to the immigration after the Second World War and the migrants was handled as guest workers, the positive attitude started to weaken progressively after recognizing the migrants' cultural background which is sometimes substantially differing from the locals.

## 5. Conclusions

Migration is a social process with stressed topicality which presents challenges to the host countries in a number of aspects. The fact that help must be provided to the people fleeing war is the non-negotiable subject of consensus in the continent. At the same time, significant differences can be experienced relating the ideas regarding how to be of help. More ways can be imagined for the migrants' successful social integration; we have just dealt with two of them in details, namely the employment and education.

Return to the education system enables the children forced to escape to complete their studies and become integrated into the society of a host country by taking part in the formal trainings. This provides the possibility for them to learn and get to know



the host countries' languages and culture and, in addition to that, they can retain their on national identity. In the framework of adult education, the adult migrants without appropriate qualifications can get a chance to become successfully integrated into the labour market as employees or self-employed entrepreneurs. Their qualifications obtained in Hungary are widely accepted, the certificates are valid throughout the entire territory of the European Union according to the fundamental rights of the EU and fresh knowledge makes the migrants more attractive in the labour market.

Employment is of paramount importance in the migrants' life from more than one angle. They could establish an independent existence from the wages and may be capable of self-preservation which can significantly improve their state of mind. On the other hand, they will have a chance to convince the members of host country, who are sceptical on the migration or straight hostile or xenophobic, of the fact that the migrants are able to maintain themselves and the reason of their arrival cannot be traced back to gaining economic advantage. At the same time, due to discrimination and xenophobia, they have to face up to several challenges in the course of their employment; to this problem, the entrepreneur career i.e. the self-employment, which is widespread among the migrants, can partly provide a solution.

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