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## **BREFE - Boosting refugees' access to employment**

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### **Methods and tools to prepare and support companies to employ refugees and newcomers**



This set of resources is now online for four countries: **Denmark, France, Italy and Spain** on: [www.brefe.eu](http://www.brefe.eu). They are available in the corresponding languages as well as in English, as separate tools together with a full guide ready for downloading.

#### **What is the target?**

Employers and the human resource managers when they exist, are the first target, because they are the ones to decide to employ a refugee: if they are not convinced about their potential and are not aware of what they can bring to the company, this guide will make them change their opinion. A second target is made of workers in direct contact with refugees, either because they have the official duty of tutoring them or because they are close co-workers. The last target is made of facilitators matching the needs for skills expressed by employers with a workforce able to fulfil them.

#### **Why employing a refugee?**

The hiring of an immigrant or refugee may be motivated by different reasons that be mixed: principles of corporate social responsibility, the need to cope with labour shortages, difficulties in identifying specific profiles, involvement in social inclusion projects or just happen like this. A survey conducted by Ceipiemonte and Ires Piemonte on 500 companies reveals that the main reasons for hiring foreign staff are by order of importance: 1) a lack of candidates for the position sought (44%), 2) adherence to corporate social responsibility principles (32%) and 3) the awareness that foreigners can add value to the company mission (31%). Brefe focuses on the value that can be integrated in the company while reassuring employers about administrative processes, about the capacity of refugees to continue to effectively develop their language skills on the workplace and by stressing that refugees are highly motivated and loyal employees meaning that they will tend to stay in the same company once they are settled.

#### **Importance of transversal skills**

In all European countries, employers point out the importance of transversal and soft skills for a successful integration and evolution within any category of job. If they are relevant for natives, they are even more strategic for refugees whom, because of their migration history, may be better equipped and able to adapt quicker. Employers need to be aware that during the induction process, these skills can make up for a lack of mastering the host country language.

## Preparing the welcome of newcomers

The hiring of a refugees needs to be prepared as many factors can hinder successful job inclusion such as mismatch between skills and the assigned role, cultural differences, misunderstanding of work assignments, difficulties in communicating and relating to staff, etc. Preparation and tools used will depend on the size of the company, the resources available, the sector and on the level of qualification.

Brefe suggests tools and methods to prepare for the welcome of new arrivals, raise awareness among staff and collaborators, to adapt the workstation or work materials when the language is not fully mastered.

## Adapting the recruitment processes

In particular for low qualified profiles, it cannot be expected to run a recruitment using the widespread process of motivation letter and CV followed by an interview. Priority needs to be given to direct face-to-face contacts and work situation simulations. Action steps needs to be taken also to minimise cross-cultural issues during this phase in order to evaluate the actual refugee's skills.



## Learning the language on the workplace

Ideas and suggestions for encouraging and guiding the learning of language on the workplace are provided, such as the use of bilingual guidance sheets, the use of images and videos, the preparation of tutor and co-workers, the organisation of courses and social activities, the integration of language learning in the mentoring activities.

## Securing the employment during the first months

If supporting the refugee to improve his communication skills is key for securing the employment, other actions can be undertaken taking into account that a successful integration is a global social process meaning that all the life dimensions are concerned. Third part counsellors may be useful in that phases.

## Success stories

Testimonials from companies, large and smalls, from supporting operators and from refugees in the four partner countries have been used both to produce our guidelines and to illustrate them, in terms of skills, attitudes, language and culture.

## Your experience and feedback

We will be happy to welcome your experience about employing refugees, to integrate your feedback about resources suggested by Brefe: please do not hesitate to contact us.

## Who is behind BREFE?

- Greta du Velay, Le Puy-en-Velay (France)  
[www.velay.greta.fr](http://www.velay.greta.fr)
- Ceipiemonte Scpa, Torino (Italy)  
[www.centroestero.org](http://www.centroestero.org)
- Foreningen Nydanske, Copenhagen (Denmark)  
[www.foreningen-nydanske.dk](http://www.foreningen-nydanske.dk)
- Solidaridad Sin Fronteras, Madrid (Spain)  
[www.ssf.org.es](http://www.ssf.org.es)



Visit our web site: <http://www.brefe.eu>

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