

ABOUT AIM - ACCESSIBILITY & INCLUSION FOR MIGRANTS

Accessibility and Inclusion for Migrants (AIM) seeks to create lasting impact on Vocational Educational and Training (VET) Institutions and their staff, enhancing their ability to engage migrants more effectively; promoting their social integration and raising learner achievement that empowers migrants to succeed within their host countries.

Why Migration is a defining challenge of our times. In addition to the thousands of EU non-nationals and international migrants living in Europe e.g. 289,000 migrated to the UK in 2016 while Europe processed more than 1.3 million asylum requests in 2015. Sweden received 163,000 and more than 2.2 million Syrians now live in Turkey. The problems migrant's face in host countries is well documented. Often hindered by poor language skills and unaware of their rights or obligations, they struggle to make best use of public services



KICK-OFF MEETING IN UNITED KINGDOM

The project AIM had the kick-off meeting at Go-Woman! Alliance in Birmingham, UK.

The project was presented and discussed and the next transnational meeting and milestones decided upon



Erasmus+

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WHAT ARE WE GOING TO ACHIEVE ?

Research shows that Vocational Education and Training fails to fully engage migrants. In addition to lower participation rates, attainment is weaker and dropout rates higher compared to those who are indigenous. Our AIM project tackles this disadvantage head-on by building capacity within VET institutions through up-skilling staff to better meet migrant's needs.

AIM will provide professional development to all staff within VET institutions; enhancing the ways VET institutions approach inclusion and transforming the ways VET is taught by improving staff's understanding of the issues surrounding hard to reach migrant groups, and the challenges associated with engaging and teaching immigrants.

COLLABORATION WITH WIDER PARTNERS IN THE REGION

Rather than acting as a standalone project which solely promotes training, AIM will create five VET Business Partnerships which bring together the diverse actors in the "migrant integration ecosystem" to maximise the opportunities for knowledge sharing and generate (and sustain) innovative responses.

HOW ? AIM WILL:

1. Establish 5 AIM VET Inclusion Partnerships (UK, Ireland, Italy, Sweden, Turkey) to bring together 60+ key stakeholders from VET sector, social partners working with migrants, businesses and employers' associations.
2. Produce an innovative **SELF-ASSESSMENT SYSTEM** for VET institutions to evaluate their current level of access and inclusion and generate a personalized learning path.
3. Develop **VET CURRICULUM**; a multilingual curriculum, trainers' guide and learning materials aimed at staff in different roles in VET institutions to help them drive organizational change towards inclusion for migrants.
4. Develop **OPEN ONLINE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES**; a suite of interactive online learning resources to complement the curriculum and establish a delivery platform to provide maximum flexibility to increase access and accelerate independent learning



This is an effective but under-used means of addressing migrant inclusion because:

- Each partnership builds social capital, and will generate firm commitments from each, proving an ongoing space for collaborative work
- a multi-agency partnership approach maximises the expertise across multiple organisations to develop suitable solutions.

Each partnership is made up of 12-15 high level policy makers or executive staff from organizations including:

- VET and FE institutions
- Local authority
- Migration / Asylum seeker representative body
- Social Enterprises
- NGO's
- Voluntary organisation's
- Local/regional economic development agencies
- Statutory organizations responsible for education & economic development

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The AIM partnership has just published the results of their research carried out with VET professionals in order to assess their own experience and provide institutional perspective on the comparative value and practicality (cost-benefit) of known pedagogies, across five countries, Ireland, Italy, Sweden, Turkey and UK. 74 VET professionals across the five regions responded to the survey between November 2017 and February 2018.

To set the baseline, VET professionals were asked if it was more difficult for migrants to get information on learning opportunities than the general public? Overwhelming 80% of the respondents agreed that it was more difficult for migrants to get information on learning opportunities.

Some of the reasons included:

IRELAND (IR)

- *I think migrants are at a disadvantage because of language barriers, lack of knowledge about services available in the country and general social isolation.*
- *We don't think we cater for those who haven't English as a first language. We don't target the audience in places that they access as well as we should. They may not be aware of the opportunities and how to access them.*

ITALY (IT)

- *Use of too specific and bureaucratic language that produces linguistic and comprehension difficulties.*
- *It is no more difficult for migrants to get information on learning opportunities. They have bigger problems related to getting a job which is important for them to remain in Italy as well as sending some money to their families. The Italian migration law does not allow immigrants to stay if they do not have a job.*

SWEDEN (SE)

- *It can be the case sometimes due to the language barrier, as they don't understand the rules and so on.*

TURKEY (TR)

- *They don't know the language of the hosting country.*
- *The migrants don't have good access to internet and public or private organisations which provide courses for the migrants and refugees.*

UNITED KINGDOM (UK)

- *Language barrier. Socially disadvantaged. Economically disadvantaged.*
- *Language barriers, unfamiliarity with the learning/support environment, lack of networks/connections.*

THE RESEARCH SCOPES MANY KEY ISSUES:

How do VET bodies engage migrant learners to participate in a VET course / initiative?

- Ways to connect and engage
- Motivating learners
 - Referral processes
 - Overcoming lack of specific migrant services

How do you initially determine migrant competence levels?

Key issues, migrant learners face when trying to access and complete VET courses.

How does your VET organisation overcome these barriers?

Are there any issues faced by migrant women that are different from issues faced by men?

81% of respondents replied yes to this question

The full research report will be available

TRAINING COURSE IN DEVELOPMENT

The AIM training course is being designed to benefit VET staff spanning

- *Directors and Managers*
- *Communication/ Admin Staff*
- *Marketing, Outreach and recruitment teams*
- *Teachers and trainers and mentors*



A LITTLE PREVIEW OF OUR MODULES THAT ARE IN DEVELOPMENT

Module 1: INTRODUCTION TO DIVERSITY & INCLUSION IN VET

Culturally diverse communities are becoming more common across Europe. This module is designed to support those working in VET to develop a deeper understanding of the migrant experience and the need for inclusive approaches.

- Introduction to diversity in VET. Why a specific approach is needed to increase accessibility & inclusion for migrants. Understanding needs and the barriers to migrant learners in VET
- Assessment of current VET practice and strategies to support migrant/refugee learners and identification of improvement actions > link here to IO2
- Skills development - fostering cultural awareness, competence and sensitivity skills, communication skills

CALL FOR CASE STUDIES

We would love to hear from you and your experience of best practice and overcoming barriers of fully engaging migrants in VET.

Please contact orla@momentumconsulting.ie to get