



# Policy Recommendations

## Changing Politics on Migration Narratives

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## I. Introduction

Recent Eurobarometer surveys have shown high and increasing support among EU citizens for a common European policy on migration<sup>1</sup>, including relatively stable and consistent support for protection for asylum seekers and refugees. Public opinion is vulnerable to political manipulation, local context and national histories, but there are also key policy challenges that continue to need addressing in relation to the migration policy agenda of the EU. As the Commission introduces a New Pact on Migration and Asylum<sup>2</sup>, we offer policy recommendations based on the four research reports prepared with the contributions from MAX partner organisations and developed further in an online workshop in October 2020 with 12 NGO partners.

Migration is not only a factor of C21st life indeed **migration was a founding principle in the creation of the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1957**. By enshrining the free movement of labour in its Treaties, the EU recognises the importance of the right to move to shelter and to seek opportunities as a prerequisite for a good life<sup>3</sup>. This same principle of free movement created the EU of today, forging friendships, families, values and futures for 550 million people. It reminds us that at the heart of the European project is a welcome to those fleeing from danger to come to safety, to work and to live in a peaceful and diverse society and to create shared prosperity through cooperation and integration.

At this particular point in time, as the EU emerges from a pandemic, and as it reacts to the combined challenges of climate change, an ageing population, BREXIT and a struggling economic model, migration presents a particular set of challenges to policy makers. Our core recommendation is that these challenges need to be framed as opportunities for migrant integration by addressing key policy concerns, coordinating social partners and ensuring a better and more consistent governance of migration policy across the arenas that the EU acts upon. Central to the success of such a strategy is the foregrounding of the experience of migrants in understanding their needs from policy, the delivery of their rights and the accurate representation of their beneficial impact on to Europe's economy and society.

Prejudices against migrants often arise from uncertainty that accompany periods of social, economic and political change<sup>4</sup>. But they are also in part due to the inconsistency of migration policies across the EU in managing migrant integration. For this reason, we comment on three key areas of focus in our research for the project – the

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<sup>1</sup> Standard Eurobarometer 93 survey between July 2020 - August 2020 published October 2020 [viewed 25-1-21 @ <https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/ResultDoc/download/DocumentKy/91061>]

<sup>2</sup> COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS on a New Pact on Migration and Asylum Brussels, 23.9.2020 COM (2020) 609 final [viewed 1-12-20 @ [https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/1\\_en\\_act\\_part1\\_v7\\_1.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/1_en_act_part1_v7_1.pdf)]

<sup>3</sup> Commission "Free Movement" [viewed 1-12-20 @ <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=457>]

<sup>4</sup> Castles, S. (2010) Understanding Global Migration: A Social Transformation Perspective, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 36:10, 1565-1586

economic, social and cultural dimensions of migration – and on the potential implications for the politics and policy of migration governance this may have.

The report is organised into seven sections: the systemic challenge of changing the narrative over migration, reframing migration, specific recommendations in relation to the economy, culture, and society, contribution from the partners, governance and civil society engagement and then integrated policy recommendations.

## II. Changing the Dominant Narrative On Migration Across The EU – a systemic issue

These three key areas are of particular concern in migration policy:

- **Entry policies:** a number of gaps and barriers undermine and slow down the entry of migrants from rescue at sea or external borders to hotspots and reception centres<sup>5</sup>. Currently there is little predictability for migrant access to the EU, with acceptance rates varying significantly between member states and an unsuccessful relocation process regime. This offers opportunities for organised and criminal groups to exploit the vulnerability of migrants. It also fuels a trade in illegal labour and modern slavery into core sectors of the EU economy such as agriculture and construction<sup>6</sup>. New channels, such as Humanitarian Corridors<sup>7</sup>, that offer stewardship along the journey and over the border are vital to enable humane entry policies<sup>8</sup>.

- **Resettlement and return policies:** the failure of the relocation schemes approved by the EU, the strong opposition of the Visegrad countries (V4) against migrants<sup>9</sup>, the shortcomings in implementation of the Return Directive (2008)<sup>10</sup> and the Commission's 2018 proposal amending the 2008 Directive (non yet adopted) and now the COVID crisis; these have all shown not only inefficiencies in the asylum and return systems of the EU member countries but also raised fundamental concerns about fairness. Greater engagement with social partners is an important mechanism for both raising awareness of the need of member states for migrant workers, and for

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<sup>5</sup> First, seven member states prevent asylumseekers from accessing the labour market in the six months following their asylum application, while another seven member states go even further with a waiting period of nine months. (Huddleston, Tanczos, Wolffhardt, *New Asylum recast may undermine the EU's greatest impact on refugee integration*, 2017 and Aida country reports, 2019) [viewed 1-12-20 @ [https://www.cidob.org/en/publications/publication\\_series/project\\_papers/niem/new\\_asylum\\_recast\\_may\\_undermine\\_the\\_eu\\_s\\_greatest\\_impact\\_on\\_refugee\\_integration](https://www.cidob.org/en/publications/publication_series/project_papers/niem/new_asylum_recast_may_undermine_the_eu_s_greatest_impact_on_refugee_integration)]

<sup>6</sup> L.Palumbo & A.Corrado 2020 "Are Agri-Food Workers Only Exploited in Southern Europe?" November 4th, 2020 [viewed 1-12-20 @ <https://blogs.eui.eu/migrationpolicycentre/are-agri-food-workers-only-exploited-in-southern-europe/>]

<sup>7</sup> Eg AMIF Humanitarian Corridors project [viewed 1-12-20 @ <https://www.humanitariancorridor.org/en/homepage/>]

<sup>8</sup> ECRE 2020 "Humanitarian Corridors: An Italian Model for the European Union?"

" [viewed 1-12-20 @ <https://www.ecre.org/humanitarian-corridors-an-italian-model-for-the-european-union/>]

<sup>9</sup> Máté Szalai, Zsuzsanna Csornai and Nikolett Gara V4 Migration Policy: Conflicting Narratives and Interpretative Frameworks 01/2017 CIDOB [viewed 1-12-20 @ [https://www.cidob.org/articulos/monografias/illiberals/v4\\_migration\\_policy\\_conflicting\\_narratives\\_and\\_interpretative\\_frameworks](https://www.cidob.org/articulos/monografias/illiberals/v4_migration_policy_conflicting_narratives_and_interpretative_frameworks)]

<sup>10</sup> EPRS 2020 "The Return Directive 2008/115/EC" [viewed 1-12-20 @ [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2020/642840/EPRS\\_STU\(2020\)642840\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2020/642840/EPRS_STU(2020)642840_EN.pdf)]

supporting a more streamlined approach to migrant resettlement in the EU and return sponsorship. Returns and legal pathways need to go hand-in-hand<sup>11</sup> and both need to engage with the needs of social partners.

- **Inclusion policies:** these are complicated by reactive, piecemeal and confusing legislative procedures regarding the migration management systems. These start by discriminating against migrants and refugees in the identification procedures (because of ethnicity, religion, their origin countries, vulnerable and disabled people etc.), and leads to their arbitrary expulsion and/or protracted detention, limited employment support, limited insertion in the education system and in housing access, inadequate social protection etc. Migrants from third countries have made a vital contribution to the EU and must continue to do so in its future. They bring knowledge, skills, culture, connections work and life from around the world to enrich European society. Migrants greatly help the EU and its member states to face the challenges of climate change, an ageing society, decreasing growth and now COVID<sup>12</sup>. Europe needs to see migration less as a burden and more as an out-stretched hand from those willing to risk leaving their home for a new life in Europe.

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<sup>11</sup> H.Dempser & A.Kappeli 2020 “The EU Migration Pact: Why Effective Returns are Necessary” [viewed 1-12-20 @ <https://www.cgdev.org/blog/eu-migration-pact-why-effective-asylum-returns-are-necessary>]

<sup>12</sup> German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Friday thanked the husband-and-wife founders of BioNTech who are behind a first-in-the-west coronavirus vaccine developed with Pfizer. In a virtual visit, she congratulated Ugur Sahin, Ozlem Tureci and their Mainz company ahead of vaccine distribution in the European Union on Dec. 27th 2020, End of the New Year Speech DW News. See also on the Italian on entrepreneurship in SMEs integration experience, IDOS\_OIM\_CNA 2019/2020 Entrepreneurship, Migration Report.

### III. Changing the Narrative - an illustration

Our project focused on this last aspect of migrant inclusion and integration. A common recommendation was that **a new more holistic approach was required to better integrate migrant workers into the labour market**. In 2019, the employment rate for migrants born outside the EU was 6.3 % lower than the employment rate for the EU-born population. Many surveys confirm the positive impact of migrant contributions on aggregate output and public finance<sup>13</sup>. Our economies need migrant's labour in many economic and social sectors. We need them, they need us and this fact needs to be at the heart of the politics of migration. **This requires that we have to change the politics of migration as well as migration policies.**

If we look at the simple integration of a migrant worker into the labour force, we see that this requires a much broader frame of reference than a simple focus on a migrant can capture. **Labour is an individual right, a fundamental tool for inclusion and a core freedom in the EU**. Migrant workers do not begin with the right to work in the EU but does their status as migrant or refugee do enough to establish this right? Even if the right to work is accessed through legal mechanisms, it is often the case that work is not available in practice as a wide range of cultural, social and historical factors offer stand in the way. These need to be explored across the EU. Member states need to face up to the colonial origins of contemporary racism, welfare chauvinism and the influence that the imperial predispositions of the past have on the present.

More frequently, the right to work is linked solely to a migrant's economic contribution. For this to occur, first there **must be a recognition of the different skills** that the individual has at the earliest opportunity, such as in orientation meetings and language training. These need to link to the opportunities and procedures for accessing a country's labour market. In addition to removing barriers and restrictions to the labour market access of migrants it is important to support them translate what they can bring to the opportunities in the labour market. This should apply to any non-native EU worker, whether they have come for specific or seasonal jobs, or if they have arrived to be reunited with their families. It should also apply to asylum seekers and refugees who, if able, should be assumed to be desiring of work and with skills to share. Many refugees work beneath their qualifications in the EU because their skills are not recognised and integrated into the labour market effectively.

Furthermore, instead of limiting legal migration to highly skilled people "the Blue Card directive" must give access to medium skilled workers who are needed by many by SMEs. The integration of refugees and migrants into labour markets and society generally must happen at the local level in close partnerships between local authorities, societal representatives, small business support services and civil society, training and research bodies. Since SMEs are the basic fabric of communities, they are key players in initiating this integration at the local level. Migrant

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<sup>13</sup> eg "People On the Move: Migration and Mobility in the European Union", Bruegel 2018 [viewed 1-12-20 @ <https://www.bruegel.org/2018/01/people-on-the-move-migration-and-mobility-in-the-european-union/>]

entrepreneurship should be facilitated into a common “European Enterprise Pathway”. At the local level this is a good way to develop a career and integrate in migrants into the community<sup>14</sup>.

Once these skills have been identified, **how can migrants be helped to participate in the labour market?** We all need access to social institutions to work. Schools educate and care for our children, hospitals heal us and social housing to house us. In order to access the full capabilities of migrant workers, access to the same social support systems available to workers must also be available to migrant workers. Member states have been extending health services to asylum seekers and facilitating temporary regularisations during, for example, harvesting periods. Other welfare resources (for example housing and mental health) are also key if migrants are to perform on equal terms in the labour market. Social contributions paid by migrants employed workers represent an important component of the revenue into many EU welfare systems. Yet the receipt of benefits for migrants is often on differential terms while migrants are not consulted on the policies design or even offered the opportunity to vote on how their taxes are spent.

**Learning a language is a prerequisite for accessing the labour market.** The evidence from the 12 Country Reports<sup>15</sup> and many publications showed that learning the language of the country of residence was the first and most important investment needed to allow migrants to start the inclusion process. Language classes should be adapted to individual's needs and competences since the level of qualification and education, the years at primary or secondary school, the skill, the foreign language knowledge may be very different. They should also reflect the challenging circumstances that refugees may have experienced on the journey to and arrival in the EU. Migrants often do not take part or even avoid some of these activities because they perceive them as linguistically too demanding or threaten valuable emotional and cultural links to homelands<sup>16</sup>. Learning a language therefore *“needs to be included in a tailored made process ... which will help refugees in their further steps towards integration in the society and in employment”*<sup>17</sup>. Some migrants may lack documents, others may not have worker status, but all need to be able to access language training. In addition to formal access and availability, further work needs to be pursued to ensure that meanings, as well as words, are translated properly. Cultural networks can be hard to penetrate *from both sides* so it is important that “bridging moments” are created to allow migrant and recipient cultures to be explored and celebrated in relation to each other.

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<sup>14</sup> Joint statement by the European Commission and Economic and Social Partners Renewal of the European Partnership for Integration, offering opportunities for refugees to integrate in the European labour market [viewed 6-1-21 from joint-statement-commission-economic-social-partners-renewal-european-partnership-integration.pdf (europa.eu)]

<sup>15</sup> <https://maxamif.eu/research/>

<sup>16</sup> Schiller, Nina Glick, Linda Basch, and Cristina Szanton Blanc. "From Immigrant to Transmigrant: Theorizing Transnational Migration." *Anthropological Quarterly* 68, no. 1 (1995): 48-63. Accessed January 25, 2021. doi:10.2307/3317464.

<sup>17</sup> Linguistic Integration of Adult Migrants (LIAM), Council of Europe 2020 [viewed 1-12-20 @ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/lang-migrants>]

This example demonstrates the complexity of issues relating to migration. Rather than creating discrete policy frameworks for migration and adding them to existing policies designed to prioritise other outcomes, there is a need to begin the discussion from the perspective of migrant needs first. In policy frameworks, this is an unusual, even radical, proposal because it implies that the other is being privileged over the needs of the “native European”. But nativist politics has always permeated European politics and the EU has been at its best when pushing against these forces rather than with them, and now more than ever<sup>18</sup>. There will always be plenty of advocates calling for more services for those EU citizens who already have so much. Refugees and migrants deserve our humanitarian, empathy and practical support. They are in the same situation as the refugees at the end of Europe’s second world war. It is time that the EU takes on the role of advocating for migrants who are needed to work in the future EU. It is also time that the EU recognises that it is the legacy of European colonialism that has created the conditions of poverty that many economic migrants are fleeing.

The problems are therefore serious and in manyways entrenched through Europe’s history into the organisation and assumptions of European politics. While the project of European integration was premised on collaboration between peoples, they were mainly understood as white, often Christian, people born on the European landmass with a peculiar and particular shared take on history<sup>19</sup>. The attitudes that these shared values and beliefs have sustained are invariably represented in the opinion surveys produced by offices like OPAN and MIPEX which, while enabling valuable comparisons, also begin from common assumptions<sup>20</sup>. For example MIPEX highlights the importance of basic rights, equal opportunities, and secure future which in many ways reflect the gold standard for social integration in Europe<sup>21</sup>. But even with these rights, opportunities and futures, the experience of refugees are likely to be inhibited by barriers to legal redress, skill recognition and obstacles to family reunification or citizenship. Without recognizing the political legitimacy, or electoral significance, of migrants and refugees, law makers and decision takers may well be incentivized to use migration as a political resource. There is plenty of evidence that since the global financial crisis nativism has become increasingly important in European politics, reasserting the orientalist prejudice of the C20th and confirming the othering of “surplus strangers”<sup>22</sup>. Our discussions with

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<sup>18</sup> Macron, E. 2017 Initiative for Europe -Sorbonne Speech 26 septembre 2017 [vied 25-1-21 @ <http://international.blogs.ouest-france.fr/archive/2017/09/29/macron-sorbonne-verbatim-europe-18583.html>]

<sup>19</sup> See, for example, Rober Shilliam, 2017. The CRISIS of Europe and colonial amnesia: Freedom struggles in the Atlantic biotope. *Global Historical Sociology*, p.124; Dipesh Chakrabarty, 2008. *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial thought and historical difference*. Princeton University Press.

<sup>20</sup> OPAM is the European University Institute’s OPAM – Observatory of Public Attitudes to Migration  
<https://migrationpolicycentre.eu/opam/>

<sup>21</sup> MIPEX is the Migrant Integration Policy Index and collects rich data on migration policies for comparative analysis  
<https://www.mipex.eu/key-findings>

<sup>22</sup> For example Noury, A. and Roland, G., 2020. Identity politics and populism in Europe. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 23, pp.421-439, Iocco, G., Lo Cascio, M. and Perrotta, D.C., 2020. ‘Close the Ports to African Migrants and Asian Rice!’: The Politics of Agriculture and Migration and the Rise of a ‘New’ Right-Wing Populism in Italy. *Sociologia Ruralis*, 60(4), pp.732-753; Cocks, J., 2020. Between nativism and displacement: Citizens, strangers, and surplus status in the contemporary age. *Current Sociology*, 68(2), pp.169-186.

partner organisations even suggested that realizing pro- migrant, integration policies could be costly for local politicians. While legal rights and economic opportunities are essential to refugee integration in Europe we also need to think about what it means to be human today. The world has been united in its common experience of the horrors of COVID and all stand to suffer from the catastrophe of climate change. As European citizens see that the political rights and democratic institutions of post WWII democracy become threatened, it is also time to reflect on the histories that erected Europe's borders, the relationships that structure Europe's role in the world and the values that have tolerated the lack of integration of migrants into so many of the EU's different member states for so many decades.

## IV. Recommendations from the 12 Partners

### 1. Economic Issues

The report on the sphere of economy has investigated and compared the experiences and practices gained by the 12 EU member Countries on the migrants' impact on the labour market (Belgium, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, The Netherlands, Poland, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden). The result of this research offers a differentiated picture on the labour policies implemented by these countries showing heterogeneous results in terms of participation rate in the labour market, unemployment rates, migrant entrepreneurship, women working conditions, employment rights. Most of these differences come from the autonomy that member countries have in the management of integration policy, but also from other issues linked to past migration experiences, labour market models, government and institutional structures.

In recent years, migrants are facing an additional barrier, the negative reaction of an increasing number of political parties, media and citizens against the presence of third-country nationals (TCNs) in their countries. These reactions, which have been translated in more accentuated restrictions of entry, residence procedures, access to the labour market and social services, represent the most visible impediment to the full valorisation of foreign work in the economy. It is interesting to note that the 12 countries experienced different attitudes in relation to this topic. After the 2015 large arrival of migrants seeking international protection, the migration policies of the Scandinavian countries, the Iberian Peninsula, the European central countries, while introducing more restrictive measures, have not radically changed their welcoming attitude. The policies of the Eastern Europe countries towards migrants have registered a substantial change of direction.

All the 12 country reports confirm the empirical evidences emerged from the numerous studies carried out on the migrant impact on the economy. In particular, the labour market impact depends on the presence of specific conditions existing in the host countries. In the first place, the willingness of public policies, but also of private entrepreneurs, to enhance the opportunities induced by migrants work. All the reports confirm that migrants have contributed in many ways to the development of their economies. They have compensated the negative demographic trends experienced in their countries, especially in those of the Eastern area who have seen the higher decline in the population. They have contributed with their work, despite the global crisis and the hostile environment, to satisfy the internal demand of social personal assistance (in Europe, there are over 8 million declared domestic workers, 91 per cent of whom are migrant women). They have created, as migrant entrepreneurs, new small business initiatives helping to reduce labour shortage and, through the payment of taxes, to sustain the pension system of the hosting countries. It is difficult to imagine, considering also the decrease of the working -age of European population, how these economies could survive without the contribution of the TCNs.

A second element, whose relevance has grown significantly in the countries that experienced relevant migrants' flow in relation to their overall population, consists in ensuring an institutional and regulatory environment that contributes to giving effectiveness to labour policies and to maximizing the foreign workers impact on the economic growth. These positive labour market outcomes are closely related to a well-integrated system of migration policies aiming at creating the conditions for the full societal integration of migrants to ensure their participation in the implementation and monitoring of all aspects of migration. When migration policies of the EU countries have not moved in this direction, but were implemented reactively to deal with emergencies, the contribution of migrants on the labour market has been more conflicting and with less impact.

The availability of quantitative and qualitative data is a basic requirement for commenting or confronting the experiences of the migration impact on the labour market. From the analysis of the MAX country reports, it is clear we need more disaggregated, but homogeneous, data in studying migration flows. To understand the complexity of information that can be obtained from reading the dynamics recorded by the labour forces, it is necessary to collect data on a wide spectrum of phenomena related to the composition of labour forces (by gender, age, education etc.) and the working conditions prevailing in specific markets or sector of activity. This information is all the more necessary when the intent is to design migration integration policies able of responding, specifically and sustainably, to the needs of workers and businesses in the countries under observation. Comparative studies based on macro and micro-economic analysis are very useful in this regard.

Key obstacles faced by migrants are their lack of knowledge of their recipient country languages and the non-recognition of the skill and qualifications they bring, often due to the lack or non-validation of their documentation. All the reports mentioned that migrants were mostly employed in low skilled jobs or that they had a higher level of qualification than their low-skill job requires. There needs to be a mandatory requirement for simplifying procedures and times required for the certification of skills, for improving the knowledge of language and for better access to education and training for all migrants (asylum seekers, refugees, low-skilled workers and people at risk of exclusion) across the EU. These steps would greatly help migrants to reach a qualified participation in the labour market and to raise their awareness against discriminatory practices or violent attitudes, in particular towards migrant women. Combining language courses with training and education activities (dual systems) has proven to be a positive experience that countries should introduce to improve TNCs access to the labour market.

An initiative that has produced positive effects, mentioned in some of the country reports and also supported by EU laws (in the "Global Approach to Migration and Mobility" 2011 and the "European Agenda on Migration" 2015), regards the establishment of partnership agreements with the origin countries of migrants. A lesson has been learned in the last decades when dealing with international migration: the origin and destination countries share the same interests and responsibilities. Due to the complexity of migration and the multiple effects, directly or indirectly, produced in both countries, it is hard to believe that solutions are possible without working together.

Solutions must be found in the interest of migrants, but also in the interest of pursuing joint development goals, including those related to security and defence of human rights.

### *Policy Recommendations*

1. **Media and public opinion require more detailed and diffused information on migrants' participation in the labor market.** Due to the increased anti-migration rhetoric in politics, targeted information campaigns, comparative studies on the working conditions of migrants in specific sectors and market areas in EU member countries, could help to implement evidence-based policies on the positive impact of migrants work at both national and EU level.
2. **The EU and Member States should invest more in the skill development of migrants to improve their productivity and qualified participation in the labour market.** Indeed, migrants are mostly employed in low skilled jobs with no recognition of their qualification. Therefore, skills development, trainings, and the development of competences and opportunities could allow them to obtain a decent, better-paid job that matches their skills.
3. **The EU member States should favour the development of bilateral “partnership agreements” to strengthen coherence in migration policies of both origin and destination countries.** As a matter of fact, migration is a priority for both the origin and destination countries, and migrants are an heterogeneous population. These bilateral partnership agreements could contribute to face the different impact and challenges due to migration, assess the occupational standards and acquire the skills needed, provide safe migration corridors.

## 2. Cultural Issues

The country reports showed in many ways how migration and migrants have contributed to the transformation and development of national cultures. They have given rise **to cultural diversification and enrichment** with real positive impacts on our societies. One of the most important features in our cultural report, showed that language and education is perhaps the most important area within “culture”. It is therefore highlighted here as a policy recommendation field. Most of the country reports showed that in most European countries, migrants have the right to attend schools or other forms of educational institutions as newcomers. Migrants tend however to under achieve as well as being early school leavers.

We put particular attention to some good practices from the country reports. *“The Italian country report **focusing on school and education for integration** into the Italian culture and to be able to participate in society. In the Czech Republic, the Ministry of Interior has established a network of integration centres providing among other things education and language courses. The Greek “Odysseus” project run by the Ministry of Education supports education of migrants in the Greek language, the Greek history and the Greek culture”. Spain further showed proof of the importance of **speaking the language and understanding your new country’s culture** when looking at how quickly migrants from Spanish speaking Latin America have traditionally integrated in Spain. “In Estonia however, language learning and schools have proven particularly problematic especially towards the largest minority and group of migrants that are Russian speaking. “*

The European Commission’s new “Action plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027”<sup>23</sup> highlights the particular importance of education and training. The E.C. sees education at all levels and ages as a foundation for successful integration and the school environment as a potentially inclusive context to support migrant children and fight segregation. This is going to be further highlighted in the upcoming EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child which wants to ensure that all children, regardless of origin, ability, socio-economic background, legal and residence status have equal access to rights and protection in the country they live in.

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<sup>23</sup> Brussels, 24.11.2020 COM (2020) 758 final

### *Policy recommendations:*

1. **Regardless their statuses, all migrants arriving to the EU must receive access to language learning as soon as they arrive to their new country.** Member States should cooperate in bringing forward good quality language learning programs.
2. **All EU Member States should promote a common skills qualification and assessment system.** A joint and common practice of recognising qualifications should serve migrants in general but in particular refugees. This could be implemented, either through the Erasmus Programme, the Euro pass portal or the European Qualifications Framework.
3. **A multilevel participatory and partnership approach is needed in the EU, in particular a deeper cooperation between national authorities and EU supporting programs.** Indeed, there is the need of a tighten relationship between national authorities in charge of integration, learning, teaching and training and European support programs within the ESF (European Social Fund), ERDF (European Regional Development Fund), ERASMUS+ or similar.

## 4. Social Issues

The country studies indicated a wide range of definitions, practices and understandings of migration across Europe. Migration and integration describe an ongoing process in societies as they change. While there may be common phenomena driving the changes, the marked differences in each country migration patterns, migrant origin countries and issues relating to migrant integration show that host countries do not react to migrants in isolation. Rather the process of migrant integration is one informed by the past, the associated power relations that these often-colonial histories have cemented, and the traditions and reactions to migrants that these histories have laid down in host societies. Debates about migration are therefore, as much about changes and challenges in European societies - like an ageing society, climate change, slowed economic growth - as they are about the people who enter a country as migrants. Will they be open or closed, welcoming or hostile? How far have Europe's societies faced up to the damage they did through slavery, colonialism and the violence of empire? **Migration, and the benefits it can offer to Europe's societies, needs to take far more central place in Europe's key political debates** and institutions. The support for the BLM (black lives matter) across Europe this year shows that Europe is ready to face up to the legacies left by its past.

There is a real need to promote better discussions and understandings of both sides of the experiences of migration and of receiving migrants to better understand mutual fears, hopes and frustrations as well as formulate collective actions and identities. Political institutions have the capacity to do this but presently the focus of many migration institutions is to keep migrants and society apart rather than bring them together. These distinctions are made at borders, in newspapers, in political debates, in benefit claims, in seeing a doctor, in job markets and in cultural references. Indeed, **the repeated distinction between "us" and "them" is how the daily routine of a migrant is made different** to the everyday experience of any non migrant. These institutionalised borders need to be examined, unpacked and evaluated more stringently – are such categories worth the money they save, do they really pacify voters, are they fit for purpose in a world facing so many new challenges that can only be addressed collectively? If migrants are to be integrated into society, they need to be far more integrated into societies institutions as well as cultures and economies.

How can the experience of migrants be better represented at different levels of social interaction? It is clear that local political responses to migrants can be very different to national ones, either more welcoming through making human connections or more opposed in competition for scarce resources. But the institutionalisation of policies frequently prohibits better representation of migrant voices and views to the detriment of effective understanding and debate. **The EU could make the promotion of migration one of its core principles.** While this in effect has been at the heart of most of the EU's policies, attaching the significance of migration today to the welcoming of strangers in the building of the European community would familiarise the present challenges faced by migrants with those of citizens of the European Union. Europe needs to consider how it translates its post national democratic form further into its own member states as well as beyond its own borders.

Many of the inequalities that migrants face are experienced by Europeans too. Class, gender, access to housing and jobs, welfare and healthcare, are all challenges under the EU's existing systems. If there was an abundance of resources in these areas, then perhaps there would be more generosity? Blaming migrants has always been used as a strategy for distracting the blame from those who deserve it. Policies that claim to protect welfare spending are easily received by racists, just like a dog's whistle is only heard by a dog. **Attaching benefits and grants, perhaps through ESIF conditionalities, to accompany migrants** could address these problems directly. First it would allow the EU to direct resources to the services that migrants will access. Second it confirms the importance of migration to the EU project, would go some way to instrumentalising the benefits of migration in local public discourse.

A recurrent theme in this discussion of societal integration has been the lack of formal representation of migrants in the society that they live in. Migrants, past present and future, from all over the world and the EU are an important constituency of Europe. They bring resourcefulness, awareness and diversity that enriches the EU and its member states. They also generate taxable income and provide valuable contributions to society across the full range of human endeavour. Yet have no political voice explicitly dedicated to their representation. European Parliamentary Groupings reflect long standing political traditions (liberal, social and Christian democracy) that may support migrants but have their origins in European political life and concerns. There is unlikely to be a consistent position that reflects all migrant demands and wishes but, like other interests in the EESC or minorities in the EP, they deserve to be heard. With no political voice advocating the benefits of migrants for countries, nationalist anti migrant voices are likely to prevail. The CEC's new expert group on the views of migrants is welcome but there needs to be a far greater expansion of the voices of migrants **into the EP and channels for migrant directly into the EC and Council**<sup>24</sup>. Only by making migrant voices a normal part of the representative process will the wide range of migrant experiences be understood in the decision making bodies of the EU. This could and should makes the EU home to and the voice of those who are stateless or moving across states.

### *Policy recommendations*

1. **Greater recognition is needed on the fact that migration is a common and unifying experience of modern life, as states and people adapt to contemporary challenges.** Until COVID, migration was an assumption of globalisation and a defining ingredient of the European Union. The EU needs to make migration a core focus of its action, alongside competition policy, trade and development and climate change.
2. **Making ESIF receipt conditional on migrant integration objectives would normalise the link between European integration and migration.** As an important instrument for the social integration around the EU, ESIF has great potential for also facilitating migrant integration.

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<sup>24</sup> EC Commission informal expert group on the views of migrants:  
[https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip\\_20\\_1364](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_20_1364)

3. **New tools should enhance the visibility of migrant experience in key decision-making venues.** Migrants are defined not by who they are but by where they come from. Therefore, they are excluded from political channels of representation and have a limited voice. Special mechanisms, such as migrant impact assessments or special migrant envoys and select committees, should allow them to participate in the democratic representation.
4. **There should a normalization in the education of the consequences and resposnabilitites that the EU history had in the current unequal global development.** Indeed, a broader education in the EU on the legacies of European history and its impact on unequal global development, regional insecurity around the world and the invention and impact of scientific racism, could develop a sense of reponsability in the EU.

## V. Additional Contributions from the Partners

We also hosted an additional discussion with partner organisations to collect specific recommendations from a brainstorming and policy recommendation session. These raised additional issues that complemented the studies above. It was clear that policies need to change their approach towards the migrant and refugee labour force and to make inclusion in the labour market a more holistic approach. In particular, this applied to economic and cultural issues.

**Training programs** were not in line with the real requests from the labour market and mostly targeted low skilled job while many countries experienced shortages of key roles (medical sector, engineering, care) requiring high skilled labour force. Migrants and refugees often preferred to start their own business to avoid being hired in low skilled jobs or receive negative responses from potential employers (mostly for racist reasons or cliché). The enterprise path therefore was the last resort for a lot of them and shows that many could not succeed in conventional careers or have to struggle much more than their native counterparts. Setting up a business also necessitated borrowing money which could lead to borrowing from unregulated lenders through migrant networks. This could bind migrants with their native peers without being able to break the cluster and become included into their recipient society. Draft recommendation: "**Increase the funding for mentoring/coaching/training programs related to the shortage of the high skilled roles in the job market. Build effective training programs for the entrepreneurs to be, providing access to microcredit funding and accompany them for at least three years after the creation of the business. Acknowledge the brain waste that occurs in a lot of countries and invest in the high skills brought by migrants and refugees**". Highlighting the net contribution of migrants to the welfare state, skills and climate change was also extremely important. The majority of EU countries are experiencing a demographic decrease, together with the increase of the life expectancy. This leads to pressure on those active in the labour market to pay for the welfare state. Migrants are therefore contributing to the welfare state much more than what they receive. Draft recommendation: "**Adopt a longer term vision that includes the demographic curve and its modifications, the impact of the brain waste into each national society, the need of a major involvement of the private sector and an eye on the risk mitigation of the climate change consequences on the migration flows**"

### Policy recommendations

1. **Making language education accessible to everybody regardless legal status, age and position.** This is important, especially for undocumented and asylum seekers given the variable status of migrants across Europe.
2. **A Focus on schools as a main actor in the integration of foreigners is key.** Schools could take responsibility for the integration of children and not only for teaching of children. Schools and teachers should therefore

be a key point for integration necessitating more training to teachers and all the education professionals involved in this process.

3. **Public funded institutions should promote a better image of migrants.** Cultural and educational institutions should play a major role and be more inclusive, accessible and interesting (ie *attract attention*) for both third country nationals and locals.
4. **Media coverage should be improved and encouraged to integrate narratives on migration among all levels of reporting.** This requires new kinds of skills and so education for many journalists to be able to research and write on unfamiliar stories and to become better at source criticism:” how to spot fake news?”

## VI. Governance and Civil Society Engagement

There needs to be a concerted effort to reframe the strategic political delivery of migration agendas at **all levels of governance**. Migration has consistently been side-lined as an issue that was of a second order to more important “EU” agendas. Thus, migration would be added to an employment or security or education agenda. This needs to change with migration now becoming a key driver for European integration that exploits the powers offered by Articles 79 and 80 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), including incentives and support. Migration is an important political agenda that gives the EU the opportunity to actively challenge the nativist nationalist political agendas that have fuelled the populist right and disproportionately framed the legislation and execution of migration policies to date. The **rights of migrant workers should be at the very heart of the EU** as a social entity which is, by its very nature, transnational and explicitly concerned with the movement of people across borders. The EU is therefore positioned to offer insights and offer leadership in the political processes required to manage migration effectively and should draw on its past experiences in doing so.

An **Inter Institutional Migration Agency (IIMA)**, ideally in office of the Commission’s Secretariat General, should promote and harmonise migration and integration agendas across and through EU policies. This would play the important role of demonstrating an institutional commitment from within the heart of the EU to both recognise and operationalising migrant integration in the EU. The pact proposal for a systematic Commission monitoring of agencies could also apply to the EU DGs and institutions as well, monitoring their performance and change, just as services have monitored regulatory reform, for example. Proposals to enhance the quality control of FRONTEX, among others, need to find ways of securing feedback from refugees as potential citizens of the EU, rather than on the assumption of criminality often associated with border management.

**Engage with social partners** to: identify and celebrate the contribution of migrant workers, to actively welcome migrants into society, to collaborate in cultural events, to engage in dialogues with migrants on key issues such as the future of work, the legacies of colonialism, the possibilities for future collaboration in the face of common challenges. In short, while political institutions set the legal context for migrant integration, civil society reflects the everyday experience of migrant experience. It is especially important that the needs of women are prioritised in these discussions.

While the EU holds formal power, the implementation of actions is predominantly through the member states. In policy areas with similar power asymmetries, the EU has been effective in promoting good practice through creating scoreboards (eg. state aids). As well as identifying the pace of progress across different countries, a **migration policy scoreboard** would also stimulate discussions about measurement and so common values and practices that can apply to migrant integration. Such discussions can involve civil society, migrant groups and a wide range of other stakeholders, developing a community of practice around migration in response to the EU’s agenda. This is a cheap and effective supplement to formal obligations.

**Involve migrants in the evaluation of EU grants** and resources dedicated to supporting migrants. While new initiatives in AMIF are welcome the practice of accommodating the wide range of experiences of migrants in grant delivery needs far greater research both to understand the best ways to capture better solutions and to confirm the role of migrants in the EU polity. In addition to improving performance in the delivery of services to the target group, this will also enable innovation between service suppliers as migrant inputs generate new feedback loops to service delivery. It may also allow migrants and civil society to establish common agendas more easily, for example around housing, training schemes, health care needs and other forms of social policy agenda. This may attract new forms of investment and develop new forms of local strategy in which migrants and civil society collaborate on equal terms.

### *Policy recommendations*

1. **Establish an Inter Institutional Migration Agency (IIMA) in the Commission to enable inter agency and inter institutional coordination on migration policy.** If we acknowledge migrant integration as a serious point of the EU agenda, we cannot isolate it to one directorate general. As the MAX reports show, the process of becoming a migrant crosses many stages and issues, that transcend traditional institutional boundaries. To ensure that migrants and refugees' integration works effectively, it requires constant monitoring and active supervision. The EU has shown that empowering an agency to share good practices, coordinate benchmarks and promote new ways of working, is an effective way of realizing ambitious changes across policy.
2. **Engage stakeholders with migrants on positive sum initiatives.** There are many ways that stakeholders can be brought into policy debates, but this often requires leadership from a third actor to facilitate the exchange, orchestrate meetings and maintain the resources that enable effective dialogue. Sometimes third sector organisations like Universities can play a powerful role in enabling such interventions. The GLIMER project offers excellent examples of how an initiative led by a consortium of partners can help engage migrants and refugees into local governance initiatives<sup>25</sup>.
3. **Involve social and economic partners and representatives of migrants in the evaluation of EU grants effectiveness (permanent Advisory Groups) and in the management of a migration policy scoreboard.** It can be very difficult to evaluate the benefits of a policy intervention designed to support a population that is by definition as heterogeneous as that of refugees and migrants. Criteria do not apply universally, heterogeneous data is hard to capture and there can be a tendency to focus on evaluative criteria that are too simplistic in capturing the experience of recipients. It is essential

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<sup>25</sup> Visit the page of the GLIMER project: <http://www.glimer.eu/>

to ensure that there are dialogues between policy makers and migrant and refugees who are the target beneficiaries of funded activities. Score boards can capture important administrative data, but they also need to be supplemented by stories and experience that confirm or challenge the experience of interventions in a more subjective way.

## VII. Integrated Policy Recommendations

### 1. A Multistakeholder Social Partnership Approach to Migrant Integration

Between 2019 and early 2020 MAX partners collected practices at local, national and European levels that showed how collaboration among social partners and civil society organizations, catalyzed the integration of migrants.

The recent European Commission Action Plan on Migration COM (2020) final 758 also acknowledged that effective migrant integration needs to engage many stakeholders and so requires migrants, EU citizens of migrant origin and hosting communities to be empowered in the process.

The long-term multiplier effects of multi-stakeholder partnerships across levels of governance could be built through Urban and rural Partnership on the inclusion of migrants and refugees Actions. Specifically, these could focus on:

- Target EU funding on value added capacity building programs to assist Member States to promote better coordination between key integration stakeholders. The targets might be Civil Society Organizations and International Agencies, representative's social partners, stakeholders at national, regional or local levels. Projects might include the piloting of "human corridors" to reinforce cooperation in a common strategy of safer integration for families of asylum seekers;
- Including local authorities and EU institutions (the European Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions) in a new partnership for political dialogue and learning exchanges;
- Preventing radicalization by supporting awareness cities and strengthening inter-religious dialogue;
- Building capacity and supporting awareness raising campaigns. These might include funding programs for migrants and hosting citizens so that local communities can be involved in designing and implementing integration measures together with migrants<sup>26</sup>.
- Producing an independent Annual Report through an EU Observatory Network on migration entrepreneurship, labor integration and social innovation. This would be presented to EU/National representative social partners, European Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions;

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<sup>26</sup> For example, in Italy, cross border migrant communities and minorities have a recognized constitutional legal right from the XVII Century to maintain language of their country of origin, their cultural practices and working activities. As well as often preserving skills abandoned by local Italian natives in some Italian mountain and rural areas. Business activities led by such ethnic minorities represent a significant source of migrant entrepreneurship.

- Updating EU policies to support migrant worker rights. These would include minimum wages for seasonal agricultural workers and common inspection labour authority controls with enforcement through twinning programs and the creation of platforms to fight criminality in the local informal economy. The exercise of workers rights in seasonal works could be supported through national/local PACTs on how to practice fair and legal business and respect workers' rights, with a multi stakeholder approach. COVID conditions make this even more critical and shows the need to urgently involve civic, educational and security authorities;
- Recognising migrant workers in protecting workers rights. One of the MAX project best practices (Aboubakar Soumahoro<sup>27</sup>) highlighted how migrant representatives could play a central role in improving social conditions. In his role as a trade unionist, he negotiated with local Authorities and local businesses in the Italian agri - food sector. In doing so, he contributed to the fight against criminal behaviour, reactivated response of the public authorities and helped to enforce sanctions on those illegal businesses that did not respect workers seasonal contracts. Some of these businesses were receiving funding through the EU's CAP.
- Expanding the urban (peripheral) and rural "Partnership for Integration" into a capacity-building program. This would include awareness raising media campaigns for policy makers, public administration, social partners, local media and migration polices practitioners.
- Broadening stakeholder involvemnt in the debate over the EU Migration Pact and Joint Action Plans. Specifically this means engaging national representative social partners and wider stakeholders (including Civil Society Organizations, University and High Schools, media) in policies and incentive programs dedicated to migration. In particular this would foster: EU/National social partner twinings, exchange pilot programs and good practices to fight criminality linked to irregular migration, joint vocational training and continuous training for migrants skills, reskilling and competence assessment, improving training methodologies and multilingual tools for quick small-micro businesses start – up (qualified business support services, entrepreneurship intensive course for self employed, small business accelerators for migrant business women, aiding the transfer of businesses from eu citizens to migrants), programs for apprentices in traditional craft professional and new skills (for minors non accompanied refugees and migrant in general), in urban as well as remote and inhabited areas.

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<sup>27</sup> <https://www.theafricareport.com/28771/aboubakar-soumahoro-the-ivorian-trade-unionist-shaking-up-italy/>

## 2. “Create favourable conditions to Partnerships and multi-stakeholder approach to migrant integration in rural and internal areas”

The social project “Migrants Integration Program in Rural Aragon” was made possible thanks to co-financing by the Aragon Government and the European Social Fund. Currently located in Teruel and Zaragoza, the Project works with social educators, prospective businesses and social workers to help integrate migrants into local labour markets and society in these rural areas. The project advances these concrete measures:

- Creating shared physical spaces that allow social activities to enhance a sense of coexistence among migrant and indigenous populations
- Working with professional people from different fields (e.g. social work, educational, health, employment and local development) to create networks that show how cooperation and collaboration in real projects articulate shared ideas of territory and cultural value among associations and citizens

The main goal of the program is to work with social educators, business actors and social workers to promote a model of inclusive and intercultural society that offers fuller access to the most vulnerable people in our society. Migrants who face social exclusion in many forms can help develop strategies of inclusion for local territories. The Migrants Integration Program in Rural Aragon has faced two very marked problems in the Autonomous Community of Aragon:

- The difficulties of socio-labor insertion experienced by many local families and migrants. This has been aggravated by a broader socio-economic crisis and further by the impact of COVID that risks contracting labor market further.
- The depopulation of small and medium size rural sites in the three provinces of Aragon that not only require new settlers but also help the population that already inhabits them.

These realities and an improved urban-rural mobility by migrants have been mutually beneficial for local development processes: the rural space created job opportunities and improvements in people’s quality of life and families and people have become agents of revitalization and development in rural communities.

This project for the national, regional and local project could be transferable to other countries. The Migrants Integration Program in Rural Aragon showed how experts in social work, in labor signposting, in social education could be coordinated under the program in Aragón and Zaragoza. They could in turn support people attending the difficulties experienced by migrants in the Aragonese territory, especially those refugees who came through asylum and refugees programs. In this way, rural and internal areas (mountains, isles, remote sites) could be a place of opportunities for some of refugees and their families.

### *Strengthening and Extending EU Human Corridors*

The "Opening of humanitarian corridors" project was started in 2016 on the initiative of the Community of Sant'Egidio. The Federation of Evangelical Churches in Italy (FCEI) and the Waldensian Table initiatives, used their own funds and organizations in Italy and in the countries of origin of the emigrants to support activation of corridors to Italy from Syria/ Lebanon, Morocco and Ethiopia. The initiative was a response to the arrival in Italy of thousands of asylum seekers. Similar initiatives "opening humanitarian corridors" have been developed by other Associations in the European countries.

Despite the difficulties associated with the dramatic increase in migration, the positive results achieved by these projects have helped to accelerate the integration of assisted immigrants. In Italy these projects have also generated more supportive public opinion, institutional representatives and religious leaders which have silenced xenophobic minorities.

Human corridors could therefore be a credible common EU response. On the one hand, they address the needs of refugees who risk their lives by crossing the Mediterranean to escape critical situations. On the other hand, destination countries improve their capacity to control legal access and migration, to manage their border security and to offer an appropriate reception that enables better societal inclusion. Human Corridors are essentially funded by the promoter organizations and by the solidarity networks scattered throughout the national territory. Until now humanitarian corridors **do not include any costs paid by the Member States** for the reception and the integration pathways: the costs are entirely borne by promoter associations and civil society organizations.

The practice of "Opening of humanitarian corridors" prioritised victims protected by international conventions who came from countries where they were persecuted, subject to violence, victims of war or famine, or received threats personally or to their families. The focusing on these criteria, as opposed to indiscriminate immigration, was the product of difficult and painful delays in the integration process using conventional methodologies. These methods often presented unrealistic improvisations, lacked coordination and promoted inconclusive interventions, with treatments that were often inhuman and with bad results.

The extension of this "best practice" experience of "Opening humanitarian corridors" to other EU countries, with the pro-active involvement of the EU and national social and economic partners, would allow the deployment of tested procedures and methodologies. Importantly it could help limit the number of journeys by refugees in the boats of death in the Mediterranean and counteract the business of smuggling and trafficking people by granting a legal entry to EU countries. Those with a humanitarian EU visa under existing art. 25 Regulation could subsequently submit an asylum application.

In order to strengthen the use of Human Corridors the EU and National Governments policy makers need to:

- Develop new legal frameworks and speedy procedures for distributing humanitarian visa more widely and for a great number of people (through adjustments to the current discipline of the Article 25, Regulation No. 810/2009)
- Normalise “sponsorship” as a legal entry channel in the field of the immigration policies. Existing EU legislation (Schengen Agreement and the Lisbon Treaty) already provide “subsidiary and temporary protection” for those fleeing wars or natural disasters: this is possible. Using the legislative instruments already available of the Member States of the European Union, regular admissions can be guaranteed for vulnerable persons in need for international protection.
- The opening of humanitarian corridors to other EU Countries should benefit not only specific protected categories, such as individuals moved for family reunification, asylum seekers and refugee with qualified skills but also health practitioners and doctors to help fight COVID-19 and support the post pandemic recovery.
- Humanitarian corridors could also channel tailored services, such as language training to help the integration of refugees in the society and in labor market (see the example of the “New Civic Integration Act” in the Netherlands and Linguistic Integration of Adult Migrants, LIAM, Council of Europe 2020).

## VIII. Table of the MAX project policy recommendations

Economic Sphere	<p><b><u>Recommendation 1</u></b></p> <p><b>Media and public opinion require more detailed and diffused information on migrants' participation in the labor market.</b> Due to the increased anti-migration rhetoric in politics, targeted information campaigns, comparative studies on the working conditions of migrants in specific sectors and market areas in EU member countries, could help to implement evidence-based policies on the positive impact of migrants work at both national and EU level.</p>
	<p><b><u>Recommendation 2</u></b></p> <p><b>The EU and Member States should invest more in the skill development of migrants to improve their productivity and qualified participation in the labour market.</b> Indeed, migrants are mostly employed in low skilled jobs with no recognition of the qualifications they already hold. Therefore, skills development, trainings, and the development of competences and opportunities could allow them to obtain a decent, better-paid job that matches their skills.</p>
	<p><b><u>Recommendation 3</u></b></p> <p><b>The EU member States should favour the development of bilateral “partnership agreements” to strengthen coherence in migration policies of both origin and destination countries.</b> As a matter of fact, migration is a priority for both the origin and destination countries, and migrants are an heterogeneous population. These bilateral partnership agreements could help to address the different impacts and challenges of migration by assessing local labour market requirements, identifying skills required, and helping to provide safe migration corridors.</p>
Cultural Sphere	<p><b><u>Recommendation 4</u></b></p> <p><b>Regardless of their status, all migrants arriving to the EU must receive access to language learning as soon as they arrive to their new country.</b> Member States should cooperate in bringing forward good quality language learning programs.</p>

### Recommendation 5

**All EU Member States should promote a common skills qualification and assessment system.** A joint and common practice of recognising qualifications should serve migrants in general but in particular refugees. This could be implemented, either through the Erasmus Programme, the Euro pass portal or the European Qualifications Framework.

### Recommendation 6

**A multilevel participatory and partnership approach is needed in the EU, in particular a deeper cooperation between national authorities and EU supporting programs.** Indeed, there is the need of a tighten relationship between national authorities in charge of integration, learning, teaching and training and European support programs within the ESF (European Social Fund), ERDF (European Regional Development Fund), ERASMUS+ or similar.

## Social Sphere

### Recommendation 7

**Greater recognition is needed on the fact that migration is a common and unifying experience of modern life, as states and people adapt to contemporary challenges.** Until COVID, migration was an assumption of globalisation and a defining ingredient of the European Union. The EU needs to make migration a core focus of its actions, alongside competition policy, trade and development and climate change.

### Recommendation 8

**Making ESIF receipt conditional on migrant integration objectives would normalise the link between European integration and migration.** As an important instrument for the social integration around the EU, ESIF has great potential for also facilitating migrant integration.

### Recommendation 9

**New tools should enhance the visibility of migrant experience in key decision-making venues.** Migrants are defined not by who they are but by where they come from. Therefore, they are excluded from political channels of representation and have a limited voice. Special mechanisms, such as migrant impact assessments or special

	<p>migrant envoys and select committees, should allow them to participate in the democratic representation.</p> <p><b><u>Recommendation 10</u></b></p> <p><b>Europe's schools and Universities need to acknowledge the responsibility of the EU and its member states to the inequalities that exist in global development.</b> Indeed, a broader education in the EU on the legacies of European history and its impact on unequal global development, regional insecurity around the world and of the invention and consequences of scientific racism, could develop a sense of responsibility in the EU.</p>
<b>Additional contribution from the partners</b>	<p><b><u>Recommendation 11</u></b></p> <p><b>Making language education accessible to everybody regardless of their legal status, age and position.</b> This is important, especially for undocumented and asylum seekers given the variable status of migrants across Europe.</p>
	<p><b><u>Recommendation 12</u></b></p> <p><b>A Focus on schools as a main actor in the integration of foreigners is key.</b> Schools could take responsibility for the integration of children and not only for teaching of children. Schools and teachers should therefore be a key point for integration necessitating more training to teachers and all the education professionals involved in this process.</p>
	<p><b><u>Recommendation 13</u></b></p> <p><b>Public funded institutions should promote a better image of migrants.</b> Cultural and educational institutions should play a major role and be more inclusive, accessible and interesting (ie <i>attract attention</i>) for both third country nationals and locals.</p>
	<p><b><u>Recommendation 14</u></b></p> <p><b>Media coverage should be improved and encouraged to integrate narratives on migration among all levels of reporting.</b> This requires new kinds of skills to educate more journalists to be able to research and write on unfamiliar stories and to become better at source criticism: "how to spot fake news?"</p>
<b>Governance and civil society engagement</b>	<p><b><u>Recommendation 15</u></b></p> <p><b>Establish an Inter Institutional Migration Agency (IIMA) in the Commission to enable inter agency and inter institutional coordination on migration policy.</b> If we acknowledge migrant integration as a serious point of the EU agenda, we cannot isolate it to one directorate general. As the MAX reports show, the process of becoming a</p>

migrant cross many stages and issues, that transcend traditional institutional boundaries. To ensure that migrants and refugees' integration works effectively, it requires constant monitoring and active supervision. The EU has shown that empowering an agency to share good practices, coordinate benchmarks and promote new ways of working, is an effective way of realizing ambitious changes across policy.

#### **Recommendation 16**

**Engage stakeholders with migrants on positive sum initiatives.** There are many ways that stakeholders can be brought into policy debates, but this often requires leadership from a third actor to facilitate the exchange, orchestrate meetings and maintain the resources that enable effective dialogue. Sometimes third sector organisations like Universities can play a powerful role in enabling such interventions. The GLIMER project offers excellent examples of how an initiative led by a consortium of partners can help engage migrants and refugees into local governance initiatives<sup>28</sup>.

#### **Recommendation 17**

**Involve social and economic partners and representatives of migrants in the evaluation of EU grants effectiveness (permanent Advisory Groups) and in the management of a migration policy scoreboard.** It can be very difficult to evaluate the benefits of a policy intervention designed to support a population that is by definition as heterogeneous as that of refugees and migrants. Criteria do not apply universally, heterogeneous data is hard to capture and there can be a tendency to focus on evaluative criteria that are too simplistic in capturing the experience of recipients. It is essential to ensure that there are dialogues between policy makers and migrant and refugees who are the target beneficiaries of funded activities. Score boards can capture important administrative data, but they also need to be supplemented by stories and experience that confirm or challenge the experience of interventions in a more subjective way.

<sup>28</sup> Visit the page of the GLIMER project: <http://www.glimer.eu/>