

# **Intercultural opening of labour-market and employment institutions in the Czech Republic**

**Project "Moving Societies towards Integration?"  
National Report Czech Republic**

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**August 2010**

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## Overall Project Brief

Project "Moving Societies towards Integration?" investigated the intercultural opening of different institutions in different social sub-systems of the host societies in seven European countries (Belgium, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Portugal). The EU Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration understand integration as a two-way process, which requires integration efforts not only from the immigrants, but from every resident of the host society (Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration in the European Union).

Project focuses on the side of the host society and how its various institutions prepare to the reality of migration and a culturally diverse society. Intercultural Opening refers to a social "learning process" that does not just include intercultural contents, but also includes knowledge of structures, organizational management and decision-making skills. Intercultural opening consequently should include the workforce and training of the workforce, the re-thinking of organizational structures, management skills and the development and delivery of intercultural contents.

Within the project attention has been paid to the role of institutions in the host society with regard to the situation of young, third-country migrants under the age of 27. The first aim of the project was to describe and analyse the situation from this perspective in the selected social sub-system of the member country. For purposes of the analysis in the Czech Republic, the selected areas were the labour market and employment.<sup>1</sup> Findings on this topic are covered in Section A of this report (Chapters 1-5). Another aim of the project was to identify and verify relevant international indicators of intercultural openness which could be common for various social sub-systems. Activities and interim outputs carried out by the project team on behalf of the Czech Republic are summarized in Section B (Chapters 6-9). Final outputs of this stage of the project are contained in the summary report elaborated by the project coordinator.

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<sup>1</sup> In other countries involved in the project solution attention has been paid to those social sub-systems, or their institutional organization: media (project solved by GERME/MITICES - Université Libre de Brussels, Belgium), work with the youth (project solved by Finnish Youth Network, Finland), professional education (project solved by IPRS - Psychoanalytic Institute for Social Research, Italy), school system (project solved by ACIDI, Portugal), healthcare (the project solved by The David Hume Institute, United Kingdom) and culture (project solved and coordinated by CJD Eutin, Germany).

## **PART A**

Intercultural opening of labour-market and employment institutions  
in the Czech Republic

## 1. Intercultural Opening of Institutions in the Czech Republic: General Context

Migrations are inherent part and parcel of the present global civilization and change a traditionally mono-cultural society towards a heterogeneous one. A process of both homogenization and differentiation runs in parallel and transforms social sub-systems of significant, traditionally national communities as well as small communities in remote parts of the world. Countries with a strong national culture host migrants from many, often very distant cultures and therefore a prerequisite for further existence of the present world is in ability of a mutual social and cultural adaptation. Europe's openness results in a growth of cultural diversity of its population and the European culture becomes enriched by new components. "Numerous European countries recognize importance of cultural cooperation and intercultural dialogue"(Niessen : 73). A general goal of intercultural policies is to strengthen cultural diversity, while sustaining stability and coherence of the host society. Specifically, they contain learning about differences of other cultures and maintaining one's own cultural identity and cultural heritage.

For almost a half of the century, the Czech Republic was more or less closed for international migrations. From the beginning to the end of the last century emigration prevailed markedly. Immigrations after the World War II changed the national and ethnical structure of the population to a certain degree, rather in the sense of homogenization of the population, since together with the influx of population from abroad almost 3 million German-speaking citizens of the then Czechoslovakia left to live in Germany. From the half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to the beginning of the nineties the immigrations remained relatively low. Immigrants who came in this period became mostly assimilated into the Czech environment and today they are hardly identifiable. Ideological pressure of the previous totalitarian regime reduced ideological as well as cultural diversity systematically. Cultural diversity was tolerated, to a certain extent, only for the national minorities recognized by the state.

Since 1990 migrations have shown a steady growth in the Czech Republic. From the establishment of an independent Czech state in 1993, the number of foreigners with a residence permit grew from 78 ths. to 438 ths. at the end of 2008. Nowadays, foreigners make up 4 per cent of the population and contribute to employment by about 6 per cent. Most foreigners with a residence permit can be considered immigrants, because their stay in the Czech Republic is longer than one year. Foreigners from third countries<sup>2</sup> make up more than a half of foreigners with a residence permit (67 %); citizens from EU, EES and Switzerland make up one third. Naturalized foreigners, migrants from the second, third and further generations are not statistically reported.

In the recent twenty years, the Czech society has undergone radical changes in many aspects, including its own cultural diversity. The question is whether the Czech perception of world comprises own philosophical concept of interculturality. Although we live in a culturally diversified society, attitudes of the Czech public contain a persistent ethnocentrism linked with expectations that immigrants will adapt to the majority society. Many immigrants accept such expectations, not longing for difference<sup>3</sup>. Their original cultural identity is strengthened more by projects financed by EU or the government of the Czech Republic rather than funds and efforts of the various immigrant communities themselves.

The legal system of the Czech Republic contributes to homogenization of the society at least by preconditioning the Czech permanent residence permit by a successful passing of a Czech-language test. The language integration is very important, however, it contributes to cultural alienation, which can be hardly avoided<sup>4</sup>. Work immigrants from third countries are usually very busy at work, especially at the beginning of their stay,

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<sup>2</sup> They include the largest communities of Ukrainians, Vietnamese, Russians, Mongolians and Moldavians.

<sup>3</sup> Based on the census, the Czech nationality is acknowledged by absolute majority of population in the Czech Republic, including the naturalized foreigners.

<sup>4</sup> For instance, many children of Vietnamese immigrants speak a perfect Czech; however, they do not master Vietnamese. They understand the language of their peers better than that one of their parents (CJD Eutin 2008).

having thus little time to develop their own cultural identity. The process of integration into the culture of the host country is often stressful and many foreigners, who have already become integrated into the host society to a certain degree, do not strive to re-integrate and cultivate their original cultural identity.

In context of integration of culturally diversified minorities, the legal system of the Czech Republic operates with the term "foreigners (non-citizens)", not with the term "immigrants". The term "immigrants" cannot be found in legal regulations or public policies of the Czech Republic. Integration policy for foreigners residing legally and in the long term in the Czech Republic usually does not focus on members of the second, third or further generations of naturalized foreigners, because for the time being the need for integration of these persons is not considered urgent by state institutions or the general public.

In the Czech Republic, the concept of interculturality is being developed in particular by the academic circles and experts dealing with international migrations and ethnicity. The general awareness includes fixed terms, such as "multicultural society", "diversity management", "intercultural education", "intercultural competence", "cultural dialogue", etc. However, intercultural opening as a concept, to which policies reflecting the concepts above should lead, is not perceived by the **general public** as something which should deserve an increased and permanent attention. Public interest is usually awakened by targeted campaigns, disappearing after their fading away. A certain feature specific for the intercultural dialogue in the Czech environment is that it is less focusing on foreigners, or immigrants, and more on internal problems among citizens, in particular on coexistence with the Roma minority.

## 2. Selection of Work and Employment Sub-system for Further Analysis

### 2.1. Relevance of the Sub-system for the Integration of Foreigners and Young Migrants

As far as the Czech Republic is concerned, the authors have selected the work and employment social sub-system as the subject of their research since they consider this theme crucial in terms of immigrant integration. Foreigners, whether immigrants or not, are more visible in the labour market and the authors consider their economic emancipation to be a precondition of their successful social integration<sup>5</sup>. Access to the labour market is often conditioned substantially by the cultural openness of all the stakeholders involved in the field of employment.

Young, third-country immigrants in the second generation (younger than 27 years), who are entering the labour market at present, were mostly educated at the Czech elementary schools and from the cultural point of view they are considerably adapted to the Czech environment. School attendance is compulsory in the Czech Republic and knowledge of Czech is a prerequisite for its successful completion. Children of third-country immigrants mostly do not share the most serious integration handicap of their parents, which is the language barrier. According to available (though sporadic) results of empirical surveys, immigrants' children usually rank among good pupils, being interested in further studies. That is why they are rarely among clients of labour offices<sup>6</sup>. **This fact is substantial when existence or absence of Czech public policies in employment focusing on interculturality promotion are evaluated.**

### 2.2. Key Actors and Institutions in the Work and Employment Sub-system

The field of employment is administered by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA), migration policy and foreigners' integration are topics governed by the Ministry of the Interior (MoI). MoLSA forms an employment policy, which is then implemented via labour offices<sup>7</sup>. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic – Section for employment policy and labour market – is responsible by law for management of labour offices. In the Czech Republic, there exist 77 regional labour offices, of which **14 are coordinating bodies**; the total number, including branches and detached offices, amounts to 175.

The field of employment and labour market is governed by legal regulations, which define the degree of openness towards foreigners, or immigrants. Citizens of EU, EES and Switzerland and foreigners with a permanent residence permit have equal access to the labour market as nationals of the Czech Republic, the labour market is thus fully open for them. Nationals of other, "third" countries (except for EU, EES, and Switzerland) with a visa above 90 days or with a long-term stay in the CR have limited access to the labour market pursuant to law<sup>8</sup>. Foreigners from third countries must have a work permit apart from exceptions stipulated by law<sup>9</sup>, which is issued according to the topical situation on the labour market. Liberalization in the field of employment of foreigners from third countries led to the introduction of "green cards", which have been valid since January 2009. The Green Card system integrates residential permits and work permits into one

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<sup>5</sup> Most foreigners migrate to the Czech Republic for employment purposes or to conduct self-employed business activities. They originate from approximately 180 different countries. Most (more than 90% in 2008) can be termed immigrants since they remain in the Czech Republic longer than one year, thus corresponding to the international definition of an immigrant. (Directorate of Alien Police, Ministry of the Interior in: ČSÚ 2009 : 30, calculation Milada Horáková, VÚPSV/RILSA Prague; Horáková 2010, calculation Milada Horáková).

<sup>6</sup> As at 31 December 2009 only 450 third-country job applicants under the age of 25 were registered here.

<sup>7</sup> 435/2004 Coll. ACT dated 13th May 2004 on Employment "Public administration of the Government employment policy in the Czech Republic is carried out by a) the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, b) Labour offices".

<sup>8</sup> 435/2004 Coll. ACT dated 13th May 2004 on Employment. coordinate the employment of workers from abroad in the Czech Republic and from the Czech Republic abroad

<sup>9</sup> 435/2004 Coll. ACT dated 13th May 2004 on Employment.

document. Apart from it, there exist programmes striving to bring qualified workforce to the Czech Republic (project Selection of Qualified Workforce, Blue Cards).

Employment Act, being the basic legal norm governing the sphere of employment, has been fully harmonized with the law of the European Communities. The objective of the state employment policy is to achieve full employment and protection against unemployment. These objectives relate to all groups of nationals of the Czech Republic, including immigrants with a permanent residence in the CR<sup>10</sup>. The Employment Act also includes provisions on equality of treatment<sup>11</sup>.

The concept of foreigner integration has been developed in the Czech Republic since 1998<sup>12</sup>. Governmental bodies, professional as well as academic circles coordinate their activities in the field of integration of long-term, legally-residing foreigners and perform specific projects financed by the Czech government and by the ESF. Regarding integration of foreigners into the labour market powers are delegated to non-governmental organizations, which concentrate mainly on social and work consulting. Since the start of recession they have been participating in voluntary repatriation programmes.

Topical problems of the local and regional scope in the integration of foreigners are the subject of a seminar regularly held by the MoLSA for regional coordinators of foreigner integration and representatives of statutory cities. Cooperation with representatives of the regional administration runs also in the form of ad hoc consulting, in particular with regards to new measures in the field of foreigner integration and issues on development and financing of activities supporting foreigner integration.

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<sup>10</sup> 435/2004 Coll. ACT dated 13th May 2004 on Employment, section 3. Participants in Legal Relations: Section 3

<sup>11</sup> 435/2004 Coll. ACT dated 13th May 2004 on Employment, section 4.

<sup>12</sup> Two strategic documents adopted by the government "Principles of the Concept on Foreigners' Integration at the Territory of the CR" and "Concept of Foreigners' Integration at the Territory of the CR" specify starting points and objectives of the integration policy of the Czech Republic.

### **3. Description and Analysis of Intercultural Opening in the Sub-system**

#### **3.1. Conception of Intercultural Opening in the Czech Republic**

Intercultural opening of the Czech society has not been so far a topic frequented in media, both in public media and professional literature. As a part of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008, the Arts&Theatre Institute (Divadelní ústav) carried out in 2007 specialized study informing the public about the strategy in this area taken by the Czech Republic (Žáková and Debnár 2008). The study evaluates the present situation and points out certain specifics of the national context of interculturality in the Czech Republic. Authors point out the absence of accepted definition of "intercultural dialogue" and low awareness of its positive aspects in the general public:

*"In the Czech milieu, at the present moment, the term intercultural dialogue is predominantly perceived in terms of art categories (e.g. festival) and used as a term with no exact definition. Unfortunately, the Czech society still can be characterized by certain xenophobic sentiment; because of this, it is necessary to constantly support its tendencies toward intercultural tolerance. Having connection with such a fact, the majority of Czech society is not aware of positive factors resulting from a well-functioning intercultural dialogue, of the positive factors for the majority of the population, the minorities and the whole society as such"*

(Žáková - Debnár 2008)

#### **3.2. Current Demand for Intercultural Opening of Institutions Operating in the Sub-system**

Within the state administration, it is especially the labour office staff intermediating employment that come into contact with members of other cultures. Operatively they exchange empirical findings acquired at work with culturally different clients, however, they do not have any systematic programme cultivating intercultural openness of the institution as such. For the time being, there are only very few people coming from other cultures among clients of labour offices. Most of the interviewed labour office staff share the opinion that for now it is unnecessary to work out policies and programmes aiming at support of employment of young immigrants of the first and second generation from third countries. They concur in the opinion that people representing this target group have not caused any problems so far, and that they do not require more attention than other clients. Numerous participants of the research also explicitly emphasized that labour offices provide care, including prevention and consulting, to all their clients regardless their origin.

Among other labour market stakeholders, mainly the staff of HR agencies and employers engaging foreigners are open towards a culturally different clientship. They search for foreigners on the labour market deliberately and have an everyday contact with members of other cultures. But also their representatives do not mention a need for specific policies and programmes for young immigrants from third countries. The probable reason is that the situation in the Czech Republic has not matured yet into a stage which exists in other countries.

#### **3.3. Policies and Programmes Promoting Primarily Higher Intercultural Openness**

The issue of intercultural opening of the Czech society usually livens up during campaigns initiated usually from outside. Continuation of projects depends on the volume of funds available. So far, the Czech public has little reflected potential threats of intercultural conflicts, which may result from an ongoing rise in the global international mobility.

Intercultural openness of labour-market institutions in the Czech Republic is limited to a certain degree by legal regulations. Within projects supporting foreigners' integration, MoLSA assigned an e-learning programme focusing on migration, ethnicity, national and ethnical issues, cultural diversity and multiculturalism. These are intended to serve as an

educational tool for civil service employees, including employees of MoLSA and labour offices. E-learning educational programme went through the trial stage. Unfortunately, there is no feedback, which would evaluate efficiency of this form of training.

The project has not been in practice with a justification that it is too costly. In recent two years the staff from **selected labour offices** located in areas with a higher concentration of foreigners attended a training aimed at improvement of their qualification with regard to their intercultural skills. Trainings were organized by training centres of labour offices and the staff were trained by members of the non-government Organization for Aid to Refugees (OPU). Also selected MoLSA staff took part in the training sessions focusing on improvement of intercultural skills. Within the MoLSA project called "Education of the staff in employment services" there is a running course "Social counselling – work with endangered groups of clients".

Special programmes and trainings focusing on a **suistanable** intercultural education of civil service employees (ministries and labour offices) are not being organized and under the current economic crises not even planned. During the economic crises the labour offices are overloaded and they hardly manage administrative activities prescribed by law (registration of the unemployed, granting of social benefits). In foreseeable future, the number of the labour office staff is planned to be reduced, which will lead to a reduction of the current activities and strengthening of intercultural openness will not be apparently given priority.

### **3.4. Policies and Programmes Supporting Migrants Employability**

In the field of employment a systematic development concerns especially policies facilitating full employment of several specific groups of foreigners (for example asylum seekers). They are usually implemented by non-government organizations, not by labour offices. The most serious steps include proposals for amending laws (with regard to employment of asylum seekers it concerned a reduction of the period after which they may legally enter the labour market, from one year to three months). Other specific measures consist in removing barriers, such as a language barrier and a lack of education and IT literacy. **We did not find a policy which would be explicitly targeted at a support of opening labour market institutions towards culturally different groups of foreigners, especially the young ones from third countries.** Nevertheless, young third-country immigrants may utilise all the available state-policy instruments related to employment provided they are entitled by law to utilise labour office services<sup>13</sup>. (Foreigners who comply with the conditions for employment set forth in this Act).

Especially foreigners, or ethnic minorities (however, not necessarily persons under the age of 27) are in the limelight of various specialised activities and projects. Primarily, they include activities striving for improving competence of such foreigners who want to find a job, i.e. language courses for foreigners, computer literacy trainings or courses focusing on the basic knowledge of the working environment in the CR and culture of the host country. Specific projects may differ – the aspect whether they rather incline to an overall integration of foreigners, or they focus more on integrating foreigners on the labour market. Apart from courses focusing on improvement of foreigners' competence, we can also put such trainings into this category which aim at improvement of relations between employees or cooperation between employers and job applicants with migrant background or which provide another form of support to foreigners (e.g. they improve foreigners' knowledge related to the Czech labour market, their insight in the Czech legal system, etc.).

Also, other integrated instruments for foreigners' integration or support of marginalized groups are important: social work, legal advice, pedagogical and psychological consulting, and educational programmes. Although these fields are not directly related to

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<sup>13</sup> Employment Act no. 435/2004 Coll., as amended.

employment of foreigners, they may affect young migrants' chances to find a job on the market indirectly. Among activities that fall into these additional systems and may improve migrant's employability (and thus also increase cultural openness of the employment sphere) we may put professional advisory, assistance when arranging necessary documents, intermediation of a contact with an employer (e.g. in case of an insufficient command of language or as an "checking contact" enabling to prove a potential discrimination practice of an employer), training activities, etc.

Moreover, a significant part is played by activities and projects which do not focus on foreigners directly. This involves projects which deal with the majority (projects designed for the public, projects focusing on employers, projects focusing on the state administration) or pilot projects the purpose of which is a conceptual change in the system for employing foreigners.

Although all the said types of specialized activities and projects go beyond the scope of the concept of "cultural opening of institutions", as it is understood under this research project (where primarily "mainstream" institutions are monitored), they play, nevertheless, a positive role in increasing the cultural opening of employment services as a whole (which must be understood as a set of activities carried out by mainstream institutions as well as activities and projects which are specialized and directly designed for persons falling into the monitored target group, or, on the contrary, focusing on the majority society or its institutions). Further in the text, primarily the "cultural opening of institutions" is being systematically analysed, nevertheless, in the next chapter on good practices attention is also paid, due to the absence of activities by the "mainstream" institutions, to specific activities focusing directly on the target group. Nowadays, they increase cultural opening in the employment sphere in the Czech Republic definitely more than the "mainstream" institution do (perceived rather negatively in this respect).

### **3.5. Examples of Policies and Projects Supporting Migrants Employability or Promoting Higher Intercultural Openness**

The Employment Act no. 435/2004 Coll., as amended, defines the primary target of the state employment policy to consist in achieving full employment and protection against unemployment. Young migrants from third countries, to whom this law applies (persons with permanent residence), may utilise all the tools which state, regional as well as local employment policies offer. For the young third-country job candidates and applicants the offer includes especially graduate and assistant jobs and social-purpose jobs, consulting, re-training and targeted programmes dealing with employment. Apart from acquiring a new qualification and qualification improvement, the re-training also includes a possibility for extending or deepening the current skills, including their maintenance or renewal, as well as acquiring qualification for a natural person who has not acquired any qualification yet, in order to find a job.

For immigrants labour offices organize a specific form of re-training, that is to say, Czech language courses for foreigners. Despite they are free, they do not meet a big response by migrants<sup>14</sup>. Maybe, it is only a question of time when foreigners will show higher interest in this form of re-training. In 2007, after attending this course, 64 % of foreigners-job applicants found a job. However, young third-country foreigners under the age of 25 seek jobs via labour offices only exceptionally<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> Interest in this type of re-training in 2006-2008 was shown by less than 2 % of the total number of citizens registered at labour offices (including citizens from the Slovak Republic, who do not have almost any language barrier).

<sup>15</sup> The total number of job applicants from third countries as at 30 June 2008 amounted to the 3,303 people in total, of that number 181 were under the age of 25. As at 30 April 2009, labour offices have registered 3,987 job applicants from third countries, 368 of them were younger than 25 years; the economic recession did not affect this number markedly, probably because of the fact that jobs were lost in particular by third-country foreigners with a short-term employment, who, by law, were not allowed to seek job via labour offices and ask for unemployment benefits.

### 3.5.1. Operational Programme Human Resources and Employment (OP HRE)

The Operational Programme human Resources and Employment (OP HRE), the principal aim of which is to contribute to the increase in the overall employment in the Czech Republic, has five priorities<sup>16</sup> which can also apply to the group of young third-country immigrants who are the subject of our research.

- 1) **Adaptability**, aiming at the prevention of unemployment via supporting employers and company investments into the human resources (to increase professional knowledge, qualification and competence), modern management and development of specific services in the employment field (adaptation of employees with regard to the structural changes in companies and sectors).
- 2) **Active labour-market policies** aiming at improved access to employment and prevention of unemployment via strengthening integration of people in danger of social exclusion or the already socially excluded people; increase in the institutional capacity, quality, efficiency and transparency of the public administration and public services; intensification of international cooperation.
- 3) **Social integration and equal opportunities**. A special attention is paid to members of Roma communities, immigrants and other groups from different cultural background. This includes four areas of support:
  - social integration support;
  - social integration support for Roma communities;
  - labour-market integration of socially excluded groups;
  - equal opportunities for women and men on the labour market and work-life balance.
- 4) **Public administration and public services** – they aim at increasing the capacity, quality, efficiency and transparency of the public administration and public services (therefore also of labour offices).
- 5) **International cooperation** – in terms of human resources the aim is to implement projects funded from the ESF more efficiently.

#### Project “Support” - project running under the Priority Axis 3 of the OP HRE<sup>17</sup>

The project “**SUPPORT** of employment in the socially excluded areas within the Most district” was launched on 1 September 2009 in the region known due to numerous cases of Roma social exclusion. The project is planned to last 35 months. Within the project, the focus is not only on Roma people but **generally on all citizens of the given areas suffering from social exclusion and stigmatization**. Without an integrated intervention directly in the affected areas the given situation on the labour market cannot be changed. The project deals with the problem of unemployment **as a social and economic problem, not as an ethnic problem**, especially with regard to the impossibility to determined from the statistics who is and who is not Roma (Authors’ comment: or difficulty to find out who is an immigrant). Culture and lifestyle of Roma people will be taken into consideration when adopting a **culturally sensitive approach at provision of services**.

Unemployment and social exclusion mutually interact both ways and are accompanied with a physical as well as spatial exclusion. The main objective of the project is to provide job applicants and candidates who live in the socially and culturally impaired environment within the socially excluded areas with a possibility to integrate themselves on the job market via a targeted use of set of consulting services, motivation, re-training

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<sup>16</sup> <http://www.strukturalni-fondy.cz/oplzz>.

<sup>17</sup> Following information is based on internal material provided by the Labour office in the city of Most.

followed by practice, work assistance and support of job creation. Moreover, the project aims at strengthening cooperation with local NGOs in order to streamline AEP instruments at the development of competence and employment of socially excluded persons and increase local awareness of the necessity to apply specific approaches at integrating socially excluded people into the labour market, **push for "culturally sensitive" provision of services.**

The project has been divided into nine key activities: 1) project management and monitoring, 2) addressing, selecting and categorizing of participants, 3) individual and group consulting, 4) motivation and activation, 5) re-training and practice, 6) job intermediation, 7) accompanying measures, 8) workshops with local NGOs, 9) final conference on the project.

Within the project, target groups will be addressed directly in locations suffering from huge unemployment and social exclusion of a certain part of the population. Individual and group consulting, motivation and activation of clients, re-training and practice directly in companies will be carried out. A significant part of the project includes a service of **work assistance**, which is being utilised already at negotiating a job for the job candidate with employers, including accompanying clients to job interviews. For job candidates **subsidized jobs** will be intermediated. Work assistance in the new job will last for several weeks and will be applied also prior to the end of the work support via wage contributions with the primary aim to keep the employee on the labour market. Selection of profiles of labour office clients living in socially excluded areas **will not be based on ethnic origin but on the level of their social exclusion defined by "distance from the labour market"**.

Within the project **the target groups** have been defined in an innovative way: 1) the unemployed (those who seek a job or work occasionally), 2) inactive (the de-motivated, not seeking a job) and 3) **perspective (persons under the age of 24)**. This classification will not be made by labour offices but by a third entity – service provider – so that clients can be more open than at the state office that is authorized to exclude them from the register due to their lack of cooperation at job seeking.

Because of a close link of the project activities to the local activities in specific excluded locations and with regard to specific attributes of the Most district, the project is applied at the district level. Selection of job applicants will be carried out under the control of the supplier, in a transparent and non-discriminating way in the presence of labour office staff and while observing principles of equal treatment of men and women. Individual interest of potential participants in joining the project will be respected.

The supplier will conclude an **agreement on participation in the project** with each selected participant, which will include participant's consent with joining the project. An official from the Labour Office in Most (labour-market expert) will closely cooperate with representatives of the supplier at the selection and allocation of selected participants for subsidized or non-subsidized job positions. A re-training expert from the labour office will provide the supplier with an updated summary of the local labour-market demands (demanded professions, required qualification, skills).

Outsourcing of services in this part of the project implementation but also in the future is necessary for labour offices. Close cooperation and linkage of labour office experts with members of non-profit non-government organizations established in the given locations is a new element when solving the problems of unemployment of certain specific and endangered groups of population. Each of the entities is experienced in work with socially excluded people at a different level and each of them focuses on different specific aspects of social exclusion and the related labour-market position.

Thanks to the primary activities of the project focusing on the target groups (consulting, motivation, activation, re-training, practice, work assistance and supported employment) qualification and individual conditions of the disadvantaged persons will be improved, increasing thus their chance to assert themselves on the labour market even after the end of the project implementation.

A special attention will be paid to the **motivation and activation of perspective persons under the age of 24**. Particularly, their functional literacy will be strengthened. Visits to the Information and Counselling Centre at the Labour Office in Most will enable them to finish the elementary school, learn a trade or to continue their studies at some of the secondary schools. Experts will explain advantages of further education to young people and compare their potential perspectives with the current conditions, their families live in.

Cooperation among the labour office, consulting institutions and non-profit organizations will continue even after the end of the project and other clients of labour offices showing signs of social exclusion will have a possibility to be supported in the future via a set of services resulting in their employment.

### 3.5.2. Information and Counselling Centres at labour offices (IPS)

An Informational and Counselling Centre for job selection is located at each labour office. Consultants and psychologists working in the IPS examine personal and professional qualifications of job candidates and applicants, especially of the minor who want to select their preparation for the future job and for the selection of an adequate job. All the services provided by the labour office are free of charge and **can be utilised also by young migrants under the age of 27**, if they fall into the jurisdiction of the Employment Act).

Information and Counselling Centre provides following services<sup>18</sup>:

- provides topical information about a network of secondary schools and universities, fields of study and apprenticeship in the region and in the whole CR, conditions and process of the entrance examination, demands and requirements for specific occupations, possibilities for finding a job for graduates, the labour-market situation in the region and in the whole CR and re-training opportunities;
- provides services for elementary school pupils with specific educational needs, students and graduates, parents, educational institutions and other interested parties;
- through their computer programme, IPS enables searching for a specific field of study or apprenticeship in the entire CR, including the information on extension studies, higher specialised studies (after the secondary school graduation) and studies at universities;
- offers short informative video-films to be watched there, documenting in an illustrative and verbal manner the basic work activities of specific jobs, including examples showing job-specific environment;
- provides detailed descriptions of specific professions, comprising of a list of work activities, working tools applied, description of the working environment;
- has a computer programme at their disposal for self-testing of professional interests in relation to occupation and respective educational requirements;
- carries out individual and group consulting for pupils from elementary schools and special-need elementary schools, school graduates and other interested parties from general public related to the job selection and practical employability;
- organizes discussions with pupils from basic schools concerning the first job selection, for future secondary-school graduates the topics cover entering a job, labour market, information about activities of the labour office and possibilities of further studies and

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<sup>18</sup> <http://portal.mpsv.cz/sz/obcane/poradstrediska>.

- in autumn IPS organizes together with schools an event called "Exchange of Schools", the purpose of which is to gather as much information as possible from secondary schools, secondary apprenticeship schools and other educational institutions within the region.

As being part of the labour office, IPS cooperates with all labour office departments, especially with the Re-training and Labour-Market Analysis departments and provides all the available information from these areas: information on re-training opportunities, topical list of new job vacancies, re-training opportunities, nation-wide summary of occupations, occupation cards, information leaflets on specific occupations, information brochures of schools.<sup>19</sup>

### 3.5.3. The project Ethnic Friendly Employer brand

Since 2007 the non-government organization IQ Roma Servis (civic association), operating in Brno and other municipalities within the South-Moravian Region<sup>20</sup>, grants to employers who acknowledge principles of equal treatment and in their practice they do not discriminate job candidates and their staff (not only) because of their ethnic origin and nationality, the *Ethnic Friendly Employer* brand.<sup>21</sup>

The clients of the organization and other people of (not only) Roma origin thus receive a clear signal that they should not give up looking for a job due to a rejection on the grounds of their origin, there are employers here who will give them an opportunity equal to that one given to the others.<sup>22</sup> Another part of the project is to make such employers visible who acknowledge equal treatment principles and observe them. Support of these positive examples should further lead to the extension of observing this principle up to the normal standard of behaviour of an employer on the labour market.<sup>23</sup>

A significant effect of promotion in media and a gradual spread of awareness of this brand is also an increase in awareness of issues related to equal opportunities and discrimination on the grounds of ethnic origin and also in other spheres of social life and removal of negative stereotypes and prejudices connected with the ethnically different population.<sup>24</sup>

The project of the brand *Ethnic Friendly Employer* contributes primarily to cultural opening of the labour market itself. Although the activity is not implemented directly by an institution operating in the field of employment services and does not represent a direct form of support at the job seeking, it is complementary to activities striving for an improvement of cultural opening of employment services. In consequence it is also this activity that contributes to an improved openness towards people representing a target group looking for a job.

Among labour offices we have found only five labour offices so far that are holders of the Ethnic Friendly brand (Brno-City, Blansko, Kroměříž, Vyškov and Zlín). At these offices the pilot project was carried out. Based on the information acquired through a questionnaire, these labour offices have not started yet to organize a continuous training on intercultural skills, nor do they employ immigrants as intermediaries at labour offices. For the time being, it is due to the lack of manifested interest by immigrants themselves and a lack of their professional qualification.

<sup>19</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.ethnic-friendly.eu/view.php?nazevclanku=kontakt&cislocclanku=2007080009>.

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.iqrs.cz/search.php?rsvelikost=sab&rstext=all-phpRS-all&rstema=194>.

<sup>22</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.ethnic-friendly.eu/view.php?nazevclanku=znacka-ethnic-friendly-zamestnavatel&cislocclanku=2007080005>.

<sup>24</sup> Ibidem.

#### 3.5.4. Projects financed as part of the implementation of the Foreigner Integration Policy in 2008.

The implementation of the Foreigner Integration Policy (hereinafter Policy) is carried out each year based on the approved Government Decision<sup>25</sup>. Projects submitted by different departments and non-government organizations are financed from the state budget, or from the ESF. The Policy for 2008 approved and funded by the Czech government also includes projects directly aiming at employment of migrants. Although the Policy does not contain special projects designed for young migrants under the age of 27 at their integration on the labour market, they may utilise all the existing opportunities.

The foreigner integration policy in 2008 reflects the fact that so-far the biggest year-to-year increase in immigration occurred in the CR. This immigration was caused by economic incentives in particular<sup>26</sup>. As a consequence of the economic crisis many foreigners arrived in a difficult situation. In Plzeň the MoI initiated an **emergency project**, implemented by the municipality of this city, "Integration of foreigners at the level of administration – solving issues of people migrating for work to Plzeň". Reason was a growing tension between Plzeň inhabitants and work migrants. The project can be also applied in other towns but in Plzeň it underwent a pilot test. The project included monitoring of the situation, research survey, intensification in control activities (employment agencies, employers, hostels), intervention consulting, educational activities both for foreigners (Czech language courses for foreigners and educational workshops for foreigners), and for the majority (educational workshops for HR staff, officials and potential employers).

In 2008 the MoLSA initiated projects with the following focus: 1) support of activities aiming at deepening the Czech language command and activities focusing on facilitation of access to the labour market; 2) support of activities aiming at the support of vulnerable groups of immigrants, women in particular; 3) support of activities for provision of social, legal and psychological advice and assistance for foreigners; 4) support of relation development among foreigners and members of the majority society;

The amendment to the Employment Act no. 382/2008 Coll., which took effect on 1.1.2009, simplifies administrative tasks related to the permit procedure for foreigner employment in the Czech Republic and as a whole makes conditions for their employment more liberal. Labour office may repeatedly extend the work permit up to two years, if the labour-market situation does not prevent from it; the employer need not ask for a permit to employ foreigners; foreigners may ask for the green card issue (see below).

Since 01.01. 2009 the amendment to the Act no. 326/199 Coll., on the stay of foreigners enables to utilise a "protection period". In case of a job lost without a foreigner's fault and prior to the expiry of the work permit, the foreigner is allowed to look for a new job for 60 days, without his/her residence permit becoming invalid.

Since 2004 MoLSA has been operating **web sites** <http://www.cizinci.cz>, the contents of which is designed for officials from the civil and public administration, non-government organizations, academic circles as well as general public. These sites inform public about topical news and important events related to migration.

The portal of the public administration of the Czech republic <http://portal.gov.cz> called "**Cizinec**" (**Foreigner**) contains important information for foreigners, for example practical information about the Czech language test, which is a prerequisite for granting a permanent residence in the CR;

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<sup>25</sup> In 2008 the Policy was implemented based on the Government Decision no. 259 of 17 March 2008. Following text covers the most relevant information from this document with regard to investigated topic.

<sup>26</sup>At the end of June 2009 the number of foreigners with a residence permit amounted to 443k, the total employment rate of foreigners 335k. Foreigners' ratio to the population is 4.2 %, to the labour force in the CR 5.9 %.

The MoLSA portal <http://www.mpsv.cz> contains topical information on the foreigner employment, including a possibility to search for a job in the CR within the green card programme.

MoLSA has issued the updated Information for foreigners with a permanent residence in the CR" informing foreigners about their fundamental rights and duties and an updated directory of non-profit organizations providing consultancy for foreigners, divided into sections by region.

Moreover, MoLSA has published leaflets describing "Foreigners' employment in the Czech Republic " in the Ukrainian language within the "Assistance System for Employment of Ukrainian citizens in the Czech Republic". These leaflets were distributed among potential migrants in Ukraine. They inform about conditions for a legal work in the CR and are intended to work as a preventive measure against illegal employment of foreigners (Note: a similar brochure was published already in 2001 in English, Ukrainian, Russian, Vietnamese and Polish and was financed from funds for the implementation of foreigner integration policy in the CR).

**The labour office staff who come into contact with foreigners improve their competence in the training course "Communicative skills for working with a client of the labour office" organized by educational centres of the labour offices. Seminars for improving intercultural skills were also attended by selected MoLSA staff. Within the MoLSA project "Education of staff in employment services" there is a running course "Social counselling – work with endangered groups of clients". These projects are financed from funds for the implementation of foreigner integration policy in the CR.**

**Examples of projects supported from the state budget within the implementation of the foreigner integration policy in years 2007-2009**

**Organisation:** Society of Citizens Assisting Migrants (SOZE)

**Project:** Working together

The aim of the developmental partnership of SOZE and OPU organizations consists in the promotion and spread of knowledge gathered during the implementation of projects called Work in Czech and Work in Prague among general public, member of government and non-government institutions. Also, the project strives to have an influence on policy-makers, promoting their experience of practical obstacles as well as long-term, theoretical and analytical work in the foreigner-related sphere. Trainings organized by them are attended by members of the local governments, labour offices, health insurance companies and other NGOs. During the entire implementation of the project, a CD-ROM will be created, containing all the information from lectures and distributed free of charge.

**Organisation:** Society of Citizens Assisting Migrants (SOZE)

**Project:** Lighthouse (Maják)

The project aims at proving comprehensive assistance services for foreigners and asylum-seekers living in the Olomouc region at their coming on the labour market. The aim of the project is to secure equal opportunities in access to education, employment and other social and work assertion of foreigners with a permanent residence and asylum seekers from third countries who live in the Olomouc region and who are registered among job applicants at labour offices within this region (Czech language courses, PC courses, Work integration trainings, motivational courses, individual consulting, etc.).

**Organisation:** The Bridge to Human Rights (Most pro lidská práva)

**Project:** Immigration Friendly

The aim is to draw up a methodology for social adaptation courses, training of lecturers and verification of the pilot version of courses in practice for migrants-newcomers. The project is to check and appreciate the employers of foreigners who provide non-discriminating approach towards employees and at the same time strive to support the integration process of the newcomers among work migrants.

**Organisation:** Centre for Integration of Foreigners (*Centrum pro integraci cizinců*)

**Project:** Support of awareness of employers and foreigners for an improved mutual interaction, for better assertion and utilisation of foreigners on the labour market

The project focuses on improving awareness of potential employers and foreigners in terms of employment via presentation for employers with clear information on legislative aspects in the foreigner employment in the CR, highlighting potential benefits resulting from employing foreigners. A lecture and a round-table discussion will be held for company representatives, with a space for communicating needs and experience. Within the project leaflets for foreigners will be created with clear and well-arranged topics from law and employer duties, types of employment contracts, mandatory and optional sections, including language versions.

**Organisation:** JILORO civic association (*Občanské sdružení JILORO*)

**Project:** Facilitated access to the labour market for foreigners in Ralsko

The project implementing body is the civic association JILORO. As part of the project Czech language courses will be carried out extended by logopaedics for foreigners living in Ralsko and its surrounding, then PC-literacy courses and trainings on social and cultural orientation in the society. The project target group includes foreigners with a permanent or long-term residence and families of foreigners with children.

**Organisation:** META civic association - Counselling and Information Centre for Young Migrants (*META o.s. - poradenské a informační centrum pro mladé migranty*)

**Project:** Support of foreigners during their entering the labour market via Czech language course, HR- and legal-knowledge minimum and professional social counselling

The project offers for foreigners professional social counselling with a focus on education and facilitated access to the labour market, Czech language course for advanced learners (52 hours allocated) especially designed for foreigners planning to enter the labour market and complemented by a training on the work and legal knowledge (15 hours allocated).

**Organisation:** Diocesan Charity České Budějovice (*Diecézní charita České Budějovice*)

**Project:** Chance on the Czech labour market II

The project is implemented by Diecézní charita České Budějovice. The basic line of the project is to assist foreigners to acquire and learn skills and knowledge focusing on facilitation of the entry to the labour market via targeted activities (work on PC, preparation of a professional structured CV, covering letter, preparation for a job interview, deepening of the Czech language command, etc.).

Source: Government of the Czech Republic (2009), [www.cizinci.cz](http://www.cizinci.cz), selection of projects authors.

### 3.5.5. Policies of Hiring Qualified Labour in the CR Project "Selection of Qualified Foreign Workers"

In the Czech Republic, the first pilot project for attracting qualified labour was adopted in 2003. An impulse for implementation of the pilot project was a pessimistic demographic prediction of labour force shortages over 400 000 around 2030, which could result in shortages of pension, health and social funds. A conviction that qualified labour will generate more fiscal resources led to a policy of recruitment of qualified labour from the third countries. On 20 October 2008 the Government of the Czech Republic approved the continuation of the project "Selection of Qualified Foreign Workers". The project is implemented by the Czech Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in cooperation with the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Czech Ministry of Interior.

#### Details of Project Selection of Qualified Foreign Workers

The project is implemented in accordance with the Resolutions of the Government of the Czech Republic No 975 dated 26 September 2001, No 720 dated 10 July 2002, No 340 dated 14 April 2004, No 394 dated 6 April 2005, No 1374 dated 26 October 2005, No 431 dated 19 April 2006, No 538 dated 23 May 2007, and No 1316 dated 20 October 2008.

The aim of project was to attract and stabilize professionals from third countries with their families. Applicants must be as a minimum secondary school graduates. Applicants must find legal employment in the CR on their own. Applicants must obtain at least 25 points in the computerized selection procedure reflecting various criteria (qualification, practice, language skills, family situation, etc.). Foreign experts contribute by net payments into the social insurance system.

Motivation: Selected qualified workers are given the opportunity to apply for permanent residence within a shorter period, after one and a half year (highly qualified workers category) or two and a half years (standard category of qualified workers) of uninterrupted stay and work (as compared to the current standard period of 5 years). Starting from 1 July 2007, the project includes highly qualified workers category of participants with university level education who are working on positions requiring university level education and corresponding to their qualification (education or practice).

Together with project participants, their family members will also be allowed to settle in the Czech Republic and to obtain permanent residence there under identical conditions.

Applicants may use the [www.praceprocizince.cz](http://www.praceprocizince.cz) web site to search for an employment, where Czech employers advertise vacancies.

Participants who in the first year of the project lose their job through no fault of their own are entitled to a 45 day grace period during which they can search new job and do not lose their visa and their residence permit is not revoked. The above mentioned grace period should serve as time during which participants search for another job in the CR. In the course of following years of the project the participants are given the grace period also if they lose their job for other reasons. Since January 2009 all foreigners staying longer than 1 year are entitled to a 60 day grace period for searching a job.

The project is open for citizens of: Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Burma, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Cambodia, Canada, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Georgia, Guatemala, Honduras, Chile, India, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Macedonia (FYROM), Malaya, Mexico, Moldova Montenegro, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Republic of South Africa, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Salvador, Serbia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Tadjikistan, Thailand, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan; graduates of Czech universities coming from all countries (except those who studied in the CR as part of development assistance projects provided to their home country), who graduated in 1995 or later; graduates of Czech secondary schools from all countries, who finished their studies and passed the school leaving exam in 2000 or later. See Internet <http://mpsv.cz>.

Total 1 372 applicants were registered since start of the project in 2003 till 1 April 2009 (63 % men, 37 % women); 50 % applicants, 25 % their husbands or wives, and 25 % children. Most applicants are from Ukraine (362), Russian Federation (203), Bulgaria (176) and Belarus (142) and applicants graduated in the CR holding different state citizenship (105) as at 31 December 2008. Successful project participants are differing widely by type of profession: 25 % IT, 11 % administrative, 10 % technical staff, 8 % scientific specialists, 4 % managers, 4 % health/medicine services, 2 % artistic, and 36 % other professionals. Relatively low efficiency of the project has been caused above all by a lack of attractive vacancies for qualified foreign labour in the CR labour market and rather complicated administrative procedure for hiring foreigners who need work permit.

Due to discrepancies between policies guiding hiring qualified labour and labour market demand, and due to problems caused with import of cheap labour from third countries by unauthorized personnel agencies, the programme of green cards has been designed with an emphasis on speedy response to labour market demands. Amendment to the Employment Act, coming into force on 1 January 2009 (No. 435/2004 Coll.) introduced an institute of green cards. Main target was transparency, simplification and speeding up of the recruitment procedure of third country nationals, and more flexible and appropriate response to labour market demands.

## **Green Cards Programme**

The amendments to the Law 326/1999 on Stay of Foreigners in the CR Territory and Law 435/2004 Coll. on Employment came into the force on 1 January 2009. The amendment introduces green card programme, designed both by MoLSA and MoI. The green cards programme applies for citizens of the following countries: Australia, Montenegro, Croatia, Japan, Canada, South Korea, New Zealand, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, United States of America, Serbia and Ukraine. Other non-EU citizens need work permit.

The green card integrates in one document a permit for long-term residence for employment purposes in the CR under special circumstances (both permission to stay and work); green card is issued for a specific work. The administrative procedure for issuing green card is running abroad and should be shorter than that for issuing a classic work permit (around two months). A successful applicant arrives already with valid documents. The applicants need no mediator (as employment agency) to find an employment in the CR. Every foreigner from countries listed above can search a job himself. The CR employers can publish vacancies on the MoLSA website if he is interested to gain rapidly a foreigner for longer working period. An applicant can contact his potential employer before he enters into the procedure; he/she send his/her CV and education and skills certificate. An applicant pays CZK 1000 (about EUR 35). After 2 months he/she should be informed through embassy in home country about the result. In the case of success he can obtain visa over 90 days for the purpose of taking over the green card. Then he/she can start his/her job. Information technologies can simplify, speed up and make transparent mediation of work for foreigners.

Green Cards Program supports not only an import of highly qualified labour, but also that of less qualified one demanded by the Czech economy. The introduction of green cards system was influenced by the current economic crisis. Since 1 January 2009 till the end of April 2009 total 464 work places were offered from 117 employees into the system of green cards. There are 3 categories:

A-category of workers with college (university level) of education: 91 work places offered by 47 employers.

B-category – for workers with vocational training (as a minimum level of education accepted) 240 work places offered by 51 employers.

C-category – for others workers – 133 work places offered by 19 employers.

In total 48 foreigners applied till the end of April 2008. Only **two** green cards were issued, others are still being processed. The system reacts to an economic crisis probably more than was expected. Moreover there are not experiences nor of employees nor of foreigners yet with that system. The future will show more.

Compared to Estonian program of hiring qualified labour, the Green card scheme is not targeting only high qualified professionals. The applicants are not selected according to wage level. The level of wages is not important only a minimal wage must be respected. The Czech scheme is opened for limited scale of countries, due to security reasons. Both Estonian and Czech schemes aim at simplifying administrative procedures and speeding up of hiring demanded labour. Czech scheme respects more labour market demand, Estonian wage level of qualified workers. Czech scheme respects more equal conditions for domestic and foreign workers. On the contrary, the Estonian system discriminates positively foreigners (from the wage point of view) and there is a risk of tensions between local people and foreigners.

## **Employment Agencies**

In 2004 an amendment to Act 435/ 2004 Coll. on Employment introduced Employment agencies. Employment agencies are engaged in the direct placement into jobs, serve as advisory and information centres and "lend" their employees to other employers. The new Employment Act should ensure that a person who is an employee of an employment

agency and works for another firm has the same employment conditions as other employees of the relevant firm (working hours, wage etc.). A person who is employed by an agency and works for another company must be guaranteed the same conditions as other employees of the relevant company (working hours, wage etc.). Brokering of employment by employment agencies is regulated by Act 435/2004 Coll. (Chapter IV).

### **Work Permits Policy**

Work permit is not required from teachers, academics at universities, employees of universities attending scientific events, pupils or **students up to 26 years of age**, who pursues in the Czech Republic a constant educational or scientific activity as a pedagogue or academic staff at a university or as a scientific, research or development specialist in a public research institution or other research organization under a special legislation. Act No. 341/2005 Coll., On Public Research Institutions.

Work permit regardless of the situation on the labour market for foreigners who will be employed for a limited period for the purpose of improving skills and qualification in the selected job (trainees), but only for a period of maximally one year. This period can be prolonged, but as a maximum only for the period necessary to obtain professional qualification in accordance with regulations valid in the CR; up to 26 years of age performing occasional and time-limited works within exchange between schools or youth programs, in which the CR participates.

## **4. Information Gathered from a Survey among Labour Offices, Two Focus Groups and the First Set of Interviews**

### **4.1. Methods**

In order to research intercultural opening of labour market and employment institutions we used various methods. We organized focus group discussions with employees of labour offices, employees of non-governmental organizations working with immigrants and with people representing academic sphere<sup>27</sup>; focus group discussions with young immigrants<sup>28</sup>. In addition, we carried out individual discussions with informal representatives of the Vietnamese community (3 interviews), the Ukrainian community (1 interview) and one interview with a migrant originally from Peru. We also contacted President of the Association of Personnel Service Providers (hereinafter the "Association") with the purpose to learn how work agencies intermediating foreign workforce for employers view the situation.

The last applied research method was an electronic questionnaire distributed via the MoLSA to all 77 labour offices in the Czech Republic. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs decided for the four key questions of the research to be answered in writing by labour offices. The reason why in-depth interview could not be performed with a higher number of labour office professionals from practise was the overload of the labour office staff in the time of economic recession and growing unemployment. For us this had an indisputable advantage in higher representativeness of answers by representatives of the institution, which in the focus of our research. On the contrary, disadvantageous was a rather flat view of the examined problem. This disadvantage was partially compensated by focus group discussions and face-to-face interviews.

### **4.2. Diversity and Intercultural Trainings of the Staff**

Employers are banned by law to differentiate job applicants based on ethnicity. This restriction also concerns employment agencies and labour offices.

Some employment agencies search for labour-force primarily inside a certain ethnical community. Representatives of ethnical or cultural minorities can be found more often among employees of such agencies. According to the words of the president of the Association of Personal Service Providers foreigners are hired rather by small agencies that specialize on a particular ethnic community. In his opinion, this approach, however, narrows their clientele and these agencies cannot thus build a strong position and their survival on the market is highly insecure. Some agencies cope with this problem by circumventing the law and treating their clients unexpectedly. Well-established agencies cannot dare such actions. In the opinion of the president of the Association, renowned agencies are strongly aware of significance of intercultural opening (some employers require from these agencies to recruit a culturally diversified labour force and the agencies make efforts to address this demand). This awareness, however, does not necessarily imply that the agency itself will hire employees with a culturally different background. The recruitment follows employer's needs primarily.

The results of the survey in labour offices show that immigrants from third countries are rarely employed by labour offices. On the one hand, they have not applied to get a job in a selection procedure and on the other, there are no people, in opinion of some labour office staff, to choose from. Only once it was mentioned that immigrants are employed

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<sup>27</sup> List of participants: Ludmila Bobysudová (Organizace pro pomoc uprchlíkům - Organization for Aid to Refugees), Zuzana Čápková (Organizace pro pomoc uprchlíkům - Organization for Aid to Refugees), Ladislav Hazuka (Labour Office Prague), Jarmila Klejzarová (Labour Office Jihlava), Michala Musilová (Centrum pro integraci cizinců o.s. - Centre for integration of foreigners), Lenka Nosková (InBit ČR), Miroslava Patočková (Labour Office Jihlava), Tereza Pojarová (Etnologický ústav AV ČR - Ethnological Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic), Věra Prokopová (Labour Office Prague), Jana Slavíková (student) a Zdeňek Uherek (Etnologický ústav AV ČR - Ethnological Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic).

<sup>28</sup> Three young migrants participated in this discussion (2 from Chechnya, 1 from Ukraine).

by the labour office as intermediaries in order to ensure heterogeneity in the makeup of labour office staff (to understand problems of various handicapped groups) and in one case one person was considered to be hired but at the end it did not occur. When someone applies for a job to work in the labour office, nobody examines if the person is, or is not a naturalized immigrant of the second or third generation. Immigrants got mostly assimilated and if they are not visually different (Romanians, Asians, Africans, etc.), no one can tell their origin. Employment of visibly different immigrants was not mentioned, therefore we deduce that such persons do not work in labour offices in the Czech Republic. The interviewed immigrants did not meet them in the labour offices, and neither members of non-profit organizations nor labour office staff asked in the focus group discussions mentioned any.

Moreover, the labour office research showed that out of the total number of 70 offices, from which we received responses, the staff of 32 labour offices (45 %) had been acquainted with interculturality issues to a greater or lesser extent. Most frequently, they attended training sessions focused on multiculturalism or interculturality (communication, dialogue, conflict-solving, etc.). Mostly these were one-time events.

The focus group discussions with representatives of organizations showed that specialised trainings had related predominantly to the Roma community, or more general trainings covered multicultural issues generally. Non-profit organizations organized courses in this field for the state administration and administration generally (e.g. for municipalities – it was then a decision of the given municipality which offices and which staff should take part in). However, activities in this field are not quite well organized and are not embedded in particular policies. According to the president of the Association, one-time trainings cannot change the situation sufficiently.

*"One-day training will certainly resolve nothing. Because they [lecturers] get prepared and tell them how to do it and people [staff] may become aware of it. But it is necessary to alter these people totally and keep preparing them in the long run."*

Special needs of the target group should be resolved by NGOs, in the opinion of the labour office staff who attended the focus group discussion. For all their clients labour offices offer a targeted, individual assistance, prescribed by law, but clients must be approached equally, without any group of people being preferred. On the contrary, NGOs may deal with employment problems of specific groups of foreigners (e.g. asylum seekers) through specifically targeted projects. Anyway, it is the labour office that must, as prescribed by law, intermediate employment to beneficiaries and employers must report their vacant job positions to this office, where then these can be offered to job applicants, such as young immigrants from third countries. However, if young immigrants from third countries do not seek job via them, labour offices cannot help them. Most foreigners consider a visit to the labour office highly stressful, as one of young-immigrant respondents of our survey noted. Therefore young immigrants do not seek job via labour offices, they rather utilise informal social contacts.

**According to the interviewed immigrants** incorporation of immigrants into the activities of labour offices would be useful: *"I think it would be definitely helpful because they, as being foreigners themselves, would know how to help. And they may also know what kind of programmes or which job to offer."* Nevertheless, another respondent is of the opinion that in reality it would be very difficult to intermediate a contact between the labour office and immigrants via an intermediary from their communities.

*"Such person must be qualified very well. Not only with regard to knowledge, but also languages and moreover, with some knowledge of the community. But these people are very different and also these communities are different. It means, he should really be a very, very well-educated expert who is well versed in the topic. I think it may work in Prague, but even there are so many people there who would need him, and if*

*he is supposed to deal with all the non-standard situations, he would be very busy. So, there is a way. But prior to that, the capacity of the labour office should be probably resolved."*

The situation, according to one of the respondents, may be complicated by the fact that a person having influence in an ethnic immigrant community does not have to always act in favour of the ethnic community (if the primary aim of the person is his own enrichment). In the opinion of another respondent, whose parents came from Vietnam, trust of the community members towards employment agencies increases when it also employs members of the same ethnical minority. It may also be a risk, because there exist situations when a person from the community intermediating employment treats clients dishonestly. Dishonest behaviour by the Vietnamese themselves emerges, according to words of one respondent, just by the newcomers, whom those who have been living here longer therefore do not trust. The ethnic group of the Vietnamese is rather heterogeneous and therefore the fact itself that a certain employment agency engages a person representing this ethnic minority may not necessarily increase trust of the other towards this agency.

#### **4.3. Intercultural Contents in the Sub-system: Problems and Specific Agendas Related to Migrant Employment**

**Experience from seeking a job should be divided into those that foreigners undergo, those that ethnic minority members undergo (e.g. immigrants' descendants) and those that are common for both groups.** The barrier perceived as most serious by both groups is especially the language. Additionally, in face-to-face interviews respondents mentioned other barriers, such as cultural differences of the European and Asian cultures, tendency of the ethnic communities to retreat within themselves against the majority society and also discrimination to a certain degree. On the part of **labour-market institutions** (labour offices in particular), long queues and complicated "paperwork" were mentioned as barriers.

The most marked barriers when seeking a job were felt by **foreigners** living in the CR. Barriers limiting possibilities for this group's satisfaction were predominantly related to their status of residence. Their major cause was a very complicated system of granting a work permit, its enormous administrative demandingness, lengthiness and low efficiency. For foreigners it is very difficult to become well versed in it, which causes that numerous foreigners use services of various intermediaries and the entire system becomes thus highly non-transparent and susceptible to corruption.

*"Based on the power of attorney he [intermediary] goes there to collect the permit. It may be necessary to go there in person because of the signature, but anyway, he arranges that. For one thing it saves time and for the other he keeps going to the particular labour office or to other offices that are focused on foreigners and where lots of people and queues exist; there work people who, even though they are fair – we may suspect them, but they may really not give bribes – but they come there regularly. This means, that if you [person working in the labour office] are in your office and you often meet a Mr. V., who always asks you "How are you?", having that dozens of papers, which you always stamp, then you simply talk to him and a kind of informal communication evolves. And the man, the intermediary, is a tough act to compete with for someone who comes to the office personally and may forget some of the papers. Then the official knows that the nice, skilful Mr. V., who can do everything, knows everything – of course, because he is paid for it. Then corruption appears, bribes will come, what to do about it ..."*

*"My friend went to arrange a visa and was waiting there from 4 a.m. to 7 p.m. She was totally exhausted from that, but she had to arrange it on that day. And even she asked whether it is possible to buy the slip [determining the order in which the applicants enter the office]. This is of course possible, two men contacted her to sell it for one thousand crowns, it is no problem, they said."*

Some administrative requirements put on foreigners (e.g. documentation of certain assets, visas acquired outside the CR) definitely do not contribute to the openness of the

system. Foreigners thus do not resolve the situation by "standard means", but by means which are on the verge of law (borrowing of the officially required sum only to prove that the foreigner has it at his disposal; asking for a visa to be granted in the neighbouring country via a third person for whom the visa administration is a source of tax-free income, etc.). Sometimes foreigners arrive into an unfair position due to inadequate deadlines defined for arranging necessary documents. For instance, to extend a visa for a stay an employment certificate is needed, which labour offices are unable to deliver in the required time, although the foreigner has his employer's consent to keep him employed also in the future. Labour offices are overloaded by their routine agenda related to the unemployment and do not have enough capacities for arranging the foreigner's (immigrant's) application for the work permit extension. However, due to their delay, the foreigner might easily arrive in an irregular situation, without his fault.

We also recorded an experience of a foreigner for whom prescribed particulars were legally arranged by his employer and the respondent had practically no worries about it. Nevertheless, this example can be understood to be rather exceptional. It was a company that was extremely interested in employing this highly qualified foreigner for their external relations department.

According to one of the respondents, it is **necessary to differentiate** a sub-group of migrants or their descendants who live in the CR for a long time and either study or are already employed in various large (e.g. global) companies and a sub-group of migrants who came newly to the country. Whereas the first group is well versed in the majority society and is able to resolve various life situations without big difficulties, the second group is in entirely different situation and in respondent's opinion opportunities to help them are probably very limited.

In case of **migrants, who live in the CR in a long run, and their descendants** both positive and negative experience concerning the labour market has been noticed. A factor of high significance consisted in the fact whether the person is closely connected to the ethnic community only and is able to get a job only via their help, or the person is able to get a job thanks to his/her good contacts with the majority society. One of the respondents, the Vietnamese born in the CR, took various temporary jobs, mostly organized by members of the majority society. He always arranged jobs in person, never seeking help of agencies or the labour office. The companies were always managed by Czechs, who have a feeling for foreigners (e.g. they were re-immigrants themselves). At work he entered into a conflict with one colleague, but the management stood up for him. According to this respondent, employment agencies try to benefit from foreigners as much as possible and for profits they are willing to break the law or act on the margin of it.

To all the sub-groups it is common that when seeking a job they contact the **ethnic community** first. They utilise the labour-market institutions in a minimum extent, which raises the significance of the ethnic community and migrants often become dependent on it. On one hand, the ethnic community offers more opportunities to get on the labour market and often obtain a better paid job. To obtain a job through it is usually easier, but on the other hand, it reduces their contacts with the majority and often drags them into the black economy.

*"I know people in the Vietnamese community, who completed their studies and then found out that nothing came of it. Because, first of all, they do not find a job for which they studied. And secondly, they think it is better to set up their own business as their parents, because their income will be higher."*

*"When a foreigner comes to look for a job, then in my opinion it is always more difficult – whether they hire you, or not. And when they do hire you, what wage you will get. The wage is always lower, or at least it is my personal experience, I had a lower wage than my colleagues had. For me it is always easier to look for a job which is connected to the Vietnamese community. Or rather: these jobs find me."*

Migrants **look for a job most frequently** via their ethnic community. Migrants with good contacts to the majority society use also these contacts heavily. Internet and ads are other significant sources of information.

Often, various **intermediaries** are utilised (especially by those who do not speak the language or are not well versed in our environment). However, services of intermediaries might be on the verge of law, or even go beyond it and intermediaries may abuse a difficult situation and a low awareness of their "clients" (e.g. as a "service" they offer a sale of tickets determining the order in the queue at the labour office, etc.). **Employment agencies** are rather utilised by newly arrived migrants to whom this option is often presented by various intermediaries as the easiest one – they promise to arrange all the necessary prescribed particulars. Also in this case migrant's trust is often abused and activities of agencies are on the verge of law or beyond it.

Only a small part of migrants are informed about services provided by **labour offices**, even less of them have personal experience directly with them when looking for a job. The labour offices are contacted rather by foreigners who need to obtain a work permit, or the labour office is perceived mainly as an institution proving support at the loss of job, not as an institution which may help significantly at the job-hunt.

*"In my opinion and opinions I hear from my acquaintances and friends, about 99 % are some kind of information intermediated by acquaintances or someone from the community. Of course, the Internet is also an option. On the Internet you can find brochures, some specialised websites or websites of those offices with information written in various languages, but many people exchange information on various community forums, mainly because of the fact that brochures are written in an official language which migrants often do not understand and that they do not describe various non-standard situations. They rather look up some communities to learn how to arrange things. It especially works with the Russian-speaking community, but also for the Vietnamese."*

Migrants agree that when looking for a job they would contact labour offices only in case of extreme emergency. They have got impression that at seeking a job labour offices cannot offer them much. In this sense, migrants' perception of labour office services is similar to that one of the majority. Nevertheless, in comparison with the majority the situation of foreigners and ethnic minorities is more complicated in many aspects. Besides the above-mentioned facts, a relatively low willingness of employers to hire foreigners must be taken into account. **Reasons for a poor interest in labour office services** are relatively varied: employers' requirements, employers' interest in employees in specific professions (a limited offer of vacant posts in attractive professions) or suspicion of discrimination.

*"The willingness to employ foreigners is still not high enough. In some unattractive, less paid jobs probably yes, they usually contact directly e.g. the Vietnamese. But basically, unless it concerns a specific type of work, such as knowledge of languages or knowledge of the region, which may be true for lots of specialized professions, this foreign workforce, the foreigners are definitely handicapped in this regard. Even though their approach may resemble that of the majority population."*

*"My friend [Vietnamese], who finished the secondary commercial school and did not go to study at any university, registered herself in the labour office. And for about one year she was waiting for a job. They always offered her something. She went to that interview and then they did not hire her. So, you need to find a job by yourself. As they offer you some job at the labour office, you will go for an interview, but they will not take on you. My friend experienced that she had not received the job, because... because she is Vietnamese. That was her opinion. I did go through that, so I cannot tell whether this is absolutely true, or whether they hired someone better."*

*"Personally, I would not go and look for a job in the Vietnamese community, as a shop assistant, for example. Because I would not do it, but I would love to receive an offer from Czech companies, but they won't do it. You can see the comparison, in the Vietnamese community you always do a better job. In a Czech company they do not give me even a worse job, not even for less money."*

*"I think there is an option [to get a job outside the ethnic community]. But I would have to excel at something. If I were average, I would not have a chance."*

Another reason is that re-training programmes offered by the labour office either do not respond to market needs sufficiently and/or are not adequately adapted for this group of people. The offer of programmes for foreigners is thus significantly better in Prague than in the other regions. Already to get the information which programmes a migrant may take part in could be difficult.

*"My acquaintance learned about these programmes and registered herself at the respective office because of these courses, but then she was disappointed by their quality, but in fact for two months she was [...] officially unemployed. [...] And this was not a programme focusing on migrants. These were general re-training, language, computer and similar other courses. Maybe the problem was that the programme was not specialized in what she needs."*

*"People in Prague are perhaps used to foreigners. And here you get more programmes and opportunities for foreigners. But when you go somewhere else, to small towns, then it is even much harder for them [foreigners]. For example, in a small town where people are not used to foreigners. A foreigner cannot actually find anything there. In Prague job opportunities are larger and also people are used to foreigners, unlike somewhere else."*

#### **4.4. Standpoints of Actors of Employment Policy to Existing Policies**

**The survey at the labour offices** shows that most labour offices do not have or prepare special programmes that would support employment of young immigrants from third countries. The labour office staff do not consider them necessary because these clients represent an entirely marginal group within the job applicants registered. The question is whether it is because of having no problems to find a job, or because they do not use services offered by labour offices for this purpose. The labour office staff state that they are ready to deal with problems related to employment of young immigrants from third countries, as soon as they arise. Preventive measures are taken only exceptionally.

If young immigrants become clients of labour offices, which has been rare up to now, they will receive an equal care as any other client. If needed, individual action plans will be worked out with them, identically as with the other clients in uneasy situations.

**Face-to-face interviews with representatives of immigrants** show that immigrants perceive sensitively that labour offices start to deal with them only after they have to. Absence of a systematic preparation of the labour office staff for life in a multicultural society is also mentioned by the **president of the Association**. The intercultural approach seems to be closer to commercial agencies viewing the employer of foreigners and foreigners themselves as clients whose requirements should be met, rather than to the labour office staff. Also, the labour office staff are supposed to approach their clients actively, nevertheless, in reality it is not always true. In this situation, a commercial audit at the labour offices would be of help, testing approaches of the staff of this institution towards job applicants.

Another significant reason could be that labour offices are not staffed sufficiently. At present, they are even supposed to reduce staff. Even though they are overloaded at the time of the economic crisis because they deal with problems related to the growing unemployment in regions and problems of intercultural coexistence have not been too topical.

The labour office staff are trained for dealing with various, uneasy clients. They have general knowledge how to treat clients that differ from the others in some aspect and need an individual approach. They apply these general principles also when dealing with

clients with a different cultural origin. Moreover, clients from the target group are very easy to work with and they are often more motivated than clients representing the majority.

Foreigners' **experience with labour offices** (focus group discussions, interviews) is rather negative. The biggest troubles include a long waiting, the fact that equality of approach is not ensured when some applicants, because of their closer links to officials, receive a preferential treatment compared to the others. Often it is not safe that when queuing at the office one can get in, e.g. due to the collective submissions, due to which individual job seekers do not get in the office. In this respect the situation differs throughout the year, sometimes it is better, generally the situation is quite bad:

*"Generally, the atmosphere at a labour office, at least the Prague one, is rather dreadful. Because the worst horror there is to wait for about 6 hours and then not to be attended to. Or to be simply angry about the fact that in front of you there are three people standing with heavy piles of those applications and are chatting, smiling and greeting those officials pretty informally. You can see there the same situation as at the alien police office, the offer of services works there intermediated by a commercial network. Though it is slightly better there compared to the Prague branch of the alien police, because you usually wait there little less."*

*"A migrant knows if he got through queuing there that it actually does not work, their approach is bad. And who did not get through queuing there and did it via somebody, some intermediary, has also a negative impression. Because why is he using services of an intermediary? Because the labour office does not work properly. It is lengthy and complicated there. Therefore, I rather pay to someone else who can arrange it. So, only few people have a positive experience from there."*

In some cases, problems regarding the residential status cause that the migrant does not get a job legally (e.g. it is already a problem for asylum seekers to travel out of the country for one day and the applicant is not entitled anymore to obtain a refugee status)<sup>29</sup>. Migrants thus do not use official organizations, such as labour offices, nor contact them in case of permitting their stay:

*"Anyway, if you are good at something, everybody will hire you, illegally or on the side, and "inside" well, ...that's ... I haven't yet ... I haven't seen a single man who would go and work legally. I don't know anybody like that. Not a single man."*

Moreover, migrants having problems with the status of their stay have a feeling that labour office cannot help them at all, they have no illusions about employment services and resign their utilisation, as they feel that to contact offices makes no sense anyway, that something always gets prolonged, but they are not given any stable security or perspective. Without this, there is no sense, in their opinion, in making efforts to legalize their stay.

*"If we get it... that paper that would allow us... at least, I don't know... ..at least five years, you see, that you will be here for five years, that nobody can change it, you see... at least five years, then we would start anything, in five years you may finish some studies, or to find some... something like that."*

Also, according to other respondents, availability of programmes and services offered by labour offices, which are accessible for foreigners, differ markedly for various groups of foreigners. In particular, there is a difference between foreigners who lived here and those who came to work here and do not know the environment. As for the first group, they do not have a problem to exist in the Czech environment, they find jobs easily.

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<sup>29</sup> Interview with rejected asylum seekers, which shows they do not understand the situation in which they are and which they themselves caused and blame Czech authorities for not helping them.

Those who came to find a job and do not speak Czech at all (though they attended a training in Vietnam), arrange everything via agencies or interpreters, who mediate jobs for these Vietnamese.

*"I think that people who study here are aware of the fact that they can register at the labour office, when they look for a job. But the newly coming Vietnamese, those who cannot speak Czech well enough nor they understand those laws, do not have access to that. They neither know that they must go there and register. Or that the office will help them at the search for a job. So accessibility...different, depending for whom. I think it is mainly the language barrier and a lack of information about the Czech Republic or life here."*

A frequently mentioned problem of the services at the labour offices related to the target group consists in a limited access to relevant information, foreigners receive information with a delay and the form of providing the information does not suit them. Regarding the latter issue, there is no consonance among respondents. According to some respondents the information is too general and cannot reflect various specific problems of foreigners, according to other respondents the information is not clearly organized, it is difficult to find their way through it and it should be presented in a comprehensive form. Another problem is that laws are often amended and it is not easy even for experts to remain informed about various amendments and related changes in law.

*"The distribution is a problem there. It is not enough to distribute one or two brochures, a campaign must be done. When an official reminds an applicant 'do you know there exists such and such service', then it is a trifle. This should have a far greater impact. 'Here in the right corner you can find leaflets and here you have our phone number. We have interesting programmes.' Then this will be much more powerful, even though many people do not come to arrange the matters in person. But at least for those who come there it will be available, at least they will be more aware of those programmes."*

*"Mostly it is described in the brochures in a way that though it gives you information that for example 'in order to work you must have a work permit', but this says nothing to the man who needs to resolve now and here what to do for that. Now I am certainly exaggerating, the list of the documents is there, but it differs so awfully, both the brochures and the situations, so it is necessary to sit down and evaluate each material whether it corresponds to the situation. The best thing would be [regarding the contents of the brochure, the form of presentation] to resolve it via those community members."*

*"I have the Internet access, but the websites of the labour offices are quite bad. Not everything for foreigners is included and there is a chaos in it. So even if you try to find the information, it may not be there. A general one could be there, but as I say, in certain cases you need to know the right procedure... When you want, for example, to contact the info line, no one even answers it. You have some questions, nobody tells you anything, because they do not pick up that phone. The only way is to come in person and resolve it somehow. Via a director or in another way."*

*"If you ask these offices or the police and you have specific questions, then you sometimes get a wrong answer. Those who work there do not know themselves what is right. Perhaps they work little or are not experienced in that or they do not want their superior, or the like. But they always start dealing with it when you are already in the middle of it - when you are applying for the permit extension or for a visa. They check it simply and if anything is wrong then they simply ask you. As before, it is hard to get the information which is real and which corresponds to the laws. It is not only that it is impossible to get though, but even when you have them on the phone, you do not always get the right information. Unfortunately."*

*"The information should not be so lengthy, better in an abbreviated form, briefly, but clearly. Not everybody speaks Czech well, some people know just the basics. And if you give him then three pages to read, he does not do it because it is too long and it is too difficult."*

According to one interviewed foreigner with a permanent residence permit, it makes sense to take specific measures for young migrants only if the measures are effective. In her opinion, the most effective are re-training programmes, however, especially those should be of better quality, and general re-training programmes more useful for their participants (see above).

*"I think it is better to have no programme rather than a costly and ineffective programme. Because it is always an excuse that 'we are doing something', but the impact is always almost zero. I think it might not be a waste of time to make some re-training courses or other courses for migrants. But it must be well-considered and mainly the groups must be filled...And for specific jobs, perhaps for a specific field and so on."*

Nor immigrants who have been settled in the CR for a long time and are certain that they are well informed about the immigration policy, have the correct information who is the subject of integration efforts and they base their attitudes and evaluation on false ideas<sup>30</sup>. This is documented by the following answer of one respondent:

*"A marked obstacle can consist in discontinuity in integration, when efforts to integrate foreigners start only when the foreigner, being legally in the country, receives a permanent residence permit. Till that moment it is rather made clear to the foreigner that he or she is not desired here. After obtaining a permanent residence permit, people should learn what they are entitled to. Generally, a great obstacle for using services of the labour office is a negative perception and former negative experience. Although foreigners after obtaining a permanent residence are entitled to utilise other services of the labour office, after experience with this institution they will rather avoid any future contact anyway."*

*"This could be such 'integration trainings' or 'guidance trainings'. But here again, we have a little problem that we always draw a line there, the permanent residence permit. It means, the man stays here for five years. We do not deal with him at all and suddenly, after five years, we start integrating him. I think it is not simply true that we tell him suddenly that he may integrate. It would be good if it can go gradually, somehow. To make preparations so that the person knows that at the moment when he receives the permanent residence permit, he does not need a work permit and is allowed to buy a real estate, but also he can get some other, broader possibilities and he must be learn about it..."*

Individual programmes for applicants are unable, according to the respondent, to solve the situation to a greater extent, because even if applicants are entitled to obtain a permanent residence permit, they know about the programmes, but based on the previous experience they have created a certain stereotype (they evaluate them negatively) and will not search for them:

*"Again, it is little bit a problem of trust. Because the person must go there knowing that they will help him and he trusts they will help him. And perhaps somewhere else he will not be helped. He must have the information."*

#### **4.5. Assessment of Intercultural Opening in the Sub-system**

Respondents' opinions on the cultural opening related to employment services were rather varied. To a considerable degree, a certain ambiguity of the term contributed to that, when even after participants of the focus group discussions or to respondents were explained the way this term is viewed within this research, the respondents mentioned

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<sup>30</sup> To correct it, we must mention that the focus of the integration programmes financed by the Czech government is on foreigners legally settled in a long run (longer than 1 year) at the territory of the CR. In terms of their integration, the type of residence permit (long-term or permanent residence) is irrelevant. Foreigners with a permanent residence in the CR have already most of the rights valid for citizens of the CR (except for the right to vote). Migrants are often interested in one side of the integration process only, which means their rights, they pay less attention to their own duties.

different aspects of this phenomenon and their opinions also differed regarding the level of generality.

Focus group discussions with members of organizations have implied that cultural opening may not be a matter that could be secured by a single institution (labour office), but it can be achieved only through cooperation of various institutions. In terms of cultural openness significant differences are shown in labour offices operating in big cities and those operating in small towns. Depending where the offices operate, the labour market situation may differ significantly, which has a substantial impact on cultural opening of respective institutions.

Experience of the non-profit organization workers with the labour office staff (when accompanying their clients at the labour office) shows that potential demonstrations of animosity against foreigners are connected rather to the overall personality of the given official from the labour office and his/her attitude towards all clients generally, and these are not specific demonstrations of xenophobia against the foreigner.

Participants of focus group discussions with migrants and some respondents in the face-to-face interview expressed mostly negative standpoints. Nevertheless, one respondent appreciated efforts of various labour-market institutions made with regard to cultural opening and in his opinion the situation is quite good. According to another respondent, employment agencies have not started to reflect that foreigners may represent a major clientship for them and they do not behave accordingly. However, a significant fact is predominantly that administrative procedures give, in many situations, large space to the decision-making by officials at the labour offices. Especially, if a specific situation needs to be resolved, the same situation is addressed with non-uniform reactions, depending who from the officials addresses it (the decision may thus be affected by their personality or mood). Immigrants perceived sensitively that officials working at labour offices are not willing to provide them with advice or topical information.

*"Well...let me put it this way. Each year I apply for the permit extension and for a visa, each year something came across, each year a problem. Either with the deadline, or I must bring some other letters or the letter is not valid any more or...such trifles, but you know...due to which they tell you 'no, we cannot do anything for you and good-bye', that's the situation. They do not try to explain it to you."*

*"And sometimes they change some conditions you do not know about, for instance, once there was a period of time when you could apply for a new work permit 15 days after the old one expired. Then they changed it ...without informing that it should be done after 30 or more days. So...It's quite hard to get information."*

#### **4.6. Integrative Role" of the Sub-system and its Effects onto Society as a whole**

Opinions on the integrative role of employment services were highly diverse. Variability of opinions also in this case is strongly connected with different perspectives of respondents and the aspects the respondent focused on in his/her answer.

We have noted an opinion that employment services cannot even have any impact on foreigner integration, because foreigners do not use these services and are themselves active when looking for a job. They do not trust employment agencies and look for a job via contacts in the community (i.e. foreigners themselves take a path of rather segregation than integration).

Another respondent was certain that labour-market institutions cannot contribute to the integration, not due to the lack of interest by foreigners, but due the fact that the aim to integrate foreigners field goes beyond their scope of activities. Purpose of employment agencies is to make profit, not to integrate foreigners. The integration is a task for other institutions, both those that represent the majority (various non-profit organizations), and those operating within the given ethnic community. Rather than institutions providing services for the entire society, specialised organizations should operate there.

For instance, there should be an organization within an ethnic community that will help community members get information about the Czech Republic. Labour offices should not focus in their activities on dealing with foreigner integration, they do not have capacities for that. Also another respondent evaluated the situation similarly. In his opinion such institutions are needed that can integrate foreigners into the society, so that foreigners are provided with a training with a technical focus. However he has not heard about anything like that.

*"In my opinion, labour offices are already being too busy now. Rather than to be able additionally to integrate foreigners into the society. Who would sponsor it? Who would channel money into it?"*

Another respondent mentioned that labour offices may not have a decisive say in the integration, but undoubtedly they play a certain role. However, they could probably play a bigger role than they do nowadays. They do not work efficiently and are unable to offer adequate information and services for foreigners. The respondent also believes that integration is not continuous. However, this opinion of her speaks rather about the fact that the respondent does not understand the situation and has no current, true information.

*"At the moment when they [foreigners] receive the permanent residence permit, this [acquired negative stereotype about the labour office and consequent absence of use of their services] changes only a little. Together with the permanent residence permit the foreigner should also receive a paper which says 'Hurray, finally you will be treated in another way, so go to the labour office, now, they will address your situation.' The foreigner simply does not know it."*

On the contrary, in the opinion of two respondents, employment services are significant. The interview has pointed a specific role of employment agencies during the integration, and also, to what extent their role is limited.

*"I think they definitely play a role, even a quite important one. Because... Before you meet the employer, then in fact it is via the agency. It is very important. Indeed. Without this, it would be definitely worse."*

*Researcher: "Do you think so, even when you are, for example, unsuccessful during the interview?"*

*Respondent: "The fact that they send you there. The decision is then yes or no, but it depends just on the company. So, they [agencies] are definitely important, even when I never succeeded. Because they actually have all the information, where is someone looked for and so on. Certainly more than I have."*

Similar variability was also shown in opinions on a potential influence of employment services on the host country. Some of the mentioned opinions concerned integration rather generally, others focused directly on labour offices, employment agencies or companies.

According to one respondent, labour offices may influence attitudes of the host society, but it strongly depends on the situation<sup>31</sup>. In her opinion, answer cannot be yes or no. According to another respondent, labour offices could use some natural form to interfere with the widespread stereotype that foreigners increase the unemployment rate. For example, as a part of information for applicants in which sectors the number of jobs available is highest or via encouraging employers to be more open to foreigners. Another respondent evaluated efforts of companies in the context of integration. In her opinion, they try to contribute to the removal of barriers between the minority and majority, but they are not quite successful in it. On the contrary, agencies which were commented in

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<sup>31</sup> Attitudes of the Czech society and the Vietnamese community worsened recently (after the fire in the Vietnamese market-hall Sapa in Prague) and in connection with the recession, resulting in compulsory redundancy.

the answer of another respondent, cannot do much in this respect and key factor is the activity of immigrants themselves.

## 5. Conclusions

The integration of young, third-country immigrants in the labour market is not paid a systematic attention by state institutions. The staff of the relevant state institutions (MoLSA and labour offices) are of the general opinion, that such people do not have problems on the labour market. However, our research indicates that they do not contact state institutions regarding their problems. The reason is a mutual remoteness of state institutions as well as foreigner or immigrant communities. The reason for their being enclosed is probably a low mutual trust; within the alien agenda employees of the state institutions deal with breaches of regulations by foreigners and they tend to see a source of problems; on the contrary, foreigners are afraid of sanctions, which could be imposed on them by state institutions, if they breach legal regulations, which does not have to be always deliberate but out of ignorance or not due to their fault. Immigrants do not often understand legal regulations even after years of stay, when they have learnt the Czech language quite well. The legal language is complex, often not even understood by native Czechs. Immigrants do not always search for the right information where they should, i.e. in the respective state institution. Usually they try to obtain information informally inside the ethnic community they are members of. Here, however, they may not get the right information, because many times there are many middlemen sponging on the work of foreigners, who do not want foreigners to be well informed. Although many projects were carried out focusing on the improvement of foreigners' awareness of the legal requirements of the labour market in the Czech Republic and on legal conditions for work and undertaking in this country, it is still insufficient. Moreover, regulations undergo rapid changes and foreigners often do not know that the brochure in their hands is not the updated one containing the right information. To follow the "track" in the rapidly changing legislative jungle is demanding even for experts.

At present, labour offices are overloaded to such extent that their employees do not think of any above-standard programmes at all, which would be intended for a support of employment of young immigrants from third countries. On the contrary, as a consequence of the current economic crisis, administrative steps taken with regard to the extension of work permits for foreigners are delayed and those foreigners whom employers plan to extend their employment contract may arrive due to the delay in a situation that their permit for stay may expire. To arrange documents in the time prescribed by the law has thus become a highly sophisticated activity, which without necessary logistics can be hardly managed also by foreigners with a high qualification, who have been living in the CR for many years. Foreigners who do not need a work permit anymore (they have a permanent residence permit or citizenship) are in some respect in a slightly better situation. But nowadays they have troubles when looking for a job, not only due to the economic crisis but also because employers are more interested in temporary employment of foreigners, to whom they do not have any obligations after the termination of employment, and are not interested in hiring employees for a long term, as it is connected with a higher protection of employees against and after dismissal.

MoLSA as well as labour offices are of the opinion that all the clients should be treated equally in compliance with "equal treatment" principles, which are incorporated in the Employment Act. Those migrants who do not manage to compete with the others should be supported, in their opinion, by the non-government sector. However, non-government organizations only rarely find a real job for foreigners. They cannot substitute state institutions in their functions, because they lack the respective powers. Moreover, they suffer from a lack of funds, which made many of them dismiss some employees.

In the Czech Republic, targeted programmes have not been developed to increase legal employment of young immigrants from third countries (in particular, it concerns members of the Ukrainian and Vietnamese communities). Initiative was left to a considerable degree to ethnic networks and client systems, often resulting not in legal, standard economic activities, but in better case in irregular jobs and in extremes they manifest characteristics of slavery (when people work to get accommodation and food

only, or lodgement and food) without respecting safety and hygienic standards, without social and health insurance. Experts agree that due to the economic crisis the number of foreigners in an irregular position<sup>32</sup> has increased. This certainly does not contribute to the atmosphere of openness and trust between the host society and migrants.

Economic crisis is nowadays affecting the migration policy of the CR, when emphasis is put on support of those foreigners who are already partially integrated and on the decline in new migrations. In practise, the policies however cope with problems. One of them concerns employment agencies that continue hiring foreigners regardless the situation on the labour market. If foreigners are dismissed, complications arise to the state, when it pays costs for voluntary repatriations, as well as to labour offices that strive to find employment for those who are already integrated.

At the present time, a more thorough regulation of employment agencies<sup>33</sup> have been introduced, which is to ensure that a licence for agency employment is obtained only by agencies that demonstrate a sufficient qualification for this line of work. The spectrum of activities which agencies can intermediate was strictly limited. Organizations which will not meet the requirements prescribed by law will be in danger of serious sanctions, including a revocation of their licence. However, even this measure cannot resolve the situation entirely. Even when it may make some, so far illegally operating, disreputable agencies cease to exist, many other organizations or natural persons not meeting legal requirements are likely to keep operating in the illegal business.

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<sup>32</sup> Their estimate nears 300,000.

<sup>33</sup> The Czech government implemented the Government Order of 5 March 2009 which changed the conditions governing the import of foreign labour by agencies. The range of jobs which such agencies could intermediate for third country nationals was strictly limited.

## **PART B**

Development of International Indicators: Description of Preparatory  
Empirical Steps Conducted at National Level and their Findings

## 6. Proposed criteria for the identification of good practice on intercultural opening

All the seven partner organizations involved in the solution of the project "Moving Societies towards Integration" together with the analysis of the selected social sub-system presented a draft list of criteria which could be used for evaluating success rate of particular policies or projects from the perspective of intercultural openness, or for identifying best practise in this field. Nevertheless, criteria proposed by partner organizations very often reflected specific aspects associated with separate sub-systems, or their countries.

The list of criteria was evaluated in the structure agreed during previous consultations among partner organizations. In the process of that, the following seven areas have been identified:

- staff / agents,
- organisational level,
- contents / practice,
- audience / target group,
- partners / network,
- resources and
- evaluation.

In the Czech Republic a set of criteria has been identified within this structure based on which the Czech project team subsequently evaluated the selected project (see the text in the box; for more about selection and evaluation of the project see Chapter 7).

### **Overview of national criteria for the best practise evaluation by dimensions common for all partner organizations**

#### **A. Dimension „ Staff /Agents“**

##### **1. Corresponding Structure and Qualification of the Staff**

- 1.1. The staff is sufficiently qualified to implement project activities;
- 1.2. The staff is sufficiently skilled and in terms of personality fit for work with persons from a different cultural or ethnic background.
- 1.3. Target group (i. e. in the case of this project young immigrants under 27 years of age) is involved in the project solution.
- 1.4. Persons who represent the target group should apply for various job positions (technical staff, specialists, managers).
- 1.5. Persons who represent the target group should utilize various employment categorization (employee, external supplier, volunteer).

#### **B. Dimension „ Organisational Level“**

##### **2. Determination of Powers**

- 2.1. Powers of organizations responsible for the implementation of good practise activities are clearly determined, approaches for control of their application are defined, there exists a mechanism for resolving emergency situations (an organization does not obtain approved funds for the project, etc.); distribution of powers, inspection plans etc. need not be in a written form, however, they must be sufficiently known to all people who participate in the good practise implementation.
- 2.2. Practise is carried out in a mutual cooperation of individual persons who are responsible for it.

### **3. Link to the National Integration Policy**

3.1. Performed activities are in compliance with objectives of the existing national integration policy;

3.2. Performed activities complement and extend objectives of the national integration policy;

3.3. Performed activities represent an alternative to national integration policies. Within the current legislative framework, they facilitate achieving targets which are not included in the integration policy, however, they are in conformity with it and are legitimate.

### **4. Interconnectivity with Other Policies and Programmes and Activities of Other Entities**

4.1. Projects focusing on immigrants are interconnected with the other employment policies. I.e. they are sufficiently coordinated, striving for identical or complementary objectives. Their effects are not opposing.

4.2. Good practise is not an isolated activity, there is cooperation among activities, which mutually complement and follow up. In terms of the target group, programmes and activities pursued by different entities are not duplicate, but complementary.

### **5. Arrangement of Policies in which Good Practise is Carried Out**

*Note: To make the picture complete, we also mention a translation of this list of topics which were proposed for monitoring by the project coordinator. In the opinion of the Czech project team, however, criteria focusing on the below-mentioned areas cannot be relevant for evaluation of projects and programmes, since in terms of projects and their implementing teams these are external impacts, adjustment of which is outside the project implementing team's competence. When evaluating the selected project in the following chapter, this area was not monitored.*

5.1 On what levels are decisions made and agendas set? How and where are work plans designed (who designs / on what level)? Where are decisions implemented? How does communication take place in the organisation (hierarchical?) Is there top-down implementation of policies, e.g. policies for diversity or for intercultural opening? Is there bottom-up communication? Who implements measures for intercultural opening (only bottom level, approach of top level)?

### **C. Dimension „ Contents / Practice “**

#### **6. Universality and Variability**

6.1. The main idea of good practise is generally shared by various stakeholders. There is concord among stakeholders in terms of the basic principles and cornerstones. Stakeholders' agreement in the general evaluation of practise as being good is not disturbed by partial differences in stakeholders' opinions on an issue which is related to good practise, not by different position of various stakeholders.

6.2. Fulfilment of the main idea of good practise can be strived for using various approaches. A specific approach can be modified and is modified with respect to the stockholder's situation, position and other significant factors.

#### **7. Comprehensiveness**

7.1. Good practise is a broad set of activities, which mutually complement each other, at the level of the system, organization as well as project activities. Good practise contributes to integration in a comprehensive way. Good practise includes e.g. counselling, consultations, placement on a specific job, cooperation with potential employers, etc.

#### **8. Integrated Solution or Approach, Sustainability, Applicability of Results**

8.1. Good practise is not an isolated activity, it is an integrated solution.

8.2. Good practise is not a one-time activity, but a continuous process.

8.3. Achieved results can be applied also outside the given project (e.g. an immigrant acquires skills utilisable in the labour market) and after its completion.

## **9. Transferability, Publicity, Dissemination**

9.1. Good practise is transferable. It can be applied internally (in the environment of a company or organization) or externally (towards other entities, e.g. employers or clients) by various entities in a different position.

9.2. Public should have a possibility to learn about good practise, become familiar with its process of implementation and outputs. Presentation is designed in a form comprehensive for the target group as well as for general public.

9.3. Organisations or a unit of the organization allows a professional short term attachment or training of the interested parties, organize dissemination trainings which enable good practise to become widespread.

## **10. Intercultural Perspective**

10.1. Good practise reflects cultural or ethnic background of people whom the activities focus on and who take part in their implementation. It promotes an intercultural dialogue.

10.2. Good practise includes work with the majority society, not only with members of ethnic and cultural minorities.

10.3. Intercultural image of the organization outwards, availability of information in different languages, interpreters' availability, knowledge of languages of immigrant communities.

## **11. Achieved Effects and their Cost-effectiveness**

11.1. Good practise achieves declared effects. Achieved effects are legitimate. Unintended effects are successfully suppressed.

11.2. Activities have long-term impacts.

11.3. Achieved effects are adequate in terms of costs expended (cost effectiveness).

## **D. Dimension „Audience / Target Group“**

### **12. Target Group Definition**

12.1. The target group is clearly defined. What target group is it in this particular case (immigrants from third countries, who are: job seekers, job applicants, the unemployed, is there any limit in terms of their age)? The definition need not be in a written form, however, it must be legitimate, the staff of the organization or organizational unit must be aware of the definition and use it as a ground for implementing project activities. Project activities are adequately customized for this target group.

12.2. Persons who fall into the target group and to whom the project is intended are treated in compliance with principles of equal treatment.

## **E. Dimension „Partners / Network“**

### **13. Cooperation**

13.1. The organization is open to cooperate with other stakeholders who operate in this area. What are the specific stakeholders you cooperate with (public administrative bodies – e.g. labour offices, others; regional and local governments; non-profit organizations – focusing on immigrants, focusing on the labour market; potential employers – local ones?; employment agencies). An organizational unit or division operate in cooperation with other organizational units or divisions; activities of all the organizational units or departments are coordinated.

13.2. The organization or organizational unit develop cooperation with other entities so that practise could be shared as much as possible, or further developed by a broader range of entities.

13.3. Cooperation is accompanied with an exchange of experience among individual stakeholders. Good practise is designed in such way so that other entities could take part in its implementation or promote it.

## **F. Dimension „Resources“**

### **14. Human Resources**

14.1. There is a sufficient number of people available in the labour market who are capable and willing to perform work or to volunteer in this field under the conditions that currently exist there (financial insecurity).

### **15. Financial Resources**

15.1. Policies and projects in this area are sufficiently secured in terms of funds.

**16. Sustainability**

16.1. A follow-up of good practise is ensured.

**G. Dimension „Evaluation“**

**17. Monitoring and Evaluation**

17.1. Are the course of good practise and its outputs continuously monitored? Are the criteria and processes the monitoring is based on set up properly? Is the information gathered in the monitoring further processed and how?

17.2. Is the evaluation of completed projects secured? Are evaluation criteria and processes set up properly? How is the information gathered in the evaluation processed?

*Source: Authors.*

## **7. Case study: projects „Work in Czech“ a „Work in Prague“**

### **7.1. Introduction**

Employment policies monitor a relatively wide range of objectives (e.g. protection against shortfall in receipts, employee protection, provision of equal approach, support for specific disadvantaged or endangered groups of people, etc.). At the same time, they respond to a relatively large number of situations regarding not only the relation between the employer and the employee. This makes the employment policies a vast complex and therefore it is desirable for specific objectives to be achieved and partial activities to be mutually compatible, the effect of specific partial processes not to be fragmented and the employment policies to be well-arranged and intrinsically consistent.

This situation holds true even more markedly in the context of integration policies, which cover or should cover different aspects of immigrant integration into the society and at the same time they must reflect existence of various immigrants' status of residence, which is linked with different rights and duties. Functionality of immigrant-related employment policies requires thus both intrinsic coherence of the two policies and their mutual harmonisation.

The very attempt to overcome fragmentation of integration programmes was one of the principal aims of below-evaluated projects "Work In Czech"(WIC) and "Work in Prague" (WIP), which focused on integration of foreigners in the labour market. Both projects focused on a systematic support of immigrants' and asylum-seekers' employment in the labour market, nevertheless, with regard to the programme requirements of the EQUAL Initiative it was impossible to carry out one common project. In the capital of Prague, which does not comply with the condition of GDP per capita being lower than 75% of the EU average, a separate project was thus carried out. Nevertheless, projects were run in coordination and attention will be paid in this report to both of them.

### **7.2. Institutional Context: Comprehensive Information on Existing Policies and Projects**

#### **7.2.1. National policy of third-country immigrants' integration into the Czech Republic**

The Czech Ministry of Interior (MoI CR), Asylum and Migration Policy division, Concept and Analysis department is in charge of drawing up national drafts of asylum, migration and integration policy. The current national integration policy has been formulated in the updated Concept of Immigrant Integration in the CR from 2006. Every year the concept is approved via a government resolution, containing a specific amount of funds earmarked from the state budget for immigrant integration. They are used for the funding of specific projects approved by the Interdepartmental Commission for Immigrant Integration in the CR. The concept establishes four fundamental aims of immigrant integration: 1) support of the Czech language knowledge; 2) **support of economic self-sufficiency**; 3) support of immigrants' orientation in the society; 4) support of good relations between immigrants and members of the majority society.

#### **7.2.2. National policy of third-country immigrants in the employment sphere**

The Employment Act guarantees equality of opportunities and contains anti-discriminatory measures. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) finances projects supporting third-country immigrants' integration in the employment sphere. At present, the European Social Fund (ESF), Operational Programme Human Resource Development (OP HRD) is the main source of finance for projects in the field of integration of immigrants from third countries. In 2008, ESF's funds were utilised for financing the total of 14 projects focusing on support of third-country immigrants' employment.

In terms of specific support of third-country immigrants' employment, the MoLSA delegates powers particularly to non-government organizations, via financial support of specific projects. For the time being, specific projects and policies supporting employment of young third-country immigrants have not emerged because in the opinion of experts from practise they are not needed.

### **7.2.3. Programmes for immigrants from third countries in the Czech Republic**

With regard to employment, no specialised policies exist nowadays in the Czech Republic, which would closely focus on young immigrants below the age of 27 solely. Programmes focusing on wider groups of immigrants, or ethnic minorities, are carried out predominantly by organizations, which specialize in these groups of people. As a previous research proved the organizations focusing on a larger population pursue specialised activities for these groups of people only exceptionally and only rarely have they worked out specific approaches towards these groups of people. Therefore, by mutual consent of partners in the Good Practise project, they were sought after among institutions that focus directly on the integration issue.

Integration of immigrants and ethnic minorities is pursued by a great number of non-government organizations in the CR. Nevertheless, organizations focusing on integration of minorities concentrate in particular on the Roma population, with their limelight being on the social exclusion rather than on integration in the broadest sense. Other organizations define themselves on ethnic grounds and specialise in members of a certain minority (e.g. Club Hanoi). With regard to the immigrant integration, the most significant organizations are as follows: Centre for Immigrant Integration (Centrum pro integraci cizinců), Centre for Migration Issues (Centrum pro otázky migrace), Organization for Aid to Refugees (Organizace pro pomoc uprchlíkům), Counselling Centre for Integration (Poradna pro integrace), Society of Citizens Assisting Immigrants (Sdružení občanů zabývajících se emigranty), etc. Most organizations focusing on immigrant integration are based in Prague and in Brno, nevertheless, organizations based in these cities and other regional organizations pursue their activities also in cities and towns with a larger share of immigrants (other big cities, towns where large companies operate utilising work of immigrants, in the vicinity of which refugee facilities are located, etc.).

A number of projects of organizations focusing on integration of foreigners are financed from the European Social Fund. Prague<sup>34</sup>, unlike the other regions of the CR, exceeds the average per-capita GDP in the EU. To utilise funds for integrating immigrants in the territory of Prague, organizations may draw funds under different circumstances than in case of support of immigrants' integration elsewhere in the territory of the CR. From this perspective, the selected projects WIC and WIP represent different types of projects, nevertheless, for evaluation within the case study they are interesting, among others, right because of the fact that despite their different geographical targeting and despite different grant schemes, they were mutually coordinated.

### **7.3. Project selection, data gathering and evaluation procedures**

Prior to the selection of projects, which will be below described and evaluated in terms of the stated good practice criteria (see Appendix), a group of potential projects had been mapped. A resource at the search for projects was "Summary of projects by non-government non-profit organizations for integrating immigrants supported by ministries in 2008", which was an annexe to the government document "Report on the implementation of the Concept of Immigrant Integration in 2008 and a proposal of a follow-up process" and web pages of the most significant organizations operating in the

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<sup>34</sup> One third of all immigrants with a residential permit for the CR live in Prague. Immigrants make up 12% of the Prague population, unlike 4% of the entire CR. Immigrants in Prague make up more than 6% of labour force.

area of immigrant integration in the territory of the CR. With regard to the stated criteria, several different projects seemed adequate, drawn up by organizations pursuing immigrant integration in the labour market. Therefore, at the project selection we also leaned on the opinion and experience of an expert from the non-government organization Multi-Cultural Centre Prague (Multikulturální centrum Praha) and an expert from the Asylum and Migration Policy division of the MoI. To make a shortlist, we carried out interviews with members of non-government organizations Centre for Immigrant Integration (Centrum pro integraci cizinců, CIC) and Organization for Aid to Refugees (Organizace pro pomoc uprchlíkům, OPU). In both interviews general conditions were discussed for implementing immigrant integration projects and experience of them. In the interview with the respondent representing CIC, attention was first paid to several different projects of this organization and then only to a relatively innovative project "Post on trial" (Místo na zkoušku), the interview with the representative of OPU focused on the projects "Work in Czech" and "Work in Prague".

The project "Post on trial" looked interesting because of its focus not only on immigrants but also on the majority. Nevertheless, the project has been launched only several months ago and until now there has not been enough experience from its implementation. WIC and WIP projects have already been completed and in our opinion they also dealt with topical issues of the current arrangement of third-country immigrant integration policies in terms of employment. These projects will be further evaluated in terms of good practice, since they are very broad and comprehensive projects, which are moreover of a system nature. They complement one another in the above-mentioned regard of the geographical targeting and their link to grant schemes.

As far as WIC and WIP projects are concerned, relevance could be seen in some of the more general statements of the CIC representative, since both responding organizations were members of the development partnerships Hedera (WIC) and Helix (WIP). We have also grounded our analysis on publications and leaflets published within these projects (see references).

#### **7.4. Evaluated projects and their organizational project assurance**

##### **7.4.1. Specification of projects "Work in Czech" and "Work in Prague"**

The aim of both projects was to improve position of third-country immigrants and asylum-seekers in the labour market. WIC and WIP projects were launched in January 2005, when the first project stage started, with the aim to stabilise and re-build development partnerships, performance of research and analytical activities and establishment of cooperation at the international level ("Action 1"; January to June 2005). In the following period, specific methodologies and activities were created, implemented and evaluated ("Action 2"; August 2005 – June 2008). In the final stage, topic-related publications were drawn up and published, summarizing applied methodologies and experience of their utilisation ("Action 3"; August 2005 – June 2008). For the WIC project, the budget for Actions 2 and 3 amounted to CZK 19.1 million (EUR 740,000<sup>35</sup>) and for WIP 8.5 million crowns (EUR 327,000). Both projects were completed in June 2008.

During both projects clients from the group of immigrants and asylum-seekers could take part in a long-term Czech language course (in the extent of 300 and 400 lessons), PC literacy courses (in the extent of 60 lessons), courses Orientation in the labour market (practical information about the labour market, labour-law documents, CV elaboration, contact with employers, establishment of a trade licence, taxes, etc.) and the Motivation course (self-knowledge course). Within the WIP projects participants could attend a

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<sup>35</sup> The figure is approximate, with the conversion being based on the exchange rate as at 24 November 2009, i.e. CZK 25.890 per EUR, and does not reflect a development of the exchange rate in the past time. During the implementation of Actions 2 and 3 the Czech crown strengthened against euro, with an exchange rate of CZK 30.075 per EUR as at 1 August 2005 to CZK 23.895 as at 30 June 2008.

course called Recruitment process (knowledge and skills useful for a job interview for skilled jobs). During the project participants could work on their employment within individual social work. Within the WIC project clients were provided with assistance to achieve domestication of documents and they could participate in a re-training course, which had been reimbursed for the participant. The primary objective was to win clients over to courses specialising in the labour market, possibility to improve the Czech language was rather a complementary part of the offer.

Participation in projects was offered to clients of organizations taking part in the development partnership and immigrants registered at labour offices (for this purpose meetings were held with representatives of labour offices, potential interested parties from the immigrant group were contacted by labour offices, where projects were introduced to them). A considerable part of clients was acquired via labour offices, a part of clients were also friends of clients contacted in this manner. Some of the WIP project activities were utilised by 53 clients, some of the WIC project activities were utilised by 138 immigrants.

Responsibility for a preparation and implementation of specific activities were born by the organizations participating in development partnerships, which specialise in the respective sub-section, e.g. language courses or social work (e.g. language courses were made by the organization which had prepared documents for language courses for the National Integration Programme). Therefore, methodology of all the activities offered to clients was thoroughly elaborated. All the activities included evaluation of clients' feedback.

Methodology, findings learned at the implementation of activities as well as clients' input were subsequently described in three subject documents (integration courses, Czech language courses, individual social work). Apart from them, a publication has been created summarizing the current practice in the CR and providing comparison with selected EU countries. There was a great deal of input for improving the current practice. For the purposes of the WIP project, a qualitative research on immigrants' position in the labour market in Prague has been made and a report on this research published.

#### **7.4.2. Organizational project assurance: development partnerships "Hedera" and "Helix"**

The development partnerships Hedera and Helix were established for the purpose of implementing projects WIC, or WIP. Among members of the development partnership Hedera were 13 organizations, or institutions. Beside organizations focusing on immigrant integration partnership organizations also included MoLSA (nowadays already non-existing division of immigrant integration), Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (Ministerstvo školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy, MoEYS), labour offices in districts Brno-město and Brno-venkov, The Masaryk's University in Brno or organizations specialising in the human rights and gender issues. Within the development partnership Helix, 8 organizations or institutions cooperated. Beside organizations specialising in immigrant integration, the partnership was joined by the MoLSA (Migration and Immigrant Integration division) and the Czech Chamber of Commerce (Hospodářská komora ČR). Both development partnerships cooperated with other European development partnerships, Within the WIP project two study tours to Germany and Holland have been organized.

Apart from the implementation of the described project activities, these development partnerships together with other organizations established a national subject network. The output from it was an informational leaflet, or posters informing foreigners (in English, Russian and Czech) about advantages of legal employment versus illicit work, conditions of legal employment and contacts for important organizations. Thanks to the subject network, this leaflet could be very widely distributed in labour offices and waiting rooms of various organizations focusing on immigrants. In the respondent's opinion, the

information was not distributed to employment agencies, since cooperation with them is poor in this respect, as they often violate the Labour Code themselves.

At present, partnerships Hedera and Helix as a whole does not continue running; nowadays three of the organizations involved in the development partnership (CIC, OPU, Sdružení občanů zabývajících se emigranty) offer activities based on approaches applied and tested in the WIC and WIP projects. OPU follows-up activities of both projects also in further project plans.

The need to implement project activities within two separate projects, related to the different categorization of Prague, did not represent, in the respondent's view, a serious complication for the course of the project. On the contrary, in the respondent's view WIP could have been customized better regarding some specific characteristics of the target group of third-country immigrants in the territory of Prague (e.g. to take into consideration larger opportunities to get an illicit work in Prague rather than in the other regions and a lower motivation of clients related to that, etc.).

According to the respondent, various organizations nowadays utilise methodology of individual social work that has been created within the WIC and WIP projects for clients seeking a job. As a result, social work at the job seeking, according to the respondent, has become standardized in organizations dealing with this topic, to a considerable extent thanks to these projects. A large amount of organizations, in her opinion, has also taken over the model of courses focusing on immigrants' orientation in the Czech labour market. They are currently offered by relatively many organizations, however, prior to the project implementation, none of the organizations had offered them. In the public administration the respondent could see hardly any response to the projects. In her opinion, activities of the projects have not been reflected in work of labour offices, nevertheless, she considered study tours of the staff of the cancelled Migration and Immigrant Integration division of the MoLSA had a positive impact on their further work for the MoI.

## **7.5. Evaluation of projects "Work in Czech" and "Work in Prague" based on good practice criteria**

### **7.5.1. Staff / Agents**

According to the respondent from CIC, as a result of the economic recession it is relatively easy nowadays to recruit a high-quality staff, since interest in work in organizations of this type is shown by many qualified candidates, and organizations have a possibility to choose from the best candidates (previously it was slightly more difficult, nevertheless, even at that time high-quality employees could be found.).

Project administration and coordination are in OPU ensured by the organization staff who have been working for the organization for a certain time, at least for a year, working directly with clients. In the respondent's view, the organization staff is thus qualified enough to implement project activities (criterion 1.1) and sufficiently professionally and personally skilled for work with people who have a different cultural or ethnic background (criterion 1.2). The organization employs two people from the group of immigrants; one on the post of the deputy director and social counsellor, the other as a legal advisor (criteria 1.4 and 1.5).

The criterion 1.3 will need a modification. For the staff it is not appropriate to limit their age being under 27 years, the fact that staff members include immigrants is undoubtedly significant per se. At the same time, we cannot rely on a possibility that it will be always possible to tell whether such person takes part in the very implementation of the specific practice under evaluation.

### **7.5.2. Organisational Level**

Powers of organizations responsible for the implementation of project activities were clearly defined and functioning with regard to the determined objectives (criterion 2.1), which has been proved by a successful implementation of both projects. There was an evident mutual coordination among project activities carried out by organizations (criterion 2.2).

At the evaluation of the WIC and WIP projects, criteria 2.1 and 2.2 appeared functioning. Both the criteria focus on the procedural aspect of the project, which is undoubtedly vital for success of the project. However, the question is the degree of importance such "procedural" criteria should be attached to, how far they are critical for the nature and impacts of the project. This question also concerns other criteria mentioned in this chapter.

The activities performed were in compliance with objectives of the existing national integration policy (criterion 3.1) and they significantly amended and expanded the objectives of the national integration policy (criterion 3.2). Project activities also contributed to improving the capacity of the national integration policy, the question is whether this increase in capacity is permanent and whether it can be successfully followed up (for this see below). Some project activities (e.g. Orientation course) can be regarded a significant innovation in the field of the national integration policy<sup>36</sup>, being however in conformity with its objectives (criterion 3.3).

Projects were implemented via the development partnership represented in particular by non-profit organizations, which participate in making and implementing the national integration policy. In terms of immigrant integration in the labour market, the state does only little (see the mid-term report) and delegates activities concerning immigrant integration to non-profit organizations, which the state support financially, being a standard procedure at the implementation of national integration policies. In the context of the Czech Republic, the state determines principles of the national integration policy not only with regard to employment, and in practise the integration policy is mostly performed by non-profit organizations.

Projects focusing on immigrants were interlinked with the other employment policies (criterion 4.1) and were not an isolated activity. All activities were carried out in mutual coordination, they complemented each other and followed up (criterion 4.2).

### **7.5.3. Contents / Practice**

Objectives of the projects were negotiated and fine-tuned during the period of establishing the development partnership. Projects were in a pursuit of objectives which are in the immigrant integration field accepted universally (criterion 6.1). Stakeholders misusing the system, i.e. various intermediaries or some employment agencies, had opposite interests. Projects set, among others, an aim to protect their clients against mistreatment of such stakeholders. During the implementation of project objectives background of organizations involved in the development partnership was utilised and responsibility for the implementation of activities was born by organizations which specialised in the given topic. Therefore, constituent project activities reflected approaches specific for these organizations. Outside the scope of development partnership, single component activities can be applied variably (criterion 6.2). However, without a comparable capacity and volume of funds in the future such complex approach to the solution of immigrant integration in the labour market cannot be ensured.

Within both projects a broad set of activities was carried out, mutually complementing and contributing in a comprehensive way to the immigrant integration in the labour market. Also, both projects were complementary one to another: they comprised of

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<sup>36</sup> Introduction of an orientation course for immigrants based on the model by the Dutch Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs have been proposed by experts from RILSA already in 1992.

some identical activities, which, however, could be run in regions with different structural characteristics. Sponsor's requirement to carry out two separate projects fairly enriched coverage of the projects and the scope of knowledge acquired than put a useless administrative burden and complicated the project implementation. A comprehensive nature of activities within both projects themselves reduced the need to interlink and coordinate them with the other activities of the organization. At the same time, project activities were designed to reflect general aspects of integration policy in an integrated way. A limited number of clients, who utilised project activities, and high financial costs reduce the overall utility of both projects. Thus, although projects were approached comprehensively, they had a limited reach and impact on the overall form of the national integration policy (criterion 7.1).

Thanks to their coverage of topics and territory, projects could be regarded a significant initiative concerning the immigrant integration in the labour market, although project activities were utilised by a relatively small number of clients for a relatively short period of time (these limits concern in particular key activities implemented within "Action 2"). Both projects, however, can become a certain "model" in the future. Projects resulted in a systematic solution of some of the drawbacks of the current practise. Within "Action 3" methodologies have been created, becoming a kind of standard also for future activities of other organizations. Undoubtedly, both projects had an impact on the current practise, nevertheless, intensity of this impact is not easy to be evaluated precisely. It cannot be measured how far new methodologies affected activities of other organizations operating in this area.

Their impact on harmonisation of integration policies and employment policies was neither unambiguous. On one hand, both spheres in activities of non-profit organizations became better interconnected, on the other hand, at the national level these integration activities remain isolated and fragmented: their significant harmonisation has not occurred either at the legislative and policy-making level, or in the field (importance of labour offices for immigrant integration is considerably limited or even disserviceable - compare the mid-term report) (criteria 8.1 and 8.3).

Projects were prepared very thoroughly and were running for a relatively long period of time (the implementation stages lasted almost three years) and were continuously coordinated. It is a pity that after their completion a direct follow-up did not happen (criterion 8.2). However, project findings could be applied also outside the scope of the given project and after its completion (criterion 8.3).

Numerous results and outputs of the projects were transferable and could be also applied by other organizations (criterion 9.1). The course and outputs of the projects can be learned about in subject-related brochures or on the internet. Documents were worked out in a comprehensible form for the target group as well as general public (criterion 9.2). Within the development partnership study tours abroad were organized, participated by representatives of member organizations and institutions of the development partnership (criterion 9.3).

Intercultural perspective was not explicitly emphasized within the project. However, it is obvious that it is a significant pre-requisite for implementation of numerous project activities. Some documents were published in Russian and English (criteria 10.1, 10.2 and 10.3).

Direct effects of the projects (criterion 11.1) concern the immigrant target group itself and can be evaluated positively. This has been indicated in evaluation questionnaires, which were part and parcel of project activities. Their proof is in the comprehensive nature of activities offered to clients, possibility of their individual combination and high quality of designed methodologies of constituent activities. On the contrary, a more general objective, to achieve a higher degree of harmonisation of fragmented policies, has not been successfully met. Here we need to say that this ambition did not naturally depend by far on the project implementing party solely but rather on interest of policy

makers in project outputs and their willingness to utilise these outputs in order to bring both policies (employment policy and integration policy) in a better harmony.

Long-term impacts of the project (criterion 11.2) can be seen both in terms of the target group and in terms of project impact on integration policies, or their harmony with employment policies. The situation of the target group cannot be evaluated, assessment of a broader, long-term impact is rather ambivalent. These issues were dealt with, despite a slightly different perspective taken, in the project evaluation based on criteria 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3).

Funds expended on both projects (criterion 11.3) were considerable. But without a strong financial support both projects could not be carried out in the given form (meeting a range of good practise parameters). Project benefits, even despite considerable financial costs, are highly valuable. Continuity assurance of projects designed in such a comprehensive manner would significantly strengthen not only the capacity of integration policies but it would also reduce costs expended. The fact that such all-embracing and systematically prepared projects are not being followed up can be regarded a waste of a very good "starting potential".

#### **7.5.4. Audience / Target Group**

In both projects the target group consisted of immigrants from third countries living in the CR for more than one year and asylum-seekers. Incorporation into the WIC or WIP projects was based on the place of their residence in the CR (Prague / another Czech region). The target group was thus defined very widely, however, clearly. The principal aim was to attract clients to attend trainings specialising in the labour market, the opportunity to improve the Czech language was rather a complementary part of the offer. The project was thus designed for those who showed interest in some of the trainings specialising in the labour market integration. Most clients participating in the project were above the age of 27, only a smaller group of clients overlapped with the target group of the project "Moving Societies Towards Integration", (criterion 12.1).

#### **7.5.5. Partners / Network**

Projects were implemented as part of development partnerships Hedera and Helix (for more see Chapter 2) (criteria 13.1, 13.2 and 13.3).

#### **7.5.6. Resources**

Interest in work in organizations focusing on the immigrant integration has been shown by numerous high-quality candidates and organizations operating in this field have an opportunity to recruit the best candidates (criterion 14.1).

Financial securing of policies related to integration (criterion 15.1) is considerably unsafe. Subsidy schemes of ministries (MoEYS, MoI, earlier also MoLSA) are opened relatively frequently, nevertheless, organizations focusing on the immigrant integration lack a sense of long-term financing security: long-term schemes are rarely offered. Organizations modify their project plans according to the up-to-date requirements of sponsor's schemes and a focus of immigrant integration projects changes thus rather rapidly depending on these requirements. This, on one hand, creates an opportunity to respond quickly on topical needs in this area, on the other hand, sometimes a high need of flexibility prevents a follow-up of previously implemented projects (criterion 16.1). The integration policy with regard to employment is thus not systematic.

### **7.5.7. Monitoring and Evaluation**

Within both projects evaluations of all the integration courses for clients have been made (anonymous questionnaires answered by clients). Findings have been reflected in the design of methodologies. General objectives, namely harmonisation of integration and employment policies, were not evaluated within the projects. Project results could only initiate efforts to achieve these objectives but their fulfilment is rather a task for policy makers. Although a financial evaluation is an arduous activity, it should not be missing in the good practise evaluation.

### **7.6. Conclusions**

The WIC and WIP projects can be considered good practise in terms of most of the monitored criteria, the critical aspects of the projects were sustainability, or a long-term impact. In this regard projects contributed to standardization of approaches of non-profit organizations and as a consequence to expansion and improvement of their integration capacity. A comprehensive approach of the projects toward integration has not been further systematically utilised. Integration projects running after the end of these projects mostly do not have an ambition to resolve the issue of the labour market integration in a comprehensive manner. Funds allocated to the implementation of the projects were relatively considerable, nevertheless, they can be regarded adequate if other activities follow up.

Findings acquired during the project, which could contribute to a better harmonization of integration and employment policies, both at the legislative and policy-making level, have not been utilised in the field in the public administration (work of labour offices). The existing method of funding of integration projects, where only a little room is for the implementation of long-term project plans, is problematic. Neither of the projects could resolve overcoming the system limits, which fall into the scope of policy-making activities. Without their overcoming projects with long-term impacts cannot be carried out.

Criteria for good practise evaluation are mostly functioning but some of them would require a modification (criteria 1.3 – 1.5 should cover broader target group, they should not concern only narrow target group of this project), or to make them operational enough, so that they could be better utilised during the project evaluation (criterion 5.1). Another question is what significance should be attached during the practise evaluation to organizational criteria (criteria 2.1 - 5.1). The classification of criteria is functioning, only for criterion 8.3 a certain overlap with criterion 11.2 has been detected. To separate these criteria would be more adequate since both criteria focus on different aspects and do not overlap entirely. The overlap is linked to a considerable extent with design of the projects; their scope, focus as well as cost requirements beg the question whether such a comprehensible approach is sustainable and whether and how project activities can be followed up and long-term effects of the projects secured.

## **8. Draft international criteria of intercultural openness across various social sub-systems**

### **8.1. Process of developing international criteria**

At the final stage of the project, the project coordinator proposed international criteria for monitoring intercultural openness across various social sub-systems. At their proposal the project coordinator worked on findings gathered by partner organizations. In the final proposal criteria were categorized and defined in a different way in contrast to their original categorization.

The draft criteria proposed by the coordinator were further discussed at the working session of partner organizations which was attended not only by project teams from each country but also an expert invited by teams in each country, specialising in the given topic. On behalf of the Czech Republic the meeting was attended by and draft criteria (related to the labour market and employment) commented by the Director of the Ethnological Institute of the Academy of Science of the Czech Republic, Zdeněk Uherek.

Based on comments on the draft obtained from project teams from different countries and from experts invited by them the draft criteria were further reviewed. Their final wording was translated in each country and submitted for comments to five (or more in some countries) people representing three different stakeholders of the respective policy – specialists in the given field, migrants and politicians (to whom, ideally, the agenda in question is familiar and who were well-versed in the topic).

Respondents were asked to give general standpoints and comments on the discussed topic and encouraged to evaluate generally relevance of each criterion. From a broad range of contacted people answers to our questions were given by these respondents:

- Pavel Čižinský – Advocate dealing with alien law, advisor of NGO Counselling Centre for Citizenship, Civil and Human Rights and collaborator of other organizations, member of Committee for the Rights of Foreigners of Government Council for Human Rights,
- Marie Jelínková - Multicultural Centre Prague (NGO); lecturer of diversity management, member of Committee for the Rights of Foreigners of Government Council for Human Rights,
- Věra Kolmerová - Expert of Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs, dealing with employment of foreigners,
- Iva Kotvová - politician, City Hall of Prague, member of City of Prague Council Committee for the Area of National Minorities,
- Yana Leontiyeva - immigrant from Ukraine – expert – Sociological Institute, Czech Academy of Science, dealing with migration issues,
- Jarmila Marešová - expert from the Czech Statistical Office dealing with indicators of foreigner's integration,
- Jan Schroth - expert from International Organisation for Migration and
- Ladislava Šteinichová - expert from Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, dealing with implementation of employment services.

During the dialogue respondents asked about cultural openness commented these sets of topics:

1. workforce / staff / professionals working in the sub-system,
2. intercultural trainings,
3. policies / tools for advancing process of opening,

4. steering / management / internal organisation,
5. partnerships between organisations and networks,
6. intercultural contents / services,
7. mediation with target group,
8. participation of target group,
9. making use of research / dissemination and learning a
10. other.

On the basis of gathered answers the coordinator subsequently worked out the final wording of criteria which will be published in the summary report elaborated by him.

## **8.2. Relevance of international criteria proposed by experts in the field of the labour market and employment from the Czech Republic**

Interviewed experts from the Czech Republic were asked to evaluate **relevance of the above-mentioned criteria related to the field of the labour market and employment**. Criteria proposed by the coordinator for the field of the labour market and employment were nowise modified, because the aim of the project was to verify relevance of universal criteria common for all the monitored social sub-systems. This chapter pays only marginal attention to the evaluation of draft criteria (or respondents' proposals of their modification). We mention only examples when criteria were generally regarded as relevant, but particular definitions or a possibility to apply them seemed problematic or unacceptable to respondents.

Criteria focusing on the **workforce, staff or professionals working in the sub-system** are relevant to the intercultural opening of the work and employment sub-system. This finding, discovered as a result of the authors' empirical research, is not surprising since this dimension undoubtedly forms an important element of the work and employment sub-system. Moreover, the measures to which some of these criteria refer should already have been introduced on the independent initiative of related organisations without resort to controversial regulation.

With regard to the criteria in this subset, the highest level of importance should be accorded to the cultural diversity of the team and employee awareness of intercultural issues, the appointment of professionals from migrant/minority backgrounds to visible positions as role models and they should include intercultural sensitivity as a criterion in the recruitment process<sup>37</sup>.

Importance should also be accorded to those criteria related to **intercultural training**. It is beyond doubt that the efficacy of intercultural training is determined by the initial conception and design. The identified set of criteria appears to be relevant in terms both of describing the conception and design of intercultural training and (despite some criticism<sup>38</sup>) for the sub-system under discussion.

Attention should also be devoted to the **policies or tools used for advancing the process of opening**. However, especially in terms of the work and employment sub-system, the question is to what extent policies introducing intercultural opening

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<sup>37</sup> However, there were some conflicting statements in the case of the last-mentioned criterion in the interviews. This criterion imports enormous non-market regulation to the labour market and deforms it. Its relevancy is contestable since the border between measures which only "soften conditions for foreigner integration" and measures which should be considered "positive discrimination" is often unclear and arguable.

<sup>38</sup> One interview respondent pointed out that certain criteria identified in this dimension refer to different manifestations of the same aspect or to very similar aspects. The respondent remarked that the provision of "systematic and continuous" training is not possible if it is not at the same time "financially secured and sustainable". Many respondents put forward the objection that there are no appropriate criteria allowing the measurement of the impact of training ("the impact of training in the work context should be measured").

should intervene in this area (or in the labour market in general) and which measures are eligible in this regard. Interviews revealed that centralization is considered to be counterproductive. For this reason it would appear preferable to ensure the mainstreaming of intercultural issues in different institutions (or within one already existing institution) rather than to establish a specific central institution the role of which would be to provide intercultural training and coordination exclusively in this field.

It is also important to consider the influence of the media on the general public's perception of foreigners and minorities. The media has, according to the majority of respondents, a considerable impact on the sub-system. The compliance of the media with agreed ethical codes is obviously desirable however in reality this rarely happens since they are not obliged by law to do so. On the other hand, it is questionable whether it is reasonable to demand that the media be obliged to respect such codes.

The commitment that a state institution will strive for intercultural opening (**steering, management or internal organisation**) is undoubtedly promising; at the same time the risk exists that this is merely a formal declaration or simply a formal approach to fulfilling the stated aims.

The criteria related both to **mediation** and the **participation of immigrants** are undoubtedly important in terms of intercultural opening in general. However it is difficult to apply such criteria to employment. Labour offices clearly have to respect their legal obligations which include the protection of the national labour market. Consequently, the specific requirements of their clients can be considered only to a limited extent in accordance with existing legislation and the opportunities for immigrants to negotiate are limited<sup>39</sup>.

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<sup>39</sup> The legal provisions regulating entry of third country nationals into the EU labour markets set inequalities.

## 9. Opportunities for the Increased Opening of the Sub-system to Migrants

As far as "mainstream" institutions in the employment sub-area are concerned, labour offices provide by far the most important complex of services despite which the target group under investigation uses such services somewhat sporadically<sup>40</sup>. This would appear to be a crucial shortcoming in terms of the intercultural opening up of work and employment opportunities within the sub-system. The reasons are numerous but the most significant include:

- labour market regulations to which foreigners from third countries are subject,
- low level of migrant trust in this institution,
- low level of attractiveness of labour office services and
- a migrant's strong ties to their ethnic community (alternative resources or offers).

All these factors would tend to imply that the successful integration of a foreigner lies more in *institutional opening with regard to clients in general* rather than the narrower concept of the *intercultural opening of labour market institutions*. However, intercultural opening should be perceived as an important element of the broader of these two concepts. The identified *criteria of intercultural opening* are therefore (through their narrower focus) in principle also relevant. They also refer to the question as to whether the sub-area is open to migrants or not (e.g. a culturally diverse team at the labour office would increase a migrant's level of trust in this institution and thereby open up the field to them). But it is necessary to reflect that the criteria assessed below will refer only to factors influencing the *intercultural opening of labour market institutions* and will not cover the whole range of factors influencing *institutional opening in general*.

All measures which are able to increase *institutional opening in general* or the *intercultural opening* of the sub-system **should be primarily compatible with the principles and aims of employment policy**. Such measures will be counterproductive if they or the consequences of such measures considerably distort market and equal treatment principles or are seen as being in opposition to the other important aims of this policy. Consequently, it is possible to say that relevant measures (i.e. measures compatible with employment policy) should

- **reduce *undesirable* barriers** in the labour market,
- **increase an immigrant's trust** in the relevant institutions and
- **increase the attractiveness of labour office services** to immigrants (and thereby allow such services to better compete with alternative offers available).

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<sup>40</sup> According to the opinions both of labour market officers and immigrants offered at interview.

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OK práce information system - information requested for research purposes

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