



# Adult Migrant Education in Malta



## Table of Contents

<b>CHAPTER 1: MIGRATION BACKGROUND</b>	<b>3</b>
<i>1.1. Overview of the situation of migrants and immigration regulation</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>1.2. Migrant Integration Policy and Measures / Services</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>1.3. Identifying Educational Needs of Adult Migrants</i>	<i>8</i>
<b>CHAPTER 2: ADULT MIGRANT EDUCATION IN MALTA</b>	<b>9</b>
<i>2.1. The Maltese Adult Education System and Infrastructure</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>2.2. Adult Migrant education policies</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>2.3. Infrastructures of Adult Migrant Education System</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>2.4. Adult Migrants Education Programmes and Methods</i>	<i>13</i>
<b>CHAPTER 3: DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE ADULT MIGRANT EDUCATION STRATEGY</b>	<b>14</b>
<i>3.1. Challenges and opportunities in the adult migrant education</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>3.2. Planning and evaluating adult migrant education policies</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>3.3. Access to quality education</i>	<i>16</i>
<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>18</b>

## CHAPTER 1: MIGRATION BACKGROUND

### *1.1. Overview of the situation of migrants and immigration regulation*

As most of the countries in the Mediterranean area, Maltese island have switched their nature from source to destination countries during the XXI century.

At the beginning of last century, the English monarchy planned to have a military base on the island, but they had the impression that the population was so wide that, given the small dimension, there would have been no space for the soldiers. This lead to a demographic policy based on making migration of Maltese people easier. Most of the Maltese moved into other English speaking countries (mainly USA, Canada and Australia). The flow of migrants from Malta continued during the two World Wars and even after, when the Government itself was organising technical trainings in order to ease the integration into the labour market of the country of destination (Mayo 2007: 9).

While some Maltese people were still leaving the islands, and the remaining were obtaining their independence from the United Kingdom, small groups of foreigners started to arrive and settle down: besides some British which decided to stay in Malta even if the domination was over, relatively small groups of Indians, Arabs and Nigerians landed in the country and established roots here (Cassar 2013: 12).

During the 90s, the country came to the fore as a country of humanitarian immigration because of the arrival of refugees from the Gulf and later on from Yugoslavia. In the same period, the Government started the discussion related to the opportunity of Malta joining the European Union. This process ended up with official negotiation process and finally the access to the EU in May, 1<sup>st</sup> 2004.

Some researchers (Pace 2012: 199) link the access to EU to the growth of the numbers of arrivals of people from Sub-Saharan region, which started landing in Malta in the first decade of the 2000s.

According to UNHCR Malta (2014) the boat arrivals in Malta have been increasing between 2002 and 2008, when Italy and Lybia signed a security agreement which made the flow of boats decrease until 2010. After this stop, the flow started to increase again with the explosion of the crisis in Northern Africa. UNHCR states that the increase during the following years can be linked to the operation *Mare Nostrum*, which was putting more pressure on Maltese Government for the organisation of missions of rescue at sea.

The end of the operation marked a new drop in the flows, starting from last year and continuing during the current year.

Despite the perception of an influx of arrivals from the MENA region and Sub-Saharan Africa which is common among the general public, the majority of migrants arriving in Malta are made up of EU citizens. According to UNHCR, the biggest non Maltese group on the island in 2011 were British, followed by Somali and Italians.

According to the current Minister of Education and Employment, Mr. Evarist Bartolo there are over 6,000 third country nationals working in Malta<sup>1</sup>: the largest community being the Filipinos (1,128), followed by the Serbs (793) and Chinese (346). Most of them are employed in unskilled occupations, but given the particularly favourable Maltese fiscal regime, a number of companies which are incorporated in the country are managed by foreigners and present good employment opportunities for others to come.

Immigration in Malta is regulated by the Chapter 217<sup>2</sup> of the Laws of Malta, i.e. the Immigration Act. Article 10 of the Act states that if someone enters the country without the necessary documents, this person should be temporarily detained, in order to ascertain if he/she is entitled to humanitarian protection, if required. If the person does not intend to seek asylum, a Removal Order becomes applicable and effective (Article 14), which will lead the person back to his/her country of origin or to another State in which he/she may be permitted to enter according to the provisions of any readmission agreement concluded in accordance with international law and to which Malta may be party (Article 14.4).

The detention of people arriving without proper documentation, even if they intend to seek asylum, is one of the most criticized aspects of Maltese law. According to Social Watch Europe (Sammut 2009), conditions of the detention centres on the island in 2009 were deplorable. The high number of boat arrivals caused the centres to be overcrowded and with poor hygiene facilities. Detention is mandatory for all the people arriving without a visa from the country of origin, for the ones which could not obtain a visa at their arrival and for the ones who attempt to overstay after their visa expires.

In order to transpose the Returns Directive (n. 2008/115), some amendments to Returns Regulations were made in 2014 through Legal Notice 15. The amendments introduced a review of the detention of people at reasonable intervals that shall not exceed three months. This change in the regulation resulted in changes in the procedure, which resulted in the release of detained persons. According to AIDA report (2015: 54), it seems that the changes in place consisted of assessments on the “returnability” of persons, based on their nationality.

---

<sup>1</sup> The figure has been reported by various newspapers and was tabled by the Minister as an answer to Parliamentary question by Mr. Charlo Bonnici, Member of Maltese Parliament.

<sup>2</sup> Immigration Act: <http://www.justiceservices.gov.mt/DownloadDocument.aspx?app=lom&itemid=8722&l=1>

According to the Immigration Act (Article 7), “the Minister may issue, subject to such conditions as he may deem proper to establish, a residence permit to any person who makes an application for retirement, settlement or an indefinite stay in Malta”. In order to obtain a residence permit, a non-EU national shall first of all prove that he/she can maintain him/herself, by providing a work contract or any title that proves that has means with which he/she can maintain him/herself<sup>3</sup>.

After five years of continuous residence in the country, migrants are allowed to require long term residence. Besides the criteria of continuous residence in the country, other requirements are:

1. Economic self sufficiency for the two years previous to the application (the person might also prove that s/he has the resources to sustain members of the family)
2. Adequate accommodation
3. Health insurance
4. Compliance with some basic integration conditions:
  - a. Attendance (at least 75%) of a course organised by the Employment and Training Corporation on the social, economic, cultural and demographic history and environment of Malta
  - b. Obtain a pass mark of at least 75% after being assessed for the equivalent of Malta Qualifications Framework Level 2 in English
5. Submit a letter explaining why they came and then stayed in Malta (employment history, current and past premises occupied, family members and any other information which may be useful in the consideration of the long term status).

Long term resident permit is valid for 5 years and shall be automatically renewable upon application.

Foreigners willing to acquire Maltese citizenship have two main choices: naturalization upon registration and naturalization under the *Individual Investor Programme (IIP)*.

Maltese Citizenship Act<sup>4</sup> (Article 10) states that a person can apply for Maltese citizenship if the following requirements are fulfilled:

1. Has resided for at least for 12 month in Malta throughout an uninterrupted period immediately preceding the date of application
2. Has spent in Malta at least 4 years prior the said period of 12 months
3. Has an adequate knowledge of the Maltese and English language
4. Is of good character and would be a suitable citizen of Malta

---

<sup>3</sup> Until 2014, there was a different application for EU citizens and non-EU citizens. Legal Notice 160/2014 transposed the EU directive 2001/98 which asked governments to unify the procedure for EU citizens and non-EU citizens.

<sup>4</sup> Maltese Citizenship Act:

<http://www.justiceservices.gov.mt/DownloadDocument.aspx?app=lom&itemid=8702&l=1>

Besides the application form and ID documents, a person should provide a letter which explains why s/he wishes to become a Maltese citizenship, and also an explanation of her/his life in Malta (work experiences, involvement in the community).

The Individual Investment Programme allows individuals (and their families) who contribute to the economic and social development of the country to obtain citizenship by a certificate of naturalisation. Besides the other documents, the programme requires some investments, namely:

- the acquisition of a property for the value of 350,000€<sup>5</sup>
- a contribution to the National Development and Social Fund
- an investment in stock, bonds or special purpose vehicles to be identified by the governmental agency (Identity Malta)<sup>6</sup>.

Family reunification is regulated by the Subsidiary Legislation n. 150 of said Act, which states that the sponsor has to prove to have a stable economic situation and has to be potentially entitled to permanent residence. If these requirements are filled, the person can ask for the reunification of his/her spouse and child/ren<sup>7</sup>.

Besides residence permits, according to the Immigration Act, a third country national will need an employment licence (former work permits). This will be issued by the Employment and Training Corporation (ETC), a governmental agency which provides assistance to workers and employers in order to make easier for them to “meet” their needs on the labour market. Employment licences for third country nationals are generally issued for one year but are renewable. Differences in the duration are applied in the case of refugees (6 months) and failed asylum seekers (3 months). Among the documents needed to apply, the applicant which has no specific qualification for the job needs to provide letters of references which will prove that the person has gained experience in the position. Another requirement is a letter by the employer which explains why the position can’t be filled by a Maltese or European national.

## *1.2. Migrant Integration Policy and Measures / Services*

Despite migration is not really a new phenomenon in Malta, the public attitude towards migrants is still a barrier for their integration. The *Migrant Integration Policy Index* (MIPEX) showed that Malta is a slightly unfavourable environment for integration. The overall score obtained (40/100), ranks the country at 33<sup>rd</sup> position out of 38 countries.

One of the most criticized points is the length of bureaucracy, which is seen as an obstacle to integration, an aspect which is strongly criticised by third country national communities is

---

<sup>5</sup> The property has to be kept for at least 5 years

<sup>6</sup> The minimum amount of investment is 150,000€ and they have to be detained for a minimum of 5 years.

<sup>7</sup> Refugee Act, available at <http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/55118b6a4.pdf>

the slowness of the procedure to obtain residence permits, which is worsened by language barriers. The long bureaucratic timing makes more difficult for third country nationals to start working and/or to have the possibility to require family reunification, thus making more difficult for them to integrate in the society. In addition to this, the negative attitude that the general public has towards migrants reflects in the lack of will to help people understand the administrative machine.

In order to ease the process of obtaining information and make the bureaucratic process faster, the Government realised a web portal<sup>8</sup> in which the user can find information on Maltese Law, documents needed to obtain residence permits, educational opportunities, and others. The website was launched only last year, as a result of a project which saw the collaboration between the Ministry for Social Dialogue and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

The biggest challenge for Malta is the lack of a comprehensive integration policy. This leads migrants to rely on the community of origin, to help them find out the required documents, a job and a house, contributing to the isolation of the groups.

During the last year, policy attention towards integration of third country nationals increased. This interest pushed the Ministry for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties to launch the project *Mind D Gap – Together we can make a difference*. The main aim of the project is to contribute to the integration strategy which will be launched during 2015.

In the framework of this project, the Minister launched, in May 2015, a public consultation process by publishing online three general questions which were asking for opinions and suggestions of single or groups of citizens regarding the different fields of action of the strategy (anti-discrimination, social barriers and opportunities, role of local communities, civil participation)<sup>9</sup>. The consultation was open for one month and collected feedback from different organizations (migrant and Maltese organizations and NGOs working in the field) but also independent citizens (both Maltese and foreigners), academic institution and international organizations (IOM and UNHCR).

Most of the subscribers agree that there is the need for an integration policy, which will empower migrants and it make easier for them to build a life in Malta. Most of the entities that gave feedback agreed that the considered aspect have to be tackled in order to have a good integration strategy and some of them made suggestions based on information from other countries and/or studies which show best practices all over the world. The main theme that comes out of the consultation, which is also underlined by MIOEX, is that the government needs to improve the anti-discrimination regulation, which is still considered a

---

<sup>8</sup> The integration portal is available at [www.integration.gov.mt](http://www.integration.gov.mt)

<sup>9</sup> The results of the public consultation process are available at <http://tinyurl.com/qfo776s>

big obstacle to integration. This is considered to be a key area, its improvement will have a very positive impact on the other considered areas, in particular easing access to the labour market by easing the procedure to obtain the employment license.

At the moment, a working group is shaping the strategy which, as mentioned above, will be issued later on during the year (2015).

### *1.3. Identifying Educational Needs of Adult Migrants*

In the framework of the public consultation process almost all the subscribers recognised that education is one of the main drivers for integration.

This outcome has been confirmed by third country nationals which were consulted during the research<sup>10</sup>. Almost all of them recognised that linguistic barriers make the process of obtaining information on the required documents more difficult. The request made by most of the migrants is to have more opportunities to learn both the languages spoken in the country (English and Maltese), in order to have a better understanding of this specific aspect of the culture. Moreover a course on Maltese culture is deemed useful because it eases understanding of the community they are going to live in.

Besides cultural and linguistic courses, some of the interviewed also requested specific vocational courses, possibly with a training component. This are deemed useful in order to improve their employability. Another useful aspect, according to Malta Migrants Association<sup>11</sup>, would be to have more information on the rights of the workers and Maltese labour legislation, this would help to avoid exploitation and raise awareness on their rights as human beings.

The main finding that emerges from both subscribers to public consultations and interviews with migrants is the need for more information on educational opportunities, which are often not “advertised”.

---

<sup>10</sup> During the research we got in touch with some third country nationals and asked them to answer to some questions regarding their educational needs and their awareness about educational opportunities offered to them in Malta.

<sup>11</sup> Feedback provided in the framework of the public consultation process for the Integration Strategy (May 2015), available at <http://tinyurl.com/qfo776s>



## CHAPTER 2: ADULT MIGRANT EDUCATION IN MALTA

### 2.1. *The Maltese Adult Education System and Infrastructure*

The first step for the diffusion of Adult Education Programmes in Malta was made in 1850, when rev. Pullicino organised first evening classes targeting adults. The course took inspiration from the Italian “*scuola serale*” (evening school). The main aim of the lessons was to teach people how to read and write, but also some mathematical and technical skills alongside literacy (Mayo 2007 : 8).

The evening classes, together with Sunday classes, survived until the beginning of last century, with some changes in the programmes, reflecting changes in the political situation. According to Professor Mayo (2007: 8), the main change was the introduction of English language – the language spoken the elite at the beginning of XXI century - as a way to end the Italian influence on the country.

In between the two World Wars, the economy of the country was stationary<sup>12</sup>. In a state where resources are limited, labour becomes an easily exportable commodity, and that is precisely what happened to Malta. People emigrated from the island to look for work in English speaking countries (Canada, USA and Australia). The Government, following the suggestions of the receiving countries, started to organise courses which provided the future migrants with technical and agricultural skills. In 1938, the first Migrants Training Centre was opened in Ghammieri (Mayo, 2007: 8).

Last year, the Ministry for Education and Employment launched the Lifelong Learning Strategy<sup>13</sup>, for the period between 2014 and 2020. The basic idea is to provide learning opportunities from *cradle to grave*. The Strategy has to be read together with a number of other documents<sup>14</sup>, whose aim is to organize a comprehensive policy which will increase the flexibility of adult workers and improve their employability not only at national but also at international level.

The challenges identified within the Strategy are the following:

- Low level of adults participating in Lifelong Learning Programme

---

<sup>12</sup> As already mentioned, the beginning of XXI century in Malta was characterized by the British domination. The colonizers decided to built in the country a military camp and shaped the whole political and economical system around it.

<sup>13</sup> The whole strategy is available at <https://lifelonglearning.gov.mt/dbfile.aspx?id=37>

<sup>14</sup> The documents are: National Employment Policy (2014), National Strategic Policy for Active Ageing (2014), National Literacy Strategy (2014), Malta’s National Reform Programme under the Europe 2020 Strategy (2013), A Strategic Plan for the Prevention of Early School Leaving Strategy for Malta (2012), National Strategy for the Cultural and Creative Industries (2012), A National Curriculum Framework for All (2012)

- High number of early school leavers<sup>15</sup>
- Low participation of women in the labour market or in Lifelong Learning
- Low education passed on from generation to generation.

In order to address the challenges, the Strategy set 5 main objectives:

1. Stimulate participation by creating a demand and a desire for learning
2. Place the learner at the centre through the optimisation of methodologies
3. Improve skills sets contributing to professional development and employment mobility
4. Develop support structures
5. Improve the governance of Lifelong learning sector.

The primary public organisation in charge of Lifelong Learning is the Directorate for Lifelong Learning. The main objective of this organisation is to develop a strong and responsive adult learning sector. It provides different courses at basic level and also at MQF level 1<sup>16</sup>, in different subjects, varying from language to vocational courses. Basic courses are offered free of charge, while level 1 courses are offered at a subsidised rate.

Another provider of vocational education and training is Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) has the main objective of enhancing employability through policy recommendations and implementation of initiative for the empowerment of jobseekers, but it provides also assistance to employers in the recruitment and training. ETC offers basic skills courses with the aim of increase unemployed opportunities of work.

Through the *Reggie Miller Foundation*, General Workers Union<sup>17</sup> offers a number of courses for adults. The courses cover a wide range of topics varying from arts and craft to IT and vocational courses.

University of Malta offers the opportunity for adults interested in the courses to enrol as part time students, in order to match educational and working needs. While full time students can attend the courses free of charge, part time students have to pay to attend.

Two other institutes provide educational and vocational courses, mainly focusing in science and technology and the touristic industry. Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) is a tertiary education provider. The aim is to provide educational and training courses ranging from qualification to degree level (MQF levels 1-6).

---

<sup>15</sup> According to the strategy, in 2012, 61% of Maltese adult had a low level of education, while EU average is about 25%

<sup>16</sup> Malta Qualification Framework (MQF) provides an indication of the level of difficulty as a benchmark for those qualifications which still need to be mapped in the framework. The qualification is recognised according to the level of difficulty of the course, which is described through the use of a number of *level descriptors*, which indicate the outcomes acquired by the learner at the end of the educational process.

<sup>17</sup> General Workers Union (GWU) is the largest trade union in Malta. Among the service they offer to their members, they also have a programme against black market economy which is a phenomenon that often involves third country nationals.

The Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS) aims at meet the changing needs of the hospitality and tourism industry. As the MCAST, the level of the courses rang from qualification to degree (MQF level 1-6).

## *2.2. Adult Migrant education policies*

The recognition of diploma and qualifications in Malta pertains to the National Commission for Further and Higher Education (NCFHE), which can deal with this through the Qualifications Recognition and Information Centre (QRIC). The recognition is based on Malta Qualification Network and European Qualification Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF).

As pointed out by some of the third country nationals interviewed, the problem is still the slowness of the bureaucratic process, which may take up to three months in this case and this may discourage people to undertake the process, thus limiting employment opportunities.

In Malta, third country nationals have the same right as natives to enrol the educational and vocational trainings offered. The only difference is related to costs: for courses offered by the Directorate for Lifelong Learning, natives and EU citizens have the opportunity to attend basic courses free of charge and level 1 courses at a subsidised rate; third country nationals have to pay for the basic courses, and have to pay a higher fee to attend the level 1 courses. The same policy applies when it comes to MCAST and University courses, even if in this cases exemptions are possible in the case of refugees and people under subsidiary protection.

This difference in pricing policy might be seen as one of the issues that should be addressed by the integration strategy, because it might be an obstacle for third country nationals to access to education and training.

The only initiative specifically targeting third country nationals was implemented by ETC during last year. As one of the outcomes of a EU co-financed project (IF 03-2012 Integrating TCNs in Maltese society), ETC was asked to organize a training called *Living and Working in Malta*, which was aimed at providing information on the documents required to work in Malta, but was also providing basic cultural information, in order to ease the integration.

The context is a bit different when it comes to asylum seekers and refugees living in the open centres, because a number of NGOs and voluntary organizations provide educational activities both inside and outside the centres. Usually, these are offered on voluntary base, which means that often people teaching lack of experience and/or qualification. Besides the lack of professional educators, another problem is that educational activities offered to refugee and asylum seekers may be financed through different funding sources, and might stop once the project ends.

The lack of professional teaching skills and the lack of continuity are recognised as two of the main factors affecting the educational activities offered inside the open centres, but another issue which may affect the employability of the residents might also be the lack of qualification recognised by these courses.

### *2.3. Infrastructures of Adult Migrant Education System*

As already mentioned, there are not specific policies for the education of adult migrants, so there is no difference in the public infrastructure offering educational and vocational trainings to adults.

It has to be highlighted that a number of people come to Malta on a temporary base, in order to attend one of the many private English schools and improve their knowledge of the language.

As already mentioned, the situation for asylum seekers and refugee is a bit different, with NGOs offering courses and information sessions inside the open centres, but also other religious and nonreligious organisations offering courses outside the centres.

Following some of the initiatives which are deemed to be most interesting.

Information sessions for the residents in the open centres. The sessions were organized by the Agency for the Welfare of Asylum Seekers (AWAS) and have been held in the open centres between March and June 2015 by Kopin<sup>18</sup>. The topics of each sessions and the informative materials has been provided by AWAS. The tackled topics were: education and employment, budgeting, health, housing, social skills and hygiene. The outcomes was positive both from the trainers and from the beneficiaries.

Lessons in Marsa open centre. The Foundation for Shelter and Support to Migrants (FSM) is an NGO which is in charge of managing an open centre in Marsa hosting adult men. The management offers residents the opportunity to attend different educational and vocational trainings: among the others, also a one-off course on food handling, which was open also to residents of other open centres.

English courses at Blue Door Institute. Blue Door Institute is managed and financed by Saint Andrew Scots Church. The institute offers English lessons held by professional teachers, but they are open only to refugee and asylum seekers. The courses are held between October and June and have quite a large attendance (between 100 and 180 people). The lessons are open to people living in the centres and also people living in the community. The organization releases to the students a certificate of attendance showing clearly their level.

---

<sup>18</sup> The sessions were held in the framework of a EU co financed project in which Kopin was partner and AWAS the leader organisation.

## 2.4. Adult Migrants Education Programmes and Methods

As already mentioned, the methodology used in Malta for migrant education is the same as for natives. But, observing the work of some of the actors involved in adult education and migrant education in Malta, is it possible to identify some methodological features which might be considered good practices.

It is deemed important to mention that in the framework of an ESF project involving a number of organisations both governmental and non-governmental working in the field of education, has been developed a toolkit for Maltese literacy. The toolkit, called "*Ic-Cavetta*", is currently used by the Directorate of Lifelong Learning in literacy courses for Maltese. It takes into consideration different aspects deemed important when it comes to teaching literacy skills to adults. First of all, the training techniques have a strong visual aspect, in order to facilitate the recognition of the letters. The contents of the toolkit are specifically developed in order to target adults, and it is also IT interactive<sup>19</sup>.

According to Professor Mayo from the University of Malta, it is important to have a look at South America, main destination continent of most of the European flows during the second half of last century. One of the most important researchers in the field of pedagogy of last century, Professor Paulo Freire (1921-1997) has developed the concept of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire, 1971), and *banking education*, which have been deemed really useful by pedagogues around the world in order to deal with adult education. The main idea that the pedagogy of Freire tries to destroy is that human mind is like an empty jar, which has to be filled with concepts. According to Freire, in fact this is the process used by oppressors in order to enslave people with no education.

Freire suggests a contextual approach, based on real-life experiences of the learner. In this non-formal approach, formal language study plays a secondary role: reading and writing skills are acquired through the inquiry of the problems affecting their community. One of the main features of this approach is the *dialogue* between teachers and learners. Dialogue was defined by Freire as a two-way relationship between two subjects, in which the parts confront each other as equally knowledgeable: while the teachers have the knowledge on reading and writing skills, the students have the knowledge of their culture.

Freire's approach was successfully used for teaching in developing countries, but also as a methodology to teach basic literacy skills in native languages in the United States.

The use of this approach for teaching a foreign language might be limited by cultural differences, but researches conducted on possible application show that it is possible, and useful, to use everyday life situations as a starting point for discussion and teaching of adults, particularly if dealing with languages.

---

<sup>19</sup> More information on the project are available at <http://www.cavetta.org/mt/eng/about.php>



## CHAPTER 3: DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE ADULT MIGRANT EDUCATION STRATEGY

### *3.1. Challenges and opportunities in the adult migrant education*

According to MIPEX<sup>20</sup> Analysis results, Malta has obtained quite a low score with regards to educational opportunities offered. As already pointed out, a number of third country nationals, underlined the importance of education as driver for integration: in this framework, having a better organized educational system targeting migrants shall be useful in order to ease integration. Through cultural and linguistic courses, migrants get to know the destination country, and understand better the context in which they are living.

One of the aims of the integration policy, should be the exploitation of the potential that education opportunities can have. Thus, this strategy should take in consideration also the provisions of the other policy documents developed during the last years, particularly the Lifelong Learning Strategy and the National Employment Policy.

According to the National Employment Policy (2014: 72), offering training and education opportunities to migrants, will have a positive impact in order to fill the vacancies resulting from excess demand. Education opportunities will empower migrant labour force and allow them to be employed on the formal labour market, thus mitigating the disadvantages experienced by unemployed on the formal market. Moreover, from a macroeconomic perspective, the recruitment of young migrant labour force, will mitigate the ageing factor, which has been growing during last years.

The challenges that the strategy for adult education will have to tackle have already been listed, and some of them can be addressed also when it comes to migrant education. It is important to keep in mind, anyway, that migrants have different stories, which are part of their cultural background and can affect the learning process in different ways. It is deemed important also that the learning materials and methodology show links with everyday situations, which can be helpful to make adults understand the importance of education.

Another shared challenge is the involvement of women, which can be problematic among migrants too, according to cultural habits.

As suggested by Professor Mayo (Mayo, 2009), with regards to asylum seekers and refugees, an opportunity might be transforming detention/open centres into Lifelong Learning Centres with education for resettlement as focal point. Moreover, it should be useful to have intercultural courses for all the people which are working with asylum seekers, not only social and care workers, but also people working in the police force, the army, the

---

<sup>20</sup> *Migrant Integration Policy Index*, is developed in Malta by *The People for Change Foundation*. The results for each country involved are available at <http://www.mipex.eu/>.

judicial sector and also people working in the media, in order to stop the xenophobic wave which is spreading around Europe.

### *3.2. Planning and evaluating adult migrant education policies*

In order to achieve quality education for migrants, the first step is to have in place an effective anti-discrimination law. According to the Network of Experts in Social Sciences of Education and training (Heckmann 2008: 71), anti-discrimination laws might be useful in order to overcome forms of discrimination which can take place at a micro level<sup>21</sup>, but they might not be effective when it comes to improving the situation of structural disadvantage in education. Thus the main objective of this laws, in the field of education, should be to combat the discrimination lead by denied support. This form of discrimination has been suggested by the Network and refers to the *denial by the political and civil leadership of societies, of support for individuals and groups with little economic, cultural and social capital, who cannot improve their lot on their own so as to achieve a situation of equal opportunity in the societal competition for positions, resources and status.* (Heckmann 2008: 37).

The suggestion that they make in order to reach quality education for migrants, is to try and implement diversity policies, whose main aim is to look upon diversity as a resource that is not used to its full potential. These policies target mainly institutions and organisations, against those rules and habits which cause disadvantages to minority groups.

The opening of new opportunities, should go in parallel with the empowerment of the groups, not only the migrants, but also the natives, which should be trained in order improve inter-group relations and reduce prejudices.

If applied to the field of education, this policies could take the form of goals targeting minority groups, and this will generate a ripple effect which will translate into the elimination of all the obstacles that have been hindering the participation and the success of students from these groups. The results will be possible because of the change in perception of the system, which will be deemed to provide more opportunities of success but also more support to minorities.

Another policy which could be useful in order to reach quality education concerns the recruitment of the personnel, particularly the teachers. By increasing the number of teachers from minority groups, the institute will reach the double result of pushing

---

<sup>21</sup> Heckmann identifies three different forms of discrimination at micro level: *individual discrimination*, i.e. the unjustified unequal treatment based on prejudice and stereotyping; *conformity discrimination*, i.e. the unequal treatment caused by social group pressure and to avoid social sanction; *opportunistic discrimination*, based on the belief that recognition and acceptance for membership of certain persons would be detrimental to oneself or one's organization, because other people have prejudice against these persons (2008: 36-37).



minorities towards education and also to deconstruct some of the prejudices of students from other social groups.

The application of these principles to the adult migrants education system will lead to the empowerment of migrants, which would ideally feel more integrated in the society. Moreover, giving an opportunity and a fair chance to migrants will allow the society of destination to have availability of the full economic potential of all its human resources.

The application of these principles to Maltese society should start by the removal of the differences in the pricing policy for educational opportunities. This might be helpful in order to increase the number of third countries nationals enrolled in the courses. Moreover, implementing specific programmes which take into consideration the different learning paths and backgrounds of the students would translate into an increase of the share of migrants which will successfully complete the courses.

It is deemed useful, moreover, to clearly identify a number of targets in the indicators, this will have the effect of having a concrete measure of the effects of the policies.

### *3.3. Access to quality education*

The strategy for Lifelong Learning foresees four different sets of quality indicators for educational initiatives targeting adults, which deal with different areas.

- AREA A: Skills, competencies and attitudes
  - Literacy
  - Numeracy
  - New Skills for the Learning Society
  - Learning-to-Learn Skills
  - Active Citizenship, Cultural and Social Skills
- AREA B: Access and Participation
  - Access to Lifelong Learning
  - Participation in Lifelong Learning
- AREA C: Resources for Lifelong Learning
  - Investment in Lifelong Learning
  - Educators and Learning
  - ICT in Learning
- AREA D: Strategies and System Development
  - Strategies for Lifelong Learning
  - Coherence of Supply
  - Guidance and Counselling
  - Accreditation and Certification
  - Quality Assurance

The Strategy has already foreseen a specific Programme which can be applied to migrants. *Programme 34* foresees the setting up of a working group with the aim of identifying and remove the barriers to adult learning among migrants, particularly those not in education, employment and training (NEETs). The focus of the programmes and methodologies should be to ease the integration in Maltese society, and make them becoming self supporting. The programmes and methodologies should be tailored to migrants' needs, but also their skills and personal stories.

Another envisaged measure is the development of a community programme involving people regularly working with migrants. The rationale would be to sensitize people and avoid the cultivation of xenophobic attitudes.

According to the programme, there should be a number of partnership with NGOs working in the field of migration, but also with private companies. Particularly important would be the partnership with General Workers Union, which would be an important partner also in order to inform migrants about their rights as workers.

It would be also useful to ease the process of recognition of qualifications, this will increase the number of third country nationals in higher education, but also in skilled jobs.

Given the fact that the practical implementation of the strategy will most probably take some times, an immediate measure to obtain quality education should be providing funding for educational projects which will make them being continuous and thus not affecting the learning process of the students.

## REFERENCES

### Books and articles

- Asylum Information Database (2015). AIDA – Country Report: Malta. Available at: <http://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/malta> (last open September 2015).
- Cassar, C.M. (2013). Researching Migration and Asylum in Malta: a guide. Report from The People for Change Foundation. Available at: [http://www.pfcmalta.org/uploads/1/2/1/7/12174934/researching\\_migration\\_and\\_asylum\\_in\\_malta\\_-\\_a\\_guide.pdf](http://www.pfcmalta.org/uploads/1/2/1/7/12174934/researching_migration_and_asylum_in_malta_-_a_guide.pdf) (last open September 2015).
- Freire, P. (1970). Pedagogy of the oppressed. New York: The Continuum Publishing Corporation.
- Ministry for the Education and Employment (2015). Malta National Lifelong Learning Strategy (2015-2020). Available at: <https://lifelonglearning.gov.mt/dbfile.aspx?id=37> (last open September 2015)
- Mayo, P. (2007). Adult Education in Malta. International Perspective on Education (56)
- Ministry for the Education and Employment (2014). The National Employment Policy. Available at: <http://education.gov.mt/employment/Documents/EMPLOYMENT%20POLICY%20DOC%20sml.pdf> (last open September 2015)
- Heckmann, F. (2008). Education and migration strategies for integrating migrant children in European schools and societies – A synthesis of research findings for policy makers. European Commission. Available at: <http://www.nesse.fr/nesse/activities/reports/activities/reports/>
- Pace, P. (2009). Migration in Malta: an example of Good Practice?. Malta in the European Union 2004 – 2009. Report, 197-202.
- Sammut, J.M. (2009). Immigrants in Malta. Social Watch Europe. Available at: <http://www.socialwatch.eu/2009/Malta.html> (last open September 2015)
- Spener, D. (1990). The Freirean Approach to Adult Literacy Education. National centre for ESL Literacy Education. Available at: [http://www.cal.org/caela/esl\\_resources/digests/FREIREQA.html](http://www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/FREIREQA.html) (last open September 2015)

### Legislation

- Republic of Malta (1965). Maltese Citizenship Act. (2013). Laws of Malta.
- Republic of Malta (1970). Immigration Act. (2013). Laws of Malta.
- Republic of Malta (2000). Refugee Act. (2015). Laws of Malta.

### List of websites

- Directorate of Lifelong Learning: <https://lifelonglearning.gov.mt/>
- Employment and training Corporation (ETC): <http://www.etc.gov.mt/Index.aspx>
- General Workers Union (GWU): <http://www.gwu.org.mt/Default.aspx>

- Integration webpage: <https://integration.gov.mt/en/Pages/Home.aspx>
- MIPEX – Country report Malta: <http://www.mipex.eu/malta>
- UNHCR – Malta: <http://www.unhcr.org.mt/>

*Stakeholders Consulted*

- Ms. Marcelle Bugre, Foundation for Shelter and Support for Migrants
- Mr. Mario Cardona, Directorate of Lifelong Learning
- Ms. Elizabeth Lloyd, Director of Blue Door Institute
- Professor Peter Mayo, University of Malta