

# TOWARDS A WHOLE-OF-SOCIETY APPROACH TO RECEIVING AND SETTLING NEWCOMERS IN EUROPE



By Demetrios G. Papademetriou and Meghan Benton



Vision Europe Summit

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## Executive Summary

The fever appears to have broken in Europe, as the seemingly relentless flows of migrants and refugees have abated. But this is a fragile, and possibly illusory, calm. Although most European countries—especially those of arrival and final destination—now have the breathing space they need to reduce adjudication backlogs and bottlenecks, the inability of European Union (EU) institutions to forge a regional solution to the migration crisis has exposed deeper cracks in the European project. And as public services and communities grapple with the scale, pace, and evolving nature of migration flows, several countries feel that they are doing far more than their fair share.

Italy is now bearing the brunt of renewed flows while Greece, ground zero of the crisis, is still struggling to build the needed capacity to offer vital services and assess protection claims in a timely fashion. Against this backdrop, the decision by voters in the United Kingdom to leave the European Union is a symptom of a more widespread malaise, a crisis of sovereignty-pooling multilateralism, and above all a loss of confidence in political elites. The publics of many countries perceive a growing chasm between the winners and losers of globalization, and although immigration is not the sole or even main cause of these anxieties, its role in driving rapid and seemingly uncontrollable social change is a powerful unifying narrative for those who feel left behind.

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*Many countries in Europe are old hands at the integration game, and the region can draw from rich collective experience.*

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Despite the sense that too many crises are unfolding at once, some countries and sectors of society remain optimistic that newcomers will inject vital human capital into aging workforces. The lessons of history, however, suggest that the integration of newcomers into European labor markets—and communities—will be neither straightforward nor complete. Although some groups have performed remarkably well, the general story across the continent is one of persistent socioeconomic gaps between natives and migrants. There is also considerable evidence that this disadvantage is often passed on to the children of immigrants, making EU Member States less successful than other Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries (including Canada and, in many ways, the United States) in supporting intergenerational mobility. Meanwhile, the segregation of migrant and minority groups in housing, schools, and services continues to fuel both anxiety about immigration and various forms of discrimination. Together, these factors create a vicious cycle that makes it harder for newcomers and their offspring to thrive.

The prognosis for efforts that seek to successfully integrate migrants is uncertain. While it is true that an increasing share of well-educated newcomers is entering the European workforce, most new arrivals possess characteristics routinely associated with difficulty entering and succeeding in the labor market: limited education, poor host-country language proficiency, and skills and experience out of sync with the needs of local employers. The diversity and scale of inflows, large number of unaccompanied minors, and significant physical and mental health needs of newcomers is putting further pressure on already-stretched public services. Meanwhile, automation and digitization continue to make many low-skilled jobs redundant, suggesting that the economic integration of many migrants will become harder rather than easier as the labor market is transformed.

However, there is also some good news. Many countries in Europe are old hands at the integration game, and the region can draw from rich collective experience and knowledge of what works. Policymakers who are able to make strategic, farsighted investments; balance experimentation and new methods with a rigorous commitment to evaluation; enlist new actors (especially employers and other social partners)



in supporting immigrant integration; and avail themselves of new technologies and innovations will be on strong footing to transform this crisis into an opportunity.

Importantly, because the political, social, and economic contexts and immigration histories of European countries are different, what works in one country may not work in another. But a number of overarching principles can be identified that should stand European countries in good stead when facing the persistent effects of this challenge, and the next one. Promising approaches to integration policy are:

- **Work-focused but not myopic.** They prioritize labor market integration, but not at the expense of broader social belonging; for instance, they create opportunities for people unable to work to nonetheless become full members of their new societies.
- **Pre-emptive.** They take the earliest opportunity to map the skills—and diagnose the needs—of newcomers in order to put them on a fast track to work and inclusion.
- **Coordinated.** They promote collaboration and action across the whole of government, including brokering a fair deal with local actors and ensuring integration objectives are embedded across all policy portfolios.
- **Collaborative.** They bring together existing civil society groups and new players, from tech companies and social enterprises to refugees and migrants themselves as part of a whole-of-society approach.

Underpinning each of these approaches is the need to embed integration in robust immigration systems that build and maintain the confidence of the public, including by selecting the majority of new arrivals. Since many of the structural adaptations needed to turn this crisis into an opportunity will benefit more than just migrants, they could also strengthen public trust in governance by easing tensions over the use of scarce resources. But to truly make this work, everyone has to play their part.

The breathing space afforded by the present lull in flows should not be a time for complacency, but for strategy. The decisions being made now will shape not only the integration outcomes of the most recent newcomers, but the way European societies experience integration for decades to come. As superdiversity and hypermobility become the water in which we all swim, countries will have to develop truly dynamic responses to mobility and integration.

## I. Introduction

Europe is experiencing a period of intense uncertainty and fragmentation that is symbolized by—but runs much deeper than—immigrant integration challenges. The 2016 United Kingdom referendum vote to leave the European Union (EU) is one notable symptom of a broader malaise, characterized by feelings of alienation and disillusionment with the European project. The success of the “Leave” campaign reflected widening polarization across Europe—between the cosmopolitan residents of large urban centers and those who live in smaller cities and rural communities, between young and older, and between the winners and losers of globalization (writ large). It also revealed a distrust of politicians of all stripes who were perceived to be insulated from (and failing to understand) how their decisions were playing out for the people and communities they are meant to represent.

Moreover, most countries are plagued by sluggish economies, and some are contending with the negative effects of continued austerity policies and high unemployment, particularly among youth. Greater openness to trade and other forms of globalization have left many behind. While immigration is not the sole (or even most important) cause of these anxieties, it has become the mast to which an array



of concerns are pinned.<sup>1</sup> Populist parties have found it an easy issue to exploit. Across Europe, anti-immigration movements and calls for a changing of the political guard have raised the specter of Brexit in various forms—and even hinted at a possible demise of the European project.

It is in this context of mistrust and uncertainty that the biggest migration crisis<sup>2</sup> since the Second World War is playing out. With the lull in the number of entries into EU countries following the closure of the Balkan route and the EU-Turkey deal, there is a sense that the fever has broken. But symptoms of the crisis continue to unfold and intensify across the region. Countries of arrival and transit on the European periphery—already struggling to rebound from the persisting impact of the economic crisis—are still in emergency mode as they seek to set up functioning reception facilities, reduce the processing backlog, and breathe life into EU plans to relocate asylum seekers from Greece and Italy to other Member States. Countries of destination face huge capacity problems as their housing and integration services strive to find accommodations, care for, and educate needy populations. And communities across the region are grappling with the fast pace with which their neighborhoods are changing.

Although the crisis may not be as exceptional as some commentators suggest, it brings new challenges of scale, nature, and demographics; the recently arrived include both a significant share of individuals experiencing trauma and a large proportion of children and unaccompanied minors. The fact that the European institutions, in particular, were not designed to deal with this constellation of political, cultural, and social issues—many of which have long been the domain of national actors—is further fueling the sense that the European Union may not be fit for purpose.<sup>3</sup>

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*Although the crisis may not be as exceptional as some commentators suggest, it brings new challenges of scale, nature, and demographics.*

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In some quarters, however, there are deep wells of hope that newcomers will bring dynamism and vital skills, especially to regions with rapidly aging populations. But history teaches us that supporting new arrivals (especially those from rural areas or with limited education) into good jobs is difficult—and costly. These newest cohorts are also entering labor markets at a time of intense flux; most advanced industrial societies are likely to require better skilled and fewer workers in the future, in part because of the evolution of labor-saving technologies. While concerns about demographic change are very real, the assumption that the migration crisis can singlehandedly and comprehensively solve the demographic crisis in developed countries is misplaced. Transforming this crisis into an opportunity will require imagination, flexibility, strong leadership, extensive collaboration (reaching into every corner of society and enlisting new actors), and enormous upfront and long-term investments.<sup>4</sup>

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1 For a more in-depth discussion of the drivers of anxiety about immigration, see Demetrios G. Papademetriou and Natalia Banulescu-Bogdan, *Understanding and Addressing Public Anxiety about Immigration* (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2016), [www.migrationpolicy.org/research/understanding-and-addressing-public-anxiety-about-immigration](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/understanding-and-addressing-public-anxiety-about-immigration).

2 This report views the crisis as both a “migrant crisis” and a “refugee crisis.” It uses the phrase “migration crisis” to capture the fact that these movements are mixed flows.

3 Immigrant integration policies remain in the hands of Member States, hence some of these challenges do not technically fall under the remit of the European Union. However, this study takes the view that because integration challenges and asylum, immigration, and European policy are interdependent, and because many integration challenges are shared across Europe, it makes sense to discuss this issue as a “European challenge.” Therefore, the report discusses the integration challenges being experienced by the region as a whole, as well as by individual Member States, and, where relevant, cities and regions. “Europe” and the “European Union” are used as shorthand for the entire European Economic Area.

4 For example, Germany announced that it plans to spend 93.6 billion euros by the end of 2020. See Reuters, “German Government Plans to Spend 93.6 Billion Euros on Refugees by End 2020: Spiegel,” Reuters, May 14, 2016, [www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-germany-costs-idUSKCN0Y50DY](http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-germany-costs-idUSKCN0Y50DY).



This report considers how these integration challenges differ from, and complicate, existing challenges of fragmentation and social unrest in European countries. It assesses where integration has worked—and where it hasn't—and analyzes the prognosis for the most recent cohort of newcomers. It also sets out the main policy tradeoffs inherent to these challenges and identifies the most promising approaches to integration policy and programming.

## II. Current Integration Trends: Where Is Integration Working and Not Working?

Integration policy has seen multiple rebirths. Policymakers have debated and renegotiated the target areas (culture, work, communities), responsible agencies (national versus regional and local government), and target groups (first generation versus all migrant-background individuals,<sup>5</sup> non-EU immigrants versus all foreign born, migrants versus those with similar needs across the entire society). A number of countries have seen responsibility for the integration portfolio change hands multiple times. Others have seen a move away from targeted policies and towards mainstreaming—that is, embedding inclusion or diversity objectives across all policy areas and government departments.<sup>6</sup>

Numerous factors shape integration. Other than the characteristics of individuals migrants, discussed below, the receiving-country immigration history; general climate of welcome (or lack of it); political context and dialogue around integration; welfare model; and economic, social, and demographic trends all color the very different experiences European countries have had helping newcomers settle in. Much has been made of different models of integration and how these have supposedly shaped integration outcomes, from the so-called assimilationist French model to the Dutch brand of multiculturalism and the (at least historically) ethnocultural approach to citizenship taken in Germany. But studies have found that these models fail to account for most of the variation in integration, especially in terms of socioeconomic outcomes.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, recent policy changes (the result, in part, of EU legislation or pronouncements, for instance on the status of long-term residents) have meant that some national differences in these models have been diminished.

More important when seeking to account for differences in integration outcomes between countries is the social welfare and labor market context. For instance, Scandinavian countries, with their universalist approach to social protections, have found it difficult to enable and encourage newcomers to enter work since such countries have high (collectively bargained) minimum wages, a high level of female employment (meaning there is greater competition for jobs), and fewer low-skilled jobs. As countries introduce reforms in response to aging populations, the challenge of incorporating newcomers and ensuring the long-term sustainability of social democratic welfare systems will grow (see Section III.C.).

Despite national differences over the precise scope and approach to integration policy, European countries generally accept that integration has a number of dimensions (political, cultural, social, and economic); it is also generally recognized as a two-way process whereby the characteristics, outcomes,

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5 The term “migrant background” is used in this report to describe individuals who were either born abroad or who have at least one immigrant parent.

6 Elizabeth Collett and Milica Petrovic, *The Future of Immigrant Integration in Europe: Mainstreaming Approaches for Inclusion* (Brussels: Migration Policy Institute Europe, 2014), [www.migrationpolicy.org/research/future-immigrant-integration-europe-mainstreaming-approaches-inclusion](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/future-immigrant-integration-europe-mainstreaming-approaches-inclusion).

7 See, for example, Demetrios G. Papademetriou, Richard Alba, Nancy Foner, and Natalia Banulescu-Bogdan, *Managing Religious Difference in North America and Europe in an Era of Mass Migration* (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2016), [www.migrationpolicy.org/research/managing-religious-difference-north-america-and-europe-era-mass-migration](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/managing-religious-difference-north-america-and-europe-era-mass-migration).



or subjective experience of newcomers eventually converge with those of longer-standing residents.<sup>8</sup> Integration therefore describes a planned trajectory at the end of which the newly arrived, or at least their children, come to resemble the native born on most social and economic outcomes. However, while socioeconomic outcomes are easily measured and compared, in many ways the real test of integration is a less easily quantified state of social harmony and shared purpose. By this second definition, successful integration describes a sense of belonging and membership among newcomers and a sense of ease with the pace of social change among longstanding residents. While these dimensions are much less measurable, failure along them can manifest in angry electorates, social unrest, or exclusion and marginalization.

## A. Labor Market Integration

The most important vehicle for full integration is finding sustainable employment. Work helps new arrivals become self-sufficient, (re)gain a sense of self in a new place, bridge ethnic and cultural divides, and learn about the host-country society. As such, work can be a gateway to other dimensions of integration. However, employment can also impede integration if newcomers get stuck in low-skilled work that constrains their ability to provide for themselves and their family, to meet people from different social groups, or to develop host-country language skills.

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### *Work can be a gateway to other dimensions of integration.*

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On average, foreign-born migrants in the European Union are disadvantaged relative to natives across all economic indicators: employment and economic activity rates, underemployment, and quality of jobs (e.g., contract type, income, and share in part-time work).<sup>9</sup> Many of these gaps tend to be relatively small in the aggregate. For instance, 61 percent of foreign workers were employed relative to 66 percent of native workers across the European Union in 2015.<sup>10</sup> The proportion of people economically active is 70 percent for non-EU nationals, compared to 77 percent for nationals of the reporting Member State.<sup>11</sup> However, a number of causes for concern remain. Women's employment and activity rates are much lower than those of men, bringing the overall foreign-born average down (see the section How do Different Groups Fare?). And many of these gaps persist over time. Although the employment rates of all groups improve over time, immigrants remain overrepresented in the lowest-skilled jobs even after a

8 For instance, the Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy, agreed in 2004, state that “employment is a key part of the integration process” alongside “basic knowledge of the host society’s language, history, and institutions,” education, access to institutions and public and private goods, intercultural dialogue and participation. See Council of the European Union, “2618<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting: Justice and Home Affairs” (press release, November 19, 2004), [www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/en/jha/82745.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/jha/82745.pdf).

9 Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), *Indicators of Immigrant Integration in 2015: Settling In* (Paris: OECD, 2015), [www.oecd.org/publications/indicators-of-immigrant-integration-2015-settling-in-9789264234024-en.htm](http://www.oecd.org/publications/indicators-of-immigrant-integration-2015-settling-in-9789264234024-en.htm).

10 Data are from 2015 and do not include Romania. Gaps between foreign-born and native-born workers exceed 10 percent in Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Sweden. See Eurostat, “Employment Rates by Sex, Age and Citizenship (%) [lfsa\_ergan],” updated September 8, 2016, [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-datasets/-/lfsa\\_ergan](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-datasets/-/lfsa_ergan).

11 Gaps in activity rates are especially prominent in Western Europe (above 15 percent in Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Sweden), although this picture is not universal: in certain countries in southern and Eastern Europe, non-EU citizens are more likely to be active (for example, in Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Spain). See Eurostat, “Population by Educational Attainment Level, Sex, Age and Country of Birth (%) [edat\_lfs\_9912],” updated September 8, 2016, [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-datasets/-/edat\\_lfs\\_9912](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-datasets/-/edat_lfs_9912).

decade of residence. In fact, evidence that immigrants are steadily moving into middle- or high-skilled work over time is mixed at best.<sup>12</sup>

These poor outcomes are partially—although not exclusively—explained by education levels. More than 70 percent of third-country nationals resident in the European Union have an upper secondary or postsecondary non-tertiary education or less, and almost 40 percent have less than an upper secondary education.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, a majority of the “very-low educated” (individuals with no education or only a primary education) in many European countries are immigrants.<sup>14</sup> On top of limited formal schooling, many newcomers face additional challenges. These include limited host-country language proficiency, low levels of literacy in their own language (making learning a new language more complicated), little or no local work experience, and weak support networks (or exclusively ethnic support networks, which limit the number and quality of opportunities). They may also face difficulties navigating host-country labor markets (including a lack of information about professional norms and how to search for a job), steep learning curves in demonstrating how their skills fit employer needs, and various forms of employer discrimination.<sup>15</sup>

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*While qualification recognition systems have improved in recent years, they are rarely targeted at middle-skilled occupations.*

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Education is also no guarantee that newcomers will flourish. Skilled immigrants are often unemployed, and many experience brain waste as they struggle to put their foreign qualifications and experience to good use. For instance, immigrants with a university degree are 10 percentage points less likely to be in work relative to similarly educated natives in southern Europe, Belgium, France, the Netherlands, and Sweden. Since this disadvantage is specific to those who have a foreign degree (i.e., the gap shrinks for immigrants who have a host-country degree), it appears to largely reflect obstacles foreign workers face in getting qualifications earned abroad recognized by employers.<sup>16</sup> Such difficulties are not unique to Europe. In the United States, almost one-quarter of college-educated immigrants are un- or underemployed.<sup>17</sup> In addition to the impediments outlined above, skilled migrants find their efforts to realize their potential thwarted by limited opportunities to plug gaps where sending- and receiving-country education systems do not line up perfectly.<sup>18</sup> While qualification recognition systems have improved in recent years, they are rarely targeted at middle-skilled occupations. Moreover, alternative ways to assess the competence of people who are unable to provide evidence of their credentials or whose qualifications do not have an exact host-country equivalent, such as through on-the-job assessment, remain largely experimental (see Section IV.B.).

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12 Meghan Benton, Susan Fratzke, and Madeleine Sumption, *Moving Up or Standing Still? Access to Middle-Skilled Work for Newly Arrived Migrants in the European Union* (Washington, DC and Geneva: Migration Policy Institute and International Labor Office, 2014), [www.migrationpolicy.org/research/moving-or-standing-still-access-middle-skilled-work-newly-arrived-migrants-european-union](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/moving-or-standing-still-access-middle-skilled-work-newly-arrived-migrants-european-union).

13 Eurostat, “Employment Rates by Sex, Age and Citizenship.”

14 OECD, *Indicators of Immigrant Integration in 2015*.

15 Meghan Benton et. al., *Aiming Higher: Policies to Get Immigrants into Middle-Skilled Work in Europe* (Washington, DC and Geneva: Migration Policy Institute and International Labor Office, 2014), [www.migrationpolicy.org/research/aiming-higher-policies-get-immigrants-middle-skilled-work-europe](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/aiming-higher-policies-get-immigrants-middle-skilled-work-europe).

16 OECD, *Indicators of Immigrant Integration in 2015*.

17 Jie Zong and Jeanne Batalova, “College-Educated Immigrants in the United States,” *Migration Information Source*, February 3, 2016, [www.migrationpolicy.org/article/college-educated-immigrants-united-states](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/college-educated-immigrants-united-states).

18 Madeleine Sumption, *Tackling Brain Waste: Strategies to Improve the Recognition of Immigrants' Foreign Qualifications* (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2013), [www.migrationpolicy.org/research/tackling-brain-waste-strategies-improve-recognition-immigrants-foreign-qualifications](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/tackling-brain-waste-strategies-improve-recognition-immigrants-foreign-qualifications).



It is worth noting that migrants in the European Union do worse on many of these indicators than those in some other Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries, such as Canada and the United States. For instance, the employment rate in the United States is higher on average for foreign-born residents than for natives, an advantage that is especially prominent among low-educated men.<sup>19</sup> Social welfare models provide one explanation for this difference: it is, by and large, easier to find work in a flexible labor market and an environment of modest social protections, such as that of the United States.<sup>20</sup> However, while newcomers in the United States find employment much more quickly, they are also more likely to be underemployed or employed in low-wage jobs that offer little room for advancement into the middle class, especially during their first years in the country.<sup>21</sup>

This finding points to a potential tradeoff between early work and high-quality work. Low-skilled work can act as a stepping stone by allowing migrants to acquire valuable host-country work experience that may allow them to “unlock” their skills and return to their previous occupations. But it can also act as a trap by signaling to employers that migrants are not qualified for skilled work.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, early employment may come at the expense of longer-term career investments; newcomers who are anxious to make a living and support their families may forego time-consuming language and skills training, and credential recognition or recertification.<sup>23</sup>

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*Early employment may come at the expense of longer-term career investments.*

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### How Do Different Groups Fare?

These headline findings obscure considerable variation between groups and destination countries. In addition to education level, factors such as route of entry, gender, and country of origin all shape employment opportunities and labor market success.

**Route of entry.** On average, labor migrants (especially those who have a job offer before arrival) fare much better in the labor market. In many Western European countries, the employment rates of labor migrants approximate or exceed those of natives after a decade of residence (see Figure 1). This partly reflects the fact that immigrants from outside the European Union are likely to have immigrated specifically to take up a job offer (and likely a skilled job) because of work permit requirements.

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19 National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, *The Integration of Immigrants into American Society* (Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 2015).

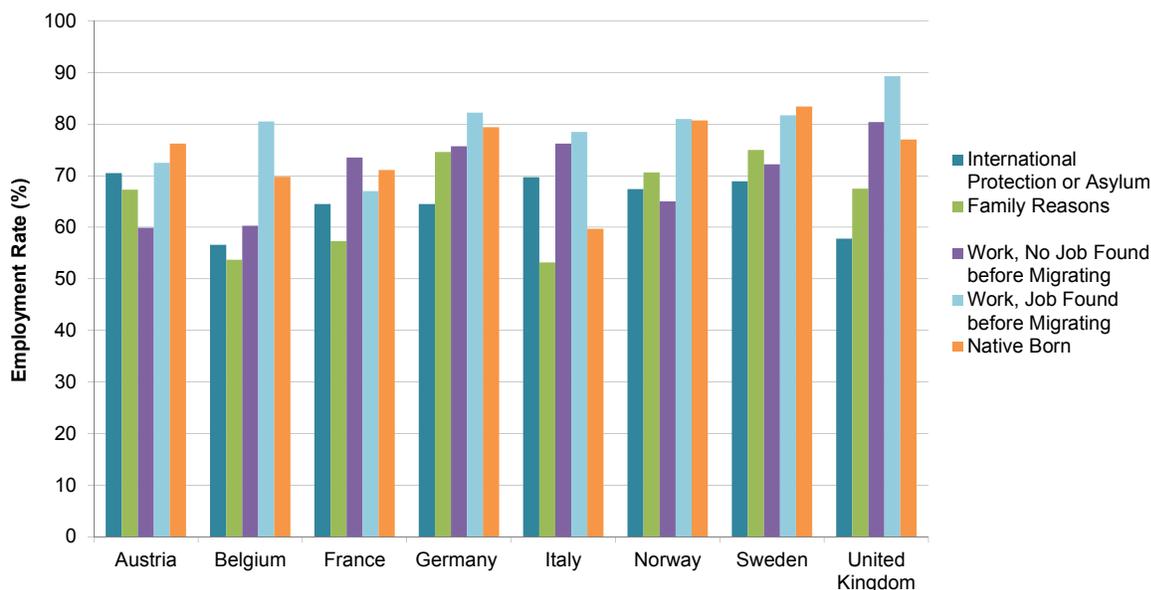
20 Richard Alba and Nancy Foner, *Strangers No More: Immigration and the Challenges of Integration in North America and Western Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015).

21 Michael Fix, Kate Hooper, and Jie Zong, *Refugee Integration at the National and State Level in the United States: Is There a “Lottery Effect”?* (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, forthcoming).

22 Benton, Fratzke, and Sumption, *Moving Up or Standing Still?*

23 Fix, Hooper, and Zong, *Refugee Integration at the National and State Level*.

**Figure 1. Employment Rate for Immigrants (ages 20 to 64) Residing for Ten Years or More in Selected EU Member States, by Reason for Migration, and Corresponding Figures for Native-Born Adults, 2014**



*Note:* These data include both EU and non-EU migrants.

*Source:* Eurostat, “Employment Rate of First Generation of Immigrants by Sex, Age, Years of Residence and Reason for Migration [lfsa\_14l1empr ],” updated April 6, 2016, [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-datasets/-/lfsa\\_14l1empr](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-datasets/-/lfsa_14l1empr); Eurostat, “Employment Rates by Sex, Age and Country of Birth (%) [lfsa\_ergacob ],” updated September 8, 2016, [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-datasets/-/lfsa\\_ergacob](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-datasets/-/lfsa_ergacob).

By contrast, the employment rates of family migrants and beneficiaries of international protection or asylum (henceforth “refugees”)<sup>24</sup> lag behind even after a decade. Since these groups are not selected for entry based on their skills, they are less likely to fit easily into local employment opportunities. People fleeing war, political instability, or natural disaster have less control over how migration will shape their careers. Refugees often spend time in limbo—while en route or waiting for their protection claims to be processed<sup>25</sup>—during which time their skills may atrophy. They may also be subject to labor market restrictions or face difficulties substantiating their qualifications.<sup>26</sup> Finally, refugees (and in some cases, family migrants) are more likely to be required to participate in full-time introduction programs, delaying them from taking up employment immediately after arrival.

**Gender.** The employment outcomes of women are especially worrying. In Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Sweden, the employment rates of foreign-born women (both EU and non-EU migrants) are around 20 percent lower than their native counterparts. Since their activity rates are also much lower

24 A beneficiary of international protection is a person who has been granted refugee status or subsidiary protection status. Although technically different, this study uses the term “refugee” to include beneficiaries of subsidiary protection status (see “Directive 2011/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on Standards for the Qualification of Third-Country Nationals or Stateless Persons as Beneficiaries of International Protection, for a Uniform Status for Refugees or for Persons Eligible for Subsidiary Protection, and for the Content of the Protection Granted,” *Official Journal of the European Union* 2011 L 337/9, December 20, 2011, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=celex:32011L0095>). This report uses the term “asylum seeker” to refer to people who have applied for, but have not yet received, international protection. However, at points it uses the term “refugees” for the collective category of both applicants for and recipients of international protection.

25 Restrictions on asylum seekers working while their claims are being processed have been eased in many European countries dealing with large-scale arrivals.

26 For more on these challenges, see Maria Vincenza Desiderio, *Integrating Refugees into Host Country Labor Markets: Challenges and Policy Options* (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2016), [www.migrationpolicy.org/research/integrating-refugees-host-country-labor-markets-challenges-and-policy-options](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/integrating-refugees-host-country-labor-markets-challenges-and-policy-options).



than natives throughout Europe (close to 30 percent lower in some countries), this can be attributed in part to cultural norms against women working. However, since unemployment rates are higher among foreign-born women, at least some of this gap is the result of structural barriers, such as employer discrimination or limited language proficiency, rather than choice.

One of the reasons for the low activity rates among women is that they are more likely to arrive through family routes. For instance, the French ELIPA survey (Longitudinal Survey of the Integration of First-Time Arrivals) found that 30 percent of newly arrived women were homemakers (compared to 23 percent of French natives) and that family responsibilities were the main reason for women's inactivity.<sup>27</sup> The combination of migration route, age at arrival,<sup>28</sup> and barriers to work can tip the calculus towards economic inactivity, perhaps in favor of beginning or caring for a family, for many newly arrived women.

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*Since unemployment rates are higher among foreign-born women, at least some of this gap is the result of structural barriers.*

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**Country of origin.** Ethnic and national origin also plays a large role by shaping both origin-country characteristics (such as education and employment experience) and host-country context (including discrimination). Some commentators have raised the question of whether it is where people end up or where they come from that determines their chances. For instance, a recent analysis of the “lottery effect” of refugee resettlement in the United States found that national origin, rather than resettlement location, was more highly correlated with how newcomers fare across employment, language proficiency, and income indicators.<sup>29</sup>

It is much less easy to isolate the impact of national origin in a European context, given the array of relevant variables across Member States. But some trends can be observed. Visible minorities, such as Muslims or sub-Saharan Africans, tend to face employment barriers that are related to explicit discrimination. The European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey (EU-MIDIS) survey found that jobseekers of sub-Saharan African origin suffer from the highest rates of employment-based discrimination, second only to Roma (who are a national minority rather than an immigrant group).<sup>30</sup> In several EU countries, Turkish women are especially disadvantaged: there is a 31 point gap in the employment rates of Turkish and native women in Austria, and the gap is only slightly narrower (at 25 percentage points) for women who grew up in Austria with Turkish parents.<sup>31</sup>

Some groups fare much better. In Italy, South and Southeast Asians outperform natives on employment rates.<sup>32</sup> Eastern European migrants<sup>33</sup> in many cases have also historically had higher employment

27 Virginie Jourdan, “ELIPA 2013: Les premiers résultats,” *Infos Migrations* no. 72-73 (2014), [www.immigration.interieur.gouv.fr/Info-ressources/Statistiques/Etudes-et-publications/Etudes/Enquete-Longitudinale-sur-l-Integration-des-Primo-Arrivants-ELIPA/Les-publications/ELIPA-2013-les-premiers-resultats](http://www.immigration.interieur.gouv.fr/Info-ressources/Statistiques/Etudes-et-publications/Etudes/Enquete-Longitudinale-sur-l-Integration-des-Primo-Arrivants-ELIPA/Les-publications/ELIPA-2013-les-premiers-resultats).

28 Many women, and particularly those who immigrate through family channels, arrive when they are of childbearing age.

29 Fix, Hooper, and Zong, *Refugee Integration at the National and State Level*.

30 European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, *EU-MIDIS: European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey* (Vienna: European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2009), [http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra\\_uploads/663-FRA-2011\\_EU\\_MIDIS\\_EN.pdf](http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/663-FRA-2011_EU_MIDIS_EN.pdf).

31 OECD, *Jobs for Immigrants (Vol. 3): Labour Market Integration in Austria, Norway and Switzerland* (Paris: OECD, 2012), [www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/jobs-for-immigrants-vol-3\\_9789264167537-en](http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/jobs-for-immigrants-vol-3_9789264167537-en).

32 OECD, *Jobs for Immigrants (Vol. 4): Labour Market Integration in Italy* (Paris: OECD, 2014) [www.oecd.org/publications/jobs-for-immigrants-vol-4-9789264214712-en.htm](http://www.oecd.org/publications/jobs-for-immigrants-vol-4-9789264214712-en.htm).

33 This analysis focuses on immigration from outside the European Union; however it still treats movement within the European Union as “migration” and mentions the case of Eastern Europeans as an important comparison.



rates than natives, although they proved more vulnerable to the effects of the 2008 recession. In some countries (e.g., Norway), Eastern Europeans are now among the most economically vulnerable due in part to their concentration in certain sectors, such as construction, that tend to be very sensitive to economic shocks.<sup>34</sup> Finally, arrivals from former Yugoslavia have fared well in Scandinavia, with employment rates exceeding those of natives.<sup>35</sup>

## B. Second-Generation Immigrants and Newly Arrived Children

Many observers see the success of the second generation as a more reliable test of integration. In theory, even if their parents are unable to get work commensurate with their skills and experience, the children of immigrants should be able to thrive. Given the size and growth rate of the second generation in Europe—almost one-quarter of young people in Europe now have a migrant background (a similar proportion to the United States)<sup>36</sup>—ensuring that these young people can overcome the barriers their parents face is central to European cohesion and competitiveness.

In practice, however, there is considerable evidence of intergenerational disadvantage. Even more troublingly, there are indications that the second generation may be doing worse in the European Union than elsewhere. Foreign-born children perform worst among all groups across the OECD,<sup>37</sup> which is unsurprising given language barriers, the challenge of catching up with a new educational curriculum, and the likelihood that those from less affluent countries have had more limited formal education. But while Canadian and U.S. data find little difference between the reading levels of second generation and native children at age 15, in the European Union children with two foreign-born parents lag behind (25 percent lacked basic reading skills at age 15, compared with 17 percent of native-born pupils).<sup>38</sup> In Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, and Sweden, the gap was over 40 points as of 2012, although Belgium and Germany dramatically improved their results from 2003 to 2012.<sup>39</sup> The share of low-school performers in reading is also frequently higher among children of migrants than among children of native-born parents, with gaps exceeding 15 percent in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, and Spain (see Figure 2).

34 OECD, *Jobs for Immigrants (Vol. 3): Labour Market Integration in Austria, Norway and Switzerland*.

35 Pieter Bevelander and Nahikari Irastorza, *Catching Up: The Labor Market Outcomes of New Immigrants in Sweden* (Washington, DC and Geneva: Migration Policy Institute and International Labor Office, 2014), [www.migrationpolicy.org/research/catching-labor-market-outcomes-new-immigrants-sweden](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/catching-labor-market-outcomes-new-immigrants-sweden).

36 As of 2008, the most recent year for which data are available, 19 percent of individuals ages 15 to 24 in EU-15 countries were either born abroad to foreign-born parents and immigrated as children, or were born in their country of residence to at least one foreign-born parent. In the United States, 24.5 percent of the population are first- or second-generation immigrants (children and adults). See Eurostat, "Population by Country of Birth, Country of Birth of Mother and Father, Sex and Age (1,000)," updated March 19, 2014, [http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=lfs0\\_08cobsmf&lang=en](http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=lfs0_08cobsmf&lang=en); Pew Research Center, *Second-Generation Americans: A Portrait of the Adult Children of Immigrants* (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center, Social & Demographic Trends, 2013), [www.pewsocialtrends.org/2013/02/07/second-generation-americans/](http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2013/02/07/second-generation-americans/).

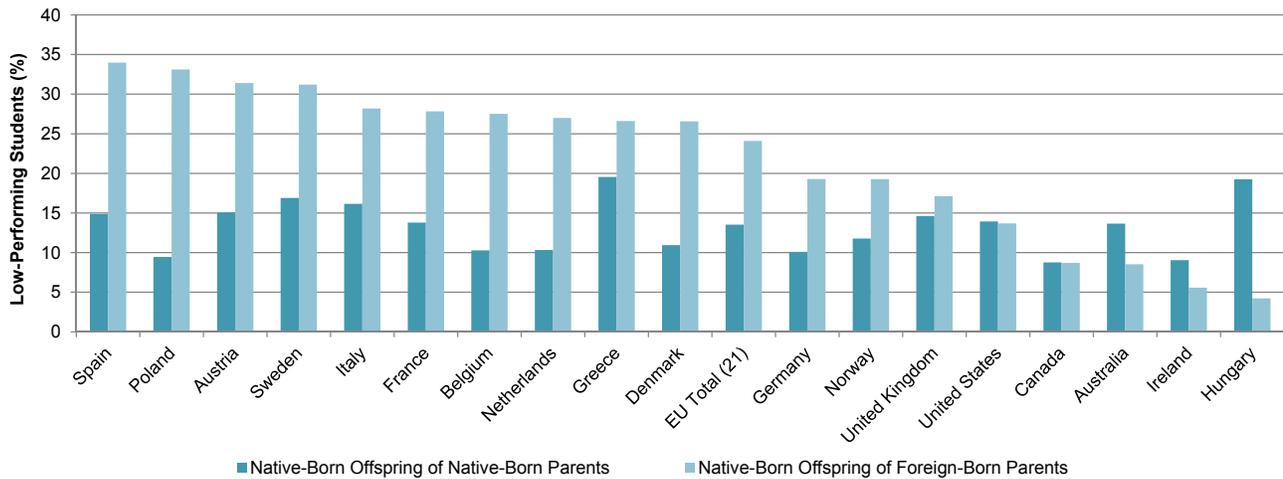
37 Foreign-born children are, for example, less likely to have higher education than native-born children of native-born parents, native-born children of foreign-born parents, or native-born children of mix parentage. See OECD, *Indicators of Immigrant Integration in 2015*.

38 OECD, *Education at a Glance 2016* (Paris: OECD, 2016), [www.oecd.org/edu/education-at-a-glance-19991487.htm](http://www.oecd.org/edu/education-at-a-glance-19991487.htm).

39 OECD, *Indicators of Immigrant Integration in 2015*. However, the United States is a mixed picture. While education and earnings are higher among some ethnic groups than the population as a whole, this is not universally true—first and second-generation youth with a Hispanic background in particular face huge obstacles in certain areas of the country. See, for example, Sarah Hooker, Michael Fix, and Margie McHugh, *Education in a Changing Georgia: Promoting High School and College Success for Immigrant Youth* (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2014), [www.migrationpolicy.org/research/education-reform-changing-georgia-promoting-high-school-and-college-success-immigrant-youth](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/education-reform-changing-georgia-promoting-high-school-and-college-success-immigrant-youth). Moreover, a majority (almost 60 percent) of English Learners (ELs) are U.S.-born, pointing to an important obstacle to intergenerational mobility in the United States. Migration Policy Institute (MPI) analysis of American Community Survey (ACS) data available at U.S. Census Bureau, "American Community Survey (ACS)—Summary File Data," updated August 16, 2016, [www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/data/summary-file.2013.html](http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/data/summary-file.2013.html).



**Figure 2. Shares of Low School Performers in Reading among Native-Born Offspring of Native-Born Parents and Native-Born Offspring of Foreign-Born Parents, Selected Countries, 2012**



Source: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), *Indicators of Immigrant Integration in 2015* (Paris: OECD, 2015), [www.oecd.org/publications/indicators-of-immigrant-integration-2015-settling-in-9789264234024-en.htm](http://www.oecd.org/publications/indicators-of-immigrant-integration-2015-settling-in-9789264234024-en.htm).

Encouragingly, school dropout rates are roughly similar between native and second-generation youth in many European countries, including the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden; and in the United Kingdom, second-generation pupils are less likely to leave school early than their native-born peers. However, in Austria, Denmark, Finland, and France, the second generation is overrepresented among early school leavers.<sup>40</sup>

### C. Social Integration

Social integration is often neglected in discussions of hard socioeconomic measurements, but can have a dramatic effect on how people experience their neighborhoods, schools, and communities. The impacts of immigration are typically highly localized. Cities, rather than rural areas or small towns, absorb the lion's share of newcomers, and thus have the most experienced integrating newcomers. Many urban areas are already superdiverse, meaning the minority population is itself diverse and consists of more than a few main national groups. People with an immigrant background make up close to or more than half of the total population in Amsterdam, Brussels, and certain boroughs in London.<sup>41</sup> In the United Kingdom, the proportion of residents who belong to an ethnic minority group is projected to rise to 38 percent by 2050 (a considerable increase from 16 percent in 2012). Most of this change will occur in urban areas.<sup>42</sup>

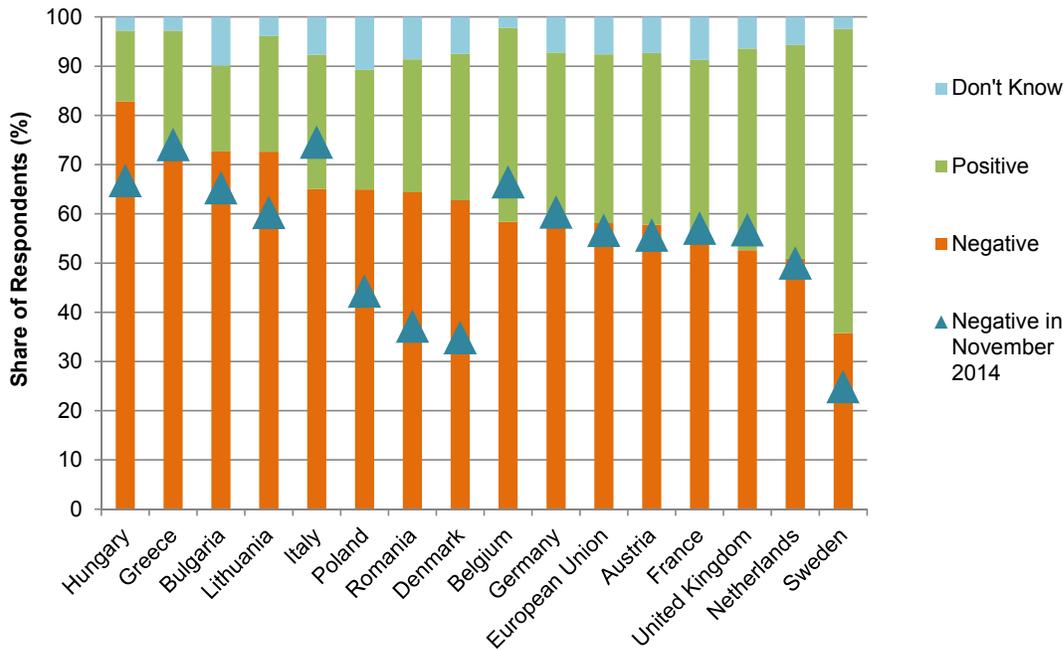
Smaller cities, suburbs, and rural communities are less experienced and less prepared, but are increasingly shouldering some of the responsibility, especially in countries such as Sweden, where a controversial new law makes the distribution of asylum seekers among municipalities mandatory. These decisions clearly impact local services, from schools to housing. They also often lead to greater tension between local and national governments and to greater polarization in national politics as communities feel like change is being forced upon them.

<sup>40</sup> OECD, *Indicators of Immigrant Integration in 2015*.

<sup>41</sup> OECD, *Settling In: OECD Indicators of Immigrant Integration* (Paris: OECD, 2012), [www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/settling-in-oecd-indicators-of-immigrant-integration-2012\\_9789264171534-en](http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/settling-in-oecd-indicators-of-immigrant-integration-2012_9789264171534-en).

<sup>42</sup> Social Integration Commission, *Kingdom United? Thirteen Steps to Tackle Social Segregation* (London: Social Integration Commission, 2014), [http://socialintegrationcommission.org.uk/images/sic\\_kingdomunited.pdf](http://socialintegrationcommission.org.uk/images/sic_kingdomunited.pdf).

**Figure 3. Percentage of People Who View Immigration from Outside the European Union Positively and Percentage Who View It Negatively, May 2016**



Source: European Commission, “Eurobarometer—Please Tell Me Whether Each of the Following Statements Evokes a Positive or Negative Feeling for You: Immigration of People from Outside the EU,” accessed September 30, 2016, <http://ec.europa.eu/COMMFrontOffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Chart/getChart/themeKy/59/groupKy/279>.

However, it can be difficult to predict how immigration dynamics will play out on the stage of public opinion. For instance, negative opinions of immigration from outside the European Union in many Eastern and Southeastern EU Member States rose in response to the scenes of chaos and news of processing and transit challenges in 2015.<sup>43</sup> In Hungary, negative attitudes exceeded 80 percent as of May 2016. But in Greece, views have remained relatively stable (a difference of less than a percentage point from 2014 to 2016). And in many countries, a share of the population remain liberal in their attitudes on immigration, despite recent events (see Figure 3).

Public surveys on immigration capture well the instability and diversity of public sentiment, with answers varying widely by country, characteristics of respondents, and, as always, the wording of the survey questions. For example, no country surveyed in a recent Pew poll had a majority that said increasing diversity made their country a better place to live, but few countries (only Greece and Italy) had majorities who said that diversity was overall negative; most respondents held a neutral rather than a negative attitude on this issue.<sup>44</sup> Before the dramatic increase of arrivals in Europe, the 2014 *Transatlantic Trends* survey found considerable variation between countries—a small majority in the United Kingdom and Spain saw immigration as more of a problem than an opportunity, while a minority of respondents did so in France, Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands—but concluded that anxiety levels had remained relatively stable over time.<sup>45</sup> It remains to be seen how the crisis will play out in public opinion in the

43 European Commission, “Eurobarometer—Please Tell Me Whether Each of the Following Statements Evokes a Positive or Negative Feeling for You: Immigration of People from Outside the EU,” accessed September 30, 2016, <http://ec.europa.eu/COMMFrontOffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Chart/getChart/themeKy/59/groupKy/279>.

44 Richard Wike, Bruce Stokes, and Katie Simmons, “Europeans Fear Wave of Refugees Will Mean More Terrorism, Fewer Jobs,” Pew Research Center, July 11, 2016, [www.pewglobal.org/2016/07/11/europeans-fear-wave-of-refugees-will-mean-more-terrorism-fewer-jobs/](http://www.pewglobal.org/2016/07/11/europeans-fear-wave-of-refugees-will-mean-more-terrorism-fewer-jobs/).

45 German Marshall Fund, *Transatlantic Trends Key Findings 2014* (Washington, DC: German Marshall Fund, 2014), 32-41, [http://trends.gmfus.org/files/2012/09/Trends\\_2014\\_complete.pdf](http://trends.gmfus.org/files/2012/09/Trends_2014_complete.pdf).



long term, especially since surveys tend to be conducted at a national level, masking often considerable variation between localities.

One of the main causes of concern across Europe is segregation in housing, services, social spheres, and institutions.<sup>46</sup> Few attempts have been made to rigorously categorize and measure segregation, however, and it is often caricatured or exaggerated. Ethnic enclaves can act as an important stepping stone for new arrivals who draw on networks of conationals as they find their footing in the new country, before moving elsewhere.<sup>47</sup> It is only if newcomers become shackled to areas with more limited opportunities that this concentration becomes a problem, because it shapes—and in such cases, inhibits—life chances.

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### *Segregation exacerbates already prominent disadvantages among minority ethnic groups.*

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Structural and institutional segregation can have effects ranging from entrenched unemployment<sup>48</sup> and limited career progression to social isolation, mental health issues, and lower levels of trust within communities. Nor is it only minority groups that are afflicted. In fact, a 2014 report on social integration in the United Kingdom found that all ethnic groups have 40 to 50 percent fewer social interactions than they would if there were no social segregation, and white groups had the highest levels of segregation.<sup>49</sup> But to the extent that more limited interactions with individuals from other national and ethnic groups curtails opportunities, segregation exacerbates already prominent disadvantages among minority ethnic groups—an effect that is much less likely to impact white Europeans.

## III. Future Integration Trends: How Will New Arrivals Fare?

What does the past progress of immigrants tell us about the future those arriving in Europe during the migration crisis? There are broad disagreements over both the scale of the challenge at hand and whether it is truly new. Some point to Europe's previous experience with large-scale population movements after the Second World War and the wars in the Balkans, or to Member States' experience with large-scale inflows following decolonization and EU enlargement.<sup>50</sup> Others have described this crisis as unprecedented.<sup>51</sup>

Regardless of how it is labeled, the perception in many camps that the current spike in inflows could be relieved by resolving conflicts in Syria and the broader Middle East underestimates both the multiple drivers contributing to these movements and how attractive Europe is to people fleeing political

46 For instance, the view that Muslims—one of the most prominent visible minorities in Europe—want to be distinct from their country of residence is associated with negative views about Muslim minorities more broadly. See Wike, Stokes, and Simmons, "Europeans Fear Wave of Refugees."

47 Doug Saunders, *Arrival City: How the Largest Migration in History is Reshaping Our World* (New York: Vintage, 2011).

48 A 2014 study in the United Kingdom found that an individual was 13 percent more likely to find a job if at least one of his or her friends was employed. See Social Integration Commission, *Kingdom United?*

49 Ibid.

50 OECD, *Is This Humanitarian Migration Crisis Different?* (Paris: OECD, 2015), [www.oecd.org/migration/Is-this-refugee-crisis-different.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/migration/Is-this-refugee-crisis-different.pdf).

51 United Nations, "'Unprecedented' 65 Million People Displaced by War and Persecution in 2015 – UN" (news release, June 20, 2016), <http://refugeesmigrants.un.org/%E2%80%98unprecedented%E2%80%99-65-million-people-displaced-war-and-persecution-2015-%E2%80%93-un>.



instability and economic precariousness. Meanwhile, family unification continues to be a powerful—and largely uncontrollable—driver of demographic change in Europe. Together, these mixed and largely unselected flows of people will continue to shape how immigrant integration is discussed in Europe for decades to come. A number of demographic, social, and economic factors further indicate that this crisis will bring new—and bigger—integration challenges.

### A. *Scale, Character, and Needs of the Newest Cohorts*

The scale, pace, and persistence of the crisis have posed major challenges to traditional countries of immigration and new destinations alike. In 2015, 890,000 people registered their intention to claim asylum in Germany, equivalent to more than 1 percent of the country's population,<sup>52</sup> and Sweden received 162,550 asylum applications, roughly 1.7 percent of its population. Hungary, whose government has been openly anti-immigration, received 177,135 applications in 2015, equivalent to 1.8 percent of its population.<sup>53</sup> And even in countries that saw relatively small absolute numbers, the rate of change was sometimes significant. For instance, Finland saw an increase in asylum applications of nearly 800 percent from 2014 to 2015.<sup>54</sup> The seemingly unexpected nature of these flows and the fact that, until recently, there seemed to be no end in sight, has further exacerbated public anxiety about immigration. In many countries, the sheer scale and pace of the flows has overwhelmed the capacity of asylum processing and integration institutions, and has created tension between national and local governments regarding capacity issues and burden-sharing.

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*The makeup of new inflows also marks a shift from earlier cohorts, creating new challenges for receiving authorities, services, and communities.*

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These capacity challenges have had important implications for integration and settlement institutions. Insufficient housing to support new arrivals means that asylum seekers are often initially housed away from economic centers (and job opportunities) or, if they choose to house themselves, they often overcrowd substandard accommodation, with implications for the already-fragile sense of community cohesion.

The makeup of new inflows also marks a shift from earlier cohorts, creating new challenges for receiving authorities, services, and communities. New arrivals come from a diverse array of countries. This puts greater pressures on public services to provide more extensive (and more costly) translation and interpretation services, and to adapt their advice and support systems to serve people with different

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52 Although 1.1 million had previously been reported, this estimate was revised down. Registration numbers can double count some people if they registered in more than one place, or if they have since moved on. See Reuters, "Germany Revises Down 2015 Refugee Intake, Arrivals Slow," Reuters, September 30, 2016, [www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-germany-idUSKCN1201KY](http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-germany-idUSKCN1201KY).

53 MPI Data Hub, "Asylum Applications in the EU/EFTA by Country, 2008-2016 (Q1)," accessed July 18, 2016, [www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/charts/asylum-applications-euefta-country-2008-2016-q1](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/charts/asylum-applications-euefta-country-2008-2016-q1).

54 Pasi Saukkonen, "From Fragmentation to Integration: A Case Study of Finland" (working paper, Vision Europe 2016, Working Group 3, June 2016).



backgrounds.<sup>55</sup> Moreover, many new arrivals have had longer journeys than previous cohorts.<sup>56</sup> As a result, they have been out of the labor market for longer and are more likely to be experiencing physical and mental health problems that must urgently be addressed upon arrival. Perhaps most important of all, the high number of unaccompanied minors has created enormous challenges for public services.<sup>57</sup> Since these young migrants need special housing and supervision, they cannot be supported through traditional integration services. Youth who arrive in their late teens face the additional challenge of catching up with their native-born peers in school, despite having missed much of their compulsory education. Moreover, many children go missing in the system and are especially vulnerable to exploitation. In January 2016, Europol reported that 10,000 unaccompanied minors had gone missing, and potentially been exploited by trafficking networks.<sup>58</sup>

However, there is also some good news in regard to the education level of newcomers, particularly since education is one of the primary factors that shape integration. Syrians arriving in Europe are better educated, on average, than other cohorts of refugees. In Sweden, more than 40 percent of Syrians in 2014 (that is, before the very large flows of 2015) had at least an upper secondary education, compared to 20 percent of those from Afghanistan, and 10 percent of those from Eritrea.<sup>59</sup> However, anecdotal evidence suggests that the most recent Syrian arrivals have lower levels of education<sup>60</sup> and many have limited work experience. And a 2016 survey conducted by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) suggests that more than one-quarter of Syrians arriving in Greece abandoned their education to travel to Europe, which raises complex issues for education and credential recognition.<sup>61</sup> According to recent figures from Germany's Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, more than 60 percent of new arrivals (and almost half of Syrians) in Germany have not completed upper secondary school, and only two-thirds of adults had worked in their country of origin.<sup>62</sup> Moreover, as described in the previous section, even high-skilled arrivals are not guaranteed to do well, and will require careful, tailored investments to ensure they thrive.

## B. Changing Labor Markets and Labor Needs

For countries on Europe's southern periphery that are still plagued by high levels of unemployment (particularly among youth) and wrenching austerity programs, new arrivals are putting pressure on systems already under strain and competing for scarce resources with existing vulnerable groups.

55 Past experience suggests that once groups reach a critical mass they are more likely to receive specialist services. For instance, following the recent increase in Syrian refugee and migrant arrivals in the Netherlands, the country produced a framework for service providers that compares Dutch and Syrian education levels for the purpose of facilitating qualifications recognition. See Desiderio, *Integrating Refugees into Host Country Labor Markets*.

56 OECD, *Indicators of Immigrant Integration in 2015*.

57 For instance, the number of unaccompanied minors in Sweden increased more than 400 percent from 2014 to 2015. See Migrationsverket, "Statistik," updated October 3, 2016, [www.migrationsverket.se/Andra-aktorer/Kommuner/Om-ensamkommande-barn-och-ungdomar/Statistik.html](http://www.migrationsverket.se/Andra-aktorer/Kommuner/Om-ensamkommande-barn-och-ungdomar/Statistik.html).

58 Mark Townsend, "10,000 Refugee Children are Missing, Says Europol," *The Guardian*, January 30, 2016, [www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jan/30/fears-for-missing-child-refugees](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jan/30/fears-for-missing-child-refugees).

59 See OECD, *Is This Humanitarian Migration Crisis Different?*

60 Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation (COMCEC), *A Study on Forced Migration in OIC Member Countries: The Policy Framework Adopted by Host Countries* (unpublished report prepared by MPI on behalf of the COMCEC Coordinating Office for the 8th meeting of the COMCEC Poverty Alleviation Working Group, forthcoming).

61 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), "Profiling of Syrian Arrivals on Greek Islands in February 2016" (fact sheet, February 2016), <https://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/download.php?id=874>.

62 Anna-Katharina Rich, "Sozialstruktur, Qualifikationsniveau und Berufstätigkeit" (issue brief, Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge, May 19, 2016), [www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/DE/Publikationen/Kurzanalysen/kurzanalyse3\\_sozial-komponenten.pdf;jsessionid=CA8EF5367BAD4A523C593537598D9389.1\\_cid359?\\_blob=publicationFile](http://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/DE/Publikationen/Kurzanalysen/kurzanalyse3_sozial-komponenten.pdf;jsessionid=CA8EF5367BAD4A523C593537598D9389.1_cid359?_blob=publicationFile). In Austria, around 30 percent of Afghanis have only a primary level education. See Michael Bernstein, "First Data on Education Level of Refugees Released," *Metropole*, January 13, 2016, [www.metropole.at/ams-study-refugees-education/](http://www.metropole.at/ams-study-refugees-education/).

Other countries receiving large inflows do so while on much stronger economic footing. For instance, Germany, Austria, and Sweden all have relatively low levels of unemployment (4.6 percent, 5.7 percent, and 7.4 percent, respectively) and relatively robust levels of growth. However, even these countries are not immune to the challenges that large inflows of migrants bring, and some are already contending with structural unemployment associated with deindustrialization. Importantly, national employment and growth averages also obscure significant regional variations between localities that are more and less well equipped to receive new arrivals.

As labor markets change, demanding more skilled and fewer workers, these challenges look set to grow. According to some estimates, almost half of all U.S. jobs are vulnerable to automation in the next decade or two, as sophisticated algorithms learn to replace tasks done by workers, especially in transportation, logistics, services and sales, and office and administrative support.<sup>63</sup> While this does not necessarily mean that the overall number of jobs will fall, it does suggest that it may become harder to sustain current employment levels and that the jobs that remain are likely to be ever more skill intensive. Finally, jobs at all skills levels are likely to become less tethered to traditional career paths. For instance, even high-skilled workers are increasingly employed on flexible terms, and according to some estimates, half of U.S. workers may be freelancing by 2020.<sup>64</sup>

These shifts will likely bring both challenges and opportunities for newcomers. Digital platforms such as Uber (the taxi company) and TaskRabbit (the platform for odd jobs) are creating demands for services among new groups, such as millennials. Such services are circumventing some traditional barriers newcomers face finding work, such as language barriers and employer discrimination. But they may also perpetuate integration challenges and exacerbate the precariousness of employment for migrant groups as such jobs hold few opportunities for on-the-job training, learning the host-country language, or building a professional network. The changing labor market has also created additional demand on career advisors and teachers who support young people's career planning (including both newly arrived migrants and the second generation).<sup>65</sup>

### C. Aging, Demographic Change, and the Future of Welfare Systems

Finally, and related to the above, the aging of European populations creates both challenges and opportunities for integration. Low birth rates and higher life expectancy mean that young people (ages 0 to 14) now make up 15.6 percent of the EU-28 population, compared to 18.5 percent for those over 65. This trend is especially pronounced in Bulgaria, Germany, Greece, and Italy.<sup>66</sup> As the baby boomer generation ages and developments in health care lengthen lifespans, the number of people of retirement age will only increase.

Because of these shifts, the demographic old-age dependency ratio (which measures the proportion of people age 65 relative to those ages 15 to 64) is projected to increase from 28 percent to 50 percent between 2013 and 2060.<sup>67</sup> As Figure 4 shows, differences in birth rates and life expectancies mean that many countries will face greater challenges from aging populations. These include labor shortages, difficulties sustaining welfare systems and pensions budgets, and rising elder-care costs. Indeed, countries that are deeply committed to universalist social benefits, such as Norway, are facing difficult questions

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63 Carl Benedikt Frey and Michael A. Osborne, *The Future of Unemployment: How Susceptible Are Jobs to Computerisation?* (Oxford: Oxford Martin School, 2013), [www.oxfordmartin.ox.ac.uk/downloads/academic/The\\_Future\\_of\\_Employment.pdf](http://www.oxfordmartin.ox.ac.uk/downloads/academic/The_Future_of_Employment.pdf). The same analysis has not been carried out for Europe.

64 Micha Kaufman, "Five Reasons Half of You Will Be Freelancers in 2020," *Forbes*, February 28, 2014, [www.forbes.com/sites/michakaufman/2014/02/28/five-reasons-half-of-you-will-be-freelancers-in-2020/#7a608f0a7300](http://www.forbes.com/sites/michakaufman/2014/02/28/five-reasons-half-of-you-will-be-freelancers-in-2020/#7a608f0a7300).

65 For instance, they reinforce the need for new skills, including advanced information and communications technology (ICT) skills, creativity, and collaborative problem-solving.

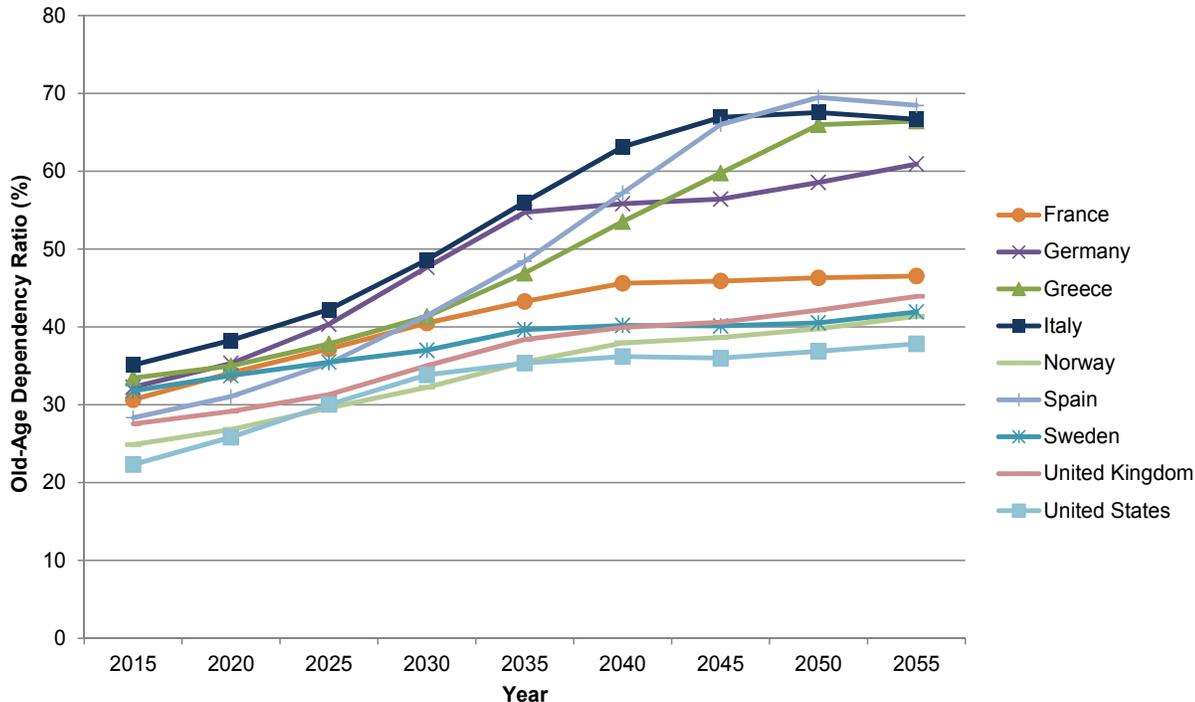
66 European Commission, *The 2015 Ageing Report: Underlying Assumptions and Projection Methodologies* (Brussels: European Commission, 2014), [http://ec.europa.eu/economy\\_finance/publications/european\\_economy/2014/pdf/ee8\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2014/pdf/ee8_en.pdf).

67 Ibid.



about the long-term sustainability of their welfare models in the face of both an aging population and an increased number of newcomers who are not easily absorbed into the system.<sup>68</sup>

**Figure 4. Projected Change in the Old-Age Dependency Ratios of Selected Countries, 2015 to 2055**



*Note:* Old-age dependency ratios measure the proportion of people age 65 in a population relative to those ages 15 to 64. *Sources:* Authors' calculations using data from United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), Population Division, "Population Aged 65+ (Both Sexes Combined) by Country or Area 1950-2100 (Thousands)," updated July 2015, [https://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/DVD/Files/2\\_Indicators%20\(Probabilistic%20Projections\)/UN\\_PPP2015\\_Output\\_Pop65Plus.xls](https://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/DVD/Files/2_Indicators%20(Probabilistic%20Projections)/UN_PPP2015_Output_Pop65Plus.xls); UN DESA, Population Division, "Population Aged 15-64 (Both Sexes Combined) by Country or Area, 1950-2100 (Thousands)," updated July 2015, [https://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/DVD/Files/2\\_Indicators%20\(Probabilistic%20Projections\)/UN\\_PPP2015\\_Output\\_Pop15-64.xls](https://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/DVD/Files/2_Indicators%20(Probabilistic%20Projections)/UN_PPP2015_Output_Pop15-64.xls).

How countries handle the challenges presented by an aging population will vary widely. As many countries already rely heavily on migrant labor to provide social care, supporting new arrivals into care jobs could therefore act as a win-win. However, these challenges associated with an aging population are not merely economic; they are also likely to require resilient, cohesive communities willing to support one another. Many local authorities in the United Kingdom, for instance, estimate that the costs of social care will become financially unsustainable over the next decade.<sup>69</sup> As a result, they are looking to communities and volunteers to shoulder the burden of caring for aging populations. Hyperdiversity could make this more difficult (since many elderly people have trouble bridging cultural barriers and there are differing cultural norms around care). But if governments are able to foster community-based support, they could alleviate some of the pressures of an aging population while providing a source of employment for newcomers.<sup>70</sup>

68 Grete Brochmann, "The Survival of the Nordic Welfare Model: The Migration Challenge" in *Nordic Ways*, ed. Debra Cagan (Washington, DC: Center for Transatlantic Relations, 2016).

69 Meghan Benton and Julie Simon, *Connected Councils: A Digital Vision of Local Government in 2025* (London: Nesta, 2016), [www.nesta.org.uk/sites/default/files/connected\\_councils\\_report.pdf](http://www.nesta.org.uk/sites/default/files/connected_councils_report.pdf).

70 Ferruccio Pastore and Irene Ponzio, "Boundaries, Barriers and Bridges: Comparative Findings from European Neighbourhoods" in *Inter-Group Relations and Migrant Integration in European Cities*, eds. Ferruccio Pastore and Irene Ponzio (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2016), <http://link.springer.com/book/10.1007%2F978-3-319-23096-2>.

## IV. Policy Approaches

Addressing the challenges described in the previous sections will require intensive, up-front investments that balance evidence- and evaluation-led approaches with experimentation and new solutions—and partnerships with new actors. In crafting such an approach, European policymakers face a number of difficult decisions and tradeoffs. These include:

- ***How to forge a work-focused approach to integration.*** Governments face the challenge of providing labor-market support while simultaneously addressing other vulnerabilities (such as mental health and trauma) and furthering social integration.
- ***How to prioritize investments in the context of limited resources and great uncertainty.*** For instance, whether to invest in the largest number of individuals or to focus on providing a smaller number with intensive support, and how to make investments early enough in the migration trajectory to yield the greatest impact without wasting resources or creating a pull factor for future flows.
- ***How to build integration programs that are attuned to the needs of particularly vulnerable groups.*** Programs must be adapted to the needs of refugee women and children (both as part of family units and unaccompanied) while being mindful of unintended consequences (such as leaving out other groups or fueling resentment in the general population).
- ***How to collaborate effectively with other actors.*** The inclusion of new players, such as social enterprises and tech entrepreneurs, must be pursued while simultaneously protecting vulnerable groups from the risks associated with a more complex landscape, ensuring programs receive rigorous evaluation, and supporting initiatives that work to grow in scale.

The sections that follow outline a number of the big questions policymakers are facing, and highlight promising approaches to overcome these challenges. While not every country will be able to achieve all of these objectives, adherence to broad principles will put them on the right path to weather this and future challenges in their own way.

### A. A Work-Focused Yet Holistic Approach to Integration

Since newly arrived refugees may have spent time out of work during the transit, processing, and/or resettlement process, supporting them into jobs quickly is especially critical to prevent their skills from atrophying further. But it is also especially hard. Along with the barriers to work outlined in previous sections, policymakers face the challenge of balancing early support to get newcomers into work with help addressing more complex needs and health problems, including support for psychological distress and long-term illness.

A second dilemma is that full labor market integration—finding a job commensurate with one’s skills and experience, with good prospects for upward progression—can compete with the goal of finding work quickly. Policymakers often face a choice between absorbing the high, upfront costs of retraining newcomers for local jobs and the more long-term costs of underemployment, brain waste, and slower social integration. This challenge is further complicated by the risk of training newcomers for jobs that may cease to exist in the near future, creating additional costs further down the line.

Finally, policymakers face the challenge of creating clear incentives for newcomers to take jobs that are readily available without undermining social cohesion. Many countries have seen a shift in recent years towards policies that use more sticks than carrots to encourage people into work, by ceasing benefits for



individuals who do not participate in training or “workfare” (mandatory unpaid work).<sup>71</sup> While these policies mark a shift towards the crucial goal of creating incentives to work, imposing coercive programs without helping people upgrade their skills can have unintended consequences, including long-term poverty for vulnerable groups such as older migrants or single parents.<sup>72</sup> Similarly, policies that make access to language training conditional on actively looking for work may exacerbate the social exclusion for women caring for their families.

### Creating Balance in Integration Policies

The most promising policy approaches attend to the intersections between labor market and social integration in ways that make them complement and reinforce each other. In considering the most recent arrivals, European policymakers may need to lower their expectations and recognize the unintended consequences of forcing people who are not ready into work. Work also needs to be broadly defined: voluntary work (especially if it helps mitigate other costs to the public purse), freelance and part-time work, and self-employment are all valid (if short-term) alternatives to a traditional job, but may be less immediately obvious to service providers.

- **Valuing other contributions.** While all newcomers should be given the opportunity to enter work as quickly as possible, other avenues, such as voluntary work, can help migrants learn the host-country language and become contributing members of society. As detailed in the previous section, aging populations means European countries must expand their reservoirs of care workers. Initiatives to help refugees into voluntary work (e.g., supporting elderly people) could be a win-win in that they encourage intercultural interactions and reduce isolation, both among elderly groups and newcomers. However, it is important that safeguards are in place to prevent voluntary workers, particularly those from vulnerable groups, from being exploited.
- **In-work training.** Many migrants and refugees are keen to enter work as soon as possible, even if this means taking a job at a lower skill level than their education and training merit. Improving the availability of part-time, flexible, and distance learning—as well as creating incentives for employers to invest in workforce development—is essential to preventing low-skilled work from becoming “sticky.” In countries where qualifications are valued more than host-country work experience, service providers should help newcomers access information and assess whether the opportunity cost of pursuing additional education or training will pay off.

71 Most of these are targeted at the general population rather than refugees per se, but there has been a trend towards making benefits even more conditional for refugees. For instance, Denmark intentionally gives low financial support to refugees relative to social assistance in order to “make work pay,” and a new program in the Mjølnerparken area will impose sanctions, including eviction, on people unwilling to take workfare jobs. See Martin Bak Jørgensen, “New Approaches to Facilitating Refugee Integration in Denmark” (discussion paper presented for the Transatlantic Council on Migration meeting “The Other Side of the Asylum and Resettlement Coin: Investing in Refugees’ Success across the Migration Continuum,” MPI, Toronto, June 27–28, 2016). Similarly, in Germany, the Integration Law which passed in July 2016 will create 100,000 “one-euro” jobs, and refugees who refuse to participate will have their benefits cut. See Victoria Rietig, *Moving Beyond Crisis: Germany’s New Approaches to Integrating Refugees into the Labor Market* (Washington, DC: MPI, 2016), [www.migrationpolicy.org/research/moving-beyond-crisis-germany-new-approaches-integrating-refugees-labor-market](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/moving-beyond-crisis-germany-new-approaches-integrating-refugees-labor-market).

72 Julia Griggs and Martin Evans, *A Review of Benefit Sanctions* (York, United Kingdom: Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2010), [www.jrf.org.uk/report/review-benefit-sanctions#jl\\_downloads\\_0](http://www.jrf.org.uk/report/review-benefit-sanctions#jl_downloads_0). Single parents, migrants with limited language proficiency, and people with limited education are all less likely to be able to fulfill so-called “conditionality” requirements or may trigger sanctions because they do not understand how the “system” works or what is required of them. Recent evidence suggests that noncoercive approaches to getting people into work are more effective than coercive approaches. For instance, behavioral insights or “nudges,” such as encouraging jobseekers to make commitments and building psychological resilience, can be deployed to get people into work. In this regard, a randomized controlled trial found that the intervention group had 15 to 20 percent improvements in employment rates versus a control group. See Behavioural Insights Team (BIT), “New BIT Trial Results: Helping People Back into Work,” updated December 14, 2012, [www.behaviouralinsights.co.uk/labour-market-and-economic-growth/new-bit-trial-results-helping-people-back-into-work/](http://www.behaviouralinsights.co.uk/labour-market-and-economic-growth/new-bit-trial-results-helping-people-back-into-work/). However, noncoercive programs are themselves costly and may require the prioritization of some groups over others.



- **Entrepreneurship.** Migrants and refugees who don't speak the host-country language face limited employment options: either accept low-skilled work or make intensive investments in building the necessary high level of language proficiency. For some, entrepreneurship may be the most realistic source of early work experience and a way to eventually transition into formal employment. However, starting a business is often beset with barriers, including the need to access credit and navigate complex bureaucracy (see Box 1).

### Box 1. What Works: Business Support and Incubation

While migrants in many countries have a proclivity toward entrepreneurship, many face barriers to setting up a business. These include weak host-country networks, challenges navigating administrative requirements, poor understanding of social and cultural business norms, and difficulties attracting funding (because of their limited credit history and the perception of risk on the part of financial institutions).

Promising programs to support entrepreneurs fall into a number of categories:

**Mentoring and Training.** For instance, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IHK) in Berlin runs monthly start-up classes for refugees, in both German and Arabic, that advise refugees on the requirements and support available to start a business in Germany. These classes connect students with successful refugee entrepreneurs who act as mentors, and link newcomers with networks of entrepreneurs, services, clients, and credit institutions.

**Incubators and Accelerators.** In the Netherlands, Incubators for Immigrants is a program for new arrivals that includes training, mentoring, legal and regulatory assistance (for migration and business permits), and support in identifying funding and office space. In the United Kingdom, mi-HUB is a social enterprise that offers virtual offices, networking, and training courses. Another UK initiative, This Foreigner Can, is a 16-week migrant business accelerator that selects talented entrepreneurs for a training program to develop and scale their businesses in return for equity.

Although most commonly associated with high-growth tech businesses, there is potential to expand these models to include people who have experience running businesses in their countries of origin. These so-called ethnic businesses are not often included in such programs, but can be an important vehicle for social integration and can provide valuable opportunities for disadvantaged groups, such as women. Setting up a business could be especially valuable for refugees who are housed away from urban centers and more abundant job opportunities. That said, entrepreneurship is more often than not a survival strategy; it is much more difficult to create the elixir that can support newcomers into high-quality entrepreneurship.

Sources: Maria Vincenza Desiderio, *Integrating Refugees into Host Country Labor Markets: Challenges and Policy Options* (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2016), [www.migrationpolicy.org/research/integrating-refugees-host-country-labor-markets-challenges-and-policy-options](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/integrating-refugees-host-country-labor-markets-challenges-and-policy-options); Industrie- und Handelskammern (IHK) Berlin, "Registration for the Start-Up-Class for Refugees 2017," accessed October 3, 2016, [www.ihk-berlin.de/Service-und-Beratung/finanzierung/Start-up-Class-anmeldung/3298098](http://www.ihk-berlin.de/Service-und-Beratung/finanzierung/Start-up-Class-anmeldung/3298098); Incubators for Immigrants, "Incubators for Immigrants," accessed April 28, 2016, <http://incubatorsforimmigrants.com/>; mi-HUB, "About Us," accessed October 3, 2016; This Foreigner Can, "Migrant Business Accelerator," accessed October 3, 2016.

Because investing in training for jobs that may not exist in the future is likely to backfire, both for host-country budgets and migrants, public employment services need to work closely with independent advisory bodies on migration (following the model of the UK Migration Advisory Committee, for instance, which advises on shortage occupations) and analysts who study labor market trends. However, since it is difficult to accurately predict what jobs will be around in decades to come, flexible and lifelong learning is a critical element of employment support.



## B. An Early, Proactive Approach to Integration

Many newly arrived migrants and refugees need extra support before they will be ready for local jobs. Because many will have spent time out of the labor market, it is important to begin this process as early as possible. But policymakers face a tradeoff: they can either choose to invest early in people who may later be required to leave the country if their protection claims are denied (expending resources that might have been used on other immigrants or natives), or they can delay support until they know who will stay, missing out on crucial early interventions that boost integration outcomes. Most countries have tended to reserve services (such as labor-market integration programs), just as they have restricted the right to work, to individuals granted asylum and resettled refugees. Such approaches also have the advantage of reducing the risk of creating perverse incentives for those seeking work to misuse the asylum route.

Awareness that current backlogs mean that future refugees will have to wait a considerable time for their applications to be processed has encouraged many countries to extend integration services to asylum seekers. Countries have either staggered the intensity of programs (as in Finland's stepwise approach, which assesses asylum seekers' skills to decide where to settle them, but then conducts a more intensive screening once they have residence) or made services available to nationalities likely to be given protection (as in Germany's decision in November 2015 to open introduction programs to asylum seekers from countries with high recognition rates).<sup>73</sup> At the same time, most countries have opened their labor markets to asylum seekers, at least if they fulfill certain conditions (such as labor market tests or waiting periods).<sup>74</sup>

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*The risk of not investing in people who stay ... exceeds the risk of investing in people who leave.*

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A more radical approach was announced by Germany in May 2016. The new Integration Law treats all newcomers as potential permanent residents, and invests in them as if they are going to stay. It opens the German labor market and integration services further to asylum seekers by a) suspending the priority test in areas of low unemployment;<sup>75</sup> b) making it easier for asylum seekers to get Vocational Education and Training (VET) positions with the so-called 3-plus-2 rule, which gives people the right to stay for the duration of the VET program plus the right to work for two years afterwards; and c) opening up initial language and induction training to all asylum seekers.

The law is grounded in hard-headed realism. Since many of these newcomers will not be returned even if their applications are rejected, the risk of not investing in people who stay (e.g., social exclusion and marginalization) exceeds the risk of investing in people who leave. In any case, investments in people who return to their regions may also serve a development purpose by equipping them with useful skills to break the vicious cycle of dependency. Sweden has taken a similar approach by making it possible for asylum seekers to switch legal tracks to become labor migrants if they get a job. Still, policymakers must realize that they walk a fine line between sensible efforts to reduce legal and practical barriers to work without creating incentives for the asylum system to be used as a labor migration channel.<sup>76</sup>

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73 This approach has been criticized for creating a two-tiered system of early integration for refugees from common sending countries and delayed services for those from other countries who are nonetheless granted protection.

74 For an overview of waiting periods and eligibility criteria for both integration services and labor market access, see OECD, *Making Integration Work: Refugees and Others in Need of Protection* (Paris: OECD, 2016), [www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/making-integration-work-humanitarian-migrants\\_9789264251236-en](http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/making-integration-work-humanitarian-migrants_9789264251236-en).

75 The priority test mandates that jobs can only be given to asylum seekers if there is no German or EU national qualified and available for the job.

76 For a detailed discussion of recent policy changes and their implications, see Desiderio, *Integrating Refugees into Host Country Labor Markets*.



## Crafting Policies that Span the Migration Trajectory

An early but staggered approach to investments depends at the very least on good systems for collecting data, mapping skills and experience, and identifying needs at the earliest possible opportunity. It also requires—as far as possible—narrowing the gap between arrival and work; even if someone is not perfectly trained or in possession of full language proficiency, it may be easier to develop these skills on the job.

The following principles inform early intervention approaches to integration:

- **Predeparture policies.** As European policymakers seek to make resettlement and relocation more important as routes through which refugees arrive in destination countries, predeparture policies should become an integral part of their systems. Predeparture skills mapping and career planning (though only tested on a small scale thus far) have shown good results for getting educated migrants into skilled work earlier.<sup>77</sup> And across the skills spectrum, basic language and skills training—especially where interlinked, continuous, and progressive—can lay the groundwork for further learning and success after arrival. However, these programs are often costly and will require greater innovation if they are to be taken to scale.
- **Early needs assessment and skills training.** One of the main challenges of labor-market integration is assessing competence for people who lack (or can't provide documentary proof of) formal qualifications. Promising practices include assessment-of-prior-learning techniques and on-the-job assessment, though both require considerable time and resources. While the most intensive support should be reserved for groups who are likely to receive (or have received) protection, investments in a baseline of language and skills mapping may pay huge dividends, even for those who do not receive protection.
- **Distance learning and remote work opportunities.** Technology can make training available wherever refugees and migrants are (including reception centers and rural or disadvantaged areas), enable people to learn alongside full-time work or family responsibilities, and provide alternatives for those unable to access or afford mainstream training. For instance, Kiron Open Higher Education—an NGO based in Germany—designs distance learning courses based on existing Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) for asylum seekers while their claims are being processed; a number of established universities have agreed to recognize these courses as credit once a student's refugee status has been approved. This blend of online and offline learning tools is promising, although new and as yet untested.
- **Fast tracks.** Instead of funneling newcomers through generic language training and only then considering their credential recognition or training needs, skilled migrants can be fast-tracked into intensive and tailored services to reduce their time out of work. For instance, countries can create alternative pathways so that talented refugees don't get stuck in programs that don't suit their needs (e.g., Norway exempts high-skilled refugees from the induction program), fast-track programs that help newcomers get up to speed quickly, or bridging programs to plug gaps in their skills while working (see Box 2). The effectiveness of these approaches depends, of course, on early and effective skills screening.

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<sup>77</sup> For instance, Germany has recently piloted predeparture training, credential recognition, and matching initiatives cooperatively with origin countries to fill labor vacancies in Germany. Some of these programs, run by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), have had some success, due in large part to strong industry involvement. See Maria Vincenza Desiderio and Kate Hooper, "Improving Migrants' Labour Market Integration in Europe from the Outset: A Cooperative Approach to Predeparture Measures" (policy brief, MPI Europe, Brussels, February 2015), [www.migrationpolicy.org/research/improving-migrants-labour-market-integration-europe-outset-cooperative-approach](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/improving-migrants-labour-market-integration-europe-outset-cooperative-approach).



## Box 2. What Works: Fast Tracks and Bridging Programs

Because educational levels and professional qualifications rarely match up one-to-one between countries, bridging initiatives and other training programs are important tools to help newcomers plug gaps in their skills and experience rather than requiring them to retrain from scratch. Canada has pioneered bridging courses for newly arrived migrants to speed up qualification recognition and encourage employment matching. For instance, the Canadian career pathway approach allows skilled migrants to gain host-country work experience at the bottom of the ladder in the vocation they have been trained for, while filling gaps in their training (e.g., a nurse working as a medical assistant).

In Sweden, bridging courses for migrant professionals, including health professionals, teachers, and lawyers, have had a positive impact on employment outcomes and wages. A 2014 evaluation found an 18 percent increase in the probability of getting into relevant employment for foreign-qualified teachers who participated in the bridging courses. A similar program for refugee doctors in the United Kingdom, Building Bridges, combines work placements in hospitals with intensive training to meet licensing requirements. During 2011–13, one in four participants found a medical job at a level corresponding to their qualifications immediately after the program, and roughly half found other health-sector jobs.

Because bridging courses are expensive, they have been limited mainly to high-skilled professions. A new program in Sweden, however, aims to rapidly support refugees into shortage middle-skilled occupations, including work as chefs, meat cutters, and butchers, as well as more traditionally supported professions (pharmacists, dentists, and doctors). The design of these programs includes validating knowledge through supervised work experience and knowledge tests, supplementary vocational training (if needed), professional certification and work authorization, vocation-specific Swedish language training, and work placements. One of the strengths of the Swedish program is its buy-in from social partners following a tripartite agreement between the Public Employment Service, relevant education and training agencies, and trade unions and employers' confederations.

Sources: Susan Niknami and Lena Schröder, "Using Complementary Education to Make Better Use of Migrant Skills" (paper presented at EU-OECD Dialogue on International Migration and Mobility, Brussels, February 24-25, 2014); Building Bridges Partnership, *Refugee Health Professionals: Impact Report—Sept 2011 to Aug 2013* (London: Refugee Council, 2013), [www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/assets/0003/0756/Building\\_Bridges\\_Impact\\_Report\\_Sept\\_11\\_to\\_Aug\\_13.pdf](http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/assets/0003/0756/Building_Bridges_Impact_Report_Sept_11_to_Aug_13.pdf).

There is a clear case for making intensive investments early in the migration trajectory, but doing so can further complicate an already tricky question: what should be done with people who have acquired host-country human capital, but whose asylum claims are rejected? Strong migration management systems depend on governments being serious about removing people who don't have authorization to be there, raising a number of questions, including whether the state should deny access to services and benefits at this point. Some countries may wish to do so in order to make staying less desirable, but this creates other challenges, such as the risk that those who stay are pushed into the informal economy, criminal activity, or destitution. Moreover, some countries may see the value of continuing to offer some services in order to retain some control over failed asylum seekers. Either way, governments need to address these practical, political, and moral issues rather than adopting a laissez-faire approach that grants de facto status to all, regardless of the outcome of their claim.

### C. A Whole-of-Government Approach to Integration

Policymakers also face the challenge of balancing support for newcomers with investments in the integration of existing migrant groups. The migration crisis and the associated emergency response threaten to divert scarce resources away from other vulnerable groups that are already hurting economically in order to meet the immediate needs of newcomers, thus further inflaming anxiety about migration.



One of the biggest debates in integration policy in recent years has been about mainstreaming integration. That is, the extent to which targeted or group-based policies work, and whether they should be replaced by general programming that targets conditions requiring attention, such as language training or school leaving, that affect both new arrivals and a wider population. Critics of group-based targeting argue that such programs fuel resentment among the general population, leave out other vulnerable groups who may not fulfill the program criteria but share similar characteristics, or that they detract attention from more structural changes needed to ensure that society and public services can accommodate diversity. One example of this latter challenge is integration programs that cover only a finite period after arrival, after which migrants go from receiving intensive services to very little support (including, for instance, from employment advisors). On the other hand, critics of mainstreamed approaches argue that they have often been introduced as an excuse for cuts and that many promising initiatives have been terminated in the name of mainstreaming.<sup>78</sup>

### Engaging the Entire Government

As European countries adapt further to their status as major immigrant-receiving societies and become more accustomed to rapid social change, mainstreaming is the only approach that makes sense. Many of the smartest investments for newly arrived migrants and refugees will also hold value for other disadvantaged groups. For instance, a focus on lifelong learning can help newcomers and existing groups alike weather changing labor markets. Similarly, public employment services that are equipped to give advice about how to go about retraining to meet the needs of the local jobs market are likely to benefit older workers who have lost their jobs and young people who are unable to gain a foothold in the labor market, as well as migrants and refugees.

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*Many of the smartest investments for newly arrived migrants and refugees will also hold value for other disadvantaged groups.*

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Mainstream policies that benefit, but do not exclusively target migrants and refugees may also be easier to present to publics concerned about the cost and effectiveness of various services. For example, many governments are investing in building social housing while emphasizing that these efforts benefit everyone. However, for mainstreaming to live up to its promise, it requires concerted efforts across all levels of government to systematically assess and adapt all services (including integration, education, housing, employment, and social policy) to both diversity and mobility.<sup>79</sup>

- **Adaptations to mainstream services.** At a minimum, mainstreaming requires all services to be able to make necessary accommodations—such as having female interviewers for women from cultures where interactions with men are not encouraged, or hiring bilingual staff. Services must also offer translation and interpretation, which can be costly, but are ultimately likely to pay off in the form of early access to essential services.
- **Coordination mechanisms.** More muscular mainstreaming approaches improve coordination across government, both strengthening information-sharing and ensuring that different services interact positively with, instead of working against, one another. For instance, the Austrian strategic plan for the integration of asylum seekers suggests ways to align services—such as

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78 Meghan Benton, Helen McCarthy, and Elizabeth Collett, *Into the Mainstream: Rethinking Public Services for Diverse and Mobile Populations* (Brussels: MPI Europe, 2015), [www.migrationpolicy.org/research/mainstream-rethinking-public-services-diverse-and-mobile-populations](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/mainstream-rethinking-public-services-diverse-and-mobile-populations).

79 Collett and Petrovic, *The Future of Immigrant Integration in Europe*.



providing parents with language classes while their children are at kindergarten (see Box 3).<sup>80</sup> Portugal has also increased cooperation to prepare for the arrival of newcomers, setting up an interministerial and multilevel working group to coordinate the reception of resettled refugees.<sup>81</sup>

- **Data sharing and digitization.** New technologies and the broader move to digitize government systems can also help ensure that problems are spotted early and can ultimately make deeper analysis possible (including by using big data and predictive analytics). For instance, Germany is introducing an ID-card system so that all services have access to the same information about asylum seekers, while Denmark and Sweden assign personal identification numbers that link information about newcomers to different data registries.
- **Diversity and intercultural awareness.** Diversity training for officials, such as the intercultural training promoted by the German Integration through Qualification (Integration durch Qualifizierung, or IQ) Network, can do more than increase cultural sensitivities.<sup>82</sup> It can also help officials understand the challenges that all nontraditional jobseekers (whether career changers, former military personnel, or new arrivals) face translating their skills and experience across different worlds.

### Box 3. What Works: Balancing Mainstreaming and Targeted Support

The Austrian Government's *50 Action Points: A Plan for the Integration of Persons Entitled to Asylum or Subsidiary Protection in Austria* is a strategic, comprehensive look at the governance and policy of integration. It takes an important step back at a time when most integration policymakers are concerned with short-term challenges. The plan makes recommendations in eight areas: language and education; work and employment; the rule of law and values; health and social issues; intercultural dialogue; sports and leisure; housing and the regional dimension of integration; and general structural measures (including use of data and evaluation).

Although it does not use the language of mainstreaming, it embodies core mainstreaming principles, such as improving the diversity awareness and language capabilities of the medical workforce both by developing interpretation services and hiring people with language skills relevant to the communities they serve. It also places emphasis on improving the multilevel governance of integration, for instance by strengthening the role of elected officials responsible for integration in areas unused to migration. Finally, it acknowledges that housing pressures affect a broad share of the population, and makes the construction of new housing a priority for society as a whole.

Source: Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration, and Foreign Affairs (BMEIA), *50 Action Points: A Plan for the Integration of Persons Entitled to Asylum or Subsidiary Protection in Austria* (Vienna: BMEIA, 2015), [www.bmeia.gv.at/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Zentrale/Integration/Publikationen/Integrationsplan\\_final\\_EN.pdf](http://www.bmeia.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Zentrale/Integration/Publikationen/Integrationsplan_final_EN.pdf).

80 Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration, and Foreign Affairs (BMEIA), *50 Action Points: A Plan for the Integration of Persons Entitled to Asylum or Subsidiary Protection in Austria* (Vienna: BMEIA, 2015), [www.bmeia.gv.at/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Zentrale/Integration/Publikationen/Integrationsplan\\_final\\_EN.pdf](http://www.bmeia.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Zentrale/Integration/Publikationen/Integrationsplan_final_EN.pdf).

81 The working group includes the High Commission for Migration, the Border Police, the Labor and Vocational Training Institute, the Social Security Institute, and a number of Directorates-General from the European Commission.

82 The Integration through Qualification (Integration durch Qualifizierung, or IQ) Network builds awareness of the needs of foreign jobseekers by engaging all stakeholders involved in labor market integration, with the aim of normalizing issues of credential recognition. Across Germany, there are 16 regional IQ Networks and five competence centers that provide advice, bridge training, and assess skills for migrants. These networks work with employment offices and job centers by training staff in crosscultural competencies and improving their knowledge of foreign credentials. From 2011 to 2014, about 500 training programs were implemented to support intercultural awareness. For instance, the Baden-Württemberg network trains migration commissioners as “intercultural ambassadors” who seek to raise awareness of diversity and equal opportunities issues among employment agencies, welcome centers, chambers, and businesses. The networks also work with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to help them adapt their hiring and human resources strategies to diversity. See IQ Network, “Activities of the IQ Network Baden-Württemberg,” accessed November 16, 2016, [www.netzwerk-iq-bw.de/en/activities-of-the-iq-network-baden-w%C3%BCrttemberg-2.html](http://www.netzwerk-iq-bw.de/en/activities-of-the-iq-network-baden-w%C3%BCrttemberg-2.html).



Countries and cities where intercultural and diversity training have become standard are well-placed to receive and support newly arrived refugees. But it is important to understand that the needs of new arrivals, especially those who have experienced trauma, may differ from those of previous groups. And many countries have considerably less experience with mobility-proofing (rather than diversity-proofing) services by specifically preparing them to deal with the impact of large numbers of new arrivals at unexpected times. Whether placing students who arrive part of the way through the school year or solving bottlenecks in medical services, helping services plan for and manage unexpected challenges depends on much better data and analysis of how policies and programs affect different groups.

To meet both existing integration challenges and adapt to the needs of newcomers, thoughtful cross-governmental efforts require strong leadership and systematic coordination efforts to ensure that all services are fit for the populations they serve.

#### **D. A Whole-of-Society Response to Integration**

Public anxiety reflects a sense of lack of control over change and a perception that it is happening to people as a result of decisions or failures higher up the political food-chain, rather than a collective project or responsibility. The idea of a whole-of-society approach (one that engages people outside government, and more importantly, outside of insular policy communities and the political establishment) has therefore taken on renewed urgency amid the scale of the current challenge.

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*The year has also seen a proliferation of new refugee integration initiatives ... under the banner of the Techfugees movement.*

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The 2015–16 period saw an explosion of energy and enthusiasm from civil society, ranging from large numbers of people volunteering or offering newcomers their spare rooms to private companies offering donations, both financial and in-kind. A number of large U.S. firms have pledged to donate considerable sums of money through the White House partnership program.<sup>83</sup> And the recent private sector pledges around the United Nations General Assembly Summit for Refugees and Migrants were impressive, with 51 companies pledging more than U.S. \$650 million (though U.S. \$500 million of that was the commitment of a single individual).<sup>84</sup>

The year has also seen a proliferation of new refugee integration initiatives, from distance learning and freelancing platforms to apps that help newcomers navigate services, under the banner of the Techfugees movement. Tech and social entrepreneurs are simultaneously highly adaptive and reactive; they collaborate rapidly and easily across borders and seek to involve refugees and migrants in the design and delivery of new innovations.<sup>85</sup> However, the speed of the tech-community response has led to the development of some tools that don't meet user needs, connect with mainstream services,

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83 The firms involved include Accenture, Airbnb, Chobani, Coursera, Goldman Sachs, Google, HP, IBM, JPMorgan Chase & Co., LinkedIn, Microsoft, Mastercard, UPS, TripAdvisor, and Western Union. See The White House, "Fact Sheet: White House Launches a Call to Action for Private Sector Engagement on the Global Refugee Crisis" (news release, June 30, 2016), [www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2016/06/30/fact-sheet-white-house-launches-call-action-private-sector-engagement](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2016/06/30/fact-sheet-white-house-launches-call-action-private-sector-engagement).

84 This pledge was made by financier and philanthropist George Soros, whose focus is on supporting businesses and social enterprises founded by refugees and migrants.

85 For instance, many of the new intensive coding schools have built their business model around recruiting refugee graduates of the program to return as mentors or teachers.



or adhere to minimal security and privacy requirements.<sup>86</sup> Policymakers thus face the challenge of fostering experimentation and engaging these groups, while encouraging greater evaluation and sharing knowledge of what does and doesn't work.

Meanwhile, new coalitions of employers continue to form. Big employers such as Siemens, Adidas, and Deutsche Bank have launched flagship paid internship and apprenticeship programs.<sup>87</sup> These are still small-scale and connected to employers who see hiring refugees as their corporate social responsibility, rather than a genuinely attractive proposition. And there is always a risk that programs that deal with very small numbers create expectations that can't be met. Once more, policymakers face the challenge of institutionalizing much bigger partnerships and enlisting the big players in order to offer thousands instead of dozens of high-value apprenticeships.

### Engaging a Wide Range of Stakeholders

Governments have immense convening power to help stimulate civil society and private sector innovation and energy. The rapid growth of the Techfugees community and the explosion of volunteer support demonstrates that while skepticism about, and outright opposition to, refugee flows across most European electorates has grown, so too has the enthusiasm for developing new solutions to help refugees overcome integration challenges.<sup>88</sup> However, unless these efforts are more closely aligned with the development of policy, there is a risk that this enthusiasm will wane. Volunteers need to be supported and valued to avoid burning out. Promising approaches to supporting a whole-of-society approach include:

- **Engaging employers to adapt their business models.** The most promising initiatives encourage employers to engage in ways that go beyond traditional corporate social responsibility efforts. Doing so can help recalibrate the calculus for hiring newcomers. In France, the Employers' Groups for Labor Market Insertion and Qualification pools public and private resources to provide immigrants training, mentoring, and apprenticeships to small businesses.<sup>89</sup> In Sweden, the 100 Club initiative, led by the Employment Services, seeks to build the capacity of companies who are willing to hire a critical mass of newcomers, with the hope that they will permanently change their hiring practices and spur industry-wide changes.
- **Supporting new public-private partnerships.** Social Impact Bonds (SIBs) encourage results-oriented solutions to thorny social challenges and bridge funding gaps. Often called "payment by results" (United Kingdom) or "pay for success" (United States), SIBs set outcome metrics for measuring services delivered by third parties, promising payment from the government only if the services achieve certain outcomes. Usually, SIBs are funded by private investment and delivered by third party groups such as social enterprises, civil society organizations, or private providers—hence the private sector bears the financial risk. SIBs have been used to good effect in policy areas that struggle to attract the political capital needed to invest in long-term and/or preventative measures, such as criminal recidivism, chronic health conditions, and homelessness.<sup>90</sup> A

86 Meghan Benton and Alex Glennie, *Digital Humanitarianism: How Tech Entrepreneurs are Supporting Refugee Integration* (Washington, DC: MPI, 2016), [www.migrationpolicy.org/research/digital-humanitarianism-how-tech-entrepreneurs-are-supporting-refugee-integration](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/digital-humanitarianism-how-tech-entrepreneurs-are-supporting-refugee-integration).

87 For instance, Siemens, in partnership with the city of Erlangen, Germany has a program offering paid internships to university-graduate asylum seekers with good English or German proficiency. The program includes workplace orientation, skills assessment, and training.

88 These sentiments are likely a reaction to the enormous speed and manner in which migration enveloped (parts of) Europe in the last two years, as well as to the sense that political leaders had no viable plan to reduce and control inflows. With both the number of arrivals and the route of entry into Europe now seemingly under control, there is an opportunity for stakeholders from across the political spectrum—including immigration skeptics—to join efforts that focus squarely on the new task at hand: integration.

89 Desiderio, *Integrating Refugees into Host Country Labor Markets*.

90 Sonal Shah and Kristina Costa, "Social Finance: A Primer," Center for American Progress, November 5, 2013, [www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/report/2013/11/05/78792/social-finance-a-primer/](http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/report/2013/11/05/78792/social-finance-a-primer/).



promising trial in Finland seeks to train and employ 2,000 migrants over the next three years through continuous language, culture, vocational, and on-the-job training. Since public-private partnerships are often fragile and small-scale, SIBs offer promising ways to fund social challenges and institutionalize relationships between public, private, and nonprofit partners.

- **Fostering innovation.** Policymakers can help stimulate innovation (for instance through social challenge prizes or open competitions) and support and scale what works (for instance through follow-on funding and incubation). Giving the best solutions the ability to win public contracts to deliver services will be the most robust pathway to realizing these alternative models on any significant scale.<sup>91</sup> And supporting the growth of young companies can also help fuel economic growth (see Box 4).

#### **Box 4. What Works: Community-Led Approaches to Housing and Integration**

A wide range of approaches exist that engage communities structurally in supporting newly arrived refugees. In the United States, community umbrella organizations organize local faith communities, student groups, families, and other groups to help newcomers settle in. For instance, they may organize someone to meet refugees at the airport, help them apply for social security cards and enroll their children in school, and provide cultural orientation.

In Canada, private sponsorship has been used to engage private individuals, groups, corporations, and civil-society organizations in delivering refugee resettlement services—and bring in greater numbers of refugees. A number of other countries—such as Argentina, Australia, Ireland, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and 15 of Germany's 16 federal states—have introduced aspects of private sponsorship, although not all have been used to bring in additional refugees.

Recent initiatives use technology to harness community energies and to match newcomers who need certain services with individuals offering them. For instance, house-sharing platforms such as Refugees Welcome in Germany or CALM (Comme A La Maison, or Just Like Home) in France match refugees with families offering a place to stay.

But to be sustained and scaled up, these promising initiatives will need the support of government services that could redirect to them some of the resources that would otherwise be spent on in-house services. For instance, although Refugees Welcome has forged strong partnerships with some government authorities, bureaucratic obstacles in most countries have made this process difficult. As a result, the initiative relies for the most part on crowdfunding. To realize its full promise—of an alternative, community-led approach to refugee reception—governments will need to be less risk averse and work more closely with these alternative delivery models.

Source: Meghan Benton and Alex Glennie, *Digital Humanitarianism: How Tech Entrepreneurs are Supporting Refugee Integration* (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2016), [www.migrationpolicy.org/research/digital-humanitarianism-how-tech-entrepreneurs-are-supporting-refugee-integration](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/digital-humanitarianism-how-tech-entrepreneurs-are-supporting-refugee-integration); Judith Kumin, *Welcoming Engagement: How Private Sponsorship Can Strengthen Refugee Resettlement in the European Union* (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2015), [www.migrationpolicy.org/research/welcoming-engagement-how-private-sponsorship-can-strengthen-refugee-resettlement-european](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/welcoming-engagement-how-private-sponsorship-can-strengthen-refugee-resettlement-european); Refugees Welcome, "Refugees Welcome—Countries," accessed October 3, 2016, <http://net.fluechtlinge-willkommen.de/>.

To capitalize on these movements, governments have a role to play in institutionalizing some of their innovations and in ensuring that they respond to actual needs and gaps at the policy level. Because many civil society programs are extremely small in scale, the resources to undertake proper impact investment are modest at best—and any assessments of impact are often skewed by selection biases (because program participants tend to be more motivated or better qualified to begin with). Governments could assist promising initiatives in measuring their impact, understanding what good evidence looks like, and disseminating lessons learned more widely.

<sup>91</sup> Benton and Glennie, *Digital Humanitarianism*.



## V. Situating Integration in Policies that Build Public Trust

Public trust is critical to developing rigorous integration policies—and vice versa. Across Europe, the persistent belief that government is unequal to the task of managing immigration well—exacerbated by the perception that the asylum process is being misused—has poisoned the well of policy innovation.<sup>92</sup> Even countries with a long and proud tradition of welcoming refugees, such as Sweden, have had to confront the question of whether there are limits to their generosity following capacity problems and rising public anxiety.

Many of the drivers of spontaneous and disorderly migration to Europe are beyond the control of immigration and integration policymakers. Growing global instability, civil wars, regional conflicts, and endemic violence, together with aspirations for upward mobility through migration, have meant that many people are willing to stake their chances on long and arduous journeys. For many would-be migrants, these calculations are made even more compelling by access to real-time information about routes and opportunities, and highly adaptive networks of smugglers.<sup>93</sup>

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*Even countries with a long and proud tradition of welcoming refugees, such as Sweden, have had to confront the question of whether there are limits to their generosity.*

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However, there are some factors that are within the control of policymakers. These factors include border management and interior enforcement regimes (including addressing the delicate and complex question of returns). Policies that calibrate the degree to which destination countries choose most of their migrants (e.g., through labor migration and refugee resettlement) instead of waiting to see who chooses them (e.g., through family migration and asylum processes) can also help. And such approaches can be strengthened by nurturing relationships and partnerships with countries of origin and transit.

There is no escaping the fact that the global protection system is in dire need of a comprehensive overhaul to narrow the gulf between opportunities in Europe (and elsewhere) and those in the regions where refugees and migrants originate. One way to bridge this gap is to mitigate the negative effects of initial displacement that drive onward flows. Policymakers can support development in these regions by building strong partnerships with humanitarian and development actors, making up-front investments, and fostering cooperation among political leaders (within and across governments).<sup>94</sup> While efforts

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92 For a more in-depth discussion of public trust, see Demetrios G. Papademetriou, *Maintaining Public Trust in the Governance of Migration* (Washington, DC: MPI, 2016), [www.migrationpolicy.org/research/maintaining-public-trust-governance-migration](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/maintaining-public-trust-governance-migration).

93 Ibid.

94 Demetrios G. Papademetriou and Susan Fratzke, *Beyond Care and Maintenance: Rebuilding Hope and Opportunity for Refugees* (Washington, DC: MPI, 2016), [www.migrationpolicy.org/research/beyond-care-and-maintenance-rebuilding-hope-and-opportunity-refugees-transatlantic-council](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/beyond-care-and-maintenance-rebuilding-hope-and-opportunity-refugees-transatlantic-council).



are undoubtedly needed to build the capacity of the global protection system,<sup>95</sup> bridging this gap is not possible without smart national immigration and integration policies.

Countries such as Canada and Australia that select the majority of their immigrants based on attributes that are likely to lead to labor-market and integration success (language and professional skills or experience, among other metrics) have done a better job of easing newcomers' entry into middle or higher rungs of the labor market. It is no coincidence that their policymakers have also had an easier time maintaining public confidence. (This also holds true, if to a much lesser degree, in the United States.) Although European policymakers are constrained by deeply held principles—including the desire to uphold humanitarian responsibilities and to admit family members of citizens and residents—regaining public trust depends on reducing disorderly flows. As the European Union and its Member States seek to regain control of their borders, policymakers should invest in building immigration systems that allow states to choose a larger share of their immigrants.

The most immediate manifestations of this challenge include tradeoffs and difficult choices that stem from the interdependence of asylum, immigration, and integration policies. For instance, policies such as temporary (instead of permanent) protection and reasonable delays on family unification may help countries manage flows, but could also impede the integration of existing residents. And although reducing numbers became a political necessity, as well as a policy precondition for the successful integration of the most recent arrivals, there is no definitive, “right” balance between these competing political and ideological imperatives.

## VI. Conclusions

Europe is often described as facing a demographic crisis and a migration crisis. Underlying this narrative is sometimes an assumption that the latter will somehow transform into a gift that solves the former. Specifically, some observers assume that an influx of young newcomers, by altering the old-age dependency ratio, will automatically offset the impacts of demographic decline. While the large number of arrivals may prove to be an opportunity for Europe, enormous work and massive investments will be required to make the most of the skills and experience new arrivals bring given the scale of the current challenge. Without these efforts, the twin trends of aging populations and large-scale migration risk exacerbating, rather than solving, one another.

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95 It is worth noting that President Obama's Leaders' Summit on Refugees, held in conjunction with the UN General Assembly in September 2016, is an important step to increasing the attention paid and the resources available to the global protection system. However, it remains to be seen how much difference the summit will make. The precedent set by previous donor conferences is that some of the money pledged will have already been committed, and that promises made are not always fulfilled. For instance, of the 1.88 billion euros raised for the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa by the 2015 Valletta EU-Africa Summit on Migration, 1.8 billion euros came from the European Commission and only 81.8 million euros had been pledged by Member States as of June 2016. Of the 1.88 billion euros raised, only 782 million euros had been disbursed by September 2016. Similarly, of the U.S. \$11 billion announced for the London Syrian Donors Conference, only U.S. \$2.4 billion has since been donated to Syrian funds, based on data from the Financial Tracking Service. Only three countries—Latvia, Lithuania, and Malta—have donated the full amount pledged, and only 14 countries have donated even half of their promised amounts. See European Commission, “A European Agenda on Migration: 2015 Valletta Summit on Migration” (fact sheet, November 11, 2015), [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/2\\_factsheet\\_emergency\\_trust\\_fund\\_africa\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/2_factsheet_emergency_trust_fund_africa_en.pdf); European Commission, “The EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa,” accessed September 13, 2016, [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/regions/africa/eu-emergency-trust-fund-africa\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/regions/africa/eu-emergency-trust-fund-africa_en); and MPI tabulation of data from Financial Tracking Service, “Humanitarian Aid Contributions Reported This Year,” accessed September 13, 2016, <https://ftsbeta.unocha.org>.



The migration crisis has brought into sharp focus the significant difficulties European countries face in receiving and processing newcomers. These challenges have often seemed to exhaust the capacity of national and local governments to craft thoughtful, forward-thinking integration programs. Although the number of daily arrivals has abated—at least for the moment—in many ways the real work has only begun. Instead of breathing a sigh of relief, policymakers should use this time to carefully consider and make choices about where to invest in the next two to three years, how muscular they wish to be in their approach, and, most crucially, what kind of societies they wish to operate in 15 to 20 years' time.

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This is also the time for realism. Policymakers need to decide what their priorities are and what “good enough” strategies for integration look like. For some of the most disadvantaged groups in recent cohorts, convergence with natives on socioeconomic outcomes may not be an attainable short- or even medium-term goal. But perfectionism should not be the enemy of good: these groups should still have the opportunity to learn the language of their new homes, have flourishing lives and families, and benefit from the opportunity to participate in and contribute to society. Opportunities for social integration even in the absence of traditional labor market integration should be at the top of the agenda for policy discussions and integration initiatives that focus on these populations.

Policymakers should pay attention to three areas in particular:

- **Strategy.** Policymakers should clearly develop and articulate goals to strive towards and identify milestones that can be used to evaluate progress across different policy portfolios and on different timescales. The choices governments make now will shape integration policies and the face of societies in the coming decades.
- **Evaluation.** Many countries have become better at measuring and understanding what works, but more extensive evaluation—including with high-quality evidence that uses a control group—and data sharing is needed to ensure that investments are cost effective over the long run. Governments must strike a balance between responding quickly and responding thoughtfully. Collecting and evaluating evidence—and, critically, adapting systems based on it—must become an integral part of the policymaking ethos.
- **Innovation.** New technologies offer promising ways to streamline the integration process—from tools that offer newcomers a chance to plug skills gaps to digital platforms that mobilize the energy and resources of the public. The main challenge is how to expand what works to a much larger scale. Greater collaboration among employers, civil society, tech entrepreneurs, the wider public, and all levels of government is essential to deepening and strengthening Europe's ability to address integration challenges today and in the future.

Integration policy is constantly evolving. This evolution is hinted at by, but goes way beyond, the rise of mainstreaming: superdiversity and hypermobility will likely define the future of many European societies. This adjustment will come with a number of conceptual and policy shifts. With creative, carefully considered, and thoroughly evaluated policy, countries have an opportunity to move away from narrow concepts of integration and community cohesion, and towards richer and more inclusive communities that are more robust and resilient because they have been prepared to adapt to change.



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The Migration Policy Institute is a nonprofit, nonpartisan think tank dedicated to the study of the movement of people worldwide. MPI provides analysis, development, and evaluation of migration and refugee policies at the local, national, and international levels. It aims to meet the rising demand for pragmatic and thoughtful responses to the challenges and opportunities that large-scale migration, whether voluntary or forced, presents to communities and institutions in an increasingly integrated world.

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