

2. Thematic Chapters per Nations

2.1. EVALUATION OF PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES AND EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF MIGRANTS/REFUGEES

Migration and issues concerning immigrants and refugees are characterizing the 21st century. Nowadays, more people live outside their own country of origin than in any other period of human history (International Organisation for Migration, 2011).

Europe is receiving a substantial number of refugees and migrants and national governments are dealing with the situation in different ways. However, for EU and EU countries the main question to be answered is how to successfully integrate new comers in the host states. After the initial emergency phase, EU countries are now focusing on the process of integration, that is to say social, cultural, political and economic integration of the new arrivals. This chapter intends to present how the process of integration of migrant/refugees into the job market functions, in Europe in general and in Germany in particular, and explore which government policies and strategies for the economic inclusion of migrants/refugees have been adopted to cope with the situation. Furthermore, several initiatives from organisations and volunteer groups have played an important role to implement State actions in the process of integration of new arrivals.

1. Asylum Seekers in Europe

As Europe is experiencing the largest influx of migrants since World War II, the integration of refugees into host society is a big challenge especially for the main destination countries. The number of people seeking refugee status increased sharply over recent years, due mainly to war in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and Eritrea. It reached a peak in 2015 with 1,257,030 first time asylum applicants.

According to Eurostat, a total of 229,000 persons were granted refugee status in the EU-28 in 2015, 56,000 subsidiary protection status, and 22,000 authorisation to stay for humanitarian reasons.

The European response on migration involves all actors, from EU countries and institutions, to international organisations, local authorities, and also civil society, all involved in different levels in contributing to the integration of a high number of refugees also into the labour market, as work is a major step to integration.

However, one should take into account the different professional competencies as well as educational needs of a group that is often erroneously considered as homogeneous. In fact, the competencies and needs of migrants/refugees can change in relation to age, gender, the country of provenance, and class.

The 74% of asylum seekers arriving to Europe and applying for the first time are male and the 82% are below 35 years old. Among them, high shares are low skilled although highly motivated, selective data from various Member States show.

EU Member States are differently prepared to cope with the situation. The infrastructure for service provision and financial resources are uneven across states.



In fact, the full integration of refugees including housing, education, health services and access to the labour market is an expensive process.

However, long asylum procedures and European Law as the Dublin Regulation, are extending the integration process and many thousands people have to be relocated in the first country of arrival and it is prohibited to start working or studying in the country of temporary residence. The number of the outgoing Dublin requests by receiving EU countries in 2015 is 111,430 (Eurostat 2016).

2. Barriers to Integration

The right to work is a fundamental human right and is strongly related with the concept of dignity of the person, at the core of human rights principles.

The right to work is recognised in art. 23 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) that reads as follow: “Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment (...) without any discrimination.

For people seeking international protection the integration into the labour market is one of the hardest challenges they have to face.

The first obstacles they must overcome are the language barrier and the recognition of study/work experiences gained back home, to prove to be qualified in a specific field of work.

Becoming able to communicate in the official language spoken in the host country can facilitate not only to get in touch with local community but also to deal with institutions and social services in general. However, learning a new language means lots of effort and time. This period can last from months to years, depending on several factors such as the age, the educational background of the learner, or the psychological conditions in which one should learn.

2.1. The residence status in Germany

This differentiation of status and relative access to range of rights is valid all over European countries, among which also Germany, the EU Member Country that received the biggest number of asylum applications between 2015 and 2016.

In the specific, for people who are seeking international protection in Germany, there are some preconditions to be taken into account. In fact, recognized refugees have different residence status than refugees with temporary suspension of deportation status, and consequently German authorities do not recognize to everyone the right to work. In fact, the conditions that determine refugees' opportunities in the labour market strictly depend on their residence status.

In the year 2016, the German Federal Office received 722,370 initial asylum applications. A total of 695,733 initial applications and follow-up applications were approved in 2016, which applicants come from Syria with 295,040 positive decisions (total protection rate: 98.0%), Iraq with 68,562 positive decisions (total protection rate: 70.2%), Afghanistan with 68,246 positive decisions (overall protection rate: 55.8%). This means 3.5% increase in the number of applications compared to the previous year.

Of all the proceedings pending at the Federal Office, a total number of 22,505 are pending proceedings in the Dublin regulation. This corresponds to 5.2% of all pending proceedings at the Federal Office.



Refugees who have a temporary permission (Aufenthaltsgestattung) or a temporary suspension of deportation (Duldung) have no right to work, since they do not have a temporary residence permit (Aufenthaltserlaubnis). In other words, who has a Aufenthaltsgestattung or a Duldung status is obliged to reside in the same place to which he/she was assigned, has a limitation of freedom of movement, has no right of family reunification, and no right to work. Furthermore, the persons with a Duldung status are obliged to leave Germany and go back to the first country of registration where they left their fingerprints, according to the Dublin III regulation.

3. European Strategies to Promote Integration

Being part of the labour market is the most significant factor to influence integration into society. In addition to that, workers also contribute to the financial system of a country.

At EU level, the short term fiscal costs strategy of providing housing, education, training, and social and health services is more costly but considered more effective than a long-term one that could involve risks of integration failure, as a study published by the European Parliament's Committee on Employment and Social Affairs shows.

Several EU Member States developed good practices for refugees, as the situation of many new arrivals required innovative approaches to integration. Swedish dispersal policies, for example, helped in accounting the availability of jobs at the local labour market; the UK is training refugees to work as link-officers; Slovenia and Portugal build a coordinated infrastructure for integration in Eastern and Southern EU Member States. Furthermore, language-training systems were implemented in many EU Member States.



Also, a range of European Networks and platforms focusing on integration of migrants were implemented. Among others, the European Migration Network (EMN) that links the European level bodies with stakeholders in the Member States, but also the European Migration Forum (EMF), the European website on Integration (EWSI), and the ESF Thematic Network Migrants.

An important role at a European level is played by the European Public Employment Services (PES), for which the key aspects to take into account for the integration of refugees into the labour market are the language, their skills and qualifications, the institutions supporting in offering work opportunities and the employers.

3.1. Evaluation of professional competencies in Germany (Kompetenzfeststellung)

The recognition of the study or job qualification is very important in order to find work in Germany. Different offices are responsible for the evaluation of professional competencies obtained abroad and the official recognition of studies or professional qualification. These offices are the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales - BMAS), and the Support Program Integration through Qualification (Förderprogramm "Integration durch Qualifizierung").



In October 2014, the BMAS established the new ESF program "ESF - Integration directional federation". The aim of the "ESF-Integration Guideline Federation" (ESF-Integrationsrichtlinie Bund) is to support persons with specific difficulties in entering the labour market or offer training to improve skills and qualifications. Several programs are strictly addressed to migrants and refugees and the areas of actions include: Integration instead of exclusion (Integration statt Ausgrenzung - ISA), integration through exchange (Integration durch Austausch - IDA) and the integration of asylum seekers and refugees (Integration von Asylbewerbern und Flüchtlingen - IvAF). The programs have in focus how to access to work or training and integrate gradually and sustainably into the labour market.

3.2. The 1 Euro Jobs and internship

The 1-€-jobs is an amendment to increase refugees' job opportunities and implement their integration in the German labour market.

The amendments to § 5 of the Asylum Seekers' Benefits Act (AsylbLG) concern all persons in the current asylum procedure who receive benefits under this law and allow them to work earning 1€ per hour.

The government, municipal and non-profit organizations offered new job opportunities. For this purpose the program "Refugee Integration Measures" (Flüchtlingsintegrationsmassnahmen - FIM) were launched.

Another option migrants/refugees have to get into the labour market is to apply for an internship (Praktikum), which request has to be accepted by the foreign authority (Ausländerbehörde).

Integration through qualification (Integration durch Qualifikation) is a strategy adopted very often, since in Germany it is fundamental to have a qualification to get into the labour market.

3.3. Private initiatives supporting State's measures

A range of companies in Germany presented sustainable integration programs, providing their own services to support refugees with a certain qualification background integrating into the labour market. Among others, big companies like Telekom and Siemens offered internship programs that also included language courses.

German companies offering Job Opportunities to Refugees can be found through several online platforms, among others work-for-refugees.de, careers4refugees.de, and everjobs.de.



Furthermore, in Germany self-organised initiatives offering internships or educational trainings to refugees represented an important support that States needed to include new comers. Also, large number of big and smaller projects involving refugees contributed to the process of integration and connected locals to new comers, facilitating a two-way integration process. Among others, the case study on ARRIVO BERLIN that follows.

3.4. Case study: ARRIVO BERLIN

ARRIVO BERLIN is an initiative that offers training and professional support for refugees to integrate in Berlin labour market.

The initiative is organised by the International JugendKunst- & Kulturhaus Schlesische27, an organisation in Berlin-Kreuzberg that has a long experience in creating occupational guidance and programs for integrating refugees into the new society providing with apprenticeships.

ARRIVO BERLIN is funded by the Berlin Senate Administration for Work, Integration and Women (Berliner Senatsverwaltung für Arbeit, Integration und Frauen), the Berlin Chamber of Crafts (Handwerkskammer Berlin) and the Berlin Network for Right of Residence (Netzwerk für Bleiberecht) "bridge".

The initiative has the slogan "Refugee is not a profession" (Flüchtling ist kein Beruf), and wants to connect refugees looking for a job and offer skilled workers to unoccupied apprenticeships in Berlin companies. ARRIVO BERLIN aims to cut the long bureaucratic process and bring together both parts in a quicker way.



Berlin companies, mainly in the craft sector, but also in industry or the care and health sector, offer a three to six-week internship in which refugees can get an insight into their work. During this period of internship there is a mutual process of learning: the trainees get an insight into the work structures and the employers can find out new employees among trainees.

The connection works through the online: companies that are looking for trainees or employers are registered at ARRIVO BERLIN, which team is in contact with refugees counselling centres and other Berlin institution that work in the field of integration of refugees.



ARRIVO BERLIN represents an innovative project because considers mutual participation and interest as fundamental to the success of the new working conditions. Furthermore, it focuses on refugees skills and abilities, and describes refugees through positive connotations and not as a weak group by defining them "ambassadors from all corners of the world, who in addition to their professional qualities, can also support intercultural and engaged working atmosphere".

4. Evaluation of Educational Needs of Migrants/Refugees

Education plays a central role in the process of integration of migrants and refugees that are settling in new countries.

Both new comers than hosting community's institutions and organisation can benefit from providing access to education to migrants/refugees. The European Commission implemented education programs addressed to those groups at different levels: from higher education, to schools and adult education, to specific support programs to facilitate the language learning.

4.1. The Language Barrier

The education and knowledge of the host country language represents one of the major obstacles to overcome when resettling into society.

Language training courses are offered in Germany to asylum seekers and are free of charge in most cases. The Integration course (Integrationskurs) is offered to asylum seekers with good perspective to remain in Germany. The course offers language classes until an intermediate level and includes information about the German legal system, history and culture.

For asylum seekers coming from the ones considered “safe countries of origin”, German language courses are offered for free until the basic level of knowledge of it.



4.2. The integration process from the perspective of women

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and EU indicators (2015), specific groups of humanitarian migrants can struggle more to get into the labour market. In fact, among them besides very-low skilled persons, older refugees, there are also women. This might be due to their specific vulnerable situation or also to the fact that back in the home country were participating to the labour market less than men. Certainly, many women asylum seekers and refugees leave in very precarious situations in asylum seekers' shelters, constituting a vulnerable group that need special protection. Some women might have lost one or more children and might be not willing to give the child to the childcare centre to go to work or to educational trainings. However, childcare facilities are required in order for women to attend educational courses.

Many learning programs addressed to women only have been developed in Germany.

4.3. “Welcoming classes” at school for asylum seekers children and youths

The “Welcoming classes” (Willkommensklassen) are school classes in which children and young people learn the German language. Participants are aged between 12 and 18 and have completely different level of education and socio-cultural backgrounds. These classes are a support for pupils to get into regular school classes after one year at the latest.



4.4. New educational programs and Universities’ offers for refugees

In Germany several new educational programs are regularly created to cope with the integration of new comers over the last years. The programs are a numerous variety of institutional programs but also initiatives of smaller organisations that can be funded both by European Union and State agencies or institutions.

Also, many universities all over Germany offered special opportunities to refugees and addressed a certain number of available places into the new study programs just to them.

5. Integration with a Human Right's Approach

The asylum procedure represents for applicants all over EU Member States a very long period of time in which applicants' status by law impede them the full realization of their rights, among others the prohibition to work with a regular contract.

It is important to mention that the difficulties economic migrants can face while trying to integrate into a new society are strongly different by the ones that asylum seekers could face. The EU Member States when referring to integration, including integration into the labour market, should consider this substantial difference, since asylum seekers might have had arduous life experiences and could still be in the process of recovering from traumas; this could be the case of asylum seekers fleeing their country due to a war or persecution. Also, migrants/refugees can involve highly skilled individuals, who can already talk the language of the host country as well as less-skilled individuals who may arrive with no ability to speak the language and by having low level of education might require much more time in settle into the new society.

Another difference to take into account is that migrants, asylum seekers and refugees have not the same access to economic, social and cultural rights, and have to go through a range of procedures that foresee quite different steps.

However, apart from measures to support labour market inclusion, successful integration requires to implement fundamental social services as access to healthcare, psycho-social support and rehabilitation, adequate and free of charge legal counsel and adequate support in languages spoken by migrants/refugees.



It is necessary to develop methods that focus on improving the skills of migrants/refugees and support the further development of their competencies, tackling the economic disempowerment through faster process of integration into the job market, for example creating new job offers that are more accessible without the need of advanced language skills.

Furthermore, implementing the job offers already since the very first moment of the arrival in the host community will not only facilitate the integration process but also avoid the risks of depression and feelings of being displaced migrants/refugees might experience in the new society.

5.1. Which jobs are offered to refugees?

According to a research by International Organization for Migration (IOM), everywhere in the world, there are significant percentages of people who think that migrants take the jobs that citizens do not want (IOM, 2015).

Certainly, if one considers the job offers and educational trainings specifically addressed to refugees, one can notice that they are mainly dictated by the market demand more than being based on the professional competencies of migrants/refugees and their needs.

Among other example, the copious offers in the healthcare field (Pflegebereich) in Germany working with elderly people.



5.2. The 1 € jobs

The German 1-€-jobs proposal should aim to help newcomers integrate into the job market, but has already been severely criticized.

In fact, jobs of this kind, in which however only € 0.80 per hour is paid, not only cause the exploitation of workers but also influences the hierarchy in the social structure between refugees workers and other workers.

This kind of offers promote an erroneous integration process, impeding the full enjoyment of work activities, and generating frustration feelings in workers that earn too little, in a country where the official minimum wage rates 8,84 € per hour.

In some cases, it forces asylum seekers to take jobs in which not only they are not professionals but also increase their traumas through the revival of experiences, e.g. language interpreters in asylum seekers shelters, sometimes working as social workers but not being qualified for that job).

If on the one side it is clear that the 1-€-jobs is an alternative to the empty period of the asylum procedure, on other side job offers must be given assuring to every worker equal pay for equal work.

5.3. Enhancing Opportunities for Women

About women's difficulties to integrate into the labour market, authorities should include not only integration measures like language courses and trainings, but also make an effort already during the application procedures and reception conditions to be more gender-sensitive and consider the special needs of women.



5.4. The Welcoming classes

The process of integration of children and young people is an important step for the future population. The “Welcoming classes” have too many disadvantages since the setting generates isolation and sense of exclusion for the participants. Furthermore, the setting accentuates the diversities, stigmatizes the participants and prevents integration since it does not facilitate the contact with local students or with German language.



CONCLUSION

This chapter gives an insight about how EU in general and Germany in particular are dealing with the integration of migrants and refugees. It outlines points of discussion in relation to how State policies to regulate migration risk to provoke the stigmatisation of migrants/refugees and can cause their exploitation in the labour market.

Since integration is primarily a national competence, it is in the responsibility of the EU Member States to implement integration policies, allowing asylum seekers to work, also the ones with few possibilities to remain in the host country, and granting equal pay for equal work to all workers.

Also, evaluate the professional competencies of migrants or asylum seekers coming from different world area could mean to consider different processes and approaches.

That is to say, during the integration process authorities should take into account not only the migrant'/asylum seeker'/refugee's education qualifications and work competences but also his/her cultural and social background and experiences so that host society can be enriched by their knowledge already through the process of integration.

Finally, practical proposal made by smaller organisations and self-organised initiatives result to be fundamental for the implementation of state policies that aim to integrate migrants and asylum seekers into the job market, supporting a two-way integration process.

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2.2. DIGITAL INTEGRATION INITIATIVES: CONTEMPORARY PATTERNS OF MIGRATION AND SUPPORT INTERVENTIONS IN THE MODERN ERA

1. Introduction: Define Digitization in the Modern Migration Era
2. Classification of contemporary digital devices in support of asylum seekers and refugees:
 - Inflow Migration Devices
 - Post arrival Devices:
 - Informal Networks
 - Integration aid apps
 - Volunteers and donor's platforms
 - Institutional digital services for migration
3. Italy and the challenges of digitisations

1. Introduction: Defining digitization in the modern migration era

The term digitisation, or the most commonly misused term “digitalisation”, refers to the process of integrating technologies into everyday life by the digitization of everything that can be organised in a virtual format. In worlds, many aspects of people’s life are nowadays increasingly translated and converted into a virtual dimension. Digitizing information makes it easier to preserve, access, and share. This process is permeating many different spheres of the society and it is spreading worldwide.

Not surprisingly, tools like the Internet and social networks cover now pivotal roles in contemporary migration. In the last few years, a great number of websites, socials and apps dedicated to asylum seekers fleeing their countries aroused; giving details and information about many crucial aspects to consider when travelling toward a safer place. The refugees’ escape to Europe is the first of its kind in a fully digital age and it has changed how the exodus is unfolding. Technology used by the refugees is not just making the voyage safer, but also challenging stereotypes held against them. Many Syrian, Iraqi and other refugees fleeing to Europe, have shown through their use of smartphones that not all refugees are poor. In fact, many incorrectly criticised refugees for carrying expensive smartphones reflecting a wrong idea about refugees. It is important to remember that smartphones are present at fair prices even in the poorest countries and they do not represent a luxury item anymore. Also, modern migration differs widely from the stereotypical idea that people have about it. The vast majority of both economic migrants and asylum seekers trying to reach the EU, usually represent the class of their society who can actually afford to pay the high cost of the travel and of the resettlement process in the new country (ex. housing-schooling-basic needs etc.). The poorest are usually internally or externally displaced in refugee camps in neighbouring countries; and yet, even the most of them have a smartphone.

The so called “techfugees” are today challenging the stereotypical ideas not only about them, but also about their countries and nations which are often imagined as old agrarian societies, not taking in account modern

globalisation and its worldwide effects; such as the spread of the western culture and related goods or items. People fleeing wars are more and more appearing similar if not identical to “us”, giving the possibility to reflect about conflicts and the causes or dynamics of political instability in the contemporary world.



This chapter will present an overview and definition of the different types and most widespread digital tools available in Europe to support refugees and asylum seekers, with an insight about the current Italian situation. Professionals and providers operating in the migration sector, but also educators, teachers, health carer and others, will be provided with a list and descriptions of the most relevant apps and platforms available at this time; in this way they will also have the possibility of spread and supply the people they assist with tools that can be crucial in making the difference before, during and after their escaping journey to Europe.

2. Classification of modern digital devices in support of asylum seekers and refugees available in Europe

The technology industry is still growing and developing, generating more and new tools to digitize services and information, connecting people and places sometimes very different and distant from each other, but with similar specific needs or objectives. To organise the content of this chapter, we have decided to divide and define the different kind of digital tools available nowadays for migrants, volunteers, donors and practitioners, starting from their contents and from the type of users to which these virtual services are dedicated. We have identified five different kinds of tools: Inflow migration devices and post arrival devices, subdivided in informal networks, integration aid apps, volunteers and donors' platforms and Institutional digital services.



2.1. Inflow Migration Devices

We call Inflow Migration Devices the ones used before and during the journey that usually include groups or dedicated pages like the Arabic-language Facebook group Trafficking to Europe, with 6,057 members; or Smuggling Into the E.U., with 23,953 members, and How to Emigrate to Europe, with 39,304. Similar pages are present also on Twitter, WhatsApp, Viber, Skype etc., where people can subscribe to post and receive different information: routes updates about safer passages on the borders, EU polices changes and new directives, information related with the quality of life and the receptive system in different EU countries, smugglers offers, tips about the trip and travel updates in general; but also shared messages of encouragement and good wishes. They even share GPS coordinates so that relatives and others can monitor their paths, a move that lets them avoid astronomical calling rates and alert the authorities to their location should trouble arise.



The journey to Europe is dangerous, tragic, and unprecedented: it's the first mass-scale migration to take place in a digital age with virtually ubiquitous smartphone access. For reference, pre-crisis Syria had 87 mobile phones per 100 citizens; one study found that 86% of Syrian youth in a Jordanian refugee camp owned mobile handsets (Data from the Harvard Business School). Mobile computing power transforms reporting (every migrant can tell their story in photos, videos and texts) as well as their prospects for success and even survival. Access to technologies like Google Maps and instant communication apps enables a viable route through Europe, a rescue call to the Coast Guard, or a compass to guide your swimming when a boat sinks. In fact, social networks are not the only tools that can be useful while escaping a country; there are apps of every kind: to help find a place to sleep, translate foreign languages, offer guidance on what to pack, and help manage money. Almost every need is met with mobile.



This strips out information opacity and lag time in a manner that has a massive network effect on migration routes; the more successful routes tend to exponentially receive more migrants. It can also shorten the life spans of these paths when governments can leverage this transparency to crack down on the most popular routes or smugglers, triggering the cycle to start from scratch. Smugglers need decentralized operations to quickly capitalize on shifting checkpoints and stay one step ahead of government's actions. However, social media and digitized communications offer smugglers an unprecedented procurement tool: the opportunity to engage in direct marketing, soliciting customers with sophisticated Facebook offerings and dynamic pricing. Additionally, smugglers become less reliant on intermediary field agents who publicize smugglers' services in key geographies in return for a cut.



Yet, migrants' ability to crowd source other refugees' best practices motivates more of them to go alone and disinter mediate the smugglers (at least for segments of the journey that don't require vehicles). Refugees can quickly vet smugglers' offers based on denser feedback; this quality control and price visibility pressures smugglers' profitability. Digitization clearly reduces the information gaps upon which smugglers can thrive.

Refugees also rely on mobile networks to stay safe from trafficking or document eventual human rights violations with their smartphones. It offers a small level of control during a time of great uncertainty. As tens of thousands completed their journeys, they share their experiences on social media — even the precise GPS coordinates of every stop along their routes, recorded automatically by some smartphones.

Recently some more reliable projects have started for those who are travelling through the Balkan routes such as Info Aid, which is an app with up to date information for refugees on their way through south-east of Europe. It covers all countries on the Balkan route, including updates about the situation at the borders, weather reports for the Mediterranean Sea, ferry strikes, transportation information, security advises, information for children travelling alone and many more topics. The app is developed and maintained by volunteer developers from Hungary. The story of this app started when, at the end of 2015 many asylum seekers were encouraged to take trains that they thought directed to Austria, while the final destination was actually a refugee camp not far from Budapest. A Hungarian developer, Nina Kov, realised that the government was not providing asylum seekers with the right information, so she decided to create this app. Its sole purpose is to help and provide with necessary and valid information and it is not connected in any form to the Hungarian government. The reports are updated daily and available in many languages like English, Arabic, Farsi, Greek, Pashto and Urdu.

2.2. Post arrival Devices



Informal Networks

Difficulties and trials do not end once asylum seekers reached the EU. Especially the first months, while waiting for the application to be registered and processed, can represent a shocking and stressful experience. Before to even start to rethink about a new life in a new country, these persons usually face a cultural shock due to the differences in culture, habits, language and legal system. Who have contact with these persons at their first arrival, often describe them as highly fragile, scared, confused about their location and diffident toward institutions. At this very initial stage, they usually rely mainly on informal networks. These networks are present also online in the form of public groups or pages where to ask about a place to sleep (emergency shelters or rough sleeping) or where to go to ask for a job. These groups also provide information to cross through different countries inside the EU borders. However, because of the lack of systems of updating and control, information collected by the member of these groups can be wrong and misleading, sometimes based on subjective experience or perception only.



Integration aid apps and networks

We call integration aid apps all those applications and platforms, Facebook groups or similar, that has been developed by different subjects (privates, associations, NGOs or other organisations dealing with refugees and migrants). In this sense they are distinguished from the informal networks, as the information provided and the services offered are more reliable, of better quality, usually safer and trustworthy. The type of offers can vary, but all of the services provided are free of charge. In some cases, they focus on specific countries or contexts, but sometime they offer a wider coverage giving advises useful in many countries of Europe.



In fact, the interesting aspect is that some of these projects are committed in creating a network including several European partners. For example, Refugeeinfo.eu is a hyper-local site that provides up-to-date, location-specific logistical info (where and how to register with local authorities, where to find social services, and how to get around). The aim is to put together different NGOs or associations that provide services for asylum seekers across the EU member states. Another one of these projects is repaid; an app initially developed in Germany by a British company, which is now expanding its network to other 10 countries and it is working to include more in the next year. These kind of apps often develop starting from real necessities and problems witnessed by developers and IT, who decide in turn to start projects to help refugees and asylum seekers in Europe. Beyond developing new tools, the tech sector is focusing on making those tools more efficient, faster, smaller and less energy-intensive. In October, Google launched Crisis Info Hub, an effort to open source many of the tools refugees use and optimize the information so everything runs lightly on a phone.



Trace the face from the Red Cross, let's people upload photos to locate missing family members. Apps are starting to be developed also in countries which are not formal member of the EU, like the Turkish Gherbtina (meaning “exile” or “loneliness” in Arabic), launched by a Syrian refugee, Mojahed Akil, provides mobile-friendly resources to address aspects that come with resettlement, like obtaining residency, opening a bank account, and more.



Self-organization has been essential for thousands of refugees arriving in EU. In Germany, refugee's organizations have been struggling for ensuring their right to stay, to move and to live in dignity. Consequently, volunteers and supporters have been engaging to improve the newcomers' living conditions using apps to navigate the complex new national policies on asylum. These apps not only inform about services available, but also about legal aspects and bureaucratic procedures that can be difficult to follow or to understand, which however represent the only way to have access to their rights. Refugermany is an app that covers important topics such as asylum procedure, housing, opening a bank account, transportation, learning German, health, school and kindergarten, culture, collection of important documents and more.



Additionally, there are also apps like phase6 hallo Deutsch Kinder, a free language learning app especially for children and young migrants which have no German language skills at all. Another popular app in Germany is Speak free, an anonymous chat app to get in contact with other refugees or supporters. Without knowing anybody in the new city, one can ask questions within a radius of 1, 10 or 100 km of one's location and people will answer. In Austria, the app Hope Austria is a useful guide for refugees with information about the country: trains, accommodation, maps, contacts etc.

Even if there are countries more pioneering than others, it appears clear that in all of the Europe states developers are getting ready to launch their own apps and devices in support of refugees.

Volunteers and Donor's platforms

We refer to Volunteers and Donors' platforms to define those digital devices dedicated not to asylum seekers or refugees directly, but to the great number of EU citizens and professionals willing to take action for refugees inside and outside the EU borders. In many cases, volunteer citizens initially started to gather together spontaneously and informally. Successively they founded more structured associations to coordinate interventions or fundraising activities. In order to do that, they often utilised platforms or social networks such as facebook groups or twitter.



For example, Calais action, Care4Calais or Calais Migrant Solidarity are just some of the pages where to find calls for volunteers, real time updates about the situation in legal or illegal camps at the Uk-France border, give details about the most needed items and organise visit to the camps for everyone willing to give a hand. These groups are now organised in associations and counts around 30000 subscribers each. Similar responses can be witnessed in other critical locations at the EU borders like in the case of Militene (Lesbos Island, Greece), where a couple of retired British citizens decided to start rescue operations to bring refugees safe on the shore using a Facebook group called Philippa and Eric Kempson - refugee support Eftalou / Molovos.



These devices work very effectively in attiring and coordinating large numbers of volunteers coming from all Europe willing to help but don't know how to. Another example is RefugeeMap.com, a web based custom Google Map with crowd sourced information on the current refugee crisis. It helps volunteers to find out where they are needed and what the situation is at key Locations. The map monitors hot spots in various European countries, especially at their borders: Greece, Hungary, Macedonia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia, Italy, Austria, The Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, France and Turkey. Moreover, even if nowadays many people would like to give a hand, the majority don't have the possibility of interrupting their everyday life and jobs. To overcome this barrier, there are apps that give the possibility to contribute by distance, donating money or other kind of basic and special needs.



One of the most promising is Gee Cycle, a widget that developers can add to sites and prompt people to donate smartphones to refugees. Give Now is another donation app for basic needs items needed by refugees. It connects donators with supporters and volunteers who collect the donation and bring it to the refugee organisations. Donators just set their location in the app and add the kind of donation they want to give. The categories right now are: smartphones, blankets, travel bags, sleeping bags, train tickets, baby products, hygiene articles, winter shoes and other. A volunteer then collects the items at the given address and transports them to the organisation. Although organizations and charities have just started to develop these dispositive, it is clear that the use and design of such digital supports is growing rapidly; in doing so they trying to promote networking and collaborations also with large private companies.

geecycle



For example, the website www.refugeephones.co.uk is a call to all London agencies and digital & tech companies to donate used or new smartphones, chargers and sim cards. They are also looking for brands to partner with. Similarly, Phone Credit for Refugees and displaced people is a Facebook group that swelled to 20,000 members and has raised almost £100,000, but the pile of requests increases daily and the organisers fear won't be able to keep up with demand.



Institutional Digital Services for Refugees

We call Institutional Digital Services for Refugees speaking of all those initiatives and informatics procedures developed by governments and departments in relation with refugees and asylum seekers. Institutions and government agencies make use of informatics systems for the management of the asylum requests, such as the European database for fingerprints, but also to streamline the bureaucratic process that applicants have to face. Some more than other, many EU members have decided to digitize some of their services, like appointments bookings or online registration to access services such as job seeking. Just recently, developers and volunteers' groups have started to promote partnerships with governments and local institutions mainly to provide correct information and also to coordinate rescue or other kind of activities. For example, within the Italian region of Lombardy it is possible to book and manage appointments with the police online, while in the past applicants had to queue even for days sleeping in front of offices in order to be able to book and be received.



3. Italy and the challenge of digitisation

Even if slightly delayed, Italy is one of those countries where apps and platforms for refugees and volunteers started to be developed. There are clear benefits in relying on digital information and devices especially for a country like Italy, which has to organise and manage large numbers of first arrived asylum seekers, who usually are in need of greater assistance and guidance to understand and undergo the legal procedure to apply for protection. However, the Italian society and culture is still new to apps and similar digital services so that developers and promoters are still working to raise awareness and spread these devices among organisations, volunteers, donors and refugees. In some cases, foreign developers first contacted Italian organisations to improve their apps and extend the information they provide, including also other countries and especially those ones at the EU's borders.



For example, we have already cited the integration aid app RefAid, developed by the British company Trellyz for iPhone and Android which is aiming to create a European network to cover information about services and help in different countries of Europe. Recently, it started a collaboration with Italian charities like Programma Integra, the CIT (Italian Council for Refugees), ARCI, Astalli Centre, Caritas and the government's SPRAR (System of Protection for Asylum seekers and Refugees), which has promoted the app inside the accommodation centres. Through this app it is possible to find food, accommodation, health care, legal assistance and so on. Partners and organizations can modify the information included in the app to keep it update and more precise at a local level. The app looks like a platform with a geolocation tool aiming to a map of all of the services present and available in different EU countries.

Another integration aid app recently born from an intra-European collaboration is AsylEasy, developed by the Austrian association Plattform Rechtsberatung and ARCI Catania (Sicily), where a number of videos in different languages will provide, in a simple manner, information and guidelines about how to apply for asylum in Italy, and the most recent administrative policies in the EU.



Infostranieri is also an integration aid app translated in 8 different languages, where it is possible to find information but also to make specific questions and then be called back within 48 hours by a volunteer. The peculiarity of this app is that it has been developed by a Bashkim Sejdiu, a young Albanian migrant who lives in Italy since 20 years and had to navigate the ordeal of resettlement himself in person. Also volunteers and donors' platforms are present in Italy, to coordinate donations and volunteers. One of the most interesting is Emergency B&B, a platform that resembles the well-known company Air-B&B and working in a similar way. There, Italian citizens can register their house on the platform, giving details of rooms and periods when the accommodation is available to host refugee families or individuals. Even if the app is still relatively new and unknown to many organizations or private entities, the number of people subscribing and registering their home is increasing constantly, suggesting an outcome of greater impact for the future. Not only apps but also social networks are promoting and organising donation and support campaigns in favour of refugees, like The 'People to People Solidarity – Italy, a Facebook group collecting funds to provide unaccompanied children on the move in Ventimiglia (the Italian-French border) with sim cards, air credit and smartphones.



The fact that the digital sector is in Italy in continuous expansion is also proved by the presence not only of apps, blogs or platforms available providing generic and first needed information about asylum, but also by other ones proposing to cover more specific topics and needs, like in the case of the Mesoghios Project. This initiative emerged by the specific need of a namesake drop in clinic in Crotone (Calabria), where the second biggest refugee camp of Europe is located. In this camp asylum seekers have to wait for prolonged amount of time for their request to be evaluated, while the hygienic conditions are precarious and health care is not guaranteed to everyone. This clinic is run by volunteers and has assisted more than 3000 asylum seekers since 2014 delivering medical and psychological support, since the majority of asylum seekers in the area live at the borders of the Italian society and are unable to get access to national health services, especially to general practitioners.



From 2015 the Mesoghios project relies on a fundamental digital service thanks to a new app, developed by the collaboration of INTERSOS (a Greek organisation) and IBM Foundation (the American multinational technology company present also in Italy). This app works in an efficient way tracking, recording and storing personal medical data, including the complete health history of patients. In this way practitioners will be able to have access and share data to understand patients' conditions and provide better care overcoming the language barrier and the cultural diversity related with health and care. This is particularly essential firstly because the majority of asylum seekers don't have records of their medical history, making difficult for doctors to make diagnosis and monitor the progress of therapies and condition. And secondly, because refugees usually travel frequently from a town to another, or from a country to another making difficult to follow their health condition. Thanks to this app, the medical personnel will be also able to record audios, pictures or videos on the virtual folder to be seen by other doctors and physicians in the future. The patient as well will be able to have access to his records all the time, with the option of receiving it by email so that the system can work offline as well.

Thanks to these cyber technologies it is possible to observe and make an assessment of how the Italian population, professionals and institutes are proving to be receptive and proactive in front of the recent refugee crisis. A positive trend appears clear when looking at groups coming up on social networks such as Facebook, where pages like Refugee Welcome Italia has around 15000 likes; or Nessuno è Straniero (literally, “nobody is a stranger”) with more than 50000 likes, while the Italian department of the UNHCR has a group counting more than 100,000 of subscribers. These virtual places are pivotal in providing a tool to start discussions about the topic of international protection sharing opinions and ideas, to coordinate volunteering interventions and fundraising. Most of all these groups have the fundamental role of spreading correct information and news through its members that in this way become active online in finding other people sensitive to the topic and to show the truth of asylum to other less informed users.

Therefore, it is foreseeable that already in the coming months the digitization process of services for refugees, volunteers and organizations will be able to reach increasingly higher numbers of people, guaranteeing better coverage and a widening of the offers, satisfying more directly and locally the needs of highly vulnerable individuals as the asylum seekers.

3.1. Some Questions for the Future

“One Iraqi refugee explained how important internet connectivity was for passengers on his boat, as they made the crossing from Turkey to Greece. As well as using global positioning system (GPS) on mobile phones to ensure they were steering the boat in the right direction, one passenger had a laptop with an internet connection. Through Facebook, he was in contact with anonymous volunteers who checked that the boats arrived safely in Greece. In this instance, the boat started to sink. The passengers alerted the volunteers through Facebook, who alerted the Greek police, who sent a helicopter to check the situation. Eventually, a boat arrived to rescue the passengers and deliver them safely to Greece.” (Voices of Refugees, BBC 2016)

As shown, digital services and IT tools have today an increasingly essential role in characterizing contemporary forms of migration. However, this a recent phenomenon and even if it is now possible to observe some of the dynamics involved, it is still difficult to predict future outcomes. Therefore it is pivotal to start considering and generating questions to produce an analysis and of this phenomenon, giving the possibility to shape it in the most positive way for all the actors involved in the process (refugees, institutions, practitioners and developers).

The BBC published online a research report in July 2016 called “Voices Of Refugee: Information And Communication Needs Of Refugees In Greece And Germany”. This comparative study highlighted several points, sometimes conflicting, emerged from the large number of qualitative interviews conducted involving informants of all kinds.

Firstly, the analysis shows that refugees who stay in regular contact with other refugees and who have wide communication networks of family members and friends (via mobile networks and social networking sites such as Facebook and WhatsApp) were likely to be more resilient than those who were less connected. However, particularly Afghan refugees, tended to rely more heavily on smugglers through informal inflow devices, such as travel group for information on their journey and were often cut off from contact with family and friends. However, not all participants had strong online social connections. For example, many of the Afghan refugees had no social media access and reached Europe without it. Syrians were more likely to be in social media contact with people who had made the journey than Afghans. The latter were less likely to be connected online before they left home and therefore did not plan their journeys in the same way. This result brings out one of the major problems of the digital age, the so called digital divide.



The term digital divide describes a gap in terms of access to and usage of information and communication technology. It was traditionally considered to be a question of having or not access, but with a global mobile phone penetration of over 95%, it is becoming a relative inequality between those who have more and less bandwidth and more or less skills. Conceptualizations of the digital divide have been described as "who, with which characteristics, connects how to what". Consequently, it is no surprise that the refugees carrying smartphones with a good connection capacity are those who could afford them back home.

Surely, the digital divide is a factor to take into account, because it excludes a group of people from the possibility of preserving advocacy and agency capacity while being in such a vulnerable state. As we have already mentioned, people have also begun to share exact GPS coordinates, so others can follow their paths. Refugees are choosing to go it alone, and smugglers are losing business. By providing refugees with this kind of autonomy and peer review, social networks could alter the system on the ground, and render the services of those persons profiting off of refugees unnecessary. Still, to ensure a safe journey, information needs to be accessible. It is necessary to consider the different effects that the same phenomenon can generate. In such a complex system it's hard to determine whether digitization is net positive for refugees, smugglers, both or neither. For example, pricing pressure on smugglers can incentivize them to use cheaper, life-threatening boats. Additionally, holding onto the device during so arduous journey is not easy since patrol guards often confiscate smartphones at the checkpoints. And even those who have phones don't always have access to the Internet or to apps and services that might help them.

Nevertheless, IT and developers active in this sector are trying to address these problems developing solutions more fair and accessible. For example, Mike Butcher, editor-at-large of TechCrunch, organized the Techfugees Conference in London in October 2015, with the intention to replicate again this year. Around 300 people from the tech and start-up communities were joined by concerned citizens to discuss what can be done to help Europe's refugee crisis.

The goal was to hone some of the ideas that came out of an October hackathon that drew engineers, entrepreneurs, designers, NGO members and some of them former refugees themselves. They offered ideas ranging from tools to report war crimes to apps that can help

reunite families. However, Butcher found companies less keen on being associated with Syrian refugees after the ISIS attacks on Paris and Beirut. As techfugees expands to other parts of the world, concerns might arise over surveillance issues, especially location-specific tools “The organizations that are trying to address this crisis in a genuine and helpful way are suffering because of the erroneous conflation of refugees with terrorism” he says.

However, though it is undeniable that states and governments are in need of new digital tools as well to ensure national public safety, it must be remembered that asylum seekers and refugees are a special group of technology users who need special protection. They are vulnerable and their personal data is very sensitive.



Secondly, one of the positive aspects of the digitization of migration is the fact that the support apps that are springing up to meet different requirements and needs are organized more and more at an intra-European level, generating collaborations between partners of different countries avoiding duplication in the many different initiatives around the world. It is important also to ensure that these initiatives are effective and sustainable in the long-term. Finally, the fact that there are organizations, companies, private individuals or professionals interested in having an active role in support of refugees, should not mean that states and institutions can delegate to third actors, responsibilities and interventions that are political and institutional. The best solution to ensure everyone a safe and dignified journey to seek asylum in Europe is still to create humanitarian corridors to rescue these people, eliminating the system of smugglers who make profit over the tragedy of those who run away from war and conflict.

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2.3. ICT AND SOCIAL NETWORK FOR REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS EMPLOYMENT

The European Commission Joint Research Centre - Institute for Prospective Technological Studies , has recently conducted several researches showing that ICT play an important role in the social and labour integration process of migrants and refugees in the host community.

In some European Countries, like Spain and Romania, online communities provide an essential support for foreign people that recently have arrived in a new country; both Internet shops and many websites often provide newcomers with all practical information, job opportunities and practical help, especially at the very beginning of their new life in the hosting community.

Also in some cases, Internet café owners, together with experts and online ethnic minorities communities, are key actors for the social inclusion of newcomers and are actively engaged in local development and skills/capacity building back in their communities of origin.

Recent data show that migrants and refugees make an extensive use of the Internet and its tools (such as social networks), and this trend seems to be constantly rising in their countries of origins as well. ICT and social networks have turned into a vehicle to develop economical and civic initiatives that benefit both host community and migrant's countries of origins (co-development strategies).

1. ICT and Social Network for Refugees and Immigrants Employment

ICT tools have been promoting new job opportunities for migrants and ethnic minorities, since they allow both migrants/refugees and employers to see and eventually match professional profiles, employments need and requirements.

However, one of the biggest barriers that migrants face while searching for job in a foreign country, is the lack of recognition of their professional qualifications and education degrees, due to the differences in training and educational systems between countries. But also because to have a degree recognised in a different country, one has to apply for a difficult bureaucratic process and there are high fees to be paid.

In order to face this challenge, ICT tools are nowadays being used to assess, evaluate and demonstrate expertise and allow migrants to create their own portfolio, completing and integrating their officially recognised qualification. Employment opportunities are also multiplied by the very nature of social networks, which make communication more fluid and expand contacts going beyond geographical limitations and specific nationally-tailored job profiles.

ICT can also simplify recruitment procedures as well as facilitate contacts with potential recruiters. Below, a short list of good practice on how to use ICT and social media to foster employment opportunities for immigrants and refugees is illustrated.



- Refugees at Work (<https://www.refugeeswork.at>) - AUSTRIA

It is an online job platform for refugees whose purpose is to break down the barriers between refugees and employers/entrepreneurs. The platform also provides refugees with legal information and helps them to create job profiles and CVs as well as guidance to find suitable job vacancies according to individual skills and competences. It also offers a e-learning space where job and human resources recruiters share their knowledge in order to prepare refugee candidates to carry out a successful job interview.

- Kompetenz-Erfassungs-Notebook (KEN) (<http://demo.kompetenz-erfassungs-notebook.de/>; <http://www.bagarbeit.de>) - GERMANY

This tool consists of a notebook that allows users to record their competences and skills under 3 categories: “activities”, “workbook” and “curriculum vitae”. Main users are employment and qualification companies as well as potential candidates, whose competences and skills are both self-assessed and assessed by externals. The objective of the tool is to facilitate labour insertion for foreign people whose qualification and job profiles are not recognized in Germany, by providing an alternative recognition system, thus increasing carrier opportunities.

- The Arbete Initiative of the Municipality of Stockholm (www.stockholm.se/Arbete) - SWEDEN.

This initiative aims at training immigrants specific job profiles, using, among others, mobile phones to teach the vocational, cultural and language skills. The project actively engages potential employers.

- Social Digital Mentors (<http://www.social-digital-mentors.eu>).

Social digital mentoring constitutes an innovative approach to foster employability for long-term unemployed people, especially for refugees, immigrants and people who are struggling to enter the labour market, because at risk of social and economical exclusion. This strategy is based on peer-to-peer non formal learning, and a full exploitation of ICT and social media for self-employability and job searching. Online mentors offer advisory and tutoring to unemployed adults on how to efficiently use social networks and ICT to be a good candidate and be successful in online job searching. SDM has been developed in the

framework of an Erasmus + Strategic Partnership project, promoted by Esmovia Sistema Practices s.l.



ICT and social networks also constitute a valuable tool to enhance self-employment and entrepreneurship among migrants and refugees. For example, the case study of Tarifa, reported in the research “ICT for Integration, Social Inclusion and Economic Participation of Immigrants and Ethnic Minorities: Case Studies from Spain”, 4 life stories of immigrant’s entrepreneurs are presented to illustrate different ways of ICT tools to develop own business (ICT for internationalizing business, intercultural networking, enhancing pro-social activities, etc.).

According to a comparative study in some EU countries, it has been also proved that in general ICTs and social network constitute an important resource both for social and economical integration of migrants. The large number of migrants relying on digital tools for their employment needs mainly refers to young and educated, since older and less educated ones are normally isolated and excluded from the digital world because of the lack of digital skills, not being able to utilize ICT for their socio-economic integration. In this matter, a set of recommendation have been drafted in order to promote digital literacy as one of the strategies that institutions and social key stakeholders should develop in order to facilitate integration.

2. The Efficient Use of Social Networks for Employment

In the past, to recruit employees, companies would simply advertise job opportunities in the local press; engage a recruitment consultant or, more recently, post jobs online via the company website or on popular job platforms. Many claim that this is a passive way to approach to recruitment and that times are changing. For example, in 2009 it was reported that Monster.com saw a 31% drop in revenue. This is a higher percentage than the overall decline in the recruitment industry worldwide.

Today, with the advent of social media, recruiters need to be more proactive in their approach, by engaging with talents across a wide range of social networking platforms.

Social media used as a recruitment tool are fast, efficient and cost effective; and have improved the recruitment process by making it more open and fair guaranteeing equality.

Thanks to the easy access of these basic technologic devices, social networks also represent a very efficient and direct way for refugees and migrants to get connect with new job opportunities and stay updated with advertisements and vacancies all the time.



Given this scenario, migrants and refugees have to pay attention and deal with a new emerging concept: the digital or virtual identity. And this is not another that the impression we cause based on the content about us available on the Internet. Depending by the content that one collects, generates, and exposes in his\her virtual profile, a specific digital identity is created and different kind of impressions is made by those who see it. Being most advisable to opt for posting content with a neutral character against the ideology and politics and not displaying inappropriate behaviour as may be images or videos.

This is a factor to keep in mind since it is a very common practice for many companies to look up at the social profiles of job applicants. In this way, they can make a quick dismissal only based on the impression given before the corresponding interviews. Therefore, digital identity will play a decisive role in finding work and is the duty of each candidate to take care of maintaining and controlling it at all times.

2.1. Digital Reputation

Digital reputation can be described as “the result of the relative proximity of three factors to one another, as follows: Who You Are, Who You Say You Are, and Who People Say You Are”.

The first of the three factors covers the digital identity in real life. ‘Who you say you are’ corresponds to the image that job-seekers wish to display to the public. In the case they run their own business, it is their own responsibility as entrepreneurs to create and defend the digital reputation of the company’s identity.

‘Who people say you are’ corresponds to the way other people describe you. To manage one’s own reputation means dealing with all these dimensions.

A good online reputation may take months or years to be completed, and only a few seconds to be destroyed. The best way to maintain and improve an own digital reputation, is through communication and online conversation. For this purpose, it is necessary to participate and be available to answer. Refugees and migrants can participate in two different ways:

- Creating contents and sharing them on the Internet or helping to spread the content created by other people using the platforms they have chosen.
- Answering to conversations started by other people through comments.



To succeed in social media, it is necessary to set a publishing schedule, indicating dates and themes, creating a plan and establishing a routine avoiding one's profile to become obsolete. There are three main steps:

- 1) To choose one or more topics that you feel comfortable with, and divide them into categories and subcategories.
- 2) Make a list and decide how many times a week you will publish or post articles.
- 3) Write the headlines, and if you have previously written articles, use them as a backup when you have no ideas.

An example of planning board:

	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 4
	Sub Category	Sub Category	Sub Category	Sub Category
Week 1	Title			
Week 2		Title		
Week 3			Title	

Some examples of topics to write about:

- Presentation of the work you do.
- Reviews of books on a chosen category.
- Videos and websites that talk about a subject matter.
- Summaries of books.
- Pictures.
- Answers & questions.

2.2. Tools to Create Digital Identity

Social platforms:

- Facebook is free for users; they can create profiles containing photos and lists of personal interests, exchanging private and public messages to each other and participants in groups of friends.
- Twitter is a free social networking micro blogging service that allows registered members to broadcast short posts called tweets. Twitter members can broadcast tweets and follow other users' tweets by using multiple platforms and devices. Tweets and replies to tweets can be sent by cell phone text messages desktop client or by posting at the Twitter.com website. Unlike Facebook or LinkedIn, where members need to approve social connections, anyone can follow anyone on public Twitter. To weave tweets into a conversation thread or connect them to a general topic, members can add hashtags to a keyword in their post. The hashtag, which acts like a Meta tag, is expressed as the “#” keyword.
- LinkedIn is a social networking site designed specifically for employment. The goal of the site is to allow registered members to establish and document networks of people they know and trust professionally. A LinkedIn member's profile page, which emphasizes employment history and education, has professional network news feeds and a limited number of customizable modules. Basic membership for LinkedIn is free. Network members are called “connections.” Thanks to the potential international dimension of the professional connections, migrants and refugees can overcome restrictions that national legislation may set for certain job vacancies and represented by specific requirements related to the national education system (qualification and certifications). Unlike other free social networking sites like Facebook or Twitter, LinkedIn requires connections to have a pre-existing relationship.



- Flickr is an image hosting and video hosting website and web services suite widely used by photo researchers and bloggers to host images that they embed in blogs and social media. Photos and videos can be accessed from Flickr without the need to register an account but an account must be made in order to upload content onto the website. Registering an account also allows users to create a profile page containing photos and videos that the user has uploaded and also grants the ability to add another Flickr user as a contact.
- YouTube is a video sharing website. The site allows users to upload, view, rate, share and comment on videos. Available content includes video clips, TV clips, music, videos, movie trailers and other content such as video blogging, short original videos, etc. Most of the content on YouTube has been uploaded by individuals, but media corporations including CBS, the BBC, Vevo, Hulu, and other organizations offer some of their material via YouTube, as part of the YouTube partnership program. Unregistered users can watch videos, and registered users can upload videos to their channels. Videos considered to contain potentially offensive content are available only to registered users affirming themselves to be at least 18 years old.
- A blog is a frequently updated online personal journal or diary. It is a place to express you to the world. A place for people to share their thoughts and passions. Really, it's anything people want it to be. For job purposes a blog is a personal website that migrants and refugee job-seekers have to update on an ongoing basis. Blog is a short form for the word weblog and the two words are used interchangeably.
- An Internet forum, or message board, is an online discussion site where people can hold conversations in the form of posted messages. They differ from chat rooms in that messages are often longer than one line of text, and are at least temporarily archived.



Also, depending on the access level of a user or the forum set up, a posted message might need to be approved by a moderator before it becomes visible.

2.3. Tools for Monitoring Digital Identity

Google Alerts is a content change detection and notification service. It is offered by the search engine company Google. The purpose of the service is to send emails to the user when it finds new results—such as web pages, newspaper articles, blogs, or scientific research—that match the user's search term(s).

To create an alert:



1. Visit Google Alerts.

(<http://www.google.com/alerts>)

2. In the "Create an alert about" box, enter the words you want to get email notifications for.

3. Click Show options to say how often you get alerts, what types of results you want to get, and more.

4. Click Create Alert.

5. Once your alert is set up, you'll start getting emails any time we find new search results for your keywords.

6. You can also create an alert by clicking the + next to any of the suggested topics on the Google Alerts page.

2.4. Tools for Maintaining your Digital Identity

Hootsuite is one of many tools referred to as a "Social Media Management System". It offers plan features that allow migrant and refugee job-seekers to streamline workflows.

With a single dashboard they can control different social media platforms and schedule posts to automatically publish it at any day/time.



3. ICT and Social Network for Campaigning

ICT play an essential role in developing and carrying out campaigns with several purposes: spreading awareness and inform, promoting legal and political changes, engaging people and any Internet user to join and contribute signing petitions or by providing financial support. With regard to the refugees-related issues, several campaigns have been promoted by NGOs, foundations, organizations and other social keys actors.

Please find below some example:

- 8 Ways to Solve the World Refugees Crisis

Campaign led by Amnesty International

Link:<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2015/10/eight-solutions-world-refugee-crisis/>.

Through this campaign, Amnesty International is putting forward eight solutions for how world leaders (in particular rich countries) can start tackling the massive humanitarian crisis together.

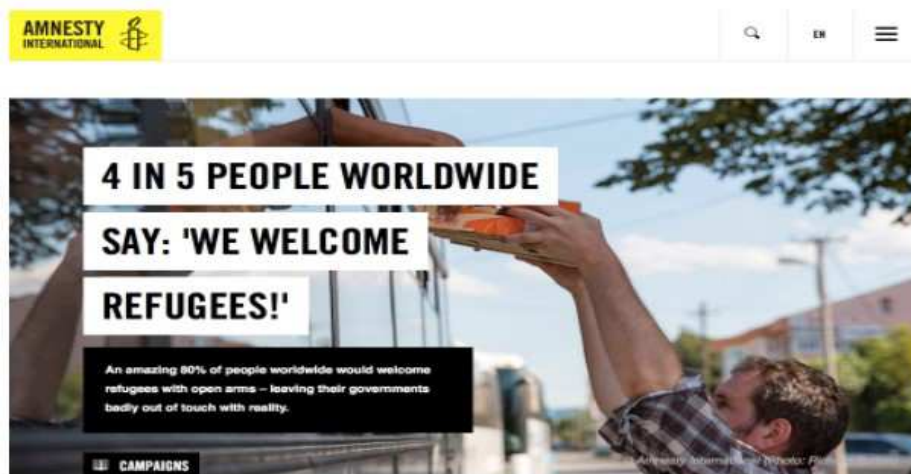


- We Welcome Refugees

Survey and campaign led by Amnesty International

Link: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2016/05/survey-4-in-5-worldwide-welcome-refugees/>

During a worldwide survey carried out by Amnesty International, where 27.000 people across 27 countries were asked if they would welcome refugees showed that 4 in 5 people were willing to do that. The survey is an action to push governments to put more effort in their refugees welcoming/hosting policies, worldwide.



- Refugees Welcome

Led by Refugees Welcome UK

Link: <https://www.refugees-welcome.org.uk/campaigning-for-change/>

It is a national network of local campaign groups, whose objective is getting specific commitments from councils to resettle refugees locally, getting local municipalities to ensure resettlement of 50.000 people over the 5 years and persuade local stakeholders to back resettlements, using the Community Welcome Plan to plan actions



- Refuge for Gender

Led by CEAR – The Spanish Commission for Refugees Aid

Link: <https://www.cear.es/sections-post/refugio-por-genero/>

This campaign aims at raise awareness of refugees and asylum seekers for gender-related reasons, by disseminating video-stories and relevant data and statistics. Other goal of the campaign is to propose recommendation to mass and communication media to get them more engaged in transmitting information on this issue.



#With Refugees

Led by UN Refugee Agency UNHCR

Link: <http://www.unhcr.org/news/press/2016/6/5762567a7/global-celebrities-join-campaign-calling-governments-action-refugees.html>

The Campaign was launched in 2016 and asked the world to stand together #WithRefugees. In a stunning video message more than 60 global celebrities join with refugees and aid workers to echo the message, “we stand with refugees, please stand with us.” The petition appeals for government action on behalf of the world are forcibly displaced.



#liberate de Prejuicios

Led by CEAR

Link: <http://www.libresdeprejuicios.org>

By this campaign, CEAR aims to disrupt prejudices and false beliefs on refugees, supporting counter narratives with data, statistics, and telling refugees' reality through videos and images.





2.4. PROMOTION OF EUROPEAN VALUES, DEMOCRACY, ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BEST PRACTICE



In order to fully assess the promotion of European values, democracy, active citizenship and community development best practice it is necessary to define the European Values. The European Union's central values are respect for human dignity and human rights, freedom, democracy, equality and the rule of law. Countries within the European Union are considered to recognise these values to unite them together. The main aim of the European Union is to protect these values and promote the peace and wellbeing of the civilians. The European Parliament is responsible for ensuring these values are understood in the EU law and policies. It's argued that the larger the EU becomes, the more important it is for the people who live in it to realise that their union has been built on common values.

1. Introduction

Democracy is considered a crucial European Value and can be defined as a government by the people; especially: rule of the majority. There is good reason to argue that the decision-making process at the European level is a democratic one. To summarise, it appears that the EU decision making process is composed by a representation and a careful balance between the interests of the European Union and the Member States on the one hand, and the interests of the citizens of the Member States on the other. So, it can be said that the European Union qualifies as democratic, efficient and effective. At least, there are very few arguments available that convincingly demonstrate that the process is undemocratic in character.

Active Citizenship is an essential element of the European Values and arguably links to other values; representative democracy and civil society. Active citizenship can be defined as people getting involved in their local communities and democracy at all levels, from towns to cities to nationwide activity. Within an EU context it surrounds specific activities involving citizens, bringing together people from local communities across Europe to share and exchange experiences, opinions and values, to learn from history and to build for the future.

Community development is a process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems. Community wellbeing (economic, social, environmental and cultural) often evolves from this type of collective action. Although Europe is a 'wealthy democracy', the reality shows that there are still people being excluded. That is why European Community Development Network works on inclusion, participation and democracy through the promotion and development of sustainable community development in Europe. Community development is focussed with working together with communities and groups for positive social inclusion, change and equality. It is often described as placing attention on product and process. Community development is an approach that focuses on poverty, social exclusion and inequality that highlights the participation of those experiencing the issues at all levels of intervention. Community work approaches are useful when you need to build democratic participation and citizen participation.



“Community development reflects European principles as:”

- A true expression of the European principle of subsidiary, ensuring that decisions, problems and issues are addressed at the lowest possible level;
- Democratic and egalitarian: it values all citizens as equal and worthy of inclusion in the process of development;
- Social, for it addresses social processes, such as exclusion, inequality, neighbourhood fragmentation, alienation and poverty;
- Inclusive, for it seeks to unite divisions across gender and race, promote equality and thereby combat discrimination, racism, xenophobia or socially divisive politics or movements;
- Ergonomic, for problems of exclusion are defined and addressed by those who know most about them and who are experiencing them. It provides an efficient means of analysing problems, addressing need and defining solutions;
- Political, for it engages with the political process, uses democratic means to redress imbalances and inequalities in decision-making and engages with governmental structures;

- Improving, for it drives up the quality of administration through the identification of shortcomings in the public sector;
- Effective, for where used, it has empowered people, enabled them to take greater responsibility for their own affairs and led to a greater sense of citizenship. It has also improved public services, ensured a more just allocation of resources, improved the quality of life and has made government more accountable.

<http://eucdn.net/statement/>

In other words, community development is a crucial practise that can promote European values, democracy and active citizenship.



2. The European Context



2.1. Community Development

To meet the needs of the European Values, increase democracy, active citizenship community development within a European Context must meet the following concepts;

- Delivers interdisciplinary, professional and independent support to groups of people
- Identifies, together with local people, community problems;
- Increases the empowerment of local people so that they can organise themselves to solve problems;
- Turns its attention primarily to people struggling with social deprivation, poverty, inequality and exclusion;
- Contributes to a sustainable community based on mutual respect and social justice;
- Challenges power structures which hinder people's participation;
- Contributes to the socio-cultural development of the neighbourhood through local people

<http://eucdn.net/statement/>

Community development is practiced across all the member countries of EuCDN. This has made positive conditions whereby the meaning and collective knowledge of community development can be realised across the diverse EU communities in different contexts. Community development processes are different practise and are used in the EU today to promote European values, democracy, and active citizenship.

Community Development Practise is more equal, just and sustainable as it is working with people to build knowledge, skills and analysis the action and the correct support people need to make change. Therefore, community development is effective in promoting European values and democracy, active citizenship. Community development recognises that people have a meaningful place in society and that through participating in decision making that can be acknowledged.

2.2. What has Europe done?

Europeans are more aware of their status as citizens. Several Europeans want to understand their right and want them to increase. “Four out of five Europeans cherish, in particular, the right to free movement that allows them to live, work, study and do business anywhere in the EU” (December 2016 Eurobarometer). However, there is a constant lack of knowledge so EU citizens don’t know how to use their right effectively. The 2017 EU Citizenship Report sets out the Commission's priorities in further raising awareness of these rights and making them easier to use in practice.

In the 2017 EU Citizenship Report: Commission promotes rights, values and democracy report it was decided that more needs were to be done.

The following targets and aims have been set to promote European values, democracy, active citizenship and community development.



- Organising an EU-wide information campaign on EU citizenship rights, to help citizens better understand their rights.
- Strengthening voluntary engagement: The Commission wants to create more opportunities for young people in Europe to make a meaningful contribution to society and show solidarity. The European Solidarity Corps, launched on 7 December 2016, gives young people the opportunity to gain valuable experience while showing solidarity to those in need.
- Proposing a 'Single Digital Gateway' to give citizens easy online access to information, assistance and problem-solving services on a wide range of administrative questions.
- Intensifying the Citizens' Dialogues and public debate, to exchange views with EU citizens and increase their understanding of what impact the Union has on their daily lives. Already, 125 Citizens' dialogues have been organised since the beginning of the Juncker Commission.
- Promoting best practices to help citizens vote and stand for EU elections, particularly in the run up to the 2019 elections.

<http://europa.eu/>

Members of the European Union and Commission are working together to increase European values, democracy, active citizenship and community development. Here are many examples;



The Future of Europe debates: Debating Europe will be publishing a set of liveblogs, infographics and posts for the "Debate on the Future of Europe", a series of citizens' dialogues with European Commissioners held in towns and cities across Europe. Some of these debates will focus on European values, democracy, active citizenship and community development.



2.3. Where to Improve

The European Union is currently undergoing a crisis in democratic legitimacy since the UK voted to leave. There is now a lack of confidence and stability in the European Union and its institutions. Many Europeans criticise the way in which democracy works in the Union. There is an increasing gap between community institutions and European citizens. Citizens believe that their voices are not heard by the European Union. The breakdown of the EU is argued to have lasting damage on its future and the values it represents. However, the EU referendum has had at least one useful side-effect. Brexit has got people engaged in politics, including those who don't have a British passport. According to a lot of media sources the recent 2015 refugee has unsettled the EU like never and threatened the values that make up the European Union. The current legislative arrangements were clearly capable of dealing with the influx of refugees. This started a crisis and deep division around community cohesion between EU states. It is argued that this can lead the EU into two extremes. Either it will increase European values and thrive or become less European and a breakdown of its core principles. The media also to blame for this current problem. The media has been creating a spiral of fear surrounding Brexit and the refugee and immigrant crisis. This has resulted in citizens being fearful of the future and being more individualised. They lack the sense of community they had before, are lack motivated to participate in the local community as well as at a European level.



To regain any kind of legitimacy, the Union must reduce its democratic breakdown and recreate a link with Europeans. Some initiatives have been implemented to this end, but they would appear insufficient. Other action must be taken, and that is one of the challenges facing the new Commission for the next five years.

3. Sweden Case Study – General National Level

On a National Level Sweden has its own Cultural Policy that supports the promotion of European values, democracy, active citizenship and community development. The objectives for cultural policy are that “culture is to be a dynamic, challenging and independent force based on freedom of expression, that everyone is to be able to participate in cultural life, and that creativity, diversity and artistic quality are to be integral parts of society’s development.”

The Cultural Policy promotes European and Swedish literature and reading, architecture, form and design, archives and a positive cultural environment.

In accordance with the objectives for cultural environment activities, central government have set a cultural environment for activities that promote European values, democracy, active citizenship and community development. They particularly encourage public participation in cultural environment activities and opportunities to understand and take responsibility for society; an inclusive society with the cultural environment as a shared source of knowledge, education and experiences.



Sweden's participation in the European Values study however has been mixed. There is little research around today with valid information that can explain Sweden's viewpoint on European Values. Old research from the 1990s compared governments in Nordic countries and how citizens trust the government in relation to European values. At that time Sweden was in the middle of ranking with Finland and Norway at the top. However, as time progressed into 2005 Sweden increased to be nearer the top of the Nordic countries in European Values.

In terms of democracy, It is argued that the Swedish policy for democracy promotion is permeated by a Swedish democratic self-image, eclectic theoretical reflection, and flexibility. In addition, it is argued that Sweden is primarily driven by altruistic and ideological motives, and acts to promote legal and societal democracy, and that the allocation of democracy promotion resources is based on theoretical as well as practical considerations.

Community development in Sweden focussing either on Nature or Tourism. Tourism is questioned in its sustainability and Nature is considered the "better" way to achieve community development. In the broadest sense, tourism contributes to regional sustainability by helping to diversify the economy. Regions like northern Sweden have traditionally been dependent on exogenous development (e.g., mining, hydro-power development) but tourism development in the region is mostly endogenous. Thus, this can lead to more sustainable northern communities. Sustainable community development in general and not tourism development must remain the ultimate goal if tourism is to have a place in northern communities.

3.1. Micro - Case Study

An example of how Sweden is working to promote European values, democracy, active citizenship and community development is through the best practise of board game.

One European project called NET NET aims to provide a ludic and educational kit (The NET NET kit) composed by a board game and supporting tools (a cartoon video, a video tutorial and a mini-guide) focused on EU Citizenship, EU awareness and Democracy (equal opportunities for all, discrimination, social exclusion, participation, political rights): a highly flexible and customisable kit, suitable for re-processing and subsequent integrations to be used by youth workers with a wide range of targets (youngsters, people with fewer opportunities, NEETs, drop out students, persons of recent immigration, refugees, adults, senior).

The NET kit is going to help youth workers in their role as a multi-target providers of non-formal learning opportunities by which they will be able to empower themselves, their social awareness, their citizenship, with the aim to share with “multicoloured” targets an amusing learning process and to explore, as in a learning fun travel, some of the crucial topics of Europe today: EU Citizenship, EU awareness and Democracy topics.



Another example of how Sweden is attempting to promote democracy and creativity is through a project called Democreativity, which gets ideas for "the most unlikely [video] game ever."

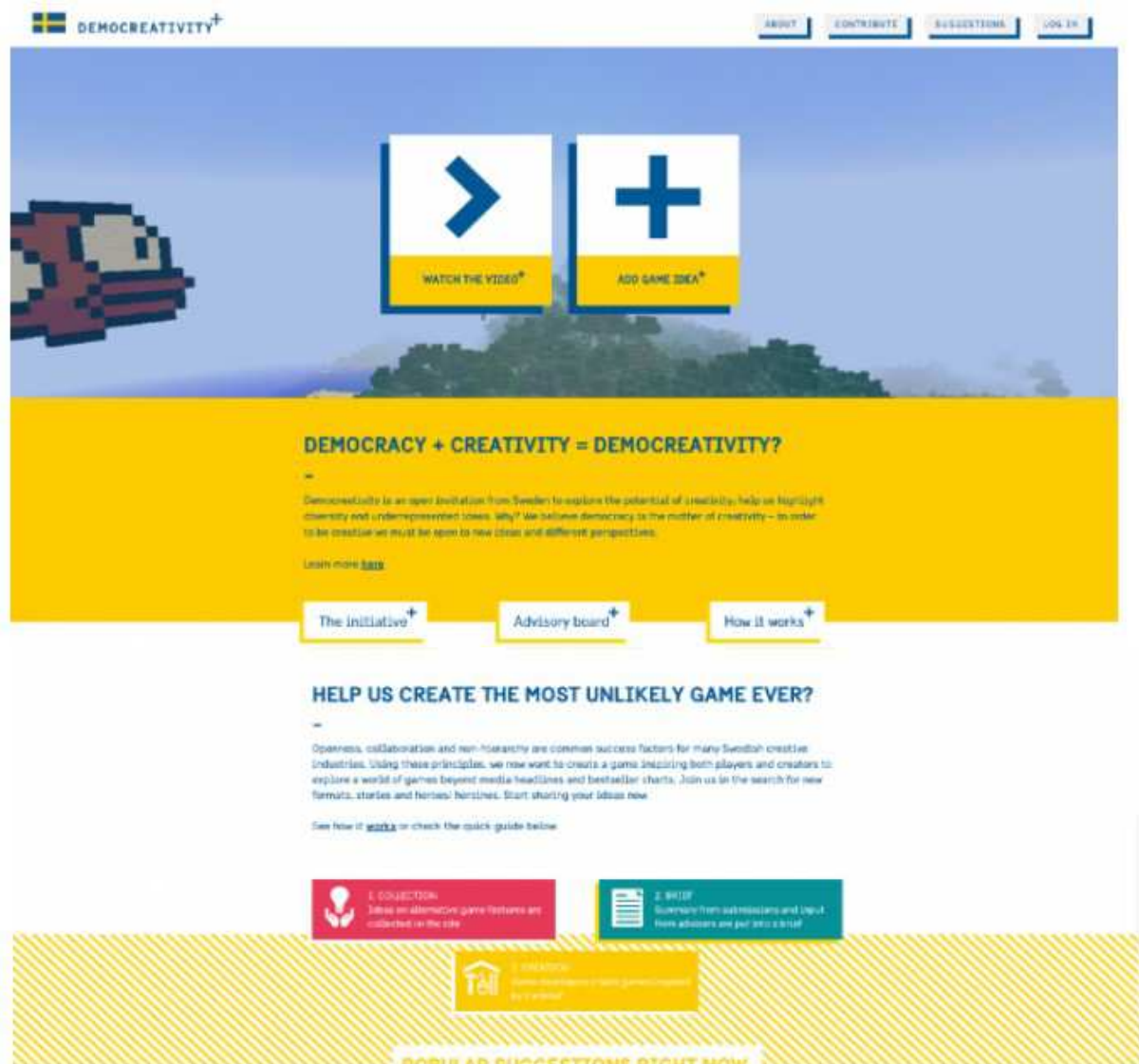
According to the website's description, the project gets ideas from the public and lets site visitors vote on what they like best. The creators Democreativity won't make the games themselves, they would like to see game developers use the site's ideas to inspire others

The site has a section where visitors can share their own ideas for game environments and characters. Examples of suggestions that have been voted to the top include game environments inspired by Ancient Mesopotamia, the human body and a normal-sized house where you play as a mouse.

Democreativity received more than 500 suggestions during its four-week submission period. Participants came from more than 126 countries. Some of the key insights gathered included a desire to see abstract and unidentified characters in games, non-violent game play and fantastical environments.

"Democreativity focuses on different creative expressions and helps give a voice to all ideas, just as democracy gives a voice to all people," the project's site reads. "Democreativity wants to inspire both players and creators by exploring the world of games beyond media headlines and bestseller charts."

The project organizers "hope to see several games produced" and they will be posted to the Democreativity website



To conclude, promotion of European values, democracy, active citizenship and community development best practice is essential for the stability and future of the European Union. Without the knowledge of best practises organisations and even individuals will not have the awareness of its importance.

The main areas that need to be improved upon is awareness raising and stronger communication between European countries so they can share their best practises. Furthermore, individuals need to be open minded about the media they are being exposed to and considering the current situation within the European Union it is crucial people remain positive, open for change but active in the process.

Several competitions, activities, projects and promotions are being run currently that can promote European values, democracy, active citizenship and community development. The positive side is they are making a difference but they need to continue to make an even bigger impact.

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2.5. HOW TO RAISE AWARENESS ON THE RISK OF RADICALISATION THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

The current political discourse is characterised by the emergence of different types of extremism and the governments' efforts to tackle them down before they become a threat to the population.

This chapter aims to understand how to raise awareness on the risk of radicalisation, with particular attention to the role played by social media in this process. It will focus on two realities, the European and the British one and it will give an insight on the measures adopted in these two in order to prevent radicalisation by underlining what these measures imply, the consequences of their implementation and how they could possibly be improved.

1. What? Who? Why?

To begin with, it is necessary to define the meaning of the term 'radicalisation' which is understood as the process that leads an individual or a group of people to adopt increasingly extreme political, religious or social ideas and positions. Secondly, it is important to understand why social media are so important when it comes to radicalisation. Despite the perhaps obviously fact that potentially everyone has an access to some sort of social media platform (be it Facebook, or Twitter, or Blogger or even YouTube), there are some additional characteristics of these platforms that make them the ideal radicalising tool. They are costless, easy to use, 'renewable', unconventional, immediate, far-reaching and free. More specifically, the term renewable refers to the fact that even when a page is blocked or shut down for its inappropriate content there is always another one popping out within minutes with similar if not identical content; unconventional indicates that fact that mobilisation through social media does not require logistical or physical efforts; immediate and far-reaching underline how a message can be shared with hundreds of thousands of people within seconds; and free denotes how there are no restrictions on who can use these platforms or what they can say. It could be argued that there are actual restrictions on what can be shared online as all companies have teams to track, block and remove abusive or inappropriate contents, but this only happens once something is published and therefore seen by many.



Secondly, identifying who is more prone to be radicalised is crucial. Questions such as why some people go through the process of being radicalised or what lays the conditions for people to take paths that will progressively radicalise them are common. Given that no one actively and deliberately aims to be radicalised, much of the researches and academic works on radicalisation studies seem to agree on the fact that those who end up being radicalised start their journey pushed by a general sense of discontent and injustice. However, despite the complexity and plurality of motivations that could lead single individuals to be radicalised, some authors have identified propensity to being radicalised in the following elements: search for meaning, stability and respect; search for a community; and – as already mentioned – as a reaction to perceived injustices committed against Muslims.

Before moving any further it is important to understand why there is the need to raise awareness on the risk of radicalisation through social media among people in general and among educators in this specific case. On the one hand, given the growth in dimension and – unfortunately – expertise of ISIS and the increase in the number of western grown people joining the movement after they have been radicalised online, the fears of the European governments towards online radicalisation seem legitimate. On the other hand, considering the current political situation in Europe with more than 1.3 million asylum claims presented in 2015 by people running away from war, persecution, hunger and ultimately death and the increase of the migrant population in the various member states, there is a progressive emergence of far right inspired radical positions which needs to be dealt with. In addition to these two types of extremisms, the EU council lists other types of potentially radicalising ideologies such as far left, nationalist and anti-globalisation movements. Considering all these different ideologies that could be brought to extreme levels and the already mentioned peculiarities of social media, governmental responses need to be backed up by third sector workers, social workers, teachers, educators, etc. This is even truer when taking into account the fact that the above listed categories are the ones having a direct contact with people potentially passable of radicalisation.



In other words, figures such as counsellors, mentors, cultural mediators, teachers and educators need to be aware on the radicalising threat posed by social media not only because they are among the first ones that could notice early-signs of radicalisation such as behavioural changes or shifts in a person's interests and so on, but also because they are the people that often work first hand in initiatives of social inclusion and integration destined to various sorts of disadvantaged categories believed to be more likely liable to being radicalised. Fundamentally, their work helps societies to be more peaceful and secure, with local communities opening up to and accepting immigrants or disadvantaged people which as consequence will be better integrated in the realities where they live. The very ultimate consequence of this is that if matters such as social exclusion, unemployment, isolation, etc are tackled down adequately, the emergence of extremist movements and the propensity of people to look for answers outside their own society with the risk of being radicalised will diminish.

2. The European Context



Radicalisation in the EU started to be perceived as a problem in relatively recent times. Despite Europe has seen episodes of terrorist acts committed by groups such as the Red Brigades, the IRA or the ETA in the 90s, it was not until the 2004 terrorist attack in Spain and the 2005 one in London that the EU started actively and evidently worrying about terrorism and radicalisation. Concerns over terrorism grew bigger with the 2011 Oslo shootings by the far-right militant Breivik. This is in line with the global trend of fear of Islamic terrorist attacks that spread through the Western world after 9/11 and the rise of far right and xenophobe movements in Europe as a reaction.



The European approach to combat radicalisation in general and online radicalisation in particular is very broad. The European Commission has identified four main goals to face the threat posed by terrorism which are:

- 1) To disrupt the activities of the networks and individuals who draw people into terrorism by monitoring the internet and travel to conflict zones of individuals with a suspicious behaviour, by initiating forms of community policing and by working towards a legal framework that would prevent individuals from inciting and legitimising violence;

2) To counter extremist propaganda through the empowerment of moderate Islamic voices by cooperating with Muslim organisations and faith groups and encouraging the emergence of European imams. In addition to this, the EU aims to initiate a two-direction process in which the common perception of European and Western policies among Muslim communities as discriminatory or unfair and the faulty but sadly diffused perception of Islam and Muslims as linked to violence or terrorism are both addressed;

3) To promote more vigorously security, justice, democracy and opportunity for all as a response to the conditions that might create the ground for the growth of radicalisation which include the lack of political and economic prospects for the interested categories, unresolved international and domestic strife, inadequate and inappropriate educational or cultural opportunities for young people. These issues will be addressed by targeting inequalities and discrimination and promoting inter-cultural dialogue, debate, and long-term integration mechanisms;



4) To increase the understanding of radicalisation issues by developing an appropriate response by listening to Muslim and other communities, comparing the various national situations and experiences and establishing a European picture of the phenomenon of violent radicalisation. The involvement of non-governmental groups, local communities, religious authorities or other organisations will have a fundamental role in the achievement of this goal.

2.1. What Europe has done?

In order to meet these ends and block factors conducive to violent radicalisation the EU has promoted various initiatives such as:

- “Check the Web”, an information portal supported by the European Council aiming at strengthening the cooperation between European countries on the monitoring and evaluation of open internet sources;
- The “Audio-visual Media Services Directive” which stated that member states shall ensure by appropriate means that audio-visual media services supplied by those who provide them under their jurisdiction do not contain any incitement to hatred based on race, sex, religion or nationality;
- The “Clean IT Project”, a Dutch-led initiative established in 2010 and funded by the European Commission under the Prevention and Fight Against Crime programme with the purpose of starting a constructive dialogue between governments, business and civil society to explore how to reduce the terrorist use of the internet. The result of this initiative was the setting of general principles and possible best practices to reduce terrorist use of the Internet;
- The “Radicalisation Awareness Network” which is a network within the home Affairs office of the EU which seeks to aid and facilitate information sharing amongst ‘first-liners’, that is to say people directly engaged with at risk individuals or groups within the EU such as social workers, educators, teachers, the police, academics and NGO personnel;



- The promotion of workshops on how to use the internet to foster tolerance and moderation. One example is the 'High Level Conference' that took place in December 2012 and focused on the exchange of knowledge and best-practices between EU-level organisations and the private sector. More in detail, the outcome of this specific conference was the proposal of examples of good practice in implementing 'counter-narratives' that would challenge the extremist discourse online. It also explored ways in which the EU could work with the private sector to combat radicalisation online;
- The European Network of Experts on Radicalisation which is a EU-instituted organisation, hosted through the UK-based Change Institute which wants to deepen the European Commission's understanding of radicalisation through publication, seminars and workshops;
- The Internal Security Strategy in Action also contains measures that can be put into action in order to prevent radicalisation. Among these recommendations there was the creation of a 'handbook of actions and experiences' to support the efforts of member states.

2.2. Where to improve?

The EU approach to violent radicalisation and recruitment does have some critical aspects that need to be underlined in order to have a complete picture of the work carried out by the Union.

First of all, the approach in question is a very broad one. This is perfectly understandable given the nature of the Union itself, but it leaves room for some misunderstandings and questions over responsibility. Measures are implemented in such a way that every single country's internal dynamics can be controlled by the county itself because different states see different paths extremist follow when it comes to both online and offline radicalisation.

Secondly, the EU approach is not unitary, that is to say that while there are European guidelines for dealing with the issue of radicalisation, much of the responsibility lies in the hands of the single member states. The EU is aware of the fact that the bulk of counter-radicalisation work takes place within the local communities, at a regional and especially national level and what it does to support the member states is to offer a framework to coordinate national policies and facilitate information sharing on best-practices.

Finally, a third critical aspect of the European answer to radicalisation is that it does not pay much attention to the process of de-radicalisation. While energies are spent on preventing radicalisation, there are very few measures prescribed as help for those who have been manipulated and convinced to assume extreme and violent positions. In addition to this, it has to be underlined how the focus of the European programs is mainly on Islamist radicalisation rather than other types of extremism although they are extensively mentioned in the official documents.

3. The UK



The United Kingdom has faced – and is still dealing with – one of the most serious and long lasting terrorist threats in Europe. Despite other countries such as France or Spain had terrorist attacks as well, the UK seems to be particularly worried and, as a consequence, extremely active in opposing extremism and radicalisation. The reasons for such a first in line involvement of the UK in this specific area of fight against terrorism which is countering radicalisation are its foreign policy that has been closely aligned with the one of the United States and the nature of British immigration.

Large part of this section will be on general counter-radicalisation measures in the UK, with the very last part of it focusing on responses to online radicalisation.



The increasing concern over several cases of extremism led the British authorities to launch the Contest program in 2003 with the scope of countering terrorism. Even if the Contest strategy is designed for different types of terrorism such as Northern Irish terrorism and extreme right-wing terrorism, its main focus is on Islamic extremism as this is perceived to be the most threatening one. Contest encompasses four sub-categories which are Prevent, Pursue, Prepare and Protect and this paper will specifically focus on counter-radicalisation strategy, Prevent.

Subtitle 2: DoubUK's counter-radicalisation strategy has set objectives which are: responding to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the treat people face from those who promote it; preventing people from being drawn into terrorism and ensuring that they are given appropriate advice and support; and finally working with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation that need to be addressed. With these objectives in mind, the Channel Duty Guidance has been set out.
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3.1. Prevent and Channel

Channel is part of the Prevent strategy it is a multi-agency approach to identify and provide support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorism. It focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being particularly exposed to threats posed by terrorism. Channel's action develops through three main lines of action which are identifying individuals at risk; assessing the nature and the extent of that risk and finally, developing the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned.

The overall and final aim of both Prevent and Channel which is part of it is to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people from supporting terrorism or becoming terrorists themselves. In order to do so Channel encourages local governments, schools, health professionals and charity workers to observe individual's behaviour and refer him/her to the relevant authorities if the person in question shows signs of what is thought to be an indicator of 'radicalization'.



Once a person is signalled as 'vulnerable to radicalisation' the duty to correct their behaviour is taken by the local government panels. The Channel Duty's wording itself states how the 'success of the program is very much dependant on the co-operation and co-ordinated activity of partners. It works best when the individuals and their families fully engage with the programme and are support in a consistent manner'. The Channel process comprises five different steps: the identification of the individual, the screening of the referral by a specific panel; the assessment of vulnerability and risk of an individual; the development of an appropriate action plan together with the identification and procurement of an appropriate support package in case the referral is found to be legitimate; and finally, the delivery of support to the individual. In relation to the first point, the text of the guide states that 'there is no single way of identifying who is likely to be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

Factors that may have a bearing on someone becoming vulnerable may include: peer pressure, influence from other people or via the Internet, bullying, crime against them or their involvement in crime, anti-social behaviour, family tensions, race/hate crime, lack of self-esteem or identity and personal or political grievances'.

In addition to this, it is necessary to specify that the nature of the panels that have the duty of evaluating the extent to which the reported individual is liable of being radicalised may include representatives from NHs; social workers; schools, further education colleges and universities; youth offending services; directors of children's and adult's services; chairs of local safeguarding children boards and safeguarding adult boards; local authority troubled family teams; local authority safeguarding managers; Home Office and its immigration department; border force; housing; prisons and probation, depending on the nature of the referral. Finally, Channel assesses vulnerability using what is reported as a 'vulnerability assessment framework' which is built around three criteria, the engagement of the individual with a specific group, cause or ideology; the individual's intent to cause harm and the individual's capability to do so.

As in the case of Europe, the UK have set practical and concrete initiatives – led and funded under the Prevent strategy directives – aimed at preventing radicalisation. These include:

- The 'Radical Middle Way' initiative, a Muslim-run project that specialised in bringing traditionalist Muslim scholars to speak to mostly young British Muslim audiences;
- 'M-Power' which reached out in particular potentially vulnerable young Somalis and created "safe discussion spaces" where they could take part in guided conversations and debates on topics like radicalisation, terrorism, democracy and foreign affairs, as well as other matters related to gangs, drugs, education and social exclusion;
- 'From one extreme to the other' which is a theatre production believed to be a highly effective tool for teaching children about the dangers of extremism, intolerance and terrorism. It is a play for children in by the GW Theatre Company which has reached over 50,00 school children living in many highly segregated and often economically deprived communities in Northwest England;
- 'Getting Together', initially conceived as a DVD-based lesson program for schools and Further Education colleges, developed by specialist Cardiff teachers, a local imam and a scholar from the Muslim Council of Wales;
- Other initiatives such as public debated, lectures and talks aimed at building ties and trust between the Muslim component and the other members of the;
- Police-led initiatives targeting schools, often aimed at creating and raising awareness on the risk of extremism and radicalisation among children and teachers and at tackling possible negative attitudes towards the police.

3.2. What went wrong

There is much criticism towards both the Channel Duty guidance and the Prevent Strategy. Channel has been criticised mostly for the unclear and discriminatory nature of the criteria it sets for its action, starting from the indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation up to the categories of people forming the evaluation panels. More in detail, Channel has been criticised because among those who are entitled to refer individuals to the Channel co-ordinators and the authorities include categories such as people from schools, colleges and universities, health service workers, housing officers, and prison and probation officers which more often than not do not have the necessary preparation to spot signs vulnerability to radicalisation which are also listed very broadly, vaguely and in a discriminatory way. Also, the hints or 'symptoms' listed as warning signs of potential radicalisation seem to be biased towards one type of extremism, the Islamic one, leaving out other, perhaps more dangerous, types of extremism. As a consequence, Muslim communities and individuals are at risk of being discriminated against unfairly, simply because they happen to match a list of indicators. The faultiest part in relation to this matter is that discrimination – when not tackled properly – leads to marginalisation and exclusion which could potentially make people more prone to being radicalised.



Others have criticised the fact that channel's work is very decentralised with local Channel co-ordinators having much freedom to experiment with different forms of interventions. The most immediate consequence of this is that not all suspect individuals are treated equally and that some of the Channel co-ordinators have adopted hard-line measures with local Muslim groups. Finally, some critics have dismissed Channel as a program that does not involve looking for evidence of a crime, but as involving searching for indication of what people think as reflected in the things they say, read and watch.

This incident was described by David Cameron as instance in which public money meant to be used to oppose extremism has instead ended up in the hands of the extremists. Another problem of Prevent is that practitioners and officers have received very little guidance from the central government as some of them have declared in interviews. Finally, a problematic aspect of Prevent that could however be expanded to the whole British counterterrorism strategy is the fact that despite it is aimed at all forms of terrorism that could pose a threat to the British public, including violence perpetrated by the far right, in practice it seems to have focus overwhelmingly on British Muslims. Generally, Prevent can be described as large, ambitious, high-profile, rolled out too quickly but it has been going through a revision project in order to make it slimmer, more cost-effective and more functional.



The criticism on Prevent is mainly revolving around the misuse of the funds destined to the accomplishment of the aims it lists. Much money has been channelled into regional governments and third-sector organisation in order to run programs in line with the Prevent strategy but often these activities seemed to have worsened the risk factors for radicalisation and aggravated tensions between Muslim and other religious or ethnic communities rather than promoting integration. This is for example the case of a highly publicised Prevent funding program for Muslim-focused sports clubs and youth groups or the 2007/8 incident with the Cordoba Foundation in which a public debate organised by the foundation with Prevent money and featuring alleged Muslim Brotherhood activists and sympathisers against pro-jihadist speakers saw the former lose the debate to their harder-line opponents. This incident was described by David Cameron as instance in which public money meant to be used to oppose extremism has instead ended up in the hands of the extremists. Another problem of Prevent is that practitioners and officers have received very little guidance from the central government as some of them have declared in interviews. Finally, a problematic aspect of Prevent that could however be expanded to the whole British counterterrorism strategy is the fact that despite it is aimed at all forms of terrorism that could pose a threat to the British public, including violence perpetrated by the far right, in practice it seems to have focus overwhelmingly on British Muslims. Generally, Prevent can be described as large, ambitious, high-profile, rolled out too quickly but it has been going through a revision project in order to make it slimmer, more cost-effective and more functional.

3.3. Responses to online radicalisation

With an internet access penetration rate up to 87% of households in the UK by 2012 (against the 76% in the 27-EU) and Internet use among individuals standing at 89% (again versus the 75% of the EU) the UK could be considered a country which is very active online. If we add the fact that the 2011 Prevent Review stated that 'all terrorist groups have an ideology' and that 'promoting that ideology, frequently on the internet, facilitates radicalisation and recruitment', it is possible to gain a clear picture of the attitude towards online radicalisation of British authorities.



One of the first measures to be adopted was the Counter Terrorism Internet Referral Unit launched within the Association of Chief Police Officers (CTIRU). The duty of this unit is to remove or modify unlawful internet content, identify the individuals responsible for posting such material, and support the police counter-terrorism network fighting terrorist or radicalising activity online. Online material can be referred to CTIRU through the Directgov website. During an average week this CTIRU removes over 1000 elements with content that breach antiterrorism legislation and material which is unlawful or offensive is sometimes referred directly to the company which hosts the relevant site. What is more, strict regulatory controls have been applied to Internet Service Providers (ISP) and other service providers. Generally, most ISP's, web hosting companies, file-sharing sites and social networking sites apply conditions that prohibit certain contents.

Prevent contains some section that specifically refer to the problem of online radicalisation. It contains internet-specific measures that ought to be put in place to address the threat of online radicalisation such as limiting the access to harmful content online in specific sectors on premises (this includes schools, public libraries and other public buildings), or ensuring that action is taken to try to remove unlawful and harmful content from the internet. In parallel to this, great part of Prevents online counterterrorism work consists in conducting an online counter-ideological work in order to spur the confidence of civil society activist to challenge extremist content online effectively. This implies working with social media enterprises such as Facebook that could help civil society organisations understand the effect of social media and web 2.0 on marketing, communications, online influence and public relations.



Ultimately, the UK parliament passed the Investigatory Powers Bill, also known as 'Snoopers' Charter' which will become effective by the end of 2017.

This new bill requires internet and phone companies to keep record of every phone call and every web search or website visited by their clients, allowing unprecedented access to people's life to the police, security services and official agencies. Other critical aspects of this bill are the fact that bulk collection of data will be allowed and investigators will be able to access people's computer without conducting prior investigations or having evidence proofed suspicions of someone's misconduct, and the fact that security and law enforcement agencies will be able to legally hack into computers, phones and networks to eavesdrop on communications by simply holding a mandate. Security intelligence officials will be able to hack into computers outside the British borders, to download data from unattended mobile phones and to remotely take control of laptops with the authorisation of the home secretary and an independent judge.

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