LINGUISTIC INTEGRATION OF ADULT MIGRANTS

Guide to policy development and implementation

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Foreword

The Council of Europe has been a pioneer in promoting the integration of migrants in member States. Based on shared principles and values which inspire its work, our Organisation places human rights and social cohesion at the centre of migration policy.

The Council of Europe defines integration as a two-way process: migrants have to play their part, for example by learning the language of the host country; but the host country also has responsibilities, such as access to the labour market and averting discrimination. "Living together in diversity" is not a mere slogan, but vital for peaceful democracy. Policy makers and citizens have an active role to play.

It is remarkable that the first Resolution on migrants ever adopted by the Committee of Ministers concerned "the teaching of languages to migrant workers". That was in 1968, but only many years later the Council of Europe finally launched a project offering support to policy makers and practitioners aimed at promoting the linguistic integration of adult migrants.

Learning the language of the host country is not a pre-condition for integration, but it is of course a key element. Our survey data show that a growing number of member States have introduced policies incorporating language education and assessment. However, migrants do not fit into a single category of learners; their educational needs are complex. Policy responses and educational methodology must reflect that complexity. Drawing on its long experience regarding (foreign) language learning and teaching, the Council of Europe has therefore developed a differentiated set of initiatives, which include a dedicated website, guidelines and instruments to assist member States in developing coherent and effective policies.

The *Guide to policy development and implementation* was designed to respond specifically to the needs of policy makers who are not necessarily specialists in language education and assessment. I hope that the Guide will assist them in their efforts to reconcile migration management and language education, in order to facilitate the integration of migrants into our societies.

Snežana Samardžić-Marković
Director General of Democracy

Preface

Migration is a major issue for Europe, and managing relations between migrants, the communities they form and the host-country population is a complex business.

As Vaclav Havel pointed out[1], "Europe knows, and has always known, how to open herself to newcomers. […] During the last half century, Europe, at least in one of its corners, has been able to accommodate those who differed because their homeland was of another Continent. Europe was and should always remain an open Continent".

Based on its 40 years of experience in the migration field, the Council of Europe is a pioneer in the development of integration policies that respect the rights and dignity of migrants and contribute to societal stability and cohesion.

The *"Guide to policy development and implementation"* focuses on linguistic integration as part of a coherent set of policy proposals for improving the situation of migrants while building harmonious community relations in increasingly diverse European societies.

Successful integration depends on giving priority not only to recognition of migrants' human capital (their mother tongue, personal background and professional experience), but also, more importantly, to the opportunities available for building on that capital during the integration process, by acquiring knowledge about the host country and learning its language.

1. *Diversity and cohesion: new challenges for the integration of immigrants and minorities* (Council of Europe, 2000).

This *Guide* offers an overview of the resources developed by the Council of Europe in the LIAM (linguistic integration of adult migrants) field. Using practical examples, it discusses the different forms of linguistic integration while taking account of the diversity of migrant populations, proposes guidelines for the design of learning programmes while suggesting adaptations to existing instruments, and also considers aspects relating to skills assessment.

Such is the underlying concept of this publication. It will, I hope, be a useful aid to you in your work to make diversity an asset for everyone.

María Ochoa-Llidó
Acting Director of the Directorate of Human Rights
and Anti-Discrimination
(December 2013)

Introduction

Some Council of Europe member states have recently, others some time ago, organised systems to support the integration of adult migrants who have just arrived or are already settled in their territory. They have sometimes chosen to intervene in the area of language learning instead of leaving migrants to 'learn the language themselves', for many reasons. But we must ensure that these actions do not in fact lead to exclusion, especially if they are focused, as is the case in many member states, on tests of knowledge of language and society.[2] The integration of newcomers is a process which encompasses social inclusion[3] (access to housing, employment, education and health services, political life, etc.) and also a transversal but specific dimension: linguistic integration. This aspect is often underestimated, or even non-existent, in reception systems and integration indicators.

2. The Council of Europe has elaborated standard setting instruments and recommendations which set out the principles governing actions in the migration field (see relevant extracts of Council of Europe Conventions and Recommendations). These are complemented by language policy guidelines and reference tools developed to support their effective implementation in an inclusive approach based on shared values and principles, which are made available on a website (www.coe.int/lang-migrants) dedicated to the linguistic integration of adult migrants (LIAM).
   This website, developed by the Council of Europe (Language Policy Unit), offers a range of background documents for further reflection and support on issues related to the linguistic integration of adult migrants, aimed both at policy deciders and practitioners. Searching the website is facilitated by 'keywords'. Several tools and various resources are made available.
3. See also *The role of languages in policies for the integration of adult migrants*, Jean-Claude Beacco, Council of Europe, 2008 (www.coe.int/lang-migrants – Categories: Studies).

The most important thing for migrants is that they consider themselves integrated from the point of view of linguistic communication in the receiving society, and this may be based on different and variable perceptions concerning the nature of integration (see section 1 below). It is also important that members of the receiving society perceive migrants as integrated from the linguistic point of view. But this perception will focus on mastery of the majority language in the social space and this narrow view is not necessarily that of the migrants concerned.

From the perspective of migrants linguistic integration is not necessarily a sign of full integration: you can have a good knowledge of the language of the receiving society and, for example, not have the same access to employment as natives, or not comply with some commonly accepted behaviours in society. But developing proficiency in the majority language can facilitate integration.

To manage programmes designed to facilitate linguistic integration, some member states place particular emphasis on the tests[4] that migrants must take, corresponding to the different stages of legal integration: entry into the country, permission to live there, access to the labour market, and acquisition of nationality. However, these 'measurements' of language skills are very complex and likely to be ambiguous because, for example, it is not easy to define in a clear and consensual way 'minimal functional competence' in a language. Furthermore, language tests are often seen by migrants as obstacles to be overcome, imposed upon them by the receiving society, and less often as being part of a system provided to welcome and support them.

If the priority of member states really is to achieve the effective linguistic integration of new arrivals and not to control migration flows by monitoring their language skills, then the language programmes offered must be of high quality because only that will truly help adult migrants to adapt to a new linguistic and cultural situation. In other words, language courses[5] should be designed not as a preparation for tests but as an educational tool (see section 2 below).

4. Surveys conducted by the Council of Europe among its member states show a regular increase of countries submitting adult migrants to tests on language competence and knowledge of society (www.coe.int/lang-migrants – see under 'Categories: Surveys').
5. *Language policies for adult migrants: from values to education.* Jean-Claude Beacco, www.coe.int/lang-migrants.

The perspective of the Council of Europe

The fundamental values of the Council of Europe require that the development of language programmes[6] for adult migrants should take account of the rights that they are acknowledged to have. To meet this requirement, it is not enough to adopt the scale of reference levels (A1.1, A1, A2, etc.) from the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR).[7] In this regard it is worth recalling the Council of Europe's core values: 'The primary aim of the Council of Europe is to create a common democratic and legal area throughout the whole of the continent, ensuring respect for its fundamental values: human rights, democracy and the rule of law. These values are the foundations of a tolerant and civilised society and indispensable for European stability, economic growth and social cohesion.'

The *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue*[8] (2008) defines social cohesion as 'the capacity of a society to ensure the welfare of all its members, minimising disparities and avoiding polarisation', and integration as 'a two-sided process and as the capacity of people to live together with full respect for the dignity of each individual, the common good, pluralism and diversity, non-violence and solidarity, as well as their ability to participate in social, cultural, economic and political life'. The *White Paper* recognises the need for 'a pro-active, structured and widely shared effort in managing cultural diversity', and proposes intercultural dialogue as a means to achieve this aim.

Clearly, language has a key role to play in the achievement of social cohesion via intercultural dialogue. The very word 'dialogue' implies exchange, discussion, negotiation, even the resolution of potential conflict, and language is the necessary medium in which these different forms of dialogue are enacted. The integration of migrants in the receiving society is a process that cannot seriously begin in the absence of communication; and for the most part that

6. *Language courses, assessment and quality assurance.* Richard Rossner. www.coe.int/lang-migrants.
7. Council of Europe: *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages : Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (CEFR), 2001. Published by CUP. Available in 39 languages and online in English and French. (www.coe.int/lang-CEFR).
   It is important to underline that the CEFR was designed for foreign language learning and teaching: it should therefore not be applied to migrant contexts without careful reflexion (see 2.2 and 2.3 below).
   An introduction to the CEFR in the migrants' context is available on the LIAM website www.coe.int/lang-migrants as well as related tools.
8. *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue – Living Together As Equals in Dignity*, Council of Europe, 2008.

communication is likely to be conducted in the receiving society's language. Hence the high degree of importance that member states attach to migrants' development of proficiency in that language.

Programmes designed to support linguistic integration should implement the Council of Europe's core values. In particular, they should take into account:

a. *the languages that adult migrants already know*: it is not a case of teaching these to migrants (since they already know them), but of recognising them and making space for them to:
   - help migrants learn a new language;
   - encourage adult migrants to appreciate the value of their mother tongue(s) because they need self-esteem to succeed;
   - encourage them to pass these languages on to their children (at least using them within the family), because the languages that these migrants bring with enrich their receiving societies;

b. *the language needs of adult migrants*, which must be identified but also discussed with them (see section 2.3 below);

c. *the diversity of migrant populations*, in response to which language programmes should be tailor-made, as appropriate as possible to particular situations of individual migrants. The learning programmes offered to or imposed upon many different groups risk being demotivating and ultimately ineffective if the migrant learners do not get from them what they were looking for. This effort to achieve quality thus defined shows respect for individuals, as it truly aims to integrate them successfully into the receiving society.

To support the development of language programmes for adult migrants, these guidelines:

- describe the operational principles that derive from definitions of *linguistic integration* and *linguistic repertoires* (section 1);
- detail the stages in the process of creating courses to teach majority language(s) to adult migrants (section 2);
- describe ways of assessing the skills acquired and of developing language tests that are fair, transparent and adapted to the learners in question and to the overall endeavour of integrating migrants, and outline possible alternatives to language tests (section 3).

Chapter 1

What is linguistic integration?

In accordance with the fundamental values of the Council of Europe, *linguistic integration* is defined in terms of the contribution it makes to the social cohesion that integration mechanisms are intended to strengthen.

1.1. Learning the language(s) of the receiving society (is not enough)

The linguistic integration of adult migrants is most often defined as migrants' obligation to learn the language(s) of the receiving society (national, official, majority language(s), etc.) for practical but also for ideological reasons. Migrants are expected to acquire a 'good' knowledge and are sometimes even expected to become indistinguishable from speakers of the majority language, or to differ from them only minimally (through their accent, for example). It is clear that this is not how migrants themselves interpret linguistic integration as it takes account of only one language. True integration involves putting in place the conditions for a *successful reconfiguration of the linguistic repertoires* of adult migrants.

1.2. Linguistic repertoires

The notion of a *linguistic repertoire* is not specific to migrants. It refers to the fact that we all possess a complex of linguistic knowledge and skills that we deploy in various ways in the different domains of life. For many of us, including adult migrants, this repertoire is made up of more than one language and therefore rests on 'plurilingual competence'. The languages of a person's individual repertoire fulfil different roles (for example, communicating within the family, with neighbours or at work, expressing cultural identity), and those roles can be fulfilled jointly by several languages. This 'distribution' may vary as time goes by or in the different situations where communication takes place. Whenever a new language is acquired, it changes the balance of the individual's repertoire, necessitating its reorganisation. However, in the case of adult migrants this reorganisation, which is imposed by their new situation, has significant identity implications, since native speakers and members of their own group are witnesses to the process.

1.3. Forms of linguistic integration

In order for the language(s) of the receiving society to play a full part in the integration into society of those learning it/them, it/they must be taken into individual repertoires without causing alienation or personal suffering in terms of identity.

Several forms of integration of the receiving society's language(s) into individual repertoires are possible:

a. *linguistic integration is passive*: the adult migrant's competence in the majority language is insufficient to manage everyday communication effectively and without excessive effort. Communication frequently relies on other persons, and its success very much depends on the goodwill of those being spoken to. Certain social activities are not sought out, or are avoided, because they cannot be coped with linguistically. These repertoires may be felt by the speakers not to be effective, and they may also give rise to attitudes of exclusion amongst native speakers. But they are just as likely to be accepted, with the receiving society's language being barely tolerated or practised and the language of origin alone retaining all of its functions in terms of identity;

b. *linguistic integration is functional*: resources in the majority language and in the other languages of the repertoire are sufficient to allow adult migrants to manage relatively successfully the majority of social, work-related and personal

communication situations. They don't worry about the many mistakes they make as their primary objective is effectiveness. Their language of origin retains a prominent status in terms of identity, but the receiving society's language is accepted because of its practical usefulness;

c. *linguistic integration is proactive*: adult migrants seek to improve their competences so as to fit in better linguistically, but also for personal reasons: for their work-related activities or in order to develop their social and personal relationships, etc. They strive to make fewer mistakes and to acquire more advanced competences acceptable in their own eyes;

d. *linguistic integration expands linguistic identity:* migrants reconfigure their repertoire by fully including the receiving society's language: the repertoire is managed with conscious effort; in particular, the use of languages alternately in the context of life in society is not avoided. The language of origin remains the one reflecting the migrant's identity, but the receiving society's language(s) also start(s) to be part of the migrant's identity. The existence within a repertoire of several languages which reflect identity might be compared with dual nationality. The language of origin may then have such value attached to it that there is a desire to pass it on, something that adult migrants often avoid, believing that the use of their own language is a marker of migration.

The various forms of linguistic integration experienced by adult migrants depend on their life goals, educational and cultural background and other factors. They may:

- seek to alter their repertoire as little as possible;
- wish to alter it, but lack the time, practical support or self-confidence to do so, giving rise to psychosocial suffering;
- strive for self-improvement, without excessively seeking to come into line with norms, i.e. accepting mistakes, approximations, the 'foreignness' of their accent, and retaining their cultural communication habits as transposed into the target language;
- seek to acquire native speaker competences, pursuing a project to fit in linguistically, leading to the sidelining or the dropping of the language of origin or, on the other hand, to a wish to pass this on from one generation of the family to the next

It is for migrants to decide, both for themselves and for their families, which of these linguistic strategies are the most appropriate to their life goals and to the management of their identity. Programmes should offer guidance in

their approach to the learning processes, whatever purpose these may serve, and make learners aware of the consequences of their decisions.

1.4. Migrants' linguistic diversity: there is no standard and definitive response to their needs

The diversity of migrants' life goals is matched by a great diversity of repertoires and educational backgrounds when they begin learning the majority language: 'migrant' is a sociological or legal category, not a homogeneous linguistic one. When drawing up any integration policy relating to languages and adult migrants, whether newly arrived or already settled, account must be taken of the different contexts in which they are received and their varying linguistic experience and knowledge.

Thus there can be no single standard or universal solution in terms of the organisation and evaluation of language programmes, for all such programmes need to be tailored to the learner, in so far as this is possible given the resources available.

The objectives of language programmes for adult migrants vary according to the nature of the migration: refugees, long/medium-term workers or residents, spouses of migrants, newcomers, etc. This diversity is reflected in the domains in which the language of the receiving country is used, which may to some extent be common. These differences in the nature of migration should guide institutions' identification of objectives for language programmes, and therefore their preparation of courses.

Other factors in the diversification of needs and expectations in terms of languages stem from migrants' previous experience: the nature of their educational capital (highly educated versus limited or no schooling in their country of origin), the nature of their vocational training and the composition of their linguistic repertoire, which may include some languages, whether or not learned through teaching, used in Europe as national/official languages, or taught as foreign languages (German, English, Spanish, French, etc). Account will have to be taken of similarities between the language of origin and the/a language of the receiving country (particularly a language using the Latin alphabet as against another alphabet, or language using a writing system which is not alphabetical).

Account should also be taken of 'timing' relative to migration: during the phase prior to effective migration or on arrival in the receiving society (when the

need is urgent), and form of settlement (brief stay, settlement involving regular alternation between countries, long-term settlement, settlement involving a planned return, settlement regarded as permanent, etc.).

Finally, care should be taken not to consider 'good' factual knowledge of the receiving society and a 'good' command of its language(s) to be necessarily a sign of integration. Adoption of that society's fundamental values is a socio-affective and identity-related process which has to be characterised by a set of parameters and assessed on the basis of migrants' overall conduct, not just their linguistic skills. So conversely, what is deemed to be a 'poor' command of the target language does not automatically mean that the person concerned has not adopted the basic values of the society in which he or she has settled.

Language programmes that take no account of these factors or of the diversity of these contexts are unlikely to be effective. Member states should opt for flexible courses, types of assessment and testing methods which are 'tailor-made', as appropriate as possible to the persons and groups concerned, on the basis of investments considered acceptable in order to create and maintain social cohesion. The extent to which programmes can be adapted for specific groups of migrants is a matter of resources and is therefore dependent on political decisions in each member state.

Chapter 2

How to create appropriate language programmes

The organisation of programmes for adult migrants in the language(s) of the receiving society comes within the general field of language programme design. Because of the complexity of these issues, however, the preparation of such programmes requires the institutions responsible for providing them to offer quite particular quality and transparency. The CEFR is a useful instrument in this regard, but not the only one, and should be used appropriately (see below 2.2). In particular, it is definitely not enough to decide on a CEFR level to be achieved in order to 'define' a language course.

2.1. The general process

The general process of programme design may be summarised as follows:

- distinguish the groups of learners concerned: it is not enough to refer to language courses 'for migrants', as, for example, there may be a very wide range of linguistic repertoires and levels of knowledge of the receiving society's language(s);
- define the language needs, i.e. the (oral and written) communication situations that the adult migrants in question wish to become capable of managing, or which it is desired that they should be capable of managing;

- on the basis of the situations thus identified, specify objectives, using for this purpose the CEFR descriptors, in terms of the nature of the activities (oral interaction, written reception, etc.), and of domain (family life, working life, social life, etc);
- set the corresponding operational objectives, with the help of the CEFR's *Reference Level Descriptions*[9] (RLDs) where they exist; that leads to the definition of a profile of the *target competences*;
- divide these objectives into sequences of activities, taking the fullest account of the number of hours of teaching available and of learning speeds;
- define the structure(s) of these teaching sequences;
- define the teaching methodologies; active and independent teaching/learning approaches may be given precedence, but it is important to take very careful account of the educational culture of the persons being taught, i.e. their learning habits and their expectations of the teaching;
- advise learners to assess their own achievements;
- assess what has been achieved;
- and, possibly, prepare for tests.

The necessary diversification of language programmes should not lead us to underestimate the fact that many migrants are in everyday contact with the majority language and that they need to use it in real life. This utilisation of language in informal situations where what is said may be partly understood from the context, is an effective way for anyone to develop their language skills. We should therefore create a social learning environment or develop the relationships that migrants have established within their neighbourhoods (building, street, neighbourhood, business, etc.), by supporting positive interactions.[10] This does not imply that we should abandon language courses but rather that we should enhance them with experiences outside the classroom. On the other hand, it does imply that we should make the social environment as conducive as possible for natural learning, informing the stakeholders of the issues involved and providing them with advice in order to manage the linguistic development of migrants in a positive and supportive manner

9. *Reference Level Descriptions* for individual languages are based on the levels described in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR). For further information see www.coe.int/lang: Section RLD.
10. See A. Orton (2012): Building migrants' sense belonging through positive interactions, Council of Europe

(linguistic goodwill). All of this upholds the notion of the 'two-way process' of integration.

2.2. The *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) and adult migrants' linguistic integration

The reference levels of the CEFR[11] are often used to define the learning outcomes expected in language programmes for adult migrants. But this does not guarantee the quality of such programmes, or their capacity to meet the needs of migrant learners.

It is important to recognize that the Council of Europe's educational projects have always aimed to enhance the individual's capacity to contribute to the democratic process at national, regional or local level. Since the 1970s the Council's language education projects[12] have focused on learning languages for communication and exchange, which has the potential to extend the individual's social, cultural, political, academic/intellectual and vocational/professional range. These considerations help to explain the nature of the CEFR: a comprehensive description of what the individual user/learner can *do* in a second or foreign language. It is important to emphasise that the CEFR is a great deal more than a technical instrument. Its scales of language proficiency are embedded in a detailed taxonomic analysis of language use on the one hand and the competences on which we draw when we engage in communication on the other. Non-prescriptive in its function, it also sets out a wide range of methodological options for learning, teaching and assessment.

The CEFR's six proficiency levels reflect the language learning trajectory characteristic of European educational cultures: language learning for general communicative purposes (A1-B1) provides a basis for the development of more advanced proficiency (B2-C2) that increasingly interacts with academic, vocational and professional use of the target language.

At the lower levels the emphasis is more on oral than on written communication; reading and writing skills support learners' predominantly oral repertoire:

A1 defines the lowest level of generative language use, the point at which learners can interact in a simple way rather than relying purely on words and

11. See Note 6.
12. Consult the Language Policy Unit's website www.coe.int/lang. For an overview of past projects (1957-2001) see Fields of activities/A brief history.

phrases. At this level they can *understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type* (CEFR, p. 24), *understand familiar names, words and very simple sentences, for example on notices and posters or in catalogues* (CEFR, p.26), and *fill in forms with personal details* (CEFR, p.26).

At level **A2** learners can cope with a basic range of social interaction and make simple transactions in shops, post offices or banks. They can *communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information in familiar and routine matters* (CEFR, p. 24), *find specific predictable information on familiar topics and activities* (CEFR, p. 26), and write *short, simple notes and messages relating to matters in areas of immediate need* (CEFR, p. 26).

At level **B1** learners are able to maintain interaction and get across what they want to in a range of contexts and can cope flexibly with problems in everyday life. They can *deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken* (CEFR, p. 24), *understand texts that consist mainly of high frequency or job-related language* (CEFR, p. 26), and write *simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest* CEFR, p. 26).

At the higher levels, reading and writing assume greater importance as proficiency is increasingly associated with learners' areas of academic and/or professional specialisation:

At level **B2** learners are able to engage in sustained and effective argument, can more than hold their own in social discourse, and have an enhanced language awareness. They can *scan quickly through long and complex texts, locating relevant details* (CEFR, p. 70) and write *clear, detailed descriptions on a variety of subjects related to [their] field of interest* (CEFR, p. 62).

At level **C1** learners have good access to a broad range of language that allows fluent, spontaneous communication. They can *understand in detail a wide range of lengthy, complex texts likely to be encountered in social, professional or academic life* (CEFR, p. 70) and write *clear, well-structured expositions of complex subjects, underlining the relevant salient issues* (CEFR, p. 62),

At level **C2** learners communicate with a high degree of precision, appropriateness and ease. They can *understand and interpret critically virtually all forms of the written language* (CEFR, p. 69) and write *clear, smoothly flowing and fully engrossing stories and descriptions of experience in a style appropriate to the genre adopted* (CEFR, p. 62).

It is important to recognise that only a minority of foreign language learners reach these higher proficiency levels.

A summary description of its proficiency levels must not be allowed to obscure one of the CEFR's most important features. It divides language use into four categories – reception, production, interaction and mediation; and it provides illustrative scales for the spoken and written forms of the first three categories: listening and reading; speaking and writing; and spoken and written interaction. This approach allows us to take account of the fact that we typically develop a higher level of proficiency in some activities than in others and reminds us that the CEFR levels are not holistic standards.

It is also important to emphasize that the CEFR gives a comprehensive account of the language user/learner's competences. In particular, linguistic competence in a narrow sense (internalised knowledge of grammar and vocabulary) is only one part of communicative language competences, which also embrace sociolinguistic and pragmatic competence. This means that curricula and learning programmes based on the CEFR should define a great deal more than the grammar and vocabulary to be mastered; they should also, for example, seek to equip learners with the capacity to communicate appropriately, taking account of local politeness conventions, norms of interaction and other sociolinguistic factors.

The CEFR is an extremely useful analytic instrument, but should always be used in conjunction with other instruments and procedures, e.g., needs analysis, language-specific Reference Level Descriptions (RLDs), appropriate teaching methods, and so on.

2.3. The CEFR and needs analysis for adult migrants

Because the CEFR aims to be comprehensive, transparent and coherent (CEFR, pp. 7-8), it does not offer ready-made solutions for any domain of language learning. Using it to develop a programme of language learning or specify a communicative repertoire for purposes of assessment *always* involves three kinds of adaptation. First, it is necessary to make a selection: no programme or repertoire for assessment can possibly include *everything* described in the CEFR, even in relation to one dimension of language use at one proficiency level; secondly, whatever is selected must be 'translated' into the language in question because the CEFR itself is language-independent; and thirdly, the selection must be contextualised to take account of the needs of the learners in question. These considerations have an important consequence that

is often overlooked: *in the real world there is no such thing as (for example) A2, only an infinite variety of communicative repertoires in specific languages that correspond, more or less, to some or all dimensions of the CEFR's definition of A2*.

This should be taken into account whenever the CEFR's levels are used to specify the proficiency adult migrants are required to achieve in the language of the receiving society. Level A1.1 for migrant learners of French[13] provides a useful example. It describes a level of proficiency that may be acquired autonomously or by attending a course, and can be used to guide course designers and testers and valorise language learning at that level. Because it is based on the CEFR it is clearly and explicitly related to higher levels of proficiency in French, but its elaboration required the creation of new descriptors and the inclusion of many vocabulary items that are not high-frequency but are nevertheless essential for adult migrants because they refer to administrative and other procedures that migrants need to be able to cope with.

In accordance with the Council of Europe's concern for the individual citizen and the CEFR's emphasis on the agency of the individual language user/learner, selection, 'translation' and contextualisation should always be guided by an analysis of the needs of the learners in question. At the beginning of Chapter 4 of the CEFR, 'Language use and the language user/learner', the authors list the questions they expect users of the CEFR to ask themselves as they work through the successive sections of the chapter. These questions (CEFR, p. 44) provide a starting point for needs analysis, so some of them are worth quoting here:

- Can I predict the domains in which my learners will operate and the situations which they will have to deal with? If so, what roles will they have to play?
- What sort of people will they have to deal with?
- What will be their personal or professional relations in what institutional frameworks?
- What objects will they need to refer to?
- What tasks will they have to accomplish?
- What themes will they need to handle?
- Will they have to speak, or simply listen and read with understanding?

13. *Niveau A1.1 pour le français (publics adultes peu francophones, scolarisés, peu ou non scolarisés). Référentiel et certification (DILF) pour les premiers acquis en français*, 2006, J .C. Beacco et alia, Paris, Didier

- What sort of things will they be listening to or reading?
- Under what conditions will they have to act?
- What knowledge of the world or of another culture will they need to call on?
- What skills will they need to have developed? How can they still be themselves, without being misinterpreted?

These questions are as relevant to adult migrants as to any other category of learner. They are also relevant to the design of language learning programmes and the specification of the communicative repertoire that language tests for adult migrants are designed to assess.

As the order of the questions implies, an analysis of adult migrants' communicative language needs should begin by considering the context(s) in which they are expected to communicate, taking account of situational and other constraints. When that has been done it should be possible to specify the communication themes they should be able to cope with, the tasks they should be able to perform, and the communicative purposes they should be able to meet. The information thus generated can be used to identify the varieties of language use – reception, production and interaction – that they need to master and the proficiency level at which they need to be able to perform. These can be double-checked by considering the range of (spoken and written) texts they will be called on to understand and produce. The final step is to make this context-sensitive repertoire language-specific by adding appropriately elaborated scales of communicative language competence.

There should be two strict constraints on this exercise. First, the goal should be to identify the *minimum* communicative repertoire that adult migrants need in order to function in the receiving community; and second, at every step account should be taken of the learning burden that is gradually being accumulated. Adult migrants generally attend language courses on a part-time basis; language learning may not be among their highest priorities, especially if they have families to care for; and the educational culture of their country of origin may be very different from that of their receiving country. Account must be taken of these factors if language requirements and language courses are not to become insuperable obstacles.

The point has already been made that 'adult migrant' is not a linguistic category. In consequence, needs analysis should always take account of the diversity

of migrant populations. Adult migrants may come from different countries and speak different languages, and they may belong to a wide range of ethnicities and have widely differing attitudes, values and beliefs. They may also have very different educational backgrounds, and some of them may not be functionally literate in their home language. In other words, there may be a serious mismatch between the very varied competences adult migrants bring with them and the competences they are expected to develop as part of their proficiency in the language of their receiving community. This adds significantly to the learning effort required of them, and it poses a serious challenge to the pedagogical skills of teachers; it must also be taken into account when designing language courses for adult migrants or specifying the communicative repertoire that will underpin an official test.

At this point it may be appropriate to offer a practical example of needs analysis based on the CEFR. Taking account of the length of time they can reasonably be expected to devote to language learning, an analysis of the needs of adult migrants who are seeking permanent residence may conclude that priority should be given to communication in the public and occupational domains: dealing with officialdom, school and medical staff, banks, etc. and the formal demands of the workplace. The private domain is not irrelevant since it encompasses informal communication with colleagues at work and members of the community with whom migrants do not share a language of origin. But it is reasonable to leave the development of proficiency in the private domain to 'natural' processes – migrant learners will gradually become better at communicating with their colleagues and neighbours as a result of their efforts to do so. In most courses for adult migrants the target language is likely to be the language of instruction, but we may also conclude that the target repertoire need not include communication for educational purposes beyond the immediate goal of learning the language of the receiving community.

As regards communicative language activities, the greatest emphasis may fall on the skills of listening (adult migrants need to understand the officials who interview them, managers or foremen who give them instructions in the workplace, health and safety regulations) and spoken interaction for transactional rather than social purposes (again, dealing with officials and managers/foremen). These considerations may lead to the conclusion that an appropriate target repertoire involves more than one CEFR level[14], perhaps

14. Concrete examples are illustrated in the ELP for adult migrant language learners*: a Guide for teachers,* Barbara Lazenby Simpson. See in particular chapter 7 of this Guide (www.coe.int/lang-migrants – 'Instruments'). See also section 3.6 below.

A2 in listening and spoken interaction (transactional tasks only), and A1 in reading (with a strong emphasis on public notices and printed instructions) and writing (chiefly filling in forms, if necessary under guidance). The fact that writing plays a relatively minor role in the target repertoire does not mean, of course, that learners should not be expected to use and further develop writing skills in the service of their learning.

Experience may show that this repertoire is more than many migrants can achieve. In that case it may be appropriate to reduce the target repertoire to one that focuses on the same domains and language activities, perhaps exclusively at A1, bearing in mind that A1 constitutes a viable repertoire for limited communicative purposes, and always supposing that the language programme in question is intended to be facilitative rather than discriminatory.

2.4. Subjective needs, autonomous learning and the European Language Portfolio

So far the needs of adult migrants have been discussed in terms of the communicative tasks they will be required to perform in different domains of language use. These are sometimes called 'objective' needs because they can be analysed by course designers, materials developers and teachers on the basis of objective information about the learners. But it is also necessary to take account of the subjective needs that learners experience in the process of language learning. Subjective needs have to do with factors like attitude and motivation, learning style, learning aptitude and learning skills. Attitude and motivation may well receive a positive boost if the course in question is based on an adequately detailed analysis of learners' objective needs, because that helps to ensure a clear and relevant learning purpose. But those subjective needs that have to do with the learning process itself can only emerge as the course proceeds. In other words, whereas an analysis of learners' objective needs provides a basis for programme planning, eliciting and responding to subjective needs is a task for the teacher. Because subjective needs change as learning progresses, responding to them is a never-ending task; and because they are individual, responsibility for identifying and responding to them cannot be borne by the teacher alone. As the authors of the CEFR point out, learners are 'the persons ultimately concerned with language acquisition and learning processes', and 'once teaching stops, further learning has to be autonomous'. They argue that autonomous learning 'can be promoted if "learning to learn" is regarded as an integral part of language learning' (CEFR,

p. 141). The Council of Europe has always encouraged lifelong learning[15] and the development of learners' ability to manage their own learning. This has particular relevance for adult migrants, whose language learning will continue informally long after the end of their language course.

The Council of Europe developed the European Language Portfolio (ELP) in parallel with the CEFR partly in order to foster autonomous learning, and a version of the ELP has been specially created for use with adult migrants[16]. The ELP has three obligatory components:

- a **language passport**, which presents a regularly updated overview of the owner's linguistic profile;
- a **language biography**, which helps the owner to reflect on his or her language learning and language use, focusing on goal setting and self-assessment, learning strategies, the intercultural dimension of language learning, and plurilingualism (the ability to communicate in two or more languages at any level of proficiency);
- a **dossier**, in which the owner collects samples of work that reflect the language proficiency he/she has achieved and his/her intercultural experience (the dossier may also be used to organise work in progress).

The language biography includes checklists of 'I can' descriptors arranged according to the proficiency levels and communicative activities of the CEFR. The checklists can be used to identify learning goals and self-assess learning achievement, which is periodically recorded in the language passport against the CEFR's self-assessment grid[17]. Provided learners are required to support their self-assessment with evidence of their achieved proficiency, the ELP can also be used as an alternative assessment instrument in its own right (see section 3.6 below). It is important to recognize, however, that self-assessment has no place in many educational cultures and needs careful mediation to adult migrants.

There are two other ways in which the ELP can help to meet the needs of adult migrants and contribute to their linguistic integration. First, because it is concerned to support the development of plurilingualism, the ELP offers

15. See for example *The Linguistic integration of adult migrants and the CEFR*, David Little, 2008 (www.coe.int/lang-migrants).
16. *The European Language Portfolio for Adult Migrants: Learning the language of the host country*, 2012, Barbara Lazenby Simpson. Accompanying tools available in section 'Instruments' of the LIAM website.
17. Available in 31 languages (www.coe.int/portfolio).

them a way of recording and reflecting on the languages they know and use in addition to the language of their receiving country. Making them aware of their linguistic capital and the role that it might play in their integration can be a powerful motivating factor. And secondly, because it is concerned to support the development of intercultural awareness, the ELP can help adult migrants to achieve a deeper understanding of similarities and differences between the language of the receiving country and the language of their country of origin.

2.5. Teaching methodologies and adult migrants' educational cultures

When developing courses targeted at adult migrants, the wish may be to use the latest teaching methods, or those that are reportedly most effective, such as active task- and activity-based methods. Moreover, these methodologies were used almost as soon as they appeared (around 1975) in programmes intended for migrants (see Jupp & Hodlin, *Industrial English*, 1975). But adult migrants bring with them certain concepts of teaching and learning, concepts based on their personal experience at school or on the ordinary social representations commonly used to describe and explain these. Like all learners who move from one educational environment to another, they have to understand and adapt to the different operational norms of the educational institution. We shall refer to these norms and their representations as educational culture.

The preconceptions and educational experience of the native-speaker teacher are not necessarily the same as those of the learners and this may therefore give rise to misunderstandings. The teacher may give priority to activities whereby the learners carry out straightforward or complex tasks, which may be repetitive or open-ended and may be socially relevant, or get them to engage in independent or group activities. But account needs to be taken of widespread teaching practices such as rote learning, using bilingual dictionaries for vocabulary-building, focusing on 'grammar', translating everything, noting everything down in writing, etc. Here again, no single standard solution could be put forward: types of teaching need to be devised and negotiated on a case-by-case basis, albeit taking account of the nature of any tests and language qualifications which may be required of adult migrants.

That said, it may be decided to give precedence to activities based on classroom simulations of verbal exchanges (making appointments to see children's teachers, consulting doctors, reading TV schedules or work-related handbooks,

watching TV news) or on real-life situations 'outside' the classroom (buying tickets from a machine, asking the way, using a paper or on-line dictionary, reading Wikipedia articles about the receiving society, etc.).

If learners agree to carry out semi-independent activities outside course time, assuming they have access to computer-based communication resources and if they have sufficient time, it would be desirable to offer them activities which increase their exposure to the language they are learning, using, for example, the Internet and following clear instructions on appropriate materials. These individual and group tasks will then be discussed in the classroom, and may be assessed), helping to give the course greater relevance, realism and legitimacy.

It seems clear that programmes of the kind we have been describing can be delivered only by appropriately qualified teachers, whether they are voluntary or paid. The success of such programmes depends significantly on teachers' professional qualifications (and on their skills in human communication). It is thus important to provide courses for teachers, particularly but not exclusively at university level, that lead to official national diplomas.

2.6. The importance of transparency and quality

The human rights that are central to the Council of Europe's concerns include the right to quality education.[18] *Quality assurance* is the process by which the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is regularly reviewed. It may lead to adjustments in order to maintain agreed standards and/or ensure that the needs of those receiving the education and those sponsoring it are met. Responsibility for quality assurance is best shared between those directly involved in organising and teaching courses and designing and administering assessment procedures, and those responsible for overseeing them[19]. The process includes asking learners for their opinions. Where language programmes for adult migrants are concerned, quality assurance entails regularly evaluating, for example:

- whether the needs of individual migrants are being addressed in the design of language programmes;

18. Council of Europe: Recommendation CM/Rec(2012)13 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on ensuring quality education.
19. See in particular *Providers of Courses for Adult migrants: Self-assessment Handbook* which includes a detailed questionnaire. Richard Rossner (www.coe.int/lang-migrants: Instruments).

- whether their ability to engage in relevant transactional and social exchanges with members of the receiving community is being strengthened, and whether they experience fewer difficulties arising from language problems;
- whether the culture and language(s) of adult migrants are being respected and, where relevant, supported as they learn the language and customs of the receiving community.

In the assessment of migrants' proficiency in the language of the receiving society, quality assurance focuses on questions like:

- Does the format of the test take account of the potentially limited capacities of the test-takers?
- Are candidates with special requirements adequately catered for? These may include temporary or long-term emotional impairments, temporary or long-term illness, illiteracy in the home language and/or the language of the receiving society, and any other circumstance that would make it difficult or impossible for a candidate to take the test in the same way as anyone else.
- Is information about test procedures and test instruments readily accessible to candidates?

Quality control can also be relevant to language education for adult migrants. It involves using a sampling approach to check from time to time that agreed quality standards are being maintained. This can be done, for example, by unannounced short observations in a cross-section of classes, or by talking to randomly selected learners about specific aspects of their language programme. Quality control is often carried out by external agencies, for example in order to renew accreditation under a mandatory or publicly available scheme. Quality control is a standard feature of language assessment procedures that lay claim to validity and reliability.

Quality management aims to ensure that within an organisation there is a continuous and systematic approach to quality assurance and a regular focus on identifying opportunities for improvement. It also includes analysing what kind of change would lead to quality improvements, assessing the cost of such changes, and ensuring that changes designed to improve quality are piloted appropriately, and that their implementation is well managed. An important part of quality management in language education is reference to properly researched frameworks and benchmarks that are independent of the provider. Where course aims and content are concerned, the CEFR provides a valuable

reference point. In all forms of language education, the appropriate formation of teachers plays a central role in quality assurance, quality control and quality management.[20]

20. The LIAM website offers further reading on these issues, e.g. a Concept Paper on *The role of languages in policies for the integration of adult migrants* (2008, Jean-Claude Beacco) and a paper on *Quality assurance in the provision of language education and training for adult migrants – Guidelines and options*, (Richard Rossner, 2008). See also section 'key terms'.

Chapter 3

Assessing the linguistic competence of migrants

It is clear from recent surveys and research reports that "integration tests" have become an established feature in many Council of Europe Member States[21]. Tests are routinely used before entry to determine levels of linguistic competence and also, for some countries, civic knowledge. The majority, however, are concerned simply with language and do not provide information or support towards achievement in other domains of integration. Tests are also used later in the immigration process to determine eligibility for permanent residence and/or citizenship. Again, the emphasis is primarily on linguistic attainment although many countries now also assess knowledge of civic issues. But the nature of "integration tests" imposed by Governments has led to a growing feeling that they are often simply a means to control migrant numbers, rather than being genuinely supportive of integration. If this is the perception of the migrants involved, then there is a risk that actions genuinely intended to enhance their integration will be discredited and undermined.

A further factor to consider is that "integration tests" have a disproportionate effect on particular groups of persons. The "free movement" principles of the European Union mean that EU nationals will only be subjected to any form of testing should they apply for citizenship of another EU member state. Even then, testing of EU nationals is by no means universal and those seeking citizenship of another EU Member State comprise less than 5% of total citizenship applications across the EU (source Eurostat migration statistics). So if the overall aim of tests is better integration of migrants, a significant proportion of persons are left out of the process, raising concerns about equitable treatment. Efforts should therefore be made to ensure that there is a clear distinction between processes that are designed for the specific purpose of managing migration and tests that seek to measure and support an individual's progress along an "integration pathway", even though there may be similarities in the testing methodologies used in each case.

21. See Note 3.

3.1. Some guiding principles for testing

It is apparent that there are some differences between tests that have been developed for migration purposes and those that are utilised in academic circles to assess progress in language programmes. Many of the "integration tests" used by Council of Europe Member States and elsewhere are designed to be administered by non-experts, perhaps migration officials or contractors. Some are multiple-choice computer based tests and others involve an interview with an official. Some countries utilise mainstream language qualifications, other have tests that have been specifically designed for migration purposes. By contrast, tests utilised by colleges and accredited linguistic assessment bodies tend to be more structured and detailed, are internally and/or externally verified and will normally cover all elements of linguistic attainment (reading, writing, speaking and listening).

In developing the Linguistic Integration of Adult Migrants[22] (LIAM) project the Council of Europe has outlined a number of guiding principles, several of which are relevant to the topic of language and integration tests. These are the need to:

Define required proficiency levels in a realistic and flexible manner that reflects the actual needs and capacities of migrants.

The CEFR can be used to define "profiles" e.g. A2 level for spoken interaction, but A1 for reading or written interaction, rather than homogenous levels (A2 for all competences); in adapting the CEFR levels for official purposes such as residence or citizenship it is important to set realistic levels, bearing in mind that in most societies the majority of native speakers do not need to perform the tasks specified at the higher CEFR levels; the requirement to demonstrate a "sufficient" level or "good standard" in the official language is not only too vague to be useful but is based on the unproven assumption that successful integration depends on a given level of language proficiency.

Ensure that formal tests, where used, conform to accepted standards of quality and are not misused to exclude migrants from society.

Where tests are used for official purposes such as residence or citizenship, they should be prepared by professional bodies to ensure that they are impartial, reliable and fair; however, there is no established relationship between passing a language test and successful integration; migrants can be well integrated

22. www.coe.int/lang-migrants.

and yet have limited language skills; language proficiency develops through real life use over time and therefore is not a precondition for, but rather a result of, participation in society; alternative forms of assessment such as the European Language Portfolio provides evidence of what a learner can do in the language, and could complement or replace a test that is linked to the CEFR.

Devise effective incentives rather than ineffective sanctions; tangible rewards for language learning, such as speedier access to employment or social benefits, provide enhanced motivation.

Sanctions that attempt to force migrants to learn can result in less effective learning and negative attitudes towards integration; disproportionate measures may be discriminatory and infringe the human rights of migrants.

Language tests are not necessarily the most appropriate form of assessment to use with adult migrants, especially when linked to financial or social sanctions, because they can undermine motivation to learn. In some circumstances, therefore, it may be preferable to try to find an acceptable alternative (see 3.6 below).

Language tests that are properly designed, constructed and administered have the following advantages:

- results are standardised and reliable, which means that it is easy to compare candidates across the same or different administrations
- candidates are assessed with a high degree of independence and objectivity
- large numbers may be tested in a short space of time
- test validity helps to ensure fairness
- tests are credible and achieve their aims.

Good practice in test design requires that developers first determine the purpose of their test and the real-world demands on test takers. Only once this process has been gone through should a test specification be produced. The format of the test, the criteria by which performance will be measured, and other practical matters should be included in this process. The goal should be to provide test-takers with adequate opportunities to demonstrate that they meet the assessment criteria and not to set them up to fail.

Language tests should be taken under conditions which are equally fair for all test-takers. Test centres should be suitably accredited for the administration

of the tests and meet general quality requirements[23]. Test centre staff should be professionally competent and security and confidentiality should be maintained throughout the testing process. It is also necessary to look at the physical environment of the test centre which should be appropriate, with all necessary arrangements in place for persons with special requirements. If not appropriately managed, each aspect of test administration has the potential to infringe the human rights of test-takers. These issues are clearly of central importance when tests are aimed at adult migrants. So too is the issue of access to the test: requiring adult migrants to pay a fee may be a disincentive and may be discriminatory.

3.2. Pre-arrival tests

The Commissioner for Human Rights has raised concerns in respect of human rights in the context of pre-arrival requirements for family migrants. In a February 2011 press release[24] the Commissioner comments:

> "It is becoming more and more difficult for immigrants in Europe to have their family members join them. Even long-term residents and naturalized citizens are being deprived of this human right as policies in host countries are now becoming more restrictive and selective. Applicants have to fulfil unreasonable requirements which create insurmountable obstacles to them to living with their loved ones. The present trend to put further limits on family unity does not respect agreed human rights standards. The right to respect for family life is guaranteed by international conventions; in particular by the European Convention on Human Rights, the revised European Social Charter, the European Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers as well as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Being denied the human right to be with one's family makes life more burdensome – and integration much more difficult."

The EC Green Paper concerning the EU Family Reunification Directive[25] highlights additional issues. Section 2.1 states:

> "The admissibility of integration measures - as stated already in the evaluation report – should depend on whether they serve the purpose of facilitating integration and whether they respect the principles of proportionality and of subsidiarity. Decisions on the application for family reunification in relation to passing tests should take into account whether there are available facilities (translated materials, courses) to prepare for them and whether they are accessible (location, fees).

23. *Providers of courses for adult migrants – Self-assessment Handbook,* 2012, Richard Rossner.
24. Council of Europe: http://commissioner.cws.coe.int/tiki-view_blog_post.php?postId=113.
25. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0735:FIN:EN:PDF.

> Specific individual circumstances (such as proven illiteracy, medical conditions) should also be taken into account."

This suggests, therefore, that any pre-arrival testing regime needs to be flexible and "fit for purpose", that the use of alternatives to formal testing should be considered and that wherever possible some financial support should be provided.

From the perspective of Governments there are convincing arguments to support the use of pre-entry tests. Traditional countries of migration such as the USA, Australia, Canada and New Zealand have utilised points based systems for migration that enable them to recruit the labour market migrants they need for economic stability and growth. Such systems are also beneficial to would-be migrants in that they provide an open and transparent process leading to security of access to the country concerned and to its labour market. This in turn will positively benefit them over the longer term as economic integration through employment is a key factor in an overall feeling of "belonging".

However, the situation of Europe is different. Europe has traditionally been the source of migrants for the countries mentioned above and only in recent years has there been large-scale inward migration. The types of migrants differ too, with significant numbers of family members and low or semi-skilled migrants moving into and between Member States. Systems are therefore being developed to control numbers of migrants, as well as providing a means for selecting those with specific skills that countries desire for their continued economic growth. However, the use of such systems for purposes other than labour market migration is more controversial and it is arguably less reasonable to expect, for example, a family member to demonstrate the same level of linguistic competence as a skilled worker prior to arrival.

Having said that, it may be beneficial for intending family migrants to be offered programmes that give clear information about the language and the reality of life in the country to which they aspire to migrate. Accurate and honest guidance, and support for those wishing to learn the language of the receiving society, can go a long way towards managing expectations and promoting integration. But if pre-entry testing is of such a type and at such a level that it excludes certain categories of migrant or individuals then it is entirely inappropriate to promote it as a mechanism for in integration.

Some insights into the impact of pre-entry tests can be gained from the Migration Policy Group's (MPG) 2011 briefing for the EC Green Paper on Family

Reunion.[26] The MPG briefing notes that the introduction of pre-departure tests led to a sharp temporary drop in the number of family reunions in France, Germany, and The Netherlands. After the introduction of the requirement, Germany's application rate dropped by 25% in the first six months, especially in respect of persons from Turkey, Serbia, Russia, and Kosovo[27]. France's rate dropped by 27% in the first six months of 2009. The Netherlands' rate dropped by 40% in the first two years, with persons from Morocco and Ghana particularly affected. The briefing also mentioned that the UK government expected the pre-entry test for spouses introduced on 1 October 2011 to cause a drop in applications. This has been borne out in practice with a "significant decrease" in the number of migrants arriving to accompany or join others from 80,000 in the year ending September 2011 to 62,000 in year ending September 2012[28]. This evidence suggests that the pre-entry tests in the countries concerned are not supporting integration but rather are providing a disproportionate hurdle for persons who would otherwise qualify for entry.

3.3. Tests for permanent residence and citizenship

The draft report of the INTEC Project[29] (a comparative study of integration and naturalisation tests and their effects on integration in nine EU Member States) has provided some valuable insights into tests for permanent residence or citizenship. The point is strongly made in this report that successful integration depends on many other factors besides knowledge of language and society. Furthermore – and this is a key issue in the context of linguistic integration – the study found that knowledge of the language of the Member State is not always necessary to become integrated, especially if the migrant lives in an environment where another language is spoken.

Amongst other things, the study found that knowledge acquired by migrants before arriving in the host country is often lost when they finally arrive because the tests are often held a long time after their arrival. Whilst rules governing permanent residence vary considerably from state to state, it can often be five or more years following arrival before migrants become eligible. Also, some people living in rural areas or areas far from the places where lessons

26. http://www.migpolgroup.com/projects_detail.php?id=63.
27. All reference to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.
28. UK Office of National Statistics: Migration Statistics Quarterly Report May 2013.
29. http://www.humanrights.dk/files/pdf/INTEC/Synthesis%20Intec%20final%20.pdf.

are held have difficulty in following classes and it is often very costly for them to do so. Tests can often be particularly demanding for older people or for those who have not had the benefit of higher education.

There are few examples of detailed studies into the effectiveness of tests for permanent residence or citizenship as a means of promoting integration. One example is that of the UK, where in 2012 the Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS) at Oxford University completed some independent research (partly financed by the European Integration Fund) into the UK's twin routes to citizenship.

The report *"Citizenship and Integration in the UK"*[30] noted that a popular option for persons with less-developed language skills seeking permanent residence or citizenship involves making progress from one language level to the next through attending courses using specially developed citizenship learning materials. Some 7% of survey respondents used this alternative route which was popular with particular nationalities. Employment status and immigration status on entry also seemed to be factors in the decision to enrol on these courses.

3.4. What are the consequences to integration of those who fail?

There is a clear risk that migrants who fail tests, both pre- and post-entry, will be left in a state of limbo. Being denied a visa for no other reason than failing to reach the required standard in a pre-entry test arguably infringes the right to family life or the right to marry. On a more human level, an inability to be reunited with a spouse will cause a migrant to become unsettled and might serve to erode any progress towards holistic integration they have already made. For those seeking a permanent stay or citizenship (which is often the gateway to full access to rights and benefits comparable with others in the receiving society) there are other potential sanctions. Such persons may have to renew their periods of temporary residence as an alternative to a permanent stay and in many countries this will be an expensive process. Those who for whatever reason cannot reach the requirements for permanent residence will be left in a state of continuous anxiety about their situation. This can only hinder their prospects of becoming fully integrated.[31]

30. http://www.compas.ox.ac/uk/research/citizenship/integrationintheuk/.
31. See also Recommendation 2034 (2014) on Integration tests: helping or hindering integration? adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) and addressed to the Committee of Ministers (accompanied by a report)

3.5. Some concluding thoughts on language tests

A question that constantly arises is that of the appropriate level of competence that should be expected in "integration tests" in order for them to support integration rather than becoming a barrier to it. The INTEC report shows there is considerable variation across Member States in terms of the levels required, although some clustering around A2/B1 level CEFR is evident. However, there is very little in the way of empirical research to show whether this is appropriate or not, and no clear answers, so this paper deliberately avoids making any specific recommendations in respect of levels. However, it should be emphasised that even though someone may be successful in the kinds of tests discussed here, that success does not define the point in time at which they become "integrated" into their new community. Integration is by definition a multi-faceted and long-term phenomenon that can be affected by many external and internal factors. It is therefore difficult to say with any degree of certainty when initiatives to support someone's integration have become successful.

There are, however, some clues as to what levels of competence in an additional language might reasonably be expected (see section 2.3). Again, it is worth mentioning that factors such as own language literacy, a different alphabet, the learning environment, external pressures such as work etc. can all impact on attainment. Anecdotally many language experts suggest that for someone with little formal education or limited literacy in their own language, something in the region of A1 (CEFR) in an additional language is the maximum they will ever be able to attain[32].

3.6. Alternatives to testing

This is an area that is worthy of further research. It is apparent from the preceding paragraphs that, whilst the "integration testing" regimes of many Council

32. In the UK, in the commentary to an internal (unpublished) report in 2009 to the then Department for Education and Skills on attainment and completion rates in English for Speakers of Other Languages programmes, some language teachers reported a phenomenon which they described as «course blocking». This is where students who have little or no formal literacy in their mother tongue cannot progress beyond approximately A2 in speaking and listening or A1 in reading and writing, despite being very motivated to learn and attending classes regularly. So whilst there are of course many success stories, for many the pressure of courses and tests prior to, and after, entry is often an insurmountable barrier.

of Europe member states may be a practical means of assessing the language skills of large numbers of individuals, there remain concerns about the extent to which they promote integration or are accurate barometers of progress in it. It is equally clear that at present there are few alternative approaches.

We noted in section 2.4 that the Council of Europe developed the *European Language Portfolio* (ELP) in parallel with the CEFR partly in order to promote the development of learner autonomy. It provides learners with checklists of 'I can' descriptors arranged according to the language activities and proficiency levels of the CEFR. These are used to identify learning targets and assess learning outcomes. If the curriculum or course programme uses 'can do' descriptors to define learning outcomes, versions of those descriptors can be included in ELP checklists, which helps to ensure a close fit between learning/teaching and curriculum or programme goals. When evidence of proficiency is systematically linked to checklist descriptors, the ELP can complement or replace a test that is linked to the CEFR. It is necessary to stress, however, that the use of the ELP as an instrument of alternative assessment requires continuous support from the teacher, especially as self-assessment will not have played a role in the previous educational experience of many adult migrants.

A further approach is the so-called "progress route" in use in the UK until October 2013. There are several advantages to supporting someone to make progress from one CEFR level to the next (for example, someone at A1 level would be required to show progress to A2 level). First and foremost, it recognises that different people have different abilities and acknowledges the fact that individuals might reach a plateau beyond which they will struggle to progress. It is also flexible in that acknowledges the efforts that individuals might already have made through formal or informal learning. Thirdly, it is non-discriminatory in that it does not exclude people from access to rights and benefits that they might otherwise not attain. And lastly, it is entirely possible to have a "fuzzy profile" and to show differentiated progress in speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Other possibilities might include greater emphasis on participation in community-based language learning rather than formal programmes. The aim would be to uncover new ways to teach basic conversational (majority) language to people facing significant language barriers and integration challenges. This in turn can increase opportunities for people to take part in the life of their communities, mix with neighbours from different backgrounds, help move them towards employment and give them the confidence to aspire to their full potential in society. A logical extension of this idea might be simply

to measure attendance and involvement in such programmes rather than absolute achievements.

The idea of "language portfolios" mentioned earlier in these guidelines is also worthy of further exploration. In a multi-cultural Europe which has trading links to many countries, it is arguable that a working knowledge of several languages is undervalued.

Whilst language is clearly an important component (and indeed underpins the whole concept of integration) there are other domains of integration too. In its 1988 report "Measurements and Indicators of Integration" the Council of Europe refers to four key dimensions of integration – economic, social, cultural and political – and encourages the use of indicators concerning the nature of the relationship between migrants and the receiving community. These domains continue to provide a foundation for further work. For example, the Eurostat Zaragoza Pilot Study[33] that has led to the development of EU indicators of integration has focussed on employment, education, social inclusion, and citizenship. It could be argued, therefore, that progress in domains other than language should be used to measure the extent to which tests support integration. In practice, though, this connection is rarely made. Perhaps, then, the idea of "integration portfolios" could be further explored, in which migrants could provide evidence of their achievements in domains other than language.

33. http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-RA-11-009/EN/KS-RA-11-009-EN.PDF.

Recommendations

The work already undertaken by the Council of Europe Language Policy Unit therefore raises the prospect of further recommendations that should be addressed in the context of linguistic integration and related policy development and implementation. These include:

- Bearing in mind the different ways in which languages are learned and the widely differing baseline literacy levels amongst adult migrants, careful consideration should be given to the levels of competence required before entry and after entry to ensure that these are appropriate, achievable and do not exclude migrants who would otherwise be eligible.

- Language programmes offered to adult migrants should be of a sufficiently high quality to give strong support to their efforts to adapt to a new linguistic and cultural situation.

- Language programmes should be designed not simply as a preparation for tests but as a wider educational tool.

- Language programmes for adult migrants should take account of the rights that they already have, including respect for the fundamental values of the Council of Europe: human rights, democracy and the rule of law. These values are the foundations of a tolerant and civilised society and indispensable for European stability, economic growth and social cohesion.

- Programmes designed to support linguistic integration should take into account the languages that adult migrants already know: their linguistic repertoire. These should be recognised and valued, but also utilised to help them learn a new language.

- Member states should opt for flexible courses, types of assessment and testing methods which, insofar as this is possible, are 'tailor-made' to the persons and groups concerned. The extent to which this can be achieved is a matter of resources and is therefore dependent on political decisions in each member state.

- The Council of Europe has developed the European Language Portfolio (ELP) in parallel with the CEFR partly in order to foster autonomous learning. Use of the version of the ELP specially created for use with adult migrants is strongly encouraged.

- If it is considered appropriate to introduce, or continue the use of, integration tests then those responsible for developing them should ensure they are differentiated, according to the needs and abilities of those being tested.

- Wherever possible, education should be offered to support people wishing to take tests, and there should be careful consideration of the form this should take.

- Further consideration should be given to exemptions from testing and what these should be.

- Consideration should be given to whether or not it is appropriate for there to be a fee for tests and, if so, what exemptions there should be from payment.

- Further consideration should be given to researching and developing the alternatives to tests outlined in this paper that might be fairer and non-discriminatory.

- In order to support the implementation of the preceding recommendations, member states are invited to make use of available Council of Europe resources and expertise.

This *Guide*, designed for migration policy decision makers in the member states, addresses the notion of linguistic integration, surveys the means and describes the steps that are essential in addressing the issue in a way that enables the schemes set up by public authorities to meet the needs and expectations of both the host society and the migrants themselves. This can only be truly achieved if the common values of the Council of Europe are respected. The *Guide* outlines the resources already developed by the Council of Europe and proposes guidelines for designing training programmes based on concrete examples. The term "migrant" does not define a single group of people requiring a single type of training and the *Guide* emphasises that training programmes must be tailored to meet the needs and expectations of those they cater for. It is also their duty to make it clear to migrants that learning a new language in no way implies that they have to turn their backs on the languages they already know. Finally, the book discusses the quality standards required for reliable testing and the very excessive role which it is often attributed.

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