



Language Support for Migrants *A Council of Europe Toolkit*

Tool 39 - Supporting migrants who are starting to look for work

Aim: To suggest ways of supporting migrants who are interested in looking for work.

Depending on their legal status in the host country and their age, some migrants in your group may be able to work, at least in part-time jobs or casual employment. Assistance with finding a job cannot be left until migrants have the language skills needed to do so. For this reason, the role of those providing language support to migrants may/must often go beyond language support, especially if no counsellors or other relevant specialists are available in the organisation.

Below are some simple ways in which you can assist with this problem, but additional mediation may be needed, for example via online translation and reference to relevant websites. It is also important to brief other professionals whom migrants will be dealing with so that these people are prepared to be understanding and helpful.

It is a good idea to discuss with migrant learners the kinds of job they might want to apply for (see also Tool 72, Scenario - *Looking for work and applying for jobs*).

The following kinds of question can be used to guide discussion:

- a. *Did you work in your home country? What kind of work did you do? What other kinds of work are you able to do?*
- b. *What kinds of jobs were most often available in your home country?*
- c. *Are you looking for:*
 - *jobs with fixed working hours?*
 - *daytime or night-time work?*
 - *seasonal work, like fruit picking?*
 - *individual work, or work in a team?*
 - *jobs involving physical activity, such as cleaning or delivering items by bicycle?*
 - *jobs with little physical activity such as at a supermarket cash desk?*
 - *work involving senior citizens/the elderly?*
 - *work in a city or in the country?*
 - *etc.*
- d. *Would you prefer a job, for example:*
 - *in a restaurant, e.g. as a waiter or cook?*
 - *In a small shop?*
 - *in a large shop like a supermarket?*
 - *in a manufacturing company?*

- *in a service organisation like a bank, post office or call centre?*
- *with an association doing voluntary work?*
- *related to education?*
- *related to cultural activities?*
- *in the field of sport and physical activity?*
- *in the field of computing and IT?*
- *and so on.*

Having obtained this and, depending on the context, other similar kinds of information, you and other colleagues may be able to identify state entities, local professional organisations, municipal employers, job agencies, websites, associations etc. who are able to inform migrants about the kinds of jobs that are available to young and adult migrants and can give information about the application procedures and the vacancies available.

See also the three scenarios ([Tools 73, 74 and 75](#)) related to helping migrants in preparing a curriculum vitae, a job application letter and a job interview.