

Including refugees in the labour market: the Swiss approach

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16.1. Introduction

With rising numbers of refugees entering Europe the question of how to include the newly arrived in the local labour market becomes both prevalent and controversial. The education and training system within the host countries will play a major role in preparing the new workforce for job placements; this includes the recognition of prior learning, cultural and language integration. All of this has to be addressed while resident permits might only allow residing in a host country until a safe return to the home country can be expected. Switzerland has a long tradition of immigrants entering the country and its VET system (where the apprenticeship track is predominant) has played an important role in integrating them into the labour market. Immigrants due to humanitarian reasons ⁽⁹⁶⁾ represent only about 4% of all foreign residents and just under 1% of the total population of Switzerland. However, 60% of the asylum migrants are under 26 years old and will probably stay for a long time ⁽⁹⁷⁾, so integrating them into VET and the labour market is important. In recent years, a significant number of those arriving did not speak a Swiss national language, had little school education and no knowledge about the culture of their host country. A lot of different aspects need to be taken care of in the education and training system in order to integrate them, such as how to cope with heterogeneity in the classroom and at the workplace, the recognition of prior learning and

prior education, special education and support for those in need or alphabetisation (Schneider et al., 2014). It is important to provide a number of preparatory stages for refugees to enable them to enter an apprenticeship-based VET programme. Switzerland has implemented a number of active integration policies and also took steps within its VET system to ease the transition of migrants into the local labour market.

This chapter outlines the specific situation of asylum migrants in Switzerland and the challenges to include them in the VET system and in the labour market. It describes the possible pathways into the labour market and elaborates their impact and capacities. Requirements for the VET system to meet the needs of refugees as much as society's needs for their successful integration are also discussed.

16.1.1. Europe's challenges with refugee integration

Research findings suggest that effective integration policies benefit not only immigrants but also the receiving society. Countries with inclusive integration policies tend to be better places for everyone to live in (European Commission, 2016). However, the capacity to manage effective integration policies depends very much on the possibility to govern migration flows and to avoid massive increases over a short time span concentrated in a few territorial areas (European Parliament, 2017).

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⁽⁹⁶⁾ Three categories of asylum migrants are distinguished in Switzerland: recognised refugees, temporarily admitted refugees and other temporarily admitted persons. For details regarding their residence permits and the underlying legal acts see SEM, 2019a.

⁽⁹⁷⁾ <https://www.sem.admin.ch/dam/data/sem/integration/agenda/faktenblatt-integrationsagenda-d.pdf> [accessed 18.11.19].

Integration policies remain primarily a national competence. There is strong empirical evidence that the entrance channel impacts the integration path (European Parliament, 2016). Refugees are one of the most vulnerable groups in the labour market, being more likely than the native-born to have low pay and irregular jobs, although in many host countries they generally have higher chances of becoming citizens ⁽⁹⁸⁾ than other migrants (European Parliament, 2016; 2017; European Commission, 2016; Desiderio, 2016). Further, the large flows of refugees and terrorist attacks have increased prejudices and reinforced discrimination.

16.1.2. Refugees in Switzerland

For more than 100 years, Switzerland has been an immigration country. Today, about 30% of young adults in the country have one or two parents from abroad. Therefore, the country has a lot of experience with integrating groups of foreign people into society, including into the labour market. Considering asylum migration, only 2.4% of all asylum applications in Europe in 2018 were filed in Switzerland. However, the figure of 1.9 asylum applicants per 1 000 residents was still significantly higher than the European mean (1.2 applicants per 1 000 residents). The highest application rates in 2018 were registered in Greece (6.2%), Cyprus (6.0%), Malta (5.0%), Luxemburg (3.7%), Sweden (2.1%) and Belgium (2.0%) (see SEM, 2019b). The so-called protection rate – the number of persons who are granted asylum or are temporarily admitted in all first instance decisions in Switzerland – was high at 60.5% in 2018 (SEM, 2019b). Asylum seekers mainly come from states outside of the EU: in 2019 they came especially from Afghanistan, Algeria, Eritrea, Syria and Turkey (SEM, 2019c). The employment rate of refugees in Switzerland was judged as too low and unsatisfactory by the OECD in 2012; this contrasts with the employ-

ment of other immigrants, which was higher than in other OECD countries (Liebig et al., 2012). A possible explanation for this low performance was seen in the lack of clearly structured and labour-market oriented integration programmes for asylum migrants (Liebig et al., 2012, p. 2).

A first longitudinal study of the labour market integration of asylum migrants (arrivals 1997 to 2000) was available in 2014 (KEK-CDC Consultants and BSS, 2014) and was later updated (arrivals 2000 to 2004). The update (see document indicated in Footnote 97) showed that the employment rates of the subgroups developed differently after they were assigned their residence status; after 10 years of residence 51% of the recognised refugees were employed but only 34% of the temporarily admitted persons ⁽⁹⁹⁾. The most successful evolution was observed in the group of the so-called hardship-cases ⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ whose employment rate reached 73% after 10 years. Overall, these reported employment rates are relatively low compared to those of Swiss nationals or other persons with foreign status living in Switzerland. More recent data from the State Secretary for Migration (SEM, 2018) on the employment rates of asylum migrants cannot be directly compared with these figures because they are based on different methodology. However, the reported employment rates after seven years of residence still seem rather low, at 40% for refugees and 47% for temporarily admitted persons.

In principle, refugees and temporarily admitted persons have free access to the labour market in their canton. Only asylum seekers are not allowed to work for the first three months after filing their application. Since January 2019, employers have simply needed to give notice that they have hired a refugee or a temporarily admitted person so that quicker integration into the Swiss labour market can be encouraged. The former authorisation procedure no longer applies. Wage and work conditions apply as to any

⁽⁹⁸⁾ Obtaining the Swiss citizenship takes time for first generation migrants (10 years of residence before an application may be filed) and the process is difficult as it involves three administrative levels (confederation, canton, community).

⁽⁹⁹⁾ The asylum application of temporarily admitted persons was rejected but their expulsion cannot be carried out (e.g. travel documents cannot be obtained, expulsion would violate international laws or would not be reasonable).

⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ The status assigned to asylum applicants, rejected applicants or temporarily admitted persons may be considered as a case of personal hardship so they receive a residence permit. Such permits are only issued for persons who lived for a minimum of five years in Switzerland and are well integrated. Protection is no longer the deciding factor but the question whether it is still reasonable for these persons to return as they have built up a solid personal, economic and social perspective.

other worker. However, many asylum migrants will not easily find access to the Swiss labour market, which is highly structured and oriented towards standardised VET qualifications. They therefore need time and appropriate integration measures to increase their employability.

The individual reasons, which may support or obstruct integration into the labour market, comprise language skills, the willingness to take on work of a lower status, and psycho-physical impairments or traumata (KEK-CDC Consultants and BSS, 2014). Next to structural obstacles, a lack of self-confidence, stamina and learning abilities hinder professional advancement. Also, managing such multiple burdens as caring for family members, language learning, keeping a household, taking care of health issues and balancing all of this with work is a challenge. For the refugees, the potential to bring their families to the host country is very important. For those who are temporarily admitted, insecurity about the possibility to remain enhances or obstructs the inclination for integration. This perceived instability and insecurity also affects employers' willingness to hire.

The motivation to take on jobs is quite high among refugees and often they have a wealth of work experience in their home countries. However, these experiences do not correspond to the expectations regarding VET qualifications in Swiss enterprises. Usually, the basic requirement for qualified work is an upper secondary Federal VET diploma (three or four-year VET programmes) or a Federal VET certificate (two-year VET programmes with lower requirements). Switzerland has therefore developed various measures to help refugees to start an apprenticeship-based VET programme.

16.2. Swiss measures for labour market integration

Institutions and procedures are in place to manage the influx of asylum applicants and to assign them resident status (SEM, 2019a). Under the revised Asylum Act ⁽¹⁰¹⁾, in force since March 2019, most asylum procedures are now completed within 140 days. These accelerated procedures ⁽¹⁰²⁾ follow stages with a strict timetable to shorten the waiting time for asylum applicants who first get a residence permit with restricted options for employment or education. Further, considerable efforts were undertaken since 2014 to support the integration of migrants in a coherent way across all Swiss cantons.

The State Secretariat for Migration (SEM) started to allocate funds for the Cantonal integration programmes (KIP) according to four-year agreements following a national strategy with common goals in eight domains of integration. In the first KIP phase (2014 to 2017), the confederation and the cantons spent a total of CHF 614.02 million: more than two thirds of that went into the language training (36%) and promotion of employability (34%) ⁽¹⁰³⁾. Of the Federal funds covering for nearly two thirds of the total sum, CHF 257.19 million were flat-rate payments for the integration of recognised refugees and temporarily admitted persons as laid down in the Foreign nationals and integration Act (FNIA) (Article 58, Paragraph 2) ⁽¹⁰⁴⁾. The one-time flat rate was still CHF 6 000 per person in the first KIP phase, a modest amount considering that many of these people need different integration measures over several years before they find access to regular VET structures or to the labour market. Besides jointly financing the KIP, the confederation finances programmes and projects of national importance which aim at the development of quality assurance, the evaluation of effectiveness, the testing of innovative projects and new solutions to close gaps in existing programmes.

⁽¹⁰¹⁾ <https://www.admin.ch/opc/en/classified-compilation/19995092/index.html> [accessed 18.11.19].

⁽¹⁰²⁾ <https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/en/home/asyl/asylverfahren.html>, and <https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/en/home/asyl/asylverfahren/nationale-verfahren.html> [accessed 18.11.19].

⁽¹⁰³⁾ <https://www.sem.admin.ch/dam/data/sem/integration/foerderung/kip/finanzen-kip-2014-2017-d.pdf> [accessed 18.11.2019].

⁽¹⁰⁴⁾ <https://www.admin.ch/opc/en/classified-compilation/20020232/index.html> [accessed 18.11.2019].

Another milestone was reached in April 2018, when the Integration agenda Switzerland (IAS) ⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ was accepted by the cantons and the confederation. It led to increased Federal funding of integration measures for refugees and temporarily admitted persons (the one-time flat rate of CHF 6 000 per person was tripled), the formulation of clear integration goals, and the definition of a binding integration process for all actors involved.

The first language courses and coaching to promote labour market integration have been organised within the framework of the KIP and the IAS. Motivated refugees and temporarily admitted persons who have the potential and have attained the required level of language ability (at least level B1 in the Common European framework of reference for languages, CEFR) are coached to start a dual, apprenticeship-based VET programme in order to acquire a recognised upper secondary qualification. Dual VET programmes last for two, three or four years, depending on their requirements. They are accessible for young people aged between 16 and approximately 23 years but, to be able to enrol, an apprenticeship contract with a host company is needed. If this is not yet possible, there are non-certifying pre-VET programmes that usually last for a year and combine school and work-based training. For many years, the cantons have offered specific pre-VET programmes for young migrants coming to Switzerland towards the end of, or after, the period of compulsory education to prepare them for certifying initial VET. They focus on teaching of a local language (German, French, Italian) and of the academic skills required for VET as well as on transmitting norms and values of the Swiss culture of learning and working. The students also gain practical work experience and are supported to find a host company to start initial VET. However, most cantons set an age limit (21 to 23 years) for these pre-VET programmes, because it may be difficult to find a host company to start an initial VET programme after the age of 25 years.

With the arrival of many refugees in December 2015, the Federal Council decided to help fi-

nance additional pre-VET programmes for a pilot period (2018 to 2021). These new programmes also last for a year and were set up in cooperation between the cantons and professional organisations to prepare refugees and temporarily admitted persons for dual VET in specific occupational fields that are looking for a future workforce (Scharnhorst and Kammermann, 2019). Many of them are also accessible for young adults (up to approximately 35 years). So far, these new programmes have been successful according to a recent presentation (mid-November 2019) of first evaluation results ⁽¹⁰⁶⁾. The participants, as well as the cantons and the companies, are satisfied with the programmes. Of the first cohort (750 students), 80% finished their pre-VET programme in summer 2019 and, considering the dropout-rate, about two-thirds of the participants that started received an apprenticeship contract and have taken up a certifying dual VET programme. Another 5% directly found a job in the labour market. Others could take up branch-related continuing education options and the rest has not yet found a solution to continuing their education and training. In May 2019, the Federal council extended the pilot phase for another two years (until summer 2023).

Besides strengthening language and basic academic skills needed for VET, the pre-VET programmes are considered as important for socialisation into a community of workers in which basic work skills, as well as cultural skills and knowledge about Switzerland, can be acquired. Here, refugees have contact with locals and learn with them and from them; this also covers behavioural standards which they are expected to comply with, including punctuality, politeness, honesty, service orientation towards customers, dress codes at work, taking initiative and asking questions in decisive moments.

The regular initial VET programmes are strongly labour market-oriented as the professional organisations define the occupational qualification profiles. The main partners of the VET system (confederation, cantons, professional organisations) share the conviction that the low-threshold two-year VET programmes are the main gateway

⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ <https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/de/home/themen/integration/integrationsagenda.html> [accessed 18.11.2019].

⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ <https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/de/home/aktuell/news/2019/2019-11-12.html> [accessed 18.11.2019].

to access certifying initial VET for those with low achievement due to sociocultural disadvantages or learning impairments. These programmes are academically less demanding, but the graduates hold a Federal vocational certificate (FVC) and are skilled workers for simpler occupations for which there is demand in the labour market. An FVC also ensures permeability towards the corresponding three- or four-year VET programmes which lead to a Federal vocational diploma (FVD) and give access to professional education at tertiary level.

The Federal authorities and their partners consider the existing flexibilities in the VET system as sufficient to promote the acquisition of a recognised vocational qualification. In addition to the support measures to promote successful learning and graduation of all VET students (such as remedial courses at vocational schools, prolongation of the VET programme for one year), there are specific support measures for students in two-year VET programmes. They are instructed in smaller school classes with teaching methods adapted to weaker learners and are entitled, if needed, to get individual tutoring which comprises all learning venues (training company, vocational school, branch courses) and the social environment to support successful development that may be hindered by different factors (SBFI, 2014a). The Federal VET agency (SBFI, 2014a, p. 4) further underlines in its official guide for two-year VET that these programmes are conceived to allow as many young people as possible to obtain a recognised VET qualification; for those who cannot yet stand their ground with the available support measures, specific solutions outside regular VET have to be found to prepare them.

A Swiss education policy goal stipulates that 95% of all residents (which includes accepted refugees and temporarily admitted persons) have an upper secondary qualification by the age of 25 years. The VET system plays a central role in reaching this goal because about two-thirds of the young people in Switzerland enrol in initial VET after compulsory education. National monitoring data show that the 25-year-old Swiss nationals born in Switzerland almost meet this

goal (graduation rate of 94%) but migrants born in Switzerland (86%) or abroad (73%) are still far from it (BFS, 2018). It remains to be seen how the new Integration agenda Switzerland and the pre-VET programmes for refugees will contribute to improving this situation.

16.3. Four pathways for adults into the labour market

The clearly structured, full-time initial VET programmes are targeted at adolescents or younger adults. But older adults (over 25 years), who have different needs and conditions, may also get an initial or a second vocational qualification according to the Vocational and professional education and training Act (VPETA) ⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ and the Vocational and professional education and training ordinance (VPETO) ⁽¹⁰⁸⁾, both in force since 2004.

There are four ways for unqualified adults to get an initial VET qualification (FVC or FVD). Two require attendance of a formal apprenticeship-based VET programme, either a regular programme or a shortened one, if some previously acquired competences are recognised. Both options require a contract with a host company besides attending lessons at vocational school and a standard final examination. The two other ways are meant for adults with at least five years of work experience (partly in the desired occupation) and do not necessarily require formal education. One is direct admittance to the final examination, with self-organised preparation or preparatory courses provided by different schools. The other is validation of prior formal and informal learning results which are either judged as fully equivalent to a final examination in the desired occupation, or which need to be supplemented by some additional courses but without having to take a final examination. Validation procedures only exist for 20 of about 230 initial VET qualifications and are not offered in all the cantons. Validation would be the least costly way for interested adult refugees and for the State but often they are neither the quickest, nor the easiest way. A comprehensive validation dossier

⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ <https://www.admin.ch/opc/en/classified-compilation/20001860/index.html> [accessed 18.11.2019].

⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ <https://www.admin.ch/opc/en/classified-compilation/20031709/index.html> [accessed 18.11.2019].

must be compiled so that professional experts can judge the equivalence of the competences acquired through prior formal and informal learning. This requires cognitive and language skills and often needs support by coaches. Therefore, regular or shortened apprenticeships are often easier and quicker ways for many adult refugees (Spadarotto, 2019). In principle, the legal foundations (VPETA, VPETO) allow for flexibility regarding the four ways to obtain an initial VET qualification for adults: vocational classes with adapted schedules, part-time study courses, modular courses with partial examinations which would facilitate the recognition of prior learning results, and dispensation from some modules. However, such offers are only available in certain cantons or occupations or are still in the process of being established (SBFI, 2014b).

The current initiative *VET 2030* ⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ might also help to flexibilise VET for adults further. Increasing digitalisation sets new challenges and calls for a more open system of lifelong learning, for the young and adults.

With about 400 000 adults (total in Switzerland) between 25 and 54 years without post-compulsory certification, the potential for qualification is considerable (see Tsandev and Salzmann, 2017). However, in comparison, the number of certifications acquired by adults is relatively modest and only marginally increasing over time: in 2014, only 7 643 persons aged 25 years or more completed upper secondary education, of whom two-thirds completed regular or shorter initial VET programmes. The pathways created for adults - direct admission to the final examination and the validation procedure - are far less frequently followed and, depending on the canton and profession, the proportion taking these routes varies greatly (see Wettstein, 2016).

16.4. Factors impacting refugee work integration

The Swiss experience shows that if refugees have successfully acquired a Federal VET certificate or diploma, they are eligible to work as

qualified workers in their profession. This not only provides them with a steady income and makes individuals self-reliable, it also is a key to social integration. Often colleagues help with the various issues and challenges that refugees face when trying to understand the new culture and new behavioural expectations. For society, the benefit is that refugees can work in fields needing employees and bring their knowledge and skills to enhance or stimulate new approaches to work. The cultural exchange between refugees and their colleagues contributes to the development of inter-cultural competence and helps when workers go abroad or cope with international individuals as customers or colleagues.

Integration into the labour market is not an easy or straightforward endeavour. The immigration of many young people with a long-term perspective to stay in their host country at an age where they can start VET brings with it several challenges for the VET system and its institutions. These are briefly outlined below:

16.4.1. Risk of discrimination

The risk of discrimination in the social and occupational integration of those from a migrant background should not be underestimated, especially among employers who have little or no experience with such employees and whose market and customer relationships are regionally oriented (Scherr et al., 2015). A perceived 'lack of training readiness' in refugees promotes a culturalising perspective and might contribute to a social selection in decisions about admission to education, and hence to discrimination against young people with a migrant background (Hormel, 2016). Although a future workforce is needed and many of the refugees could be recruited, even those who are adequately qualified often have difficulties finding gainful employment. There is also a hierarchy of recruitment preferences, with companies and organisations initially actively recruiting workers based on the free movement of persons' policy within the EU/EFTA. This also reduces the opportunities for refugees to find employment. Based on the Federal Constitution (Article 121a) and the For-

⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ <https://www.sbf.admin.ch/sbf/de/home/bildung/berufsbildungssteuerung-und--politik/projekte-und-initiativen/berufsbildung-2030.html>

eign nationals and integration Act (FNIA, Article 21a, Paragraph 3, see Footnote 104 for this act), Switzerland has introduced a regulation to exploit the domestic employment market potential better before hiring workers from abroad; this applies in the professions, areas of employment or economic regions with an above-average level of unemployment (i.e. 8% until December 2019 and 5% as of January 2020). Employers must therefore notify the public employment agencies of vacant positions so that access to information about these vacancies is restricted for a limited period to persons registered with public employment agencies in Switzerland. Refugees and temporarily admitted persons are residents of the country and therefore a part of the domestic employment market potential.

16.4.2. Training design

The heterogeneity of the refugees and their experiences require not only new perspectives and patterns of action, which can be an enrichment for the working world, but also an openness of all workers to joint learning. For education and training, especially in the workplace, this means a broader understanding of work and experiential knowledge as well as how this can be made visible and usable for the work process. On-the-job learning must normally be supported during the introductory phase, as with mentoring programmes, but this requires extra staff capacity.

16.4.3. Access to dual VET

There are many vacant apprenticeships (mainly in the area of water supply, trade, construction and hospitality according to the apprenticeship barometer of April 2019) ⁽¹¹⁰⁾. Refugees could be encouraged to apply for these apprenticeships. The new pre-VET programmes created in cooperation with professional organisations should also generate apprenticeships in occupational fields that need a skilled workforce in the future. More generally, involvement in value-added working life also contributes positively to integration in society. In order to achieve this, the insight and trust of employers must be motivated to provide enough training places for refugees.

Since direct entry into dual VET often fails due to a lack of prior knowledge, transitional pre-VET programmes, are a first step to allowing a slow and accompanied entry into vocational training.

16.4.4. Motivation obstacles

There are several soft factors that can hamper adult learning, such as low self-learning skills, low stamina, multiple family and work-related issues, lack of social and operational support, or fear of failure. Many refugees need more than traditional structural support to understand the rules, trust themselves, and establish a healthy work-life balance.

16.4.5. Social integration and support

In addition to preparing for the labour market, VET also largely fulfils a social function, supporting socialisation in the workplace and integration into society. Apprentices can learn important basic behaviours and make contacts with colleagues. However, employers are often overwhelmed by the scope of additional integration needs, especially explaining basically expected social behaviours. In order to be able successfully to shape the integration in training and the labour market, the support of case managers and coaches is highly important.

16.5. Public institution integration challenges

Increasing immigration efforts place special demands on canton administrations. Their tasks, in the context of the integration of refugees into work processes, essentially include placement in language courses, advice and support with regard to the recognition of foreign diplomas, and placement in education and the labour market, including pre-employment measures (see Heckmann, 2015). These stages of development are ideally framed by coaching and counselling services that will support both the refugees and the trainers.

Networks between communal organisations emerge as part of refugee integration when the

⁽¹¹⁰⁾ <https://www.sbf.admin.ch/sbf/de/home/bildung/berufliche-grundbildung/nahtstellenbarometer.html> [accessed 18.11.2019].

division of labour has led to a fundamental division of functions. A distinction is made between the domains of social protection (such as social assistance), work integration, and education (such as vocational guidance, language courses). At the same time, organisations can focus on their core competences and, with fewer human resources, choose teamwork based on trusting collaborative relationships and process orientation (see Mayntz, 1992). The successful integration of refugees into the labour market thus requires institutions that manage the organisation of measures as well as the counselling and support of participants in the cantons (Barbasch et al., 2016a).

The Swiss integration policy is anchored in the Foreign nationals and integration Act (FNIA) and the premise is ‘promote and demand’. Demand includes encouraging foreigners to take responsibility for their own lives, while funding involves Federal financial contributions to the cantons, which coordinate and implement social and occupational integration measures at the cantonal level (see Jörg et al., 2016). Sustainable vocational integration of temporarily admitted persons and refugees is one of the most important strategic goals. According to the SEM (2018), there are several major goals to be achieved within a certain timeframe: a language level of A1 has to be achieved by all after three years of arrival; two thirds of refugees between 16 and 25 years old are in post-obligatory education; and half of all refugees are integrated into the regular labour market seven years after their arrival.

Inter-institutional cooperation (IIZ) in Switzerland supports the development of institutions and structures for the integration of migrants. It has been operating at national level since 2010 and supports the integration efforts in the cantons and cooperation between them⁽¹¹⁾. Institutions for VET, social security, health or employment cooperate in this framework.

Depending on the canton, the concrete measures and programmes for the social and occupational integration of provisionally admitted persons and refugees are delegated to national,

regional or local NGOs or to public institutions at cantonal or community level. In some cases, this is also the responsibility of a specific department of the cantonal or municipal administration. According to a report commissioned by the SEM (see Jörg et al., 2016), there are currently about 50 smaller or larger specialist organisations across Switzerland with a broad range of services, from coaching and consulting, assessment and work integration to qualification measures.

16.6. Conclusion

Despite many challenges for both the administration in the receiving country and the refugees themselves, successful labour market integration is crucial and to individuals’ benefit. Switzerland has a comprehensive infrastructure in place for refugees and temporarily accepted persons. Experiences have shown that early preparation for VET in connection with the recognition of prior learning serves socialisation in the world of work. If this is achieved, much of the support needed by refugees throughout the integration is then provided by colleagues.

There are several challenges that remain. Language education is key to successful integration. The Swiss programme Fide⁽¹²⁾ supports the acquisition of language skills and ensures the adequate qualification of language trainers. Quality assurance and high efforts in language training are the foundation for ensuring that language learning opportunities are in place. The second step is successful integration into the labour market, for which new pre-VET programmes were created to facilitate the transition to dual apprenticeships. Overall, the goal to increase successful integration into the labour market will remain and is a priority for all institutions involved.

⁽¹¹⁾ <http://www.iiz.ch/> [accessed 18.11.2019].

⁽¹²⁾ <https://www.fide-info.ch/de/wasistfide/entwicklung> [accessed 18.11.2019].

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