

THE PECULIARITIES OF THE WORK INTEGRATION OF IMMIGRANTS IN SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

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Abstract. *This article analyses the problem of immigration. In the process of globalization, the countries are forced to solve the issues of emigration, declining birth rates, and populating ageing. Therefore, immigration may be beneficial as the immigrating people help to create economic potential by filling vacancies. However, the acceptance of immigrants and their integration often leads to debates and confronts the members of society. The methods of research: analysis of scientific literature and documents, expert interview, analysis and interpretation of the research results. The review of scientific literature and the research data, presented in this article, may be adapted for improvement of the social integration factors, while considering the way the needs of immigrants are met and the integration measures that are provided. The research has revealed the key factors, influencing the social integration of immigrants in social enterprises.*

Keywords: *immigration, social enterprises, integration, work integration.*

Introduction

For a long time, migration issues had been dealt with by the EU countries according to the position adopted by the country itself, but the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) helped to define the common agreements in the area of migration policy. The Treaty of Lisbon (2009) stipulates that, in accordance with the principles of solidarity and fair sharing of responsibilities, including funding in the EU countries, migration policies shall be pursued and aligned with the principles and legal norms of the EU common policy.

According to Ruhs (2008), while developing immigration policies, national states have to make the key decisions that define: the number of migrants admitted, the selection of migrants, and the rights of migrants who have been admitted, however, in order these decisions are made properly, it is necessary to solve legal, economic, political as well as social aspects of the country's migration. When discussing the situation in Lithuania, the Guidelines on Migration Policy (22.01.2014, No. 79) state that implementation of the policy of integration of foreigners requires the following principles: to ensure human rights and equal opportunities in all areas of life; to grant permanent resident status and/or nationality; to reduce social inequalities, vulnerability and exploitation; to monitor work and living conditions; to strengthen representation.

It should be noted that integration is understood as a process taking place in a society, where individuals are involved in the system, creating their relationships and a position in society. It is the result of intentional and motivated cooperation and the interaction between individuals and groups. The report of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions "Integration of third-country nationals" (2007) emphasizes that integration should be understood as a mutual adaptation process between the migrant and the host society. It consists of four stages: 1) structural integration into the labour market, education and accommodation sectors; 2) socialization through knowledge, cultural standards and individual competence; 3) social integration through social interaction, communication and migrants' social relations with the host society, and 4) identification of migrants with the host society (Žibas, 2008). Thus, it might be stated that involvement in the labour market during the integration period and later is one of the most important goals in implementing the integration strategy. Participation in the labour market helps those arriving to survive, take care of the family, fosters confidence in a new country, and establishes social relationships through which the social capital is created.

Violations of labour migrants' rights by country of origin, gender, or employment sector have been researched by: Preibisch and Binford (2007); Hennebry and Preibisch (2010); Martin and Teitelbaum (2010); Jokinen et al. (2013). The models for selecting the labour migrants have been analyzed by Papademetriou and O'Neil (2004), Niessen and Schibel (2007). The issues of immigration and the factors of integration in Lithuania have been examined by Žibas (2009, 2012); Bartkevičienė and Raudeliūnaitė (2012). Meanwhile, Blažytė (2017) analyzed the problems of the family-based immigrants, and Platačiūtė (2015) examined theoretical models of labour force immigration. Social enterprises have been examined by several researchers, such as Urmanavičienė, Cizikiene, Rasiene (2015), Greblikaite, Sroka, Grants (2015), Urmanaviciene, Cizikiene (2017). Social business models have been analysed by Vveinhardt, Kuklytė (2016, 2017).

The aim of the article is to review the factors of reception and integration of immigrants, to analyse the aspects of social integration in social enterprises. The following objectives are set to reach the aim: to describe the theoretical aspects of labour immigration models; to identify the factors of social integration and to make suggestions and recommendations that will allow for more successful integration of foreigners. Research methods applied: analysis of scientific literature and documents, expert interviews, analysis and interpretation of research results.

The aspects of immigrants' involvement in the labour market in Lithuania

In Lithuania, the total number of immigrants is increasing, and the majority of immigrants are labour migrants, who come to work and seek for better living conditions. Their number became significantly higher when emigration of the Lithuanian population increased, and a shortage of the skilled workers emerged. In 2017, 10.5 thousand foreigners immigrated to the country, and they made up 35.8 percent of the total migrants. In comparison with 2016, the number of foreign immigrants increased by 4.5 thousand (1.8 times). Almost all (4.4 thousand or 42.2 percent) of the total number of immigrant foreigners were Ukrainian citizens, 2.8 thousand (26.6%) – Belarusian, 673 (6.4%) – Russian citizens (Statistics Lithuania). The fact that the majority of immigrants were from Ukraine was caused by the EU visa-free regime with Ukraine.

Papademetriou and O'Neil (2004), Niessen and Schibel (2007) identify the following models for selection of labour migrants: *employers' interest* – where the current rather than the future situation in employment field is more important; the migrants with specific job position in a registered company are employed; *shortage of workers* – the workers with relevant qualifications to work in specific sector of the labour market are employed; *human capital* – where the future immigrants are assessed, according to their personal traits, and selected. According to the above models, the programmes for reception of labour migrants are developed, where the selection methods and criteria are provided. It is observed that the model of employers' interest emphasizes the current rather than future situation in the field of employment, the migrants with specific job position in a registered company are employed, the migrants work in specific position, and this allows the government to control and protect the labour market. However, this model increases the risk of failure to notice the exploitation of migrant workers, since, upon termination of an employment contract, a migrant must leave the country and often lacks the legal and financial capabilities to defend his rights. Application of the selection model involves the implementation of consistent programmes, and the economic interests of the state determine the criteria and factors of selection. Migrants are selected on the basis of government-defined sectors of the labour market that lack labour force. Although migrants have the opportunity to find a job and become self-employed, their admission is usually only linked to temporary work which is associated with the risk that, after the termination of the contract, migrant workers can stay in the country illegally. The human capital model is focused towards the selection of labour migrants according to various criteria for specific sector of the

labour market, depending on the personal characteristics of the migrant. Furthermore, in this case labour migrants can work independently and, if requirements are met, the possibility of long-term residence is provided (Platačiūtė, 2015).

It should be noted that the model of employers' interest, based on the work permit issuance system, dominates in Lithuania, while the selection methods include employment contracts and labour market tests. Employment contracts are one of the most important methods for controlling the arrival of labour migrants. Upon arriving to Lithuania, a labour migrant must obtain a work permit and a temporary residence permit on the grounds of employment (LLG) which require employment contracts (therefore, an independent search for work is impossible upon arrival to the country) (Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, 2014) The next control method is a labour market test that is used to protect the Lithuanian labour market: employment is possible only after announcing the vacancy in a territorial labour exchange and upon failure to employ a citizen of the Republic of Lithuania or another EU country during the period of a month. At least 3 months before submitting the application, an employer must inform the territorial labour exchange about the anticipated need for employment of foreigners (Ministry of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania, 2015). As it has already been mentioned, due to the increased shortage of skilled workers, the Government of Lithuania was forced to make certain changes in employment of foreigners. In order to facilitate the recruitment of skilled workers, the government made a decision to approve the list of professions whose specialists are in short supply in Lithuania, and the employers no longer need the decision of the Lithuanian labour exchange that the work of a foreigner is in line with labour market needs.

Thus, the model applied in Lithuania, is aimed at the needs of the labour market and the fact that the government would be able to control and protect the labour market. While analysing the models, Ruhs (2005, 2008) observes that it is precisely the referral of a worker to specific workplace by issuing a work permit is the greatest risk of exploitation of labour migrants, as the models of employers' interest and selection of workers usually do not provide for the possibility to change workplaces and for the long-term employment. Furthermore, they limit the access to public services, thus, restricting the rights of migrants and making them extremely vulnerable. These individuals are often discriminated, equal opportunities are not guaranteed for them, they lack capabilities to defend their rights, and upon termination of an employment contract or expiry of a residence permit, a person must leave the country regardless of the personal situation.

Other migrants – those, who come on the basis family reunification and studies, experience different problems than labour migrants in Lithuania. According to Beresnevičiūtė et al. (2009), Žibo (2012), Blažytė (2017), the immigrants, who come on the basis of family reunification and studies, face difficulties in getting employed due to differences in appearance, religion and inability to speak Lithuanian. Yakushko (2006) states that immigrants face not only unemployment but also low-skilled work problems or disqualification issues, when their professional qualifications are not recognized. Immigrants have fewer opportunities to work in line with their professional qualifications, therefore, they are forced to perform low-skilled works or start individual business. The research show that immigrant women, who came on the basis of family reunification, encounter work problems more often than men in the host country (Yakushko, (2006), Logan and Drew, (2011). The results of the research, carried out by Logan and Drew (2011), revealed that women, who do not speak or hardly speak the language of a host country, face more difficulties in getting employed than men immigrants.

It should be noted that the students, residing in Lithuania, face the problems of restricted working hours, greater potential for illegal employment, and difficult employment procedures. Although the issuance of a residence permit is often a challenge for foreigners, the laws provide one circumstance, facilitating the adaptation of the immigrants, arriving due to family reunification. This is provided for in Article 58 of the Law on the Legal Status of Aliens of the Republic of Lithuania, whereby the aliens, who come to the country on the basis of family reunification are exempted from the obligation to obtain a work permit. In her research, Blažytė (2017) revealed that while family immigrants have easier employment possibilities, the path to the labour market is often prevented by other factors of social context. According to Blažytė (2017), discriminatory cases on the labour market are primarily related to the negative attitude of employers towards foreigners and, consequently, the difficulties encountered by foreigners in getting employed. Employers do not tend to rely on non-EU citizens, and the priority in the country's labour market is given to the citizens of the Republic of Lithuania, later – to the citizens of other EU countries, and only if they fail to find a skilled worker for certain position from these countries, the chance to be employed goes to a non-EU citizen. In addition, it should be noted that employers often say that the main problem of low-skilled work is the lack of knowledge of the host language. However, they do not encourage and do not provide immigrants with conditions to learn the language of the host country.

According to Bartkevičienė and Raudeliūnaitė (2012), the integration measures aimed at participation of newly arrived immigrants in the labour

market are shown by the fact that new immigrants in Lithuania associate the need for integration measures with counselling and ensuring equal opportunities in the labour market. Thus, targeted programmes for new immigrants would be a useful political instrument for integration in order to guarantee the immigrants' rights. Yakushuko et al., (2008) revealed that complex interventions are important for immigrants, i.e., the integration measures that promote integration of immigrants into the labour market: provision of individual counselling; organization of discussions; simulation activities to familiarize the immigrants with peculiarities of the work environment of a host country.

It should be noted that the number of governmental programmes for integration of immigrants is not sufficient, and the state does not allocate funding for programmes for the integration of non-EU citizens (Blažytė, 2017.) Implementation of integration of immigrants is left to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) which offer separate integration programmes, however, due to unstable funding, the support projects are not continuous. Therefore, the provided integration measures are single and short-term; there is a lack of systematic support which would combine the complex assistance for the process of integration of immigrants.

The role of social enterprises in the context of social integration

It is important to emphasize that respect for the rights of migrants is the basis for their successful integration. If human rights are not respected, the barriers for integration are created and there is a danger of marginalization of alien groups, while the public, instead of benefits from work, business potential, taxes, will be burdened by social benefits, the risk of crime and manifestation of marginal culture. The state must act responsibly in integration of vulnerable groups of society; otherwise it may face increased societal problems and higher social tensions in the future. Entry into the labour market is one of the main goals of the integration of immigrants. Participation in the labour market helps those arriving to survive, take care of the family, foster confidence in a new country, and establish social relationships through which social capital is created. Social business is one of the ways where immigrants can effectively become involved in the Lithuanian labour market; however, the actual support provided in this field is a rare exception. It is noted that the immigrants usually come from the countries with completely different language, traditions and culture, and because of cultural differences often do not meet the expectations of Lithuanian employers. However, different cultural experience can be an advantage in creating business, innovative products and offering our society services that have not been developed yet in

Lithuania. Therefore, employment of immigrants as well as involvement into social business in any other form, for example, volunteering, would help to solve the issues, related with integration of immigrants in Lithuania.

Thus, successful development of integration is possible when support is provided for employment of the immigrating persons, and special measures for the labour integration are applied. Work integration social enterprises (WISE) have been established in Europe since 1990. The main objective of this social enterprise is to help to integrate the marginalized target groups into work through manufacturing or service provision activities (Nyssens, 2007). The politics of the European countries have actively supported the creation of work integration social enterprises by providing certain subsidies for employment of the targeted groups. The experience of the European Union countries shows that social enterprises mainly work with the people with disabilities, long-term unemployed and low-skilled people, refugees and immigrants and other groups of the population, i.e., with those whose employment opportunities are extremely low for various reasons. According to Neverauskienė and Moskvina (2011), work integration social enterprises take care of employment (usually temporary) of the target groups, experiencing difficulties in the labour market and public life, help them to try entrepreneurship and to become engaged in other productive activities. It should be mentioned that the socialization processes, taking place through work, are important precondition for social integration. Therefore, some social enterprises are engaged in social integration of specific vulnerable groups (for example, the disabled, the long-term unemployed, immigrants, etc.), but a significant proportion of social enterprises are concerned with the integration of several target groups or vulnerable individuals in general. An organization may decide to work with only one target group of people or with a combination of different target groups. Some researchers state that focusing on one group helps an organization to succeed because it is possible to better focus on the needs and capabilities of one group. According to Smith et al. (2008), the inclusion of several target groups could have even greater positive impact on reintegration of the disadvantaged individuals. In other countries, this has already achieved positive results. Thus, inclusion of several groups can improve the adaptation of disadvantaged groups to a “natural, regular” working environment (Smith et al. 2008) without causing exclusion.

In Europe, due to the political and historical context of different countries, there are different types of work integration social enterprises: for example, in some countries, the work integration social enterprises take care of employment of the target groups, experiencing difficulties in the labour market and public life; while WISEs in other countries propose long-

term work places for these unemployed persons, in order they would acquire social and professional skills, would become independent. In addition, there are some WISEs with the main purpose to socialize people through certain activities, where re-socialization of the target groups is important for restoring social relations, respect for rules, forming a “structured” way of life, etc. This activity is “semi-official” work, not regulated by labour laws and employment contracts (Cooney, Nyssens, Mary O’Shaughnessy, Defourny, 2016). It should also be mentioned that some of the work integration social enterprises cannot be strictly assigned to any of these categories, since they work with several different integration models and several target groups (Neverauskienė and Moskvina (2011)).

In Lithuania, the work integration social enterprises can be divided into several types, i.e., those which are recognized by laws, and those that exist “de facto” (Greblikaitė, Gerulaitienė, Žiukaitė, Garcia-Machado, 2017). Legally (by law) recognized social enterprises offer permanent long-term jobs for the most vulnerable groups of society: the disabled, long-term unemployed, unemployed people over the age of 50; ex-prisoners; the persons addicted on narcotic, psychotropic and other psychoactive substances after completing psychological social and/or vocational rehabilitation programs; a mother (adoptive mother) or a father (adoptive father), a guardian or a carer, who alone takes care of and raises a child under eight years of age, or a disabled child under 18 years of age, or another person who cares for a sick or disabled family member with special need of permanent nursing or continuous care (support)). However, the migrants are not included in the target groups, whose employment is supported under the Law on Social Enterprises. It should be noted that the majority of these companies employ disabled people. There has been some practice that some of these companies operate as traditional business organizations: they employ the target groups, but fail to fully implement their social mission, i.e., fail to develop their social skills, are not interested in social integration of these people. There is no known data on how many of these employees get employed in the open labour market later.

Social business work integration enterprises de facto are work integration social enterprises which are not legally recognized, they are not provided with state support. Their primary and the most important objective is a social mission – to develop self-sufficiency, work and social skills of people so that they can use them to find job in an open labour market. These enterprises usually engage in temporal employment of these individuals by providing them with the opportunity to improve their social and professional competences, or theoretical training, the practice tailored to their individual needs, all of which are focused towards the individual

and the improvement of their competences or acquisition of additional skills rather than seeking profit for their shareholders or founders.

As the number of migrants is growing in Lithuania, social enterprises could be a perfect solution for the problems of unemployment and integration of migrants. The article will further analyse the view of heads of social enterprises towards involvement of emigrants into their business activities.

The features of employment of the arrivals (expert opinion)

The qualitative research method – survey of experts' opinion in the form of semi-structured interviews – was selected for empirical research. This form of interview was selected to find out the experts' opinion on the current situation and, by comparing the responses, to reveal the experts' attitude towards the process of integration and opportunities for successful integration of migrants by getting employed in social enterprises.

The problem of the research is to identify problems and limitations for integration of the arrivals into activities of social enterprises, thus, increasing the social value created by these enterprises. The objectives of empirical research are: 1) to conduct a survey of the opinion of the heads of social enterprises that would help to identify the problems of social integration; 2) to identify the opportunities for more successful integration of foreigners.

Interview is one of the effective methods of qualitative research. This method was also selected because of the fact that the necessary information is obtained through direct targeted interview with the respondent. The direction and content of the interview is determined by the research problem. Five heads of social enterprises were interviewed in an unstructured interview. The informants were introduced to the purpose and use of the research, and the issues of confidentiality were discussed. The data obtained during the interview were analysed using qualitative content analysis. The interrelated questions to be answered by respondents were prepared in advance. The survey was conducted during the period of February – March, 2018. It included the following stages: preparation of research instrument, interviewing, analysis of research data, and reflection.

It should be noted that while assessing the process of immigration, the respondents point out the following aspects: *“integration involves preparation of both the hosting society and the integrating people”, “it is a complex process, it is necessary to understand the arrivals and find appropriate measures or their integration”, “the arrivals are very different, unique, therefore, the measures of social integration should be applied for each individually”, “I think that it is essential to make a complex assessment of*

each individual case, to consider the circumstances that may promote a proper social integration". In summary, it might be stated that the respondents agree that in order to help for the arrivals to successfully integrate in Lithuania, a complex support, cooperation and involvement of all parties concerned in integration processes is necessary. The informants emphasized that is essential to consider each case individually, to take into account individual possibilities, and to prepare a proper action plan for integration by offering a complex assistance and support.

It was found out that *"migration is associated with the risk to face mental and psychosocial experiences", "risk to experience psychological trauma, and emotional difficulties", "there are no social relationships, one needs to discover himself in a new environment, it is difficult for a person", "psychological difficulties in a new environment because one needs to socialize and cope with his emotions", "we noticed that they are not ready to seek for future plans here, it is necessary to give people the prospects for the future"*. The respondents point out that the arrivals may be assigned to the groups of vulnerable persons, since they face mental and psychosocial disturbances in a new environment, they need to create new personal and social relationships, to understand and discover themselves in a foreign country.

While considering the opportunities of the arrivals to enter the labour market, it was determined that: *"upon arriving to Lithuania, people do not work for a while, they need to arrange documents", "the working activity usually starts from the lowest step", "the benefit received during social integration is low", "there is a language barrier, there are negative attitudes about the arrivals in society", "there are few opportunities to succeed in the labour market", "the social, cultural and professional experience of each arrival is different; "there are differences in abilities to adapt, according to age, education, etc., therefore, it is impossible to apply general rules and the same measures to all", "the process of employment is not easy, various difficulties are faced"*. All respondents do agree that in order to integrate the arrivals successfully, first, it is necessary to find out their personal experience, available capabilities, social and professional skills, and motivation to enter the labour market, and only then to employ them.

While analysing the information, obtained during interviews, it was found out that according to the informants, *"interinstitutional cooperation is the key for integration in the labour market", "it is necessary to offer the best opportunities to work and learn as people have language barriers", "social enterprises would help to prepare a person for work in an open labour market", "when employing the arrivals in our enterprise, we would like to have more knowledge about the situation", "there should be possibilities to explain special needs, e.g., cultural ones, for the employer", "an employee must*

understand the national traditions and organization culture as this would help to avoid possible conflicts”, “possibility to join the community may develop a social network and dispel negative attitudes of the society”. All respondents could help the arrivals on the employment issues, however, they lack specific knowledge about peculiarities of the people being integrated and their current situation. The informants agree that it would be advisable to organize training for employers, familiarizing them with the opportunities and challenges of integration.

The informants pointed out the following opportunities for the arrivals to get employed in social enterprises: *“in order to help for successful integration, it is necessary to create conditions for combining learning, especially language, with work”, “we have to cooperate with various institutions”, “in order to get the arrivals involved into social life, we need to look for the best opportunities, e.g., we have volunteers in our enterprise”, “it is essential to understand that there also are family members, who also need support, we could be more flexible with working schedules”.* The respondents agree that employment of the arrivals in social enterprises would provide the immigrants with more opportunities for successful integration in society, and the enterprises could thus increase their social value by helping the vulnerable persons, involving them and their family members in the social life.

Conclusions

Integration should be understood as a mutual adaptation process between the migrant and the host society. Involvement in the labour market is one of the most important goals, while implementing the integration of immigrants. Participation in the labour market helps those arriving to survive, take care of their families, fosters confidence in a new country, and establishes social relationships through which the social capital is created. Social business is one of the ways where immigrants can effectively become involved in the Lithuanian labour market, however, the actual support provided in this field is a rare exception. It is observed that immigrants usually come from the countries with completely different language, traditions and culture, and because of cultural differences often do not meet the expectations of Lithuanian employers. However, different cultural experience can be an advantage in creating business, innovative products and offering our society services that have not been developed yet in Lithuania. Therefore, employment of immigrants as well as involvement into social business in any other form, for example, volunteering, would help to solve the issues, related with integration of immigrants in Lithuania.

The results, obtained during research, confirmed that the process of employment of immigrants is not easy, thus, the heads of social enterprises face different difficulties: there are still certain preconceptions in society about the arrivals, it is necessary to organize language learning, the arrivals often face psychological difficulties due to adaptation in a new environment, handling of documentation takes a long time. The research also revealed that despite of the challenges, the heads of social business could help the arrivals on the issues of employment, however, specific knowledge about peculiarities of the people being integrated and their current situation. The respondents emphasized that while employing the arrivals, it is necessary to find out their personal experience, available capabilities, social and professional skills, and motivation to enter the labour market, and only then to employ them. Finally, the informants did agree that it would be reasonable to organize training for both employers, familiarizing them with the opportunities and challenges of integration, and for employees, who would be able to better understand the national traditions, culture, thus, avoiding possible future conflicts.

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