

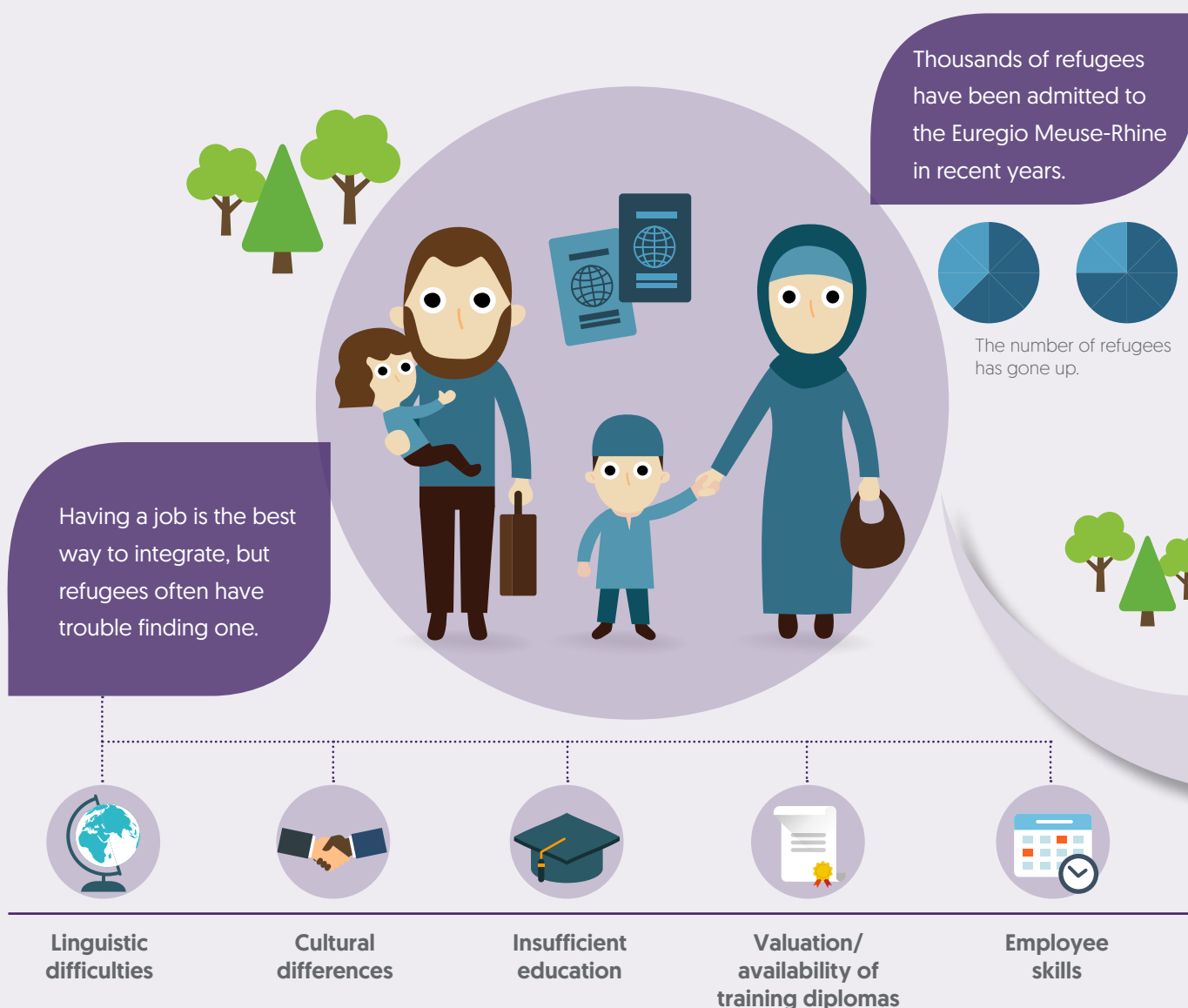
Euregio Meuse-Rhine integrates refugees through work in the care sector

In Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany

We're helping refugees find work

In 2015, Europe was faced with a tremendous influx of refugees. A key prerequisite to their successful integration is finding work. However, they often encounter a number of obstacles during the job hunt. Simultaneously, the care sector in Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany is facing a growing shortage of skilled workers. Via the *Into care to be carefree* project, eight Euregio organisations are attempting to contribute to a solution to both problems in cooperation with refugees and the care and labour markets.

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in the care sector

European aid

The *Into care to be carefree* operational timeline is from November 2017 through November 2020 and is funded by the European Regional Development Fund within

the Interreg V-A Euregio Meuse-Rhine programme [EMR]. The provinces of Belgian Limburg and Dutch Limburg and the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia also provide financial support.

Growing demand for care workers

In Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany, the shortage of skilled personnel is already being felt and is set to increase significantly in the coming years.

OUTFLOW

Care workers are ageing, which means that many will be retiring in the coming years.

03



Increasing demand for care from an ageing population

- More elderly
- More complicated issues



Labour market competition: high demand for jobs in other sectors

Many young people move away from the region, which means less inflow.

INTO CARE



TO BE CAREFREE

The project approach

The healthcare sector is highly institutionalized and subject to strict protocols. In addition, refugees frequently encounter communication difficulties. Sufficient language skills are essential to being able to communicate well in the care sector. All kinds of cultural differences also play a role, e.g. how men and women interrelate.

The partner organisations from Dutch and Belgian Limburg, as well as the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia, aim to remove these roadblocks by developing a special care-oriented programme that includes a mediation process, training and/or refresher

courses, and on-the-job coaching. The partner organisations have designed the project as six work packages, each of which has its own clear-cut (sub) goal to be achieved.



Perception

There are several hurdles that need to be overcome to achieve the project objectives. On the one hand, in several cases, both the staff and clients at healthcare institutions need to adapt their mindset to properly appreciate the new care workers.

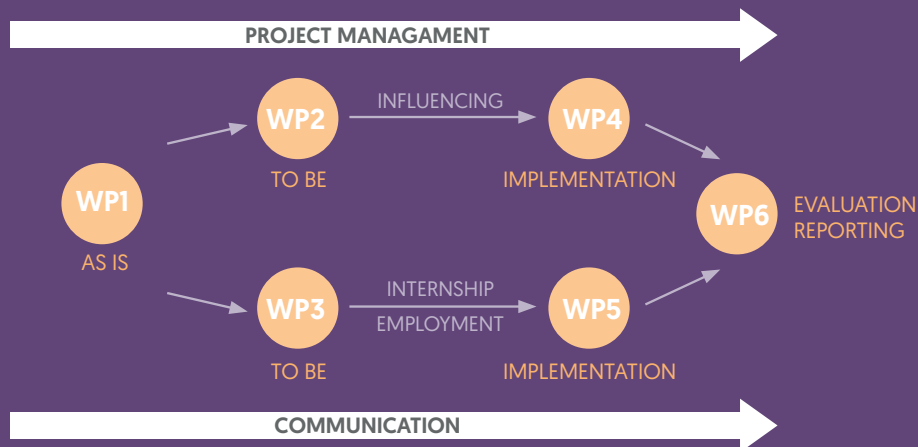
On the other, refugees also have to work on resolving cultural differences in how they

perceive providing and receiving care. Linguistic difficulties and unfamiliarity with specific jargon and protocols also play a role, just as acquiring the right degrees, certificates and competencies do.

A research-based methodology was developed to influence the perception of refugees among care recipients, care providers,

volunteers and care organisations along positive lines.

This methodology focuses on issues such as language training, experience models, mentor and internship supervisor training, skills training, communication, buddy system with volunteers, motivational assessment and relationship building. Best practices are identified, recorded and disseminated.



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Guidance towards jobs or internships

To facilitate guidance towards jobs or internships, a variety of tools and methods have been developed, including a study pack *Taal in de zorg* [Care Sector Terminology], with a focus, among others, on specific care-related terms and how to carry on a conversation. Refugees are provided with a context in which to experience what providing care = receiving care by refugees in Europe means, thanks to the Experience Training Course developed for the project.

A workshop called 'How to be a good employee' teaches them how to properly carry out their roles as employees. An assessment model is used to measure whether participants are motivated and have acquired the right qualifications to start a work placement or job in the care sector. Because starting out in a care organisation requires a specific awareness and focus, an introductory course has been set up in which refugees receive

guidance by mentors and buddies. The methods are described in a report made available to the [associated] partners. The participating organisations then go on to test the described methods in practice. Once the process is complete, the results are assessed and the methods are adjusted, where necessary.

Other healthcare institutions gain broad access to newly validated methods

The validated methodologies and insights gained are carefully documented and widely disseminated. For example, publications on these methods and insights are listed on the www.idz-udz.eu website and are also available as a book that details the process steps and models. The project exchange rounds off with a final international conference to which all stakeholders are invited.

In this way, the tested and validated methodologies are made available to care organisations in the three countries interested in using them.



Collaborating Partner Organisations

Into care to be carefree

Familiehulp



With over 12,500 employees in its service, Familiehulp works in the area of home care in Flanders and Brussels and offers a wide range of home care services from family and elderly care to maternity care, cleaning assistance and help with odd jobs around the home. Familiehulp would like to use this project to give refugees a hand up in the integration process. We also want to raise awareness among employees, customers, informal carers and others about this topic to help steer perception away from the negativity in the media.

➔ www.familiehulp.be

VluchtelingenWerk Zuid-Nederland



VluchtelingenWerk Zuid-Nederland is a non-profit organisation dedicated to assisting refugees, from the minute they set foot in the Netherlands up to and including helping them make a future for themselves there. Active involvement of volunteers (supervised by professionals) who are personally interested and inherently driven, helps refugees become familiar with Dutch society and gives them a gentle nudge towards a smoother integration experience. The benefits of synergy produced by the project can lead to the creation of new opportunities that are also used more effectively.

➔ www.vluchtelingenwerk.nl

ACV Limburg



With 160,000 members, ACV Limburg is the largest trade association in Belgian Limburg. ACV Limburg defends and works towards the equal opportunity and development of all Limburg employees. As part of this project, it provides easily accessible training to recognised refugees. It's worthwhile to acquire a holistic view with the various project partners of what the barriers refugees run into are during their integration in the labour market and society at large, as well as to experience what does and doesn't work.

➔ www.acv-limburg.be

Internationaal Comité



IC is a multicultural federation of 340 ethnocultural grassroots organisations and communities in Flanders and Brussels and is active nationally, at the provincial level, and locally in refugee issues. It focuses on facilitating refugee participation in society, which is also why they developed expertise on and a clear vision of employment. This project opens up an opportunity to share this knowledge beyond the organisation so that refugees and society can both benefit.

➔ www.icvzw.be

Limburgs Platform voor Vluchtelingen VZW (LPV)



The Limburgs Platform voor Vluchtelingen VZW (LPV) is an active network of volunteers, committees, organisations and individuals who work with and for refugees in Belgian Limburg and are committed to their welfare. The LPV strives to ensure that refugees (with or without a legal residence permit) are treated with dignity when they arrive and receive the assistance they need. By partnering on this project through coaching and supervising volunteers and refugees in Limburg, along with the transfer of knowledge, we are bound to improve newcomer employment opportunities.

➔ www.limburggastvrij.be

Zorg aan Zet

[Turn on the care Initiative]



Zorg aan Zet is a partnership made up of over 60 affiliated employers in the care sector focussed on making a strategic, relevant contribution to ensuring that Dutch Limburg's healthcare and welfare sector has sufficient, well-trained personnel. Zorg aan Zet works on the basis of trust and corporate social responsibility. In this context, it makes sense that it makes its infrastructure and network available for the benefit of refugees looking for work.

➔ www.zorgaanzet.org

Zuyderland



Zuyderland is a care organisation with approximately 10,000 employees in South Limburg (the Netherlands), including two hospital locations, various care centres, home care, domestic help, rehabilitation, mental healthcare and youth healthcare. In this context, Zuyderland would like to share the experience gained during previous innovative projects by offering refugees an opportunity to become more involved in society. Their approach to accomplishing this is by having them play an active part in the organisation's care processes and sharing their experiences with other hospitals in the region and in the Netherlands.

➔ www.zuyderland.nl

German Red Cross



The German Red Cross (DRK), Kreisverband Städteregion Aachen e.V. and the DRK gemeinnützige Rettungsdienstgesellschaft mbH Städteregion Aachen have been extensively engaged in refugee aid since August 2015 and operate over 20 refugee reception centres throughout Aachen city proper. DRK is increasingly involved in the overall assistance of asylum seekers. For us, the exchange of experiences with Euregio partners in relation to helping refugees find work is tremendously important.

➔ www.drk.ac



The 'Into care to be carefree' project is a collaboration comprised of eight refugee organisations, care organisations and trade union organisations from Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany.



Into care to be carefree has its registered office at Industriepark 1243, in 3545 Halen [B]
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