



FWSS

Foreign Workers in Social Sector

Summary report of the surveys in selected EU countries

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INTRODUCTION

The present Summary Report on the research on the employment of foreign workers in social services was prepared within the framework of the European project Foreign Workers in Social Sector, funded by the Erasmus+ program (project No. 2021-1-CZ01-KA220-VET-000025630). Its aim is to promote the employment of foreign workers in the social care sector, contributing to their subsequent integration, by proposing new measures, recommendations and training programs for managers of social service organisations.

The Foreign Workers in Social Sector project involves 6 partner organisations from 5 European countries: the Czech Republic, Greece, Belgium, Austria and France.

The Centre for Development Activities of the Union of Employers' Associations of the Czech Republic (CRA UZS) from the Czech Republic became the project promoter and coordinator of the implemented activities. The following organisations participate in the project on behalf of the participating countries:

- ❖ **AKMI ANONIMI EKPAIDEFTIKI ETAIRIA (AKMI)** from Greece,
- ❖ **Association of Social Service Providers of the Czech Republic (APSS CR)** from the Czech Republic,
- ❖ **Federation of European Social Employers (Social Employers)** from Belgium,
- ❖ **SERVICE MENSCH GmbH / Volkshilfe Niederösterreich (Service Mensch)** from Austria,
- ❖ **ELISFA** from France.

In order to uncover the issue of employment of foreign workers in the social services sector, including the identification of significant barriers that have a negative impact on the employment of foreign workers, **two online questionnaire surveys were conducted** in the participating countries, both among social service providers and among foreign workers working in social services. The questionnaire surveys took place between April and June 2022.

The summary report is divided into two logical units - the results of the survey among social service providers and the results of the survey among foreign workers.

1. RESULTS OF THE SURVEY AMONG SOCIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

A survey among social service providers on the issue of employment of foreign workers was conducted in the 5 participating countries through an online questionnaire (see Annex 1), which was sent to a wide number of entities. Among the providers contacted were organisations providing all types of social services (homes for the elderly, residential homes, care services, personal assistance, etc.) and providing both outreach (outpatient) and residential services. The aim of the survey was to obtain responses from at least 50 providers in each participating country. It was therefore not a representative survey.

For employers already employing foreign workers, attention was focused on:

- ❖ the recruitment of foreign workers,
- ❖ the positions they hold,
- ❖ the reasons for employing foreign workers,
- ❖ their evaluation in terms of work performance
- ❖ activities to help integrate foreign workers.

Employers who do not employ foreign workers were asked in particular about the reasons for not using foreign workers. For both groups of employers, the possibilities of employing foreign workers in the future and their educational needs in the field of employing foreign workers were then monitored.

The questionnaire survey was conducted in April and May 2022, in electronic form. Completion of the questionnaires by the respondents was done through a web interface.

The recruitment of selected respondents in each participating country was supported by an outreach letter that included a request for cooperation, a justification of the purpose and need for the survey, and a link to the electronic questionnaire located on the web interface. The selection of respondents took into account the existing structure of social service establishments according to the form of social service provided and the number of staff.

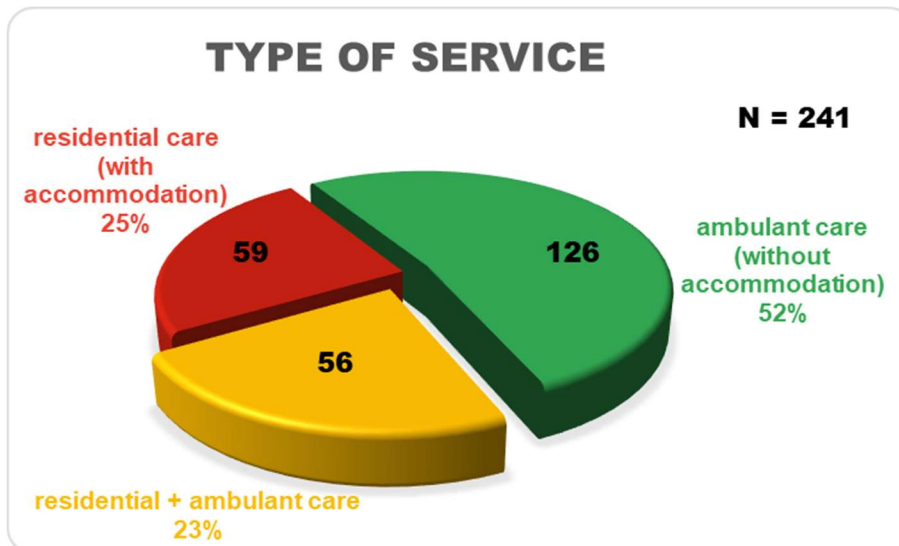
292 subjects participated in the questionnaire survey. However, in the case of 51 questionnaires, the proportion of completed questions was less than 10 % - due to possible unwanted bias in the final survey results, these were therefore excluded from the statistical analysis of the data.

The data analysis or evaluation of the monitored issues was based on the information contained in 241 questionnaires.

1.1 IDENTIFYING FEATURES OF THE INVESTIGATED ORGANISATIONS

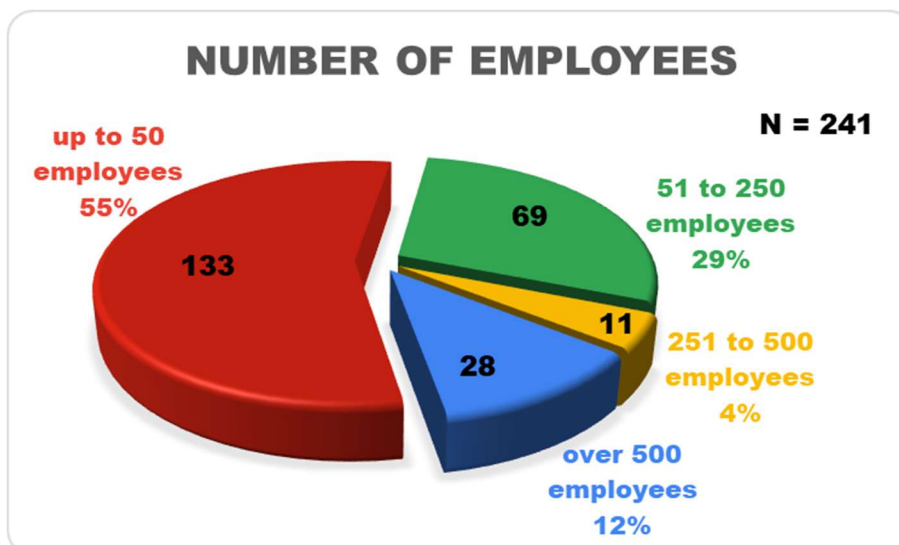
In terms of the type (form of social service provision) of the social service providers involved, 182 of them provided outpatient services and 115 provided residential services. From the sum of these figures, it is evident that in practice the organisations provided services cumulatively. For the sake of completeness, it should be added that the highest proportion of organisations with outpatient services in the participating countries was observed in France (94 %).

Graph 1



In terms of organisation size, more than 80 % of the organisations surveyed had fewer than 250 employees - see Graph 2. On the other hand, the presence of more than 500 employees was observed in the case of 28 surveyed organisations. Of this number, 2/3 of them were active in Austria.

Graph 2



1.2 FOREIGN WORKERS IN THE ORGANISATION

The questionnaire survey monitored the presence of foreign workers in the organisations, on the basis of an employment contract and/or as employees of an employment agency.

Almost two thirds of the respondents, i.e. 156 surveyed organisations, mentioned the presence of foreign workers in their organisations - see Graph 3. Their number **totalled 4 214 persons**. Of this number, 89 were employed by an employment agency. Thus, the number of employees having an employment relationship directly with the social service provider amounted to 4 125 persons.

For the sake of completeness, the presence of foreign agency workers was recorded in only 14 organisations, where, however, foreign nationals were also employed on the basis of a classic employment relationship. The number of these employees was not lower than the number of agency staff in any of the organisations surveyed.

The use of agency workers was mainly monitored in Greece – 94 % of the total number of agency workers working in 12 organisations.

Graph 3



The number of foreign workers in each organization ranged from 1 employee to 1 549 foreigners, with 94 % of the organizations not tracking a presence of more than 50 persons per organization. In 82 %, the number of foreign workers present in the organisation did not exceed 20 persons.

By far the highest number of foreign employees was observed in Austria, with a total of 2 486 employees in the surveyed organisations. This was also the highest number of employees per organisation observed.

There were 876 foreign workers in the organisations of the surveyed social service providers in Greece, 460 in Belgium, 157 in France and 146 in the Czech Republic.

The questionnaire survey also **tracked the (recalculated) numbers of foreign employees broken down into EU, EEA and Swiss citizens, third country citizens**, including citizens of Ukraine before the migration wave triggered by the Russian attack on Ukraine, and **finally refugees**. The resulting structure of the country of origin of foreign workers is shown in Graph 4 and Table 1. For employment agency workers, the country of origin was not tracked.

Graph 4

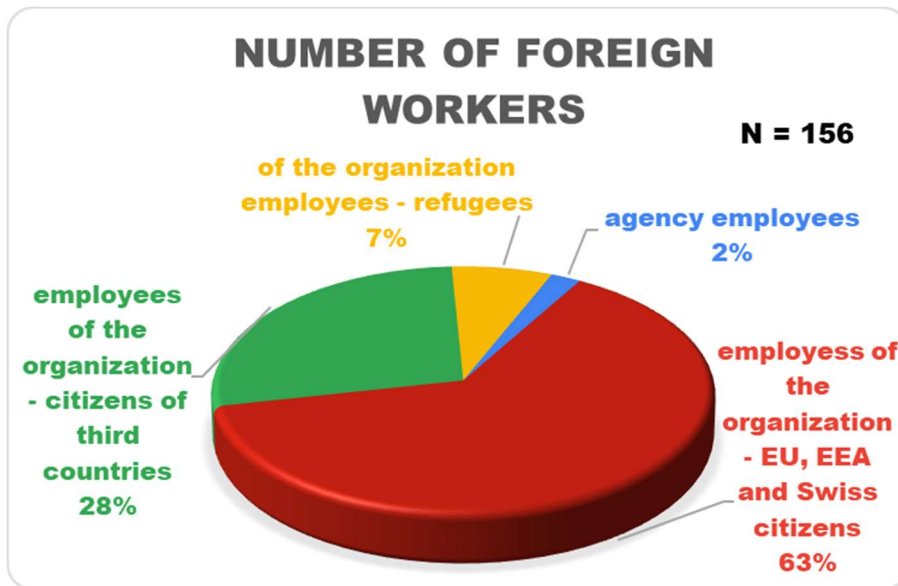


Table 1 Country of origin of foreign workers

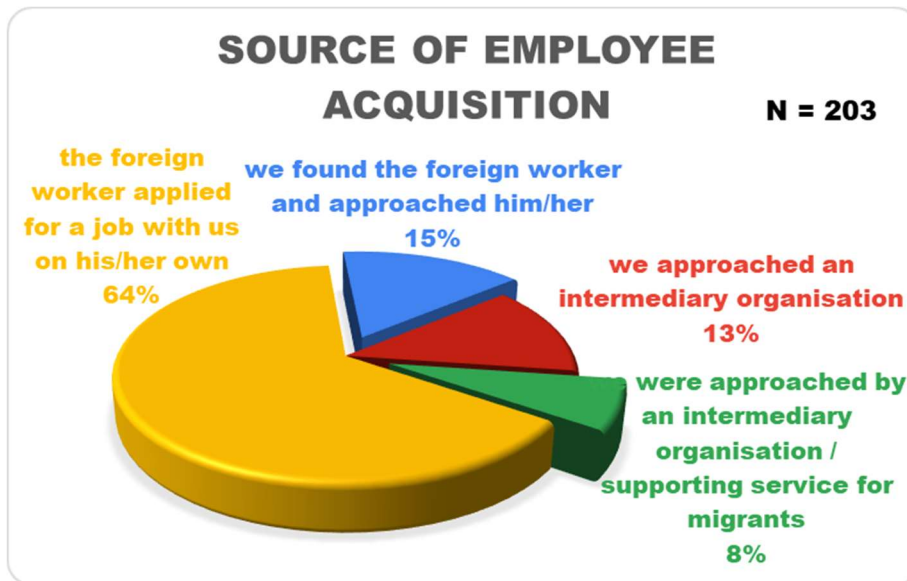
	Number of foreign workers	Number of organisations
Nationals of the EU, the EEA and Switzerland	2 669	30
Nationals from third countries	1 160	96
Refugees (from Ukraine, Syria etc.)	296	48

1.3 RECRUITMENT OF FOREIGN WORKERS

In the questionnaire survey, social service providers indicated 203 cases in which they had recruited persons of other nationalities into employment relationships. By far the most frequently cited way of entering the employment relationship in the surveyed organisations was the personal initiative of the (potential) employee themselves – **64 % of the surveyed organisations that** employed foreign employees recruited at least one foreign employee by them **applying for a job themselves**- see Graph 5.

The second, by a wide margin the most used way (15 %), was the so-called snowball method - **2 out of 10 surveyed entities** used recommendations from their employees and acquaintances to potential employees, whom they then **invited to work with them**.

Graph 5



21 % of the organisations surveyed used the services of an intermediary body – 13 % of them approached an intermediary organisation and 8 % were approached by an intermediary organisation.

The open-ended questions available to the respondents in the questionnaire showed that the **nationality of the employee does not play a role in the recruitment process. Recruitment focuses on assessing the individual's ability to perform the tasks required by their position, in most cases without a targeted intention to reach out to foreign nationals, although** In countries where there is more than one generation with a migrant background, i.e. the clients of social services are already people with a migrant background, knowledge of the language, culture of the clients is often considered an advantage for employees.

1.4 POSITIONS HELD BY FOREIGN WORKERS

The results of the questionnaire survey showed that **foreign employees work** in organisations providing social services in **both auxiliary and professional positions** - social workers, caregivers, and health workers. Thus, in the structure of individual organisations they move vertically across existing positions.

1.5 REASONS FOR EMPLOYING FOREIGN WORKERS

As part of the questionnaire survey, social service establishments that employed foreign workers were asked to evaluate the reasons given for employing foreign workers. The reasons were rated on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 represented an insignificant reason and 5 a very significant reason. As the results showed, for most organisations the **most significant reason was the lack of adequate 'local' workforce** (mean value was 3.05) and the **specific skills of foreign workers** (2.79) - see Graph 6.

Graph 6



A more significant reason could be seen as the higher qualifications of foreign workers and greater time flexibility, with a mean value of over 2.11.

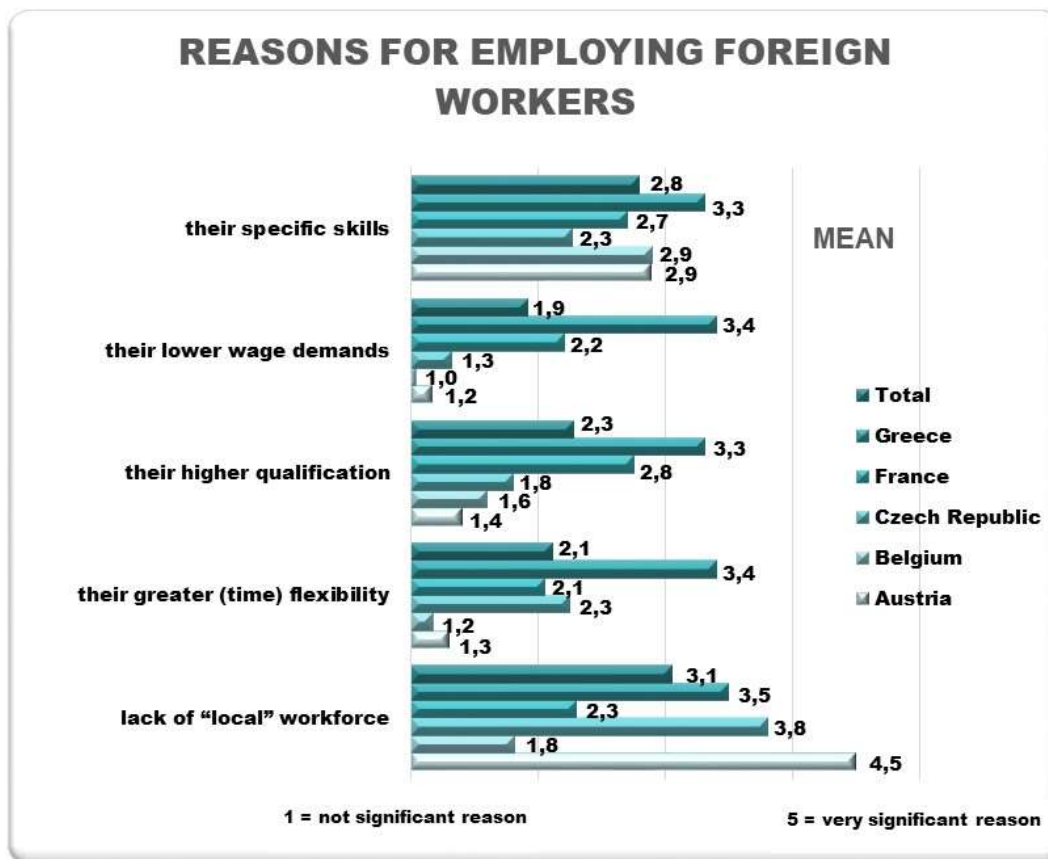
Lower wage demands from foreign workers are **not considered reasons for their employment by most organisations.**

Given that respondents' ratings varied considerably depending on the countries involved, we present below the mean values found for each country - see Graph 7.

Bivariate data analysis showed that all the reasons given in the questionnaire are significant for social service providers in Greece.

The most significant difference between countries was observed when assessing the reason "lack of local workforce". The reason given for employing foreign workers is particularly significant for the respondent providers in Austria and the Czech Republic. In contrast, in France and Belgium this reason is not significant for the majority of respondents. However, it needs to be noted that in case of Belgium, the second most significant reason was the lack of adequate local workforce.

Graph 7



1.6 EVALUATION OF FOREIGN WORKERS

As part of the questionnaire survey, the social service providers who employed foreign employees were asked to evaluate the statements made regarding personal characteristics related to the performance of work in social services. Individual statements were rated using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 represented strong agreement with the statement and 5 represented strong disagreement. The statements presented by the questionnaire and the results obtained in the form of a calculated mean (MEAN) are shown in Graph 8. If we accept that a calculated MEAN value higher than 3 indicates disagreement with the statement and lower than 3 indicates agreement with the statement, then the results show that the respondents did not agree with all the statements presented.

For the sake of completeness, we add that the bivariate statistical analysis performed did not reveal any significant differences in the evaluation depending on the country of operation of the respondents. However, if a certain statistically significant difference was found, it is indicated in the individual statements in the following text.

Graph 8



In terms of the calculated means, the respondents' agreement with the statements can be defined as follows:

- **foreign employees are accepted by their colleagues without major problems (1.85).** Employers from Greece agreed with this statement the least (3.20). In their case, one can even speak of a disagreement with the statement;
- **Foreign employees are accepted by clients without major problems (2,11).** Here again, a higher level of disapproval was observed from organisations in Greece (3,17);
- **foreign employees are interested in integrating into the society (2.36).** No differences were noted in the ratings for this statement from the perspective of the countries involved;

- **foreign employees are interested in learning the language** (2.50). Respondents from social service providers in Greece (3.24) and Belgium (3.06) agree less with this statement compared to others;
- **foreign workers are qualified to do the job** (2.71). This result reflects the fact that due to the specificity of the services provided or the type of clients, social services must recruit people who are qualified.

On the other hand, disagreement with the submitted statement was observed in the following statements:

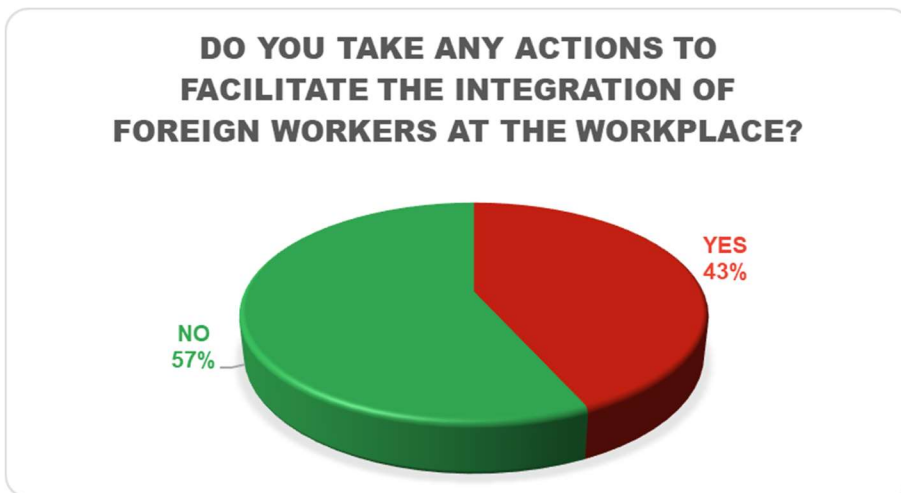
- **foreign employees have lower salary demands** (4.11). Respondents from Greece had the lowest level of disagreement with this statement when compared to other countries (3.34). It should be added that, despite the disagreement expressed, respondents in the open-ended questions reported that the financial remuneration in social services is generally lower compared to the existing wage level in the labour market;
- **foreign employees are limited by their culture/religion** (4.01). There was no difference in ratings for this statement from the perspective of the countries involved;
- **foreign workers are limited by their qualifications** (3.68). Disagreement with this statement was observed especially among social service providers from Austria;
- **foreign workers are willing to do work jobs that "domestic workers" are not interested in.** (3.63). Respondents from the Czech Republic were more likely to agree with this statement (2.69) when compared between countries;
- **foreign employees are more reliable workers** (3.30). Respondents from the Czech Republic were more likely to agree with this statement (2.57);
- **foreign employees value their work more** (3.24). In the case of this statement, there was a stronger agreement from social service providers in the Czech Republic (2.37). However, it should be added that in the case of the Czech Republic, a high degree of heterogeneity of responses was observed among respondents;
- **foreign employees are limited by difficulties with the recognition of qualifications** (3.24). Respondents from the Czech Republic agreed with this statement more often than others (3.03);
- **foreign employees are limited by their language proficiency** (3.21) There was no difference in ratings for this statement from the perspective of the countries involved. Again, the type of clientele and the nature of the services provided have a major influence on the result;
- **foreign employees have a low fluctuation rate** (3.10). The respondents from the Czech Republic agreed with this statement in particular (2.35);
- **foreign employees have a low rate of absenteeism** (3.08). Respondents from Austria in particular disagreed with this statement (3.80). On the contrary, the strongest agreement came from social service providers in the Czech Republic (2.37).

7 ACTIVITIES TO ASSIST THE INTEGRATION OF FOREIGN WORKERS

More than 40 % of the surveyed organisations employing foreign workers, i.e. essentially 4 out of 10, are implementing activities at their workplace to facilitate the integration of these workers - see Graph 9. It should be added that in the case of social service providers from Greece this share is significantly lower - only ¼ of respondents reported implementation.

In most cases, this involves mentoring, systematic integration into the team and the provision of a language course.

Graph 9



The bivariate analysis showed that the **country of origin**, or whether the person is an EU citizen or a citizen from a so-called third country, has **an impact** on the incidence of workplace activities. In the case of **EU citizens, professional activities, which are commonly carried out in the case of a new recruit, were more frequently mentioned.** In the case of non-EU nationals, it was a longer placement, often accompanied by language training.

Integration activities outside the employer's workplace were mentioned by almost ¼ of the respondent organisations that employed foreign workers in the survey - see Graph 10.

Graph 10

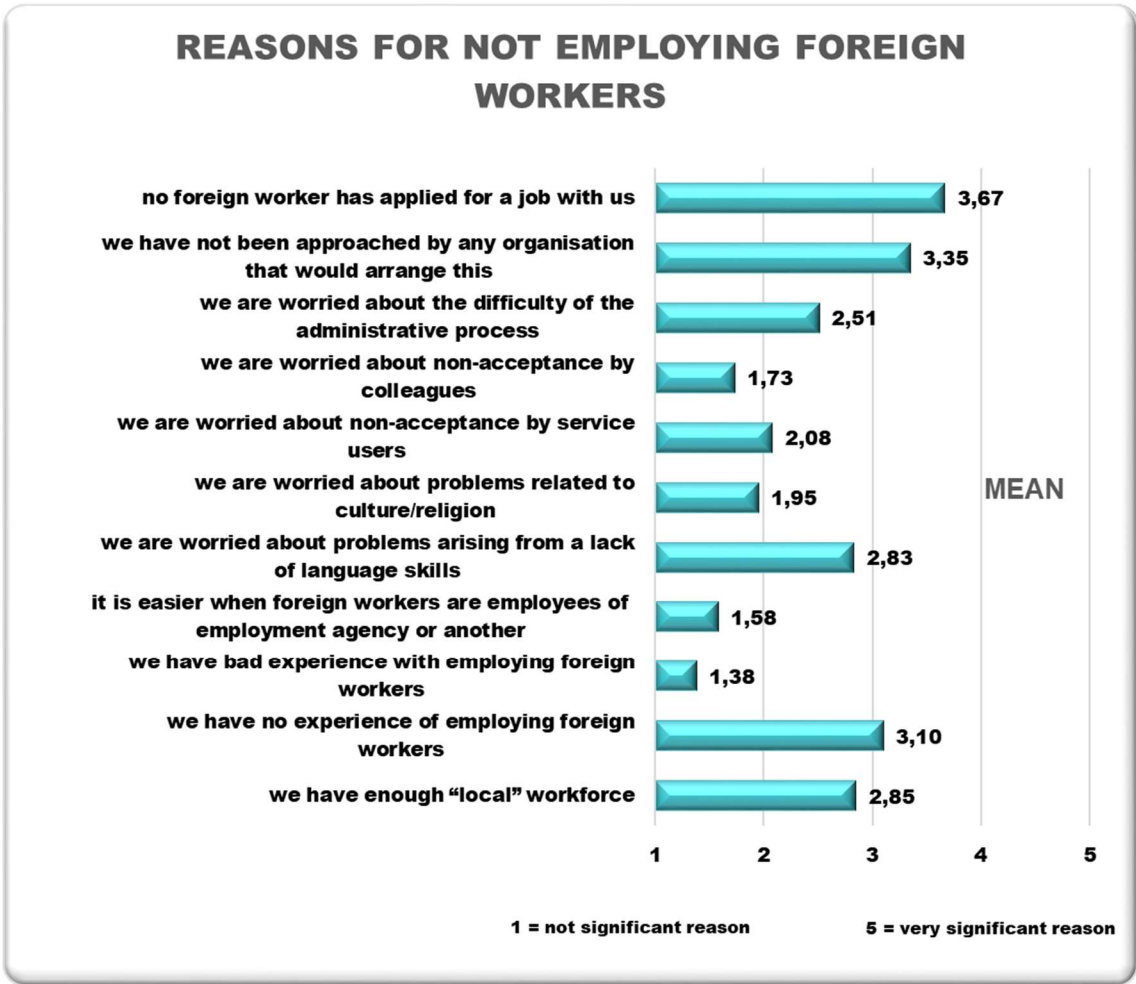


These included, in particular, mediation of contacts with integration organizations, assistance in communicating with social authorities and authorities in general, support for further education, support in securing housing, assistance in placing children in school facilities, etc.

1.8 REASONS FOR NOT USING FOREIGN WORKERS

A battery of possible reasons for not employing people of other nationalities was presented to **social service establishments that do not employ foreign staff** (85) as part of a questionnaire survey. At the same time, establishments were asked to rate the importance of each reason from their perspective on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being an insignificant reason and 5 being a significant reason. The reasons given in the questionnaire and the results obtained by the survey in the form of a calculated mean value are shown in Graph 11.

Graph 11



The results clearly showed that there **were three really important reasons why** the organisations surveyed did not employ people of other nationalities, namely that they simply **did not apply for jobs** (3.67), that the organisations were not approached by any organisation that would "arrange everything" regarding employment (3.35) and that **the organisations had no experience in employing these people** (3.10). In addition, it appears that in the selected regions **there is apparently a sufficient**

"domestic" workforce, which often, in the dependence on legislation, **does not allow the recruitment of citizens from third countries.** The fact that organisations are concerned about problems arising from a lack of language skills or fear of the demanding administrative process that needs to be undertaken when employing a foreign worker can also be considered a non-negligible reason.

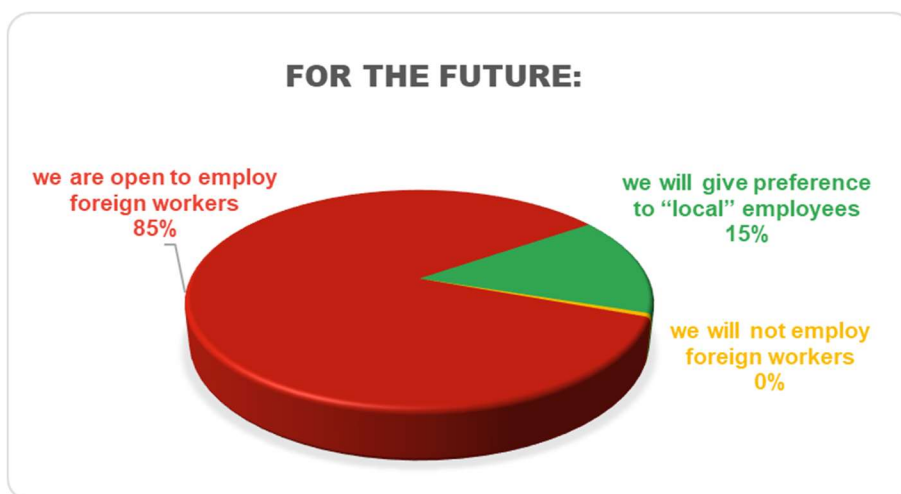
In assessing the reasons for not employing foreign workers, the bivariate analysis conducted showed two major differences in the responses of respondents depending on the country:

- ❖ for social service providers from Greece, the reason "the foreign employee did not apply for a job in the organisation" is not significant compared to others;
- ❖ The reasons "there is enough labour on the labour market" and "we have no experience with employing foreign workers" are significantly more frequent for respondents from the Czech Republic.

1.9 POSSIBILITY OF EMPLOYING FOREIGN WORKERS IN THE FUTURE

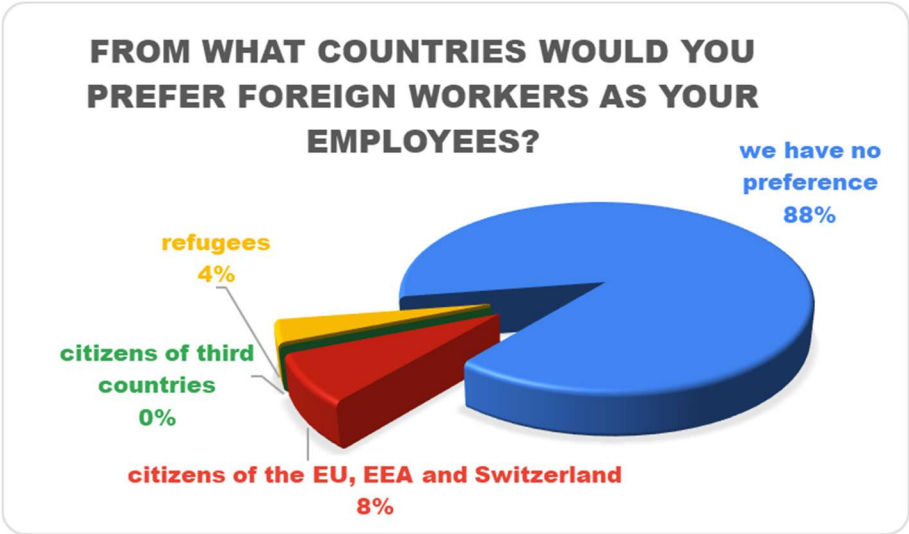
In the future, as the survey results showed, **85 % of all respondents are open to employing foreign workers** - see Graph 12. In addition to this, **15 % of respondents do not rule out employing them in the future, but will prefer to employ "local" employees.** This restriction was mainly voiced by Czech and Belgian social service providers. Only one respondent in the survey refused to employ foreign staff.

Graph 12



9 out of 10 organisations that are open to employing foreign workers in the future announced that they will **not have a preference for the citizenship of the employee** - see Graph 13. 8 % of them admitted to a preference for EU, EEC and Swiss citizens.

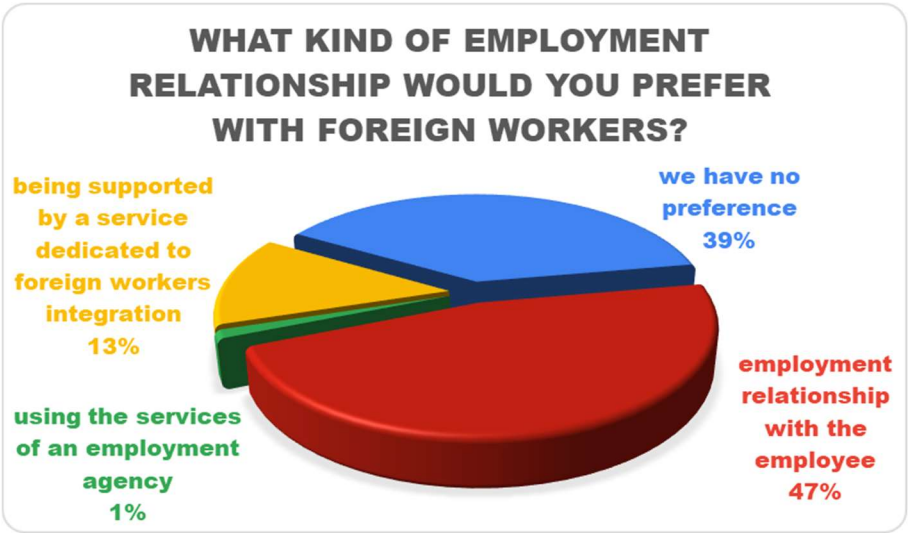
Graph 13



In terms of the employment relationship under which the foreign workers should work in the organisation, **almost half of the social service providers that are open to employing foreign workers indicated that they would prefer to have an employment relationship directly with their organisation** - see Graph 14. This option was more often preferred by respondents from Belgium compared to the others. The preference for an employment agency employee was observed in only 1 % of the organisations.

4 out of 10 social service facilities that are open to foreign workers in the future do not have a preference in terms of the employment relationship. This option was chosen significantly more by social service providers from Greece.

Graph 14



1.10 EDUCATION ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF FOREIGN WORKERS

In the questionnaire survey, **two thirds of the** respondents from **social service institutions** expressed interest in **attending a training programme focusing on** the employment of foreign workers - see Graph 15. On the other hand, in the case of the Czech Republic almost 2/3 of the respondents are not interested in education.

Graph 15



1.11 COMMENTARY, RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE ISSUE UNDER STUDY

During the questionnaire survey, the respondents had the opportunity to provide their comments and additions to the issue. This option was used by 23, i.e. less than 10 % of all respondents.

There were both positive experiences with employment, but also negatives or concerns. Two recommendations were also noted.

SELECTED POSITIVES REPORTED BY ESTABLISHMENTS EMPLOYING FOREIGN WORKERS

- ❖ Foreigners have been working for us for several years. Their Czech is good, we have no problem with them. (CZE)
- ❖ We are satisfied with the foreign employees, who are mostly from Ukraine. They have been working with us for a long time, they appreciate their work. (CZE)
- ❖ The employee works on a part-time basis, she is a member of my family, the relationship is based on a personal basis, and at the same time we have a daughter staying with us, for whom we provide a language course. We help them overcome language and habitual barriers, with material support. (CZE)
- ❖ Our foreign employees have been working with us for more than 3 years and we are satisfied with them. They are a Slovak, a Ukrainian and a Russian, the latter two have been married in the Czech Republic for many years. (CZE)

- ❖ We treat foreign employees the same, we make no distinctions! (AUT)
- ❖ Country of origin does not limit employment opportunities in our organisation. Successful completion of training and acceptance of the mission statement is crucial. (AUT)

RECORDED SELECTED NEGATIVES OR CONCERNS RELATED TO THE EMPLOYMENT OF FOREIGN WORKERS

- ❖ In the past, we employed a social services worker from Georgia. A big problem was not only the language barrier, but also their traditions, culture and customs. (CZE)
- ❖ We also have experience in employing citizens from Ukraine, but before the outbreak of Ukrainian migration. Frankly, we have avoided employing citizens from third countries. The reason is a big problem with submitting documents and processing employment permits. In addition, applicants must have adequate knowledge of the Czech language, because we also work with mentally disabled people or people with impaired pronunciation and hearing impairment. (CZE)
- ❖ We are concerned about the language barrier when employing foreigners. Our clients - the elderly - cannot hear very well and their expressions must be very clear. So we prefer our job applicants. (CZE)
- ❖ We are not opposed to employing foreign workers, but we consider language skills to be necessary and very important. (CZE)
- ❖ The biggest problem in employing foreign workers is the language barrier with regard to the nature of our services, both in the team, in the sense of transferring information, and, above all, in direct work with users (counselling workers, work in social rehabilitation). (AUT)

RECOMMENDATIONS COMMUNICATED BY THE SURVEYED SOCIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS

- ❖ Considering the shortage of mid-level health workers on the labour market, it would be advisable to focus on the integration of relevant foreign workers into the structures of social services. (CZE)
- ❖ More flexible recognition of education by the host country (all countries)
- ❖ Coordinated administration - not reporting the same things to multiple authorities (all countries).

2. RESULTS OF THE SURVEY AMONG FOREIGN SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

A survey of social service workers from other nationalities was conducted in the 5 participating countries through an online questionnaire (see Annex 2).

The recruitment of respondents was carried out with the help of employers who indicated that they employed foreign workers in the project's survey of social service providers. These were asked to provide foreign employees with either a link to a web-based form of the questionnaire or a hard copy of the questionnaire. Respondents could send the completed paper questionnaire either by email or by post to the (email) address provided in the questionnaire of the respective partner organisation involved in the project.

The questionnaire was completely anonymous, only at the end employees could provide a contact email or a phone number in case they were interested in participating in the in-depth interviews. The aim of the survey was to obtain responses from at least 50 people in each participating country. For expatriate workers, the survey looked in particular at:

- ❖ the reasons that led to the decision to work abroad;
- ❖ specific experience of getting a job as such (obtaining a work permit, demonstrating competence, etc.);
- ❖ experience of working in social services;
- ❖ language skills and courses taken;
- ❖ integration into society, attitude of the environment, etc.;

Data collection took place in May and June 2022.

A total of 208 foreign employees working in the social services sector **participated in the survey**. However, in the case of 28 of them the proportion of completed questions was less than 10 % - these were therefore excluded from the statistical analysis of the data due to possible unwanted bias in the final results of the survey.

The data analysis or evaluation of the monitored issues was based on the information contained in 180 questionnaires.

2.1 IDENTIFYING FEATURES OF FOREIGN EMPLOYEES UNDER INVESTIGATION

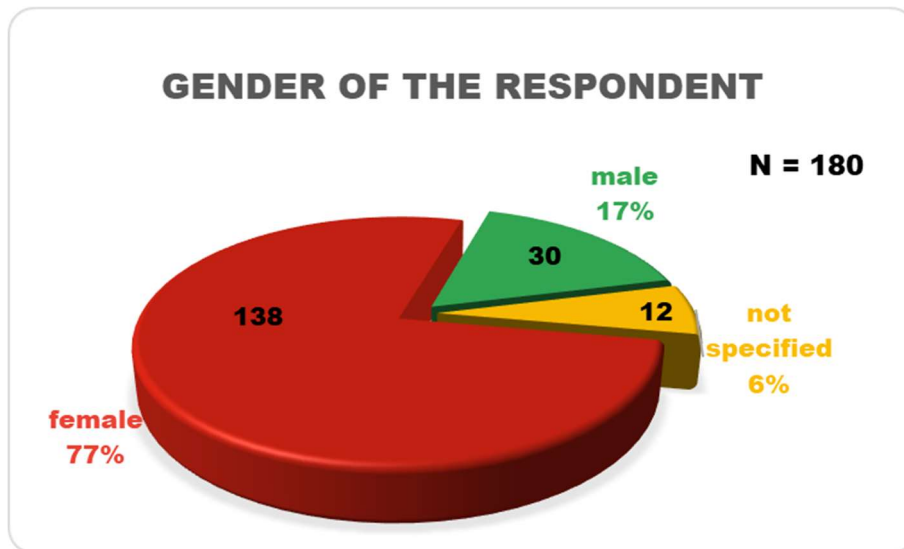
The questionnaire survey involved 180 foreign employees, who were found to have 36 different nationalities. Their structure according to the countries involved in the survey is shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Country of origin of respondents

	Austria	Belgium	Czech Republic	France	Greece	Total
Afghanistan	2					2
Albania				1	12	13
Algeria	2			2		4
Belarus	1		3			4
Benign				1		1
Bulgaria	1				2	3
Burundi				1		1
Comoros				1		1
Congo				1		1
Congo RDC				1		1
Croatia	2					2
Czech Republic	3					3
Ethiopia			1			1
Finland	1					1
France	1					1
Georgia					5	5
Germany	4			1		5
Greece					2	2
Honduras				1		1
Hungary	5					5
India					1	1
Italy					1	1
Kenya	1					1
Morocco				5		5
Moldova			1			1
Pakistan	1				1	2
Poland	2		3			5
Romania	5				4	9
Russia			1		2	3
Senegal				1		1
Serbia	1					1
Slovakia	4		11			15
Sweden	1					1
Syria					2	2
Turkey				1		1
Ukraine			59		3	62
not specified						12
TOTAL						180

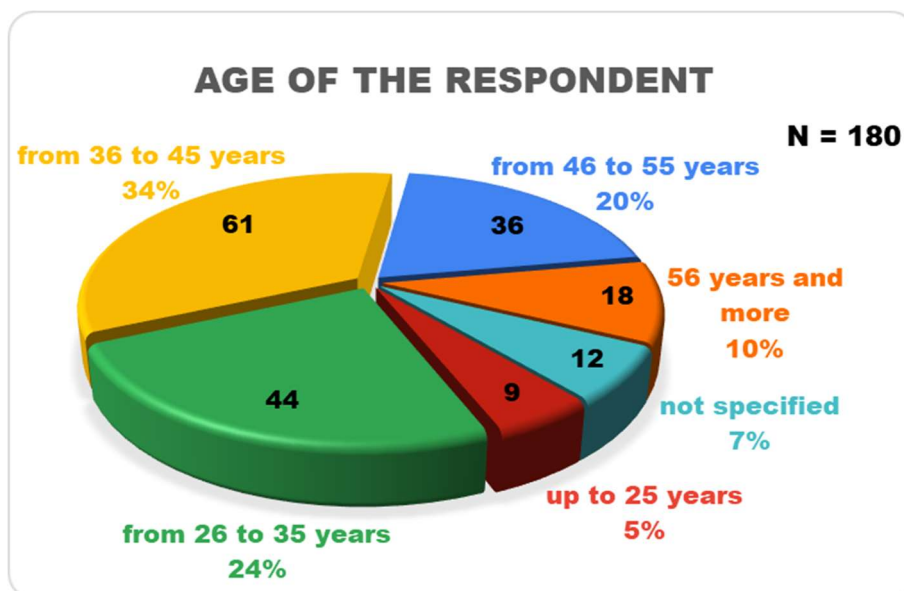
The research sample consisted of 77 % women and 17 % men respectively, which generally corresponds to the gender structure of social service workers, who are significantly feminised - see Graph 16.

Graph 16



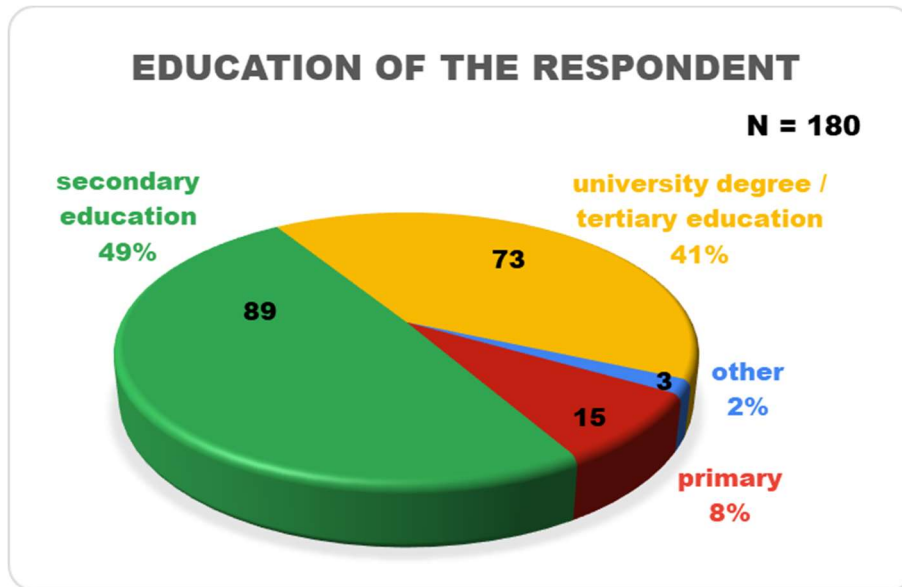
The largest age cohort of foreign employees surveyed was the "36-45 years" cohort, which comprised more than 1/3 of the respondents, followed by the "26-35 years" cohort, comprising ¼ of the respondents. The least represented age group was foreign employees aged 25 years and younger.

Graph 17



Almost half of the surveyed foreign employees had the highest level of secondary education with a high school diploma - see Graph 18. A significant share was also observed in the case of university-educated employees, whose share represented 41 %. Primary education or incomplete education was observed in the case of 8 % of the persons.

Graph 18



2.2 REASONS TO WORK ABROAD

The questionnaire survey also looked at the reasons that led respondents to move to another country for work. In the case of individuals, more than one reason could have been given - **193 reasons** in total. Their structure is shown in Graph 19.

Family reasons (children's studies, family reunification etc.) **or friends** were the impetus for **1/3 of the respondents** to go abroad for work. For **¼ of the respondents, the main reason was financial. Poor prospects** in their own country encouraged **17 % of respondents**.

The questionnaire survey also clearly showed the **impact of the February 2022 attack on Ukraine, which forced 28 respondents to leave their country**. In addition to the above, political or security reasons were the reason for leaving for another 6 foreign social workers (Ethiopia, Russia, Syria, Albania and Romania). Although respondents could have given more than one reason, the reason given was (logically) not combined in any case.

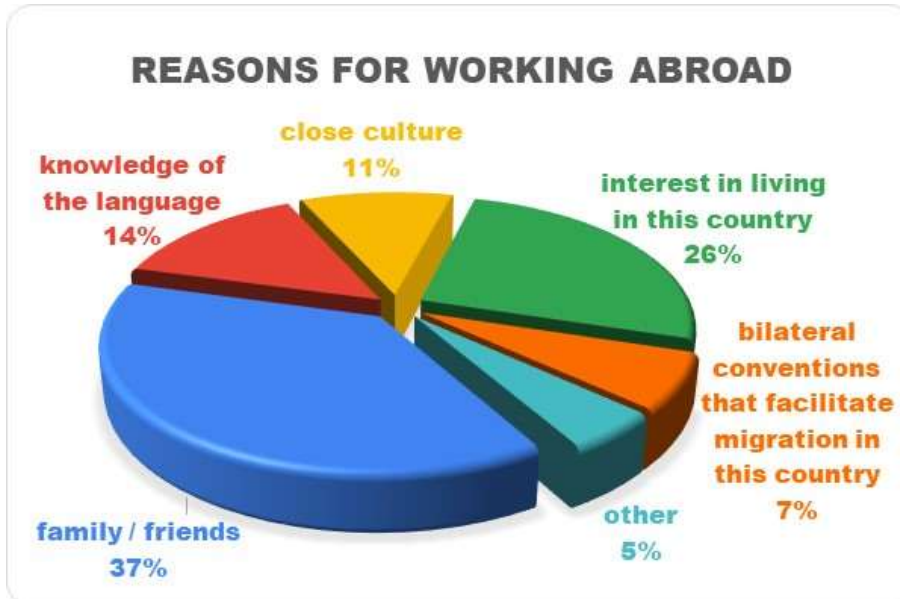
It should be added that, as possible additional reasons, respondents stated that they simply wanted to go "for an experience", to discover a different way of life, a new culture ...

Graph 19



For more than half of the respondents, **family or friends** were one of the reasons for **going to the country where they are now working in social services** (37 % of all reasons recorded) and for more than 1/3, the **interest in living in that country** (26 % of all reasons given) - see Graph 20. Cultural proximity also played a significant role in the decision for 15 % of respondents.

Graph 20

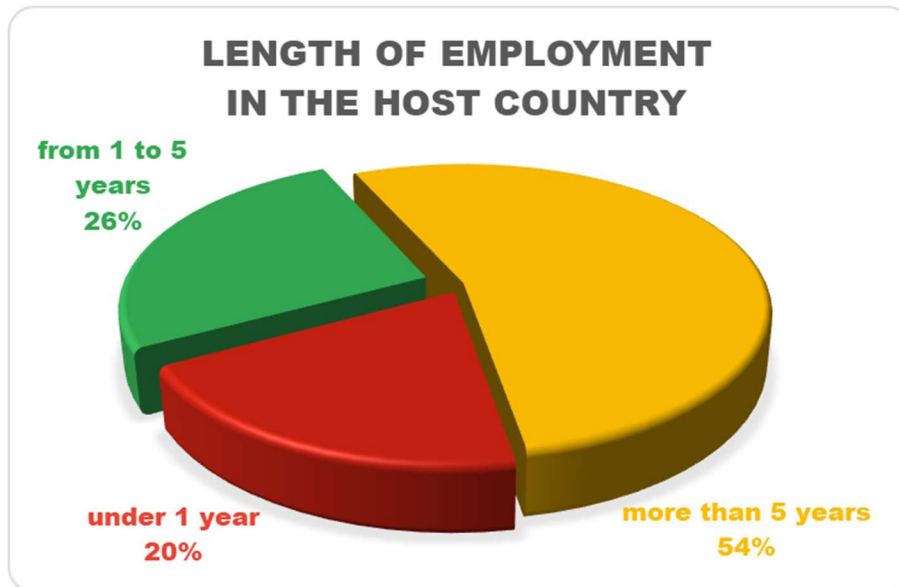


The fact that the foreign employees surveyed had indeed carefully weighed their decision to move to a new country is evidenced by the fact that a total of 186 reasons were given.

2.3 EMPLOYMENT

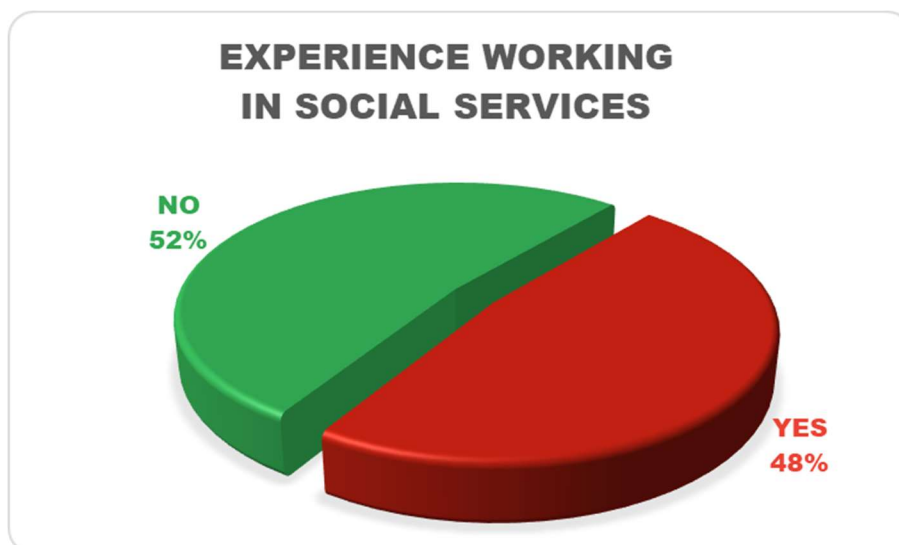
In terms of the overall length of employment of respondents in the host country where they are currently working in social services, it can be noted that those who **have been working in the (current) host country for more than 5 years** were the main respondents to the survey - see Graph 21. Their share was 54 %. **More than a quarter of the social service workers surveyed had been employed in the host country for 1-5 years** and 2 out of 10 respondents reported employment of up to 1 year.

Graph 21



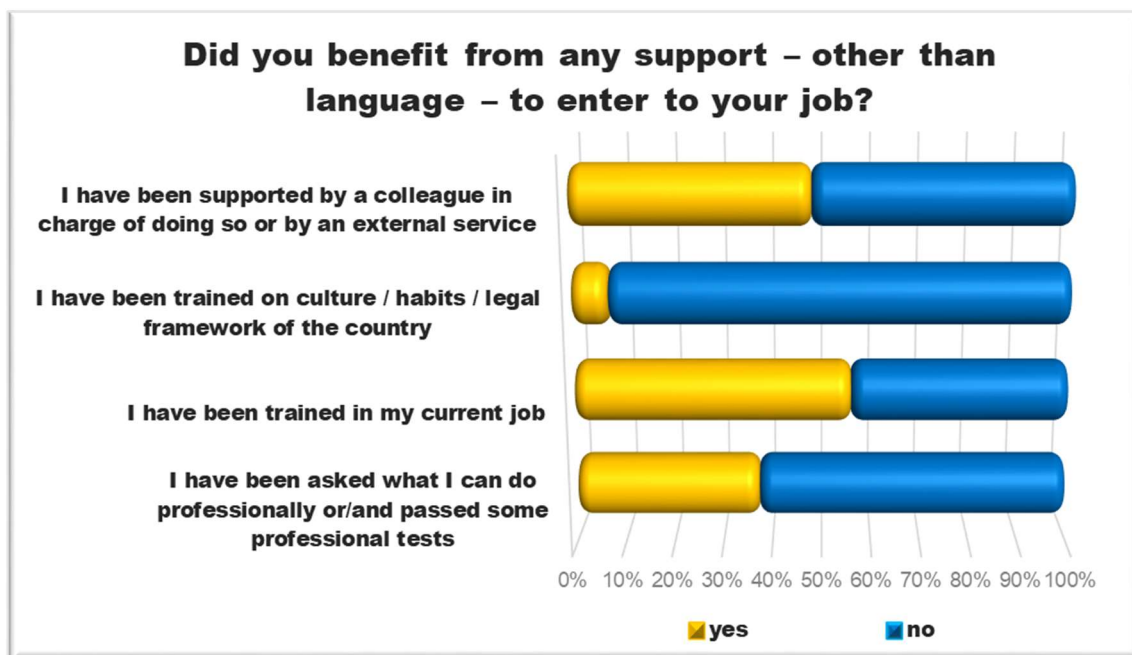
Almost half of the respondents had **experience of working in social services** prior to their current employment - see Graph 22.

Graph 22



The next question of the questionnaire mapped the conditions for the respondent's entry into the job they currently hold. Here, there seemed to be some concern about the consequences of the answers, with up to a fifth of respondents not answering the question. However, the responses showed that on entering their current workplace, **more than half of the respondents who answered the question had received training to do the job and almost half had then had support from colleagues or other designated external persons** - see Graph 23. In neither case, however, was there a correlation between experience of working in social services and the provision of a mentor/training. This is also suggested by any additions that respondents may have made in this context, as in most cases this was a specification of the 'normal' on-boarding that each new employee receives as appropriate.

Graph 23



Other responses showed that 4 out of 10 respondents **had to provide evidence of their professional qualifications**. Only 7 % of respondents reported having received training on culture, customs, law etc. in the host country.

Almost two thirds of the respondents used their qualifications in social services - see Graph 24. However, the share varied across the countries surveyed - in Belgium and Austria it was more than 80 %, while in the Czech Republic it was only about 50 %.

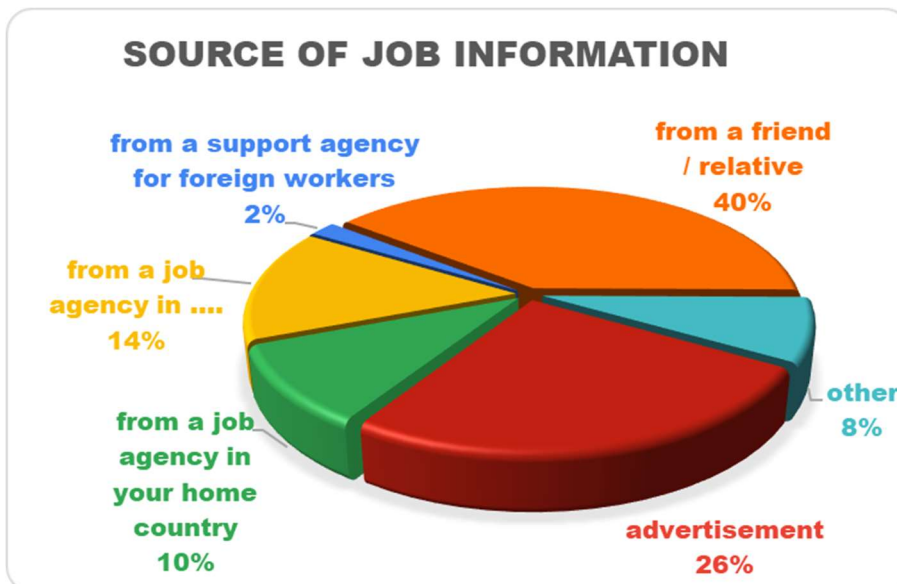
The questionnaire also focused on the positions in social service facilities held by the respondents. The data showed that **foreign workers hold all levels of positions from a vertical perspective - from support staff to high managerial positions in the organisation**.

Graph 24



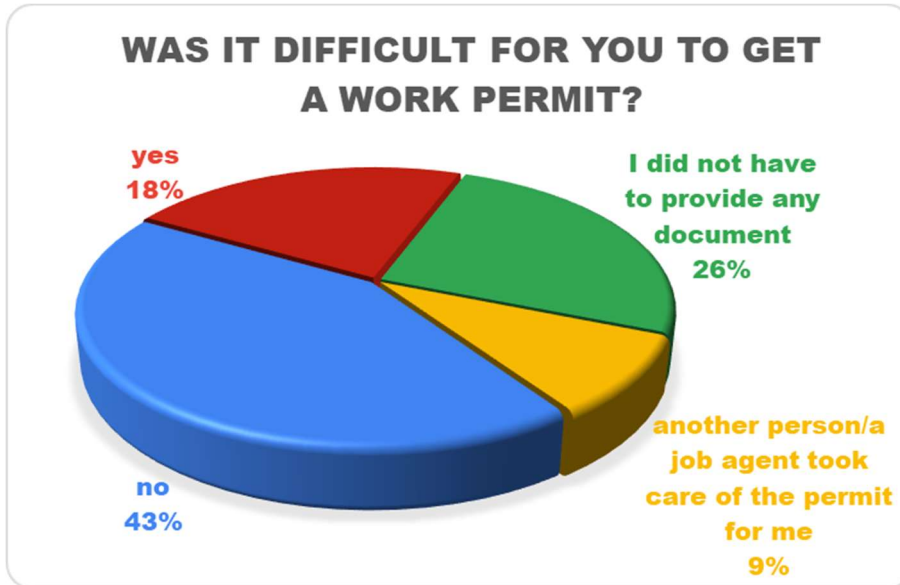
Respondents found out about the possibility of employment in social services mainly from their friends and acquaintances (40 %) - see Graph 25. The services of an employment agency in the home country, an employment agency in the host country or another intermediary organisation (e.g. an employment office) were used by ¼ of the foreign employees surveyed. Under the option 'other source', the majority mentioned the option that the respondent simply looked up the establishment and went to ask for a job or sent a written enquiry.

Graph 25



26 % of the respondents did not need a work permit to perform their (current) employment in social services and 9 % were helped to obtain one by another person, a job broker - see Graph 26. Difficulty was particularly reported by respondents from Greece and the Czech Republic. This difficulty was mostly due to the lengthy, administratively demanding process, which unnecessarily limited the respondents' ability to take up employment.

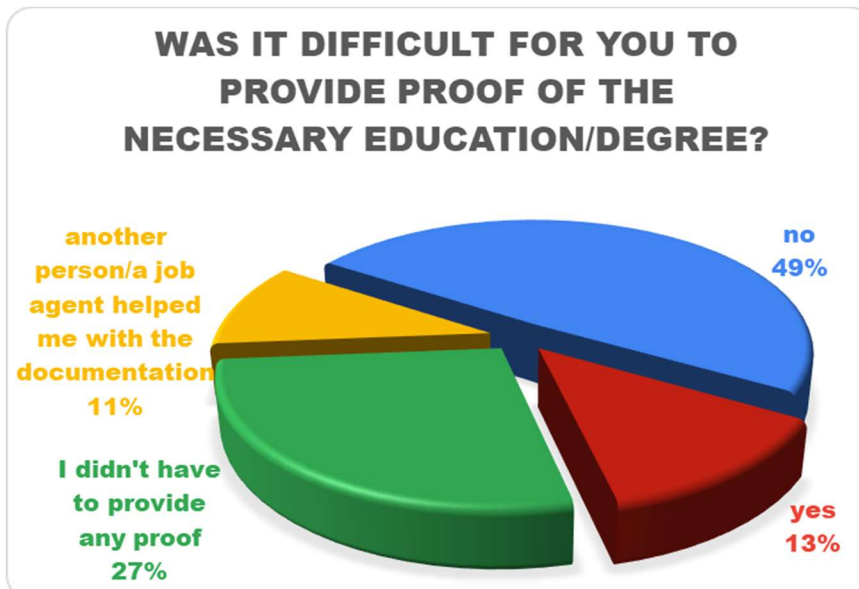
Graph 26



A somewhat "better" situation was observed in the case of the difficulty in proving educational qualifications for the position, where **of those foreign employees interviewed who needed to prove their qualifications and did not use the help of another person, the subject, only 2 out of 10 said that proving was difficult.** According to these respondents, the difficulty was mainly due to the fact that it was very difficult to navigate through the set requirements, which are also written in the language of the host country, which the respondents do not always have the necessary knowledge of.

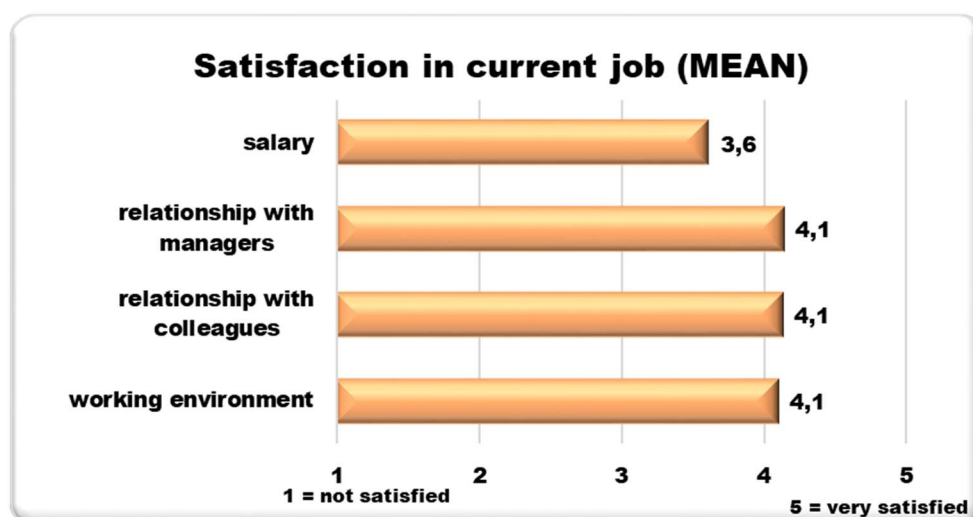
More than a quarter of respondents did not have to prove their education and 11 % had someone else help them prove their qualifications - see Graph 27.

Graph 27



At the end of this thematic block, the respondents were asked about their satisfaction in their current job, in terms of the working environment, relations with colleagues, relations with superiors and financial remuneration. Satisfaction was measured using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 represented dissatisfaction and 5 represented high satisfaction. **The calculated mean values show that, in general, the foreign employees surveyed are satisfied with their current job in social services - see Graph 28.**

Graph 28

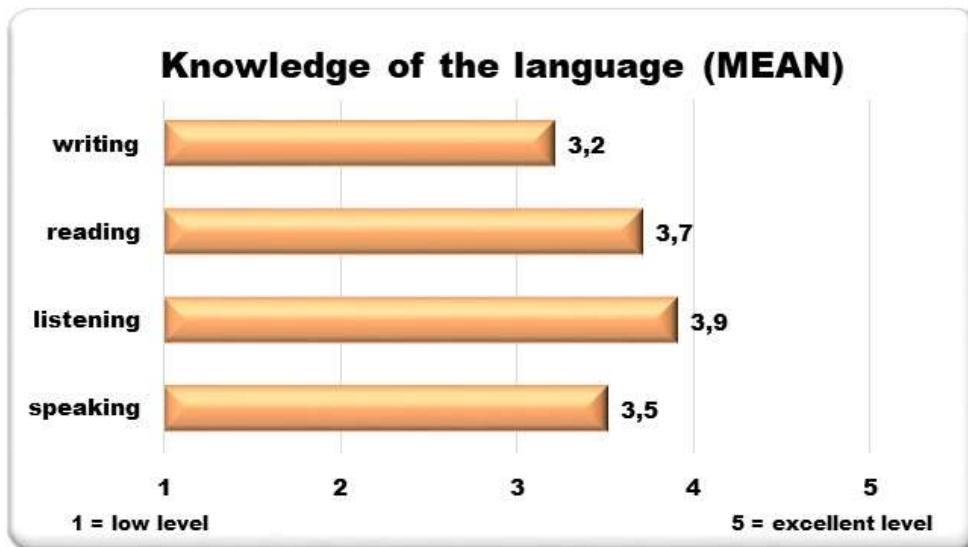


2.4 KNOWLEDGE OF AND COURSES TAKEN IN THE LANGUAGE OF THE HOST COUNTRY

The questionnaire survey asked respondents to rate their knowledge of the language they speak at work using a 5-point scale, where 1 meant low proficiency and 5 meant excellent. The level was assessed according to the level of proficiency in speaking, listening, reading and writing.

The results showed that foreign employees have the greatest problem with writing in the language of the host country - see Graph 29. In general, however, it can be stated that "only" 13 % of the foreign employees surveyed have a greater problem with listening to the language (values 1 and 2), 18 % with reading, 25 % with speaking and 28 % with writing. At this point, however, it should be noted that the majority of jobs in social services require (good) knowledge of the (clients') language and the criteria set for selection procedures for (potential) employees correspond to this.

Graph 29



Almost two thirds of the respondents were involved in some kind of activities to help improve the language of the host country - see Graph 30. Of this number, about half were carried out outside the workplace, i.e. the activities were not provided by the employer.

In addition, many respondents mentioned self-education - education with the help of the Internet, books, radio, television.

The group of those who did not participate in activities to improve language skills consisted of respondents with different lengths of residence and citizenship.

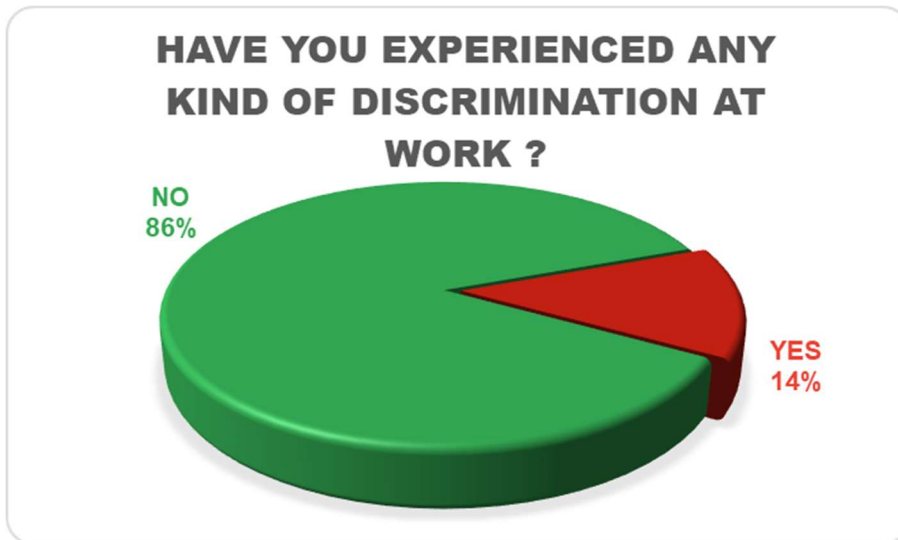
Graph 30



2.5 LIVING IN SOCIETY

Some kind of discrimination, as revealed by the answers, was encountered by 14 % of the foreign employees surveyed - see Graph 31. In most cases, the reason was the respondent's origin, in three cases it was poor knowledge of the language, and in one case each it was religion, culture and age. It should be added that those respondents who experienced discrimination because of their lack of knowledge of the language of the host country did not participate in any language course, as the data analysis showed.

Graph 31



Only ¼ of the social services employees surveyed had to find their own housing – see Graph 32. **Of this number, almost 1/3 rated this concern as difficult.** Difficulties were mainly reported by respondents from Greece.

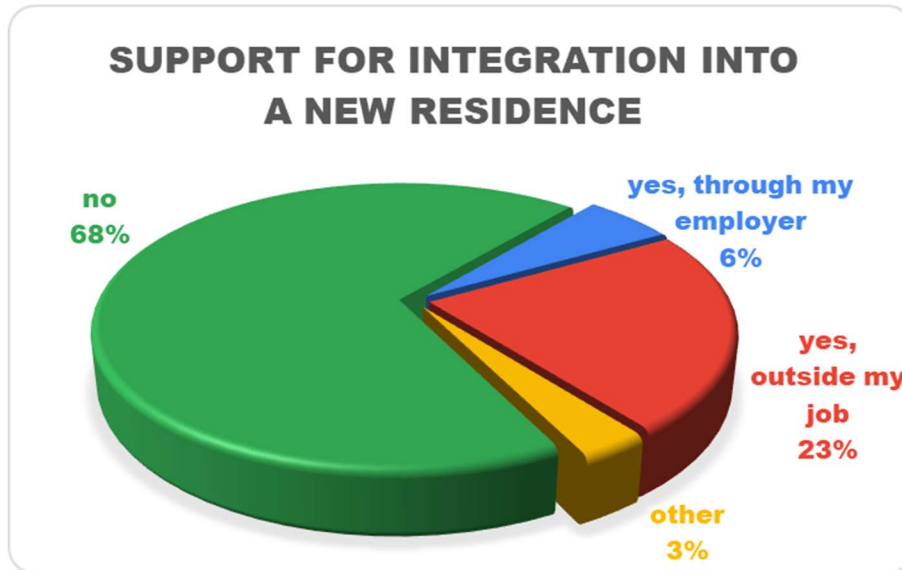
A positive finding was that the employer helped provide housing for 8 % of respondents.

Graph 32



Less than a third of the respondents were involved in activities to help them integrate into their new home - see Graph 33.

Graph 33



2.6 EXPERIENCE, RECOMMENDATIONS OF RESPONDENTS

At the very end of the questionnaire survey, respondents had the opportunity to give their comments and recommendations. 23 respondents took this opportunity. Some of them wanted to express their satisfaction with their situation, while others mentioned their experiences, shortcomings, problems, recommendations in relation to their work abroad.

SAID EXPERIENCE

- ❖ The biggest problem was getting an ID. The municipality of WOLUWE-SAINT-LAMBERT did not want to issue the document without a signed contract for the work. Unfortunately, without an ID card, I had no access to measures that would help me to get a job and also to renew my driving licence. I was outraged at the administrative treatment I had to go through, especially as I am a European citizen.
- ❖ Personally, I feel integrated in a way. I admit that as an EU citizen I did not feel the need for any particular 'integration'. But language is, in my opinion, the most important tool for integration. However, I know people who did not get integration support - even if they are intelligent people with perspective - because of language they do their work far below their education/qualifications.
- ❖ The hardest part for me is the dialect. I understand written German well, but the dialect is like a completely different language. In staff meetings, many colleagues speak dialect and I don't understand everything (it often happens that I understand almost nothing at all). Some of my colleagues speak written German (or at least when they talk to me they don't speak any dialect) and in these cases I have no problems at all

and understand almost everything. If they speak in dialect and too fast, then I often have to ask questions and get stressed and feel that they find it annoying. I feel inferior.

SELECTED RECOMMENDATIONS RECORDED

- ❖ Simplify the forms, link the offices.
- ❖ Set up better cooperation between countries in administrative matters. My country's ministries do not communicate with each other (i.e. the citizen pays taxes in the country of residence). In general, as European citizens we are more than solidly comfortable.
- ❖ For foreigners with poor knowledge of the language of the host country, it would be necessary to have brochures in their native language about important things to consider when looking for an apartment (that you do not pay a cash deposit, that you check the land registry to see if the owner is the owner of the apartment). The brochure should also include employment law, social law, insurance, as well as links to language cafes and networking opportunities with Austrians. It is very easy to build a community from your home country, but it is hard to make friends with new people from another culture. I think community and community building are very important.
- ❖ I think the people here, the locals, should be a little more understanding of beginners, because actually starting out in a new country is very exhausting for a foreigner. At least in the first two years.
- ❖ The beginning is always difficult - when I came, I didn't know the language and I didn't know who to ask. Fortunately, other Georgians helped me. It would be good to have an office to help those of us coming from another country with work and residence.

3. CONCLUSION

Foreign social workers work outside their home country mainly for family and financial reasons. Family reasons or friendship ties then play a significant role in the choice of a particular host country.

The most frequent way to obtain employment in social services is clearly the personal initiative of (potential) employees themselves, who **learn** about the possibility of employment in social services **mainly from their friends, acquaintances** or from **advertisements**.

In most cases, their work is performed **on the basis of an employment relationship directly with the social service provider**. If they need a work permit, many report that this is an unnecessarily lengthy, administratively demanding process that limits entry into employment.

Nationality does not play a role in the recruitment process of a social service provider. Attention is mainly focused on assessing the (qualification) skills of the individual to perform the position (including language), in most cases without a targeted intention to approach foreign nationals, although In countries where there is more than one generation with a migrant background, i.e. clients of social services are also people with a migrant background, knowledge of the language, culture of the clients is often considered an advantage for employees.

Proof of qualifications is particularly difficult for employees from third countries. This is mainly due to the existence of many forms and poor language skills. Experience of working in social services before joining is often not required.

Foreign employees work in organisations providing social services in both **auxiliary and professional positions** - social workers, carers, health workers ... In the structure of individual organisations, they move vertically across all positions.

As the results showed, the **most important reason for most organisations to employ expatriate labour** is the **lack of an adequate 'local' workforce**. However, it should be added that the reason is significant especially for the interviewed providers in Austria and the Czech Republic. The **specific skills of foreign staff** also play an important role.

When evaluating foreign workers, it can generally be stated that they:

- are interested in integrating into society;
- are interested in learning the language;
- are sufficiently qualified to work in social services;
- their qualifications do not limit them;
- are not constrained by difficulties in getting their qualifications recognised;
- are not limited by their culture/religion;
- are not limited by language proficiency.

In addition to the above, the survey revealed the positive finding that foreign employees are **accepted by colleagues and clients without major problems.**

Less than half of the organisations employing foreign workers implement activities in the workplace to help their integration. In most of them, these include mentoring - **support from colleagues or other designated external persons**, as well as systematic integration into the team and the provision of a language course. **A quarter of these providers provide integration activities outside the workplace.** These include, in particular, mediation of contacts with integration organisations, assistance in communicating with social authorities and authorities in general, support for further education, support in securing housing, assistance with placing children in school etc.

If social service providers do not employ foreign staff, it is mainly for three reasons, namely that:

- ✦ foreign employees **did not apply for the job;**
- ✦ Social service providers have **not been approached by any organisation that would "arrange everything" regarding employment;**
- ✦ organisations have **no experience of employing these people.**

In addition, it appears that, apparently in some regions, **there is a sufficient "local" workforce, which often** (depending on national legislation) **does not allow the entry of third-country nationals.** A non-negligible reason for this is that organisations are concerned about problems arising from a lack of language skills or fear of the demanding administrative process that has to be undertaken when employing a foreign worker.

In the future, social service providers are open to employing foreign workers. The preference for EU, EEC and Swiss citizens was admitted by 1 out of 10 social service providers. Preference will be given to entering into an employment relationship directly with the employee.

ATTACHMENTS

Annex 1 - Questionnaire for employers - social service providers

Annex 2 - Questionnaire for foreign employees working in social services

ANNEX 1 - QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EMPLOYERS - SOCIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS

**Foreign Workers in Social Sector
QUESTIONNAIRE
Employers**

Dear Madam, dear Sir,

as part of the Foreign Workers in Social Services project, we are trying to identify major barriers in the employment of people from other European Union countries and third countries. This will help us to set up measures that will facilitate their integration and ensure maximum use of their potential. Therefore, we would like to ask you to fill in this questionnaire.

1. Please indicate the name of your organisation:

.....

2. Please indicate the contact person (name, job position, e-mail):

.....

3. Please indicate the type of service (multiple answers are possible):

- residential care (with accommodation)
- ambulant care (without accommodation)

4. Please indicate the number of employees (full time equivalents) in your organisation:

- up to 50 employees
- 51 to 250 employees
- 251 to 500 employees
- over 500 employees.

5. Do you have foreign workers (i.e. persons with other nationalities) working in your organisation - working under employment contract or through an employment agency?

- yes (next questions 6 - 12)*
- no (next questions 13)*

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS APPLY TO THOSE WHO ANSWERED YES (question no. 6 - 12)

6. Please indicate the number of

A. foreign workers with employment contract (full time equivalents) in your organisation:

- a. from EU, EEA and Swiss nationals:
- b. from third country nationals:
- c. refugees (e.g. Ukraine, Syria etc.)

B. foreign workers working provided by an employment agency (full time equivalents):

7. How did the employment of foreign workers in your organisation "came about" (multiple answers are possible)?

- we approached an intermediary organisation (e.g. a recruitment agency)
- we were approached by an intermediary organisation / supporting service for migrants
- the foreign worker applied for a job with us on his/her own
- we found the foreign worker and approached him/her (e.g. on the basis of an employee's recommendation)
- other, please specify:

8. In which positions do foreign workers work in your organisation?

Name of position	Own employees	Agency workers
care givers (carer, care assistant, home care workers etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
social workers (community social work, child, family, school social work etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
health workers (nurse, medical doctor, nutrition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
pedagogical workers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
technical, administrative and economic workers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
operational workers (professionals in support functions)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
managers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. On a scale of 1 - 5, please rate the importance of reasons listed below that led/are leading to the involvement of foreign workers in your organisation. (Scale 1 = not significant reason, 5 = very significant reason)

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> lack of "local" workforce | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="radio"/> their greater (time) flexibility | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="radio"/> their higher qualification | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="radio"/> their lower wage demands | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="radio"/> their specific skills | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="radio"/> other reason | | | | | |

10. On a scale of 1 - 5, where 1 = strongly agree and 5 = strongly disagree, please indicate your level of agreement with the statement that foreign workers:

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> are accepted by service users without problems | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="radio"/> are accepted by their colleagues without problems | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="radio"/> have lower salary demands | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="radio"/> value their jobs more | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="radio"/> are willing to do work that "local" workers are not interested in | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="radio"/> are more reliable employees | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="radio"/> have a low fluctuation rate | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="radio"/> are well qualified for the job | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="radio"/> have a low rate of absenteeism | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="radio"/> are interested in learning the language | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="radio"/> are interested in integrating into society | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

- their knowledge of the language limits their work performance
1 2 3 4 5
- their work performance is limited by their qualifications
1 2 3 4 5
- their access to work is limited by difficulties of recognition of their qualifications
1 2 3 4 5
- their work performance is affected by their cultural or religious requirements
1 2 3 4 5

11. Do you take any actions to facilitate the integration of foreign workers at the workplace? (e.g. language training, vocational training, etc)

- From
- Yes
- If yes, please specify

12. Do you take any actions to facilitate the integration of foreign workers outside the workplace (e.g. provide support to secure housing, facilitate family integration, etc.?)

- No
- Yes

If yes, please specify:

THE FOLLOWING QUESTION APPLIES TO THOSE WHO ANSWERED NO (question no. 13)

13. On a scale of 1 - 5, please rate the importance of reasons listed below that led/lead you not to have foreign workers in your organisation. Scale 1 = not significant reason, 5 = very significant reason.

- we have enough "local" workforce 1 2 3 4 5
- we have no experience of employing foreign workers
1 2 3 4 5
- we have bad experience with employing foreign workers
1 2 3 4 5
- it is easier when foreign workers are employees of employment agency or another company 1 2 3 4 5
- we are worried about problems arising from a lack of language skills
1 2 3 4 5
- we are worried about problems related to culture/religion
1 2 3 4 5
- we are worried about non-acceptance by service users
1 2 3 4 5
- we are worried about non-acceptance by colleagues
1 2 3 4 5
- we are worried about the difficulty of the administrative process
1 2 3 4 5
- we have not been approached by any organisation that would arrange this
1 2 3 4 5
- no foreign worker has applied for a job with us 1 2 3 4 5
- other, please specify:

14. For the future:

- we are open to employ foreign workers (*next questions 15 to 16*)
- we will give preference to "local" employees (*next question 17*)
- we will not employ foreign workers (*next question 17*)

THE FOLLOWING 2 QUESTIONS APPLY TO THOSE WHO ANSWERED "we are open" (question no. 15-16)

15. From what countries would you prefer foreign workers as your employees:

- citizens of the EU, EEA and Switzerland
- citizens of third countries
- refugees (e.g. from Ukraine, Syria etc.)
- we have no preference

16. What kind of employment relationship would you prefer with foreign workers:

- an employment relationship with the employee
- using the services of an employment agency
- being supported by a service dedicated to foreign workers integration
- we have no preference

17. Would you be interested in attending a training course on the topic of employing foreign workers, i.e., how to remove barriers and create equal opportunities for foreign workers, understand specific needs and facilitate their integration into the labour market.

- Yes.
- Rather yes
- No.

Space for your comment, clarification:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

ANNEX 2 - QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FOREIGN EMPLOYEES WORKING IN SOCIAL SERVICES

Foreign Workers in Social Sector QUESTIONNAIRE Employees

Dear Madam, dear Sir,

as part of the **Foreign Workers in Social Services** project, we try to identify the fundamental barriers that you, as foreign workers, face to access and participate in the labour market. By completing this questionnaire, you will help us better understand your needs and create a better working condition for foreign workers in the country you live in. The questionnaire is anonymous.

I. TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF

1. Please indicate your country of origin:

2. You are:

- male
- female

3. How old are you:

- up to 25 years
- from 26 to 35 years
- from 36 to 45 years
- from 46 to 55 years
- 56 years and more

4. Your highest educational attainment:

- primary (including incomplete)
- secondary education
- university degree / tertiary education
- other (trainee, apprentice, ...), please specify.....

5. What was the reason for your decision to work abroad? (Multiple answers are possible.)

- financial reasons
- poor prospects in your country
- family / friend reasons
- study / education
- political reasons / security issues / war / environment
- other, please specify:

6. What was the reason you went to work in? (Multiple answers are possible.)

- family / friends
- knowledge of the language
- close culture
- interest in living in this country
- bilateral conventions that facilitate migration in this country
- other, please specify:

II. TELL US ABOUT YOUR CAREER, SKILLS AND TRAINING

7. How long have you been working in this country? (a sum for all jobs)

- under 1 year
- from 1 to 5 years
- more than 5 years

8. Did you have experience of working in social services before you started your current job?

- Yes
- No

9. Did you benefit from any support - other than language - to enter to your job?

- I have been asked what I can do professionally or/and passed some professional tests.
- I have been trained in my current job.
- I have been trained on culture / habits / legal framework of the country
- I have been supported by a colleague in charge of doing so or by an external service.

If you answered yes to one of these questions, has it been useful for you and tell us why?.....

10. Do you use your qualifications in your current job?

- Yes
- No

11. Please indicate your job position in your current job

- care giver (carer, care assistant, home care worker, etc.)
- social worker (community social work, child, family, school social work, etc.)
- health worker (nurse, medical doctor, nutritionist, etc.)
- pedagogical worker
- technical, administrative and economic worker
- operational worker (professional in support functions).
- Manager

12. How did you find your current job (Multiple answers are possible.)

- advertisement
- from a job agency in your home country
- from a job agency in
- from a support agency for foreign workers
- from a friend / relative
- other, please specify:

13. Was it difficult for you to get a work permit?

- I did not have to provide any document
- Another person/a job agent took care of the permit for me
- No
- Yes

If YES, why:

14. Was it difficult for you to provide proof of the necessary education/degree?

- I didn't have to provide any proof
- Another person/a job agent helped me with the documentation
- No
- Yes

If YES, why:

15. How satisfied are you at your current job? (Scale 1 = not satisfied, 5 = very satisfied)

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> working environment | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="radio"/> relationship with colleagues | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="radio"/> relationship with managers | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="radio"/> salary | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

III. TELL US ABOUT LANGUAGE ASPECTS

16. How would you rate the level of your knowledge of language? (Scale 1 = low level, 5 = excellent level)

- | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> speaking | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="radio"/> listening | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="radio"/> reading | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="radio"/> writing | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

17. Have you been involved in any activities to help improve your language skills (multiple answers are possible):

- language course provided by the employer
- language course outside your job
- training on job specific vocabulary and language
- help / mentoring from one specific person or your colleagues
- Other, please specify

IV. TELL US ABOUT YOUR LIFE IN THE HOST COUNTRY

18. Have you experienced any kind of discrimination at work (due to your nationality, ethnicity, culture, religion, skin colour, etc.)

.....

19. Was it difficult for you to find housing?

- Yes
- No
- No, I did not have to arrange housing
- No, my housing was provided by the employer

20. Have you received any kind of support facilitating your integration into the new place of residence?

- Yes, through my employer
- Yes, outside my job
- From
- Other, please specify

V. TELL US WHAT COULD BE DONE TO IMPROVE YOUR SITUATION

Space for your comment, clarification (e.g. what other support do you need or miss, what are the barriers associated with your integration, what could be done to improve your situation etc.):

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

If you are interested in sharing with us more in a face to face conversation, please indicate your contact information (name, phone or email) or please contact **tel., email** and we will get back to you. The research will be anonymous and will help to identify the barriers to employment, the main problems, etc. By participating in the research, you can also help foreign workers get a job in another country and solve employment problems.



FWSS

Foreign Workers in Social Sector