

# Valuing Skills of Beneficiaries of International Protection



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## Newsletter March 2017- Updates from the Skills2Work team

### The Netherlands: IOM Skills2Work and Dutch Demographic Society Seminar “Fled and Working” 9 March 2017

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) in the Netherlands and the Dutch Demographic Society (NVD) hosted a seminar and networking event on 9 March, 2017 to outline the challenges to labour market participation of migrants in the Netherlands.

Over **150 employers, experts, migrants, academics and other stakeholders were invited to discuss the current state of migrant employment in the Netherlands and to promote good initiatives in support of employers and migrants.** The programme addressed the challenges faced by employers and migrants alike to recognize foreign-earned skills and qualifications. An IOM representative



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presented the Skills2Work initiative, and placed a specific focus on the importance of showcasing good practices across the EU region.

The seminar was followed by a reception and **market place event where promising initiatives were presented**, and a number of migrant performers demonstrated their musical and dance talents for the guests.



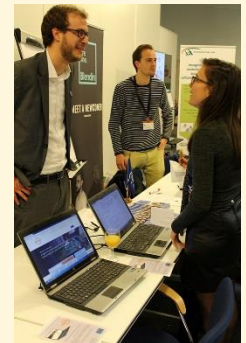
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More information and full [programme](#) (in Dutch).

### Trialing the Skills2Work digital platform – FromSkills2Work

Attendees at the Dutch network event on the 9<sup>th</sup> of March also had the opportunity to **test out the digital platform of the Skills2Work project**, the website [FromSkills2Work](#). The digital platform is an interactive, online directory designed to assist employers, local service providers and beneficiaries of international protection in navigating early, successful and sustained labour market integration.

The website contains information on existing services, organisations, projects and initiatives that support the identification of skills, knowledge and competencies of beneficiaries of international protection in nine EU member states. In addition to information provision, the digital platform will display employment success stories from each participating member state. The trial phase contains information for beneficiaries of international protection, employers and service providers in Belgium, Slovenia and the Netherlands. Information about initiatives in Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Slovakia, Spain and the United Kingdom will be made available in May, when the website will be officially launched.



### Slovenia: Conference: (Social) Entrepreneurship & Self-Employment of Refugees in Slovenia - 16 March 2017

This one-day event targeting beneficiaries of international protection in Slovenia provided participants with the opportunity to learn more about the processes of **establishing a (social) enterprise in Slovenia and discover different types of opportunities for self-employment.** Its main purpose was to inform guests about different types of **employment opportunities available in Slovenia** and to encourage the development and exchange of ideas potentially turning into business plans and concrete successful (social) businesses. **Active participation was encouraged in two workshops** where participants shared their business ideas, interests, doubts and challenges, while concurrently were invited to brainstorm solutions. Relevant governmental ministries and the Chamber of Commerce were invited to participate.

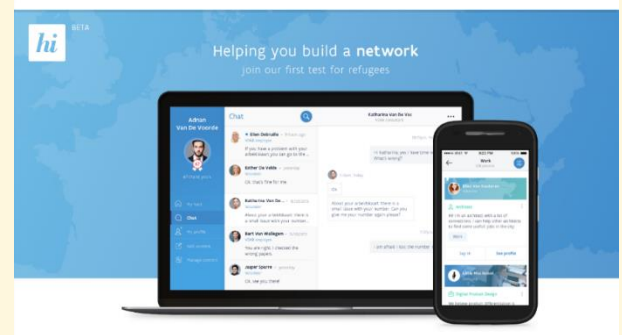
Successful and innovative social businesses from Slovenia ([Skuhna](#)), Austria ([Magdas Lokal](#) and [Magdas Hotel](#)) and Germany ([Cucula](#)) shared their individual experiences. Similarly, a representative of the Belgian organization [Microstart](#) spoke about microcredits as an option to open and finance (social) enterprises in a targeted workshop. During the last session, participants had the opportunity to have one-on-one short counselling with a local company [DATA](#) to find solutions for the development of their individual plans and business ideas.



Find more information on the [website](#) or contact [iomljubljana@iom.int](mailto:iomljubljana@iom.int).

## Belgium: Hi-app

The Flemish Public Employment Service ([VDAB](#)) launched a first **experimental digital tool** – the **Hi-app** - that helps refugees connect with the right people, helping them build a network and assisting beneficiaries of international protection (BIPs) in connecting to locals for all types of issues related to integration such as housing, welfare, daycare, mobility, education, language, leisure activities and so forth. **The platform has a strong focus on employment possibilities** as work is at the core of VDAB's activities and aims to facilitate early labour market access for refugees, without being a job matching platform.



Refugees, volunteers, social organisations and employers can register and connect with each other. This way, employers are able to connect with asylum seekers and refugees who are attending an 'integration trajectory' and that have already acquired the necessary papers to work in Belgium or can easily acquire them. They can offer support to refugees by providing internship opportunities, by screening CVs, by explaining what knowledge is necessary to work in a specific sector. A corresponding social media campaign has been launched on 28 February to bring the app to the public's attention.

## Interesting Publications

- UWV (2017) : Skills Shortages and Labour opportunities in the Netherlands
- MPI Europe (2017) : Improving the labour Market Integration of Migrants & Refugees
- MPI Europe (2017) : Strengthening local education systems for newly arrived adults and children: Empowering cities through better use of EU instruments
- MPI US (2017) : Unlocking Skills: Successful Initiatives for Integrating Foreign-Trained Immigrant Professionals