

# CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS FOR INTEGRATION



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## **Colofon**

HIT-Foundation, project Working In the Netherlands

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### *Editorial staff:*

#### **NL**

Frans Bastiaens,

HIT-Foundation, project-manager

Carrie van Schaayk,

HIT-Foundation, project-coordinator

Herman Everard, COA, case manager

Sandra Voeten,

K'Pabel, projectcoordinator

Benigna Deiana, municipality Heerlen,  
municipal official

Susan Huurenkamp, municipality

Heerlen, municipal official

Ties de Kort, Arcuscollege,

teacher Dutch language

Leandro Perez,

participant WIN project

#### **CZ**

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Aid to Refugees, project coordinator

Julie Hernandezová, Organization for  
Aid to Refugees, social worker

Anetta Řígllová, Organization for Aid to  
Refugees, social worker

Stepán Bolf, Centre for Integration of  
Foreigners, social worker

Michaela Musilová, Centre for  
Integration of Foreigners, social  
worker

# **CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS FOR INTEGRATION**

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September 2007

Esther Bitek  
Lumunu (41)  
Born in Uganda  
7 months in the  
Netherlands  
WIN participant at  
K'pabel in Breda



### **ESTHER WORKING AT A NURSING HOME IN GILZE**

*Esther Bitek Lumuni arrived in the Netherlands with diplomas and work experience. In Uganda, she studied psychiatric nursing for two years and medicine at a university for five years. She subsequently worked for a year as doctor in a hospital.*

*Esther's wish is to work in the Netherlands as a pediatrician for children with psychiatric problems. During her programme at K'pabel, we located an internship at the Elisabeth nursing home in Breda where she, in addition to supporting patients, engaged in specialised language learning and fulfilled practical tasks.*

*During a gathering at the Baptist Church, she proudly told a fellow churchgoer of her integration programme. Partly due to her good internship results, via the partner of the fellow churchgoer she will soon have paid work at a nursing home in Gilze. Everyone needs a bit of luck!*

*Esther is very happy that she participated in the programme. She is determined to study further to become a pediatrician and in this way to give something back to Dutch society. As soon as she moves into a house in the neighbourhood, she will be able to officially begin her naturalisation. We can safely say that we have no worries concerning whether she will make it. Working seven months at a job in the Netherlands gives you a strong foundation.*

# CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS FOR INTEGRATION

## Management Summary

*In this brochure HIT-Foundation and OPU present the result of the three-year international Czech/Dutch partnership The Alliance. This partnership is set up to analyse critical factors in the integration of foreigners. The Alliance identified four major critical factors. These are: language learning, employment, cohesion between the majority and foreigners, and access to education. Below you will find four main recommendations in these areas based on the experience gained during the course of the project. The recommendations have taken into account the specific conditions of the Netherlands and the Czech Republic:*

### Recommendations derived from WIN

**Provide integrated naturalisation programmes.** The WIN project offers naturalisation candidates four components in an integrated way. These components are labour market orientation, language teaching, assistance with naturalisation exams and social participation

### Offer naturalisation programmes tailored to individual needs.

A customised approach, based on the knowledge and expertise that immigrants bring with them, demands a different way of thinking inside training centres. A provider must look beyond the walls of his or her own organisation, and work together with various parties in order also to be able to provide programmes not available in-house.

### Work together in a chain

With naturalisation targeted at the labour market, it is very important that the various parties in the chain work together.

### Recommendations derived from WIP

**Enable every foreigner arriving in the Czech Republic to follow a Czech language course as early as possible.** For greater effectiveness, the courses should be designed to be given to foreigners grouped by language, and there should be flexibility as regards location and time.

Support the foreigners' potential in the host country's job market through **activities to help to realise their** employment potential and further their professional development.

**Involve volunteers from the mainstream of society to guide and support integration of foreigners into society.** Integration is successful if it is a two-way process. Support given by volunteers also helps to prevent newcomers from becoming socially isolated.

**Provide foreigners as quickly as possible with access to further education and to the information to guide them in the Czech jobs market.** Education for foreigners should be regular but at the same time sufficiently flexible to meet the needs of this group (range of courses, flexible hours).

Implementing these recommendations would help in the design of targeted assistance for integrating migrants.

The importance of well integrated foreigners is big, one out of ten inhabitants in the Netherlands is foreign and their part is still growing. Participation doesn't go automatically well, most of the migrants needs support in this. A programme is successful if, after the end of the process, the immigrant is capable of participating and communicating in a context that is meaningful to him. Then long-term relations can be built up. And then one can speak of genuine integration and participation. The integration programme equips the immigrant for this. Via internships and trainee posts, rapprochement takes place in the contact with supervisors and colleagues. In these labour market-related programmes, the ultimate goal is obtaining regular paid work for a longer period of time. Achieving this goal means that society is truly accessible to the immigrant. It goes without saying, however, that this demands more than his individual efforts. The host, autochthon society also has an important role to play here! These recommendations can help you to make a contribution in the integration process of migrants and thus to a economically and socially stronger country!

Foreigners are a reality in Czech society. Statistics show that the number of foreigners in Czech society has not yet peaked. For this reason, special activities need to be designed for this target group to enable them to fulfil their potential and to contribute to society rather than be a burden on it. Taking account of the specific needs of the group can help prevent their social isolation and, in the long term, can help to overcome any difficulties in integrating foreigners. Experience in West European countries which at certain periods in their history had underestimated the need to assist foreigners, and which have recently had to take sudden measures to resolve this, has shown that, in the long run, timely investment in targeted assistance pays dividends to the host society.



Yulia (31)  
Born in Belarus,  
Russia  
WIP participant in  
Prague

*Yulia was born in Belarus in 1970 and came to the Czech Republic in 2003.*

*She is a graduate in applied mathematics and in her country she had a reasonable number of years of experience in IT. After arriving in the Czech Republic she needed to overcome the language barrier quickly. This was her main reason for joining the Work in Prague Project.*

*Yulia knew that without these skills her chances of finding qualified work were very small.*

*She started work in the Czech Republic at a cash desk, and she realised that the main obstacle to finding more skilled work was her lack of experience in a Czech environment. During the 10 months in which she took part in our project she not only vastly increased her language skills but also successfully completed a web design course. This helped her to fulfil her potential and get the opportunity to keep up the skills for which she had originally trained. She has now been able to obtain increasingly better orders and currently she has good prospects to develop in her chosen field.*

Nadezhda  
Born in Russia  
Two years in Czech  
Republic  
WIP participant in  
Prague



*Nadezhda came to the Czech Republic with her Czech husband two years ago. Back home she had worked as a chief accountant in a government office, but at first in Prague she could only find an unskilled, exhausting manual job. When she joined the WIP her knowledge of Czech was not very good, and she did not believe she would be able to communicate in Czech. Having worked in the project for 11 months, she now enjoys normal working conditions with a proper contract. She has also decided to continue her interrupted accountancy career, although she found out that in her new country this would be a long-term prospect. With the help of the project, she is now attending an accountancy re-qualification course where slowly but surely she is becoming familiar with the Czech technical terminology. Her Czech has improved dramatically, and she enjoys being able to chat to her parents-in-law. She says that the greatest risk to foreigners in a strange land is that of losing the opportunity to take their future into their own hands.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

*Sustainable integration, or rather participation, means feeling at home in the society in which you live. In order to feel at home, you must be a part of this society. Immigrants often come a long way with respect to 'participation'; many succeed in finding their place in society, but this is by no means always the case. The present results of naturalisation courses show that the desired level of knowledge of the language of the host-country is not obtained and participation by immigrants in the labour market continues to lag far behind that of the indigenous population.*

### **European partnership**

The WIN project is closely associated with the Working In Prague (WIP) project in the Czech Republic. This European partnership allows the sharing of knowledge, expertise and experience. In the south of the Netherlands and in Prague in the Czech Republic, with the help of Equal Financing, we have implemented a pilot project in the area of naturalisation and participation. Enclosed you will find a number of recommendations that can support you in your efforts to promote the long-term integration of immigrants into our society. These recommendations are the result of an analysis of scientific research into the promotion of integration and have been tested in practice in the WIN naturalisation project by the HIT Foundation and the WIP naturalisation project by Opu in Czech Republic! This approach has made it possible for the project workers, the parties affected and the partners of the WIN and WIP project to gather and appropriate knowledge and expertise together. Innovation has been achieved by subsequently 'releasing' this knowledge and expertise into practical efforts in the field.

### **Common Vision WIN and WIP**

We consider it the joint responsibility of both the immigrant and society as a whole to make long-term integration possible. "Participation" is the key here, participation socially - in contacts with people in one's daily environment - as well as economically. Having a job and an income leads to financial independence and self-respect; you contribute to society. Thus, social and economic integration constitutes the basis for financial independence, individual happiness and societal well-being.

Fatima Ghazzali (22)  
From Morocco  
Lives in Maastricht  
with her two year-  
old daughter  
WIN Participant at  
Arcuscollege in  
Heerlen



**POSITION: ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

*Fatima lives in Maastricht and works for the Tax Authorities in Heerlen. Five days a week she brings her daughter to childcare early in the morning and takes the train to Heerlen: four days for her work, and one day to school for her Dutch and English language courses.*

*Last year, Fatima participated in the WIN project and opted for the administrative specialisation. Fatima feels at home in the huge tax office in Heerlen, where the foreign tax returns are processed. She has 15 colleagues whom she occasionally calls upon for detailed explanations. "However, it is not an easy job," says Margot Lamby, her supervisor. "The forms arrive in English, German, French and sometimes even in Chinese, and it seems to me only logical that she should ask for help."*

*Margot Lamby, her supervisor, is positive concerning Fatima's work. "It took a while for us to see the person behind Fatima, but she is precise and neat, performs her work well and lately she has become increasingly relaxed."*

## RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING NATURALISATION

### WIN project Netherlands

#### **Recommendation 1:**

Provide integrated naturalisation programmes

At present, most naturalisation programmes focus on the Dutch language and on passing the naturalisation exams. In practice, this appears to be insufficient. Language teaching is almost meaningless if you do not make use of it afterwards. Due to a lack of contacts with native Dutch speakers, many immigrants fail to master the language. A naturalisation course is also no more than a theoretical instrument. In order to remain in this country, you must pass your naturalisation exams, but obtaining the diploma says nothing about your ability to participate in society. Language teaching and the naturalisation course should be combined with targeted preparation for the labour market. A job, after all, provides the immigrant with economic and social independence.

The WIN project offers naturalisation candidates four components in an integrated way. These components are labour market orientation, language teaching, assistance with naturalisation exams and social participation. How does this work in practice? Each participant is first extensively screened. In specially equipped learning/work companies, professional skills are then taught together with the corresponding technical language. Much attention is

### WIP project Czech Republic

#### **Recommendation 1:**

Learning the language

Every foreigner should have the opportunity to attend a Czech language course as soon as possible after arriving. The effectiveness of such a course would be enhanced if it were designed to be given to foreigners grouped by language, and should be flexible in location and time.

Regarding the job performance of foreigners, we can say that a good knowledge of the host country's language can positively influence their situation in the host country's jobs market

Intensive Czech language courses.

Experience with the project shows that group courses with tests are best held 3 times weekly for a minimum of 3 teaching hours. For teaching to be most effective, it should be divided into classes catering for those who already know a Slavonic language and others who come from non-Slavonic language areas. At the moment, classes are invariably divided into beginner and advanced learners according to their prior knowledge of Czech. The minimum grant for every course of this kind should cover approximately 300 hours.

#### **Motivation:**

In the first instance we recommend establishing how much free time the client has, the accessibility of the course and any obstacles to participa-

also paid to social and communication skills and with this the confidence to participate in Dutch society. The programme is concluded with an internship and mediation in finding a job. The integrated offering increases the success of the individual components.

An integrated offering requires partners to work together, the bundling of forms of financing and the examination of existing structures! Partnership is the future!

**Recommendation 2:**  
**Offer naturalisation programmes tailored to individual needs.**

Adult immigrants constitute a diverse group; from unskilled to university-educated, with very diverse cultural backgrounds and major differences in language skills. In order to prepare this multiform group of immigrants for the Dutch labour market within one year, the education should fit the individual skills, knowledge, experience and carrier wishes. The focus should be on the participant, not the programme. A customised approach,

tion (caring for a family, planned long-term absence during the course). From our experience from running courses we propose a refundable deposit on the average level of costs, which is refunded at the end of the course with satisfactory level of attendance (60% attendance). The deposit acts as a motivating factor and prevents unauthorised absence.

**Recommendation 2:**  
**Work**

We recommend supporting the potential of foreigners in the host country's jobs market with activities which will help them to fulfil their work potential and continue their professional development.

Foreigners are a reality in Czech society. Statistics show that the number of foreigners in Czech society has not yet peaked. For this reason specific activities need to be designed for this target group to enable them to use their potential and to contribute to society rather than be a burden on it. Financial independence is a key integrating factor and enhances a positive self-image as well as their realisation in society and their family.

**Recommendation 3**  
**Volunteers**

We recommend enlisting volunteers from the mainstream of society to provide guidance and support for social integration. Integration is successful when it is a two-way process. Volunteer support helps to prevent the social isolation of migrants. Areas where volunteers can make a successful contribution are:

- Czech language practice
- mediation in informal contacts (work offers, social contacts)
- sharing the values of the host society
- active leisure time (including whole families)

based on the knowledge and expertise that immigrants bring with them, demands a different way of thinking inside training centres. A provider must look beyond the walls of his or her own organisation, and work together with various parties in order also to be able to provide programmes not available in-house. This represents a challenge for long-standing as well as new suppliers of integration programmes. In practice, this often means that they must work together instead of competing with one another. It is up to the municipalities to bring these parties together.

### ***Recommendation 3***

#### **Work together in a chain**

With naturalisation targeted at the labour market, it is very important that the various parties in the chain work together. This is often easier said than done. In particular the last party in the chain, the employer, must be involved at an early stage and it can be, for example, a part of the educational component. In this way the blocks that follow one after the other can result in considerable savings in time.

- increasing their awareness of Czech culture - joint visits to cinemas, exhibitions and public events (cultural integration)
- to mediate regarding unwritten social norms and customs

provide a volunteer coordinator (choosing a volunteer and suitable clients, regular communication with the volunteer and client, feedback)  
providing funding for activities of volunteers with the client (tickets to events, travel)  
find funding for training and continuous monitoring of volunteers.

### ***Recommendation 4 Czech Republic***

#### **Education**

We recommend providing foreigners as early as possible with access to further education and to the information needed to find their bearings on the Czech jobs market. Education for foreigners should be systematic and at the same time sufficiently flexible to meet the needs of this group (range of courses, flexible times).

In the course of our project, and when comparing our experiences, it was confirmed that educational opportunity improves the self-esteem of foreigners and benefits both the foreigners and the host society. Limited educational opportunities for certain groups of citizens are a long-term risk for society (e.g. the experience of integrating the Roma minority in the Czech Republic, which is a long-term problem).

Attending educational activities is in itself an integrating factor - students come in contact with other people, compare their experiences, gain social contacts, etc.

- offer education geared to the employment needs of foreigners (requalification, additional qualifications, recognition of qualifications obtained abroad, jobs market orientation courses)
- provision of educational and taster events which inter actively bring foreigners closer to the social and cultural environment of our society.

M.R  
Born in Sierra Leone  
Participant WIP  
project  
Czech Republic



*M.R., a woman from Sierra Leone, was widowed shortly after arriving in the Czech Republic to seek asylum. She was left completely alone with her infant son. During her marriage she had become reliant on her husband. After such sad circumstances she found herself in an entirely strange cultural environment which regarded her as a wholly independent person capable of taking her own decisions about her life.*

*The client was offered the services of a volunteer in addition to social services. Volunteers helped her to find her way about in the community (bank, post office, getting familiar with the local area), to gain some cultural knowledge and to get language practice. They also helped her with individual tasks (e.g. computer training because she frequented Internet cafes, etc).*

*Especially they look after her son, spending free time together, taking him to playground, football match or puppet theatre.*

*The sun felt like he found his own friends and liked his new home. His mother felt happy to see her son exploring his skills and having save childhood. Thus she could go for her own education, she could start think of herself. As she mentioned her son and seeing him happy was the main thing of her efforts.*

## **SUCCESSFUL INTEGRATION: OUR APPROACH**

### **Literature search as basis**

The basis of our approach lies in an analysis of scientific research already completed on the integration issue. Much research has already been done in the Netherlands into the critical success factors for successful integration. In the Czech Republic, this research is still in its infancy; there are few publications on the practice of integration in the Czech Republic. We have extracted 13 critical success factors for integration from ten different scientific publications. Most of these factors are already known and obvious, but the way and the extent to which these have found a place in the naturalisation and integration process have led to much discussion. An appendix indicates which publications were used for this purpose.

The following 13 critical success factors emerged from the analysis of scientific publications as critical. By "critical" is meant that the factors are essential to the success of a naturalisation and integration programme.

### **Critical success factors**

1. Language
2. Education
3. Certainty concerning length of duration and right to residency
4. Housing that meets the wishes of the migrant
5. Faster sustainable relations between immigrants and indigeneous population
6. Integration is a two-way-process
7. Improved public opinion with respect to immigrants
8. Empowerment of the immigrants
9. Reducing bureaucratic procedures
10. Guidance tailored to individual needs during the integration process
11. Binding character of integration programmes

## **Coherence among the factors**

The critical success factors for integration are inextricably connected with each other and are best not deployed as separate elements. It is precisely their coherence that makes them strong.

From the 13 critical success factors below, the four most relevant factors have been prioritised. These factors have been emphasised in the project since these four factors occupy a major place in the project, but were insufficiently developed. It concerns the following four factors:

- Language
- Work
- Education
- Bringing about sustainable relations between immigrants (foreign) and the host immigrant population



Yinchun Lin -  
van Meegen (24)  
From China  
Resides in Kerkrade  
WIN participant at  
Arcuscollege in  
Heerlen

#### **POSITION: FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

*Linchun Lin has lived in the Netherlands for two years and has followed an integral educational programme for one year. Within one year, she has improved her language skills by two levels, completed administrative training, fulfilled the naturalisation requirements and she is active as an administrative assistant at a Regional Training Centre.*

*Yinchun came to the Netherlands two years ago; now she enthusiastically speaks of her job at the financial administrative department of Arcus College in Heerlen. "I like numbers and computers and I have super colleagues." A spirited soul, who knows what she wants, that much is certain. Her Dutch is not perfect, but has improved immensely since she started. She consults a lot with colleagues and works together on assignments. And of course, Dutch is also spoken at home with her Dutch husband.*

*Yinchun learns something new each day, she makes reports, creates invoices, enters information and keeps the lecturers on their toes with respect to time sheets, which formerly didn't happen.*

*Rob Driessen, her supervisor, as well as her colleagues are very satisfied: "She does her work very well and her commitment is remarkable. She sometimes struggles with the language and especially the pronunciation, but this does not stand in her way! She gets her point across!!!"*

## **POINTS OF EMPHASIS AND PITFALLS IN SETTING UP NATURALISATION PROGRAMMES**

### **TIPS**

#### **Integrated programme**

- 1 Invest in the necessary preconditions before you start the programme; in this regard, think of reimbursement of travel expenses, childcare possibilities, clear intake requirements.
- 2 Make use of aids such as language cards, a logbook and practical language tasks targeted at acquiring language skills related to a profession in order to connect language and work.
- 3 Right from the beginning, start realising the final objectives: do we want to qualify or do we want to find work?
- 4 Early in the programme begin with an (external) internship in order to further develop skills and teach job-oriented language skills in a realistic context, and to adapt the teaching curriculum to the crucial practical situations of the naturalisation exams.
- 5 Bundle together financial resources for a single programme: education, reintegration, naturalisation, municipal and subsidy funds.

#### **Customised approach**

- 1 In order to work in an individually targeted way, a personal development plan (PDP) provides a good foundation on which to develop skills further. The participant is responsible for maintaining a portfolio along the way. Via a process of self reflection on his skills, he creates a showcase of evidence that he can present to the outside world.
- 2 A diagnosis phase consisting of a combination of different forms of assessment (targeted at work and oriented to a general establishment of potential), which examine among others previously acquired skills in order to provide a custom approach in the follow-up programme. Thus, the starting point is not the educational offering but rather the participant's point of departure.

### **Working together in a chain**

- 1 Case management and supervision are essential; invest in this (financial).
- 2 Form partnerships with the business community, training centres and institutions. Each organisation has its own qualities; put them to use. Engage the business community with the development of the training curriculum; this brings supply and demand together.
- 3 Make clear and unambiguous agreements concerning preparation for and direction in the programmes before these are started.
- 4 Tutorage in the form of a language buddy on the work floor with as goal the bringing about of a meaningful connection between participant and the indigenous population. (customised approach)

## **PITFALLS**

### **Integrated programme**

- 1 Don't persevere in offering Dutch via a purely grammatical method.

### **Customised approach**

- 1 Don't put all your resources into a single learning/work company. Always ensure that there is some budget remaining for referral to third parties for a customised approach.
- 2 Don't pay too much attention to the wishes of project workers and the business community; focus on the client and his development goals, and not on the short-term needs of the labour market.

### **Working together**

- 1 Don't give in to the desire on the part of employers for making language the main priority or assessing skills based on the level of language knowledge.

Mouminy Diallo (23)  
From Guinea  
Resides in Heerlen  
WIN participant at  
Arcuscollege in  
Heerlen



#### **CUSTOMISED APPROACH: POSITION: PAINTER**

*After the assessment, Mouminy started in the learning/work company technology. It quickly became evident that Mouminy's interest did not lie with general technical skills, but much more with painting alone. A customised solution was sought.*

*For five months, Mouminy has been working at Bosch en de Boer, a painting company in Heerlen. He works four days, and for one day he follows the in-service training for the painting profession in Sittard.*

*Mouminy is busy lacquering a door; in five months he has learned a lot. He lacquers, sands, plasters and after the holidays, he will learn to wallpaper and spray. The work is varied and he works at people's homes. His tutor Peter is also satisfied. "Mouminy is a pleasant young man; he is social, works well; he could work faster, but I am confident it will work out all right!!"*

*Mouminy hopes one day to start his own painting company, but for the moment he does not have the money for this and is happy where he's at! "For the time being, I first earn some money so that I can buy a round in the cafe!"*

## **APPENDIX 1: Bibliography**

### **1 Settling in and feeling at home**

*Name and function of author(s)* Mohammad Nazar Soroush, he did the interviews with 60 refugees who came to Holland and who have found a manner to live in their new society. At that time he was a student Sociology at the University of Amsterdam. M. van Wezel and M. Smulders both work for the organisation PON. Which is an institute for advice, investigation and development in the province of Brabant.

*Sub-title* Integratie en participatie van vluchtelingen

*Publishing year* 2004

*Place / country* Tilburg / Holland

*Targetgroup* (granted) refugees

*Size* 72 pages

### **2 Migration Trends in selected EU Applicant countries**

*Name and function of author(s)* Dusan Drbohlav, Charles University, Faculty of Sciences

*Title* Migration Trends in Selected EU Applicant Countries; Volume II - The Czech Republic; "The Times They Are A-Changin"

*Publishing year* 2004

*Place / country* Czech republic

*Assigned by* IOM

*Size* Paper (study)

### **3 Individual state of affairs on participation**

*Name and function of author(s)* Onderzoeksbureau RADAR

*Publishing year* 2005

*Place / country* NL

*Targetgroup* People working with and for women from ethnic minorities

*Assigned by* I found on a website developed by the department of social affairs, in order to stimulate the participation and thus the integration of women from ethnic minorities

*Size* 13 pages

### **4 Annual report on integration 2005 (first addition)**

*Name and function of author(s)* Social and Cultural Planning Office of the Netherlands / Research and Documentation Centre of the Dutch Ministry of Justice / Statistics Netherlands

*Publishing year* September 2005

*Place / country* The Hague - The Netherlands

*Target group* Ministry of Justice.

*Assigned by* the Dutch Ministry of Justice

*Size* 229 pages

### **5 Analýza postavení cizinců dlouhodobě zijících v ČR a návrh optimalizačních kroků**

*Name and function of author(s)* Ivan Gabal

*Publishing year* October 2004

*Place / country* Czech republic

*Targetgroup* Foreigners with long term and permanent residence

*Size* 25 pages summary

### **6 Závěry z výzkumu integrace azylantů a efektivita státního integračního programu**

*Name and function of author(s)* Dr. Zdeněk Uherek

*Publishing year* 2005

*Place / country* Czech republic

*Targetgroup* Recognised refugees

*Size* 10 pages summary of academic research

### **7 The Integration Monitor 2005**

*Name and function of author(s)* R.V. Bijl - A. Zorlu - A.S. van Rijn - R.P.W. Jennissen - M. Blom and was issued by the Research and Documentation Centre of the Dutch Ministry of Justice together with Statistics Netherlands

*Sub-title* The Progress of the social integration of migrants; trends and cohort analyses

*Publishing year* 2005

*Place / country* The Hague - The Netherlands

*Target group* Ministry of Justice

*Assigned by* Research and Documentation Centre of the Dutch Ministry of Justice together with Statistics Netherlands

*Size* 96 pages

### **8 Not longer with our back against each other**

*Name and function of author(s)* RMO

*Sub-title* An advice about making connections

*Publishing year* 2005

*Place / country* The Hague - The Netherlands

*Assigned by* Dutch Ministry of Justice together with ministry of labour and social affairs

*Size* 175 pages





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