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GREECE: SUPPORT TO THE LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION OF REFUGEES

Output 1b

Employer engagement strategy

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I. BACKGROUND

The Hellenic Manpower Employment Organization (OAED) is planning to launch a pilot in early 2021 with the objective to enhance refugee employment. The pilot will support refugees during the final step on their path to self-sufficiency, i.e. from integration into the Greek society to labor market integration. OAED's initiative seeks to place approximately 1,000 recognized refugees in jobs, with a first phase in the Attica region¹. By systematically engaging with employers and offering them a wider menu of options, the program seeks to go a step beyond existing initiatives that mainly offer limited and ad-hoc access to training and jobs. Lessons learnt from the pilot will help mainstream interventions for refugees into the ongoing national active labor market policy (ALMP) reform.

A key factor for the success of the pilot will be the ability to engage effectively with potential employers to place refugees in jobs and/or applied training programs (ATPs)². To this end, it will be essential to engage with employers early on to raise their awareness about the program and make the business case for hiring refugees. The present employer engagement strategy presents the main elements to consider in order to reach the proposed objective.

The document is structured as follows: a background section summarizing the objectives, rationale, and international experience on employer outreach targeting refugees; four separate sections covering audience and messages (who to approach), channels and material (how to approach), monitoring and evaluation, and implementation. The document also includes three practical, living outputs that will be updated as implementation of the project unfolds: a core script describing the basic features of the program (an easy-go-to reference on the project for OAED staff to use); suggested discussion prompts (questions for OAED counsellors to use while interacting with companies to understand and assess potential to hire refugees); and a list of proposed companies to reach out to.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STRATEGY

This document seeks to build awareness among global and local employers about the proposed OAED pilot, with a view to generate job vacancies for refugees. For refugees not yet ready to work, or where vacancies are not forthcoming, the objective should be to generate employer support for work-based training opportunities, i.e. applied training programs (ATPs). This strategy can help OAED's staff make a clear "business case" for hiring refugees and facilitate employers' access to a pool of job-ready refugees.

Additional objectives include:

- Fill potential information gaps by increasing employers' understanding of the legal and social status of refugees in Greece and other relevant considerations for hiring/training.

¹ At the time of writing, OAED was considering extending a second phase to Central Macedonia.

² This strategy will refer to both jobs and applied training programs (ATPs), even though the inclusion of ATPs in the program was not fully confirmed at the time of writing.

- Raise overall awareness about the societal benefits of early economic integration of refugees – notwithstanding renewed economic challenges in the context of COVID19.
- Obtain early feedback from employers on demand for refugee employment (skills, sectors, job profile, etc.) to adapt training courses on offer.

RATIONALE FOR REFUGEE EMPLOYMENT

Refugees and asylum-seekers often remain displaced for years, unable to return to their countries of origin due to protracted conflict and insecurity. Finding a job is crucial for refugees to sustain their own living, integrate in their new country and contribute to society. But this is not easy. Refugees find significant challenges to access jobs, at times greater than those faced by economic migrants. Forced to flee their homeland, refugees often had no chance to plan their trip and lack personal or social ties to the countries of arrival. Their lack of knowledge of the local language and culture, along with the complexity to recognize their previous qualifications and work experience, add to the challenge of finding a job according to their skills. In addition, uncertainty about the future, long asylum-seeking processes, and psychological distress from the traumatic experiences they lived through may further hinder their chances.³

There is consensus across Europe that integrating refugees into the formal labor market, and doing so as soon as possible, is beneficial – for society, for employers and for refugees themselves⁴. For host governments, labor market integration is the most important factor to guarantee a positive economic impact from receiving refugees in the long term⁵. It also contributes to increasing the tax base and reducing informality, as (if at all) refugees tend to work in the informal sector. In some countries, refugees can help fill skill gaps and labor shortages derived from ageing societies. The downsides of not doing enough can be costly and include protracted exclusion, lower social cohesion, and as a result, greater risk of political and social polarization.

Employing refugees can also bring benefits to companies, including but not limited to their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) goals. Refugees can fill labor gaps, provide diverse skill sets and knowledge of a specific language or market segment. Employer surveys show high rates of retention and motivation of refugee workers⁶. Employing refugees can also bring reputational gains and build customer loyalty for a brand⁷. Since the 2015-16 influx of refugees to Europe, a growing number of businesses have made commitments to employ and train refugees. While yet limited in scope, these experiences provide a growing body of evidence and lessons learnt about the business case for refugee employment.

³ See among others *OECD and UNHCR (2018)*.

⁴ *Konle-Seidl, Regina and Georg Bolits, (2016)*.

⁵ *Clemens et al (2018)*

⁶ *Dyssegaard Kallick, David and Cyierra Roldan (2018)*.

⁷ For greater detail, see *Legrain, Philippe (2017); Dyssegaard Kallick, David and Cyierra Roldan (2018); Bertelsmann Stiftung and Hire Refugees (2017)*., etc.

Despite the potential positive impacts, refugee employment remains challenging⁸. Businesses cite several reasons hindering them from hiring refugees – including lack of knowledge about refugee and asylum regulations, uncertainty about their skills, or concern about lower productivity due to language and cultural barriers⁹. Most recently, the outbreak of COVID-19 has brought economic uncertainty to firms, displacement of workers in certain sectors and job losses in some areas. In the short-term at least, this could mean that job hunting has become challenging for all job seekers. In addition, high political sensitivity around refugee/migration in some countries, along with the (real or perceived) extra costs of training refugees into new jobs may also play against their odds. Addressing these concerns is important to bring employers onboard.

The added value of the World Bank Group (WBG)

The WBG has growing experience in dealing with the private sector in support for refugees, including through IFC, its private sector arm. Its financing, knowledge and convening power allows the WBG to adopt a variety of tailored approaches to enhance the economic opportunities for refugees through greater business engagement – such as technical advice to governments and companies; data, research and analysis; specific financing; awareness-raising activities; etc. The role of the private sector in forced displacement is recognized in the WBG’s new [FCV \(Fragile, Conflict and Violence\) Strategy](#). It is also central to the work of IDA, the Bank’s fund for the poorest countries, and lies at the core of many innovative projects. One example of the WBG convening power is reflected in the [Charter of Good Practice](#), a practical guide to enhance private sector support to refugee entrepreneurship, employment, investment and tailored products/services. The document was elaborated by the WBG and partners in collaboration with 200 companies and practitioners.

THE INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

This strategy draws on international initiatives and analysis that target refugee employment worldwide to put forward suggestions on employer engagement. The subsequent sections of this strategy will go into deeper detail of how international initiatives identify and prioritize potential employers (audience), craft the right messages to attract them, decide possible channels to reach them, and prepare supporting material.

The international examples highlighted throughout the strategy present refugee integration programs set up by European countries over the past years, including to manage the influx of asylum seekers in 2015-16; projects undertaken by international organizations and NGOs worldwide to approach and nudge businesses into hiring and training refugees – including the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Labor Organization and the World Food Program,

⁸ According to a European Policy Center, in 2014, employment rate for refugees was 27% in the first five years after arrival – and possibly lower for recent years. Recent data from Germany is however more positive, noting 49% of refugees who arrived to Germany since 2013 were able to find steady employment within five years of arriving (IAB, 2020).

⁹ See for instance *Breaking Barriers (2018)*; *Desiderio, Maria Vincenza (2016)*; *OECD and UNHCR (2018)*

which often do so from a CSR perspective; and the World Bank Group's own set of diverse approaches to mobilize the private sector around refugee employment – e.g. in Turkey, Uganda, Jordan (with successful interventions in the garment sector and beyond) and Brazil (through IFC, the Bank's private sector arm).

Similar to the OAED refugee pilot, international initiatives often see employer outreach as one element in a broader program on economic integration of refugees. This strategy will reflect some elements that are common to other international cases. For example, programs tend to offer a combination of employer outreach activities with skills assessment and enhancement for refugees. In addition, most programs provide targeted messages and materials to businesses about refugees (e.g. on the potential of refugees as employees, administrative and legal requirements to hire them, etc.). By going beyond the business as usual of regular active labor market policies, the programs help address possible biased or misleading conceptions about hiring refugees. The table below highlights some programs of relevance for OAED, whether because they mirror the objectives of the OAED Pilot or because of their innovative approaches. Further examples can be found in each section of this strategy.

Selected international examples

- **Germany** has a variety of refugee integration programs undertaken by the federal, regional and local governments - many with a strong employer outreach element - as well as by civil society and employers themselves. Among other examples, Germany's Federal Employment Agency (BA) has established targeted short-term programs that provide language training, on-the-job training, and counselling with strong employer participation, such as [Perspectives for Refugees \(PerF\)](#) (which includes a six-week work practice to identify skills in a "real company"). The BA also collaborates with the Federal Agency for Migrants and refugees (BAMF), employers and trade unions on the [Commit](#) program (for vocational training) and [step by step](#) (company training). There are also examples of employers organizing themselves to better support refugees – such as the [Network Companies Integrating refugees](#), launched by the German Association of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (DIHK) and ["We Together"](#), where German companies joined forces to showcase how German businesses can promote refugee integration and social tolerance.
- In **Sweden**, the [Fast Track program](#) is a cooperation between the Public Employment Service (Arbetsförmedlingen), trade unions and employers' organizations that promotes rapid employment of refugees with work experience in specific professions with skill shortages (e.g. cooks, butchers, teachers, nurses), coordinating actors to provide a comprehensive program of guidance, skills assessment, work placement, and training. The program begins with an initial mapping and validation of skills. Then, refugees participate in bridging programs for their respective occupation in their native language, while at the same time attend Swedish language courses. This allows them to strengthen their occupational skills from the beginning without having to wait until they reach a sufficient level of fluency in Swedish. Another initiative, [the 100 Club](#), promoted also by its Public Employment Service, offered support (incl. access to special placement services and wage subsidies from the government) to major companies that would hire at least 100 refugees.

(cont)

Selected international examples (cont.)

- Denmark's "[United for Integration](#)" program is also relevant. Implemented through a collaboration between the Danish Public Employment Service, labor unions, employer associations, government ministries, and civil society, it connects employer and refugee jobseekers. The Danish PES is in charge of identifying candidates and coordinating training needs and recruitment. The program's website offers practical information for employers.
- **Canada** has further good examples to learn from. For instance, British Columbia [uses a skills matching platform](#) where refugees can upload their CV and employers search for matching candidates. The region also publishes detailed handbooks for employers containing the basic facts about employing refugees.
- Worth noting, there is a **growing number of companies, particularly large ones, that voluntarily hire, train and support refugees**. In this sense, the [Tent Partnership for Refugees](#) is worth mentioning, as it works with global businesses to promote this type of voluntary commitment. Tent has built a large network of companies that support refugees, publishing reports, analysis and practical material for companies, such as country hiring guides.

While not necessarily targeting refugees, **it is worth noting that Public Employment Services (PESs) around the world are currently adjusting some programs to the new COVID19 reality**. For instance, Australia and Austria have set up wage subsidies to retain apprenticeships spots and create new positions respectively; and Denmark has offered online courses to retain and train employees during the pandemic.

GOOD PRACTICES IN GREECE

This strategy also looks at good practices in Greece, mostly implemented by NGOs and international organizations. Employer outreach is normally one element of a broader program on refugee integration, with some initiatives being more proactive in reaching out to companies or building a network of potential employers. The box below summarizes some relevant examples for OAED, with other examples mentioned in each subsection of this strategy.

Some relevant refugee-focused programs in Greece

- **The HELIOS program** managed by IOM focuses on integration of refugees post-reception, gradually reintroducing them to independent living and ensuring a smooth integration into Greek society. The program provides: 1) independent accommodation and rental subsidies for up to 12 months; 2) integration courses including Greek language, cultural orientation, job readiness and life skills; 3) employability support through job counseling sessions, access to job-related certifications, and networking with private employers; and 4) integration monitoring. From 16/7/2019 till 2/10/2020, 18.141 beneficiaries have been enrolled in HELIOS program. During this period, 1.860 job counseling sessions have been recorded.

(cont.)

Some relevant refugee-focused programs in Greece (cont'd)

- **Cosmos Employment Hub - STEP Greece** is an ambitious program by the Greek Council for Refugees (GCR) to support newly arrived refugees in their transition to the labor market. It offers refugees information and career counseling, Greek and English language courses, training (including a week-long workshop), connection to employers and support throughout the job search and placement. GCR collaborates with a significant number of Greek employers and local businesses. It focuses on matching employees with refugees in specific professional fields (cleaning services, tourism, construction and technical companies, interpretation services, agriculture and IT). In 2019, 80 beneficiaries participated in the project and 186 beneficiaries got support from the two career counselors of GCR, during one-to-one employment sessions.
- **Curing the Limbo** is a European project in Athens that seeks to break the “limbo of inactivity” of recently arrived refugees by offering them affordable housing from the city’s council in return for working for the local community and citizen-led activities. Beneficiaries receive skills training and as of 2020, support to seek employment. It is financed through the European Regional Development Fund and implemented through the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Catholic Relief Services, International Rescue Committee and Athens Development and Destination Management Agency. From 31/1/2019 till 31/8/2020, 112 from the 344 recognized refugees registered in this project, participated in job counseling activities.
- **The Athens Coordination Center for Migrant and Refugee issues (ACCMR)** coordinates organizations active in migrant and refugee services provision and focuses on employment as one of six pillars. Among others, ACCMR organizes monthly meetings of job counselors to exchange best practices and identifies and promotes job opportunities.
- **The International Rescue Committee (IRC)** works with local partners to implement self-employment and employment readiness programs for both refugees and local residents. IRC has a network of employers and recently launched a new business training and coaching program in partnership with private colleges. IRC provides a range of services such as language training, soft skills training, technical training, jobs counselling and livelihood training. In 2019, IRC Hellas, provided employment services in the Attica region to over 600 refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, either directly or in cooperation with partner organizations such as Generation 2.0 and the Municipality of Athens.
- **The I.ReF.SoS program**, a former pilot program led by OAED in partnership with other national and international stakeholders targeted young refugees and asylum seekers aged 16-24, who had received services such as Greek language, basic skills training, and individual counselling. The program aimed at developing an effective system for social support and rapid employment integration of the beneficiaries. In total, 22 refugees participated in one-to-one career counseling sessions (three sessions per participant) with the duration per session 45-50 minutes.

II. TARGET AUDIENCE AND MESSAGES

TARGET AUDIENCE: What companies to approach?

For OAED, the first step in the process is to identify and prioritize potential employers to approach. Based on experience from international and Greek programs, as a first step OAED could reach out to global and local companies of any size and sector interested in hiring workers. In addition, OAED could consider reaching out to business, sector and trade associations and chambers of commerce, which can play an important role in disseminating job opportunities and information on the program. It might also be useful for OAED to engage local and central government (given potential for scale up of pilot), as well as international development partners (UNHCR, IOM) and NGOs providing services for refugee employment.

The international experience suggests that larger companies tend to be more proactive in hiring refugees than smaller ones, and often do so for reasons of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). For instance, a survey of some 2,200 German employers jointly conducted by the OECD, the Association of German Chambers of Industry and Commerce, and the German Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, found that almost 80% of participating employers who hired asylum-seekers or refugees did so due to CSR reasons. This is also the case of voluntary commitments by global firms at the recent Global Refugee Forum or collaborating with the Tent Foundation¹⁰. For this reason, programs by international organizations (e.g. UNHCR, WFP, WBG) and countries often target large companies.

Smaller companies do also hire refugees, and often do so because of the skillsets that refugees bring¹¹ rather than to reach CSR goals. International employer surveys have revealed that HR, administration and budget constraints are factors that hinder them from hiring more refugees.

Finally, a number of successful programs rely on strong collaboration with employer associations and/or firms active in specific sectors (e.g. Sweden Fast Track). Within this context, the Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry founded the “Businesses integrating refugees” network for member companies already hiring asylum-seekers and refugees or interested in doing so. The network provides practical guidance on refugee employment (e.g. how to prepare staff and managers and support newcomers, diversity management, intercultural communication, etc.). In addition, the network provides information on successful strategies used by network members. Since late 2017, this network numbers around 1,500 German businesses.¹²

As a starting point, the WBG has been working closely with OAED to build a database of potential companies to approach about the OAED pilot. An updated version of the list is included

¹⁰ For instance, IKEA has committed to expand hiring and training to 2,500 additional refugees at 300 IKEA stores through 2022 – part of much broader support, incl. through its foundation; Hilton committed to train, hire or support 16,000 refugees by 2030; Barilla will provide jobs/internships to 75 refugees in Europe by 2023; etc.

¹¹ Integration of Refugees in Austria, Germany and Sweden: Comparative Analysis, European Parliament, 2017.

¹² “Businesses integrating refugees” employer network; <https://www.unternehmen-integrieren-fluechtlinge.de/>.

in this document in annex 3. The list is a living document and will be developed throughout project implementation. It builds on several sources:

- Labor market Diagnostic tool by EIEAD (including the ERGANI database)
- Employers already known to the WBG, OAED, development partners and/or NGOs that have a marked interest in employing refugees and/or skill shortages that could be filled by refugees.
- Employers participating or supporting UNHCR/ILO programs
- Employers participating in refugee placement events
- Companies signatories of the Greek Diversity Charter
- Employers active in sectors or areas of work with greatest needs for the skills provided by refugees, based on the skill assessment of registered refugees
- Employers with strong Corporate Social Responsibility programs and/or social inclusion programs.

The section on “Channels” suggests a possible way to segment firms, based on OAED’s Guide to Approaching Employers. This selective approach will contribute to maximizing an efficient use of OAED resources.

MESSAGES: What to tell them?

In engaging with potential employers, OAED could use targeted communications that are short, accessible and related to employers’ interests. The messages could cover information on the pilot, a rationale for hiring refugees, and practical information to join the scheme. It would also be important to bear in mind cultural sensitivities, including potential prejudices against refugees.

Using tailored messages is quite common among international and Greek programs. In general, these programs seek to entice employers’ interest in refugee employment by emphasizing three types of messages:

- a) Messages related to CSR, which place the emphasis on the benefits for the company in terms of brand value and consumer respect, as well as on the social benefits of integrating refugees in the labor market.
- b) Messages emphasizing the business case for hiring refugees, which refer to the potential of employers to fill skill gaps, capacity to increase the diversity in the workplace, etc.
- c) Messages addressing typical concerns from employers about hiring refugees, such as lack of clarity about their legal status and work permits; uncertainty about skills; concern about their productivity due to language and cultural barriers; and perceived extra cost of hiring refugees.

This sub-section suggests a series of messages for OAED to communicate with potential employers about this pilot program. Since it is not clear which messages will resonate better, OAED could consider some experimentation to select over time the most effective ones. These messages can be further adapted based on the reactions from employers following the first round of discussions with OAED about this pilot.

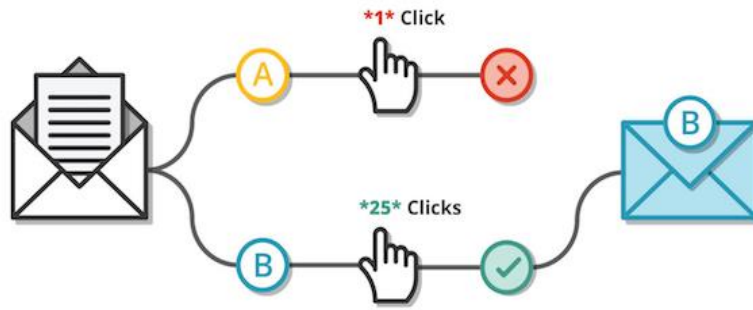


Figure 1: Setting up of different messages and checking “what works” in terms of employer interest (for example by counting the number of callbacks or the number of clicks in an email).

Suggested messages for the OAED refugee pilot

i. On general information on the program:

- OAED, the national employment service, is starting a new program to connect local employers with unemployed refugees who match their skill needs.
- All recognized refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection holding a valid residence permit, a tax number (AFM) and a social security number (AMKA), are legally entitled to work in Greece under the same conditions as Greek nationals. A “work permit” is no longer needed since it has been abolished under the Law 4375/2016 (article 69).
- The program supports refugees of different backgrounds, skillsets and language proficiency.
- The local KPA (OAED office) registers the refugees, assesses their skills (including knowledge of Greek) and arranges pre-employment preparation where necessary in order to adapt better into a new working environment. It then selects individuals for referral to suitable jobs and work placements.
- OAED offers employers and refugees a point of support throughout the process.

ii. On advantages for employers to join the program:

- Employers can easily and quickly enroll in the OAED program (OAED to confirm steps).
- Employers can indicate their requirements and will receive a shortlist of applicants to select candidates from, hence saving time and resources in the initial preselection.
- Employers make the final hiring selection but OAED can shortlist the more appropriate candidates based on employers’ needs.
- Employers have flexibility to offer temporary or permanent jobs, or internships/applied training programs.
- Employers face reduced labor costs, as OAED will cover pre-job training needs and an allowance for trainees in ATP/internships

- Employers and candidates will receive assistance throughout the hiring process and after contracting.
- The program offers employers the possibility to participate in virtual events and other networking opportunities to meet and find new potential employees, taking into account COVID-19 restrictions.

iii. On hiring refugees:

- **OAED can help employers find candidates** with the right set of language proficiency and skills among a pool of refugees seeking job opportunities.
- **Hiring refugees is not complex.** Refugees have a legal right to work and documentation to remain in Greece. The process for hiring refugees is similar, administratively speaking, to hiring Greek nationals. Refugees have an AMKA number, AFM number and can open bank accounts¹³.
- Once given refugee status in Greece, a person needs to find a job to survive¹⁴. Working can also help them improve language, build new skills, and improve their mental and physical health.
- **Hiring refugees makes good business sense.** Employer surveys show having refugees in the workforce translates into more diversity – which can translate into greater creativity, innovation, and employee satisfaction.
- **Refugees bring specific skillsets**, like knowledge of languages, which can be useful to access new consumers.
- **Hiring refugees also contributes to improve brand reputation and build consumer loyalty**, and to meet the employer’s Corporate Social Responsibility goals.
- **Hiring refugees is good for the Greek society.** It helps integrate refugees into the Greek economy and contribute to build a more cohesive society.
- Evidence shows refugees contribute disproportionately to the economy of host countries in the long run – if given the chance. They fill existing labor shortages, increase overall tax revenues, decrease informality and abusive situations.

iv. On Applied Training Programs:

- Employers can also offer applied training programs (ATPs) for those candidates who have potential but need to build their skills and work experience and where employers can deliver on-the-job training to suit their own company needs.
- ATPs are aimed at employers who do not have an immediate vacancy but who are willing to offer work experience to a refugee candidate with the potential to employ them if business picks up and the candidate turns out to be suitable.

¹³ Opening a bank account in Greece is often difficult for refugees due to bureaucratic and language barriers. For this reason, some refugee integration programs in Greece provide specific services to refugees to help them with important documentation, bank accounts, etc.

¹⁴ Greece does not have social programs targeting refugees specifically, but they can apply to the same social programs as Greek nationals.

- ATPs are short term (3 - 6 months) and free of charge for employers, subject to OAED approval.
- An ATP de-risks the recruitment process by offering the employer a chance to host a refugee for a few months and learn on the job before committing to hiring.
- ATPs allow companies to find the right people by seeing how they operate in the workplace and as part of the team.
- During, or at the end of the period, employers can hire the trainee or let them go with a reference/testimonial that they can use to help them find work elsewhere.
- OAED counsellors will provide support throughout the ATP to both employers and interns and will facilitate job placement of these candidates.
- Candidates on ATPs may also get extra support from OAED if required – for example with additional language training via evening classes to improve language proficiency.

III. CHANNELS AND MATERIAL

CHANNELS: How to approach potential employers?

There are three channels that OAED could consider to approach employers in the context of the refugee pilot: direct (where OAED Key Account Unit and employer counsellors contact the companies themselves); indirect (where OAED uses intermediaries); and through ad-hoc events and activities.

International programs use a mix of direct, indirect channels and ad-hoc activities to connect with potential employers, raise awareness about their refugee employment programs, or match refugees with vacancies. Direct contact with companies is used in several international initiatives, especially by international organizations, which tap into their own networks for communication on refugee employment programs (e.g. IFC projects in Brazil, WFP in Lebanon, etc.). There is also some experience of promoting refugee employment schemes through indirect channels, often through employer associations that can connect employers to refugee jobseekers – such as Germany’s “Business Integrating Refugees” networks, Sweden’s Fast Track scheme, etc.

Finally, activities or events seeking to engage with potential employers are varied. For instance, Austria, Denmark and Canada organize job fairs to connect refugees and employers, while Canada, France and Austria (among others) have set up digital platforms to match refugee skills to vacancies (allowing employers to directly find the suitable candidate). UNHCR-Italy raises awareness about refugee employment among Italian companies via a successful initiative that awards a refugee-friendly logo to companies hiring or supporting refugees on a yearly basis (figure 2).



Figure 2: UNHCR-Italy awards the “Welcome. Working for Refugee Integration” Logo, that companies are allowed to use for communication purposes.

Amid the present COVID19 crisis, some of these outreach activities have required adjustment.

For instance, Chile and France have organized e-job fairs to replace in-person events. Austria’s Public Employment Service offers support to businesses in dealing with urgent personal management issues and organizational adjustments during COVID-19. Other countries offer specific online counselling via email and skype (e.g. Netherlands and Denmark) or via phone (e.g. Italy) – and while this is mainly directed to jobseekers, a similar approach could be followed for employers. Australia has introduced a job-seeking site called Jobs Hub with information on hiring opportunities and in-demand jobs in the current emergency.

Existing programs in Greece also rely on a mix of direct, indirect and event-based channels to reach out to employers. For instance:

- Generation 2.0 for Rights, Equality & Diversity, initiated in 2017 the so-called “Diversity in the Workplace” campaign aiming to promote equal access to the Greek labor market for people of different cultural backgrounds.¹⁵ More than 70 companies and organizations have so far subscribed to the initiative by signing the “Diversity Charter”. Building on its constant communication with employers, Generation 2.0 publishes online job ads on its website every Thursday.
- The Greek Council for Refugees (GCR) approaches businesses through its well-trained counsellors. They identify local companies that have high levels of recruitment and may be able to offer placements for refugees. Over the past several years of operation, the organization has built a solid network of Greek companies, regularly meets them to understand their needs, and makes tailored-made referrals. GCR counsellors also act as focal points for employers and organizes recruiting events.
- IRC Hellas directly contacts large companies with frequent openings (and integrates them in their network) and communicates via phone with small SMEs with relevant job postings to conduct a more personalized pairing of beneficiaries.

Other events-based examples include “job fairs” that put refugees and asylum seekers in touch with companies interested in hiring – such as the 1st Job Fair for Migrant and Refugee applicants organized by the Athens Coordination Center for Migrant and Refugee issues in November 2019, a Job Day organized by private job-placement company Skywalker in January 2020, or the events regularly coordinated by the GCR or IRC (see above).

Suggested channels for the OAED refugee pilot:

Notwithstanding present COVID-19 related restrictions, our general suggestion for OAED is to use direct, indirect and event-based activities to engage with potential employers. Since the start of the pilot is at this stage yet to be confirmed, it will be important that OAED maintains contact with employers and updates them on development to keep their interest.

- a) Direct channels: Calls, emails and (when possible) visits to individual employers by OAED’s employer counsellors (decentralized level) and/or OAED’s Key Account Unit (central level) – depending on the size and categorization of each company. This will entail strong internal coordination within OAED to divide tasks and agree on follow-ups (*see further suggestions in next subsection, “Matching channels to employers”*).
 - o OAED may want to encourage firms to nominate a first contact point for communication with OAED. At a later stage, some may want to also appoint a “mentor” that helps new employees adjust to the company.

¹⁵ Currently, this action is a part of the project “Equality Works” implemented under the Active citizens fund program.

- o Direct contacts with Greek NGO-run programs such as those previously is also encouraged
- b) Indirect channels: Approach existing networks to promote the program and access new potential employers. Examples of networks include:
- o Chambers of Commerce; industry associations; sector groups
 - o Greek social partners such as SEV, SETE, GSEVEE
 - o Development partners (UNHCR, ILO) with relevant programs for refugees
 - o NGO counselors and networks, who can share information, job vacancies, exchange best practices.
- c) Specific ad-hoc events and activities: Actions that facilitate contact with employers and/or between potential employers and refugees, such as:
- o Participation in (virtual) business gatherings organized by OAED and business organizations
 - o (Virtual) job events or webinars to encourage contact between refugees and employers and organizations, in partnership with, or complementing those organized by local NGOs. This could be done after the first batch of refugees has registered and completed language and soft skills training.
 - o Virtual meetings and, when possible, visits to companies
 - o A regular (e.g. monthly) virtual Info Day for Employers (open or with invitations to participants)

Segmentation and Matching channels to employers

Once OAED has agreed on a list of priority companies to approach about the pilot, it will be important to segment them as means to identify the most likely to recruit refugees. Once it is done, OAED should select the correct channel to communicate with each type of company, while at the same time ensure full coordination among all the units involved in the effort: employer counsellors reaching out to local firms in their network; OAED's Key Account Unit in case of reaching out to big employers, businesses and/or industry associations, social partners, etc.

The next table proposes a possible way to categorize these priority firms, using as a basis OAED's general employer categorization; divide tasks within OAED; and match channels with potential employers. It is subject to further discussion and/or adjustment.

Table: Proposed segmentation and channels

OAED Category	Approach method + responsibility	Observations
Category 5: Representative enterprises	Email to HR, followed by call. <u>Responsible:</u> Key Account Unit. Use World Bank experience and support.	Normally big businesses that do not go to OAED to fill their vacancies. Particularly relevant for those with track record of hiring refugees or strong CSR programs
Category 4: Select employers	Intro call or email with employer leaflet to inform of program, follow-up calls/virtual visits for those that respond. <u>Responsible:</u> Key Account Unit/ head of KPA/ employer counsellors.	Use OAED services, hire frequently. May be interested in tapping on refugee skillset
Category 3: Hidden Treasures	Intro email with employer leaflet to inform of program, follow-up calls/virtual visits for those that respond, invitation to job e-fairs and virtual events. <u>Responsible:</u> Key Account Unit/ head of KPA/ employer counsellors.	Hire frequently but do not use OAED services. May be interested in tapping on refugee skillset
Category 2: Good friends	Call to inform of program, follow-up calls for those that respond, invitation to job e-fairs and virtual events. <u>Responsible:</u> Key Account Unit/ head of KPA/ employer counsellors.	History of successful collaborations with OAED
Category 1: Other types of business	Intro email with employer leaflet to inform of program, with follow-up call for those that respond. <u>Responsible:</u> Key Account Unit/ employer counsellors.	May include hiring employers from ERGANI database
No category: Employer representative groups	Introductory email with employer leaflet; request to disseminate among members, participate in virtual events; arrange a mentor; etc. <u>Responsible:</u> Key Account Unit.	

MATERIALS: What products and activities can support the outreach to employers?

In line with international and Greek experiences, **it is suggested that OAED develops targeted materials to promote the pilot**, raise awareness of potential employers, and addresses sensitivities and concerns about refugee integration in the workplace. This section first describes the types of materials developed by international and Greek programs, and then offers some suggestions for OAED to consider.

International programs in general rely on strong websites with program information, factsheets or leaflets with basic facts on the program, more developed “how to” guides for employers to hire and train refugees, interviews and multimedia products, etc. For instance, Denmark’s “United for better integration” program has developed brochures, marketing campaigns and, more important, a strong website that includes success stories from employers and refugees.

Toolkits and in-depth guides for employers are also handful. For instance, Immigrant Employment Councils of Canada have drafted a Toolkit to assist Canadian employers to more effectively recruit, hire, onboard and retain a diverse workforce that includes refugees (*Figure 3*). The toolkit aims to offer employers the opportunity to increase their knowledge of culturally sensitive hiring and retention practices and boost their ability to create more inclusive workplaces. Similarly, the U.K. Employers’ Guide to Hiring Refugees is a practical toolkit intended to help employers who are interested in hiring refugees in the United Kingdom but don’t know where to start (*Figure 4*). The guide is intended to help companies design and implement refugee employment programs that will be successful for employers and refugees alike. It contains essential information related to refugee recruitment and employment.



Figure 3: Onboarding Syrian Refugees: Toolkit for employers developed by Immigrant Employment Councils of Canada



Figure 4: UK Employers' Guide to Hiring Refugees developed by the Tent Partnership for Refugees and Breaking Barriers

Several PESs have enhanced their information services to address the growing number of COVID19-related inquiries and requests for information. For instance, they have set up online “Question and Answer” sheets for employer (e.g. in Finland, Portugal and France), promoted information on their services through social media (e.g. YouTube in Germany, LinkedIn and YouTube in Croatia), and set up new hotlines for information (Spain)¹⁶.

In Greece, among other examples, Generation 2.0 has a dedicated website where new job vacancies are posted and disseminates job ads weekly. It has produced some specific material on diversity in the workplace, like a practical Employers’ Guide (Booklet) which includes techniques and best practices of efficient diversity management in the workplace. Its “Diversity in the Workplace” campaign was accompanied by a promotional video (Figure 5). On its side, the Greek Council for Refugees, through Cosmos Employment Hub - STEP Greece, has information on the program on its website and produced a promotional video (Figure 6) and other material.



Figure 5: “Diversity in the Workplace” campaign developed by Generation 2.0

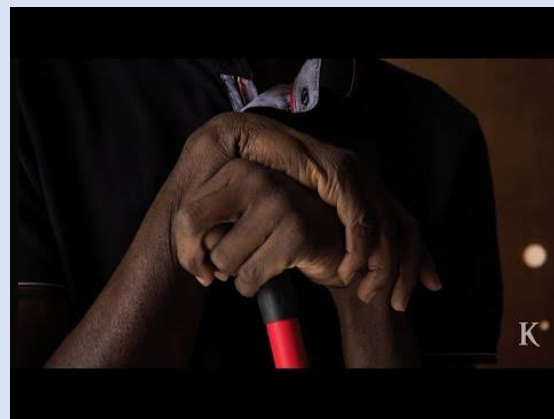


Figure 6: Promotional video called “Integration Steps” prepared by the Greek Council for Refugees

Suggested material for the OAED refugee pilot:

This strategy provides two core documents for OAED to use in approaching potential employers, both included as annexes to this document:

- A core script for OAED staff that serves as a briefing document, as a repository for frequently asked questions and as the basis for a variety of communication and promotional material for the project. (Annex 1). This will be a living document to be updated as the project develops

¹⁶ See Duell. ICON Institut. (2020)

- A guide for initial discussion with employers (Annex 2) to support Key Account Managers and Employer Counsellors with a set of questions designed to assess the employer’s interest and potential to hire or train refugees.

We also suggest for OAED to consider producing additional marketing material based on the documents above and with support from the World Bank team, including:

- Fact sheets/leaflets, FAQs, brochures: these are short documents explaining the basics of the program in a direct and appealing language. The WBG team can share several examples with OAED separately.
- “How to” leaflets or guides for employers: longer documents detailing all aspects of refugee legal status, characteristics, hiring process, trouble shooting, etc. For instance, the Tent Partnership, Canada’s British Columbia and Germany have published very practical guides directed to potential employers.

Other aspects to be defined include:

- i) Branding:** Logo, visuals, banners and other branding elements on the program.
- ii) Website:** OAED’s website should advertise the program and be a repository for useful and accessible information for employers in a clearly signposted section especially for them. (OAED has already indicated that vacancies cannot be announced in the website.)
- iii) Social media:** Social media can be useful to promote the program at specific times – such as its launch or around events. Social media could help increase visibility for the project, lessons learned and success stories. Ideally, existing OAED channels should be used to this end.
- iv) Media:** Use of traditional media (local, national, print and broadcast) may be considered for broad-based publicity and awareness – e.g. through interviews, adds and op-eds.
- v) Multimedia products:** such as video interviews or success stories of employers and beneficiaries.

IV. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

To ensure that the outreach strategy is achieving the specific objectives outlined above, several indicators will be developed and will be monitored and evaluated continuously. A system will be put in place to track the indicators as detailed in the following checklist. A suggestion is shown below, to be further discussed and refined with OAED.

Monitoring checklist

Objective	Indicator to monitor
Awareness among global and local employers about the OAED program	Brochures, leaflets and other marketing material finalized and disseminated. Events/meetings organized (disaggregated by Key Account unit in OAED HQ, and each KPA2 participating in the pilot)
Generate a sufficient number of job vacancies and internships/applied training programs for refugees rapidly	Number of job vacancies and ATPs created by month (disaggregated) Number of firms posting job vacancies and ATPs (disaggregated)
Early feedback from employers about demand for refugee employment (skills, sectors, job profile, etc)	Quality and amount of feedback received

V. IMPLEMENTATION

The World Bank together with DG REFORM will work closely with OAED in the implementation of this strategy, with OAED maintaining the leading role in the process. To this end, **the WBG strongly suggests that OAED appoints a small team to lead and implement day-to-day activities related to this strategy. A separate group of staff could be made responsible for developing relevant communications material on the program**, such as leaflets, guides for employers, etc. OAED should further consider ways to ensure internal coordination across teams (Large Firms Unit, Employer Counsellors, the Head of KPA, etc.). Job and employer counsellors within the same KPA should also be in touch, with job counsellors more familiar with the refugee profiles and the employer counsellor aware of the firm's needs.

As reflected in the figure below, implementation of this strategy will entail that the dedicated OAED staff carry out the following steps:

- **Identify and prioritize employers to approach by segmenting them into categories** using e.g. OAED's Guide, ERGANI, employers already known to WBG and OAED, development partners and/or NGO contacts, employers participating or supporting UNHCR/ILO programs
- **Develop targeted messages and communications that are short, accessible and related to employers' interests.** These should cover both information on the pilot, a rationale for hiring refugees, and practical information to join the scheme.
- **Develop tailored communication and guidance materials** directed to potential employers
- **Use a variety of channels to promote the program and access new potential employers:** direct, indirect, and specific ad-hoc events.
- **Create monitoring indicators** to evaluate the employer engagement effort and adapt as necessary.

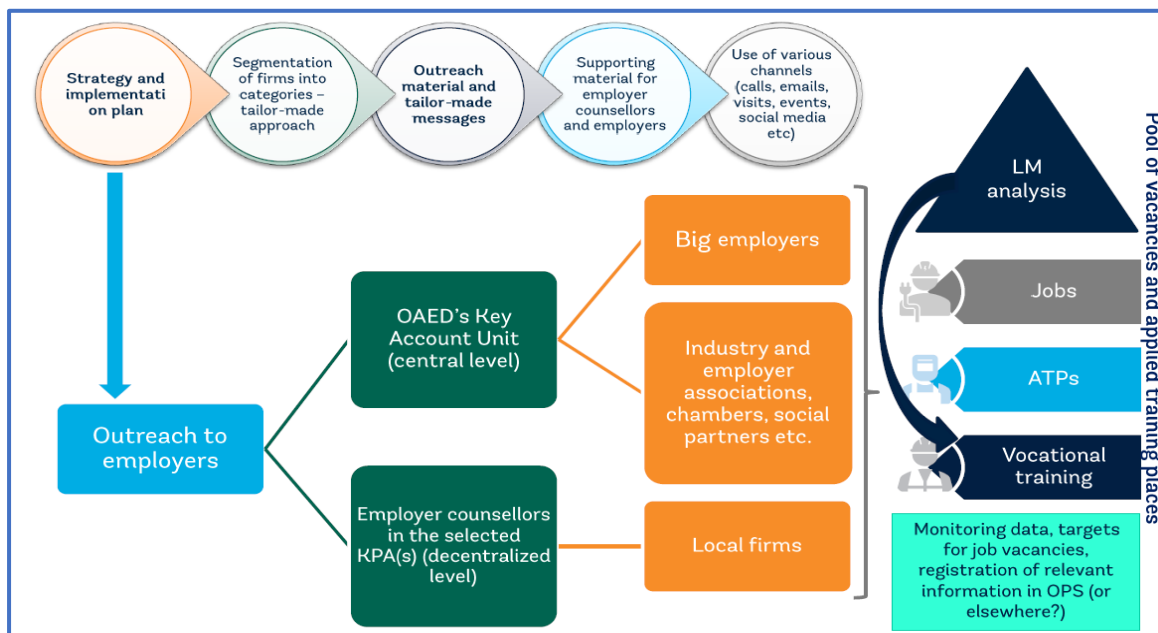


Figure 7: Proposed business processes related to employer engagement

To further facilitate the division of tasks and coordination within OAED teams and between OAED and the WBG, **it is strongly suggested to develop a detailed implementation plan for the preparation, launch and execution phases of the project.** As an example, the table below proposes some actions for the first year of the project related to employer outreach, with views to be further developed and agreed with OAED.

Proposed Implementation Plan¹⁷					
Activity	Responsibility	Time frame			
		July-Sept 2020	Oct-Dec. 2020	Jan-March 2021	Apr.-July 2021
STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN					
Strategy	WBG	Initial discussions	Agreed and finalized		
Implement Plan	WBG/OAED		Agreed and finalized		
IDENTIFICATION EMPLOYERS					
Initial list of potential employers	WBG	Delivered	To be updated as needed		
Categorization, prioritization	OAED to appoint team				
MESSAGES, OUTREACH MATERIAL					
Messages, coverage planning, frequency	WBG	Discussions	Agreed and finalized		
Core script	WBG	Discussions	Agreed and finalized	Disseminated..	Monitoring + dissemination
Brochure /Leaflet	OAED to appoint small team to develop the comms material		Agreed and finalized	Disseminated	

¹⁷ Under the assumption the project will be launched January 2021.

Proposed Implementation Plan¹⁷					
Activity	Responsibility	Time frame			
		July-Sept 2020	Oct-Dec. 2020	Jan-March 2021	Apr.-July 2021
Design and deployment of website	OAED to nominate team in liaison with IT unit responsible for web content		Designed	Test and launch. Operational at launch?	
Production of logo, visuals	OAED – as above		Agreed and finalized, incorporated to material, website		
USE OF CHANNELS					
Plan/coordination on direct, indirect channels, others	OAED		Agreed and finalized		
Social media	OAED		Agreed and finalized, initial campaign?	Maintain engagement?	
Regular media	OAED		Agreed and finalized	Interview at launch?	
Plan on supporting events/activities	OAED		Plan agreed and finalized		
EVENTS/ACTIVITIES					
tbc					

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ANNEX 1: CORE SCRIPT

(for OAED staff to communicate on the Refugee Pilot)

Purpose of this document

This document is aimed at Employer counsellors, Key Account Managers and OAED Communications staff. It is the main reference document for the Refugee Pilot and should be used by OAED staff as the basis for communicating details of the project to employers and employer representative groups and networks. It contains the basic facts of the program for use in emails, conversations, leaflets and website content. OAED can adapt the style, format and specific messages as convenient to the particular audience and means of communication.

This is a living document – it should be reviewed and updated as the project progresses and as new information becomes available, changes occur, or as some facts become out of date.

Rationale and background of the Refugee Pilot

OAED is the national employment service. As such it works with diverse client groups, including refugees who have settled in Greece.

OAED is now working on a pilot scheme to support a target group of unemployed refugees to enter the labor market. These are individuals who have already acquired refugee status (so they have the right to work in Greece), are or will be registered with OAED and reside in the Attica region¹⁸. The aim is to support them in their final step to self-sufficiency, i.e. finding a job. To this end, OAED will identify and select the most suitable candidates, while employers will take the final decision.

The pilot builds on OAED's experience and will apply lessons learned from previous programs. It is funded by EU Structural Funds and benefits from the World Bank's Technical Assistance in cooperation with the European Commission's DG REFORM.

Refugees who have registered as unemployed in the Attica region are a diverse group. There are currently slightly more men than women. Most registered refugees are young (below 40), eager to work, and have diverse levels of education (mostly primary).

The beneficiaries will mainly be looking for entry level/unskilled jobs – eg, as domestic and hotel helpers, cleaners, laborers in the manufacturing and construction industries, agricultural and general workers.

The project is expected to lay the basis for mainstreaming interventions for refugees into the menu of active labor market programs being piloted by OAED in preparation for scale up across Greece.

¹⁸ OAED to indicate other regions where project could expand in subsequent phases.

Outline of the project

This OAED pilot program aims to place around 1,000 recognized refugees into jobs. The first phase of the pilot will take place in the Attica region. The program builds on existing initiatives from International Organizations and NGOs.

This program will involve extensive outreach to employers in order to secure vacancies and applied training programs, and to inform the design of training interventions.

OAED will prepare registered refugees for employment by providing a wide range of interrelated activities, including:

- 1) Personalized, and group counselling and guidance,
- 2) Assessment of the skills, qualifications, career interests and personal qualities of beneficiaries
- 3) Placement into jobs
- 4) Placement into internships/applied training programs
- 5) Training, including Language and intercultural training,
- 6) Vocational training according to the needs of local companies
- 7) The use of digital platforms for recording the qualifications and skills of each beneficiary.

The particular challenges facing refugees

Finding a job is crucial to better integration into a new country and contribute to society. But refugees face significant challenges to access jobs:

- They lack personal networks and social ties to the countries of arrival
- They lack knowledge of the local language and culture
- They often have no documents to prove their previous qualifications or work experience
- They often face uncertainty about the future and psychological distress from the traumatic experiences they have lived through.

The advantages of moving refugees into work as soon as possible

For governments and wider society – refugee employment helps promote social cohesion and inclusion and has a positive economic impact through increasing the tax base and reducing informality.

If refugees spend too long on training programs it can lead to discouragement and to them dropping out of the formal labor market and as a result, becoming excluded from parts of the Greek society.

Employer reservations about hiring refugees and OAED's response

Experience suggests that many employers can be reluctant to hire refugees for a number of reasons. OAED is providing a range of support measures to alleviate their concerns.

Employer concerns	OAED response
Lack of certainty about the legal status of refugees with regard to work and fears about the bureaucracy of the hiring process	All candidates referred to firms under the refugee pilot will have work permits and the legal status to work in Greece. In terms of administration, the process for hiring refugees is similar to hiring Greek nationals. Those referred to firms will have an AMKA number, an AFM number and can open bank accounts.
Unsure about the skills or work experience of refugees	The local KPA (OAED office) registers the refugees and assesses their skills and experience before deciding on a range of referral options or support measures
Concerns about productivity due to language and cultural barriers, preference to hire nationals	Knowledge of the Greek language is also assessed and all candidates who require it will receive language and cultural training so that they have a functional knowledge of Greek and an understanding of Greek culture and work ethics before being referred to a firm
Perceived extra costs of training refugees to be work ready	Following screening of all candidates, they will be referred to pre-employment and skills training where necessary before referral to a firm. Pre-employment training will be funded by OAED and designed according to employer needs following consultations with employers.
Firms may worry that they end up receiving a candidate that they do not feel is suitable	Employers will have the choice of which individual they wish to hire, or take on an applied training program. OAED will do initial screening prior to referral.
COVID 19 has brought economic uncertainty to firms who may not be in a position to hire new workers	This is understandable. If a firm is not in a position to hire a new worker, they might wish to consider taking an internship/applied training program. This comes at no cost to the firm, it lasts up to 3 months, and provides valuable work experience and skills to a refugee. If a firm finds that work picks up during that period, this can provide them with a valuable trial period to see if their intern could become an employee.
New ways of working and greater use of technology will demand better digital skills which refugees may not have	Digital skills will be part of OAED's pre-employment training options if candidates show interest and if firms are asking for these skills.
A candidate might start with a firm but not fit in, or have problems that affect their work	OAED will monitor the progress of candidates who are placed with firms for a period of x months and employers will have a named contact within OAED that they can call upon if there are any issues.

The benefits that employing refugees can bring to companies

A growing number of businesses have committed to employing and training refugees. Their experience provides evidence of the business case employing refugees including but not limited to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) goals.

1. Refugees can fill labor gaps where there are hard to fill vacancies or sectors that are less attractive to local workers
2. They provide diverse skill sets and knowledge of a specific language or market segment
3. Employer surveys at international level show high rates of retention and motivation among refugee workers
4. Employing refugees can bring reputational gains, build customer loyalty for a brand and open up new market segments.

How employers sign up for the OAED refugee pilot

- To be confirmed by OAED

The options available to employers who want to get involved

- Employers can choose to offer candidates temporary or permanent jobs

and/or

- Internships/applied training programs: these are aimed at employers who do not have an immediate vacancy but who are willing to offer work experience to a refugee candidate with the potential to employ them if business picks up and the candidate turns out to be suitable. They are very useful for candidates who have potential but need to build their skills and work experience, and where employers can deliver on-the-job training to suit their own needs.
 - Internships/applied training programs are short term (up to 3 months) and free of charge for employers
 - They de-risk the recruitment process by giving the employer a chance to host a refugee for a few months and learn on the job before committing to hiring
 - Internships allow companies to find the right people by seeing how they operate in the workplace and as part of the team
 - During, or at the end of the period, employers can hire the intern or let them go with a reference/testimonial that they can use to help them find work elsewhere.
 - OAED counsellors will provide support throughout the internship to both employers and interns and will facilitate job placement of these candidates

- Candidates on internships may also get extra support from OAED if required – for example with additional language training via evening classes to improve language proficiency.

Support available to employers who hire or host refugees on internships/ATPs

In addition to an account manager who provides a named point of contact for employers throughout the recruitment process and while beneficiaries are in their company – either in a job or on an internship, OAED will produce ad-hoc material to provide employers with more detailed information. Options could include:

- Employers' Guide to Hiring Refugees – a toolkit for employers to help them design and implement refugee programs that will be maximally successful for both employers and refugees. An example from the UK can be assessed [here](#).
- What makes a good internship? – a guide for employers on how to provide a positive, structured learning experience that benefits both the individuals and the employers concerned.

ANNEX 2: DISCUSSION PROMPTS

(for OAED counsellors' initial visits to firms)

Purpose of this document

This document is designed to support Employers Counsellors and Key Account Managers making initial visits to employers to introduce the refugee pilot. It offers discussion prompts that could help OAED's staff understand whether companies are sympathetic to hiring refugees, whether they have any prior experience with this process and what kind of opportunities they can offer – i.e. jobs/applied training programs/internships. If employers are sympathetic, OAED staff could also identify the job roles they recruit for, and the types of skills they are seeking. Through these prompts, it will be possible to identify if employers are members of wider networks that OAED staff can access to further spread information about the pilot. Finally, OAED staff could determine whether a follow up with the company is needed, in what way and by whom.

Large Firms

- Introduce OAED and share information on the pilot
- Explore the activities of the company in Greece, their geographic coverage, size and nature of the workforce; types of jobs in the company
- Does the company have any ongoing activities in support of refugees in Greece? Are they members of any networks or partnerships that support refugees? Would they be willing to allow access to this network – for example to share information on the pilot?
- Do they have experience in hiring refugees? Do they have experience in hiring migrants and in particular lower skilled migrants?
- Do they have any employees from the same countries of origin (Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, for example) or language areas?
- If the company has no previous experience in hiring refugees, would they be willing to try?
- How could they be supported to take the first step? Identify potential concerns about hiring refugee workers that the company might have. Are there any constraints OAED could remove for them? Things they cannot deal with directly? Why? (lack of time, resources, risks, etc)
- Gain an understanding of their skill needs - what kind of skills they really are looking for and how would they ideally want to test for those skills? Would they be ready to work with us on designing simple on-the-job skill tests for specific occupations?
- Which potential pilot interventions could make refugees more job-ready for this company? This could include screening of the candidates or short trial periods. Do they already have such skill testing/screening mechanisms in place? Or elements of it, on which OAED could build upon?
- Would the opportunity to offer an internship be attractive? Would you be willing to give some training to beneficiaries on an internship to help them get work ready for your company?
- Would you prefer that beneficiaries have some vocational training before they come to your firm? Would you be willing to help design a training course so that it meets your needs?

- Confirm whether the firm would be willing to be involved in the pilot and amenable to follow up discussions. Ascertain whether they have vacancies, or if they would offer internships – how many? What type?

Small and Medium size Enterprises

- Share information on the pilot – stress that we want it to be aligned with employer needs and we are talking to large employers too
- Understand the activities of the SMEs, in particular if they are suppliers to larger companies in Greece or further afield – if so, ask if they are aware of any activity the large employers are involved with to support refugees
- Find out how they connect with other employers, public authorities and community organizations, i.e. if they are members of any employer or community networks or fora. Check if they would mind if OAED access these networks to spread the word about the pilot?
- Ask whether they have recruited recently or are planning to, and ask about their skills needs, i.e. if they look for technical, soft skills, language skills, numeracy or IT skills
- Explore whether they currently conduct training for their own staff, or offer work experience/internships to externals, i.e. young/disabled/long-term unemployed people (which may suggest an openness to hire refugees)
- Ask about recruitment channels most frequently used, and if they have ever used OAED for recruitment or been involved in any government-funded employment or training programs
- Explore if they are currently involved in any ongoing activities to support refugees in Greece or have ever hired refugees as part of their workforce or offered them internships. If so, discuss their positive and negative experiences.
- Identify potential concerns the SMEs may have about hiring refugee workers – eg language barriers; cultural differences; lack of skills or credentials; bureaucracy/red tape; lack of firm capacity to screen and recruit refugees; uncertainty about refugees’ legal status; extra costs to the firm like insurance
- Probe the kind of support they feel they would need from OAED to make them open to hosting and/or hiring refugees, i.e. screening; recruitment; pre-employment training; mentoring for refugee employees and for companies for support with any issues arising; support networks of peers who are also involved in activities to support refugees; guidance/handbooks
- Identify potential pilot interventions that could make refugees more job-ready for this company
- Confirm whether the firm would be willing to be involved in the pilot and amenable to follow up discussions. Ascertain whether they have vacancies, or if they would offer internships – how many? What type?

ANNEX 3: LIST OF POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS

Provided in a separate Excel file