



# Labour market conditions for researchers with a refugee background

Main findings from selected  
European countries

# Summary

**T**his report summarises and compares views from researchers and employers on the labour market conditions for researchers with a refugee background (hereinafter researchers) in 10 European countries: Austria, Belgium/Flanders, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the Netherlands. It is part of the CARE project (Career Advancement for Refugee Researchers in Europe), funded under the Horizon2020 Science4Refugees initiative.

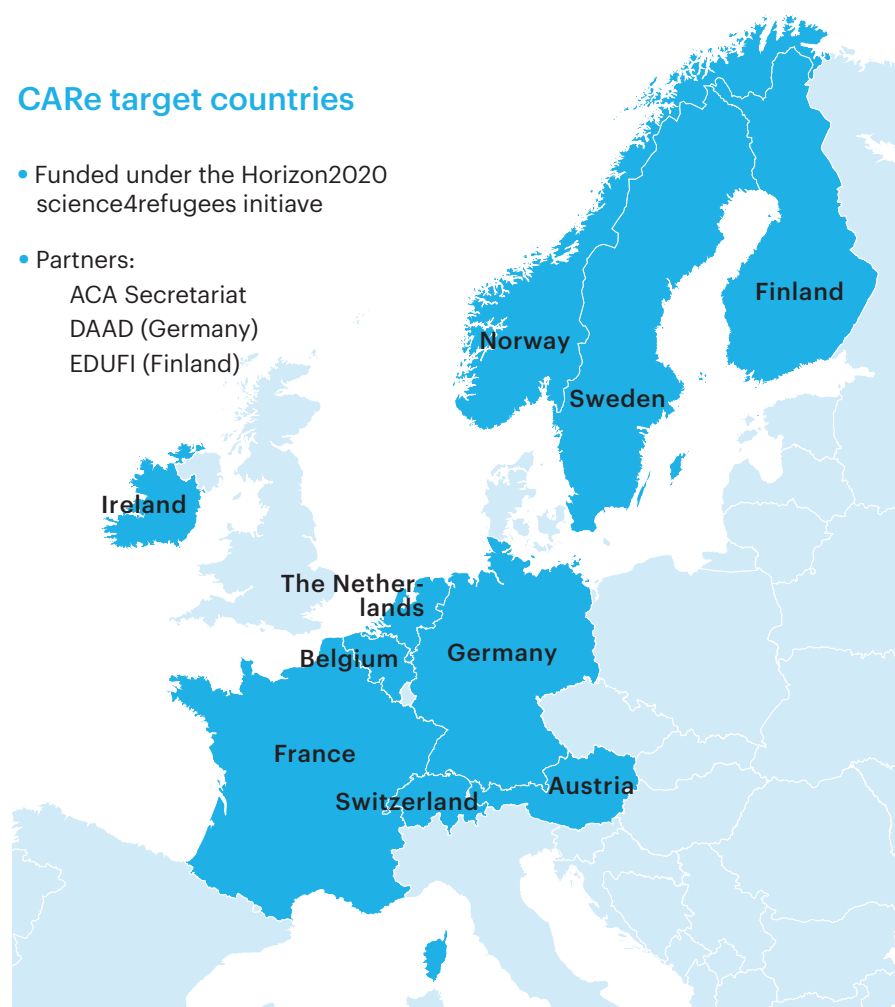
CARE is a 24-month project supporting the integration of researchers with a refugee background into the European research labour market by providing needs-based information and guidance related to specific job search in the 10 countries covered by the project. The project provides needs-based guidance and country-specific information on employment requirements and opportunities for the target group, through the following main activities: **focus groups** engaging researchers from the target group in discussion on their personal and professional experiences, trajectories and further work-related needs, **an employer survey** looking into employers' requirements and experience with the target group, **country guides** providing customised information on national research labour markets, and **country-specific webinars** to share first-hand information concerning national-level employment, legal and administrative aspects relevant for the target group.

In order to map and better understand the labour market conditions for researchers with refugee background, the CARE consortium conducted focus groups and an employer survey in the 10 target countries between June 2019 and February 2020. The CARE consortium held focus groups with researchers in different stages of their careers and of different employment status. The aim of the focus groups (FGs) was to

map the **experiences, competences and support needs of researchers** who are navigating the research labour market in the host countries. The employer survey, which ran between November 2019 and February 2020, gathered the **views and experiences of employers**, i.e. organisations identified as having a suitable profile to employ the researchers (HEIs, research institutes and clusters, companies and similar associations/networks).

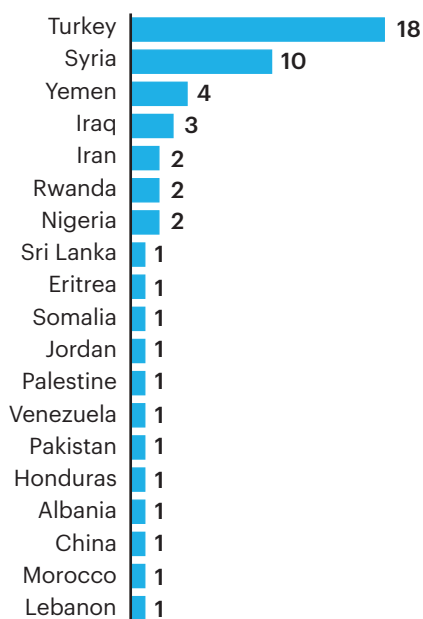
## CARE target countries

- Funded under the Horizon2020 science4refugees initiative
- Partners:
  - ACA Secretariat
  - DAAD (Germany)
  - EDUFI (Finland)



## Who are the participants of the CArE focus groups?

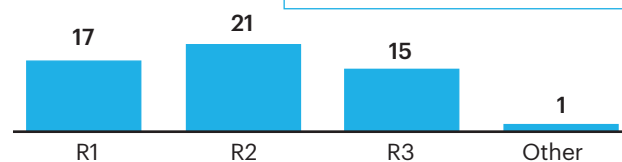
### Countries of origin



### Gender distribution in the focus groups



### Research profile



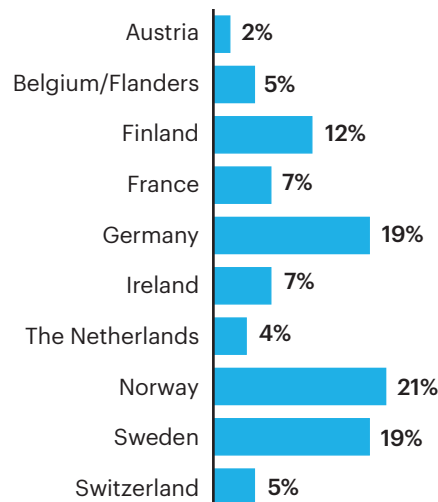
**R1 First Stage Researcher**, up to the point of PhD  
**R2 Recognised Researcher**, PhD holders or equivalent who are not yet fully independent  
**R3 Established Researcher**, researchers who have developed a level of independence

### Current employment status

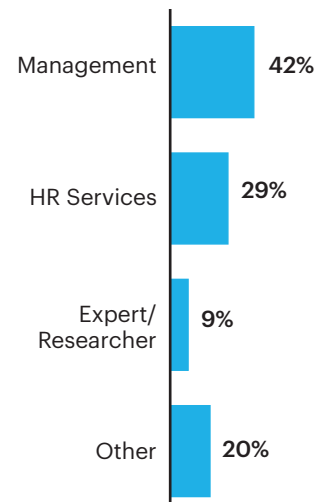


## Who are the employers in the CArE survey?

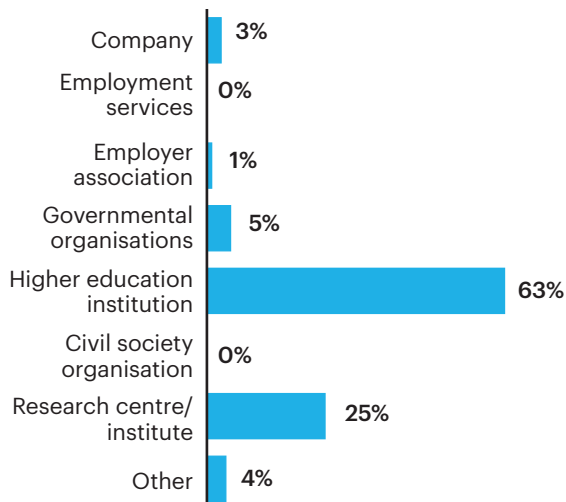
### Respondents per country



### Positions of the participants



### Type of the participants' organisation



The survey looked into the main incentives and obstacles for hiring this specific target group as well as into the main benefits and challenges of having done so.

While this report presents only the main results from the focus groups and employer survey, the complete findings from the two data collection activities

were systematised in **two full reports**, which contain a full data overview, and are available [here](#).

The aim of this, as well as the two extensive reports, is to contribute to a better understanding and potentially, to bridging the gaps between policies and practice in the integration of researchers with this specific profile. It is

to provide relevant material for policy debates and present first-hand information and authentic accounts directly from the target group on how to resolve multi-layered and intertwined complexities which stand in the way of finding adequate employment for this target group in Europe.

# Researchers' views

• **The findings from the focus groups** point to a combination of professional, cultural and social factors that affect labour market access and integration of researchers with refugee background – from insufficient knowledge of the new academic culture and struggles with host-country language, limited contacts and sources of information, to a lack of opportunities for professional development

and guidance from competent bodies. Despite researchers' strong motivation to continue their professional path in the host country, this process is often obstructed or heavily delayed by unclear administrative and legal regulations, lack of local networks, accessible information and targeted support that would cater for the specific needs of the target group.

**R**esearchers firstly and unsurprisingly point out a strong **motivation to continue their work** after arriving in a certain country, either through a temporary contract or project-based work. Although finding a stable job in research is the preferred option, researchers understand how competitive such vacancies are. However, even temporary contracts are very difficult to obtain. Furthermore, to enter academia, one needs **relevant local contacts** and insights, not only in the general academic culture, but also to more or less apparent differences in working styles which can be decisive in getting a position in such a highly competitive environment. Researchers generally consider their skills to be sufficient for the positions they apply for, as they already have academic experience, some of them significant, from their home countries.

**Targeted support** is thus required to bridge the gaps in their careers, which occurred in the process of moving to

Europe and later on dealing with the state administration before settling in and starting to look for a job. Although many researchers mentioned actively following developments in their research fields, they do point to the hurdle of having lost time on administrative procedures instead of building professional networks as a hurdle. Therefore, they emphasise, it is necessary to bear in mind the **varieties of academic backgrounds**, as well as **interrupted career paths** among many of the researchers from this group.

*"Even if you have been able to save yourself and your family from the war, it is more difficult to save your research career."*

**Language proficiency** is high on the list of aspects affecting the hiring process. Research positions usually require proficiency in English, which many candidates possess. However, even when it is not explicitly mentioned in the

call, local or additional languages are a strong asset in the hiring process. Language-related challenges were especially highlighted in multilingual countries like Switzerland and Belgium, where moving from one canton or region to another may imply learning a new language. Similarly, those who lived in multiple countries in Europe while looking for asylum or employment had to learn a new language every year or two while in the host country, with hopes of staying, until they got rejected or failed to find employment, and had to move on to another country.

Many scholars are eager to contribute to the society and are disappointed when opportunities to do so are not given. The contribution that researchers with different backgrounds and career paths can make to the European community should be recognised along with building the necessary support structures. Some scholars highlighted that there are PhD positions available to enter academia, but post-doctoral positions

are more scarce and highly competitive. Both inside and outside of academia, it is not uncommon that the higher degree one holds, the more challenging it is to find a suitable position. Instead, some researchers were expected to accept positions that nobody else wanted to take. Researchers observed that it may, in some cases, be related to underlying structural racism and discrimination. A number of researchers shared stories where they had to give up their work in research and requalify, in order to find employment in other areas which were only to some extent related to their field of research. Outside academia, **overqualification** becomes a concrete burden.

*“Be mindful that everyone is not like you.”*

Some of the **potential mitigation measures** proposed by the researchers, to offset against time and talent lost, would be to provide such targeted support through, for example, tailored

language training, career guidance specific for the target group (instead of general employment services that they are usually referred to), peer support and sharing of authentic accounts with people who have been through similar experiences (which is particularly highlighted), as well as clearer and more accessible information on relevant services, regulations and frameworks. As general services often lack detailed information for this target group, researchers highlight it would be more helpful to get access to HEIs’ career services, where they are more likely to receive relevant information. Researchers agree that having an **intermediary body** would be highly helpful, as an “interface” between researchers and different services and potential employers, to make information exchange more efficient and relevant for both sides. Such a specialised entity would provide tailored information on legal requirements, offer guidance on socio-cultural aspects, or information on funding opportunities and even matchmaking with employers.

**Tailored support programmes** are generally considered to be highly useful. They are considered as a stepping-stone for entering academia or the research environment, as they foster networking and contact-building, and generally help researchers to find their way in a new professional setting. However, some of the reservations among researchers relate to the questionable long-term sustainability of such programmes and unintended tendencies to label researchers primarily as refugees rather than scientists, which can lead to pitying or even “looking down” upon them. With their refugee or at-risk status highlighted, these researchers are put in the spotlight as a victimised group when instead, they want to be seen primarily as members of the academic community and judged by their academic achievements.

*“I refuse to be supported as a refugee but as a scholar.”*

Observation	Recommendation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Career disruptions</b> pose major challenges when arriving in and adapting to a different academic culture. Stressful experiences need to be taken into account.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researchers with refugee background need <b>time and support</b> to adjust to a new academic culture and tradition.</li> <li>• Ensuring access to <b>psycho-social support</b> is paramount.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Networks</b> are crucial for enabling the continuity of the academic career.</li> <li>• <b>Scholars without affiliation</b> struggle to follow developments in their research field without resources to attend conferences and no access to academic e-journals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide relevant <b>networking opportunities</b> for researchers with refugee background in their research field. This could entail:</li> <li>• Providing <b>support to attend international conferences</b> would be extremely beneficial both for scholars with no current affiliation and for those with a research position.</li> <li>• <b>Facilitate contacts through matchmaking events</b> and other channels to provide direct contact with universities and NGOs.</li> </ul>

Observation	Recommendation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They also struggle to <b>maintain research careers and to establish connections</b> to employers inside and outside academia.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a <b>visitor scholar programme for refugees</b>: a possibility to operate as an assistant lecturer and support scholars' connection with their own academic field. It would allow to connect them to an academic community and provide networking opportunities, access to resources, academic career services, library and e-journals,</li> <li>• Provide (more) internship opportunities for refugees.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The target group is often not aware of the existing initiatives facilitating <b>peer support</b>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create new platforms for <b>peer support</b> (on or off-line).</li> <li>• Enhance and customise the <b>promotion of existing peer support activities</b> so that the information reaches the target group.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Information on research career opportunities and funding structures</b> is often considered as common knowledge and it is not always openly available.</li> <li>• This information might not be <b>transparent</b> for scholars with different backgrounds.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Clarity and accessibility</b> of information needs to be improved.</li> <li>• Provide <b>support in applying for funding and vacancies</b>, academic writing, and publishing structures both during PhD studies and when researchers in various stages of their careers arrive in a new country.</li> <li>• <b>Support</b> start-ups, business ideas and initiatives <b>outside academia</b>.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient level of <b>local language skills</b> is seen as a barrier.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide <b>targeted academic language training opportunities</b> for researchers with refugee background.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inability to guarantee the <b>anonymity</b> of at-risk scholars causes frustration and the feeling of unsafety.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support and recognise the anonymity of the target group in their working environment and among support programmes.</li> <li>• Have <b>clear procedures</b> in place supporting academic careers of at-risk scholars who wish to stay anonymous.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research communities are not always as diverse or open to diversity.</li> <li>• Refugees are often seen as a homogenous group with low qualifications.</li> <li>• Many researchers report having experienced systemic <b>racism and discrimination</b> in the recruitment process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All relevant actors at EU, national and institutional level should be actively <b>changing and diversifying the image of refugees</b>, building awareness that it also includes highly skilled researchers.</li> <li>• Ensure <b>inclusiveness</b> of the own institution by critically reviewing the recruitment processes.</li> </ul>

Observation	Recommendation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scholars supported by existing programmes put forward suggestions for further development and improvements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular <b>reviewing of the existing support programmes</b> based on the feedback collected from the supported scholars.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Short-term grants</b> are problematic with little time to establish the research career.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure support for a <b>sustainable career path</b> beyond the grant period in all support programmes.</li> <li>• Explore <b>opportunities for long-term support structures</b> for the scholars in the framework of the support programmes.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for <b>targeted support</b> for researchers with refugee background, recognised and intensified throughout Europe.</li> <li>• Support initiatives are not available in all European countries.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce an <b>EU-wide support programme</b> for at-risk academics to ensure availability in all European countries.</li> <li>• Ensure availability of support structures on <b>national and institutional levels</b>.</li> <li>• Clarify and provide more information on <b>mobility possibilities</b> with different residence permits both for scholars and employers.</li> <li>• Introduce an <b>intermediary actor</b> operating between academia and employment offices providing support and assistance in job search and administrative and legal aspects.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>EURAXESS platform</b> is potentially very useful and relevant for the researchers with refugee background but is currently not widely known among the target group.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Intensify the promotion of EURAXESS services</b> among the target group of highly skilled refugees.</li> <li>• Link EURAXESS with national support structures.</li> <li>• Further develop science4refugees services on national levels.</li> </ul>

# Employers' views

• **Employers' views on hiring researchers** with refugee background can provisionally be seen through two categories: those who hired them and those who did not. Of the total of 104 respondents, around 40% belong to the former group, while some 30% have not done so and the rest had no knowledge of whether their organisation had hired anyone from the target group.

The employers' feedback clearly demonstrates that the highest relevance in the hiring process is given to **professional and language skills** of the candidate, regardless of whether they have or not employed researchers with this background. Employers who have done so report the **availability of funding and internationalisation of the workplace**

**and research** as two other strong incentives to hire these researchers. Out of this group, two-thirds have employed researchers through an intermediary body providing customised support for this target group. **Diversified professional skills, strengthened social responsibility and internationalisation of the workplace and research** are the most frequently mentioned benefits of employing researchers from the target group. Despite the mixed views and experiences among employers, the most common challenges in hiring researchers are of **administrative nature** (residence permits) and related to lack of **linguistic skills** (low or no proficiency in the host-country language). Recognition, although not without hurdles, seems to pose slightly less of a challenge.

**E**mployers who have had experience with hiring the target group (42 respondents) highlight **strengthened social responsibility, diversified professional skills and internationalisation of workplace and research** as the main benefits gained from employing the target group. Even though all the respondents rank highly the relevance of additional financial support as an incentive to hire researchers, those who have hired them do not rank financial support equally high amongst the perceived benefits. In this group, almost the same share of employers have seen

some financial benefits from additional funding as those who have not. Again, targeted funding programmes for refugee-background researchers come to the fore as examples of good practice and as a beneficial window of opportunity for the target group. Their benefit is seen not only in actual funding, but also in providing a justifiable course of action towards positive discrimination. However, the respondents clearly point to the challenge of limited duration, given that such programmes usually take the form of one, two or three-year scholarships. While helpful, such sup-

port does not fully align with the real need of the target group, which lies in having (longer-term) research positions. Apart from funding, experiences are relatively challenging when it comes to the matters related to **administrative procedures** while they are somewhat divided concerning the language barrier.

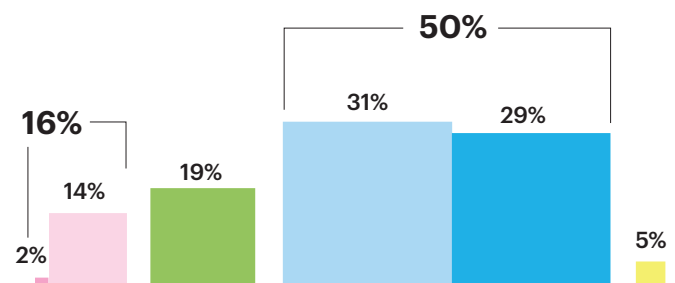
In contrast, foreign language skills, cultural differences and differences in academic traditions are not perceived as major challenges by employers. Neither do employers report negative attitudes, in the organisation or public, as a



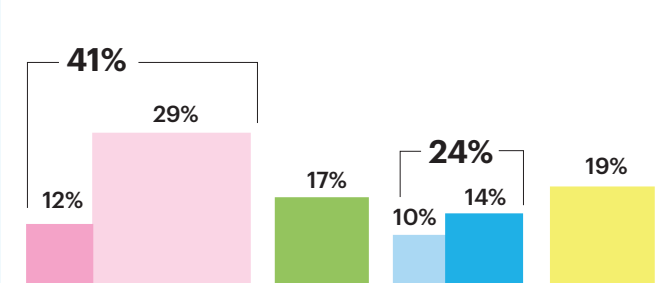
## Evaluate to what extent has your organisation/department experienced the following benefits during employment of researcher(s) with refugee background?

■ Not at all   
 ■ Little   
 ■ Somewhat   
 ■ Much   
 ■ Very much   
 ■ Not relevant

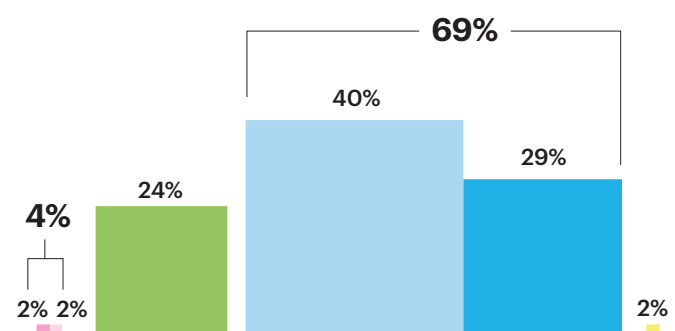
Diversified professional skills



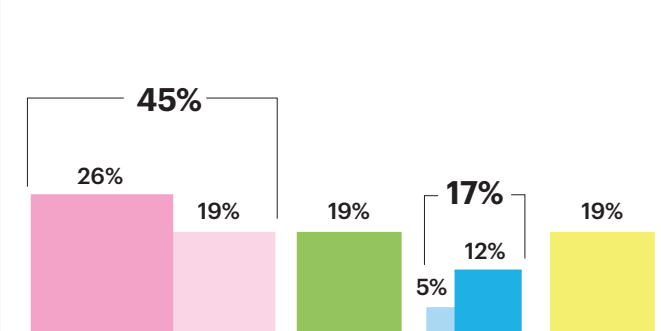
Additional language skills



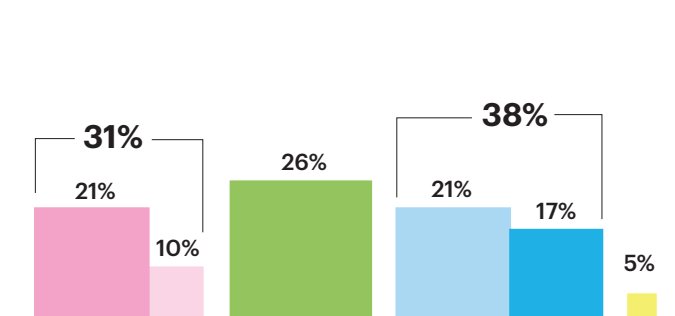
Strengthened social responsibility



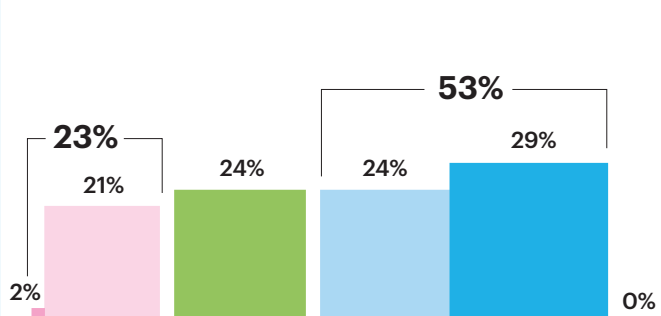
New business opportunities



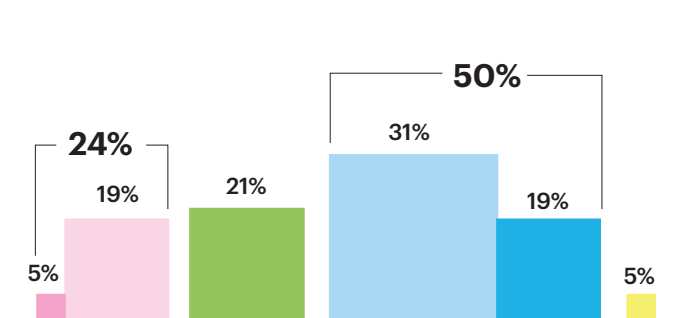
Additional financial support



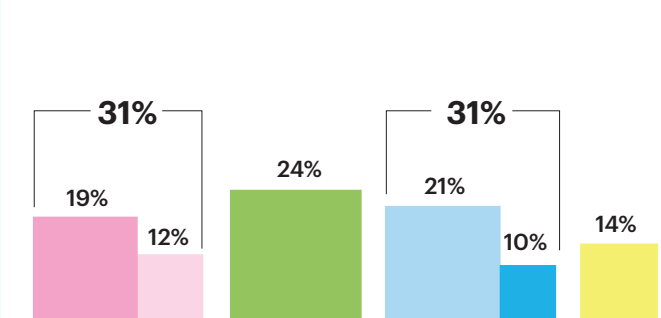
Internationalization of the work community



Internationalization of the research



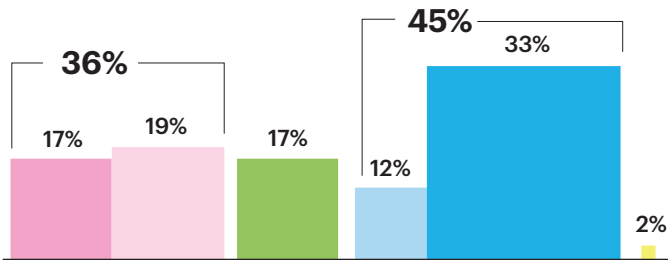
Innovations



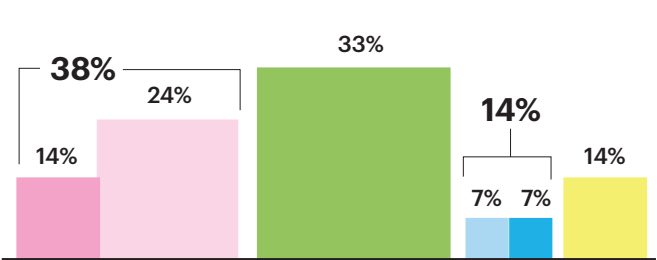
# Evaluate to what extent has your organisation/department encountered the following challenges during employment of researcher(s) with refugee background?

Not at all
Little
Somewhat
Much
Very much
Not relevant

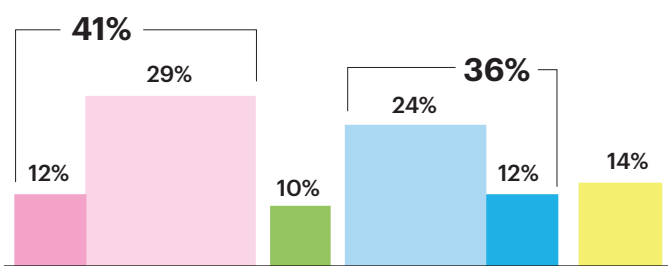
Issues concerning residence permits



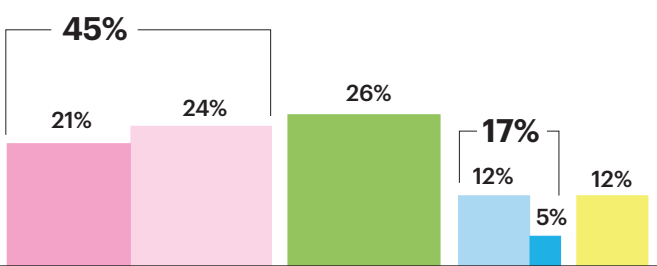
Gaps in required professional skills



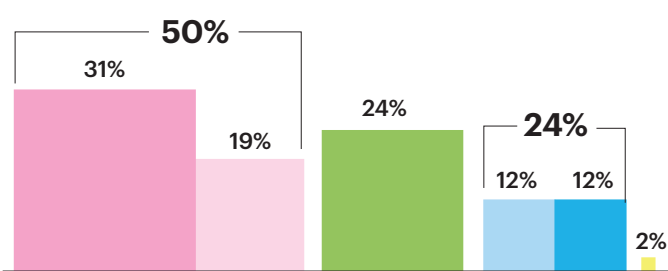
Insufficient level of host-country language skills



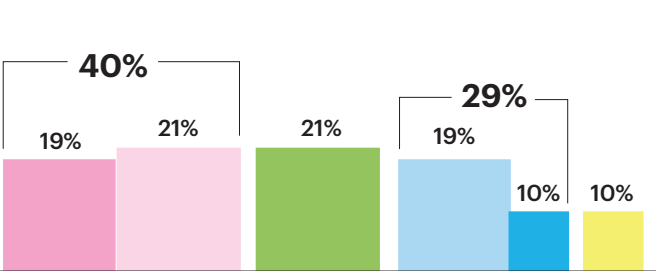
Insufficient level of foreign language skills



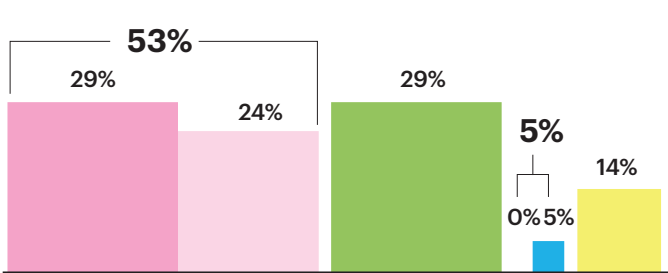
Recognition of qualifications



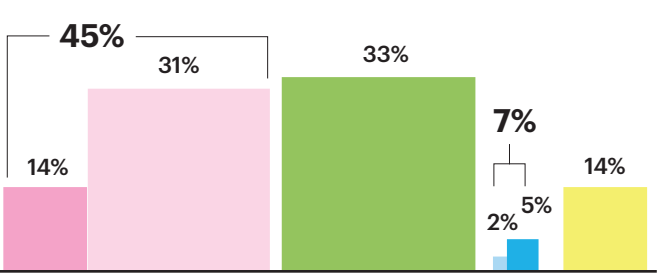
Family issues



Health issues



Lack of information and support structures



challenge they experienced when hiring the target group, as already mentioned. Although (problems with) recognition of qualifications was seen as an obstacle to hiring researchers from the target group. Lack of information and support structures was not a major challenge for slightly less than half of employers who hired the target group, although 33% report having struggled with it to some extent.

Employers welcome the possibility of having support of an **intermediary or matchmaking organisation**, a body specialised and experienced in working with this specific group of researchers, who would provide relevant information on funding, legal aspects, support in the recruitment process and sensitise both the employer and candidate about

the working culture and academic tradition.

Support through dedicated programmes and fellowships for this target group is recognised and welcome, such as through different matchmaking and support networks (e.g. SAR across Europe, PSI in Germany, or PAUSE in France, and other national programmes across the target countries), and what respondents from academia find particularly beneficial is that the procedures are less cumbersome than through the usual recruitment processes in higher education institutions.

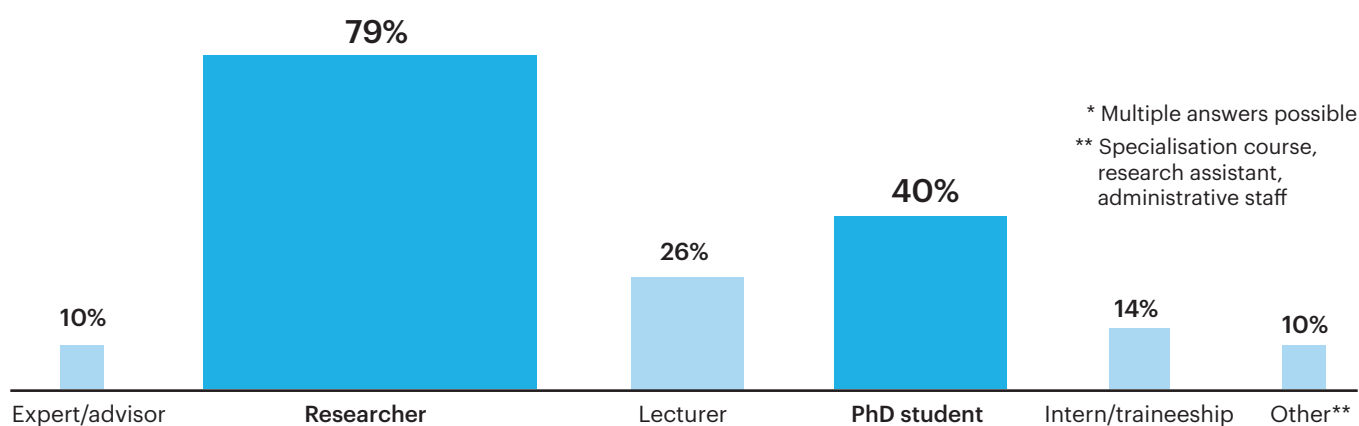
Two-thirds of employers say they have made efforts to provide additional support to researchers in order to help them integrate into the new environme-

nt, not only from the academic and professional perspective (academic training and info sessions on research funding and proposal writing), but also social and personal. Such support usually takes the form of individual assistance with accommodation, administrative matters and health-related issues.

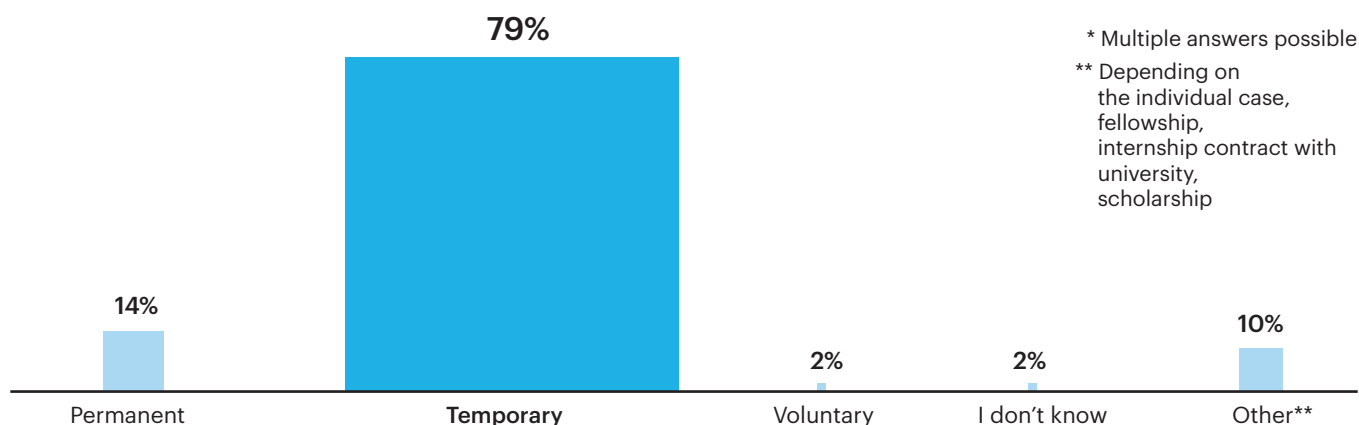
Among the group of employers who have not hired researchers with refugee background, two-thirds state that there were **no suitable candidates**, and to a lesser extent due to **language barriers**, **lack of information or funding**. Since such research positions are open to international candidates, the competition comes from all over the world, resulting in very low success rates.

## Professional situation/status of the employed researchers

To what kind of position have you employed researcher(s) with refugee background?\*



Contract type(s) offered to researcher(s) with refugee background\*



## Main incentives for employment

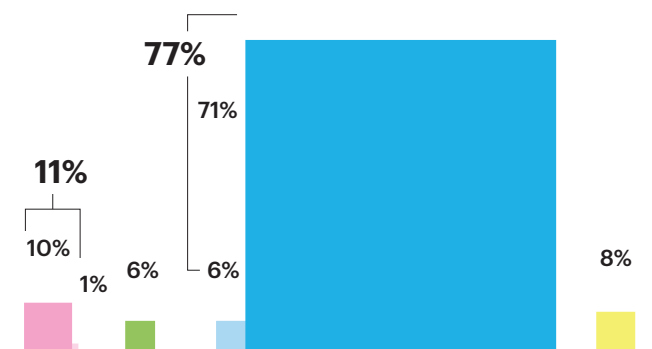
• The responses clearly show the highest relevance of **professional skills and qualifications** and language skills, and as indicated by some respondents, usually irrespective of the candidate's background. Financial support is also relevant, and many respondents note that the level of available funding for this group is insufficient. Among the employers who hire the target group, around one

third have received support specially earmarked for at-risk and refugee-background scholars. Other incentives highly rated by respondents pertain to institutional goals for **social responsibility and internationalisation**, both of workplace and research. Additional financial support was, nevertheless, what made the recruitment possible in many cases.

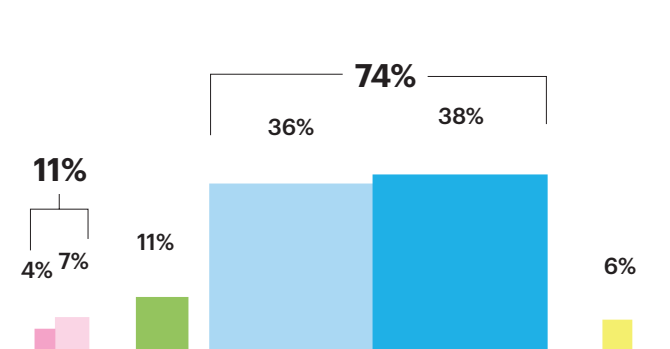
## Have the following aspects affected the process of hiring researcher(s) with refugee background?

■ No effect   
 ■ Minor effect   
 ■ Neutral   
 ■ Moderate effect   
 ■ Major effect   
 ■ Not relevant

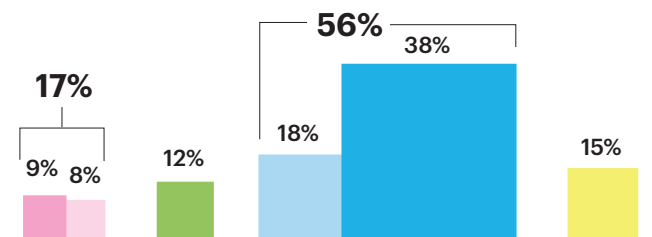
### Professional skills of the researcher/candidate



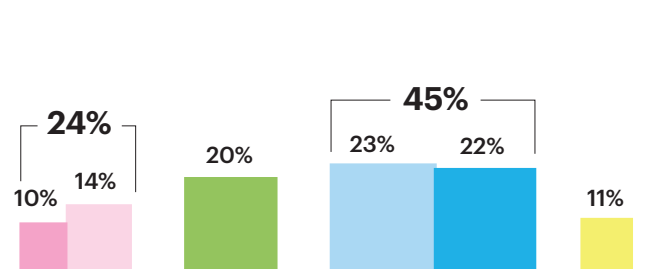
### Language skills of the researcher/candidate



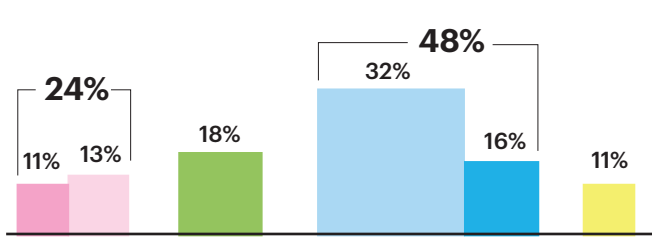
### Financial support available for the researcher/candidate (e.g. through funding programs)



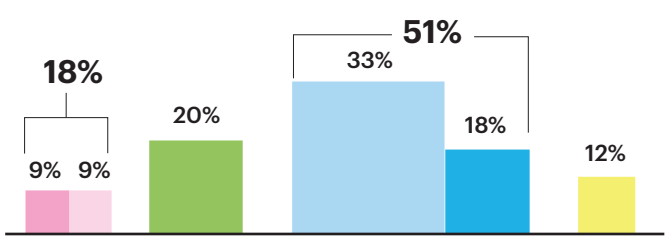
### Social responsibility of the company/organisation



### Internationalisation of the workplace



### Internationalisation of the research



## Main obstacles for employment

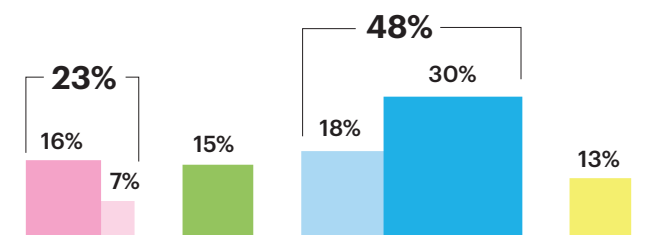
• The same main factors that positively affect the decision on hiring researchers tend to have a negative impact on the hiring process – **professional skills, insufficient level of the host-country language**, together with obstacles around **recognition of qualifications**. Additional obstacles for employers pertain to **rules and regulations** on asylum-seekers' and refugees' access to the labour market, as well the related **uncertainty** around the

duration of work or other residence permits. Employers see, to a much lesser degree than the FG participants, family issues or sceptical attitudes towards the target group as a considerable challenge during researchers' employment. As an illustration, 86% of employers report having not at all or only slightly experienced challenges related to negative attitudes within the organisation and 81% report no negative public opinion towards researchers.

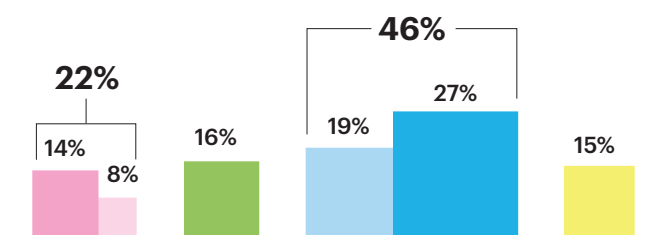
## Have the following aspects affected the process of hiring researcher(s) with refugee background?

■ No effect   
 ■ Minor effect   
 ■ Neutral   
 ■ Moderate effect   
 ■ Major effect   
 ■ Not relevant

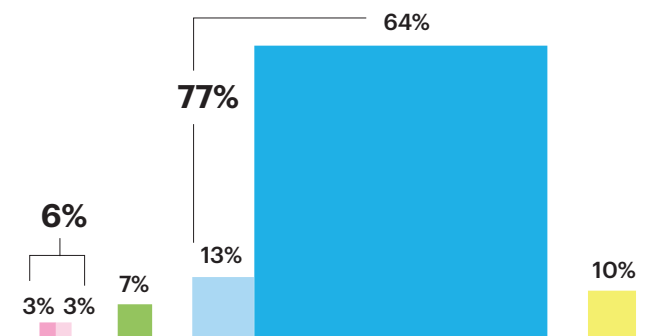
The rules governing the refugees' and asylum seekers' rights to labour market access



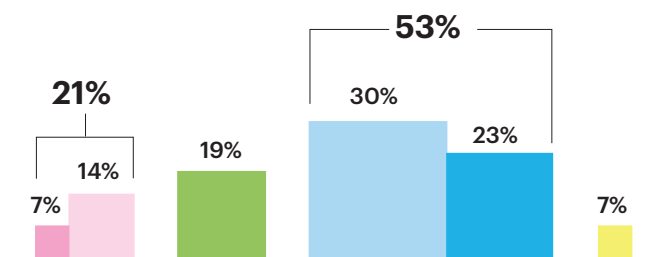
Uncertainty concerning the duration of residence permit



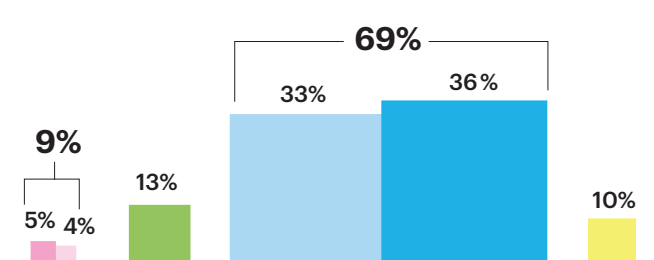
Level of professional skills of the researcher/candidate



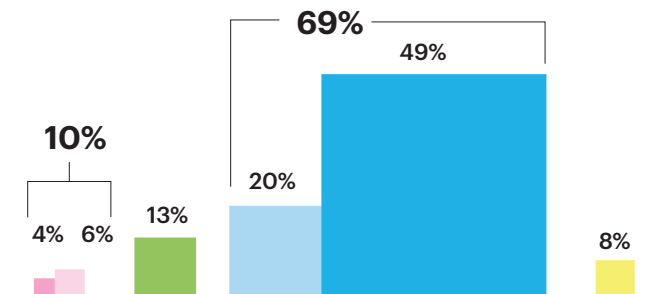
Level of host-country language skills of the researcher/candidate



Level of foreign language skills of the researcher/candidate



Recognition of qualifications of the researcher/candidate



# How to further support labour market integration of researchers with refugee background?

All employer respondents were asked to comment on the further support needed to facilitate labour market integration of researchers with refugee background. Among the extensive list of proposed support measures, the main ones pertain to the need for additional **funding**, especially in a long-term perspective, together

*“We employ the person best qualified for the position, regardless of the background.”*

with **administrative support, cooperation and partnerships** with companies, local authorities and more exchange with immigration services. Concerning the latter, **more predictable and easier immigration procedures** and more

timely processing of documentation is necessary, especially concerning residence permits, to facilitate researchers’ entry into the labour market. In addition to local authorities and immigration services, **more cooperation** is needed with and between other key stakeholders in the public sector, such as ministries of education and their designated agencies for education and research, or trade unions. The involvement of R&D and international companies is perceived as of great potential for supporting employment of the target group, but this would require an additional effort to establish stronger links and more targeted communication from the existing support providers towards employers.

**Language and cultural training** for both employers and researchers comes

forth as a welcomed sensitisation measure to facilitate better mutual understanding of cultural contexts and manage expectations. According to employers, raising awareness and changing attitudes is highly important in order to break stereotypes often attached to the “refugee” label. Furthermore, as one respondent highlighted,

*“We would like to have a research staff as a mirror of the population.”*

even when there is a professional HR service to facilitate recruitment, it may be challenging for them to cater for a researcher who has potentially gone through a traumatic experience and whose life has changed drastically.

Observation	Recommendation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Private companies active in R&amp;D field represent a potentially significant employer sector for the target group.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Efforts should be made for <b>more awareness raising</b> in the private sector.</li> <li><b>Create links and intensify cooperation with companies</b> in the existing support programmes for at-risk scholars to improve employment opportunities.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employers do not differ or recognise researchers with refugee background as a separate group in a way that would have an impact on the recruitment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take into account the need for <b>targeted support</b> given the specific challenges the researchers of this group encounter.</li> </ul>

Observation	Recommendation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employers lack knowledge and information of the legal status and work permits of refugees/asylum seekers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide <b>clear, easily accessible information</b> on the residence status and working opportunities.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The lack of local language skills identified as one of the challenges in the recruitment process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure <b>language training</b> opportunities of the local language for researchers with refugee background.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An intermediary body creating connections between scholars and employers is lacking.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create <b>support structures for recruitment</b> and introduce match-making efforts.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further support measures needed in Europe.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intensify <b>specific support</b> and introduce <b>more initiatives for the target group</b> on all levels - European, national and local.</li> <li>• <b>More funding for targeted measures</b> to create entry and pathways to academic communities.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration between the main stakeholders is needed in order to create further opportunities for researchers with refugee background.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create <b>more (and stronger) networks and partnerships</b> for enhancement of employment opportunities for researchers at-risk/with refugee background.</li> </ul>

# Comparative perspectives, gaps and the way forward

**B**oth researchers and employers point to the high **relevance of the (level and type) of financial support available** for researchers with this specific profile. Two-thirds of employers who have hired researchers did so through an intermediary body, support programme or network that provides funding schemes for the target group. However, what remains a challenge in such cases, and both the researchers and employers agree, is the short duration of this kind of support (one to three years), which is often not sufficient to fully establish oneself in the field and find an opportunity for further employment once the funding is over. Another identified common challenge, although from the researchers' viewpoint to a larger degree, is the **label** that goes hand in hand with receiving support through special programmes – “refugee” comes before “researcher”, which they feel undermines their achievement and works to their disadvantage. Employers, on the other hand, see such programmes as

beneficial precisely because they target a specific group of researchers and help provide them with the necessary support outside the “regular” pool of competition, which is admittedly fierce and often disadvantageous to the target group. Apart from funding, the relevance of **intermediary bodies** is reflected in the need for guidance and provision of tailored information. For researchers, such guidance is necessary on available job and networking opportunities, academic cultures and procedural aspects. For employers, such support is needed when dealing with legal and administrative aspects related to permits and status of candidates with this particular background. There is a recognised need for **language training** as one of the integration measures in the host-country, working culture and job-specific jargon, by both researchers and employers.

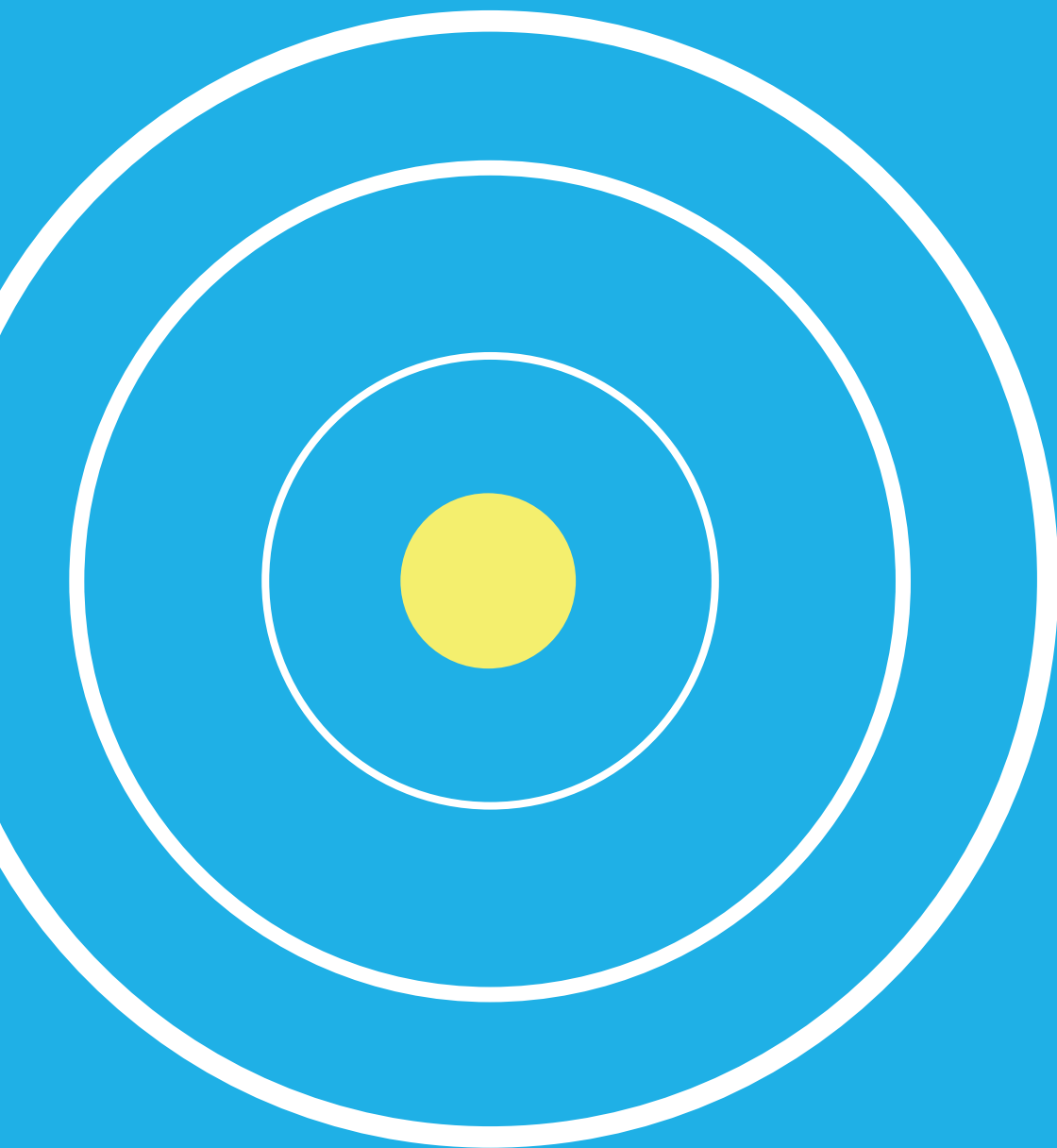
Where the views of researchers and employers differ is the level of **impact of cultural and academic traditions**

on both the hiring process and the career path of researchers. Although employers do acknowledge the need for some kind of sensitisation training on cultural differences for both groups, the concerns about potential bias and discrimination when it comes to the types of jobs and qualification levels offered are distinctly higher among researchers than among employers. This discrepancy in views may be accounted for by the strong emphasis by employers on professional skills of candidates and very often no available information on their cultural background during the recruitment process. As much as this is the case, some focus group participants did refer to their colleagues who had sent their resumes under their real names and under the “local” names, and received two opposite responses, in favour of the application under the false name.

• **There are examples of good practice** that could serve as a model to replicate or adapt to the actual needs, and some existing platforms for information sharing and cooperation that could be further promoted and enhanced to meet the needs of both employers and researchers. The already mentioned existing support networks have been illustrated as one of these good models. With the view to making support for the target group more sustainable, there is a need to bring cooperation further to the Eu-

ropean level so that practices and experiences can be exchanged in an effective and coordinated way. EURAXESS, covering European and national-level support structures, is another example of a helpful platform for cooperation and information sharing. To this end, its visibility would need to be enhanced through stronger and targeted promotion. This requires systematic and coordinated efforts from all the main stakeholders who affect the job seeking, recruitment and integration processes.





FINNISH NATIONAL  
AGENCY FOR EDUCATION

**DAAD**

Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst  
German Academic Exchange Service

**ACA**

ACADEMIC  
COOPERATION  
ASSOCIATION



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 824651

*This project has been funded with support from the European Union. This report reflects the view only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.*

Graphics and layout: Liisa Valtonen