Perspectives from Overseas

Report from a Churchill Fellowship Study Tour investigating programs and strategies to assist refugees and migrants into employment – USA, Canada, UK

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AMEP forum  May 2009
Overview - USA

- Immigrants are
  - 12% of US residents
  - 15% of US workers
  - 21% of low wage earners
  - 45% of low skilled workers
- 50% have limited English proficiency
- 1/3 are unauthorised (estimated 8 – 22 million)
- variations in entitlement
Overview - USA

• conditions in the workplace – minimum wage
• many in low paid, low skill casual jobs
• very hard to get out of the poverty trap
• annual funding for ESL
• conditions for teachers
• possible “amnesty”
City College of San Francisco

- 25,000 ESL students
- in-house placement assessment
- credit vs non-credit programs
- Spanish literacy classes
- VESL Office Training Program

CCSF web

• podcasts
Center for Employment Training

- focus on clients and employers - research
- variety of programs offered - careful planning
- case management approach – tattoos
- lifelong support
- funding
- teaching conditions
- considered a model by Dept of Labor

CET web
WorkSource Capital Career Center
Portland, Oregon

- one stop approach
- high tech entry level course
- working with employers –creative partnerships
- outcomes - 87% employment rate
- payment by employers at time of recruitment

WSCCC web
Overview – British Columbia Canada

- ESL provision
- funding issues
- performance measures
- clients
- issues for long term resident workers
Vancouver Community College

- Professional and Career English (PACE)
- focus on workplace communication & soft skills
- residential care worker course
- health sciences preparation courses

VCC web
Overview - UK

• England now the most densely populated EU state (after Malta)
• asylum seekers
• “migrant workers” – demand for ESOL
• the Scottish response
• different rights in different areas
Bridges Programmes, Glasgow

- support for asylum seekers
- partnerships
- women’s empowerment program
- 16 plus youth program – focus on life skills

Bridges web
Refugees into Jobs, London

- refugee women’s project
- doctor’s self-help project
- Invest to Save project
- partnerships – Job Centre Plus, OLMEC and Time Together

RIJ web
Conclusions

What is Australia doing well? - migrants & refugees

• AMEP – funding cycles, equity for clients, settlement & language integration, teaching conditions

• Social cohesion – the legacy of Multiculturalism
Conclusions

What can Australia do better?

• One stop approach – provide wrap around services
• Work Experience – starting with Govt dept’s
• Centrally funded placement and mentoring service
• Attitudes of employers
Conclusions

What can the AMEP do?

• Case management approach – better services to overcome barriers to employment
• Combine skills training with language & settlement
• Focus more on soft skills as well as skills training
• Outreach for refugee women – creative approaches
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Winston Churchill Memorial Trust:
http://www.churchilltrust.com.au

full copy of report available: