Cities and Migration Labour Market Integration

Summary

Cities can play a concrete role in integrating migrants into the labour market through diversity hiring, procurement policies, education/training, and network building. This brief examines economic integration. Economic integration is the core of integration, for without employment immigrants cannot build lives for themselves and their families.

Context

There is a growing recognition among government officials, the UN, IOs, NGOs, and academics that cities play a central role in migrant integration. This brief draws on evidence from ten cities across four continents, but it focusses in particular on two in the global south – Naga City and Quito – and two in the global north – Toronto and Hamburg.

Economic, Social, Demographic Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Pop.</th>
<th>GDP/capita</th>
<th>Political structure</th>
<th>Migrant Stock</th>
<th>Migrant Flows</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Naga City</td>
<td>196,000</td>
<td>US 1,600</td>
<td>Raises taxes &amp; is independent of province Federal</td>
<td>4,500 emigrants; 60% of the population are internal migrants</td>
<td>Vast majority internal/return migration.</td>
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<td>Quito</td>
<td>1,400,000</td>
<td>US 5,400</td>
<td>Unitary, but reform increased city autonomy</td>
<td>80,000 legal; up to another 520,00 undocumented</td>
<td>Colombian, Peruvian, Haitian, Cuban</td>
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<td>Hamburg</td>
<td>1,762,791</td>
<td>Euro 57,000</td>
<td>Highly decentralized equivalent of Can. Province</td>
<td>530,000 'migration background' (1st and 2nd/3rd generation)</td>
<td>28,000 per year, Turkish Polish, South European</td>
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<tr>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>2,800,000</td>
<td>C 56,000</td>
<td>Limited power, few tax-raising power, under provincial control</td>
<td>1,237,720 (50%)</td>
<td>55,000 annually, South Asian and Chinese</td>
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Focus Areas: Empowerment: Migrants can best secure their future when they are able influence politics through voting in municipal elections (debated but not implemented in Toronto) and/or through inclusion in the political process. In Naga City, migrants participate in the People’s Council, an NGO. The Council sends representatives to all city
committees, councils, boards and tasks forces, participates in the conceptualization and
implementation of all city projects, and votes at the committee level. This sort of migrant
access is unusual and highly commendable.

City Hiring: All cities are major employers. Cities’ most direct and measurable contribution
to migrant employment is through hiring. Hiring immigrants provides secure, often
unionized, positions to migrants. Diversity (affirmative action) programs benefit migrants
and visible minorities, but also the city itself: all city units will find it easier to serve their
migrant/minority communities when they draw their employment pools from those
communities.

The Police: The police budget is a large part of any municipal budget. Expanding migrant
and other minority recruitment in police services provides secure, well paid jobs to
migrants and/or their children, but it also makes policing more effective. Unless the police
look like the people they serve, they will not have the trust of migrant and other minority
communities. The South African Employment Equity Act (preamble) includes diversity as
a basic principle, and the Equity Act governs hiring in the Johannesburg police force.iii
Even where extensive hiring does not occur, police can be given diversity training. In
Johannesburg, where ‘hawking’ is the chief migrant profession, knowing how to interact
with migrants will secure crime-fighting tips (street hawkers see much), while making the
combating of pickpocketing, petty theft, assault and other street crime easier. Johannesburg
currently provides six months of training for its police force, and diversity training could be incorporated into the schedule.iv The city also operates ‘community
policing forums,’ with advisory powers. Each forum has 20-30 members; they notify police
of trouble spots and local needs. They are not exclusively for migrants, but can benefit
migrants, above all when they live in high-crime areas.

Procurement policies: Cities also have exclusive competence over procurement policies,
and they can be used to encourage migrant employment and entrepreneurship. In
Chicago, at least 25% of city contracts are given to Minority-Owned Businesses (MBEs)
and at least 5% to Women-Owned Businesses (WBEs).v, vi Fully 77.4% of Chicago-based
companies have SD policies, compared with 23.3% in Toronto.vi Cities such as
Johannesburg have procurement (or ‘supply change management’) frameworks that could
be adjusted to include diversity requirements (benefiting both black South Africans and
migrants).vii Quito planned to reserve a number of positions for migrants in major projects,
such as the construction of the city’s metro, but the national government has not
implemented the plan.

Internship and mentoring programs: Cities can launch, alone or with NGO partners,
internship and/or mentoring programmes. The Toronto Region Immigrant Employment
Council’s mentoring programme reached 10,000 people since 2004. An employer in the
private or public sector agrees to ‘mentor’ a migrant – on both technical and cross-cultural
skills – for 3-4 hours per week over a 3-4 month period. In the NGO sector, the Indo-
Canada Chamber of Commerce funds three-month internships that match migrant skills
to the Toronto labour market, provides advice on retraining/skills upgrading, and support
networking events. The running costs are low, and there is an 80% placement rate.vii The

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1 Quito’s budget is $US 1 512 475 252, while Naga City’s budget is $US 363,460; Hamburg’s budget is Euro12 billion,
while Toronto’s is $US 780 million.
Chamber offers 2-3 internships annually; over 80% secure jobs.\textsuperscript{viii} In Glasgow, the Business Gateway offers ethnic entrepreneurs seminars, drop-in sessions, and appointments that provide information on how to start a business. From 2013-2015, the Gateway had 1005 ‘ethnic client contacts,’ and 281 clients went on to start a business.\textsuperscript{ix}

\textbf{Linking employers with immigrants:} Cities can operate systems that translate foreign degrees into local equivalents (software can do so easily) and help businesses recognize informal qualifications. Hamburg does both.\textsuperscript{x} Through its “Work and Integration for Refugees programme,” it evaluates refugee skills, links them with employers when they are ready to work and advises them on needed training when they are not. At three day fairs, refugees demonstrate practical skills (carpentry, electrical work) to technical school instructors; on the third day businesses visit the fair. The instructors select refugees to demonstrate their skills, and they are hired. By linking employers with immigrants, cities can obviate the need for employment agencies, the costs of which are often foisted onto migrants, particularly in the case of low-pay jobs.\textsuperscript{xi}

\textbf{Liaising between the state, migrants, and NGOs:} States often operate inflexible, bureaucratic systems that hinder easy access to the labour market. Businesses often are unsure of how to reach and evaluate migrant applications. NGOs have privileged knowledge of migrant skills and needs. Cities can bring all three together by convening meetings at which NGOs explain migrant needs to businesses and state actors. The meetings can lead to changes in practices (for instance, not looking at the university granting the qualification until the interview stage) and in formal regulations (on, for instance, credential requirements). Naga City set up technical working groups on migration and development which dialogue between overseas Filipinos, local government units and migrant families, they are an ideal forum for conveying migrant needs.\textsuperscript{xii} Johannesburg’s Migration Sub-Unit coordinates migration across relevant government departments, and between government departments and municipal (as well as regional and national) stakeholders.\textsuperscript{xiii} In Quito, there are some two dozen NGOs (The Misión Scalabriniana, the Jesuit Service for immigrants, and many others) working with migrants. Their efforts are as yet uncoordinated, and the city could play a central role.

\textbf{Recommendations}

All policies implemented should respect, and ideally enforce, ‘the rights of migrants as outlined in the Global Forum on Migration and Development, Draft of Outcome Document for the 19 September 2016 High Level Meeting to Address Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants.’ Implementing all or any of them requires engaged local leadership.

- Regional and national support and resources are essential: Quito benefits in principle from a National Strategy for Human Mobility, which includes incentives for hiring immigrants, but the national government has yet to enact it.
- Implement diversity hiring. Focus on equity – access to well-paid positions – as well as diversity (significant numbers of migrant/minority employees).\textsuperscript{xiv}
- Introduce supplier diversity requirements into city procurement policies: set aside a fixed amount of business for migrants and other minorities.
• Expand mentoring and internship opportunities for migrants, both within the private and the public sector.
• Provide advice on the retraining and qualifications necessary to secure employment. This knowledge is inherently local.
• Establish credential recognition services that recognize both formal and informal qualifications. Work with the state and NGOs to identify ways in which laws, operating practices, and administrative structures can be reformed to ease migrants’ use of them and migrants integration into the labour market.
• Work with the NGOs and the private sector to help businesses identify migrants with needed skills and link them with private sector jobs. NGOs should advocate for refugees not in universal terms but rather in those that resonate locally (for instance, emphasize migrants’ vulnerability the importance of inclusion in Johannesburg, but highlight entrepreneurship and self-reliance in Nairobi).
• Work with all levels of government to get the broader economy right: cities can only be engines of incorporation when they are economically flourishing.

Sources

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\[1\] Joint Migration & Development Initiative, Promoting Migration for development at the local level: Case Studies. Available at: http://www.migration4development.org/sites/default/files/summaries_of_projects-en_1.pdf. I am grateful to Cecile Riallant for sending me a copy of this document.