



# ***Over-qualification of Immigrants: an acute manifestation of Europe's larger labour market failings.***

## ***What to do?***

### **PROGRAMME**

**Monday 11 February 2013**

Hosted by  
EUROPEAN UNION



**Committee of the Regions**

Room VM1 – Rue Van Maerlant 2, 1040 Brussels

*Spanish-English Interpretation available*

#### **Background:**

When people work below the level of their qualifications, they contribute less to our economy than they potentially could. Over-qualification is a kind of labour market inefficiency, which is bad for society as a whole, and has significant personal and psychological consequences for the underemployed people themselves. Reducing incidences of over-qualification is thus a win-win proposition. In Europe, immigrants, young people and women are disproportionately over-qualified.

In fact, in the EU, **two thirds** of employed high-skilled recent migrants are in jobs for which they are over-qualified – versus some 19% of EU-born who have a tertiary level education and are over-qualified for their employment. The problem is massive and structural, affecting the entire labour market, with third country migrants simply being the worst affected.

This dysfunction takes place in the context of a globalised and highly competitive world, an urgent need for economic growth to overcome the present crisis, a shift towards higher skills-based and value added labour, and a shrinking active population due to an aging workforce. All of which means we need as many people as possible in the labour force to be working at their maximum potential – i.e. to **fully realise the value of Europe's human capital**. As such, it is particularly urgent to find ways to make the most of the human resources of skilled third-country nationals living and working in Europe.

**REALISE** – a project funded by the European Integration Fund – seeks to advance this macro-level policy objective, at the very specific local levels where the REALISE project partners are active: in Ghent (**Belgium**); Bilbao and Seville (**Spain**); Botkyrka (**Stockholm**), Budapest (**Hungary**); Cesena (**Italy**); Heraklion (**Greece**); and London (**United Kingdom**).

This event brings together partners and local stakeholders from the REALISE project, and representatives of European institutions and policymaking.

For more information on REALISE visit: <http://realise2020.wordpress.com/>



Project co-financed by the European Integration Fund



**9h15 Registration**

**9h30 Welcoming address**

- **Sean O’Curneen**, Secretary General, Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe in the Committee of the Regions

**9h40 REALISE network and implementing Europe 2020 strategy: rationale, state of overqualification among migrants, key findings and points of interest**

- **Ian Goldring**, REALISE Thematic Coordinator and ProjectWorks Director, Brussels

**10h00 Panel discussion of local stakeholders dealing with overqualification of skilled immigrants across the EU**

*Chair – Andras Kovats, Director of Menedék - Hungarian Association for Migrants, Budapest*

Speakers:

- Skilled Immigrants, Employers, Local Administrations, Third Sector Organisations, concerned with employment and immigrants, from the REALISE partner localities
- **Jelena Drenjanin**, Committee of the Regions, CIVEX Commission on Citizenship, and Councillor for Huddinge, Sweden

**11h00 Panel discussion of European Policy specialists**

*Chair – Ian Goldring, REALISE Transnational Thematic Coordinator & ProjectWorks Director, Brussels*

Speakers:

- **Robert Strauss**, Head of Unit, Employment Analysis, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, European Commission
- **Jan Saver**, Immigration and Integration Unit, DG Home affairs, European Commission
- **Thomas Ljungquist**, Non Discrimination Policies, DG Justice, European Commission
- **Dr. Wolfgang Müller**, Director, German Federal Employment Agency European Representation

**12.00 Questions & Answers and Closing remarks**

**12.30 Lunch**

**13.30 REALISE transferrable partner practices and tools**

*Chair – Ian Goldring, REALISE Transnational Thematic Coordinator & ProjectWorks Director, Brussels*

- **Presentation and open discussion** of practices and approaches tested by REALISE partner localities, for tackling immigrant over-qualification in the labour force.
- **Practical recommendations** and insights for those interested in developing similar practices.
- **Direct input from** skilled immigrants, on the ground practitioners and local leaders especially invited from each locality.

**16.00 End of seminar**

