**Using VET to integrate migrants in Belgium**

/var/folders/nj/m875g2tj2j50hjqpdb11s_540000gn/T/com.microsoft.Word/WebArchiveCopyPasteTempFiles/national_news_on_vet_copy.png

**At the**[**2018 Euroskills Budapest**](https://worldskills2019.com/en/index.html)**competition, a single Brussels resident represented the successful Belgian delegation: Omar Lo, a young political refugee, had benefitted from training offered through one of the existing integration programmes set up in Brussels.**

Originally from Senegal, Omar arrived in Belgium in 2014. Immediately given legal status, he started learning French and took training in plastering/drywall work at a socio-professional integration organisation. Flag bearer for the country during the Euroskills opening ceremony, he was coached in plastering by a trainer from [**Bruxelles Formation**](https://www.bruxellesformation.brussels/)for the competition. He demonstrated great determination throughout his programme and received a high score in his occupation. He now hopes to find a good job to support his family.

Like Omar, many new arrivals can benefit from various programmes for integration and entry into the workforce. The reception agency for newcomers [**BAPA BXL asbl**](https://www.brussels.be/bapa-bxl-welcoming-newcomers) aims at increasing their social, economic and cultural participation. The agency offers a free reception programme including social support, assessment of French language skills, and courses in French language and citizenship. This programme will become mandatory in 2020 for any adult below the age of 65, coming from a country outside the European Union and who has been living in Belgium for less than three years.

Since 2017, several local employment offices in Brussels have participated in a pilot project called skills validation support, aiming to develop French learning modules. The project targets people who have professional skills in a list of identified occupations but whose level of French is insufficient for understanding the instructions given during skill validation examinations. The Prim’Test project, developed by the language centre of Bruxelles Formation and jointly financed by the Asylum, migration and integration fund, aims to ease the integration of newly arrived migrants by offering training in French as a foreign language, based on a language placement test. All these programmes have a single objective: to allow efficient and rapid integration of migrants into society while promoting their independence.