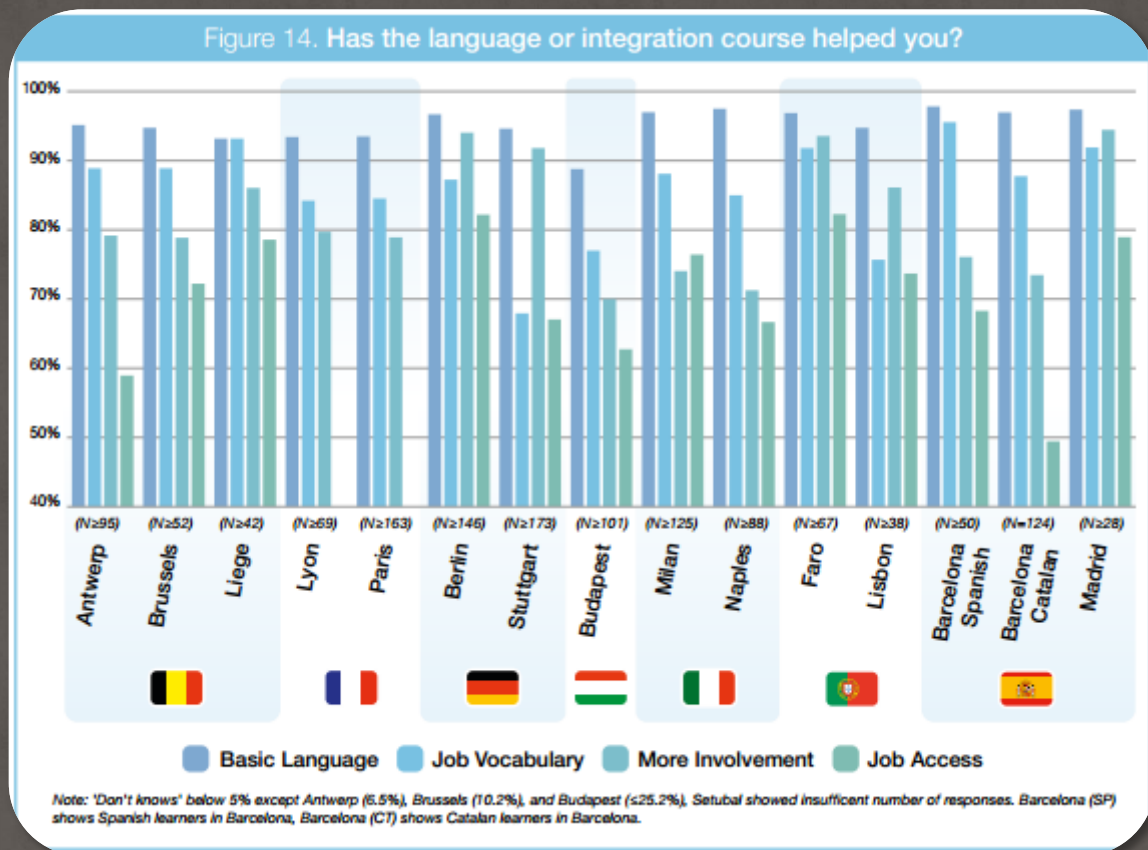


# What good is an integration course for finding a job? What immigrants have to say

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## Analysis of the Immigrant Citizens Survey

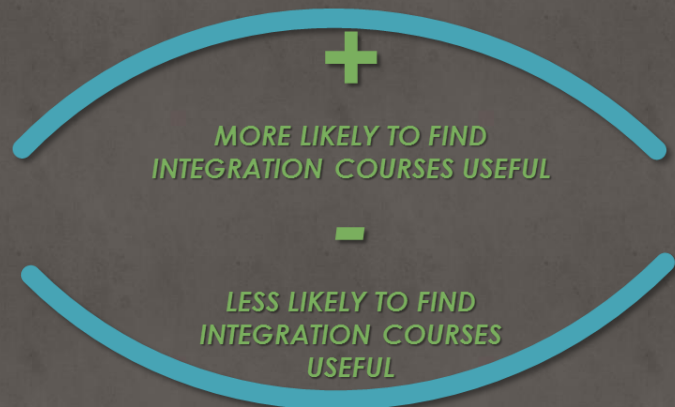
Employment improves immigrants' social contacts and reduces their risk of poverty and social exclusion. Are integration courses helpful for immigrants to find jobs? The results of the Immigrant Citizens Survey show that many participants of language and integration courses found them somehow helpful for finding jobs.



Further analysis identifies which immigrants and under which conditions these courses are beneficial for labour market integration.

- **Immigrants with greater skills and experience from their country of origin see fewer benefits of integration courses:** Immigrants with a higher **level of education** and more years of **work experience in their country of origin** are more likely to perceive the integration courses as not helpful at all for their job prospects. Courses may be less helpful for immigrants who already arrive highly-skilled. Another explanation could be that highly-skilled immigrants attribute their success at finding a job less to the integration course than to their previous experience.

More work experience in the country of residence and a better knowledge of the country's language



Higher level of education and more years of work experience in the country of origin

- **Greater perceived benefits of courses associated with greater labour market success:** In contrast, immigrants with **more work experience in the country of residence** and a **better knowledge of the country's language** are much more likely to believe their course was very helpful. Their greater language skills and work experience could be an actual result of taking the integration course. It could be the case that more successful immigrants perceive all steps taken as positive, including the integration course.



- **Some immigrants benefit more than others from courses:** Immigrants who entered as family member are most likely to find integration courses helpful for finding a job. Immigrants who are single found them helpful, while married or widowed immigrants found them less helpful.

- **The benefits depend on the course:** Controlling for all other relevant factors, participants in courses in three cities in Portugal found them most useful for finding a job, whereas participants in courses in three cities in Belgium and two cities in Spain more often found that they did not help at all.
- **Gender, age, and length of residence** do not affect an immigrants' likelihood to find integration courses helpful for finding a job, even though it is often argued that

courses are especially helpful for women and newcomers. Nor did immigrants from particular regions of origin perceive these courses to be more beneficial than other immigrants.

## The analysis

The analyses on the benefit of integration courses on finding employment were conducted using all data from the Immigrant Citizens Survey for all individuals who indicated that they have participated in an integration course (N=1142). Respondents answered the question “Did the course help you get a job?” with possible answer categories ‘not at all’, ‘helped a little’ and ‘helped a lot’. Positive coefficients indicate a higher likelihood to have benefited from an integration course in finding a job, when ‘keeping all other factors constant’. ‘Keeping all factors constant’ means that by including different relevant factors in the model, the results come to represent the effect of, for example, coming from a specific region for individuals who are equal with respect to all other characteristics included in the model (i.e. age, gender or channel of migration).

Multinomial logistic regression in STATA was used because the outcome variable had more than two possible answer categories that can't be represented by chronologically ordered numbers. The results of the analysis comparing the likelihood for migrants to indicate that they ‘benefited a lot’ from an integration course versus ‘benefited not at all’ are presented in the table below.

Variables	B (s.e)	p-value
Woman	.008 (.18)	P = .965
Age	.009 (.01)	P = .422
Length of residence	-.013 (.02)	P = .504
Educational level obtained in country of origin	-.000 (.00)	P = .848
Educational level obtained in country of residence	<b>-.001 (.00)</b>	<b>P = .021</b>
Work experience obtained in country of origin	<b>.026 (.01)</b>	<b>P = .040</b>
Work experience obtained in country of origin	<b>-.027 (.01)</b>	<b>P = .032</b>
Language attainment	<b>.547 (.09)</b>	<b>P = .000</b>
Marital status (ref = single)		
Married	<b>-.572 (.25)</b>	<b>P = .020</b>
Divorce	-.405 (.35)	P = .246
Cohabit	-.210 (.40)	P = .598
Widow	<b>-1.151 (.59)</b>	<b>P = .053</b>
Region of origin (ref = Middle East)		
Eastern Europe	-.166 (.28)	P = .555
North Africa	-.383 (.32)	P = .226
Subsaharan Africa	.222 (.34)	P = .511

Latin America	-.506 (.44)	P = .245
Asia	-.220 (.29)	P = .441
West	-.745 (1.33)	P = .576
Reason migration (ref = Humanitarian)		
Work & Study	.464 (.30)	P = .123
Family Reunion	<b>.651 (.28)</b>	<b>P = .019</b>
Longterm	-.061 (.51)	P = .905
Other	.063 (.36)	P = .861
Undocumented	.396 (.37)	P = .289
Country of residence (ref = Belgium)		
France	.045 (.35)	P = .898
Hungary	.028 (.39)	P = .942
Portugal	<b>1.316 (.42)</b>	<b>P = .002</b>
Spain	-.611 (.44)	P = .164
Italy	.413 (.33)	P = .210
Germany	.321 (.32)	P = .314

Note: p-values are based on a two-sided test, results were obtained using multinomial logistic regression in STATA 12.0.

*Unstandardized effects on the likelihood that integration courses  
“helped a lot” for finding a job compared to “not helped at all”*