

Over-qualification: What immigrants have to say

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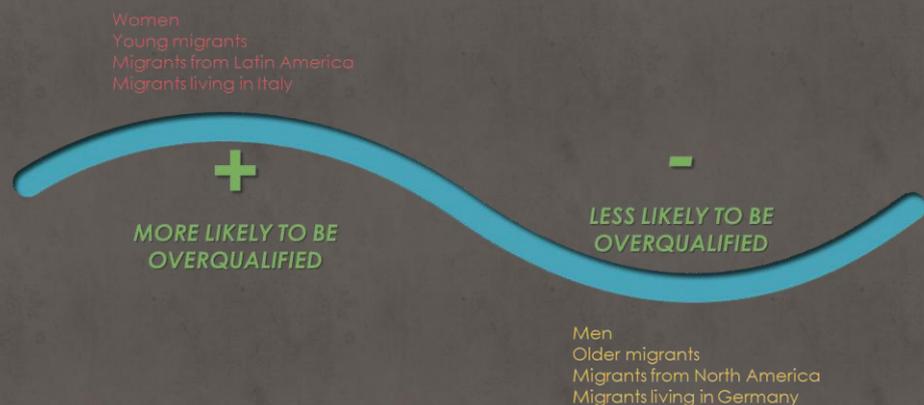
Analysis of the Immigrant Citizens Survey



The results of the Immigrant Citizens Survey showed a great variation in over-qualification among working non-EU immigrants across 15 European cities. Further analysis of ICS data on perceived over-

qualification help to explain why working immigrants perceive themselves to be overqualified for their jobs.

- Some workers are more overqualified than others: women and young immigrants** have a higher likelihood feeling overqualified. Holding all other factors constant, immigrants living in the two cities in Italy included in the survey are the most likely to feel overqualified, immigrants in Germany 's two cities are the least likely to feel overqualified.



- Education obtained abroad is not easily transferable:** Immigrants with **higher levels of education obtained in their country of origin** are more likely to feel overqualified for their jobs.

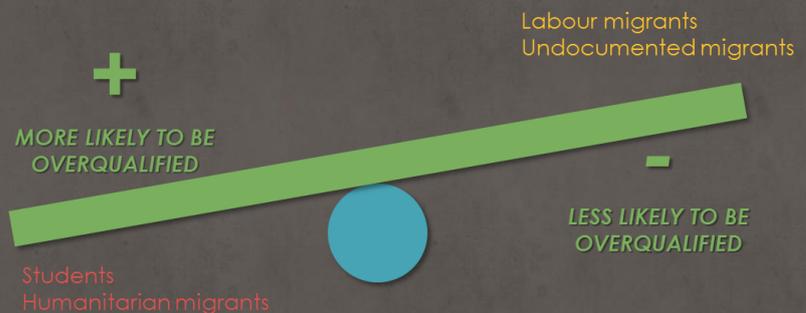
High levels of education from country of origin that are not recognised in country of residence



High levels of education obtained in the country of residence
Formal recognition of education obtained in country of origin

- The **formal recognition of qualifications** is one possible solution for perceived over-qualification. When foreign qualifications are formally recognised in the country of residence, immigrants with a higher education from the country of origin are less likely to feel overqualified for their jobs. When the qualifications are not recognised, immigrants with higher education from the country of origin are more likely to feel overqualified. Relatively few immigrants (27% of immigrants in the ICS survey) apply for formal recognition of their qualifications.

- A **higher education obtained in the country of residence** decreases the likelihood to feel overqualified. However, immigrants that entered on a **student permit** are most likely to feel overqualified, controlling for all other relevant factors. This could be due to formal limitations on student permits that restrict employment during studies and access to the labour market after studies. These restrictions contribute to the difficult transition from student to worker for people with an immigrant background.



- Experience does not count:** immigrants' perceived level of over-qualification does not decrease the longer they reside or work in their country of residence, nor the longer was their career in their country of origin.



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DOESN'T COUNT



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LESS LIKELY TO BE OVERQUALIFIED

- A **better knowledge of the language** decreases the perceived level of over-qualification. Immigrants can be highly qualified, but their degree may be of less value if they do not speak the language of the country of residence. However,

participating in a language or integration course apparently has no effect on the likelihood to feel overqualified.

The analysis

Respondents answered the question “Does your main job uses all your skills?” with possible answer categories ‘my job matches my skills and training’, ‘my job matches my skills but is not in the area for which I trained’ and ‘my job does not require the skills and training that I have’. The analyses were conducted using the data from all countries for all individuals in the Immigrant Citizens Survey (N=3700). In the analysis (see Box) the likelihood to be overqualified was compared with the likelihood to be consistently qualified. Positive coefficients indicate that scoring higher on this variable or being part of this category (for categorical variables) is related to an increased likelihood to be overqualified, 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). In the second model ‘overqualification model with interaction’ an interaction effect is included between the recognition of foreign education and educational level obtained in the country of origin.

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 are overqualified versus the likelihood to be consistently qualified are presented in the table below. Positive coefficients indicate a higher likelihood to be overqualified, whereas negative coefficients indicate a decreased likelihood to be overqualified.

Variables	Overqualification model		Overqualification model with interaction	
	B (s.e)	p-value	B (s.e)	p-value
Woman	.306 (.08)	P = .000	.308 (.09)	P = .000
Age	-.014 (.01)	P = .020	-.014 (.01)	P = .019
Length of residence	.004 (.01)	P = .649	.005 (.01)	P = .557
Educational level obtained in	-.001 (.00)	P = .000	-.001 (.00)	P = .001

country of residence				
Educational level obtained in country of origin	.001 (.00)	P = .000	.001 (.00)	P = .000
Work experience obtained in country of residence	-.006 (.01)	P = .301	-.006 (.01)	P = .333
Work experience obtained in country of origin	-.005 (.01)	P = .389	-.005 (.01)	P = .425
Language attainment	-.261 (.04)	P = .000	-.257 (.04)	P = .000
Recognition of foreign education			.415 (.21)	P = .047
Recognition of foreign education * educational level obtained in country of origin			-.002 (.00)	P = .001
Participation in integration course	.203 (.13)	P = .118	.203 (.13)	P = .118
Marital status (ref = Married)				
Divorce	-.147 (.15)	P = .341	-.151 (.15)	P = .328
Cohabit	.044 (.17)	P = .791	.040 (.17)	P = .810
Widow	.307 (.31)	P = .329	.279 (.31)	P = .377
Single	.012 (.11)	P = .910	.015 (.11)	P = .891
Region of origin (ref = Eastern Europe)				
North Africa	.193 (.18)	P = .270	.164 (.18)	P = .350
Subsaharan Africa	.152 (.17)	P = .367	.154 (.17)	P = .362
Middle East	-.125 (.18)	P = .487	-.122 (.18)	P = .496
Latin America	.319 (.16)	P = .048	.307 (.16)	P = .058
Asia	-.149 (.15)	P = .312	-.184 (.15)	P = .214
West	-1.341 (.51)	P = .009	-1.452 (.52)	P = .005
Reason migration (ref = Family reunion)				
Work	.082 (.20)	P = .678	.070 (.20)	P = .721
Study	1.422 (.42)	P = .001	1.448 (.43)	P = .001
Longterm	.260 (.19)	P = .173	.259 (.19)	P = .176
Humanitarian	.644 (.38)	P = .086	.648 (.38)	P = .084
Other	.085 (.37)	P = .819	.096 (.37)	P = .797
Undocumented	-.066 (.43)	P = .879	-.120 (.43)	P = .779
Country of residence (ref = Belgium)				
France	.108 (.19)	P = .578	.083 (.20)	P = .674
Germany	-.605 (.21)	P = .003	-.641 (.21)	P = .002
Hungary	-.145 (.20)	P = .463	-.168 (.20)	P = .396
Italy	1.293 (.20)	P = .000	1.233 (.20)	P = .000
Portugal	.067 (.20)	P = .732	.048 (.20)	P = .807
Spain	.107 (.20)	P = .599	.087 (.20)	P = .669

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 to be overqualified versus having a good match between training and job