

Integration of Migrants and Refugees in the Labour Market – the Role of Workers' Organisations





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Preface

Dear Reader,

The cover illustration of this publication shows that people in the Mediterranean continue to risk their lives in fleeing from war and hunger in their own countries to seek out better prospects in Europe. That is why a European debate is fundamental in finding common responses to the political and social challenges that accompany flight and migration.

This is a summary report of the results of a series of seminars on “Integration of migrants and refugees in the labour market – the role of workers’ organisations”, which were organised by the European Centre for Workers’ Questions (EZA) in the educational year of 2017/2018 and in which six of its member centres participated. It shows that labour migration and flight have distinct root causes, which require different policies, social measures and directives. Integration in the labour market is a basic pre-requisite for successful social integration in the host countries. In particular, the report emphasises that migration is not just a challenge but also a cultural and social opportunity for Europe, and that successful integration requires maximum effort from all interested parties – both residents and migrants. These findings therefore call urgently for a comprehensive and inclusive European immigration policy. From the Christian social point of view, we must stress that migrant workers and refugees are not mere numbers, but human beings, and should be considered in such a light.

The report also presents, in parallel, a systematic and substantial treatment of the subject of integration of migrants and refugees as

covered by the EZA and their member centres in the series of seminars over the past few years. It presents future trend and content, based on specific questions, and can therefore also be used as a compendium for anyone planning a seminar on integration of migrants and refugees in Europe.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Maria Reina Martin, who coordinated the project and led its content and methodology and who not only evaluated results in this final report but also made valuable suggestions for future educational events. I would also like to thank the six member organisations who participated, for their cooperation and contribution to such excellent results.

The European Commission's Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion supported our activities with content and financial resources.

EZA hopes that this publication will contribute to the European debate on migration and mobility, from the perspective of the workers' organisations that are concerned about this subject, both in terms of their educational work and their daily work. We would love to receive suggestions and feedback on a subject that is so important to all workers' organisations in Europe.

Happy reading!

Sigrid Schraml
EZA Secretary-General

*“Minds are like parachutes...
they only function when open.”*

Johan Wets,

Researcher at HIVA-KU Leuven

Introduction

*One of the 10 priorities of the policy guidelines
of the Juncker Commission:
Towards a new migration policy*

In the educational year 2017, six centres that make up part of the EZA network held a series of seminars on the subject of migration, with various approaches that in some way or another reflect their territorial context and the origin and vision of their organisations.

- KIKEA-DEOK (Cypriot Institute of Training/Education and Employment (KIKEA) - DEOK): 10 to 12 May 2017 (Limassol/Cyprus):
„Equal and fair treatment of workers in line with the free movement principle and tackling the issue of undeclared work – social dialogue and the role and challenges for trade unions.“ - 48 participants, 16 countries
- ZD NSi (Združenje delavcev Nove Slovenije): 14 to 16 September 2017 (Rogaška Slatina/Slovenia):
„Free movement of workers and fair social security systems: balancing the interests of mobile and domestic workers for a fair labour market.“ - 50 participants, 16 countries

- GEPO (Groupe Européen de Pastorale Ouvrière): 4 to 8 October 2017 (Remich/Luxembourg):
„Integrating refugees and people excluded from the labour market: new prospects for social dialogue in Europe.“ - 36 participants, 9 countries
- FEDER.AGRI. (Federazione Nazionale per lo Sviluppo dell'Agricoltura): 6 to 8 October 2017 (Calábria/Italy):
„Work and legality: immigration and integration.“ - 58 participants, 9 countries
- EUROMF: 19 to 20 October 2017 (Bucharest/Romania):
„Vulnerability gap for migrant workers in the EU“ - 43 participants, 6 countries
- FIDESTRA (Associação para a Formação, Investigação e Desenvolvimento Social dos Trabalhadores): 26 to 28 January 2018 (Fátima/Portugal):
„The role of workers' organisations in integrating migrants (refugees) in society and the labour market.“ - 85 participants, 10 countries

Total number of participants: 320

The following report summarises some of the main ideas brought to the debating table by the workers' organisations invited to participate. They come from all sorts of areas, academic, political and civil.

The richness of the debate and the complexity of the subject of “migration” leads us to recognise that what we have here is a **summary of ideas** that we do not dare to call conclusions or solutions, but rather a number of approaches to a complex, multi-faceted and

important subject, that help us preserve the European Project's most precious legacy, Peace.

1 Underlying Assumptions

*“Migratory movement cannot be stopped.
The important thing is knowing how to manage this phenomenon.”*

“We call them migrants, workers, but at the end of the day, we are dealing with people.” Our report begins here, with a focus on analysing the phenomenon of migration of people, in order to find solutions and stem the underlying causes.

In order to **understand migratory movement**, to change this reality into an **opportunity** rather than a problem, we need to be able to demystify and decode the myths, and to get rid of some of the false ideas, such as:

- Migratory movement will end **if we close the borders**;
- **Migration** is linked to terrorism and lack of security;
- Immigrants **generate more unemployment**, because they “steal” jobs;

or, amongst many others,

- Immigrants are the **group with the highest crime rates**;

To start with, we are fully aware that **migratory movement has had a huge impact on the XXI century.**

Migratory movement has been present throughout the history of humanity. It is nothing new. It is not just part of our past, or our present, but it will always be **a part of our future** too.

The most successful societies in history have been those who did not confine themselves to their own territory but went in search of “new worlds with which to gift our World.” **Diversity makes a society grow.** Both those who come and those who welcome them will always have both something to give and something to learn.

What is new, however, is the **speed and intensity of migratory movement today**, as well as media coverage of the phenomenon. This is a result of the globalisation of society and of technological advance in particular. Another matter that requires our serious attention is the fact that this migratory movement is currently dividing European society.

This is leading to a worrying trend of **populist political advantage**, which is threatening European social cohesion, political stability and even the European Project itself.

We believe that knowledge of and mutual respect for the culture of each individual is a fundamental contributing factor in people and religions living alongside each other harmoniously.

Europe is a very attractive place. We have strong democracies, relatively strong economies and peace in our territories. The perfect ingredients to make it a **desirable destination**. We know that migratory movement cannot be stemmed by concrete walls, so what is important is knowing **how to manage this phenomenon**.,It is within this context that we should unite to **build a common migration policy**.

The reality is that migratory movement is a **new challenge** for Europe and is present in all European countries.

We have a transnational, **collective responsibility**. This responsibility does not just belong to those countries who are the first border in migration flow.

The European States must **show solidarity** with each other. Solidarity is fundamental to European issues and is a **determining factor in migration policy**.

Solidarity, subsidiarity and humanity, the principles of the European Social Project, must again head up European policy.

However, our society has not really taken on board the concepts of solidarity and subsidiarity. They have, unfortunately, not yet become an integral part of our society. Yet **these values are indispensable** in analysing, understanding and working on the phenomenon of migratory movement that we are facing.

This **migratory movement** must be worked on **in the short, medium and long-term**. We need to be able to distinguish between those who need immediate humanitarian aid, those who need concerted policies of welcome and integration and those who need to be considered under concerted cooperation policy.

At a time of massification and lack of focus on the individual, **EZA network centres** should and can make a huge contribution to migratory movement, which is a reality of the XXI century, as well as to **building a cohesive, fair and robust common migration policy**.

2 Some Clarifications/Explanations of Concepts

“Integration is a long process, which requires time; but that time should not be infinite.”

FEDER.AGRI

We need to **use** precise language and **terminology** to clearly define the concepts.

Migrant, Refugee and Mobile Worker cannot be used synonymously. They are distinct concepts, not just distinct words, and require us to use distinct approaches and implement distinct measures for each of these 3 movement typologies.

Migratory movement within the current context should be analysed in the light of these three concepts or groups. There are different **causes, consequences and measures to be implemented**.

When the EZA network workers' organisations held the international series of seminars underpinning this report, they differentiated between these three groups and used them as a basis in approaching the problem and presenting solutions/proposals.

Protecting the borders does not mean building walls but rather a common European security policy, focused on collaboration and the best efforts of all the Member States.

We must not forget that **those who are coming in** have **rights and duties**.

We should consider our responsibilities with regards to the problem of democracy, corruption and dictatorships in the African countries from which people are emigrating (where there is a lot of political and social instability, along with serious economic problems).

We must be aware of the **differences** between migratory movement and refugees.

Welcoming refugees is not optional, it is our humanitarian duty.

We must also remember the difference between **immigrants from outside the Community** and **mobile European workers**.

Although our society has not taken on board the **concept of solidarity**, the truth is that it is fundamental to building common migration policy.

It is also crucial that we try to **plan migratory flow**, not just leave it to happen randomly, however difficult this might be.

It is important that all the Member States understand and work together to build a common migration policy and to take action, remembering that, at the end of the day, **“We are not just talking about managing a temporary emergency, but rather of dealing with one of the most complex structural phenomena of our time.”**

Federica Mogherini

3 Key Ideas from the Six Seminars

*“Migrants;
we are all those who carry the baggage of life,
the desire to destroy myths, reconcile cultures, religions ...
grow in new realities,
knowing that the legacy of a European citizen,
is to keep the European Social Project alive.”*

Though each organisation runs its seminars in a different way, and uses different methods, all of them contribute key ideas that help us not just to find solutions for the European situation of migratory movement but also, and most importantly, to find solutions to the challenge of migration (understood in the broadest sense of the word.)

The Demographic Context;

With regards to the European **demographic scenario**, we see migratory movement as an **opportunity** for Europe within the scope of the serious demographic crisis it faces. This demographic crisis is threatening the sustainability of social protection systems, the economy itself and, as a consequence, social well-being.

The Citizenship Context;

Cultural diversity enhances society, and migration can be valuable, **so long as we are able to achieve** cultural and religious harmony without

neglecting matters of security that are inherent to migratory movement.

However, to achieve harmonious cultural diversity without “acculturation” or “multiculturalism”, processes which are tried and failed, we need to develop and **perfect integration mechanisms** based on respect for differences, fighting discrimination, xenophobia and political populism.

Real integration, as opposed to assimilation, is an evolving process which requires time, the ability to articulate cultures, customs and religions and to demand tolerance, respect and solidarity.

If we do not consider how to welcome those coming in, we are burying our heads in the sand. We must not forget that it is impossible to **completely stem** migratory flow, and that if we do not pay attention to these processes, these abandoned people will be driven into the hands of organised mafias.

It is usually in the hands of the organised networks **to control migration**, whether by controlling the flow of entry or by controlling the host country. This means we should not just stand here with our arms crossed.

We must not neglect the rights of these migrants, but we also need to show those who are coming in that just as they have rights, they also have duties.

Citizenship is composed of 1 vector of 2 directions, **Rights and Duties**.

The Labour and Social Protection Context;

It is important to recognise **the rights of these migrant workers**.

The economic crisis has been used by anti-immigration movements to foster rejection and xenophobia in European citizens. But we should not forget that the migrants do not, as a rule, steal jobs, but rather they are **an important part of the workforce** in certain sectors of the job market. Immigrants generally do the jobs that the citizens of the country do not wish to do. It has been that way ever since migratory movement began.

We must work on **social and labour protection** of these migrants. It is therefore essential to overcome the **first and biggest barrier, which is that of language**. There can be no social or labour integration without the migrants learning the language of the host country.

Unionisation of the migrant workers is another task to be undertaken and this should be taken on by workers' organisations.

Union workers know their rights and duties. This can be used as an **instrument in fighting social dumping**. The lack of work contracts and terms of residency, using these non-legal workers to replace contract workers in some countries, the lack of social protection and insurance against accidents at work, are all factors that increase with migratory movement and which should be on the **action plans of unions and workers' organisations**.

In the job market, some sectors are potentially more fragile and should therefore be **monitored and supervised**, particularly the sectors of agriculture, construction and domestic service/domestic support.

Organisations in the EZA network can and should be an important tool in this **fight** against labour exploitation of migrants and human-trafficking networks.

As well as labour conditions, it is also important to be aware of residency conditions and safety at work of these workers.

Particular attention should be paid to how we integrate poorly qualified immigrants, because they are the ones most vulnerable to labour and human exploitation by the mafia.

Illegal work is a **social plague**. **Legal work is dignified** and is an indispensable tool in **achieving integration**.

The labour market has an **important role to play in the integration process**.

The Security Context;

Terrorist attacks have fostered fear, insecurity and even rejection towards migratory movement in general and in particular towards refugees.

A small amount of fear and caution is not a problem, but what we **cannot allow is that this fear** turn into hate or become a political tool that fuels an “anti-European” spirit.

We must not confuse one part with the whole.

We must recognise that **closing borders** and putting up walls will not stop migratory movement.

We must recognise that protecting borders does not mean building walls but rather **cooperating closely with the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex)** in an **articulated European security policy**.

The Political Context;

Matters of security, within the context of migratory movement, lead us towards the **political issue**.

It is important not to allow the **population to be manipulated**, not to allow fear and insecurity to become an instrument in increasing political extremism in Europe.

We need to **demystify** fear, preconceived ideas and prejudice.

The intensity of current migratory flow and the political, social and religious context leads us to ask the question:

- **Is Europe prepared to respond to this situation?**

4 Possible Actions to Combat the Causes and Results of Migratory Movement

*“We cannot permit,
that once we have pulled down the visible wall,
an invisible wall is put up
in peoples’ hearts;
1997 – John Paul II*

Migratory pressure is a phenomenon that must be managed by a united Europe, with concrete actions that are focused on **building a common migration policy**.

Starting by defining the different types of movement, that have different root causes and consequences, we can stratify possible action that is required, the main lines of possible actions, as follows:

As a broad approach to migratory movement, we advocate:

- **Being aware of** and understanding that immigration (migratory movement) is a current **item of** the political, national and European **Agenda**;
- Understanding that we need more **cooperation between European countries**;
- Understanding that migratory questions should and must be worked on within the scope of other **policy areas**, particularly

education, work, social security, culture, national security and defence; thus showing that we have to work on migration policy from an **increasingly cross-cutting perspective**;

- Transversal policies that allow us to **fight human-trafficking networks**, particularly the trafficking of women and children (two vulnerable segments of the population);
- Welcoming and integrating those who are arriving, not allowing them to be taken by the mafia networks, but welcoming and integrating them in a **clear and regulated manner**;
- **Education on Tolerance**; as a way of fighting the dangerous political and social populism that is growing around migration;
- The important role of social communication in **informing citizens** is relevant. Not allowing public opinion to be **manipulated**;
- Raising awareness and educating populations. Wrong or negative information only serves to fuel **political populism**;
- Fighting **rejection** of migration from the inside. Not allowing migratory movement to be used as a **weapon of political conquest**;
- **Political effort** in raising citizen awareness and awareness of public bodies;
- **Actions** in the short, medium and long-term. We need to **reinforce cooperation and social cohesion**;

- It is **important** not to allow the **easiest response** – the populist response of rejecting immigration – to take over and influence our political decisions;
- Europe’s most serious **demographic problem** should lead us to reflect on the need to change restrictive migration policy. We must not forget that the **population of Europe is decreasing and ageing**, and that this threatens the sustainability of the pension system;
- Migratory movement means **changing the mission** and the work of the **trade unions and workers’ organisations**.

In terms of migratory movement (economic causes) – **Migrants**;

- Being aware that **the job market has needs**. It is important to synthesise legal entry with the **needs** of the job market.
Migratory flow planning;
- If immigrants enter countries **without documentation** (by illegal means), this favours the illegal job market;
- Analysing and reacting to the common challenges faced by the **unions** as a result of the **growing problem of illegal work**;
- Intensifying the **role of social partners** and reinforcing their abilities and responsibilities, in order to systematically offer information and consultation to workers, especially mobile workers and migrants, on matters of equal treatment and parallel or illegal work;

- Working on a more effective **return** policy;
- Insisting on pilot projects in the domain of legal migration, which the Commission can help to finance and coordinate;
- **Consolidating** the rules on hosting and integration;
- **Family reunification** policy should be part of the hosting and integration process;
- Increasing **cooperation policies**, as a way of managing migratory flow; **Cooperation is instrumental** in regulating the migratory phenomenon in the medium and long-term;
- We should **reflect on**: Up to what point has **disinvestment** in cooperation between countries contributed to the **increase in migratory flow**?

In terms of mobile workers;

- **The principle of free circulation is an important benchmark**;

The mobility of EU workers and the trend to migration pushes **social progress as opposed to social dumping**;

In community migratory movement (**worker mobility**) it is important to remember and be aware of some of the consequences faced by both the countries of origin and the host countries;

Countries of Origin: - The drain of young and highly qualified labour as well as the fragmentation of families (children left alone with extended family);

Host Countries: - Social dumping; the most vulnerable accepting precarious jobs and becoming even more vulnerable. – **Ironic;**

Worker Mobility needs cooperation between member states and the exchange of good practice. **Unions** can and should publish information and raise awareness;

Dare to challenge; sanction companies that are in breach. **For example,** a company that has not respected worker rights should, for at least 10 years, be denied access to national or European support;

EZA network organisations can be and should be **an important tool** in fighting labour exploitation of migrants and human-trafficking networks.

In terms of welcoming refugees;

- Welcoming refugees is a **humanitarian issue**. These are values that Europe should not risk forgetting or losing, because that would threaten the very essence of the European Project;
- This is a **humanitarian matter**, and there is no time to lose. Response should be immediate. But immediate action does not mean uncoordinated action that is not based on knowledge and on controlling flow;
- Our **intervention priority** should be the organised mafia;
- **The principle** of solidarity and subsidiarity amongst **Member States** is fundamental;

- **Matters of security** are intrinsic to the policy of **welcoming refugees**;
- **Monitoring** – this is a key word, particularly in policies related to **welcoming, rehousing and integrating refugees**;
- **Standardisation** of rules and support mechanisms; namely: integration period, monetary values and sharing of good practices. And not neglecting the permanent residence for the period to which they are subject to the relocation programme;
- Applying measures proposed and approved by the Council of Europe to stop **secondary refugee movements**;
- **We know that** the bigger the **distance between the exit point and the host point**, for unsupported journeys, the bigger the danger of intervention by organised networks and the infiltration of terrorists. **That is why it is urgent** that we reinforce humanitarian support in countries that border countries in conflict. **Opening humanitarian corridors for refugees**;
- We need to **contribute to** building the missing links to make European migration and asylum policy more effective, fairer and more robust;
- We must urgently find **planning instruments** for migratory movement, however difficult, in fact, almost impossible, this may be. That is why **we need political effort** and the involvement of **social partners**.

5 Conclusion and Points for Reflection

*“Fighting...
The Globalisation of Indifference”*

A Europe of values, a Europe that wants to keep the European Project alive, will always be a Europe that fights the globalisation of indifference.

And if this principle is valid for all European matters, it is of particular relevance in the theme of Migratory Movement.

Migratory movement is a reality of the past, the present and the future, and forces us to **see this phenomenon as an opportunity and not a threat**.

Integration is the key word in this matter. And for that we need everyone's involvement.

True integration can only exist with learning the language, with **respect** for the customs, cultures and religions of those who are arriving and those who are hosting, and with **decent jobs**.

The EZA network centres' series of seminars and working groups in the educational year of 2017 are one of the contributions of workers' organisations to the great challenge given by Dimitris Avramopoulos, Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, and Marianne Thyssen, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, speaking on behalf of the European Commission: **“Integration can only be effective if all the relevant stakeholders play their part.”**

- **Migratory movement** must not fracture the European Project; we cannot allow populist, xenophobic and extremist movements to use this as an excuse to grow. European citizens should be well-informed, and policies should be clear and objective;
- **Migration is a matter for all Europeans.** Although Europe has different ideas on migration, the truth of the matter is that the principle of subsidiarity must be present. **A problem** affecting one Member State is a problem affecting **all the Member States.**

And **on the matter of migration**, particularly that of refugees, it is very important that we take clear and robust action, because this matter not only affects the host countries or the preferred destinations, but **the whole of Europe**;

- Europe needs to build/consolidate a more effective common migration policy. We need an **integrated and inclusive migration policy**;
- **We need to understand the importance** of migratory movement to Europe. In an ageing Europe, demographics must not be forgotten, or separated from the matter of migratory movement. It is important to remember that **demographics** is very much linked to **immigration**, and that **immigration is part of the solution**. We must get this message across to both individuals and to the collective conscience;
- In integration, the **emotional and human perspective** is what makes the difference. Migrants are not numbers, they are people;

- Within current migratory movement there are two important and particularly complex situations;
- Immigration planning. This is a very difficult, almost impossible task, but we must try to at least address it, because we should be **handling migratory flow with “intelligent borders”**;
- **Matters of security** are linked to migratory movement and appear to be linked to the increase of acts of terrorism that have instilled fear in Europe. Without neglecting matters of security, we should **not be feeding** the lie that says “**Migration = Insecurity/Terrorism**”;

This does not mean we should neglect matters of security or be naïve and think migratory movement does not involve danger.

A bit of caution, fear and the taking of precautions is not a bad thing. However, what we must not do is to allow these to turn into fear, which gives rise to xenophobic and extremist movements;

- Concern should not turn into fear. However, we do need to be wise and on our guard when it comes to **matters of security**. There needs to be a compromise between locked doors and doors that are open to migratory flow. That compromise is difficult to achieve, but it must be found. It is crucial that everyone, from individuals to nations, is involved. This is a **challenge** and a duty of the EZA network workers’ organisations;

- Again, we emphasise the **difference** between migrants, mobile workers and refugees, not forgetting that **immigration policy and refugee policy are not synonymous**;
- **The role of cooperation.** It is not possible to manage migratory flow without considering the matter of cooperation;
- Immigration policy and cooperation policy should be analysed and worked on together. It is important to work with the countries where the biggest migratory flow is coming from.

The matter of cooperation is one of the areas requiring long-term policies.

For **migratory movement**, we should establish plans of action/policies on three levels and for three movement types.

Action levels:

- **Short-term, immediate** – Humanitarian welcoming policies. This is a situation where people cannot be abandoned. This level essentially covers refugee issues, where the response is, for many, the difference between people living and people dying;
- **Medium-term** – Sectorial policies of welcoming/social and labour integration;

That is why the **Reform of the European Common Asylum System** is on the agenda.

- **Long-term** – Cooperation policies, directed at action, support and intervention in countries of origin, essentially economic cooperation and implementation and maintenance of States/Governments with solid democracies, but that are not managed or led in the same way as European countries. The identity and culture of these countries cannot be moulded to the likeness and image of European peoples. **Cooperation** must not fall into the errors of the past, particularly the colonial models of Africa or Latin America.

With regards to **movement types**, we need to distinguish between migrants (as a rule, linked to economic causes), refugees and mobile workers. Each type has **specific root causes** and requires different actions and policies.

In summary, there is no perfect integration model, but there are models whose experience has taught us not to repeat.

Assimilation or **acculturation** – does not work;

Multiculturalism – has failed and has only served to accentuate differences;

Integrationist – **the way of integration** is the path we should be taking, but we know it is not perfect and is even harder to implement. It is a path of learning, supported by values of solidarity, respect and subsidiarity, which must be implemented by those who are coming in and by those who are hosting them. It is a path begun by the individual, leading to collectivity in society, cemented in migration policies that must be unified throughout Europe.

That is why we must **build a common migration policy**.

We must provide the EU with instruments that allow it to better manage migration in the medium and long-term with regards to irregular migration, borders, asylum and legal migration.

Not forgetting that:

- **The Commission** also encourages Member States to urgently move forward with the reform of the Common European Asylum System and to step up efforts to collaborate with countries of origin and transit of migrants, especially by means of additional contributions to the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa.

AND

*“The mid-term review of the **European Migration Agenda** has shown that the EU’s management of migratory flow over the past two years has helped reduce incentives to irregular migration and reinforced protection of our external borders, allowing us to give due support to refugees and to improve legal migration in Europe. Based on these results, we must keep making the effort and step up our work, in order to find more and more robust solutions and to continue to be prepared to face unprecedented situations, as Europe continues to face strong migratory pressure.”*

- **Reinforcing** the need to promote legal ways of entering Europe for labour purposes and promoting a culture of legality, based on complying with legislation, tolerance and respecting diversity.

We hope that **unions will have an important part to play** in making new rules for welcoming immigrants and refugees, as well as in making rules on worker mobility.

Especially because,

We probably all believe that:

- Whilst human beings are dying at the doors of Europe ... because we do not have the answers;
- Whilst workers are being exploited ... simply because their nationality makes them a minority;
 - Whilst we are unable to reconcile cultures and religions, or to destroy myths ...;
 - Whilst these things are happening, we know:
We all still have a long way to go and a lot to learn.

And that was the main purpose driving the EZA network series of seminars, which form the basis for this report.