



PROJECT TITLE: Holistic Intercultural Preparation (HIP)

PROJECT NUMBER: 2019-1-ES01-KA202-065513

ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS OBTAINED IN THE INTERVIEWS:

In order to obtain a deeper understanding of the actual situation during workers' time abroad, 72 interviews were carried out with companies in the four member countries to identify the key factors in the different areas.

These interviews focused on three main questions:

1. *How many expats have you hosted/sent in 2019?*
2. *In your experience, what measures have been favourable when working with expats?*
3. *In your experience, what measures have not worked well when working with expats?*

Country Member of the association	Nº. of Interviews
Belgium	17
Italy	13
Germany	30
Spain	12
TOTAL	72

The following are the main summaries of each of the interviews conducted in each of the four member countries.

BELGIUM:

○ Regarding favourable measures, **the most important are the help with the administrative management and paperwork** as well as **assistance through a tutor** who helps with the culture as well as with all the new elements: car rental, accommodation, work permit, etc.

It also points out that **language training is something that is offered to the person only if they ask for it**, it does not seem to be as common as in other countries.

Finally, it is striking that on several occasions they state that when sending workers to Asia and Africa, special care should be taken and they should receive more support.



○ The problems that appear most frequently are due to **lack of integration** and poor reception with colleagues as well as **culture shock** and **hierarchical differences**, as knowledge differs greatly from one place to another.

The **adaptation of the family** when accompanying the expatriate and homesickness when the family stays in the country of origin also play a crucial role.

The **security** factor is particularly important, as it has been mentioned as a significant problem depending on the destination.

ITALY:

○ It is mentioned as one of the positive points the **language training** before going to the destination country in order to ensure that communication is not a problem.

In addition, it is particularly relevant that they try to look for **foreign companies where there are people from their own country**, in order to make the working method more similar and the communication more effective.

Finally, special emphasis is also placed on the fact that the aim is to provide the **necessary assistance to bridge the cultural gap** between one country and another.

○ In relation to problems, the predominant one is the **lack of integration and adaptation**: firstly because, for convenience, one tends to relate to other Italians (as there are usually many of them) and secondly because in some countries workers are very cold and do not integrate you into their routine.

It is also worth mentioning that there is a **lower level of Health and Security and social security** in other countries than in Italy.

GERMANY:

○ First of all, the measures that have been most useful in working with expatriates are attached to **family involvement**, **partner programmes**, and **preparation of the whole family** as well as **country training** for the whole family too.

Furthermore, one conclusion that can be drawn is that **support from the spouse** is very important. For this reason, an activity must also be found for this person, e.g. voluntary work or study...

In-depth **intercultural training & culturally reflective preparation** are also important.

○ In terms of problems, the **integration of the family** is extremely significant. Although companies attach a great deal of importance to this, it is a factor that is often not entirely effective.

In addition, some factors that often fail are **intercultural group trainings**, **stereotype trainings**, and **standardized offers**. Finally, sometimes it also highlights the **neglect of the integration process**.



SPAIN:

○ **Psychological and emotional support** is essential, not only for the expatriate but also for his or her family, which also plays a vital role.

Good preparation is crucial. The expatriate must be interculturally trained and have a good knowledge of the language of the destination.

There should be a person in charge of mentoring and answering questions. This **contact person** will help covering the expatriate with issues such as location, taxes, etc.

○ The main difficulties arise from **not taking the family into account** enough. The human factor is one of the most important things and sometimes it is not given adequate support.

Difficulties also arise from a **lack of communication and planning**. Both must be clear and open, as lack of communication can create major problems for the expatriate.

The last difficulty is related to **remuneration**. Sometimes it is not fair, especially with accommodation and maintenance when the rest of the expatriate's family will also travel.