



**Séminaire de l'Unité Migrations Internationales et Minorités (2009)
Ethnicité et 'race' : concepts, classifications, usages scientifiques et politiques**

en partenariat avec la Winter School du réseau IMISCOE et du RTN TIES

**The labour market integration of immigrants and their children
findings from OECD country reviews**

Conférence de Thomas Liebig (OECD)

Mardi 27 janvier 2009, de 15h à 17h, salle Sauvy, INED

When immigrants arrive in a new country, they are confronted with new labour market requirements such as language proficiency, familiarity with job-search procedures and work practices which they are not always able to satisfy. Over time, this expertise can be acquired, and in principle immigrant performance in the receiving country should be similar to that of the native-born after a certain time has elapsed. In practice however, differences persist: experience and qualifications may not be fully recognised, social capital may be lacking, or discriminatory hiring practices may persist among employers. These obstacles affect not only new immigrants, but, surprisingly, their children too, even if the children are born and educated in the receiving country.

What can be done to improve the labour market integration of immigrants and their children? Employers need to have the necessary information and incentives to assess the skills and qualifications of immigrants properly. Governments have a role to play in promoting language and vocational training, and encouraging diversity in the workplace. Immigrants themselves need to adapt to the requirements of host-country employers. The viability of future migration policies, in particular greater recourse to immigration, will depend to a large extent on how successful OECD countries and immigrants are in achieving the objective of successful integration in the labour market.

Against this background, the seminar presents and discusses the first results of an ongoing series of studies on the labour market integration of immigrants and their children in OECD countries. Until now, reviews of Australia, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal and Sweden have been completed; reviews on Norway and Switzerland are currently ongoing.

Thomas Liebig is currently working as the Administrator in charge of the OECD reviews on

the labour market integration of immigrants and their children. After studies of Economics, International Affairs and International Management at the University of St. Gallen (Switzerland) and the ESADE, Barcelona, he worked as a consultant for the OECD's Economics Department in 2000. In 2004, following completion of his doctorate degree in economics, he joined the International Migration Division of the OECD's Directorate for Employment, Labour and Social Affairs. Numerous publications and lectures on migration and integration issues.

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WIGDOROWICZ Karine

Secrétaire de l'unité 8 : Migrations internationales et minorités

INED

133, bd Davout

75980 Paris Cedex 20

Tél. : 01 56 06 20 17 - Fax : 01 56 06 21 93