

INTEGRATION OF MIGRANT WOMEN IN THE EU: POLICIES AND MEASURES

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Background

Globally and in the European Union (EU), women account for around 50% of migrants. In mid-2020, female migrants comprised somewhat less than half (135 million or 48.1%) of all migrants worldwide. In mid-2021, women comprised slightly more than half (33 million or 51.2%) of all migrants in the EU.

Recent studies show that migrant women face a so-called double disadvantage, due to the intersection of being a woman and a migrant. For example, migrant women in the EU (including EU nationals and third-country nationals) generally have a higher unemployment rate than both non-migrant women and migrant men. For women with young children, the employment rate is significantly lower for migrant women than non-migrant women. In

addition, migrant women have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, e.g. through job loss, additional care and domestic work or increased exposure when providing front-line services.

To what extent do EU Member States consider the distinct situation of migrant women in their integration policies and measures? And have special integration policies or measures been developed to counteract the negative consequences of COVID-19 for migrant women's integration?

The main research findings are briefly outlined below.



Key trends and findings

- A majority of EU Member States have integration policies in place, but few specifically address women.** This could be partly due to the gender mainstreaming approach followed by most EU Member States. In addition, some Member States pursue a dual approach that combines gender mainstreaming with targeted policies for migrant women.
- Responsibility for integration policies is shared between national, regional and local levels in the majority of the Member States.** Some deal with integration primarily at national level, but majority highlight the importance of involving municipalities and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in policy implementation.
- Labour market integration of migrant women is an important topic of debate across the Member States,** including barriers to access such as a lack of recognition of qualifications and language obstacles. Migrant women lack awareness of their labour market rights and incentives to seek education and work opportunities. **Other challenges include discrimination, lack of social networks, limited access to childcare and other family constraints.**
- Overall, Member States **acknowledge the need for specific integration policies tailored to migrant women.** Most have developed dedicated policies that address the integration of migrant women, primarily in relation to accessing the labour market and civic integration, followed by language training, education and health.
- Other specific policies address housing, protection from violence, prevention and protection from human trafficking, counter-ing anti-discrimination and racism, and integration through sport.
- Examples of good practices in integration measures that are gender sensitive or intersectional have been implemented across the Member States.** Their focus is typically access to the labour market and civic integration, followed by language training, education, health, housing and entrepreneurship. Other measures address other types of assistance, such as psychosocial or parenting support.
- The majority of the Member States did not develop specific integration policies nor adapt their existing policies to reduce the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on migrant women.** This is largely because the situation of migrant women was addressed in policies aimed at migrants overall, or in national COVID-19 policies. Member States that developed specific integration policies directly targeting migrant women during the COVID-19 pandemic typically envisaged counselling and multisectoral assistance from NGOs, as well as residence permit extensions.
- Several Member States are planning **new policies or changes to existing policies in order to further enhance the integration of migrant women,** including addressing the impact of COVID-19.



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