



I-WELCOME - Reinforcing migrant women's
integration in society and the labour
market

DESKTOP RESEARCH

Developed By:



INFORMATION ABOUT OUTPUT

Output: IO1 – A BELNDED UP-SKILLING PROGRAMME FOR TCN WOMEN
Activity: IO1-A1 : QUALITATIVE AND QANTITATIVE RESEARCH

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project acronym: I-WELCOME
Project title: I-WELCOME - Reinforcing migrant women's integration in society and the labour market
Project number:
Sub-programme or KA: KA2 Cooperation for Innovation and the Exchange of Good Practices
Project website:



Contents

1. General Introduction.....	4
2. The presence and characteristics of migrant women.....	5
3. Migrant Women in the Labour Market.....	6
4. State of Art regarding Policies/ Guidelines.....	7
5. Other training programmes/ initiatives.....	8
6. Conclusion/ Summary.....	11
7. References.....	12



1. General Introduction

The effective integration of migrants into the host country is a key challenge, countries around Europe facing at the moment. However, according to a recent report by the European Commission (2019), the number of permits per 1000 inhabitants tends to be lower in Eastern Europe, compare to Southern European Countries such as Cyprus. Especially in the early 2000s, Cyprus became a favourable destination for migration due to the socioeconomic development of the island at that time, and a large number of people moved to Cyprus in order to find employment (National Action Plan, 2020). Additionally, according to Teerling and King (2011), in 2011 Cyprus ranked high on population with foreign citizenship (second only after Luxemburg) and population with foreign birth (third after Luxemburg and Ireland)- these indicators shown again the high migration rates Cyprus experienced through the years.

However, in 2014 a massive decline was noted in the number of migrants moved to Cyprus, and this was mainly due to the economic crisis that affected the country, but also other countries around the European Union. The migration rates started to increase drastically again the following year. Based on the latest statistics, in 2018 the number of migrants in Cyprus reached the 23.442, which is the biggest number of migrants and refugees the island received the past years, taking also into consideration the overall population of the island (EUROSTAT, 2020). As a result, the need on focusing on the successful integration of these people in the Cypriot society, appears imperative.



2. The presence and characteristics of migrant women

Along with the increase noted in terms of the receiving of migrants, it is also worth to note the increase in terms of the migrant women who moved to Cyprus the recent years. Specifically, during the period of 2018-2019 women appear to outnumber men in all the age groups presented – with the age group of 15-17 years old to be the largest group (National Action Plan, 2020). In terms of the country of origin of those women, there were no available statistics specifically for this group. However, according to the statistics presented by the Asylum Service of Cyprus in 2019, the majority of the asylum seekers came from countries such as Syria (23%), Georgia (14%), India (14%), Bangladesh (11%), Pakistan (11%) and Cameroon (11%) – see figure 1 below. This data clearly indicates the heterogeneous nature of the migration population as a whole, and it needs to be taken into consideration when analysing the group of migrant women too.

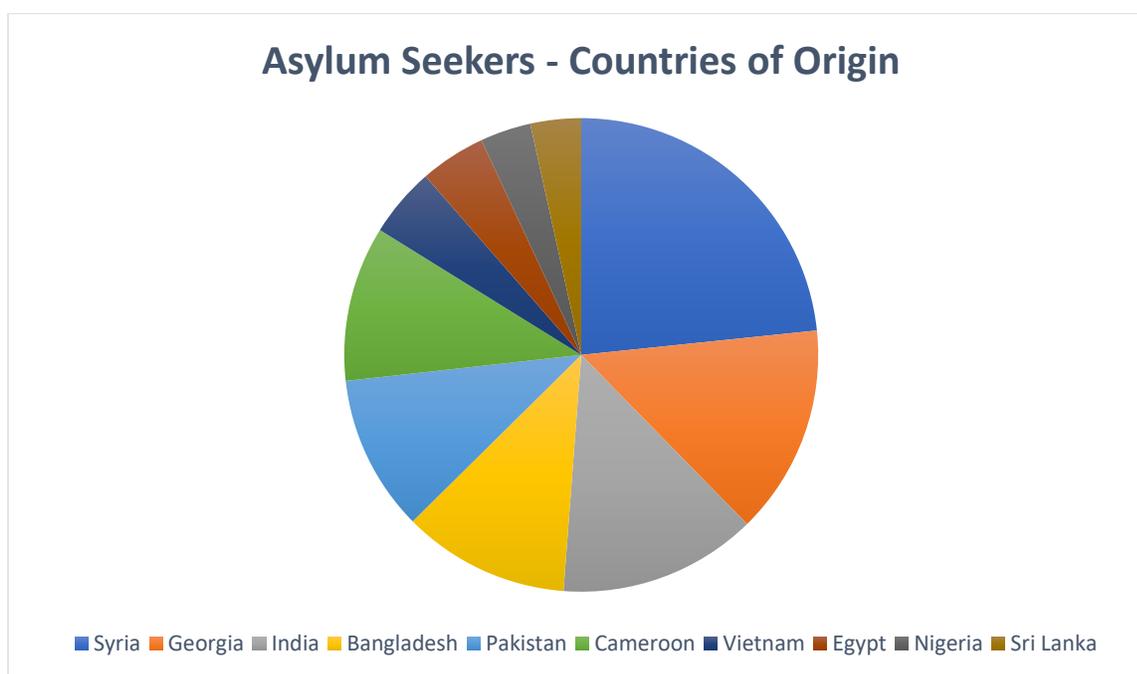


Figure 1: Country of Origin of Asylum Seekers in Cyprus during 2019– according to Asylum Service of Cyprus

Regarding the educational level of this group, again there is no available data specifically for the migrant women as a sub-group, but for the migrants as a homogenous group. According to the

data collected by EUROSTAT (2020), the majority of the migration population between 20-64 years old attended primary education and gained basic skills (27%). In terms of attending secondary education the percentage is 33.9%, but a large number of them even if they had the opportunity to attend, they have not managed to complete it in the end. Additionally, the percentage of those who attended Higher Education appears to be relatively high (39%), but this appears to be due to individuals from non-EU countries who moved to Cyprus as students and coming from wealthy financial background.

3. Migrant Women in the Labour Market

Employment is a key factor in the integration of migrants into the host country. According to EUROSTAT (2020), 66% of the women with a non-EU background and with low level of educational attainment are employed, compared to the 74% for non-EU males with the same educational background. However, women with a non-EU background and with medium educational level present higher employment rate (72.8%) compare to their male counterparts (64.1%).

These statistics though needs to be treated with caution, as migrants and asylum seekers are only a part of the non-EU population of the island, and these rates might not represent the employability rates of this group. A recent research by the University of Nicosia in 2018 indicates that a large percentage (88.3%) of the asylum seekers are unemployed, and only the 11.7% of them has access to the labour market. A reason for this might also be the communication barriers that migrants and refugees experience, as only 5% of the participants of this research indicated that they acquire some basic knowledge of the Greek language, whereas the vast majority rated their level of Greek language as very bad.

In terms of those who are employed, the most common fields of employment were household activities (47.2%), agriculture (25.6%), petrol stations (11.1%), carwashes (8.3%) and office work (5.6%). The same research moves further to identify some patterns between gender and field of work – for instance males with a migration background were more likely to work in agriculture, whereas females with migration background were more likely to be employed in the field of household activities. These patterns were also reflected in the recent Labour Force Survey conducted in 2020.

4. State of Art regarding Policies/ Guidelines

In Cyprus the main legislation regarding the refugee's rights is the Refugee Law 2000, which states that the Cypriot government assumed full responsibility for the refugee issues, including the asylum procedure as per the 1st January 2002. All persons with international protection namely refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary protection status and asylum seekers are protected under this law. In addition to the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees and the relevant Protocol of 1967, the Republic of Cyprus has adhered to a large number of international conventions and covenants on human rights as well as regional conventions such as that of the Council of Europe.

In regards to accessing the labour market, this depend on the legal status of the person as described under the Refugee Law 2000. For recognised refugees, according to the Section 21B of the law, there are no restrictions and they enjoy the same rights as Cypriot citizens to employment. For asylum seekers, the access to the labour market is permitted one month after the submission of an asylum application, however the Minister of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance, in consultation with the Minister of Interior, have the right to place restrictions and conditions on the right to employment, without hindering asylum seekers' effective access to the labour market. Additionally, in the case of Third Country Nationals, when moving to Cyprus for employment they should apply in advance to the migration authorities in Cyprus for a work and residence permit, which usually is valid for a certain period of time. In all cases, a valid work permit is required for a non-EU national to legally work in Cyprus, and it consists a serious criminal offence if those requirements are not met.

Finally, due to the high number of migrants and refugees the island received the past years, the creation of a National Plan on the Integration of Migrants was an imperative need. The "National Plan on the Integration of Migrants" concerns the drafting, monitoring and evaluation of an integrated plan, with suggestions and measures aimed at facilitating the integration of migrants - Third Country Nationals (TCN) in Cypriot society. It is the result of research and consultation with stakeholders, public services and civil society organizations dealing with migration issues.

The plan focus on 8 axes of intervention:

- Interventions related to Recognition and Certification of Migrant's knowledge, skills and qualifications
- Interventions related to the Training of Migrants
- Awareness-raising Interventions for Migrants, Host Societies and those involved in the Integration Process



- Interventions that Facilitate the Accessibility of Migrants to the Welfare State
- Protecting the Human Rights of Vulnerable Groups with migration and refugee biographies
- Integration Support Interventions through Ongoing Counselling
- Development of Support Tools for Integration
- Establishment of a Management Mechanism

The first draft of the plan is already available, and the final version is expected to be ready by the 2022.

5. Other training programmes/ initiatives

In this section, there are different training programmes/ initiatives at a local/national level directed to migrant women, in order to develop their skills and competences for joining the labour market.

GOOD PRACTICE 1	
Name	Workshop “Getting ready for the job-market and job opportunities”
Description (50-70 words)	The workshop aimed to develop the employability skills of unemployed asylum-seekers and refugees in Cyprus, with the goal to facilitate their integration in the local society.
Key Stakeholders/ Provider	European University of Cyprus
Level (Organisational, Regional, Local, National)	National
Type (Digital Skills, Professional Skills etc.)	Employability Skills, Professional Development
Tools/Resources/ Services	Employment Mentorship Workshop
Link/ Website	https://www.unhcr.org/cy/2019/05/21/employment-mentorship-workshops-for-refugees-offered-by-the-european-university-of-cyprus/



GOOD PRACTICE 2	
Name	Help Refugees Work
Description (50-70 words)	HelpRefugeesWork is an innovative and free web service that brings motivated refugee job-seekers in contact with employers and training providers in Cyprus in an easy and efficient manner.
Key Stakeholders/ Provider	UNHCR Cyprus & Cyprus Refugee Council
Level (Organisational, Regional, Local, National)	National
Type (Digital Skills, Professional Skills etc.)	Employability Opportunities/ Professional Development
Tools/Resources/ Services	Free Web-Service
Link/ Website	https://www.helprefugeeswork.org/

GOOD PRACTICE 3	
Name	Cyprus Refugee Council
Description (50-70 words)	The CRC is an NGO focus on promoting the wellbeing and integration of refugees and asylum seekers in Cyprus through offering training, legal, social and psychological support.
Key Stakeholders/ Provider	Cyprus Refugee Council
Level (Organisational, Regional, Local, National)	National
Type (Digital Skills, Professional Skills etc.)	Training Provider, Legal/Social/ Psychological Support
Tools/Resources/ Services	-
Link/ Website	https://cyrefugeecouncil.org/



GOOD PRACTICE 4	
Name	New Channels for Integration
Description (50-70 words)	New Channels for Integrations is a collaborative initiative that has been running since 2012 by a consortium of municipalities across Cyprus. Municipalities joined forces to uphold the principles of contemporary democratic pluralistic society and assist in the integration of migrants at their communities and in the Cypriot society more broadly.
Key Stakeholders/ Provider	Municipalities of Nicosia, Ayios Dometios, Engomi and Lakatamia
Level (Organisational, Regional, Local, National)	Local
Type (Digital Skills, Professional Skills etc.)	Workshops, Seminars, Support Services
Tools/Resources/ Services	-
Link/ Website	http://localintegration.eu/en/

GOOD PRACTICE 5	
Name	ILearnGreek
Description (50-70 words)	iLearnGreek provides free Greek language courses at two different levels (basic and intermediate level) for refugees, asylum seekers, and persons with subsidiary protection and non-EU migrants. The courses are held in all cities and they aim to support the integration process in the Cypriot society.
Key Stakeholders/ Provider	KES College, CARDET, INNOVADE and the Municipalities of Agios Dometios, Agios Athanasios, Deryneia and Pafos.
Level (Organisational, Regional, Local, National)	National
Type (Digital Skills, Professional Skills etc.)	Communication Skills - Language
Tools/Resources/ Services	-
Link/ Website	http://www.ilearngreek.eu/



6. Conclusion/ Summary

To sum up, this report looked into the general picture regarding migration in Cyprus by analysing the migration rates through the years and also discussing the state of art through the different guideline and policies. The presence and characteristics of migrant women in particular were also discussed, along with more information about the participation of migrant women in the labour market. However, more research directed specifically to this group is required in Cyprus, in order to better identify their characteristics and their needs. At a policy level, Cyprus is taking a big step towards a successful integration of migrants - Third Country Nationals (TCN) in Cypriot society through the development of the “National Plan on the Integration of Migrants”, which is expected to have a positive impact to this group of the population.



7. References

Provide a list of the references used in an APA format.

Asylum Service Cyprus, 2020. *Statistics - Asylum Information Database | European Council On Refugees And Exiles*. [online] Asylum Information Database | European Council on Refugees and Exiles. Available at: <<https://asylumineurope.org/reports/country/cyprus/statistics/>> [Accessed 13 January 2021].

Cylaw.org. 2000. *Refugee Law*. [online] Available at: <http://www.cylaw.org/nomoi/indexes/2000_1_6.html> [Accessed 13 January 2021].

European Commission, 2019. *Labour Market Integration Of Thirdcountry Nationals In EU Member States*. Synthesis Report for the EMN Study. [online] Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/00_eu_labour_market_integration_final_en.pdf> [Accessed 13 January 2021].

EUROSTAT, 2020. *ATLAS OF MIGRATION*. [online] EUROSTAT. Available at: <<https://bluehub.jrc.ec.europa.eu/migration/app/atlas.html>> [Accessed 13 January 2021].

Labour Force Survey, 2020. *Statistical Service - Labour - Employment - Key Figures*. [online] Mof.gov.cy. Available at: <https://www.mof.gov.cy/mof/cystat/statistics.nsf/labour_31main_en/labour_31main_en?OpenForm&sub=1&sel=2#> [Accessed 13 January 2021].

National Action Plan For The Integration Of Migrants And Refugees (2020). Serie A. [online] Available at: <<http://tcnintegration.com.cy/wp-content/uploads/ekdosiSxediouEntaksis.pdf>> [Accessed 13 January 2021].

Teerling, J. and King, R., 2011. *Cyprus as A Multi-Diasporic Space*. [online] Sussex.ac.uk. Available at: <<https://www.sussex.ac.uk/webteam/gateway/file.php?name=mwp67.pdf&site=252>> [Accessed 13 January 2021].

University of Nicosia, 2018. *The Living Conditions of Asylum-Seekers in Cyprus*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.unhcr.org/cy/wp-content/uploads/sites/41/2018/05/LivingConditionsofAsylumSeekersReport.pdf>> [Accessed 13 January 2021].



