



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

**NATIONAL REPORT**

**Developed By:**



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## INFORMATION ABOUT OUTPUT

Output:	IO2: SUPPORTING TCN WOMEN LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION
Activity:	IO2-A1: QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH FOR MAPPING EMPLOYER'S PERSPECTIVES IN SUPPORTING LABOUR INTEGRATION OF TCN WOMEN

## 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:	<a href="https://iwelcome-project.eu/">https://iwelcome-project.eu/</a>



## Table of Contents

1. General Introduction of the labour market in the country .....	4
2. Key finding in the country .....	5
2.1. Survey on employer's perspective .....	5
2.2. Focus group .....	8
3. Perspectives on offering job shadowing opportunities .....	9
3.1. On a national level .....	9
3.2. On a company level .....	10
4. Support measures for TCN women's employability .....	10
5. Conclusion/Summary .....	12
6. Glossary of terms .....	13
7. References .....	13



## 1. General Introduction of the labour market in the country

Even though nominally men and women have equal rights and the government is by constitution obliged to support gender equality, Germany is among the lowest-ranking countries in the EU when it comes to gender equality in the labor market. In 2018, 76% of women were employed in Germany, compared to over 80% of men. However, about half of all women who are employed work part-time, compared to only five to ten percent of men. 66% of women who have children below the age of 18 were working part-time in the year 2019. The gender pay gap amounts to about 21%, which is largely due to women working in areas which are paid less, such as care and social work.

In recent years policies were launched to support salary transparency and a higher percentage for women in leading positions and self-employment. While aimed at promoting gender equality in the work place, most of the measures proposed are aimed at highly educated and trained women.

The German government launched several initiatives which aim at fostering girls' interest in STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). For instance, in 2016 the *Initiative Klischeefrei* (initiative free from clichés) was started, which supports adolescents in choosing educational paths according to their interests and talents rather than stereotypical careers (<https://www.klischee-frei.de/de/index.php>). Since 2001, the annual *Girl's Day* allows girls from the age of 10 to visit local enterprises to gain insight into employment fields women are less represented in.

Generally, qualified jobs may only be granted to Non-Citizens if no German citizen is available to fill the requirements. Degrees and qualifications which were obtained in other countries need to be formally recognized in Germany. One of the measures launched to facility the procedure is the skills auditing tool *myskills* (<https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/institutionen/myskills>) offered by the Federal Employment Agency. A support program aimed at offering better job market opportunities for people with a history of migration was launched in 2005. The support program *Integration through qualification* (IQ) is concerned with offering better job market opportunities for people with a history of migration in general. It was expanded in 2015 to focus on the recognition of qualification obtained in participants' countries of origin.

In each federal state, networks have been established which are concerned with giving migrants opportunities to work at transferring their acquired skills to the German job market's requirements. Additionally, in 2015 the European Social Fund (ESF) program *Stark im Beruf* (strong at work), which is targeted towards the support of mothers with a history of migration, was launched by the federal ministry of families, seniors, women and adolescents. About two



thirds of the women who took part in the program have gained at least an employment prospect such as recognition of their qualifications, further qualification or an internship, while 32% are either regularly employed, self-employed or absolving training. (<https://www.starkimberuf.de/>)

Apart from the programs mentioned above, there are hardly any structural public support measures. Local organizations regularly launch projects in support of increasing TCNs participation in the local labour market. However, these are dependent on funding and individual initiatives. Except for a few organizations concerned with integration measures which organize mentorship projects, job shadowing is only offered to students. There are no Job shadowing opportunities for migrant women on a broader scale.

## 2. Key findings in the country

This section will present employers' perspective when recruiting migrant women and multicultural workplaces Germany, both from the survey and the focus group discussion. A special focus is put on the questions: What challenges do migrant women face at the job market in Germany? Do the cultural differences be an obstacle for migrant women accessing the job market in Germany?

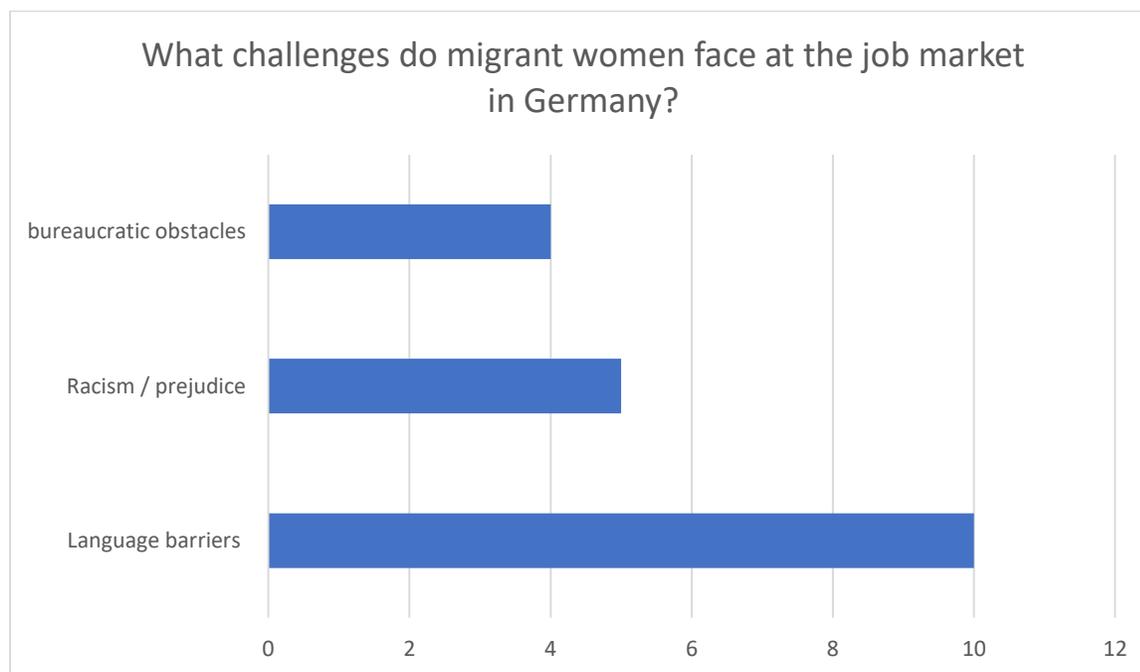
### 2.1. Survey on employer's perspective

The survey was conducted among 15 participants. Apart from three employers or entrepreneurs, most participants are or have been active in communal integration services in support of migrants and/or refugees. At the same time, half of the participants had experiences in employing or working with TCN women.

More than half of participants named language barriers as a decisive challenge faced by migrant women when entering the job market. Every second Labour Market Stakeholder asked also named a lack of understanding of cultural differences, ingrained stereotypes or even racist attitudes on the part of the employer as obstacles.

Apart from these obstacles, which one of the participants named "soft" obstacles since they could be conquered by offering language courses or trainings on inclusion, about half of the participants also cited bureaucratic issues. Another obstacle cited is the question of whether people who can only work part-time receive much less social benefit and may therefore have less money than before even if they are working.

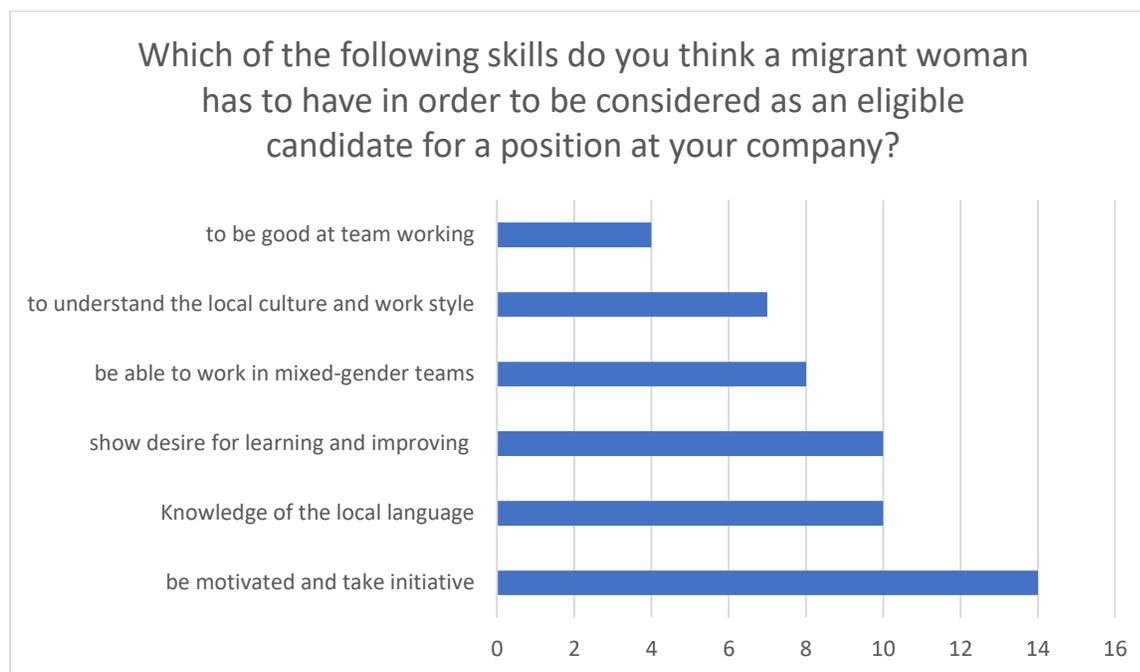
What challenges do you think migrant women face at the job market in Germany?



Stereotypes on migrant women feed into a lack of acknowledgement of their skills. Additionally, migrant women themselves are cited as often lacking an awareness of or confidence in their skills and education. Only one of the participants thought that cultural differences do not pose an obstacle in employing migrant women. A quarter of LMS asked are sure that cultural differences make it more difficult for migrant women to enter the job market, while the others were indecisive. Ingrained clichés the women themselves may have taken on also pose a barrier towards successful employment. Some participants claimed that employers often do not have the capacities or the willingness to employ migrant-women full-time and to put in the extra effort which might be needed to integrate them fully. At the same time, migrant women lack the opportunities to gain immediate access to prospective employees.

When asked on the skills migrant women need to have in order to be attractive as prospective employees, nearly all participants cited motivation and initiative, followed up closely by the need to have a basic knowledge of the German language and an interest in their own further qualification, both of which were deemed necessary by 10 of 15 participants.

Half of the participants cited the knowledge of local working culture and manner of work as important. The same number of participants thought that working in teams of different genders was necessary to be successful in the German labor market.



## 2.2. Focus group

Due to restrictions in the ability to meet people face to face because of the Coronavirus pandemic, the discussions were conducted via zoom or phone respectively. We organized one zoom discussion with a TCN woman who had previously taken part in integration measures and one woman working at a communal integration centre with migrant background herself as well as one-on-one calls with people from organizations involved in integration support measures.

Topics of discussion were mainly the obstacles migrant women face when entering the job market from the employers' point of view.

Some of the LMS questioned work with immigrant-refugees who have difficulties obtaining a secured residency permit. Even for women who do have a legal right to stay in the host country, there are bureaucratic barriers to overcome. Often, the education or experience they gained in their home country is not recognized in Germany. It is difficult for the women themselves and the supporting organizations to acquire the documents needed to become legally employed. Rather than looking at their experience, education or skills, employers are often concerned foremost with TCN women's legal status. Even if they are motivated to employ TCN women, employers may be reluctant to overcome the bureaucratic barriers. Institutions such as the unemployment agency or migration offices are often not invested in offering additional qualification, reeducation opportunities or other support measures in obtaining highly qualified working opportunities to TCN women. One of the women questioned also reported being hired for a training period of a few months only and then let go.

The center for education and vocational qualification reports placing great importance in improving language and communication skills, TCN women's assessment of their skills, establishing personal contacts and placing participants in internships. Apart from these measures which facilitate TCN women's entry to the job market, they also report that the companies they work with have seen an improvement of their social engagement.

According to the focus group findings it is crucial to both support TCN women in having confidence in their skills and abilities as well as sensitize employers to regard TCN women as potential work force. Particularly smaller companies who need to be supported in integrating TCN women and to be offered sensitivity training as they lack the resources to put in the additional effort.

TCN women themselves report the following main obstacles:

- Not being able to complete language courses due to childcare obligations



- Difficulty in maintaining their language skills due to social isolation after the language courses
- Non-recognition of the education / qualification and working experiences they obtained in their native countries
- Being placed in cooking / cleaning / child care services by the unemployment agency rather than receiving support in finding employment according to their skills and interests
- Lack of social contacts / network especially regarding potential employers

### 3. Perspectives on offering job shadowing opportunities

In Germany, Job Shadowing opportunities are often restricted to people currently absolving their secondary education or university degrees. Since it is mandatory in many subjects to spend several weeks of one's studies at an internship or another opportunity to engage in practical work outside of academia, employers do not have to pay these students. These programmes are usually organized bilaterally by the universities and the employers. Depending on the type of school you attend, it is also common to spend some days or weeks visiting an employee in order to gain practical insight to the field and working conditions. This type of job shadowing is relatively established in institutions which guide adolescents who aim at entering vocational training in contrast to going on to study at a university. Apart from these opportunities aimed at native citizens who are still completing their studies, there are hardly job shadowing is restricted to very few initiatives acquiring mentors and employers who are willing to offer such an opportunity. However, there are no Job shadowing opportunities for migrant women on a broader scale. Except for a few organizations concerned with integration measures which organize mentorship projects, job shadowing is only offered to students.

#### 3.1. On a national level

The county of Baden-Württemberg offers a mentoring programme within the *Frau im Beruf* (women at work) initiative. Local contact points which have already been engaged in supporting immigrants bring together mentors and mentees, who are counselled on their career development and opportunities. For six to eight months, mentors offer insight into their work and their professional network and encourage mentees to build up their own. The programme recognizes both the participating women's interests and qualification as well as economic interests in mind.

<https://www.frauundberuf-bw.de/frau-beruf/mentorinnen-programm/>

*berami* is an educational and consulting institution in Frankfurt am Main with 25 years of experience in the professional integration of people with migrant backgrounds. Since 2005, they have been offering mentoring programs for migrant women since 2005. While they have developed several mentoring programs (highly qualified employees, job returnees, young women), all programs have the same goal of



supporting women migrants in shaping their career paths and assisting in professional and social integration. During the mentoring programme, participating women are supported in networking, getting to know the workplace culture and rules and receiving guidance.

<https://www.berami.de/mentoring-3/>

### 3.2. On a company level

Not applicable

## 4. Support measures for TCN women’s employability

<b>Support measure 1</b>	
<b>Name</b>	MiA – Migrantinnen fit für den Arbeitsmarkt (migrant women fit for the job market)
<b>Description (100 words)</b>	MiA offers individual counseling to migrant and refugee women. During assessment weeks, each participant’s starting point is evaluated regarding their biography, their experiences, their prospects, interests and needs. After the first week, migrant and refugee women receive training according to their individual status. Among the courses offered are general and specialized language courses, digital skills, and application training. An in-depth skill assessment and guidance counseling is offered, followed by motivational courses inciting participants’ initiative. They also offer training focused on applying for jobs, networking and confidently presenting oneself as well as general support in entering the German job market.
<b>Key Stakeholders/ Provider</b>	Berami e.V. + Jumpp e.V. (both NGOs)
<b>Level (Organisational, Regional, Local, National)</b>	Regional: Frankfurt/Main and surroundings
<b>Type (Digital Skills, Professional Skills etc.)</b>	Digital skills, language skills, skill assessment, application training and guidance counselling
<b>Link/ Website</b>	<a href="https://www.mia-frankfurt.de/">https://www.mia-frankfurt.de/</a>

### Support measure 2

<b>Name</b>	Blickpunkt: Migrant:innen (Focal point: migrant women)
<b>Description (100 words)</b>	Still being developed, the aim is to develop and provide individual, flexible counseling, coaching and mentoring for migrant women. A special focus is placed on taking into account mobility, child care opportunities as well as part-time education and qualification measures. Additionally, labor market stakeholders are to be sensitized on the situation and needs of migrant women, especially concerning the disadvantages they face when entering the job market.
<b>Key Stakeholders/ Provider</b>	Caritasverband Bistum Magdeburg e. V., Europäisches Bildungswerks für Beruf und Gesellschaft gGmbH (EBG) und Minor -Projektkontor für Bildung und Forschung gGmbH
<b>Level (Organisational, Regional, Local, National)</b>	national
<b>Type (Digital Skills, Professional Skills etc.)</b>	Coaching, qualification, professional skills
<b>Link/ Website</b>	<a href="https://minor-kontor.de/blickpunkt-migrantinnen/">https://minor-kontor.de/blickpunkt-migrantinnen/</a>

<b>Support measure 3</b>	
<b>Name</b>	MuQ – Mütter und Qualifizierung (Mothers and Qualification)
<b>Description (100 words)</b>	<p>MuQ offers internships and additional qualification building upon the skills of migrant mothers. They offer module-based in-house qualifications which last for up to one year.</p> <p>They organize events which allow for the target group to get to know each other and prospective employers as well as to present themselves and their capabilities and accomplishments to the public. Especially the connection of migrant women with labor market stakeholders proves to be crucial in order to challenge stereotypes and instead acknowledge their potential.</p> <p>Another important aspect is the support in having previous education/training officially recognized.</p>

	<p>Apart from courses and qualifications aimed directly at entering the job market, participants are also able to gain more knowledge of the local job and qualification opportunities and their social confidence.</p> <p>All offers are accompanied by child care and free of charge.</p>
<b>Key Stakeholders/ Provider</b>	ZIB-BILDUNGSOFFENSIVE - die kurbel (communal support and integration centre)
<b>Level (Organisational, Regional, Local, National)</b>	Regional
<b>Type (Digital Skills, Professional Skills etc.)</b>	<p>Internships, professional qualification</p> <p>Application training</p> <p>Support + orientation in entering the job market</p> <p>Coaching</p> <p>Digital skills training</p>
<b>Link/ Website</b>	<a href="https://www.zib-oberhausen.de/projekte/mut-muetter-und-talent">https://www.zib-oberhausen.de/projekte/mut-muetter-und-talent</a>

## 5. Conclusion/Summary

According to the survey and the focus groups, there are three main factors to be regarded in supporting TCN women's entering the labour market: Helping them acquire better language skills, overcoming stereotypes and conquering bureaucratic hurdles. At the same time, overcoming stereotypes is not only necessary on part of the employers, but TCN women themselves are also not always aware of their skills and rights. It is crucial to both support TCN women in having confidence in their skills and abilities as well as sensitize employers to regard TCN women as potential work force.

Furthermore, childcare is a major problem. Many of the women surveyed stated that they were unable to take full advantage of continuing education opportunities, such as language courses, due to a lack of childcare options. According to their own statements, these women are unable to accept full-time jobs. A useful approach are programs for integrating TCN women into the labour market that simultaneously target mothers and their children, offering activities for both adults and young children. The services offered by migration counselling centres and employment agencies are proving to be inadequate. The employment agencies in particular often



ignore the qualifications and interests of TCN women. Measures and programs in which the language skills and abilities acquired could be further developed and deepened in a practical environment, for example during internships in smaller companies, proved to be positive. Unfortunately, it is often these smaller companies that lack competent support in implementing integration measures. To strengthen their social commitment and raise more awareness about the problems of TCN women in the labour market, these companies need to be more involved in the programs. Greater support from the state would be desirable for these companies.

## 6. Glossary of terms

LMS – Labour Market Stakeholder

TCN – Third Country National

## 7. References

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