



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

NATIONAL REPORT

Developed By



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:	https://iwelcome-project.eu/



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1. General Introduction of the labour market in the country

Third Country National women generally face greater obstacles to achieve social and labour inclusion in Spain. TCN women is one of the collectives with a higher unemployment rates and exposed to a higher risk of poverty in the Spanish society. One of the barriers is the lack of work permits and the irregular administrative situation, along with the deficiency of social and personal resources¹.

Secondly, the labour sectors in which most of them are working underline for being temporary, with low salary conditions and highly feminised. The majority of TCN women worked in the hospitality and customer service fields, along with the care and cleaning areas. The number of TCN women working in the domestic sector, mainly without a work contract, led them to an enormous vulnerability, which has been especially increased during the COVID pandemic². Also, seasonal workers related to agricultural tasks have, quite often, their rights diminished and the living conditions do not comply with the minimum standards.

On the other hand, resources and services are being implemented to facilitate the labour inclusion of migrant women, especially by NGOs (see section 4. Support measures for TCN women's employability). In general, the services offer: job guidance; advice on CV creation; information on training actions; social and psychological support; Spanish classes, training in ICTs for users (office, Internet and social networks, active job searching through new technologies) and training to get labour inclusion (i.e. professional cleaning, cooking, catering, etc.).

Likewise, Spanish legislation has favoured equality policies in companies, mentioning among others the Law 3/2007 for the effective equality of women and men, the Decree 901/2020, which regulates equality plans and the Decree 902/2020, for the equal pay for women and men. Equality plans are mandatory in Spain for those companies with more than 101 employees and, from March 2022, it will be also compulsory for those organisations with between 50 and 100 workers. For the rest of the entities, the plan is voluntary and, although not all companies are obliged to have an equality plan, they must have concrete measures to promote equality between men and women, according to the Equality Law 3/2007. The equality plans will contain an ordered set of assessable measures adopted after carrying out a situation diagnosis, aimed at

¹ UGT. Vicesecretaría general departamento de migraciones (2020). Condiciones de vida y nacionalidad extranjera. Encuesta condiciones de vida -2019-. Retrieved (2020, July) from http://portal.ugt.org/inmigracion/trabajo_digno/por_un_trabajo_dignob.htm

² Administración General del Estado (March), Boletín "Igualdad en la Empresa" Nº 59. Retrieved (2020, March) from <http://cpage.mpr.gob.es>

achieving equal treatment and opportunities between women and men in the company and eliminating discrimination based on sex³.

The practice of job shadowing is not yet developed in Spain, being known mainly for the activities of the Erasmus + projects carried out by educational centres such as schools and high-schools. The private companies, on the other hand, tend to prefer the internship method to facilitate the incorporation to their staff. In the case of NGOs and associations, they also opt for internships and volunteering opportunities. Job shadowing is therefore relegated to the exchange of good practices between European educational institutions.

2. Key finding in the country

2.1. Survey on employer's perspective

Fifteen participants have participated in this questionnaire in Spain, in the categories of entrepreneurs, freelancers, businessmen/women and mentors.

46.7% of the people surveyed have previous experience in hiring immigrant women, while 53.3% (8 participants) deny having hired this group. The opinions of the seven participants hiring are reflected below:

- “The experience is positive”.
- “It has been like any other contract”.
- “It has been a very illustrative experience, which helps to understand other different cultural and business contexts”.
- “As a manager of an integration company, I am a migrant and I had to change many aspects of my life to be able to fit in”.
- “In my case, the experience was the same as hiring national people, there was no impediment. In my case, they all had the necessary papers”.
- “The impression has always been very positive”.
- “I have participated in social inclusion projects focused on immigrant women, promoting their social and professional integration; and including the management of their hiring”.

An interesting point was to analyse the answers given to the question: What do you think are the challenges that a woman of migrant origin faces in accessing a job?

³ Instituto de las Mujeres, Servicio de Asesoramiento para Planes y Medidas de Igualdad. Retrieved from <https://www.igualdadenaempresa.es/faq/respuestas.htm>

- “The same as any other besides the language”.
- “Language”.
- “Homologation of educational certificates, socio-cultural prejudices, situations of need”.
- “The lack of regularization (if it is the case), ignorance of the Spanish legislation and its conditions, the different ways of doing the things, ...”
- “I think that depending on the countries they come from or even their race, they can become undervalued, the business world, being mainly a men world, I also believe that there may be a tendency to take advantage of situations”.
- “Previous work experience in Spain under a legal contract, language, being willing to carry out work where strength predominates over intellect”.
- “The lack of recognition of academic certificates, the lack of knowledge of a language (if they do not have Spanish as their mother tongue), and the racism that sometimes exists”.
- “The language and requirements of the position”.
- “The validation of their studies, the language and, in some cases, the balancing of family and work life since many times they do not have close relatives, their situation is more complicated”.
- “In a sexist and racist society, they suffer a double oppression, despite their worth they will face many prejudices”.
- “The language, possible cultural differences, rejection ...”
- “Well, in addition to all the challenges that a woman faces, which are not few, we can add racist, ethnic and language problems”.
- “Motivation and preparation”.
- “Have space and time necessary to be able to prove your worth beyond prejudices. These prejudices cause her to be seen as someone negative rather than being evaluated according to her competencies. And these prejudices, conscious or unconscious, are not far from being another form of racism. That's the big problem: racism”.

The replies show us the majority of participants are aware of the disadvantages and barriers that migrant women face. Those responses emphasise the lack of knowledge of the local language, racism and sexist prejudices as the main elements of inequality.

Regarding cultural differences, 53,3% of respondents (8 participants) consider them a possible barrier to access to work in Spain/Galician region, while 33,3% (5 participants) do not believe culture has a strong impact on access to jobs, and 13,3% (2 participants) think cultural differences could be a barrier but do not always work that way.

Concerning the question “Which of the following competencies do you think a person should possess to be hired by your company?” revealing some surprising facts:

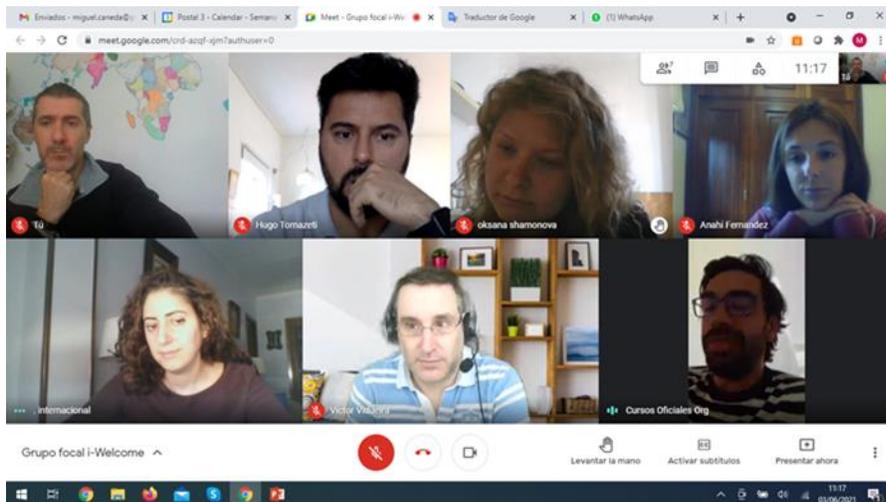
- “Speak Spanish / Galician language” looks only relevant for the 13,3% (2 participants), even if language was mentioned before as one of the main barriers to access to a job.
- “Speak English at an intermediate level” was not selected by any participant, neither “manage computer programs independently”.
- Soft skills such as “Be motivated and take initiative” and “Show interest in learning and improving knowledge” are the most relevant competencies with 26,7% (4 participants) and 46,7% (7 participants) respectively.
- Finally, “being good at teamwork” and “understand local culture and work style” obtained 6,7% (1 participant) each one.

As mentioned before, it is curious the Spanish language is not one of the most important skills since it was catalogued as a key element for labour inclusion. Another interesting fact is English skills and word/excel knowledge are not included in the answers even though, for many job offices, they are essential and mentioned in job advertisements as very valuable. Some reasons could explain this: a. a connection among TCN women and the type of work they tend to do due to the lack of administrative documentation or the lack of studies recognised (hospitality and domestic work); b. a paternalist and underestimated vision about TCN women’s qualifications (although statistics shows, for example, that Venezuelan women migrated in Spain have a university degree in a high percentage); c. a technical issue concerning the questionnaire, as only one answer could be selected, and the soft skills seem to be more appropriate for the participants.

Regarding the question “Does your company have a Gender Equality Policy?” 66,7% (10 participants) confirm that their company has an equality plan, as opposed to 33,3% (5 participants) who say they do not.

Concerning their involvement in i-Welcome project activities, 40% of respondents are interested in offering a job shadowing experience to a woman of migrant origin, 20% (3 participants) have refused to be involved and, finally, 40% (6 participants) are not sure of their possible involvement. Regarding their participation in a discussion group with other entrepreneurs on the labour inclusion of migrant women, 60% (9 participants) have shown their interest in taking part in the focus group while 40% (6 participants) have refused their involvement again.

2.2. Focus group



The focus group have counted on 6 participants, including business mentors, and national and foreign entrepreneurs. Among them, we got the opportunity to have a woman who was a national of a third country, which offered us a double perspective. The questions asked are mentioned as an annex in the bibliography section.

All participants considered interculturality to be essential to advance as a community. Regarding having a multicultural staff, they mentioned some benefits such as different perspectives on work methods, and a way to counteract stereotypes and false beliefs.

Two of the participants had previously hired women from outside the EU, which was a very enriching experience due to the exchange of points of view and knowledge. However, one of them mentioned the bureaucratic procedure as a major barrier to hiring. Another participant mentioned that there is some ignorance about how foreigners work, which could constitute another obstacle.

None of the participants had serious intercultural communication problems. Although they have commented on how different space and time are interpreted, as well as the way of working.

Most of them considered that they lack tools to understand interculturality from a gender perspective. Education is mentioned as the necessary resource to combat racism and the fears that immigration implies. Some of the attendees have linked, very clearly, the connections between racism and sexism with the intersections of social class, gender, ethnicity and culture.

The most relevant barriers and difficulties mentioned were:

1. Stereotypes, which simplify reality, making culture monolithic. The person is identified with a single adjective linked to her country, ignoring the individual characteristics, and making her representative of her country of origin by force.

2. The bureaucratic procedures that take too long in time, and the difficulty in meeting all the requirements.
3. This is linked with the extremely difficult situation of many migrants who are in an irregular administrative situation.
4. Connected to the previous points, is the lack of knowledge of the legal and administrative system of the host country.
5. Another obstacle that they pointed out is the lack of homologation of academic qualifications, which becomes a double problem for those with low economic resources since the administrative fees are high and they must complete his/her studies for 1 or 2 years more in Spain.
6. They, wisely, pointed out that the barriers also come from the host society. Many employers are not used to hiring foreigners and are unaware of the benefits it can provide.
7. Language does not seem to represent an impediment to inclusion, but this may be due to the fact that most immigrant women have Spanish as their mother tongue.
8. The lack of support and social networks for balancing work and family life is noted.
9. Finally, it is worth mentioning that immigrants must make a double effort to prove they have the right to be working in Europe / Spain, something that natives do not have to do it, which can lead to large doses of stress and low self-esteem.

In relation to equality plans, the representatives of the companies with more than 50 employees confirmed they have an equality plan, since it is going to be mandatory under Spanish law. However, they recognised the practical application could be greatly improved. The SMEs, for whom it is not compulsory to have it, showed gender awareness when facing selection processes, which is positive.

3. Perspectives on offering job shadowing opportunities

The practice of job shadowing is barely established in Spain, so it is difficult to find examples of good practices. The desk research has revealed that job shadowing is closely linked in our country to the Erasmus+ programme. The examples found make reference to the European financing framework and the activities developed around European projects.

3.1. On a national level

The closest thing we can find to the national level is the SARA programme, which is developed by The Institute for Women and Equal Opportunities (public body), along with CEPAIM organisation.

It is aimed at migrant women or women of foreign origin who need to improve their employability and training in the labour market. It consists of the design of inclusion pathways from a gender and intercultural perspective, adapted to the needs and characteristics of each woman. The contents are taught in a transversal way for the prevention of gender violence, healthy relationships, diversity and equality.

The pathways of integration (245 hours) are divided into three phases:

1. Motivation for employment: it will address content related to self-esteem, cohesion, empowerment, prevention of gender violence, etc.
2. Training / qualification: the occupational training will be defined according to the needs and competencies of the group.
3. Labour orientation: the definition of professional objectives, the preparation of CVs, preparation for job interviews, entrepreneurship, etc.

The SARA Program can provide a service to support transportation and conciliation to women who need it after prior assessment.

To get more information:

<https://www.inmujer.gob.es/areasTematicas/AreaProgInsercionSociolaboral/SaraMujMigrante.s.htm>

3.2. On a company level

The articles found during the research reveal job shadowing to be a new practice that offers numerous advantages in a theoretical level for companies and educative institutions:

- The students of the last courses obtain a vision about different types of work, which favours a more correct decision-making when choosing higher studies / professional path.
- The training of new employees in companies.

However, its use is still risible. Non-professional internships (paid or unpaid) and volunteering are the two predominant options offered when entering the world of work or changing professional careers.

The vast majority of the participants in the focus group were unaware of the existence of job shadowing, with the exception of those who worked in the field of European projects. The closest thing to job shadowing are the internships and trial periods, which in some companies means

going through different tasks under the supervision of the coordinator. In this way, the supervisor can see which are the strengths and weaknesses of the employee to be assigned later to a specific job position (practice done in Brazil). Another participant commented that she knew something similar to the job shadowing practice: 3-day visits in companies by students about to graduate to see if the type of work fit their expectations. Furthermore, it was considered that this practice could be beneficial for both sides since, for the workers, it involved an analysis of the way in which the tasks are executed.

4. Support measures for TCN women’s employability

Support measure 1	
Name	Employment Women
Description (100 words)	The project is aimed at immigrant women from third countries with work permit, in a situation of unemployment and vulnerability. The support includes individual advice on financial aid, referral to immigrant experts for card renewals, emotional support both online and face to face, workshops on personal development and job searching, digital skills workshops, occupational training in catering and professional cleaning, awareness of equal opportunities from a gender and intercultural perspective, and labour intermediate with companies.
Key Stakeholders/ Provider	<i>La Rueca</i> , thanks to the financing of the <i>Ministry of Labour, Migration and Social Security</i> and the <i>European Social Fund</i> .
Level (Organisational, Regional, Local, National)	Local level (Madrid)
Type (Digital Skills, Professional Skills etc.)	Professional and digital skills. Gender and interculturality skills. Services: The project is developed in four main actions: 1. Welcoming 2. Pre-employment training 3. Occupational training (i.e. commercial assistant, customer service, health care) 4. Intermediation with companies.
Link/ Website	https://larueca.info/
Support measure 2	

Name	Social and labour integration programme addressed to immigrant women
Description (100 words)	The social and labour integration programme is aimed at third-country national women from a gender and intercultural perspective. It is carried out in several cities in Spain and includes different activities such as training, job guidance, and workshops. The entity also works as a link among companies and participants. The programme usually lasts one year.
Key Stakeholders/ Provider	Mujeres en Zonas de Conflicto. The project is funded by the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Social Security and the European Union (European Social Fund).
Level (Organisational, Regional, Local, National)	Regional level (Andalucía, Extremadura and Madrid)
Type (Digital Skills, Professional Skills etc.)	Professional skills. Services: 1. Individual job guidance 2. Spanish classes as a foreign language 3. Training to get labour inclusion (i.e. professional cleaning, cooking, catering, etc.) 4. Workshops on Employment Skills It also covers conferences on women employment and spaces for sharing experiences.
Link/ Website	https://www.mzc.es/accionsocial/

Support measure 3

Name	Socio-Labour Centre for Immigrant Women (COSMI)
Description (100 words)	The centre promotes the participation of women in the social life of their neighbourhoods, the social inclusion of immigrant women, the prevention of racist and discriminatory behaviours and the awareness-raising in favour of equality and against gender violence, paying special attention to young women. The activity covers the legal, social, psychological, entrepreneurial, and labour areas.
Key Stakeholders/ Provider	Mujeres en Igualdad
Level (Organisational, Regional, Local, National)	National and local level
Type (Digital Skills, Professional Skills etc.)	Professional and social skills, along with psychosocial care. Services: 1. Job guidance 2. Advice on CV creation 3. Information on training actions

	<p>4.Social and psychological support</p> <p>5.English classes</p> <p>6.Training in ICTs for users (office, Internet and social networks, active job search through new technologies ...)</p> <p>Online employment advice or referral to other more specialized social services.</p>
Link/ Website	http://www.mujaresenigualdad.com/

5. Conclusion/Summary

Most of the online survey respondents and participants from the focus group have highlighted the difficulties and challenges faced by migrant women, especially those who come from countries outside the European Union.

In particular, the lack of local language skills and cultural differences stood out in their arguments. However, the vast majority of TCN women come from Latin American countries where the language is the same (Spanish) and the culture does not diverge to a great extent. The language issue does become an important and differentiating element in the case of women from Morocco mainly, along with other countries such as Syria, Afghanistan and Pakistan but also Ukraine, Senegal, Nigeria and Mali.

The participants underlined four characteristics that would promote the vulnerability of this collective, as well as a lower labour and social inclusion:

1. Being a woman;
2. Being a migrant (mainly in an irregular administrative situation);
3. Being poor;
4. Being from a minority group in the host country (ethnic, religious or linguistic minority).

Therefore, gender and social class join racism and sexist prejudices, which are more acutely visible in TCN women.

Another of the highlighted problems is the lack of homologation of university degrees and studies of migrant women from outside the EU, which prevents the exercise of their profession in the Spanish state even if they are trained to do so. The lack of social networks and knowledge of public employment services contribute to this lack of empowerment when it comes to claiming and exercising the labour rights to which they are entitled to.

On the other hand, there were responses in the online questionnaire that did not consider that this group was subject to greater disadvantages than the rest of the Spanish citizens. Finally, it has also been stressed, by a large majority of participants, that the hiring of migrant women does not entail any additional problem related to the worker's origin, nationality or culture.

6. References

- UGT. Vicesecretaría general departamento de migraciones (2020). Condiciones de vida y nacionalidad extranjera. Encuesta condiciones de vida -2019-. Retrieved (2020, July) from http://portal.ugt.org/inmigracion/trabajo_digno/por_un_trabajo_dignob.htm
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- Instituto de las Mujeres, Servicio de Asesoramiento para Planes y Medidas de Igualdad. Retrieved from <https://www.igualdadenaempresa.es/fag/respuestas.htm>



Questions Focus Group:

1. Do you think the promotion of an intercultural society is appropriate? Specifying more the previous question, what do you think of having multicultural teams in your company? Do you think it could be advantageous and in what way?
2. Has your company hired women of migrant origin?
3. Have you ever had a problem or incident due to cultural misunderstandings in your organization, or when working with users of foreign origin? How have you dealt with them?
4. Do you think you have enough tools to manage cultural differences with a gender perspective? Do you think there may be prejudice and racism / sexism in your approaches?
5. What do you consider to be the obstacles and challenges that migrant women face when looking for and keeping a job in the Galician / Spanish market? In the online questionnaire, in which you previously participated, a series of barriers faced by migrant women from third countries have been discussed:
 - Lack of regularization, that is, being in an irregular administrative situation;
 - Ignorance of Spanish legislation to carry out administrative procedures;
 - Lack of homologation of academic qualifications;
 - Lack of knowledge of a language (if they do not have Spanish as their mother tongue);
 - Racism and sexism;
 - The impossibility of balancing of work and family life.
 - Motivation and preparation.Do you agree with them? Would you add any other?
6. Does your entity have an Equality Plan? If it doesn't, have you considered introducing it in the near future?
7. Have you heard of job shadowing before? What do you think can be its benefits for both sides?
8. Would you find interesting to host a participant for a job shadowing in your entity?

