ENGAGE

‘Development of inclusivE iNteGration pAths 4 miGrant womEn’

WP2: Up-Skilling Workshops for Labour Market Stakeholders (LMS) and Third-Country National (TCN) women

National Report by

DIMITRA Education & Consulting

Greece

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AMIF ENGAGE: Aims & Purposes

The project *Development of* ***inclusivE iNteGration pAths 4 miGrant women I*** **ENGAGE** aimes to increase TCN women's capability for entering the labour market and social life of the host society. The above will be achieved via the organization of Up- Skilling workshops, Job Shadowing Programme and Cross-cultural activities. The direct and indirect target groups are TCN women, LMS, TCNs and local citizens (women and men), professionals, policy makers, NGOs and the general public.

TCN women, which are representing the 45% of refugees in the EU, have lower activity and employment rates, a higher risk of poverty and are more likely to be in lower skilled occupations. Most of them face particular integration challenges associated with lower education and labour market outcomes compared to refugee men. A main reason is that they are coming from countries with high gender inequality and low employment rates for women. Therefore, an effective integration process of these women in the new social environment, can contribute to their social and economic inclusion.

Although the integration issue is at the heart of the political discussion in Europe, many countries face difficulties in absorbing a greater number of migrants, as well as in the latter's willingness to integrate. Much has been said and written on migration and integration, but too little attention, however, has been paid to women. While TCN women are highly qualified, most of them are directed to jobs and training mostly for household, care sector, secretary, and back-office services, unsuitable to their qualifications. Across the EU and specifically in Southern Europe, over 30% of TCN women work in low-skilled jobs, although they have tertiary degrees.

As a direct response to these facts, the project aims to organise targeted workshops for TCN women and Labour Market Representatives and serves a dual aim:
1. to support TCN women's first steps in the host community's labour market through the acquisition to employability skills.
2. to increase LMS' awareness on TCN women's specific needs and gender issues
3. to introduce Job Shadowing as an efficient integration measure

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National Report: Investigating practices, gaps & needs

The aim of this report is to investigate the current scene in partner countries in relation to the integration practices and to identify good practices and gaps for the development of new innovative ways to attract migrant women. Though there is evidence in existing practices and policies for TCN women's integration, the project consortium has organized 2 focus groups from each partner country with local key players such as representatives from NGOs, labour market, local authorities and the target group, TCN women, in order to collect valuable information about attitudes and perceptions. The data collected, which will indicate the vulnerability of TCN women in specific topics, will be highly useful for the development of the consortium's targeted approach towards TCN women. Mapping and analysis of needs, gaps, good practices and policies in partner countries, is of great importance, as they will be used as the basis for the design of complementary and tailored integration tools. The proposed activities aim to provide useful information for the hosting country, such as introduction to social and cultural aspects, labour market policies and the delivery of an Employability Skills targeted training.

The report will reflect the state-of-the-art practices and the profile of migrant women in terms of needs and gaps in Greece. DIMITRA will utilize their network within refugees' communities and migrants and related stakeholders in Greece, in order to identify and address barriers, gaps and ways forward in regards to effectively accessing employment.

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Policies, legislation & practices aimed at supporting TCN women

1) *Policies, legislation & practices in place in Greece*

Women migrants represent about 46% of Europe's migrant population, with larger percentages in southern countries (Eurostat, 2018).
When migrant women arrive in Europe, they confront more challenges than migrant men do. They must often overcome structural barriers related to their status as both a migrant and a woman, including facing stereotypes (European Commission, 2020:7).

Migrant men are more likely to come in Europe alone, but women are more likely to arrive as a family member later. In this case, integration initiatives may target them based on their family status rather than on their individual characteristics. As a result, they are excluded from or have restricted access to integration assistance, skill assessments, trainings (Eurodiaconia, 2018:7), and decent jobs.

Due to this condition, as well as family duties, childcare, a lack of professional networks, and a lack of knowledge of the host country's language and environment, many migrant women are forced to work in low-paying positions that generally involve culturally undervalued labor (IOM, 2020:2).

According to the OECD, 26% of migrant women in the European Union have low-skilled employment (2020).
This is due to EU companies that frequently employ migrant women in low- and middle-skilled occupations. Migrant women in particular are overrepresented in household services in the EU. (OECD, 2020:5).

Furthermore, these professions are frequently precarious, uncertain, and informal. As a result, migrant women are more likely to lose their jobs and be denied severance compensation or social security benefits (IOM, 2020:7).

The highest unemployment rates for born outside the EU were recorded in Spain (24.2 points) and Greece (28.6 points) (Eurostat, 2020).

The economic crisis in Greece, as well as the accompanying austerity measures, had an impact on TCNs' entry and integration into the labor market. As a result, rising unemployment and labour rights restrictions created a difficult and unfavorable climate for TCNs to enter the labor market.

It also applies to migrant women who work as private caregivers, domestic workers, or cleaners; their employability has been harmed as a result of the public's perception of such services as a luxury. In practice, because third-country nationals are primarily low-skilled workers in low-skilled jobs, they are especially exposed to adverse economic situations.

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In practice, policy formulation and implementation fail to address challenges that migrants encounter when seeking secure employment, such as the inability to transfer skills and credentials to a European context, the precarious legal status, insufficient education and language skills, and limited work experience.

This is clearly linked to the polarization and fragmentation of policies aimed at facilitating migrants' entry to the labor market, as well as the Public Employment Services' limited involvement in migrant labor market integration. It is also linked to the characteristics of the Greek labor market.

Third-country nationals, particularly those who have only been in Greece for a short time, are primarily forced into the underground economy and undeclared work, a problem that is particularly pressing in light of the current economic situation.

Despite the increased number of labor inspections, there has been no progress to up to now, mainly because of the non-systematic application of those inspections as

As a result, migrants are typically trapped in low-wage, low-skilled jobs in the informal sector, with no labor rights, no social insurance, and little possibilities to improve their socioeconomic status.

2) *Are the support systems / policies in place contingent on the residency status? How do they differ?*

The main provisions governing the recruitment of immigrants are found in the Migration Code (v. 4251/2014, as amended and in force today). The basic concepts of the Migration Code state that:

- A third-country national is a person who does not hold Greek nationality or the citizenship of another EU Member State.
- Resident permit (definitive residence permit): Any sort of certification issued by the relevant Greek authorities in accordance with the applicable legal framework, allowing a third-country resident to legally remain in Greece.
- Temporary residency permit: any type of certification issued by the Greek authorities that allows a third-country citizen to lawfully remain in Greece for a defined purpose and for a particular period of time relevant to the fulfilment of that purpose.
- Callback: A procedure that allows a third-country national to enter and work for a certain company and for a certain sort of job in a third-country national
- Special Purpose Workers: Citizens of third countries who enter and remain in Greece under specialized legislation, particular transnational agreements, or for the benefit of the national economy
- Family members of third-country nationals:
  a) The husband, if he is over the age of 18, and their unmarried children under the age of 18, and
  b) the rest of the spouse's or other spouse's unmarried children under the age of 18.

In terms of the visa that allows admission into the country, a foreign individual entering Greek territory must have a valid travel document that fits the following criteria: (a) Its validity ends at least three months from the date of intended departure from its area. Members of the European Union or, in the case of multiple visits, after the last scheduled date of departure from the territory of the Member States; however, in the event of a justified emergency, this duty may b) include at least two blank pages. c) was released within the last ten years.

If needed by applicable international agreements, EU legislation, and national legislation, these documents must include a Visa. The visa will be issued by the consular authority in whose jurisdiction the third-country person is legally residing, and will be based on public policy, security, and public health considerations.

The categories of residence permits, as well as the types of permits that included in them are the following (Article 7 CP). Entry visas and permits are divided into three categories:

A. Residence permit for work and business reasons

A1. Employees with dependent work providing services or work
A2. Special Purpose Workers
A3. Investment activity
A4. Highly qualified/skilled employment - "Blue Card"

B. Temporary residence
B1. Seasonal work
B2. Fishermen
B3. Members of artistic groups
B4. Third-country nationals moving from an undertaking established in a Member State of the European Union or of the European Economic Area for the purpose of providing a service
B5. Third-country nationals moving from a company established in a third country for the purpose of providing a service
B6. Leaders of organized tourism groups

C. Residence permit for humanitarian, exceptional and others reasons

D. Other residence permits for studies, voluntary work, research and vocational training, residence permit for victims trafficking in human beings and illegal trafficking of migrants, license residence for family reunification.

Procedure for issuing a residence permit (article 8 CP)
A third-country national applying for a residence permit in Greece, for one of the reasons of this Code, must, after entering the country and before the expiration of the entry visa, unless otherwise provided by the provisions hereof, submit application for its grant.
Applications for the issuance of residence permits are submitted to the one stop service of the competent Directorate of Foreigners and Immigration of the Decentralized

Administration of the applicant's place of residence or to the competent Directorate of Immigration Policy of the Ministry of Interior. Applications for the initial residence permit, the submission of additional supporting documents and the receipt of the residence permit or the rejection decision or other documents from the relevant file can be either done in person of the third country citizen or represented by an attorney or by spouses, anions and adult cations. The proxy is proved in writing with a certificate of authenticity of the signature of the authorizing officer by any public authority.

A more specific and simplified legislative framework applies to third-country nationals who are companions of a Union or Greek citizen, with whom they have a well-established solid relationship. Specifically, it is granted by the Minister of the Interior, has a duration of one year, is renewable every two years and gives its holders the right to work. Therefore, it is a single residence permit.

From this point it has already become clear that the conditions set for the vast majority of immigrants to obtain a residence permit are sufficient and difficult to meet in their entirety, without even referring to the specific provisions.

Procedure for obtaining a work permit (article 11 CP)
By decision of the Ministers of Interior, Foreign Affairs, Development and Competitiveness, Shipping and the Aegean, Labor, Social Security and Welfare, issued during the last quarter of every second year, the maximum number of dependent jobs granted to third country nationals by Region and the employment specialty are determined.
The same decision may provide for an increase in the maximum number of posts to 10% to cover unforeseen and emergency needs, as well as any other relevant details.

The legislative framework for migrant recruitment in Greece – the hiring process

The process starts with the employer:
Any employer who wishes to hire staff for dependent work, on the basis of the jobs included in the joint ministerial decision of Article 11 hereof, shall submit an application to the competent department
Decentralized Administration of his place of residence, which will indicate the number of jobs, data and citizenship of third-country nationals to be employed, the specialty, as well as the period of employment.

The application must be accompanied by:

- valid contract for at least one year in Greece, which shows that his remuneration is equal to, at least, the monthly salary of the unskilled worker, worker
- tax return or copy of tax return of a legal entity from which the employer is able to pay the monthly salary as defined in the employment contract and
- proof of payment of a fee of two hundred 200 euros for each citizen of a third country who wants to work which is collected in favor of the State and is not refundable

The Secretary-General of the competent Decentralized Administration issues an act approving the employment of a third-country national to provide dependent work to a

specific employer only if the employment specialty is included in the above definition of work needs in Article 11 and the number of jobs provided for this specialty, for in the same decision, has not been exhausted. The relevant approval act is forwarded, together with the employment contract signed by the employer, to the competent Greek consular authority. The competent Greek consular authority invites the interested third-country nationals, for whom an approval act has been issued for entry into Greece in order to provide dependent work. Applicants must appear in person at the above service in order to sign the relevant employment contract and be granted a national entry visa, in accordance with the other general and specific provisions on visas.

From the moment the decision of the Coordinator of the competent Decentralized Administration is issued on the request for transfer submitted by the interested employer, it is forwarded together with the employment contract signed by him to the competent Greek consular authority of the place of residence of the interested employee. (Visa)

With a visa already in place, the procedure continues in the relevant service of the Decentralized Administration, for obtaining a residence permit (article 15 CP). A third country citizen, who has received an entry visa for the provision of dependent work in Greece, is granted a residence permit for dependent work that he / she submits, an employment contract stating that his remuneration is at least equal to the monthly salary of the unskilled worker and the required supporting documents. The authorization period is initially two years.

The same authority is also responsible for the renewal of licenses, for a period of three years with the additional privilege of guaranteeing from this point of time the right of access, in addition to the purchase of dependent work, and the provision of independent services or work.

A third-country national holding a residence permit for dependent work may a) change employer, if the type of work does not change, and b) work in another Regional Unit and change specialty after one year from the initial residence permit.

3) Which requirements do TCN women have to fulfill to enter the labour market in terms of language skills, education and legal status?

Although language learning and reskilling are indispensable components of EU integration policies for third country nationals, existing policies and infrastructure in Greece are insufficient and incoherent particularly with regard to migrant women.
In terms of language skills, is required knowledge of the Greek language at A2 level minimun, as well as additional training and specific training for the job. Also in order to enter to the labour market they need to have Residence permit and the permission to work.

3) *Which practices at the public sector can be seen as supporting measures for TCN women's skills development (for instance language courses, further education, skills auditing)?*

In general, policies regarding the socio-economic integration of migrants are implemented as social inclusion programmes organized in the mainland for TCNs exclusively with co-financing from International Organisations. Thus, language courses are provided from the state however civil society institutions are the main provider of this service. At national level, two major initiatives as regards the knowledge of Greek have been undertaken (Kontorizou 2018). The first refers to the "Education of immigrants in the Greek language, the Greek history and the Greek culture – ODYSSEUS" programme aimed at providing the language skills, as well as the social and intercultural competences required for the social inclusion of the participants and their families. The second refers to language and history courses for migrants which were included in several programmes implemented by the Ministry of Interior in the context of the European Social Fund (ESF) projects. Other language programs were provided from the Educational Organization AKMON in cooperation with the Association of Afghan Immigrants and Refugees targeting refugees and asylum seekers. Furthermore, local non Governmental Organization such as Metadrasi and Steki Metanaston have provided free courses of Greek language for migrants, asylum seekers and refugees.

4) *Which kind of support is offered for increasing TCNs (women and men) participation in the local labour market (training, internships, networking etc)?*

Local offices under the administration of municipalities named "Kentra Koinotitas" (Centers for Migrants Integration) are responsible for the socioeconomic integration of migrants. Kentra Koinotitas is also in charge of implementing integration-related activities such as language classes and other trainings.

Immigration policy in particular is articulated through three main issues:
a)The legal stay of immigrants, primarily for those who entered the nation prior to the recent refugee crisis,
b) the reception of refugee streams from 2015 onwards, and, to a lesser extent,
c) the socio-economic integration of immigrants, are the three key concerns defined by immigration policy.

The first issue was addressed by focusing on the legislative and institutional framework's simplification, which resulted in the adoption of the Migration and Social Integration Code (Law 4175/2014). The Code, which has been enhanced by Joint Ministerial Decision 30651/2014 and Law 4332/2015, has simplified the procedure for obtaining and renewing residence permits and facilitated migrants' access to the job market by extending the term of their legal stay. The increase in (sea) flows, the closure of the so-called Balkan route in March 2016, the EU-Turkey agreement in March 2016, and the transposition into Greek law of the EU Directive (2013/32/EU) on common procedures for granting and withdrawing international protection all resulted in new asylum legislation (Law 4375/2016, amended by Law 4399/2016, Article 86). As a result of the new laws, those who arrive in Greece after the EU-Turkey agreement

(fast-track procedure) face different asylum processes than those who were relocated to the mainland and arrived in the nation before that date (AIDA 2018). The “metaklissi” procedure, which is based on an assessment of internal labor market needs and an invitation to foreigners who have previously applied for a labor entry visa to Greece in their country of origin, as well as the completion of complex paperwork by the employer, remains the main option for legal migration for employment purposes.

Social integration programs and activities for third-country nationals address different aspects of life in Greece:

- **Economic life:** integration activities that relate to accommodation support.
- **Social and everyday life**: integration activities that help third-country nationals learn the Greek language and become familiar with Greek culture and civilization as well as activities that entail community participation and facilitate access to public services.
- **Professional life and work**: integration activities that provide professional training and enable access to the job market.

5) *Do Job Shadowing Schemes exist for migrant women?*

No, it does not exist at the moment.

6) *Are any specific support services offered to TCN women in your country (childcare services, counseling etc)?*

At the moment there are many programmes by IOM, which is the world leading intergovernmental UN Organization for migration. As part of the United Nations System IOM has developed its own policies, rules and regulations, in the light of which operates in the most efficient, effective and ethical manner. In the framework of its activities aiming to provide assistance and support to the migrant population IOM procures a wide range of goods, works and services, strongly committed in observing the highest ethical standards and values.

<u>Access to the welfare system and allowances for refugees in Greece:</u>
A recognised refugee or a beneficiary of subsidiary protection, has the right by law to receive the necessary social assistance under the same conditions as Greek nationals.

The Greek welfare system is supervised by the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Social Solidarity, Welfare General Secretariat.

A recognised refugee or a beneficiary of subsidiary protection with a valid residence permit, may be able to access the national welfare system. It is titled Social Solidarity Income (SSI) and it combines:

- Financial support (maximum of 200€ for the head of the family, plus 100€ for any additional adult, plus 50€ per child of the same family; the maximum monthly amount is 900€, regardless of the composition of the household).
- Access to complementary social services, benefits and goods such as free medical care, inclusion in social care facilities and support;
- Services that promote integration into the labour market.

A recognised refugee or a beneficiary of subsidiary protection with a valid residence permit, or an applicant of international protection – an asylum seeker with a valid asylum seeker's card not hosted in a Reception Centre, may go through an assessment procedure to determine whether qualifies for a disability allowance. The amount of the disability benefit varies, depending on the type of disability and it is periodically adjusted and is paid every two months.
Also, every refugee and asylum seeker in Greece has the right to free access to primary, secondary and tertiary health care.

Education is compulsory for all children in Greece, including refugees and asylum seekers, boys and girls, who are aged between 5 and 15 years old. Compulsory education includes pre-primary (one year), primary and lower secondary education. Primary education (Demotiko) lasts six years, lower secondary education (Gymnasio) lasts three years.
Upper secondary education lasts three years and includes unified upper secondary school (Eniaio Lykeio) and technical vocational school (TEE). Students may choose between vocational or academic courses at the age of 15, at the end of Gymnasio.
In Greece, children aged six months to five years old can attend infant centres (vrefonipiakos stathmos).

For children between 2 and a half and 5 years, there are child centres (paidikos stathmos), which are either run by the municipalities or privately funded. From the age of four, children can attend a pre-primary school (nipiagogeio), which is compulsory after the age of five.
For families or women who live in an open accommodation facility (camp), the access for the pre-primary schools is established by the Ministry of Education.

Those who live in an apartment or hotel or a building in a city, they register children aged between six and fifteen years old in educational classes. Morning classes are conducted in Primary schools and in Secondary schools there is a 'Zone of Educational Priorities' (ZEP) program operated by the Ministry of Education. Children attend school

together with Greek nationals. Reception classes will be established in order to provide additional support, in particular for Greek language comprehension.

7) *Concerning TCN women participation in the community and interaction with locals, are any specific programmes offered in your country?*

The National Strategy of 2019 contends-based on specifications from the European Council and the European Union, that a successful social integration policy requires the active participation of the State, Institutions, and civil society.
In this context, local communities in Greece are very important for the effective implementation of social integration policies. Local Greek government administrations serve as key vehicles of social integration by involving and engaging local communities.
Further, the successful implementation of social integration policies also requires the effective collaboration of local government administrations with the central government administration. It also depends on the active involvement of civil society entities-such as associations or unions for migrants and refugees and non-governmental organizations, in social integration initiatives.

Civic participation is very important for refugees' and migrants' sense of belonging in society. Civic participation is also very important for peaceful co-existence, social inclusion and diversity in society.

A programme (Best Practice) offered in Greece and more specifically in Larisa was the "Visit of Women refugees to museums". The Municipality of Larissa in cooperation with the Center of Women studies and research – DIOTIMA organize visits of Women refugees to the museums of Larissa in order to bring them closer to the Greek History and culture. Through this action the Municipality aims also to support the women refugees overcome cultural barriers and provide social and emotional support. In order for the visit to take place there should be arranged that the refugees will have someone, or more than one narrators hat will guide them through the exhibitions. In continuance the date is set and once the participants declare interest the transportation should be arranged. During the visit the Narrator explains the importance of the exhibitions and how those are connected to the Greek culture. The refugees are asked their opinion and reflect upon what they have learned and experienced during the day. The TCNs can really see the roots of the civilation and find common grounds with their own culture. This was the most important outcome of those visits up until now.

The Migrant Integration Councils conduct activities that enable civic participation.
Within each municipality, by decision of the Municipality Council, operates a Migrant and Refugee Integration Council (MRIC – ΣΕΜΠ) which serves as a counseling body

on migration and refugee issues and supports the integration of third-country nationals in the local community.
M.R.I.C.'s role involves the following responsibilities:

- Identification and examination of the integration issues and problems that refugees and migrants face in the specific municipality area.
- Collaboration with public authorities or municipality authorities.
- Submission of integration-related proposals to the Municipality Council.
- Resolution of problems that migrants face, especially using the counseling services offered in municipalities.
- Organization of events in collaboration with the municipality to help raise awareness and enhance social cohesion in local communities.

8) *Give examples of successful practices of previous and current projects.*

A certain number of initiatives, which can be considered **as best practices**, are worth mentioning:

- ESTIA was the Greek Goddess of Hospitality and House. In ancient and modern Greek means home and is also the name of the programme aimed in housing refugees, that currently live in camps, in major cities of Greece (Emergency Support to Integration and Accommodation programme, funded by the European Union Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid.). Housing is one of the most important steps that refugees need to take in order to overcome cultural barriers at the host community. When they don't live among the locals, TCNs cannot get really accustomed to what the community has to offer and how it functions. Furthermore culture barriers may be inertia when it comes to the housing of third country nationals, thus ESTIA has the responsibility to facilitate and finance the housing of refugees in Greece. Urban accommodation provides a normal daily life for refugees and asylum seekers in Greece, facilitates their access to services, including education, and the eventual integration for those who will remain in the country. The host population also benefits from embracing diversity through peaceful coexistence as well as the renting of their apartments. The refugees should have been registered as asylum seekers. In continuance they have to apply for an insurance register number and fill in the Estia application. These refugees that are eligible are added to the registry and in continuance, and when available, they will be housed and receive a financial aid for their basic needs.

- Intercultural Training for state employees that deal with TCNs in Greece
  Intercultural training for State employees that deal with TCN in Greece has been developed in order to train 300 state employees, between the age of 26-60 years, that are dealing with TCNs in all Greek regions, in order for them to obtain cultural awareness and acquire intercultural communication skills. Through that,

they will be able to offer better services to TCNs, adjust the environment of employment in order to correspond to the current multicultural environment, facilitate their social and professional tasks and upgrade their well being and last but most important understand and accept immigrants and refugees right to diversity, and overthrow stereotype way of thinking. After considering the above, a Syllabus was developed that aims in providing state employees with all those competences, attitudes, knowledge and skills needed to achieve intercultural communication and facilitate TCNs in their state encounters.

- The introduction of **a new method of payment and retention of insurance contributions** ("ergossimo"), aiming at combating undeclared work, can be considered as an example of best practice for the Greek case. The "ergossimo", introduced for the first time in Greek legislation with Law 3863/2010, is a kind of a special paycheck which concerns workers exercising non-fixed or casual work (a form of employment in which the worker is not entitled to the regular provision of work) with one or more employers. The "ergossimo" does not focus on businesses or individual employers, but on workers, in particular, those in specific disciplines, occupations or jobs (such as domestic workers, construction workers and agricultural workers). Consequently, it is, in fact a means of combating undeclared work, and in particular tax evasion and it is as such that it has been classified in the Greek legal order. Several modifying interventions for the worker's measure were made in the following years. These amendments are mainly related to procedures for extending the measure of "ergossimo" to other sectors of employment as well as the procedures for monitoring its implementation. It is also worth noting that Article 2 of Law 4225/2014 attempts to include "ergossimo" as a subject of labour inspections exercised by IKA (Social Insurance Institute). A large proportion of recipients who were targeted by this measure were immigrants, both domestic and farm workers.
- Another example of best practice is the **European Qualification Passport of Refugees**. It is a specially developed assessment scheme for refugees, even for those who cannot fully document their qualifications. It is based on available documentation and structured interviews. Started in 2017 as a pilot initiative, it involves several actors, namely, The Greek Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affair, the Italian Ministry of Education, Universities and Research, the Conference of University Rectors of Italy, the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, the UNHCR Office in Greece the Council of Europe and several qualification recognition centres in Armenia, Canada, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway and the UK. This measure is definitely a facilitator to labour market integration. It is aiming to eliminate a barrier and to provide the recognition of skills in order to match the needs of the labour market. Although in the initial phase it is a comforting measure.

Nevertheless, the coverage of this initiative is quite restrictive as it refers only to the refugee population.

- A last best practice relies on the fact that **accommodation programs** are now closely related to the process of integration. Until now these programs had to do with the provision of psychosocial support and economic benefits. The attendance of language courses or job counselling was on the side since the situation was characterized as an emergency situation. In present, things have changed and the process of integration is on the spot. The learning of Greek language is a prerequisite for the beneficiaries of the programs, in particular, the accommodation program HELIOS; moreover, the participation of the beneficiaries in the society is one of the fundamental goals that have to be achieved.

- *If applicable: what percentage of TCN women obtain these support systems?*

TCN focus group findings

Introduction of the participants

- *General information on the participating women (age, family status, country of origin, language skills, education & employment etc.)*

Due to the Corona crises and the Greek measures taken from the national government the workshop of the ENGAGE project could not take place by face to face meeting with the participants as initially scheduled.
However, the workshop was not cancelled but took place in the form of interview by phone.
The workshop involved 4 migrant women.

- *If applicable, relate to statistics / numbers on the situation of TCN women in your country in general*

Net migration is estimated at 34,439 people, which corresponds to the difference between 129,459 incoming and 95,020 outgoing migrants. In 2018, net migration was estimated at 16,440 people (119,489 incoming and 103,049 outgoing migrants). It is noted that the incoming immigration data also includes people who were in our country on 1/1/2020 due to the refugee crisis. (ELSTAT, 2020).

There is a great degree of job segregation by sex for migrants in Greece, with mostly migrant women filling the domestic roles left by Greek women. Women from the Philippines, Albania, and Eastern Europe dominate migrant domestic work in Greece, and indeed make up the majority of immigrants from those countries—76% of Bulgarian immigrants, 70% of Albanians, 76% of Romanian, 85% of Poles, and 80% of Filipino immigrants to Greece are female.

Greece has the highest female migration rate in Europe. Women from more developed countries tend to work in tourism and office work, while those from Asian, African, and former Soviet bloc countries are predominantly employed in household for domestic work, or as caregivers in medical centers. Filipino women are primarily employed as maids in families, while Albanian women are confined to domestic or cleaning roles.
While the majority of all female migrants are economic immigrants looking for good jobs that earn them a much higher salary than they can find in their homeland, female migrants, particularly undocumented ones, are vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. The Greek legal system offers very little protection to domestic workers and in some cases may actually increase their insecurity and vulnerability.
A 31% of foreign-born women report instances of discrimination, compared to 24% of their male peers.

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Experiences of the focus group

1) *Experiences with specific training / programmes aimed towards TCN women challenges towards labour market and social inclusion*

Two of the the interviewed TCN women have implemented the social inclusion programmes organized in the mainland for TCNs aimed at providing the language skills, as well as the social and intercultural competences required for the social inclusion of them and their families. Two of them have a minimum B2 in Greek, one of them speaks Italian and holds a high school degree, one of them speaks Russian and Polish, holds a high school degree and has previous experience working as secretary in an elementary school. The other two have completed the primary school.
Living in different places (town, capital city), two of them have children and the other two do not. Three out of four are currently working in Greece as domestic workers and cleaners while one is working as seamstress in her own business.

2) *Familiarity of the focus group with policies, laws & practices already in place.*

The women interviewed all were familiar with a few policies laws & practices concerning migration but not fully aware.

3) *Access to specialized training, information, aid & support*

All the women interviewed took part either in courses in order to complete their school degrees or to linguistic and professional training.
Two of them have access to child benefits.
One of them has a declared job with own public insurance and pension stamps.

4) *Difficulties faced in becoming employed (including discrimination & prejudices)*

Two of them have been discriminated due to their nationalities and they were not eager to discuss the issue in detail.

5) *Experience in or knowledge self-organizing initiatives, unions and labour rights*

The women interviewed all were familiar with some of the policies laws & practices concerning their labour rights and obligations. However, they were not aware of the unions dealing with labour rights and their usefulness.

6) *What kind of skills training do you think will help you find a job?*

All women participants agreed that the skills needed in order to help them find a job, which will be formally declared, are computer use /digital competences, English

language, Greek language in advanced level, financial competences and more specifically accounting and record keeping as well as social/ soft skills.

Identification of gaps and needs

1) *Analysis of the gaps & needs identified in the focus group*

The main need and gaps identified in the focus group concerned knowledge of labour rights and obligations, the existence of trade unions, their function and usefulness, the lack of knowledge of digital skills, lack of knowledge of English language, soft skills, financial competences and social skills.

2) *What are the problems that TCN women are facing when entering the local labour market?*

The problems are mainly focused in lack of:

- Language skills (English)
- Digital skills
- Gender inequalities
- Working hours (they are no late-hours kindergartens)
- Soft/social skills
- Financial skills

3) *Which skills do you think are most necessary to develop further?*

All participants agreed on computer literacy and a specific training on technical occupation.

4) *Identification of challenges, barriers & gaps*

The main integration challenge, is that **TCNs are pushed to the underground economy and illegal work for particularly extensive periods**. Migrant women workers are found in precarious, low status and low wage occupations, in undeclared work and informal sectors, which demands for its constant reproduction a cheap uninsured mobile temporary and flexible workforce. Others include:

- Discrimination due to their nationalities
- Self- initiative
- Knowledge of labour rights, laws and policies
- Greek language in Advanced level
- Lack of knowledge of English language
- Prior experience in host country
- Employers often provide very low wages, no insurance, and working and living conditions that do not meet the minimum requirements

- There is a treatment of TCNs as workers, not as citizens, and they are offered socially undesirable jobs
- Racist behaviour by citizens with xenophobic attitudes towards immigrants regardless of race
- Religion

5) *Level of satisfaction with the support/practices on offer*

TCN women who participated in hosting projects are mostly satisfied. The other two who didn't receive such training and linguistic education admit that they regret not taking part in those. In overall, the women rate their access in the labour market from intermediate to very difficult/limited access. They all agree that there is rasism due to their nationalities while their skills, degrees and experiences have no value at all.

6) *If applicable: possible solutions, the importance/experiences of self-organizing*

Organizations focus group findings

Introduction of the participants

1) *Type of organization, experiences in working with TCN women*

The organisations that are most involved with supporting refugees and migrants in Greece are municipalities and a large number of NGOs that support the integration of newly arrived refugee women.

Due to COVID restrictions the workshop could not take place face to face, therefore interviews with the professionals were conducted according to the questionnaire provided. The summary of the main finding are presented below.
The interview begun with an introduction of the project and presented all specific goals objectives of the ENGAGE project.
The core discussion in this first was focused on their experiences with the target group and also the difficulties that have to face in the particular context they live in. The workshop ended up with a draft compilation of different ideas on introducing job shadowing and practically involve the target group in this filed, taking into consideration all their needs and barriers recorded during the discussion.

2) *Location (region, capital / city / town / rural)*

In order to achieve the project's aim, DIMITRA focused on these organisations' expertise combined with other business consultants agencies specialised on

refugees and migrants and of course its own experience from a numerous projects that has been involved in the past.

Four professionals with extended experience on immigrant and refugee women who have been involved in different ways and projects with this target group participated actively in the interview.
More specifically, participants included one Director of Office for Welfare and Social Policy in Thessaloniki-Municipality of Pavlos Melas, two people from Athens working in NGOS with refugees and immigrants and one from Larissa working in NGO for immigrants.

3) *What services and programmes are offered? In which ways?*

The services and programmes the NGOs provide include:

Language courses, education & training, cultural adjustment courses, mental health and Health-related support.

While the Office of Welfare and Social Policy offer:
Language courses, education & training, family/domestic violence support, parent support/parent education, cultural adjustment, mental health and Health-related support.

All participating organisations agree that their services help TCN women to participate in the social life, strengthen family functioning and/or parenting skills, to enhance family safety and to improve mental health and wellbeing.

Experiences of the focus group

4) *How are TCN women informed about the services? In which languages are they provided?*

TCN women are informed about the services through settlement service providers, community service/ doctor and religious/faith-based organisations*. The languages they are using in order to inform TCN women are English, Russian and Albanian.*

5) *How are TCN womens' needs and skills identified? Are trainings tailored towards them?*

Once the contact is established, the mechanisms they use to identify the needs of TCN women are based mainly on specific needs assessments and self-reports.
While to identify their skills/competencies are using professional discussion or oral assessment, official certificates and diplomas and records of learning and experience portfolio.

6) *How are employees trained in terms of gender and cultural sensitivity? Are there specific measurements in place against cultural or gender discrimination?*

The employees are trained in cultural competences, awareness of pre-settlement and early settlement experiences, Diversity awareness training and Equality training.

7) *How long after their arrival do TCN women generally participate in the programmes? How many months do they participate?*

In the programmes TCN women participate for minimum 1 year and 3 years maximum. Also, depending on their needs this could take place in one single “session” for guidance, information, referral, etc. to attend a programme or counseling.

8) *How are TCNs supported in gaining access to the labour market?*

In most cases TCN women do not receive specific training adjusted to their labor needs. Women are supported mainly through trainings in language and cultural skills. However, there are also supported by developing a competency profile and cross-referencing it to fields of activity and matching the competency profile with requirements and demands of the labor market.

9) *What positive impact does the training have on TCN women?*

The training two of the women have received had a very positive impact as they stated. TCN women are helped to develop their language skills or to improve them. Also are familiar with the Greek history and culture.

10) *Any other advice/tips in working with TCN women*

Organizations and the state should be structured with people who are trained and certified professionals with a specialization in the field of diversity and inclusion and with many years of experience in designing and delivering courses addressed to TCNs.

Identification of gaps and needs

11) What are the key problems in providing services for TCNs?

The lack of data on migrant flows and integration is serious problem that prevents the identification and categorization of obstacles and problems. In general, the most important obstacles identified include legal, educational and policy reform issues.
TCNs' family obligations, lack of skills, discrimination due gender and discrimination due ethnicity are the main obstacles and difficulties they face in accessing the local labour market.

12) Level of implementation of policies regarding gender equality in the workplace

The level of implementation of policies regarding gender equality in the workplaces is very low, and should be enhanced and implemented.
It is difficult and demanding to legalize TCNs, as there is excessive bureaucracy and involvement of many ministries, and agencies.

13) Which services would help TCN women enter the labour market but are not available in the region?

Multilingual newsletters, spots in the media, training programs for entry into the Greek labour market.

14) Why do many companies not have any strategies for recruiting TCN women?

Due to vast variety of applications for work and mostly because of the difficulties TCNs have to face to fulfill the entry needs of the labour market.

15) What kind of skills/knowledge do employers need in order to support TCN women employment?

- Intercultural education
- Diversity Management
- Diversity coaching in a Digitally self-skilling environment
- Performance Management of coaching
- Cultural awareness and cross-cultural communication
- Organisational skills

16) Are most TCN women generally satisfied with their lives in the host country (in terms of education, employment etc)?

Their feedback by TCN women is not positive. They are not satisfied with the hosting projects related to employment. In terms of education, their satisfaction is in intermediate to high level.

Conclusion

Increasing the employment rate of women, and migrants in general, is one of the EU's priorities, as stated in the Europe 2020 Strategy, the European Agenda for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals[1], and the European Council's multi-annual programmes.
The Europe 2020 Strategy has set the objective of raising the employment rate to 75% by 2020. Ensuring that migrant women are better integrated into the labour market will be vital to achieving it. Here, the European Semester can make a valuable contribution. The Member States should introduce measures aimed at integrating migrant women and the Commission should issue specific recommendations on this subject.

Because legislation is relatively new, confusing, difficult to explain, and involves many particular issues that businesses must be informed about, legal concerns facing employers of third-country migrants in Greece are a major issue/barrier to labour inclusion in Greece.

Overall, female migrant workers confront a double difficulty since they are at the convergence of two marginalized groups – women and migrants – who confront severe labour market berries.

It is crucial the design of effective policies that address the specific needs of female migrant workers and enable them to access decent work, equal pay and fair treatment in their countries of destination. Specific measures are necessary.

Positive action is essential in light of this situation. Above all, such action and measures must consider the condition of women, their qualifications and skills, their understanding of the host country's language, and culture.

Some work-life balance measures are the same for autochthonous and non-autochthonous women. For migrant women, who often have no family nearby to help, having access to high-quality childcare that is both affordable and convenient is critical.

Other initiatives are addressed to the needs of migrating women. Combating racism, enhancing housing, health, and social services access are among them. Women are compelled to leave their nation for a variety of reasons, including a desire to profit from respect for human rights and gender equality in Europe, as well as a desire to escape violence against women and inequity.

[1] COM(2011) 455 final.

They shouldn't have to deal with these issues in Europe, but they do, hurting even second generations of immigrants and preventing them from finding work.

Many effective projects aiming at integrating women into the labor market are implemented at the local level by civic society, migrant women's organisations, and colleges across the EU. These should be promoted, and the dissemination of good practice between Member States and at the national level should be encouraged.

Making it easier to learn the languages of the host countries.

Access to the host country's language is required for integration and employment. Women's isolation is exacerbated by their lack of language skills, which inhibits them from learning about their rights and accessing public services, as well as affecting their children's integration. Indeed, young individuals from immigrant families have inferior educational outcomes than their native-born peers.
As a result, authorities must make language courses available to migrant women, ensuring that they are accessible in terms of cost, convenient, and timely (compatible with having young children at home). In terms of content, the courses should be oriented towards being beneficial in the job search and in dealing with government agencies.

Recognising qualifications and preventing de-skilling

Women immigrants have a wide range of characteristics, and policy must account for them. Some women have little education or experience, while others have extensive academic or professional qualifications.

For many of these women, the biggest problem is getting the qualifications and experience they have gained abroad recognised, which is paradoxical given that Europe needs skilled workers in numerous areas. It can take some considerable time to get their qualifications recognised and this can lead to discouragement and a loss of skills and push these women to accept jobs for which they are overqualified. When migrant women are unemployed or in jobs for which they are overqualified this represents so many under-utilised resources and a loss of human capital.

Services should be established to enable for the recognition of qualifications earned in one's home country. The social partners must also play a key role in promoting the acknowledgment of these competencies in collective bargaining agreements.
Some industries, such as cleaning, child and elderly care, hotels and catering, agriculture, and the social economy, might provide chances for less qualified workers. However, these industries must be professionalized and upgraded, women must be given training in these areas, and the major contribution made by women working in them must be recognized, so that employment in these sectors benefits both indigenous and immigrant women.
Because this type of employment might be transitional, it's critical to provide training to women who work in these fields so that they can advance in their careers or move into other fields.