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**

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**Spain**

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Table of contents

**AMIF ENGAGE: AIMS & PURPOSES ..... 3**

**NATIONAL REPORT: INVESTIGATING PRACTICES, GAPS & NEEDS ..... 4**

**POLICIES, LEGISLATION & PRACTICES AIMED AT SUPPORTING TCN WOMEN ..... 4**

**TCN FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS ..... 7**

**INTRODUCTION OF THE PARTICIPANTS ..... 7**

**EXPERIENCES OF THE FOCUS GROUP ..... 8**

**IDENTIFICATION OF GAPS AND NEEDS ..... 10**

**ORGANIZATION FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS ..... 12**

**INTRODUCTION OF THE PARTICIPANTS ..... 12**

**EXPERIENCES OF THE FOCUS GROUP ..... 14**

**IDENTIFICATION OF GAPS AND NEEDS ..... 18**

**CONCLUSION ..... 20**

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# AMIF ENGAGE: Aims & Purposes

The project *Development of inclusivE iNteGration pAths 4 miGrant women* / 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 of 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 each partner country.

## Policies, legislation & practices aimed at supporting TCN women

The immigration scenario in Spain offers a very heterogeneous panorama that depends on several factors: the region we are analysing, the origin of the migrants' country of origin (because there are specific agreements with Spanish-speaking countries[1]) or the status of the TCN people coming to Spain (for example, a person seeking international protection for political reasons).

[1] The growth and importance of Latin American immigration is related to the historical and social ties forged by Spanish emigration throughout the 20th century, both economically and politically. The characteristics of the migratory features between Spain and Latin American countries are also linked to political decisions ranging from the signing of bilateral agreements to regulate migratory flows with various Latin American countries, such as Colombia, Ecuador and the Dominican Republic; to the favourable conditions for obtaining Spanish nationality for children and grandchildren of Spaniards; to the greater facilities for obtaining and renewing residence permits and access to nationality after only two years of legal residence, without forgetting the dual nationality agreements signed since 1958 with most Latin American countries.

García Ballesteros, Aurora, Jiménez Basco, Beatriz, & Redondo González, Ángela. (2009). La inmigración latinoamericana en España en el siglo XXI. *Investigaciones geográficas*, (70), 55-70. Retrieved from:

Moreover, diachronically, the situation changes every few years if there are armed conflicts or open humanitarian crises, such as the current situation in Venezuela, which has led to increasing flows of people from that country in Spain. Since 2014, inflows of people from countries in the Americas have continued to grow. In fact, in the last five years there has been a notable increase in the number of people coming from Brazil, Honduras and Venezuela. Two of them are Spanish-speaking, which means that they share the same language in terms of labour inclusion policies.
Data for 2019 shows that 49% of new entries were from the Americas, 30% from Europe, 13 from African countries and 8% from Asian countries.

Residence status is also very heterogeneous: about 83% of the General Regime residence permits for foreigners in force in Spain are of long duration (this permit is obtained after five years following successive renewals and authorises to live and work permanently). Around 16% of the authorisations are for temporary residence (subject to renewal). It can be said that among non-EU nationals, regularity and stability in their administrative situation are nowadays the norm in the vast majority of cases, with all that this entails in terms of integration. Such reality stands in contrast to the widespread belief in Spanish society that there are more foreigners in an irregular administrative situation than those with the relevant authorisations[2]. We have to note this because it is important in understanding the situation in terms of preconceived ideas of the host society that clearly have an impact on inclusion policies. This leads in contrast to high unemployment rates for men from third countries, which increases even more in the case of women.

In terms of the picture of areas of employment by nationality, there is a clear segregation that has been maintained over the decades. Third-country nationals (Latin American and African countries) are employed in unskilled jobs and in the service, restaurants and personal care. Furthermore, figures from recent years show a clear gender segregation regardless of country of origin.
Public policies on the part of the Spanish state are usually limited to bureaucratic procedures and assistance to third sector organisations. The few measures found at regional level are limited to providing housing assistance to temporary workers. Most of the measures and actions for socio-labour inclusion are implemented by Third Sector organisations that provide workshops, training and awareness-raising tasks in their local area of action.

http://www.scielo.org.mx/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0188-46112009000300004&lng=es&tlng=es (last access on 7th of June, 2021)

[2] This is based on surveys by the CIS (Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas de España/ Sociological Spanish Research Centre), which periodically compiles statistics on the concerns of the population. It is also based on data from Eurobarometer and the Spanish Observatory on Racism and Xenophobia (OBERAXE).

There is an exception of a socio-labour inclusion initiative promoted on the national level by the Women's Institute (Instituto de las mujeres)[3], called the "Sara programme", which operates as an agreement. A theoretical framework is provided and funding is given to third sector organisations to implement it. But all the actions depend on associations such as those participating in the focus group, CEPAIM for example.
As for possible "Job Shadowing" programmes in Spain, no specific actions with this methodology have been found.
Finally, regarding public services available to TCN women, no specific actions have been found other than those for the population of national origin: public social and health services, nursery schools or access to public education.
Entities whose scope of attention is the group of immigrants do have specific plans and actions that will be dealt with in the specific section on information obtained in the focus groups.

Económico, C. (2019). *Informe de la inmigración en España: Efectos y oportunidades.*
Retrieved from http://www.ces.es/documents/10180/5209150/Inf0219.pdf

García Ballesteros, Aurora, Jiménez Basco, Beatriz, & Redondo González, Ángela. (2009). *La inmigración latinoamericana en España en el siglo XXI.* Investigaciones geográficas, (70), 55-70. Recuperado en 07 de junio de 2021, *Retrieved from*
http://www.scielo.org.mx/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0188-46112009000300004&lng=es&tlng=es

Informe CEAR (2020). *Las personas refugiadas en España y en Europa. Retrieved from https://www.cear.es/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Informe-Anual_CEAR_2020_.pdf*

Moraga, J. F. H. (2021). *Inmigración y políticas migratorias en España* (No. eee2021-10). FEDEA.

[3] The Institute of Women, an independent organisation which is attached to the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality, seeks to promote the conditions that allow social gender equality and the full participation of women in political, cultural, economic and social life.https://www.inmujeres.gob.es/areasTematicas/AreaProgInsercionSociolaboral/Sara.htm

# TCN focus group findings

## INTRODUCTION OF THE PARTICIPANTS

The 5 women who participated in the focus group belong to an association of African women called “OUNGAMO” who meet regularly as a support network. One of the participants in the focus groups of entities from ACAIM association offered her help in reaching out these women and so, helped us to bring them together.
In the following table, general information on the participating women is included (age, family status, country of origin, language skills, education & employment):

| |
|---|
| **First participant**<br>Age: 38 years old<br>Country of origin: Guinea (Conacri)<br>Family: Husband and four children<br>Time in Spain: 14 years<br>Language: Fluent in French, Spanish, Bambara and Pulaar.<br>Employment status: currently unemployed<br>Previous employment situation: worked as a seamstress in Guinea. |
| **Second participant**<br>Age: 33 years old<br>Country of origin: Guinea (Conacri)<br>Family: Husband and three children<br>Time in Spain: 3 and a half years<br>Language: medium command of Spanish, good command of French, Bambara and Pulaar.<br>Employment status: unemployed<br>Previous employment status: Hairdresser in Guinea |
| **Third participant**<br>Age: 33 years old<br>Country of origin: Mali<br>Family: Husband and four children<br>Time in Spain: 11 years<br>Language: Bambara and Spanish (medium-high level)<br>Employment situation: sometimes temporary jobs.<br>Previous employment situation in her country: Diploma in accounting, she worked in an office in Mali.<br>Currently studying at the adult school to get the secondary school diploma. |
| **Fourth participant**<br>Age: 36 years old<br>Country of origin: Mali<br>Family background: -<br>Time in Spain: 3 years<br>Language: does not speak Spanish (other participants have been translating). |

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**Fifth participant**
Age: 29 years old
Country of origin: Mali
Family: Husband and two children
Language: good command of Spanish
Employment status: unemployed
Previous employment situation in your country: in her home country he used to work in the creation of handmade jewellery.

## EXPERIENCES OF THE FOCUS GROUP

- *Experiences with specific training / programmes aimed towards TCN women.*

The training they have been offered in recent years covers the following areas: handicrafts, cosmetics, sewing, cooking, baking and care for dependents. These courses match what the workers in the focus group of entities highlighted: they are feminised jobs, typically associated with female care work. As a result of these various courses, none of them has been integrated into the labour market in a sector related to the courses taken because nobody follows up or calls them for interviews. In fact, all of them recognised not having found a job related to any of the courses they have taken.
One of the conditions for accessing the job offers is to do a large number of courses, which is why they used to do them. However, nowadays, most of them say that they no longer attend them because they involve an investment of time that in the end does not lead to job.
Most of the participants of the focus group took Spanish courses on arrival (two-week courses), but did not continue with other new levels of the language thereafter. Only one knows how to write in Spanish correctly and claims to have learned it informally in one of her first jobs upon arrival in the country, although they agreed that it is one of the first things to learn.

- *Challenges towards labour market and social inclusion*

Four of the five participants reported having had temporary jobs in fruit and vegetable picking. One of the participants also worked as a mediator and translator for three years for a local NGO. Most of them, acknowledged that they had worked before Covid in house cleaning or childcare.

They further said that they are listed in the job offers to be called but that they are never called. Moreover, their working hours are incompatible with caring for their families. Their concerns were not only to contribute financially to the family income, but also for their own future, as they are not contributing to the state and do not pay social security contributions.

They also shared that the situation of the labour market in the city is complicated, even more for them as African migrant women. They stressed that when there is an income in the family (usually from the husband), they are no longer called to work, neither for benefits nor for training. Here, perhaps, it could be understood that they are not called to work in the annual employment plans of the city council or to receive family support(welfare grants), because in order to access them, a series of requirements are requested, such as no income in the family unit, or having been unemployed for one year, among others.

The only job opportunity they have had, and are likely to have again on a seasonal basis, is in the primary sector and in fruit and vegetable warehouses, which means working long hours, with schedules that are often incompatible with family commitments. Moreover, as they have no family support in the city (apart from supporting each other) to leave their children when they work, it is very difficult to balance work and family life. They pointed out that the work associated with agriculture involves very long hours and commuting more than an hour by car.

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

All the participants expressed that they were aware of the local insertion programmes offered by the municipality. In fact, they shared that they have tried on several occasions to access the employment plan and have been unable to do so. The employment plan is a programme that is offered every year in the city for people who have been unemployed for more than a year.
They showed a good knowledge of the resources and services of the city, for example the network of social workers of the city council, but they admitted not having found or been offered support from them.

- *Access to specialized training, information, aid & support*

They have three main ways of accessing information: through the network of associations (Red Cross and Caritas above all), through the social worker in their area (a local council resource that does not always provide the support they need) and through the informal network (word of mouth).

They noted that they are usually called for numerous training courses and that they already have numerous qualifications, but this fact does not lead to employment. They expressed their dissatisfaction with this situation because when they are called back for courses, they do not feel encouraged or motivated to continue with them.
They also pointed out that it would be very important to master the language because they have learnt it in an informal way and they are fluent only in oral production and comprehension skills (speaking, listening). They have much more difficulties in written production and comprehension skills (writing and reading).

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

Since the Covid crisis began, they have not been called to work. In fact, they shared a remark that was already raised among the participants of the focus group of entities: that there is segregation by sectors of activity in the city, because people from Africa are not seen working in public services or in public-facing sales. This population is not visible in places such as buses, supermarkets, clothes shops, etc.
They also shared that they know people from their country with a degree in nursing or other university education who cannot find work according to their degree in Spain. It has to be added here that they were not only referring to the fact that people with a degree from their own country cannot work according to their profession (taking into account the aforementioned problem of the very difficult homologation of degrees), but also to the fact that people with university degrees from universities in Spain (or having studied in Spanish universities) find it difficult to find work.
They openly stated that the city's society is prejudiced against African people and the colour of their skin. Apart from not seeing African people in public services, they also mentioned problems in finding access to housing (tenants do not always agree to rent to them).

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

They all belonged to an African women's association, but the type of activities that are usually organise within the framework of the association are more focused on being a supportive network and organising leisure activities or childcare, rather than demanding rights, mobilising resources for change or an active struggle, per se.

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

When asked specifically about the skills needed, they insisted that all that is needed are opportunities. They are ready to work in anything, all it takes is work. Although on several moments, language learning is mentioned as important, not only speaking, but also writing and understanding.

## IDENTIFICATION OF GAPS AND NEEDS

- *Analysis of the gaps & needs identified in the focus group*

In the focus group the participants shared difficulties in finding opportunities at the first level of entry level because they do not even have the chance to have job interviews. Courses and training initiatives do not correspond to the real labour market in the city, which is already complicated.
This creates a gap between opportunities and expectations of TCN women: they may be reluctant to take courses again, if all the courses they have already taken have not helped them to find a job. This may cause them to reject new training opportunities that may be beneficial in the future, because of the bad experience of the past. In fact, they did not show an attitude of discouragement or discouragement, but on the contrary an attitude of non-conformity with the situation and of facing up the unfair situation. This is very positive and constitutes an opportunity, because it shows that they are in a position not to have given up in their search for opportunities.

They also noted a lack of analysis of real needs on the part of the city's public workers, because it was mentioned that they do not receive help from social workers in their neighbourhood area. They stated that this is not the case in all neighbourhoods because they know friends whose key reference persons do provide them with support. Therefore, this note is based on the mere observation of their particular case and not on a generalisation of all areas of the city.

Finally, it is important to add that there was also a lack of knowledge of the Spanish language among the participants (at this point we cannot generalise about all the TCN women, only to those who have participated). They themselves recognised that they should attend courses to learn and improve their Spanish, especially in writing and reading.

# LMS group findings

## Introduction of the participants

In the focus group conducted with entities working with TCN, we counted on the presence of 5 different entities. Four of them work in the city of Albacete and one of them in Ciudad Real, which belongs to the same geographical region. These entities were: Cruz Roja (1 participant), CEPAIM (1 participant), ACCEM Albacete (2 participants), ACAIM (2 participants) and RquR (1 participant). So finally, a total of 7 participants attended, plus the person who coordinated and moderated the focus group. The session took place online on 21 April and was recorded with the permission of the participants.
All the NGOs work with heterogeneous groups and three of them have specific programmes for TCN women. Depending on the socio-occupational insertion programme they refer to, they work with women only or with both men and women. Specifically:

**Cruz Roja Albacete (The Red Cross)**
http://www.cruzroja.es/principal/web/provincial-de-albacete
The participant representing the Red Cross works within the social inclusion part of the programme for applicants and beneficiaries of international protection.

**Accem**
https://www.accem.es/programa-accemariadna/
This organisation works with applicants for international protection and refugees. The two participants work specifically within the Red Ariadna programme for the socio-occupational integration of refugees, also from third countries. The aim is to improve the conditions of this group.

**RqueR** provides guidance and training for vocational certificates for people at risk of exclusion.

**ACAIM y Medicus Mundi Sur**

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They work together in the city and are involved in helping people at risk of exclusion who live in settlements, that is, people who do not yet have a home, so their work focuses on this, although they also provide guidance and accompaniment in the labour and social spheres. They also run a temporary shelter for homeless people.

**CEPAIM**
http://cepaim.org/fundacion/
Cepaim is an independent organisation that responds to social dynamics related to migration and social exclusion processes. Its main objective is the coherent application of cross-cutting policies of interculturality, diversity management, gender equality, social cohesion, local development and co-development, taking the territory as a basis for action. The participant works in programmes aimed at immigrant women.
Four of the associations work in Albacete, Spain (170,000 inhabitants). The fifth organisation works in Ciudad Real, a town in the same region with a population of about 75,000 inhabitants.

- *What services and programmes are offered? In which ways?*

ACCEM provides comprehensive care for people seeking international protection. The services offered range from psychological care to language training (Spanish) in a cross-cutting manner, as well as legal advice within their migratory itinerary or process. There are women's groups (in Albacete) that function autonomously or independently because they belong to a social network created by them and for them. ACCEM offers them physical spaces, gives them institutional support and disseminates the activities they organise.
They also organise activities for non-discrimination and information on access to resources with group and individual intervention. The demands are very diverse, depending on their origin, how they have accessed the country and the resources they have. Work is carried out on various levels, social and labour insertion, training, acceptance of personal and couple life. Especially the latter, because culture shock is very noticeable from the first months when they come as a couple and has a great impact on the lives of these people as a couple.
It is also often the gender motive that motivates people to leave/ flee the country for reasons of gender identity, sexual orientation or violence.

RqueR provides training to acquire different levels of certifications and professional skills because they have a cooperative where these people are integrated in stages. The participants of the programmes acquire certificates of professionalism, or in insertion companies. They usually stay in the service offered by RqueR for between 6 months and 3 years, and during this time they are accompanied by a job counsellor so that they can receive training and find another job.

In Cepaim, in order to tackle immigrant women's issues, they work from the area of gender equality (specifically) through two programmes:

1. Programa Sara "Sara Programme" for the socio-labour insertion of immigrant women. The programme has three phases: the personal development phase, the job search phase and the training phase (from an intersectional gender perspective), with an emphasis on empowering women to become entrepreneurs.
2. The +ADELANTE Programme includes a series of actions aimed at women in vulnerable situations, companies and key agents, which seek to apply the gender approach to the entire job search process, from direct work with the participants to transversal actions with companies. Intervention with companies includes some awareness-raising actions on equality and co-responsibility on issues of equality, masculinities, gender perspective, etc. for key agents such as social intervention professionals, teachers, public services staff, among others, with the aim of improving the attention to the social and labour needs of women belonging to vulnerable groups.

The Red Cross, within the programme for asylum seekers (not specifically for women), focuses on the framework of the state reception network. The reception and integration system is developed through individualised itineraries to promote progressive autonomy and their social and labour integration. The itineraries are implemented in two phases according to needs, degree of autonomy according to the length of stay of the person in our country: legal assistance, psychological assistance, employment services, job training, etc.
Gender workshops are also held, for the transformation and empowerment of women, with the aim of exchanging experiences and promoting their social participation.
The UTS (social work unit, which is a public body) refers to the different entities for asylum, depending on which reception resource the person needs.
Currently (in the city of Albacete) more attention has been given to people whose country of origin is Venezuela, Colombia and Honduras (therefore Spanish-speakers) who usually come with their families. The rest of the associations observe the same trend. There has been an evident decrease in the number of women coming from African countries, caused by the closing of borders and international relations with Latin America.
Medicus Mundi Sur ACAIM works with people mainly from African countries and the women usually come with their partner/husband. It has to be added that usually they all have documentation.

## Experiences of the focus group

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

Applicants for international protection are referred to and have access to public placement services by the public services because the entities working in the city coordinate their work in a network (Red Cross, Caritas).
It also happens that many people often go through several entities or services and access the employment agency of their entity. Afterwards, they are informed of all the services available in the city, region and sometimes at national level. From there, they are attended to and referred thanks to communication between organisations so as not to duplicate interventions.
Sometimes several counselling pathways are implemented at the same time.
Access to information on the different programmes or services that entities offer is usually through the public sector, such as employment and placement agencies or the women's centre.
Beyond the asylum, when the person comes to the entity, the entities have entry protocols to be able to refer and advise the appropriate programmes and establish what is called a "Personalised Intervention Plan".

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

In the entities with specific socio-labour insertion/inclusion programmes and pathways, there are teams of technical insertion professionals and counsellors. The identification of needs is done by means of interview exploration.
During these interviews, participants first provide the relevant documentation they can prove (be it professional experience, supporting documentation, residence and/or work permits, qualifications they have, whatever is required), and then they can participate in training group activities. In these activities, participants are trained in job search tools through competence-based work. This year there has been a trend towards the use of online tools, so the training activities have focused on digital skills.
In the focus group, the word "Employability" was brought into discussion because it tries to “dehumanize” in a certain sense the people who enter the insertion pathways.
The biggest challenge they usually face is to get people into the labour market in Albacete, and to adapt to it.

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

In the work teams of the organisations, work is carried out in an integrated manner and there are specific women's areas or departments where the workers have this type of training on gender perspective.
In the third sector, at least in these organisations, there is specific training that promotes the existence of collaboration networks, spaces for women to live together or women's areas. For example, what they call "empowered refugees"

in the Red Cross is a space provided by the organisation where immigrant women form mutual aid groups).
In these spaces, which are usually meeting rooms or classrooms in the centres of the entities, exchange and dialogue are usually motivated and encouraged. Similarly, in the African association, there are regular meetings and the president communicates important information to the rest of the community (the person referred to as the president is the person who acted as a liaison to organise the discussion group with TCN women).

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

In the case of applications for international protection, the programmes they work with have a maximum duration of 24 months, although it depends on the time it takes for the resolution to be processed (in the case of people from Venezuela it is being processed faster, i.e. for humanitarian reasons)[4]. Once they achieve this process, they have to leave the aid programmes (i.e. they leave that first programme and access new ones.), but they can continue in the individualised itineraries. In the case of refusals, the intervention is stopped and they are referred to other options.
Other organisations mention that their programmes are usually for one year or when the itinerary ends when the indicators are met or the planned stage is completed.

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

There are several steps in the requirements. It is not just a matter of obtaining residence permits, but also of obtaining a work permit. Only then can they participate in the Ariadna programme.
In terms of their integration into the labour market, the handicap is often the recognition of their professional qualifications, either through previous work experience or through training, which has little or no validity here. The difficulty of recognition or validation in Latin America is more or less standardised because there are established procedures, but for other nationalities it is almost impossible. Therefore, they tend to take the path of access to formal and vocational qualifications in the host country itself. This is indeed a challenge and the most intensive work for organisations to achieve that women are encouraged to access such training. It was stated that once they get them to enrol and obtain formal qualifications, motivation and positive attitude to access a job increases. In the pathway, it is common for many people to achieve vocational certification. The reality is that these people, especially women, tend to access (if they manage

[4] Since 2019, Spain has approved the granting of a temporary residence permit for humanitarian reasons for international protection for all Venezuelan asylum seekers. As a result, the process of obtaining asylum is faster and, therefore, they have access to the programmes sooner.

to do so) jobs focused on agricultural services, cleaning and care for the elderly or dependent people, which does not correspond to the previous experience or qualifications they brought with them; this is something common.
Another participant mentions the great difficulty with the homologation (of education).
Moreover, the places where they tend to work are often low-paid and socially unrecognised, highly feminised jobs. With the added difficulty that there are many families who refuse to hire foreign women to take care of dependents (whether elderly people, children or people with disabilities).

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

In any type of training that is developed, there is often collaboration when women talk to each other and come into contact with each other. One of the participants also mentioned an entrepreneurship programme for migrant women.
Moreover, as we pointed out in the previous section, once they obtain qualifications, their motivation to continue learning or to enter the labour market improves.

- *Any other advice/tips in working with TCN women*

They stressed above all the importance of empowerment and networking among TCN women, and the organisation of common workspaces by themselves.
The first requirement for accessing any of the organisations' resources is to learn Spanish, because otherwise access to integration workshops, which range from self-knowledge, motivation, knowledge of legislation and job interviews, will not be granted.
Another important aspect that came up was that the domestic care sector is in great demand, as well as the commerce sector. However, after the pandemic year, there is a need to re-evaluate the situation of the city's labour market. The most in-demand professions are those related to women, because that is where they see the demand: cleaning services, catering services, health or care services, retail or shop assistant services,
In terms of training, the areas most in demand are:
- Digital literacy.
- Job search workshops.

They believe that it is essential, in addition to language skills, to have access to the "Level of key competences", which is basic general training in any employment programme. Although no generalisation is possible, they tend to find that these TCN women have to start from basic levels of education. However, there are also people who get their qualifications recognised and move on to qualified positions.
People come with expectations of going on working as they did in their countries of origin, and this often clashes with the reality here.

## Identification of gaps and needs

- *What are the key problems in providing services for TCNs?*

Above all, they encountered bureaucratic barriers with official identity documents or certifications (sometimes even difficult to understand and to follow the changes made by the associations' staff).
There are often changes in procedures that make it difficult to become familiar with them. In addition, the same official paper is often not recognised in another official public body (due to a lack of coordination) and is not operational for individuals.

- *Level of implementation of policies regarding gender equality in the workplace.*

There are equality laws currently being implemented at national level but not specific to TCN. These are quota policies in companies or gender assessment reports to be drawn up by companies according to the number of employees. They are called "company equality plans".

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

There is a lack of funding for women or specific programmes for the creation of microenterprises, for self-employment. Imposed gender roles and constraints make this difficult.
There is also a lack of places where they can be advised on how to set up cooperatives (again, the bureaucracy is very difficult) or credit lines to start-up businesses.
For both men and women, there is a big impact on the issue of documentation (applicants for protection have temporary documents that have been undergoing changes in terms of their validity, renewal and expiry, with footnotes that do not always clarify what they should). These documents, which are of a legal nature and allow for temporary residence and, thus, access to resources, are mostly not recognised by the people who work in the different public services and represent a huge barrier to health services, employment, etc. This procedure is a tedious one and happens at a key moment when people are being trained to find a job (which also affects the enrolment of children in schools, for example). A single note to services without so many temporary changes would facilitate processes and access to available resources.
Several participants recalled examples of people who, after many years in Spain, lose their documentation and are unable to work. They then have to start all over again.

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Another relevant observation was made regarding the need for psychological support resources for migrants that do not exist.

- *Why do many companies not have any strategies for recruiting TCN women?*

None or not known. There is a situation where women's profiles are requested for the fruit and vegetable sector or for the selection of agricultural products, as well as intermediary companies for cleaning or care services.
The difficulty lies in adapting working hours to the responsibilities of caring for children or family members. Companies sometimes do facilitate work-life balance, but only in extreme situations when they can no longer find people to work for them.

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

The first skill that participants shared was that any worker has to work on is empathy, as well as a good knowledge of the network of services available.
It would also be good to recognize the value of professional skills and the value of performance capacity. It was mentioned that instead of professionals giving so much importance to diplomas and certificates, they should validate the training and the possibility of the person to carry out different functions, both for migrant women and women in general, in order to leave behind the feminisation of certain categories of professionals. Although the change must be global, the professionals in charge of inclusion are the ones who have to start with the task.
The relevance of mediation between key agents, awareness raising and intermediation with companies is also mentioned, as well as the importance of being aware of the context of the work and the analysis of the reality in the intervention area, as this opens up a huge range of possibilities where to invest time, in which sectors and where not to invest resources.
It was also pointed out that there is a need for intercultural intervention policies with a gender perspective in order to challenge the privileges and the position that they have of themselves as professionals, and thus respond to the discrimination and aggressiveness that can occur in the care services. It was also proposed that professionals should set objectives while respecting the rhythms and times of each person, taking into account different origins, sex, race, sexual diversity and religion.
Finally, the tools for the reorganisation of power relations that produce the different axes of oppression are also valuable, all these elements can lead people to recognise processes of oppression/discrimination and to start processes of empowerment and emancipation on their own.
The aforementioned awareness-raising has to be a joint work of all stakeholders, but it has to start from a review or initiative of the public administration to see

where jobs are more feminised and to detect where labour rights are not fulfilled. There are sectors that are not controlled for economic benefit.
Also, and this should be a general objective, the participants shared that they must make care work visible, change the dynamics that the pandemic has brought to light, all the previous shortcomings when it comes to covering up inequalities. It is necessary to normalise the fact that we live in multicultural societies, but sometimes it is invisible.
The reality in Albacete is that there are professional sectors that immigrants cannot access, especially jobs that are related to a positive social recognition and medium-high social status. There is also no presence of migrants in professional sectors in the city that deal with the public (mentioned in the focus group: supermarkets, bus drivers, clothes shops). It is mentioned that if immigrants were visible in common public spaces, inclusion with the host society would be easier because there would be exchange and social interaction, which would facilitate coexistence and the breaking down of mental barriers and prejudices.
So, the first thing that would be needed is more training in intercultural competences, empathy and work to promote intercultural coexistence in the different areas of the city.

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

This question depends very much on heterogeneous factors: national origin, education, personal or family situation. The situation of TCN women is not homogeneous.

## Conclusion

It has been observed that the joint work of civil society and organisations ensures that information on resources and opportunities reaches TCN women correctly. In fact, the women themselves state that they have a good knowledge of the local reality. The problem, then, does not seem to lie in the lack of information or communication, but in the very absence of opportunities for their socio-occupational insertion.

When talking about difficulties in dealing with the socio-occupational inclusion of TCN women, the perspectives of women and entities do not entirely align, which is logical considering that they come from different backgrounds and interests. While women tend to highlight the initial difficulty of finding mere opportunities to even be interviewed, organisations mention bureaucratic problems.
One thing they do agree on is that the few and only opportunities are in the primary sector (incompatible with caring for dependent children) and in highly feminised jobs (caring for other children and dependents). Also of concern are the prejudices of the host society which can be observed in separate and differentiated areas of coexistence and social and working life.

Moreover, something that is not mentioned by the organisations is the proliferation of courses that do not result in finding work. It was surprising that none of the participants, neither women nor organisations, mentioned the importance of language, only the interviewer's direct question brought it to the fore.
The change of mindset should not come from a single sector of society, but society as a whole. Without the involvement of the whole community, change will not be easy.
Finally, the key issue that the organisations' professionals seem to suggest is that the two major problems for the integration of TCN women lie in the bureaucracy but also in the quality of the Spanish labour market, which assigns them to low paid and traditionally feminised work (care of dependents and the countryside).

A final remark is that, as the focus group has been set up with associations that work in the rest of the national territory (although their work is local), they will have the same care protocols, because the care for the groups they attend to is highly institutionalised and follows very defined and specific phases.

## Annex I. Evidence

Signature sheet of the focus group with TCN women

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**Hoja de asistencia de participantes**

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Screenshot of the focus group with organisations. The recording is available:

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