DEVELOPMENT OF INCLUSIVE INTEGRATION PATHS 4 MIGRANT WOMEN

ENGAGE

2nd Press Release
ENGAGE
Labour Market Integration for TCN women

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ENGAGE Project Empowers Third Country National Women for Inclusive Integration

The ENGAGE project (Development of inclusivE iNteGration pAths 4 miGrant women), is making significant strides in increasing the capacity of Third Country National (TCN) women to enter the labor market and social life of the host society. Through a range of activities including upskilling workshops, job shadowing programs, and cross-cultural initiatives, ENGAGE aims to address the barriers faced by TCN women and create a more inclusive and accessible environment. The project targets TCN women, labor market stakeholders, professionals, policymakers, NGOs, and the general public.

During the initial months of the project, extensive research was conducted to examine the current practices, gaps, and needs of TCN women in the partner countries. Focus groups were organized by each partner to gather valuable insights from local key players, resulting in national reports. The data collected was then compiled into a comprehensive comparative report by UCLL, providing a European-level perspective on the situation.

The research findings reiterated the vulnerability of TCN women in all partner countries. The unemployment rate among TCN women was found to be nearly double that of national citizens. These women often faced inactivity, limited opportunities, and discrimination, or were subjected to precarious conditions due to illegal or unregistered work. Many resorted to domestic work, which often went unrecognized as formal work experience. While gender equality, integration, and employability policies existed in most countries, they were often fragmented and failed to consider the specific needs of TCN women who navigate the intersection of gender, ethnicity, and socio-economic status.

Despite variations in local contexts, the focus groups consistently revealed experiences of discrimination hindering the labor market integration of TCN women. Hiring practices were found to be non-inclusive, and employers demonstrated outright racism. Language barriers, limited experience, inflexible working hours, and a lack of awareness among employers were identified as significant obstacles. Labor market stakeholders also highlighted challenges such as cultural stereotyping, a lack of knowledge, complicated hiring procedures, and the absence of clear policies for validating informal skills.

Based on the needs and gaps identified, a set of recommendations has been developed to promote the integration of TCN women in the labor market. These recommendations emphasize the importance of an integrated policy approach that recognizes the multi-layered identities of TCN women, including their gender, ethnicity or religion, and socio-economic or legal status. Other recommendations include language learning opportunities, fostering cultural competency among labor market stakeholders, reducing cultural stereotyping, and supporting the validation and recognition of qualifications and informal skills.

The ENGAGE project is now progressing towards its next phase, which will involve a series of activities based on the research findings and recommendations. These activities encompass up-skilling workshops for TCN women, the validation of acquired competences using Open Badges methodology, capacity building for labor market stakeholders, job-shadowing schemes, women's circles involving local and TCN women, and awareness-raising initiatives.

The 11 partners in the project consortium have been actively collaborating online to ensure coordination and alignment of objectives and preliminary results. In October 2021, the partners met in person for the first time in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, for a coordination meeting. Furthermore, the upcoming Info Days for women and Labor Market Stakeholders, which will be conducted in all participating countries, will provide comprehensive information about the project's activities and opportunities.

For more information about the ENGAGE Project and its initiatives, please visit https://amif-engage.eu/or follow us on social media: @amif-engage.eu, @ProjectEngageU, @engage_project.

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