Gender mainstreaming, migration, integration and Agenda 2030
GENDER INEQUALITIES AMONG NON-EU MIGRANT POPULATION

Migrant women from non-EU countries are at high risk of inactivity and unemployment. In 2019, the EU-27 activity rate for women born outside the EU (63.5%) was 20.4 percentage points lower than that recorded for men (83.9%). In Slovenia, the majority of the immigrant population comes from the former republics of Yugoslavia. In 2018, the inactivity rate of women from this demographic was 73.6% while 92.4% of men from the same population were employed. Work is not only important for economic integration but also for mental health, social inclusion, and well-being. Current research addresses the importance of migrant women’s integration in the labor market for achieving equity, reducing socioeconomic gaps, and increasing the integration of migrant families and children. Yet, concerning the latter point, it is important to note that to achieve the sustainable development goal of gender equality, SDG5, research should address the potentials of migrant women as an independent human force and not define them in relation to their male partners or families. Migrant men usually arrive in the EU alone, while migrant women arrive subsequently through family reunifications programs, which excludes them from certain policies for integration. This complies with the initial integration program in Slovenia, where migrant women who come through family reunifications programs are entitled to fewer educational hours for integration than receive beneficiaries of international protection. Yet, it is important to note that recent decades have witnessed an increase in the feminization of labor migration, along with the increased agency of women migrating on their own, as migrant workers, students, or refugees for example.

Gender stereotypes limit migrant women’s integration in different ways. On one hand, research shows that patriarchal societal models migrate along with people themselves to their destination countries, and such culturally harmful practices and imposed gender roles hinder the social and labor integration of migrant women. Gender inequalities that exist in countries of origin will most likely impact gender inequalities in the country of destination, whereas gender inequalities in the hosting country also affect the migrant population. On the other hand, research also shows that stereotypes that present migrant women as passive and oppressed fuels xenophobia and discrimination, in particular against Muslim women. Xenophobia hinders labor integration and the achievement of SDG8, decent work, and economic growth. Target 8.8 of SDG8 aims to protect the rights of migrant workers; combatting xenophobia is essential to protect these rights. Although formal equality has been achieved in non-discrimination laws in different EU countries, there is still the need to assure non-discrimination and equality on the ground.

According to the European Institute for Gender Equality, labor market participation and family reunification are among the main gender issues in migration and integration policies. The measures defining entry onto the labor market in the EU often fail to recognize intrinsic differences among genders. For example, the admission schemas in the labor market are often seeking domains where women are less presented, which impacts negatively migrant women employability. The report on migration and Agenda 2030 implemented through the Faces of Migration program in Slovenia, addresses that the study entitled “Analysis of Employment of Foreign Workers in Slovenia”

2. Eurostat, Migrant integration statistics – labour market indicators, 2020
4. OECD, Migration and Policy Debates, 2019, page 8
7. Le Goff, Feminization of migration and trends in remittances, 2016, page 1
8. Prosen et al, Impact of Displaced Cultural Traditions and Social Integration on Health-Related Behaviour among Migrant Workers Living in Slovenia, 2019
12. European Institute for Gender Equality, EIGE, Sectoral Brief: Gender and Migration, 2020, page 4
What Are the Needs and Where Do They Come From”, which will also be the basis for drafting the Economic Migration Strategy for 2020-2030, responds to the labor shortage of human resources in the country. In 2019, most foreign workers were employed in construction, manufacturing, transport, and storage. Most of the foreign workers filling these occupations are men. While migrant women face the risk of exploitation in domestic work.

Gender-sensitive analysis proved that jobs like in the nursing and care sector or domestic and care work are not “just another form of work”, and to consider it so means we are gender-blinded. It is “gender regimes” and deep social constructs that refer to this work to be womanly work, specifically characterized by female dependency on their employer, with highly intensive emotional and personalized relationships. This shows that gender impact assessment and gender mainstreaming of policies for labor migration and integration are essential for analyzing and combatting gender inequalities among migrant populations in the EU.

Family was the top reason that women migrated to the EU in 2017. The policies for family reunification affect women and men differentially. Recent statistics show that migrant women are more economically disadvantaged than migrant men, and this causes extra difficulties for women who are the applicants and the sponsors of the family reunification process. On the other hand, the policies for family reunification create a dependent relationship, which makes it harder for migrant women who came through family reunification to escape domestic violence if it occurs. A study from Germany addresses that proposed restrictions on family reunification will particularly impact women. While family reunification in Slovenia is assessed as slightly favorable by the Migration Integration Policy Index. Nonetheless, the initial program for integration in Slovenia allocates fewer hours of language and civic education for women who come through family reunification compared to beneficiaries of international protection, and they are not beneficiaries of the support provided by the governmental office responsible for the integration of migrants in Slovenia.

OVERVIEW OF GENDER-RESPONSIVE IMPLEMENTATION FOR AGENDA 2030 IN RELATION TO MIGRATION AND GENDER POLICIES IN THE EU

In 2015, a gender equality agreement was adopted by world governments. Gender equality was recognized as a precondition for the achievement of sustainable development in the Agenda 2030 and as a key sustainable development goal by itself, SDG5. The gender equality compact consists of SDG5 and all other gender-related targets in the other 11 SDGs, it embraces the Beijing Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) as foundational frameworks for sustainable development. The UN commission on the status of women addressed key points to follow in the road map for gender equality, including strengthening gender-responsive data collection, follow-up, and review processes, as well as strengthening and expanding national institutional arrangements. Meanwhile, the European institute for gender equality addressed that the European Agenda on migration, adopted in 2015, was gender-blind, as it did not approach gender within its sections on migration and integration. Further, the progress report published by the EU commission in 2019 did not address women or gender, but it had references supporting vulnerable migrant groups. Yet, when in 2016 the EU commission adopted an action plan for the integration of third country nationals, it emphasized the importance of integrating a gender dimension in all areas of policies. Further, the EU commission commits to engaging in dialogue between member states to assure that gender and the situation of migrant women are considered in planned activities and funding schemes. Most recently, the Commission presented the new EU gender equality strategy, A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025. One of its six priorities is

\[13\] Keuc, Migrants and Refugees in Slovenia 2020, page 16
\[14\] European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, migrant women exploited in domestic work, 2018
\[15\] Lutz, ed, Migration and Domestic Work, 2016
\[16\] European Institute for Gender Equality, Sectoral Brief: Gender and Migration, 2020, page 5
\[17\] Sanderson, Are family reunifications biased against women?, 2018
\[18\] UN Women, DRIVING THE GENDER-RESPONSIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA, 2016 page 5
to integrate a gender perspective in all EU policies; special attention is placed here on focusing on action funds to support migrant women and girls in migration and asylum areas\(^9\). Conducting a gender-based assessment of budgets is part of gender budgeting, which is one of the indicators for achieving SDG5, Indicator 5.c.1 “Proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment”\(^{10}\).

**THE APPROACH ON GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN SLOVENIA**

Slovenia took its first step in gender mainstreaming in the early 1990s with the establishment of the Parliamentary Commission for Women’s Policy. The Slovenian EU strategy for EU accession had an important influence on the establishment of structures and policies in Slovenia between 1996 and 2004. The current EU gender equality strategy includes policy objectives and actions whose implementation would lead to significant progress by 2025 in terms of a gender-equal Europe. The strategy references the Agenda 2030 and employs SDG5 as a key framework for it. According to CONCORD Europe, the strategy dedicated a sufficient attention on intersectionality, yet the document does not provide guidance on how to assure the implementation of intersectionality. Intersectionality is essential to assure that gender equality is implemented in all fields, and to strengthen the linkage between gender equality and the other efforts of the EU to combat inequalities in all fields\(^{21}\). Similar to the concerns of CONCORD, the Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants addressed the fact that the agendas of migration policies were not systematically approached in the current EU gender equality strategy, which may put millions of people at the risk of exclusion\(^{22}\).

Gender mainstreaming was introduced in Slovenia through the Equal Opportunities Between Women and Men Act (2002). The act requires each ministry to assign a coordinator for equal opportunities to assure gender equality and gender mainstreaming in all policies, local administrations are requested by non-binding agreement to do the same. This coordination is essential for bolstering the national institutional arrangements, which is important for the road map toward a gender-responsive implementation for Agenda 2030 as we have presented earlier. The Resolution on the National Program for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men 2015-2020 in Slovenia, focused on eight priority areas: Economic independence; Reconciliation of professional and private or family life; Knowledge society without gender stereotypes; Social inclusion; Health; Balanced representation of women and men; Violence against women; and Gender equality in foreign policy and international development cooperation. Under the priority of health, the document indicates that migrant women are among those groups that need extra support for better health in regards to pregnancy, mental health and reproductive health. Under the priority of violence against women, heterogeneity was briefly addressed in regards to the different backgrounds of migrant women, along with how various factors affect vulnerability. Gender inequality in the labor market was included as a key challenge, as young women with high tertiary education are less likely to find a job comparing to young men with the same education. Migrant women are included partly in the proposed measurements to combat gender inequality in the labor market. The proposed measurement refers to the preparation of analysis and, if necessary, providing programs to support the employability of migrant women and women from ethnic minorities\(^{23}\).

Gender analysis is one of the tools used for gender mainstreaming in the policy making process, yet it shall all also be accompanied with a gender impact assessment and a gender stakeholder’s consultation. Further, policy and programs to support the labor integration of migrant women should be followed by gender monitoring and gender evaluation for further development. Therefore, monitoring reports on gender and migration policies are important for understanding and combatting gender inequalities among migrant populations. Gender-blind integration policies will contribute a given country’s overall level of gender inequalities. NGOs are important stakeholders for consultations on gender mainstreaming in migration and integration policies. For example, under the Faces of

\(^{19}\) European Institute for Gender Equality, EIGE, Sectoral Brief : Gender and Migration, 2020, page 8-10

\(^{20}\) UN Women, Sustainable Development Goal Indicator 5c1

\(^{21}\) CONCORD, CONCORD’s analysis of the European Commission Gender Equality Strategy, 2020, page 1

\(^{22}\) PICUM, EU Gender Equality Strategy risks leaving out millions of people, 2020

\(^{23}\) MDDSZ, Resolution on the national program for equal opportunities for women and men, 2016
Migration program, case studies, monitoring reports, policy papers, and background papers integrate gender and migration as crosscutting issues for sustainable development, such qualitative and quantitative data are essential for the cycle of policy-making: define, plan, act, and check.

In Slovenia, the Ministry of Labor, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities is responsible for gender equality, and it regularly cooperates with coordinators from each ministry; the guidelines are prepared on the initiative and in cooperation between them. On the other hand, the Ministry of the Interior is mainly responsible for integration between migrants and Slovenian society, including hosting the government office for the integration and support of migrants. Meanwhile, various ministries are responsible for supporting the integration between migrants and Slovenian society within their scope of work. At first glance we can see similarity between task delegation among different national bodies when it comes to the resolution on gender mainstreaming and the strategy of integration between migrants and Slovenian society. Yet, when it comes to the integration model, there is both inconsistency and lack of coordination between responsible public bodies. This inconsistency was addressed through NGOs reports and case studies, and it is prevalent in gaps between different integration policies. Further, the role of municipalities in the integration process is still not clearly defined according to the European Website on integration, last updated on 21 November 2019.

Therefore, in the next section we give further information on the social and labor integration models in Slovenia from a gendered perspective and based on the approach of gender mainstreaming.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING OF INTEGRATION MODELS IN SLOVENIA

The Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Slovenia is more or less the main body responsible for the integration and migration policies in Slovenia, with different fields of integration to be managed by different ministries within their scope of work. In 2017, the Ministry established the Government Office for the Support and Integration of Migrants, hereafter referred to as UOIM. This public body is responsible for asylum applicants and the beneficiaries of international protection, yet it is important to mention that this population was accounted for 1,000 people in 2020, not all of whom are even living in Slovenia. Meanwhile there are more than 167,000 people who are considered regular migrants, including through family reunification. As we mentioned earlier, most foreign workers in Slovenia are men. Migrant women who may come through family reunification programs do not have the privilege of integration through the labor market, nor the support of a public body in their social and labor integration. The only official program available for all migrants from third country nationals is the initial integration program, which provides limited hours of language and civic education according to the legal status of migrants, and which does not provide vocational trainings. Further, the hours of training courses are limited for people who come through family reunification, who statistically speaking are mostly women. In this particular case it means that integration models in Slovenia is gender-blind. People who mostly come through family reunification, are by statistics women due to different gender orders, and they do not have equal support for integration comparing to their partners. These modules increase the relationship of dependency, which, as we mentioned earlier and as identified by the European institute for gender equality, is increasing the risk of domestic violence. Migrant women who come through family reunification might not report domestic violence, and might be at high risk due to the relationship of dependence enhanced by the system of family reunification.

As we mentioned earlier, each ministry has a coordinator for equal opportunities for women and men, within the framework of the national program on gender mainstreaming 2015-2020. Each Ministry is obliged to assign a coordinator for equal opportunities for women and men, and some ministries establish their own consultative bodies on gender mainstreaming and gender equality. Within the Ministry of the Interior (MIA), there is a
Consultative Body for Gender Mainstreaming, which ensures equal opportunities for women and men in the Ministry of the Interior and its constituent bodies. A Commission has been established within the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, namely for Women in Science as an expert body of the Ministry, which deals with issues of gender equality and the promotion of the role of women in science in Slovenia. When it comes to migrant women, the work of gender mainstreaming is limited in a scope of public tenders to support the integration between migrant women and the Slovene society. The support programs are mostly running by NGOs on a voluntary level or with the financial support of the Government of Slovenia, often combined with external fund and mostly from the EU commission. There is no clear defining process, no gender impact assessment nor consultations with national stakeholders regarding the cross-cutting issues of gender and migration in Slovenia. While, we welcome gender budgeting in public tenders, we assure that, according to the principles of the gender-responsive implementation and gender mainstreaming, this budgeting should be defined through gender impact assessment and consultations with stakeholders not only through gender statistics. Further, the implementation of these programs has to include training modules for increasing staff competencies capacity building of staff regarding gender assessment and gender sensitivity, or at the very least some topical briefings. While the gender impact assessment is indeed mentioned in the Slovenian national program for gender mainstreaming, there is no reference to training on gender impact assessment or gender budgeting. Further, when it comes to migration and integration policies, the principles of gender mainstreaming are not applied. The policies are gender-blind except for some gender budgeting, which is not systematically defined or followed up. In other words, to integrate gender perspectives in policy, gender shall be considered in all aspects of policymaking, which includes four stages: Define, Plan, Act, and Check. In the defining process, there should be gender statistics and analysis, gender impact assessment and consultation with gender stakeholders. Slovenia has an elected Council to present foreigners for consultations on integration and migration policies. The elected Council consists of three individuals representing US citizens, the citizens of former Yugoslav republics and other third country nationals, and one NGO; there is no systematic gender representation nor gender perspective in its presentation as a consultative body that represents foreigners in Slovenia. Meanwhile, there are NGOs and grassroot initiatives that are led by women and that may be included actively for consultations on migration and integration policies. For example, the Slovenian City of Women Organization that runs European and national programs to support the integration between migrant women and the Slovenian society, or the informal group of “No-Border Craft”, which was founded and is led by Slovenian and migrant women, including refugees and asylum seekers.

There are public tenders offered by the government of Slovenia to support the integration of migrant women, yet these programs are also usually supported by external funds and mostly from the EU Commission. The funding is limited in time and scope, which might influence the sustainability and follow-up on these programs. The UOIM is responsible for coordination between various stakeholders in migration and integration; based on reports by NGOs and case studies, the coordination between different stakeholders who work for the support of migrant integration shall be strengthened. The voluntary and the structured programs ran by NGOs should be used to its full potentials, by systematic coordination and sustainable support for these programs and their outcomes. The policy-making process should combine gender and migration as cross-cutting issues for further programs that aim to support particularly the integration between women from third country nationals and Slovenian society. It is also important to note that some programs in the EU and in Slovenia are designed to provide trainings for migrant women in domains that are considered as female-dominant; while this may be perceived as practical, it can contribute to existing gender inequalities in the labor market, where women are less presented in certain domains like e.g. ICT.
This inequality is due to gender orders and regimes. Finally, integration is one of the main pillars included in the Slovenian strategy on migration, and it is addressed as two-way process, wherefore programs shall be design to support intercultural communication between migrants and Slovene society, with the result that both target groups shall be beneficiaries of integration programs. In conclusion, to combat gender inequalities among the migrant population in the EU and Slovenia, gender and migration shall be integrated as essential cross-cutting issues in all the stages of policy making and program design. To achieve this, it is important to start with research that fills the needs in the define stage of policy making, where women’s organizations and informal groups shall have an important role in consultations.
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