

Public Consultation on the integration and inclusion of migrants and people with a migrant background

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Introduction

As part of the priority of promoting our European way of life, the 2020 European Commission Work Programme announces an **Action Plan on integration and inclusion**. Through this specific consultation, the European Commission would like to hear your views on a key aspect of this – i.e. new actions that could be taken at EU level to promote the integration and social inclusion of migrants and EU citizens with a migrant background.

The integration and social inclusion of migrants is crucial not only to ensure the cohesion of our societies but also to address skills gaps, labour shortages, and to boost economic performance overall. Promoting social inclusion is also a key focus of the European Pillar of social Rights. EU policies need to develop to encourage social and economic inclusion for all vulnerable groups through social, education, labour market, health and equality policies, and the integration and social inclusion of migrants should play a key role in this respect.

Currently in the EU, too many migrants face challenges in terms of unemployment, lack of educational and training opportunities, and limited social interaction within their broader communities. EU nationals with a migrant background (e.g. foreign born or second generation migrants) often face similar challenges to third country nationals. To tackle these issues, there is a need to step up the work on integration and social inclusion at EU level. The EU should enhance the support provided to actors 'on the ground' with the aim of ensuring that meaningful opportunities are offered for all to participate in our society and economy.

The EU's competence on integration is set out in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. While the EU cannot harmonise laws and regulations in Member States related to integration, the EU may provide various incentives and forms of support for Member States to advance the integration of third country nationals legally residing on their territory. The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union also sets out the EU's competence to support and complement activities of the Member States in combating social exclusion and poverty.

Through promoting mutual learning and the sharing of experience and best practices between EU countries, the EU can help countries with less experience learn from countries with more well-established integration and inclusion strategies. Furthermore, EU action can complement and strengthen actions put in place at national or local level by providing funding as well as a coordinating function across a broad range of stakeholders, levels of governance and policies. EU action on the integration should also ensure that the

social inclusion needs of third country nationals and EU citizens with a migrant background are addressed holistically by making linkages with relevant EU policies such as on skills, education, equality and anti-discrimination, and health.

Key documents setting out the scope for EU action on integration of migrants are the 2004 [Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy](#) with its 11 principles, including the respect for basic EU values, and the Commission's 2016 [Action Plan on the integration of third-country nationals](#), which provides a comprehensive framework to support Member States' efforts in developing and strengthening their integration policies and describes the concrete measures the Commission will implement in this regard.

If you wish to submit a more detailed contribution, you can upload a document (e.g. a position paper) at the end of the questionnaire.

About you

* Language of my contribution

English

* I am giving my contribution as

Trade union

* First name

Mercedes

* Surname

MILETTI

* Email (this won't be published)

mmiletti@etuc.org

* Organisation name

255 character(s) maximum

European Trade Union Confederation

* Organisation size

Medium (50 to 249 employees)

Transparency register number

255 character(s) maximum

Check if your organisation is on the [transparency register](#). It's a voluntary database for organisations seeking to influence EU decision-making.

* Country of origin

Please add your country of origin, or that of your organisation.

* Publication privacy settings

The Commission will publish the responses to this public consultation. You can choose whether you would like your details to be made public or to remain anonymous.

Anonymous

Only your type of respondent, country of origin and contribution will be published. All other personal details (name, organisation name and size, transparency register number) will not be published.

Public

Your personal details (name, organisation name and size, transparency register number, country of origin) will be published with your contribution.

I agree with the [personal data protection provisions](#)

Definition of integration

In the context of this consultation, the term migrants includes people born outside the European Union and residing in the EU and people with a migrant background.

1. Since 2004, the [Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy in the EU](#) define at EU level the founding principles of integration of migrants. What does it mean in your view for migrants and people with a migrant background to be successfully integrated and socially included?

Migrant integration and inclusion is a dynamic, multi-faceted and long-term process aimed at mutual accommodation and acceptance among migrants and host societies. Integration assumes equal opportunities and treatment for migrants in their economic mobility and social, civil, political and cultural inclusion; their active participation in the integration process; and their respect for fundamental rights and values. It is very much welcome the expansion of the Action Plan to include 'inclusion' as well as integration as a way to understand integration as a two way process.

The world of work and the work of migrants are closely interrelated. Having a job is a very important step in the integration process and joining a union helps in providing integrity and dignity for migrants. As acknowledged in the policy and academic community, the cornerstone of migrants' integration process is their fair and successful integration in the labour market.

Integration in the labour market is not only a question of accessing employment, but accessing quality and decent employment. Migrants workers are disproportionately employed in precarious work and employment conditions. Their right to stay in the country where they live and work depends on their job. Losing their job means losing their income and their accommodation, as well as the impossibility to access any social benefits. They often experience discrimination in terms of pay, working hours, holidays, etc.

Migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees have the right to work, and should be protected by collective agreements and be part of trade unions to claim rights at work. EU legislation should ensure decent jobs with full respect of the principle of equal treatment and access to employment rights. Immigration status and employment rights should be separated to ensure all workers can claim their rights at work. Joining a union remains key for the successful integration of migrants in hosting communities.

2. What are in your view the main **challenges** for the successful integration and inclusion of migrants?

at most 4 choice(s)

- Lack of knowledge of the language(s) of the host country
- Difficulties in the recognition of migrants' qualifications and the validation of skills
- Difficulties in finding a job
- Discrimination against migrants, xenophobia and racism
- Difficulties in developing skills
- Limited access to quality health and social services and social protection
- Education systems not sufficiently inclusive
- Lack of access to (non-segregated) housing
- Limited meaningful interactions between immigrants and natives
- Negative portrayal of migrants in the media
- Insufficient involvement or capacity of local communities to integrate migrants
- Insufficient involvement of the private sector (i.e. employers, social enterprises) in the integration process

- Difficulties in getting access to public services (because of lack of information /knowledge or legal limitations)
- Complexities related to the legal status of (accompanying) family members
- Long asylum processes and difficulties obtaining legal status
- Other

3. Are there in your view areas where migrants and other groups in the society face similar challenges?

- Yes
- No

If yes, which one/s?

at most 3 choice(s)

- Education, including early childhood education and care
- Employment
- Vocational training
- Housing
- Health
- Participation in social and cultural life
- Social inclusion
- Other

4. Which are in your view the key challenges that migrants share with other groups in society?

Integration in the labour market is not only a question of accessing employment, but accessing quality and decent employment. Migrant workers, including those undocumented, are disproportionately employed in precarious work and employment conditions. Their right to stay in the country where they live and work depends on their job. Losing their job means losing their income and their accommodation, as well as the impossibility to access any social benefits. They often experience discrimination in terms of pay, working hours, holidays, etc. Exploitation is particularly endemic in sectors such as agriculture and meat processing, care and domestic work, construction, delivery, transport.

The recognition of diplomas and professional qualifications remains a concrete tool for faster integration into the labour market. It goes along with access to employment services, as well as to lifelong learning and requalification paths, for those who remain unemployed or who want to change employer during the period of validity of their work permit. For young migrants, equal treatment should imply access to apprenticeships and other ways of combining education and work. For migrants, their children and family members the right to access to public education and training should be ensured, regardless of their status. Furthermore, full equal access to education and training should be ensured for third country nationals and EU citizens who move across EU countries.

Early integration support (information, legal assistance, social assistance) is crucial for asylum seekers, many of whom will be entitled to status after lengthy asylum procedures, as well as for migrant workers and their families. Integration should start from the reception phase, through orientation and language training, but also skills recognition and preparation to enter employment. Refused access to labour market after 9 months, participation in internships and trainings programmes (practical barriers). The new action plan should aim at mitigating the effects of belated labour markets access by promoting training (language, on the job) , apprenticeships and skills recognition.

Often migrant workers are in the most discriminating forms of employment. This reflects structural discrimination and racism in the labour market. Discrimination in the labour market is detrimental to all workers whose working conditions risk being eroded by bad employers, by inefficient labour market institutions, declining of collective bargaining or by laws that allow it. Evidence shows that third country nationals suffer discrimination on the basis of nationality. Gaps are visible in employment rates, employment conditions and access to social protection. Programmes involving employers committed to hire asylum seekers and refugees represent a way to ensure their inclusion on equal footing.

5. Do you think that social inclusion measures targeting migrants could also benefit other groups in society?

- Yes
- No

If yes, could you give an example of a measure to support the social inclusion of migrants you are aware of that in your view could benefit also other groups in society?

The LABOUR-INT approach, which has been developed during the first edition of the LABOUR-INT project <http://www.labour-int.eu/> and during the second (ongoing) edition.

As a general rule, it is important that measures oriented to enhance labour market integration are built on a multi-stakeholder approach, involving all relevant stakeholders, namely trade unions, employers' organisations, Chambers of commerce and industry, training institutions, NGOs, public and private employment services, local authorities as well as managers of reception and integration services.

Partnerships developed among such actors could cover, inter alia, the following aspects: the general goals, the type of actions to be undertaken, the forms of collaboration between the different stakeholders involved and their level of commitment. Actions could be presented in the form of agreements between economic and social partners, taking into account the national industrial relations environment and practices. Agreements could also be concluded between and with civil society organisations and public authorities.

A number of examples and measures can be also found at the Skills and Migration report <http://www.labour-int.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Expert-Group-on-Skills-and-Migration-report.pdf>

6. Are there **specific groups** of migrants that in your view need **targeted support**?

- Yes
- No

If yes, which ones?

at most 3 choice(s)

- Women
- Children
- Unaccompanied minors
- Newly-arrived migrants
- Asylum seekers
- Migrants arriving to join their families through family reunification
- LGBTI migrants
- Migrants with disabilities
- Other

7. Should there be targeted measures envisaged to facilitate the integration of people in need of protection that are being relocated between Member States?

- Yes
- No

If yes, should private sponsors and local communities be for instance particularly involved?

Local communities

Role of different actors in the integration process

8. In your view, how important is each of these stakeholders in the integration and inclusion process?

| | Not important at all | Not important | Neutral | Important | Very important |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| International organisations | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| National authorities | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| Local authorities | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| Regional authorities | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| Authorities managing the EU funds in EU countries | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| Civil society organisations at local, national or European level | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| Employers' associations, chambers of commerce and trade unions | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| Migrants' organisations and diaspora | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| Local communities and volunteers | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Employers and social enterprises | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| Charities and foundations | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Education and training institutions and providers | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| Cultural and sport organisations | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Public Employment Services | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| European institutions | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Other | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

9. How can in your view local communities (e.g. neighbourhood initiatives, volunteers, etc.) contribute to the integration and inclusion process?

- Through putting in place initiatives to prepare the community for the arrival of migrants
- Through promoting meaningful exchanges among members of the community through various youth, cultural and sport activities etc.
- Through welcoming newcomers and supporting the process of settling in

- Through becoming ambassadors/mentors, helping migrants navigate the job market or learn the language
- Through fighting discrimination and xenophobia
- Other

10. How important is it in your view to involve migrants and people with a migrant background in the design and implementation of integration and social inclusion measures?

- Not important at all
- Not important
- Neutral
- Important
- Very important

11. How should migrants be involved in your view?

at most 1 choice(s)

- Through occasional consultations
- Through structured and regular consultation processes
- Taking into account their needs when designing programmes/measures
- Co-designing with them integration measures and programmes that affect them
- Should not be involved
- Other

The role of the EU and priority areas for EU action

The EU's competence on integration is set out in Article 79(4) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. Whilst the EU cannot harmonise laws and regulations in Member States related to integration, it can establish measures to provide incentives and support for Member States in promoting integration of third-country nationals residing legally in their territories.

12. Taking into account the role of the EU, on **which kind of support** should the EU focus its action in your view?

at most 4 choice(s)

- Supporting actions on the ground through EU funds
- Providing technical support and capacity building to national authorities and other key integration actors

- Encouraging the sharing of knowledge across EU countries and key integration actors
- Providing analysis and monitoring of integration policies and results
- Supporting better cooperation between all the different actors responsible for integration (e.g. EU, national and local authorities, civil and economic actors)
- Promoting a comprehensive approach to integration and the social inclusion of migrants across funding and policy areas
- Promoting common EU policies and measures on integration
- Raising awareness and highlighting positive stories on integration through campaigns and other communication tools
- Facilitating meaningful interactions between migrants and the host society
- Promoting partnerships and social innovation between public, private and civil society organisations
- Supporting language learning and multilingual communication
- Other

13. In your view, which **actors** should the EU primarily support through **exchanges of practices and expertise and other practical tools**?

at most 3 choice(s)

- National authorities
- Regional authorities
- Local authorities
- Civil society organisations at local, national or European level
- Education and training institutions and providers
- Employers, employers' associations, chambers of commerce and trade unions
- Cultural and sport organisations
- Migrants' organisations and diaspora
- Local communities
- Other

14. What should be in your view the **priority areas** of the EU work on integration and the social inclusion of migrants?

at most 5 choice(s)

- Education, including early childhood education and care
- Employment

- Vocational training, lifelong learning and skills development
- Recognition of qualifications and validation of skills of migrants
- Housing
- Health
- Promoting participation through youth, culture and sport
- Social inclusion
- Fighting discrimination and prejudices
- Ensuring equal access to quality mainstream services
- Reducing education and spatial segregation
- Community building
- Pre-arrival/pre-departure measures (e.g. pre-departure language and job-related training and measures to prepare receiving communities for the arrival of migrants)
- Other

15. How do you assess the **impact of EU funding** in the field of integration and social inclusion of migrants?

- Not important at all
- Not important
- Neutral
- Important
- Very important

16. Which are in your view **the fields** where **EU funding** can provide the most benefit to promote integration and inclusion?

at most 4 choice(s)

- Education, including early childhood education and care
- Employment
- Vocational training, lifelong learning and skills development
- Recognition of qualifications and validation of skills of migrants
- Housing
- Health
- Promoting participation through youth, culture and sport
- Social inclusion
- Fighting discrimination and prejudices
- Ensuring equal access to quality mainstream services

- Community building
- Reducing education and spatial segregation
- Pre-arrival/pre-departure measures (e.g. pre-departure language and job-related training and measures to prepare receiving communities for the arrival of migrants)
- Other

17. In your view, which **actors** should the EU support in priority through **EU funds**?

at most 3 choice(s)

- National authorities
- Local authorities
- Regional authorities
- Civil society organisations at local, national or European level
- Education and training institutions and providers
- Employers, employers' associations, chambers of commerce and trade unions
- Cultural and sport organisations
- Migrants' organisations and diaspora
- Local communities
- Other

18. Do you have any suggestions on how the use of EU funding for integration can be improved?

The New Action Plan should:

- ensure a coherent link between EU funds and the Action Plan.
- ensured resources to support migrants and refugees' reception, early labour market integration and social inclusion through AMIF funds, supporting social partners to work with migrants in the way they consider more effective and useful for them.
- consider that migrants and refugees have been disproportionately affected by the COVID crisis, and therefore funds need to be provided to ensure that the crisis does not produce further exclusion and marginalisation.
- ensure that one is left behind, avoid a limited approach based on residence status. The Action Plan should recognise that fundamental rights of all residents must be respected, and protected, including through the provision of services. Integration policies should be as inclusive as possible. The COVID crisis has shown that access to services and social protection on the basis of immigration status makes whole societies more vulnerable. Some member states had to organise regularisation processes to respond to labour shortages and the need to ensure access to healthcare and social services.

Please consider the document that has been uploaded which was part of the consultation on EU funds in 2018

Public consultation on EU funds in the area of migration: ETUC Comments

Practical actions at EU level

19. Which concrete new actions would you recommend the EU put in place to promote integration and inclusion of migrants and people with a migrant background?

The Action Plan issued in 2016 does not recognise the need for a specific focus on protection of labour right in migration policies, besides identification, protection and integration of third-country nationals who are victims of trafficking. The Action Plan should recognise that social inclusion can only be achieved if people have decent work, living wages and work-life balance. To uphold minimum labour standards, it is essential that the labour complaints and monitoring mechanisms protect all workers, regardless of status and without any risk of immigration enforcement. Actions to provide information on workers' rights, supporting organising and access to complaint mechanisms should be considered in each initiative promoting labour market integration, to ensure that all workers are empowered to enforce their workers' rights.

20. Do you know of an innovative practice to promote integration and inclusion in your city/region/country that in your opinion could benefit other EU countries?

The LABOUR-INT actions under the LABOUR-INT 2 project and the UnionMigrantNet and Cities for Integration project are taking place in regions and cities such as Athens, Liège, Tyrol, Naples, Milan, Trieste.

21. How could you (or your organisation) contribute to possible new initiatives on the integration and social inclusion of migrants?

The ETUC would be ready to support any new possible initiatives on the integration and inclusion of migrants, through dialogue and concrete commitment thanks to the support of our member organisations and UnionMigrantNet members providing information and assistance to migrants irrespective of their residence status.

Governance and cooperation

22. How important is it in your view to build partnerships between different stakeholders in the work on integration and social inclusion of migrants?

- Not important at all
- Not important
- Neutral
- Important
- Very important

23. How important is it in your view to have a strong cooperation between the EU, national and local level on integration and social inclusion of migrants?

- Not important at all
- Not important
- Neutral
- Important
- Very important

24. If you wish, please share examples of good practices of successful partnership /cooperation in the field of integration and social inclusion of migrants.

The LABOUR-INT project brought concrete results towards a better integration of migrants and refugees in the European labour market through a multi-stakeholder approach, involving trade unions, employers' organisations, chambers of commerce, local authorities and civil society organisations.

25. How important is it in your view to take into consideration the specific situation of migrant women, men and children in integration and inclusion policies?

- Not important at all
- Not important
- Neutral
- Important
- Very important

26. Could you suggest a good practice in integration and inclusion taking into account the specific needs of migrants in all their diversity (sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation)?

27. How important is it in your view that public services (e.g. schools, healthcare, employment services etc.) take into account the specific needs of migrants and people with a migrant background?

- Not important at all
- Not important
- Neutral
-

Important

Very important

28. Do you have suggestions for actions that should be prioritised through social inclusion policies to remove barriers to migrants' participation in the labour market?

Social inclusion can only be achieved if people have decent jobs. To uphold minimum labour standards, it is essential that the labour complaints and monitoring mechanisms protect all workers, regardless of status and without any risk of immigration enforcement. Actions to provide information on workers' rights, supporting organising and access to complaint mechanisms should be considered in each initiative promoting labour market integration, to ensure that all workers are empowered to enforce their workers' rights.

More efforts are needed on the employers side, actions should therefore aim at raising awareness. Few companies know about the opportunities and advantages to host for internships or employ migrants and refugees. Employers have a great need to be reassured when they employ migrants and be informed on the legislation, assisted in managing the employment relationship. On the other side, migrants need support and confidence to start seeking for a job or be involved in a training programme.

Asylum and Migration policies, both at EU and national level, have a direct impact on migrant's integration. Asylum rules should also introduce protection for those who already have a job or have participated in integration programmes. Actions should aim at mitigating the effects of belated labour markets access by promoting trainings, apprenticeships and skills recognition.

29. In your view, what should the EU do to ensure education policies are inclusive of the needs of migrants and people with a migrant background?

The report 'Promoting effective integration of migrants and refugees in education' as part of the project "European Sectoral Social Partners in Education promoting effective integration of migrants and refugees in education" of ETUCE and EFFE, calls for more support-based inclusive policies and practices, the active use of first language as a vehicle for learning, allocation of additional resources and professional development of teachers and more tailored models for promoting cooperation with parents, the local and broader communities.

<https://www.csee-etuice.org/en/projects/migration-education/3453-introduction>

30. Are specific measures needed to address the impact of discrimination on the integration of migrants as a whole, or specific groups such as LGBTI migrants, women, or children? If so, which ones?

Measures are needed to address the impact of discrimination to the integration and inclusion of all migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. In the context of the COVID crisis, women migrant workers have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic. They are on the frontlines, working in essential but low-paid and vulnerable jobs, as domestic and care workers, nurses, cleaners, placing them at high risk of exposure to coronavirus. Women migrant workers already have to grapple with multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and inequalities, gender-specific, restrictions in migration policies, insecure forms of labour, racism, and xenophobia.

In particular, women migrant domestic workers are at particular risk of losing their jobs due to COVID-19 as they tend to be in informal employment, often unregistered and excluded from labour protections. The lack of

assistance and protection mechanisms for women migrant domestic workers, their social isolation due to language and cultural differences, and the limited availability of accurate information heighten their vulnerabilities during the pandemic.

If you wish to submit a more detailed contribution, please upload a document here.

The maximum file size is 1 MB

Only files of the type pdf,txt,doc,docx,odt,rtf are allowed

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