



The role of EU policy in advancing migrant women's labour market integration

Zarifa Barkatullah

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Preface

The EU has expanded in depth and breadth across a range of member states with greatly different makeups, making the European integration process more differentiated. *EU Differentiation, Dominance and Democracy* (EU3D) is a research project that specifies the conditions under which differentiation is politically acceptable, institutionally sustainable, and democratically legitimate; and singles out those forms of differentiation that engender dominance.

EU3D brings together around 50 researchers in 10 European countries and is coordinated by ARENA Centre for European Studies at the University of Oslo. The project is funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme, Societal Challenges 6: Europe in a changing world – Inclusive, innovative and reflective societies (2019-2023).

The present report is part of the project's work on EU-external differentiation (work package 3) and usefully links that up to the project's focus on opinions, debates and reforms (work package 4). In the report, which focuses on so-called third country nationals, Zarifa Barkatullah examines the EU's policy frameworks and instruments for labour market integration of migrant women. Barkatullah finds a gap between the EU's principles and ambitions and Member States' integration policies. This is important for understanding third country citizens' rights and status, and for understanding patterns of structural dominance across the EU.

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EU3D Scientific Coordinator

Abstract

The terms 'immigration', 'asylum', 'refugees' have dominated recent discourse and scholarship pertaining to the European Union (EU). It is hardly surprising given the 2015 refugee crisis and the subsequent rise in the number of third-country nationals arriving in the EU as a result. On the other hand, recent trends in EU demographics show a rise in the ageing population, which is causing an increase in the labour work force dependency rate. This report aims to look at one critical aspect of this crisis that is the labour market integration of a particular demographic of third-country nationals, namely migrant women. Given the low rate of labour market integration of migrant women combined with rising immigration and ageing population of Europe, this report researches the role of EU policies in facilitating the labour market integration of migrant women.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The terms ‘immigration’, ‘asylum’, ‘refugees’ have dominated recent discourse and scholarship pertaining to the European Union (EU). It is hardly surprising given the 2015 refugee crisis and the subsequent rise in the number of third-country nationals arriving in the EU as a result. This report aims to look at one critical aspect of this crisis, that is the labour market integration of a particular demographic of third-country nationals, namely migrant women. Given the low rate of labour market integration of migrant women combined with rising immigration and ageing population of Europe, this report researches the role of EU policies in facilitating the labour market integration of migrant women.

In 2015, approximately 4.7 million people immigrated to one of the 28 EU Member States (Eurostat, 2017). In 2017, although the number decreased to 4.4 million, a total of 22 out of 28 Member States reported more immigration than emigration (Eurostat, 2019). Immigration has gone up significantly over the past few years, and this topic has received a considerable amount of attention on the academic front as well as in the media (Van Wolleghem, 2019). Migration is intrinsically tied to integration, the immediate aftermath of what follows granting admission for third-country nationals into the EU. In particular, the labour market integration of migrants is especially relevant today, given both the push

and pull factors surrounding migration. On the one hand, conflicts, climate displacement, and economic opportunities are driving migrants to the EU. On the other hand, there are labour shortages with an increasingly ageing population and other demographic trends in Europe. Therefore, successful labour market integration of migrants is beneficial for the society and economy of countries accepting migrants, and it is cogent to look at the EU's role in helping the Member States achieve that goal.

Currently, the numbers show that third-country nationals are not integrating into the labour market at the same rate as natives, especially female immigrants. The majority of (working-age) third-country nationals residing in the EU are in employment (55 per cent); however, they lag compared to host-country citizens (68 per cent), and this disparity grows in the case of women (European Commission, OECD, 2018). According to Eurostat, in 2018, 54 per cent of migrant women in the EU were employed compared to 68 per cent native women whereas 73 per cent of migrant men in the EU had jobs compared to 78 per cent of native men (Eurostat, 2019). This data shows the significant discrepancy of 14 per cent faced between migrant women and native women in the EU versus the 5 per cent gap between migrant men and native men (Eurostat, 2019). It also demonstrates the large difference between migrant men and women entering the labour market, and this is because migrant women have to deal with challenges that come from being both a woman and a migrant. Therefore they face twice the amount of disadvantages which has been established by previous research (Li, 2018).

The EU has limited competence over integration; it is the domain of the Member States. Domestic policies and programmes guide how integration occurs on a national level. However, in 2010 the Treaty of Lisbon gave the EU legal competence on the matter of integration, and over the years the EU's role in this area has developed in many aspects. Policies, exchange forums and networks, financial instruments (funds) are some of the tools the EU has used to not only build a common integration framework but also to incentivise the Member States to implement cohesive integration policies across the region. Integration, therefore, is a matter of multi-level governance, and the EU has a significant part in not only the development of policies but also actively facilitating the labour market integration of migrant women through financial instruments such as funding and other

integration tools. The next section goes over why this is an issue that requires consistent attention and progressive action.

1.2 Problem Statement and Research Question

As stated in the introduction, the statistics demonstrate the low rate of female immigrants entering the labour market, especially when compared to both migrant men and native women. The European Commission's 2019 demographics report states that increasing labour force participation (LFP) rates is the best measure to mitigate the economic challenges of an ageing population, with a heavy emphasis on improving female LFP (Lutz et al., 2019). Higher female LFP rates will positively affect the labour force size, and the aim should be to steer towards a Swedish model where men and women have around the same LFP rates (Lutz et al., 2019). Therefore, it is highly relevant and important to introduce measures and programmes specifically aimed at integrating women into the labour market, bearing in mind the unique set of challenges they are faced with and working to accommodate them.

Considering the current rate of employment for migrant women in the EU, and with increasing numbers of immigrants and an ageing population, successful labour market integration of migrant women in the EU remains a crucial issue. I want to find out the policy framework, formulation, and response on an EU level. My analysis will focus on answering the following research questions:

On the EU level, how have policy frameworks and instruments for labour market integration of migrant women developed?

This report aims to contribute to the current knowledge and research on this topic by using the primary research question as a guide, along with three objectives that will serve to augment the analysis. The objectives are the following:

1. To explore and examine the current common facilitation (via policies or financial instruments) on an EU level regarding migrant women's labour market integration in the Member States.

2. With the help of theory to better understand the formulation, implementation and ideology of Europeanization and the EU policies in place related to this topic.
3. To determine potential gaps or missing links in policy on an EU level that could be addressed to improve the case for migrant women, and thus provide recommendations as a result.

1.3 Outline of the Report

This research will be conducted primarily through an analysis of EU legislation, policy developments and frameworks from 2015 to 2019 to gain a better understanding of the EU's role and European perspective on addressing the challenges and offering solutions for the migrant women's labour market integration. This time frame was chosen because the surge in numbers due to the refugee crisis during this time led to a reorganisation of priorities not only for immigration laws but also integration management as the EU dealt with the arrival of unprecedented numbers of migrants. Although I will focus on legislation from this time frame, to capsulise the current EU response to the labour market integration of migrant women, I will also look at the historical background and development of an integration framework on an EU level.

Chapter 2 will provide an overview of the problem background by using the current data available on demographic trends and changes in the EU along with Member States' current response to the labour market integration of migrant women. This chapter will also look at the overall EU framework on integration with its historical and institutional context which allows for proper interpretation of the role of the organisation along with its competence, limitations, and influence. This, combined with a literature review on the topic of migrant women's labour market integration, will provide an important compendium about the key elements being assessed.

Chapter 3 presents the grand theories used to analyse the findings and understand European integration and integration in times of crises from three different schools of thought, namely neofunctionalism, liberal intergovernmentalism and postfunctionalism. Chapter 4 outlines the methodology that will be used, and chapter 5 presents the document analysis that was conducted to answer the research question. Chapter 6

discusses the findings from the analysis and interprets them using the integration theories. This section also provides recommendations based on the analysis and ends with the conclusion.

Before moving on to chapter 2, it is important to establish the definition of a 'migrant' that will be used throughout this report.

Migrants: In a global context, a migrant can be described as an individual who is outside their country of origin of which they are nationals, and who has lived in a foreign state for over a year regardless of the causes (forced migration versus economic migration) and the means (regular or irregular) that were used to migrate. According to the European Commission's official description, in an EU context, a migrant is any individual who:

1. establishes their usual residence in the territory of an EU/EFTA Member State for a period that is, or is expected to be, of at least 12 months, having previously been usually resident in another EU/EFTA Member State or a third country; or
2. having previously been usually resident in the territory of the EU/EFTA Member State, ceases to have their usual residence in the EU/EFTA Member State for a period that is, or is expected to be, of at least 12 months.

(European Commission, 1998)

For this report however, the term migrant will be used for individuals who are not citizens of any of the EU/EFTA Member States (i.e. third country nationals) who hold a residence permit, and came to the EU region either as an economic migrant or through refugee status acceptance and resettlement. The reason I am excluding EU citizens moving from the Member State in which they are nationals to another member state from my definition of a migrant is that the policy paper, documents and action plans I will be looking at are generally aimed at the integration of third-country nationals (TNCs). Also, migrants from one EU state to another have the freedom to move, work and settle across the Union Member states due to their EU citizenship and do not require drastic integration measures in place to help them settle down. Henceforth in this report, I will be referring to this definition when using the terms migrant, third-country nationals, newcomers, and refugees wherever appropriate.

Chapter 2

Background

2.1 Why Labour Market Integration is Important

Out of the 4.7 million immigrants in 2015, 50 per cent were nationals of non-EU countries (Eurostat, 2017), and in 2017, 2.4 million were citizens of non-EU countries (Eurostat, 2019). According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) data portal, recent trends indicate that Europe migration has become much more diverse regarding the origin of migrants. Migration affects countries in a myriad of long-term and short-term ways depending on labour market shortages, political culture, and the type of migrant entering the country, such as an economic migrant or a refugee. The World Bank (2019) reported that short-term costs of migration are more visible and immediate than the long-term benefits. Generally, it takes time for countries to experience the benefits of migration. The advantages to the host nation are also more subtle and dispersed throughout the region, in comparison to immediate short-term costs such as providing benefits to help new refugees settle in or wage decline and competition for a particular group of workers with the same skill portfolio as immigrants. However, immigration can produce positive outcomes for host nations relatively faster depending on how quickly the newcomers are integrated and able to find employment along with how they complement the existing workforce (World Bank, 2019). Similarly,

according to Jaumotte et al. (2016), while migration might bring social and political challenges for host nations (especially if there is a failure to implement proper and timely integration), they find it might also bring long-term benefits such as higher GDP per capita for recipient countries.

This is not limited to one type of migrant worker either as both high and low skilled workers are shown to contribute to the GDP increase per capita, especially if they complement the local workforce with their skillset in the case of lower-skilled immigrants. For this to occur, though, it is crucial for efficient labour market integration of immigrants (Jaumotte et al., 2016). The integration process comes with its own set of challenges and is a long, arduous process, in particular, without a robust structure of policies in place for integration. According to OECD (2015), integrating refugees into labour markets yields more expenses when compared to integrating economic migrants. Moreover, the integration success is highly dependent upon well-established policies that provide language learning assistance, emphasise on education and job training, and grant access to the sociocultural infrastructure.

2.2 Push and Pull Factors

Migration trends have both push (conflicts, economic opportunities etc. driving migrants to the EU) and pull (labour shortages in the EU in light of ageing population and other demographic trends) factors. Along with immigration numbers, the ageing population is also rising in the EU. Over the past few decades, ageing has been a significant trend in the European Union (Eurostat, 2020). Due to modern healthcare facilities and improved standard of living, the average life expectancy currently in the EU is about 81 years (Lutz et al., 2019). This can be considered an accomplishment for a developed nation and while it merits praise, an increasingly high number of ageing people in the overall population contributes to financial challenges such as increasing the age dependency ratio and reducing labour force participation rate. EU-28's old-age dependency ratio is projected to almost double from 30.5 per cent in 2018 to 57.3 per cent by 2100 (Eurostat, 2020).

Several factors come into play when discussing solutions to this issue, such as not only increasing the labour force but increasing labour force

participation and reducing gender disparities in the labour market. Both these solutions are intricately tied with successful migrant integration.

A 2019 European Commission report titled 'Demographic Scenarios for the EU' focused on the EU's ageing population and the shortage of workers found that 'integration dynamics have a significant impact on the EU's future labour force size' (Lutz et al., 2019). Increasing the number of migrants might increase the labour force size, but the focus should be on the labour force participation rate and labour-force dependency ratio (LFDR). The LFDR informs us about the number of working versus non-working people in the country, and a higher ratio equates to more challenges for the economy. In 2015, the EU's LFDR was 1.05, which meant that there were around 105 inactive people for every 100 employed (Lutz et al., 2019). With the current rate of participation remaining the same, projections find that LFDR would reach 1.36 in 2060 (Lutz et al., 2019). They would vary by the Member States depending on life expectancy and fertility rates. Still, overall projections show an increase in the LFDR ratio unless significant changes are made in the labour force participation (LFP) rates. Under an equalisation scenario where Member State-specific LFP rates of women match those of men by 2060, the ratio would stabilise at about 1.2 (Lutz et al., 2019). A Swedish scenario (all Member States gradually converge to the LFP rate in present-day Sweden by 2060) then the ratio would stabilise back to around 1.05 (Lutz et al., 2019). Essentially this demonstrates that a steady but realistic growth (as it is already Sweden's reality) of LFP over time could mitigate the economic challenges caused by an ever-increasing ageing EU population, specifically lowering the LFDR ratio.

As a result, for countries to maximise the potential impact of immigration on lowering the LFDR, any increase in immigration must come hand in hand with effective integration policies that pave the way for migrants' access to the labour market and reduce gender disparity between men and women. Increasing female LFP and also introducing longer productive work-life balance could stabilise both the size of the labour force and the LFDR (Lutz et al., 2019). If high migration inflows are not combined with efficient integration, then the increase in population along with decreasing participation rates could lead to a scenario that is worse than a case with medium or a low number of immigrants.

The European Commission demographics report states that increasing LFP rates is the best measure to mitigate the economic challenges of an ageing population, with a heavy emphasis on improving female LFP (Lutz et al., 2019). More female LFP rates will positively affect the labour force size, and the aim should be to steer towards a Swedish model where men and women have around the same LFP rates (Lutz et al., 2019).

Therefore, it is highly relevant and important to introduce measures and programmes specifically aimed at integrating women into the labour market, bearing in mind the unique set of challenges they are faced with and working to accommodate them.

2.3 Main Barriers to Migrant Women's Labour Market Integration in the EU

Most of the time integration of immigrants is approached holistically and national policy plans do not distinguish between migrant men and women despite their unique circumstances. Disparities are addressed from an anti-discrimination approach, and even gender equality legislation does not take into account that migrant women require a distinct category due to the dual nature of their challenges (Li, 2018). Overall, there is a distinct lack of policy approaches for migrant women, and most of these specific integration efforts take place through NGOs and civil society organisations that fill the policy vacuum by providing the needed integration support to female immigrants (Li, 2018).

The statistics show that migrant women have lower employment rates compared to migrant men and native women, but why are they falling behind? In order to understand how to increase the labour market integration of migrant women, it is important to understand the barriers they face. Research has found that immigrant women frequently have a 'double disadvantage' being both a woman and a migrant (Liebig and Tronstad, 2018). This causes them to face more obstacles in terms of access to several key integration services, including but not limited to education, job training, language courses and social activities in comparison to their male counterparts (Agatiello and Humer, 2018). In the EU, migrant women have lower employment rates and are also more likely to be overqualified for the jobs they do have (Agatiello and Humer, 2018). 54

per cent of migrant women in the EU are employed, which is 14 per cent less than native women and 19 per cent less than migrant men (Li, 2018). The number drops lower when it specifically concerns refugee women in the EU, with an employment rate of 45 per cent (Li, 2018).

These disparities show there are additional barriers migrant women have to overcome. It is important to identify and tackle the unique challenges migrant women face to improve their labour market integration so they can contribute to increasing the EU's LPFR. These barriers can start before arrival as well depending on the type of migrant. A female economic migrant is more likely to integrate quicker by either having a job before she arrived or finding one at a faster rate than a refugee woman, whose primary concern revolves around their legal status, family and the right to stay (TNS Qual+, 2011).

Some of the barriers before arrival are related to the woman's immigration status. Integration challenges start from that immigration status because while migrant men arrive on their own usually, women tend to join them later on as part of family reunification (Agatiello and Humer, 2018). This limits them in many ways. For instance due to this integration policies might not target them on an individual basis but rather on their status as a family member, which can result in exclusion or hindrances when it comes to accessing key training, skills assessments and integration support on an individual level (Li, 2018). A woman coming into the country by joining a refugee spouse might not have access to introduction programmes and have lower chances of receiving mainstream public services (Liebig and Tronstad, 2018). This not only leads to lower employment chances but also social exclusion due to primarily being concerned with taking care of the home as their husbands work as the breadwinner for the family. Dependency on their spouses springs up from this type of arrangement.

Family reunification visas usually end up making women dependant economically and legally on their partners. This not only reduces their chances of finding a job and a right to employment but also forces them to remain in abusive relationships due to financial necessity and concern about losing their residency status if they left their spouse (Agatiello and Humer, 2018). Divorce can lead to a woman becoming undocumented, which in turn causes her to lose access to many fundamental rights such

as healthcare, education, access to labour market due to her now uncertain immigration status as a result of the breakdown of her marriage (Agatiello and Humer, 2018).

Hence specific migrant women face distinct disadvantages regarding integration before they even arrive in their new country, showing a change in integration measures needs to be implemented at the immigration status stage to tackle gender disparity issues adequately. After arrival migrant women face a new set of barriers in comparison to their male counterparts, including but not limited to learning the native language, balancing family obligations and work, sexism from internal and external communities and cultural discrimination.

Language is one of the key components of integration into the host society, given how it affects every aspect of life from education to work to social capital. This is why many introductory programmes focus on intensive language courses to ensure newcomers learn the language as soon as possible. As established earlier, due to poor access to these initial integration services and measures, some migrant women (especially refugee women) might not have the opportunity to learn at the same rate as migrant men. This poor grasp of the native language can, therefore, act as a major barrier to not just labour market integration but overall integration (Agatiello and Humer, 2018). It is interesting to note however that evidence in a few European countries has shown that women who took part in language courses had better grades on average than their male counterparts (Liebig and Tronstad, 2018).

Family obligations also act as a barrier for migrant women. If they are not economic migrants, most likely they came to the country with a family reunification visa or as a refugee. Childbearing can also push back entry into the labour market. Refugee women, in particular, have higher fertility rates, when compared with other migrant women or native women and, on average, have higher chances of becoming pregnant within a year of arrival (Liebig and Tronstad, 2018). When comparing refugee women with other migrant and local women, the gender gap in employment is highest during the childbearing years between 25 and 35 years, and refugee women have their highest employment rate at around 40 to 50 years, much later than native women (Liebig and Tronstad, 2018).

Refugee women are not the only ones affected by family obligations as migrant women also face these challenges especially given the lack of access to childcare services and financial help, and even lack of proper knowledge on how to access the services in place (Agatiello and Humer, 2018).

All these factors negatively affect migrant women's employment chances and push back their integration into labour markets. Additionally, they also have to deal with legal barriers such as spouses granted entry under family reunification schemes are legally restricted from employment access for sometimes up to a year (Agatiello and Humer, 2018). This long period of waiting and being out of the workforce can not only hurt overall integration prospects but also result in a loss of relevant skills as the market structure, and industries develop and move forward. The skills they do possess often do not receive validation, even though they are still of value for European labour markets (Agatiello and Humer, 2018).

Cultural barriers and stigma associated with working women can also lead to delays or reduction in labour market integration. If countries of origin had low female participation in the economy and negative association with women working, then these ideas can persist once they come into the host country (Liebig and Tronstad, 2018). For example, in Syria, female participation in the economy stood below 15 per cent in 2011 (Barslund and Ludolph, 2018). This is where aspects of assimilation and multiculturalism can play a crucial role in integration matters because a balanced approach which acknowledges and respects the migrant's values along with calling for reducing inequality and gender disparities is required to deal with these specific issues. Sexism and discrimination need to be addressed through education and meaningful dialogue rather than alienation of a whole group of people for differences in beliefs.

Additionally, even if they overcome these challenges, migrant women may face discrimination when trying to enter the host country's labour markets (Agatiello and Humer, 2018). Preferences can be given to citizens over migrants for reasons not related to skills or performance but rather based on ethnic or religious background. Even after entering the labour markets, migrant women do not build career paths over time as they tend to work in industries low-skilled positions and are therefore employed for short-term contracts or part time jobs (Agatiello and Humer, 2018). These

industries do offer opportunities for migrant women to be employed, but the jobs are usually informal and insecure with limited rights and protections in comparison to other professionalised sectors (Agatiello and Humer, 2018). Improving working conditions and building a steady career path would help migrant women gain a strong foothold in employment, and along with that research has shown how secondary schooling goes a long way to increase employment chances (Liebig and Tronstad, 2018).

2.4 Common EU Policy Framework on Migrant Integration

It is evident how necessary a proper, cohesive integration system is for a society accepting immigrants, especially to accomplish the goal of increasing labour force participation rates of migrant women to mitigate future LFP shortage issues. Against this political backdrop, successfully integrating female immigrants to Europe's economic, cultural and social structures is vital. Therefore it makes sense for the EU to not only have a common policy in place for an integration framework but also to provide incentives and support for migrant women in particular due to the disparity and extra challenges they face.

This section will briefly cover the history of the development of a common integration framework on an EU level and then look at the focus given to the labour market integration of migrant women specifically.

Development of an integration framework for migrants at the EU Level

The entry into force of the Treaty of Amsterdam Treaty in May 1999 was a significant turn in the EU's commitment to cooperate in the department of Justice and Home Affairs, and develop a common policy for migration and asylum. Although the Amsterdam Treaty did not explicitly refer to integration or an integration policy, article 13 stated, '[...] the Council, acting unanimously on a proposal from the Commission, and after consulting the European Parliament, may take appropriate action to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation' (European Parliament, 1999). The European Council gathered in Tampere five months later in October 1999 for a special meeting specifically addressed integration, calling for

fair treatment of third-country nationals legally residing in member states and ‘a more vigorous integration policy, that should aim at granting third-country nationals the rights and obligations comparable to those of EU citizens. It should also enhance non-discrimination in economic, social and cultural life and develop measures against racism and xenophobia’ (European Parliament, 1999).

Integration, as a subset of immigration, has transnational stakes, substantiating the EU’s involvement in this policy realm. However, the EU did not possess formal competence on the issue of integration, and it was considered a domain of the state (Van Wolleghem, 2019). Member states were hesitant to compromise on that domain, yet there was a call for a cohesive common policy. So with that narrow space, a policy of soft law took shape, guided by soft law instruments rather than directives (Van Wolleghem, 2019). Soft law essentially refers to guidelines, policy declarations or principles for conduct; they are rules that are not directly enforceable or strictly binding but do carry legal significance in terms of setting standards or recommendations. Thus the framework would apply a ‘quasi-open method of coordination’, differing from traditional EU decision-making procedures (Carrera, 2009). This would allow the Member States to retain exclusive competence due to the flexibility afforded by the soft law. The focus would shift to EU-level coordination by exchanging information on integration policies, EU-wide evaluation mechanisms and the use of soft policy instruments among the Member States (Carrera, 2009). Hence several policy instruments were developed and adopted over the years as an integration framework began to form.

The European Court of Auditors (2018) breakdowns integration development into the following periods:

- Tampere Programme 1999-2004, the timeframe that called for standard immigration policy as well as a more robust and cohesive integration policy for EU migrants. Key developments include ‘National Contact Points on Integration’, ‘Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy’.
- Hague Programme 2005-2009, the timeframe where top priorities and common indicators for integration were laid out that focused on evaluation and adoption of a holistic approach at all levels (EU,

national, and local). The EU also received a legal basis for competence in integration through the Lisbon treaty. Key developments include 'Common Agenda for Integration', 'European Integration Fund', 'Treaty of Lisbon', 'European Integration Forum'.

- Stockholm Programme 2010-2014, the timeframe that focused on enhancing the monitoring and evaluation of the core indicators and further development of existing priorities. Key developments include 'European Web Site on Integration', 'European Agenda for the Integration of Migrants'.
- Strategic Guidelines 2015-2019, migration flows increase with record-high numbers and influx of refugees, causing a crisis that led to heavy emphasis from the EU on actively pursuing the integration of third-country nationals in Member States by developing an action plan to address pressing challenges. Key developments include 'Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund', 'Action Plan on the Integration of Third-Country Nationals'.

The Common Basic Principles (CBPs), the cornerstone of the EU framework for integration, was very general in nature and covered each topic in a broad sense. Although they mentioned diversity and inclusiveness, when it came to employment (the third CBP talks about the importance of employment for migrants), there were no specific references to migrant women in particular and labour market integration was addressed to all migrants without gender specifics.

After the development and adoption of the CBPs, the Commission was focused on how to put the principles into effect. As a result, in September 2005 'A Common Agenda for Integration', was presented by the Commission. The agenda worked as the strategy document providing a framework for implementing the CBPs, through the support of various both national and EU-level mechanisms and instruments intended to facilitate interactions between relevant integration stakeholders and actors. The Agenda went into detailed descriptions regarding the components of the CBPs, by not only describing what each principle represented but also suggesting actions to strengthen the implementation of the CBPs at national and EU level. The Agenda also highlighted gender,

stating that ‘a gender perspective should be incorporated into all relevant actions’ (European Commission, 2005).

Therefore, when discussing labour market integration, and third CBP, in particular, which talks about employment, the Agenda brought migrant women into focus. It stated, ‘the Commission stimulates and supports Member States’ efforts in employment, social affairs and equal opportunities, stressing the gender perspective to fully utilise the potential of immigrant women in the labour market’ (European Commission, 2005).

Other integration documents such as the 2010 Zaragoza Declaration and 2011 European Agenda for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals also emphasised the need to focus on migrant women’s labour market integration and their disproportionate hurdles.

Overall, EU documents have brought in the gender perspective in the policy development and promotion of integration. However, many Member States have failed to implement these measures nationally. The next chapter on theory expands on this topic of European integration and disintegration and why the Member States might be compelled at times to do one or the other, especially in the context of a crisis.

Chapter 3

Theoretical Framework

EU governance is broad and complex, and no single approach based on a selected solitary event, actor, or decision-making process can fully explain the concept (Schmidt, 2018). This applies when it comes to the matter of European integration as well, where different theories align with outcomes of different events. For example, the Euro crisis and the migration crisis both affected EU integration, but had opposite results. Whereas the former led to deeper integration in an effort to save the Euro, the latter presented a rift for the Member States' in the form of internal and external policies and resulted in lower cooperation and unity (Hooghe and Marks, 2019).

Thus with time as new challenges appear and both the EU and the Member States develop, so do the theoretical approaches that deal with EU integration. Schmidt (2018) stated that the challenge for EU scholars when answering the question 'who steers integration' was to ascertain the comparative usefulness of different theoretical approaches while keeping in mind that their range of focus will vary given their distinct analytic frameworks. Each theory will approach the issue from a distinct angle. Therefore the recommendation for academics examining a theoretical issue or answering a research question was to remain open to a pluralism

of approaches, even as each approach was tested to assess their validity for the particular situation (Schmidt, 2018).

This report considers the pluralism approach when analysing the EU's roles in the labour market integration of migrant women. This is because the migration crisis and the consequent levels of integration and disintegration that took place in its wake is a multifaceted phenomenon, and each theory will have a different perspective to offer when explaining the outcome of the crisis. All three of these grand theories that have their intellectual roots based around European integration (Hooghe and Marks, 2019). The schools of thought discussed in this section are neither mutually exclusive nor one big composite theory. Rather, there is consensus in some areas and dissensus in others between the theories when addressing integration, especially during the time of a crisis. This broader understanding of the issue allows a more holistic interpretation of the problem and the response that took place. Therefore, the main analysis is built around three grand theories: neofunctionalism, intergovernmentalism and postfunctionalism.

Neofunctionalism divides the state up into components of relevant societal actors that work towards their interests. In this case then in the international arena states will not be competing in a game to secure vital interests such as survival or economic benefits, rather international relations becomes an interplay of societal actors (Hooghe and Marks, 2019). Neofunctionalists thus assume that regional integration will take place if there are groups of significant societal actors within or among states that perceive supranational organisation to be more beneficial than domestic ones in securing their interests (Haas, 2004). This regional integration can open doors towards further integration in other policies, a spillover effect of sorts. Neofunctionalists give particular attention to supranational activism, and how supranational actors can cause further policy spillover by pushing for more integration agreements and appropriating the place of national bureaucrats in domestic policies (Hooghe and Marks, 2019). This process may not be smooth and have its share of ups and downs. Still, the assumption is that over time, with the combination of increasing spillover and growing supranational power, integration will go up. Therefore, in the neofunctionalist view, path dependence determines the trends of integration, as the previously

established events of integration have a limiting effect on options for cooperation or disintegration for the present and future. Factors such as sunk and exit costs, supranational activism and authority, endogenous interdependence, barriers in decision making or policy changing processes all contribute to path dependence for integration (Schimmelfennig, 2018). Neofunctionalism would then explain the different integration outcomes when any crisis occurs based on the level of transnational interdependence and supranational capacity in the context of the crisis (Schimmelfennig, 2018).

In contrast, intergovernmentalism sees European integration as a result of states seeking to maximise mutually beneficial gains (Hooghe and Marks, 2019). Instead of societal actors, it is national governments that are the main players. Liberal intergovernmentalism rejects the notion of zero-sum game of state interests, and supports the idea that economic interdependence creates gains for cooperative states (Hooghe and Marks, 2019). Interdependence leads to the formation of international institutions. States may agree to cooperate, but unlike neofunctionalism, liberal intergovernmentalism views this cooperation under the exclusive domain of national leaders (Hooghe and Marks, 2019). Functional interests (such as security or economic gains) drive this cooperation, and intergovernmental bargaining is used as a means to achieve these goals. Bargaining is shaped by asymmetrical interdependence as national governments with the least to lose are best situated to determine the conditions of the bargain, particularly if any decision reached has to be unanimous. The higher the value of the bargain, the more inclined governments will be to invest in institutional response in order to stabilise bargains and hinder policy revision (Moravcsik 1998).

Liberal intergovernmentalist thus anticipates that in order to maximise integration gains, governments will transfer certain competences to supranational powers (Schimmelfennig 2018). However, the level of integration will differ based on the reason or issue behind cooperation (Hooghe and Marks, 2019). Liberal intergovernmentalism would then explain the different integration outcomes when any crisis occurs based on the variation in intergovernmental bargaining structures (Schimmelfennig, 2018).

Neofunctionalism and intergovernmentalism differ in some aspects but overall conceptualise European integration as a cooperative process

driven by the need to secure interests between governments and institutions. Postfunctionalism, on the other hand, views European integration as a 'conflictual process borne out of discordant belief systems' (Hooghe and Marks, 2019). A type of supranational reconfiguration of jurisdiction that creates a national divide in terms of culture, identity, and values. This approach emphasises the turbulent possibility of clashes between functionality and identity. Human behaviour is influenced by many factors. Public opinion scholars consider economic preferences as one of those several variables, and one that is perhaps less influential than other factors such religion, racial background, or communal identity (Hooghe and Marks, 2019). The name itself, 'postfunctionalist', stresses scepticism about functionality being the primary reason driver of decision-making processes or outcomes. It is based on ideological contestation in domestic policies, and the role of politicisation of integration matters.

Politicisation refers to the rising influence of European institutions and politics, increasing the number of stakeholders involved, and the national divide concerning European integration (De Wilde, 2016). Heavy politicisation does not necessarily lead to only one type of integration outcome under other schools of thought, but postfunctionalism presumes politicisation will make Euro-sceptic citizens hold on firmly to national identities, boost the popularity of Euro-sceptic parties, and diminish general advocacy for EU integration (Schimmelfennig, 2017). Postfunctionalism explains this process by highlighting where the debate takes place and how integration influences the conflict's structure. For example, the arena or platform where issues are debated matters as mass politicisation of elections, referendums, and party primaries can pit national identity against integration by presenting the two on opposing fronts (Hooghe and Marks, 2019). Similarly, the level to which European integration affects national identity issues in terms of reforming domestic policies is important. Research among voters shows that those strongly connected to national ideology and identity are more likely to be Euro-sceptics (Hooghe and Marks, 2019). It can lead to disruption of moderate paths and create nationalism that aims to limit supranational intervention for solving the conflict. Postfunctionalism would thus explain the different integration outcomes when any crisis occurs based on the variation in national mass politicisation. (Schimmelfennig, 2017).

Each theory has distinct frameworks guiding its approach to understanding European integration or disintegration during a crisis. When applied to the migration crisis the theories interpret this event based on the basic premises they are built on, and it helps understand not only the variation in outcomes for different crises but also the different response from the Member States to the migration crisis. Depending on the state of national politics, some governments were aligned more towards neofunctionalism or liberal intergovernmentalism, and others towards a postfunctionalist approach. The role of the EU in advancing migrant women's labour market integration is one aspect of the overall European integration taking place when the EU influences national programmes and policies for third-country nationals to become part of the host country's society. Therefore, the responses to EU policy on migrant women's integration in the Member States can be analysed with these three grand theories of integration.

The next chapter deals with the methodology of how the document analysis will be conducted to answer the research question for this report.

Chapter 4

Methodology

4.1 Main Methodology: Qualitative Document Analysis

The main methods used to conduct research for this report is qualitative document analysis (QDA). QDA is a research method that is used for meticulously and systematically analysing written documents (Wach, 2013). QDA in political science is used to conduct an unbiased and congruous analysis of written policies (Wach, 2013). I chose to do QDA on EU level policy documents that are concerned with integration of migrants in the Member States for two main reasons. Firstly to better understand the trends and development in the specific area of migrant women's labour market integration in the EU, and secondly to analyse the findings with my European integration theoretical framework to understand the current response of Member States to EU policies. Lastly, I plan to identify any potential gaps or changes that can be made to both policy plans and practices to achieve the goal of increasing employment rates for migrant women.

My QDA process consisted of five steps that were taken from Altheide's 'Process of Document Analysis' (1996). They are the following:

1. Determining inclusion parameters for document selection: When selecting the documents, I had to determine what factors would

guide the criteria of selection. This involved the type of document, the institute or organisation that released the document, the time it was published, the availability (access to public) and language considerations. The document types were categorised as policy or practice documents, the former being documents that laid out policy plans (such as agendas, action plans, communications, guides) and the latter being documents that evaluated the implementation of these policies or 'these policies in practice and action. This was done not only to determine how the EU was highlighting the issue of migrant women's labour market integration, but what practical effects these policies had. As far as institutes were concerned, official EU documents were the first source and then for the practice part I gathered assessments, evaluation or progress reports following up a certain policy document that reported on its results. They came from institutes both affiliated and not affiliated with the EU to gain a more holistic review instead of just selecting sources of reports from the EU. The timeframe for publication for the documents selected was between 2015 and 2019, which is within the selected time period this report will analyse. All of these documents were available online and open to the public, so I did not need to send any special request to access them, and all of them were available in English, as well as multiple other languages.

2. Collecting the documents: As stated in point 1, all of these documents were available online and open for the public, either in the EU website for integration for the policy papers and in the individual websites from the institutes the practice papers were downloaded from.
3. Articulating key areas of analysis: Both the policy and the practice documents were analysed with the barriers against migrant women's labour market integration in mind. The problem background describes the specific barriers migrant women face when it comes to labour market integration namely immigration status, arrival conditions, early introductory measures, family obligation and childbearing assistance, validation of skills, ethnic and cultural discrimination, and employment conditions. These seven themes were used as key areas of analysis to measure how

both policy and practice documents presented solutions to these prevalent barriers.

4. Document coding: After identifying the themes, text and passages related to each theme was highlighted and coded. The texts were analysed with their context and meaning in connection with the themes and then based on these codes the document was given a rating of 'beneficial', 'satisfactory', 'inadequate', or 'vague'. These four assessment categories helped identify which documents were beneficial, satisfactory, inadequate or vague in addressing the issue of migrant woman's labour market integration in the EU. The ratings each document received depend on whether or not they include clear strategic guidelines to implement policy and ways to act in the case of policy papers. These steps are crucial for a thorough QDA and considerably discerns the process of methodology from a simple 'control f' search of keywords for themes. For instance, for the theme of 'early introduction integration measures', instead of only finding references to a call for early introduction measures, I look at whether the document not only highlights the need for migrant women to enrol in introduction integration programmes but also outlines ways to put this plan into action by suggesting how to ensure more migrant women participate, how to increase accessibility, how to tackle current challenges they face in signing up etc. Therefore this way, the QDA is more effective than a scant reading of references.
5. Final analysis: This collected data was then analysed to evaluate the trends, themes, and responses of the EU policy to the integration of migrant women into labour markets. The findings and discussion chapters go in-depth about the results from the QDA with the theoretical framework in mind and offer recommendations before the conclusion.

4.2 Conceptualisations: Key terms and definitions

Given the multinational and cross-cultural nature of the topic of migrant women's labour market integration in the EU, it is very important to conceptualise key terms and definitions that will be used throughout the report. Many of these words hold different meanings in different contexts,

and in order to avoid confusion or misrepresentation, proper conceptualisations need to be established for general terms. A definition for the term migrant was already provided in chapter 1, and here are some of the other key concepts that will be discussed in this report:

Integration

Integration as a concept has been widely studied around the globe by various scholars, yet it does not have a single unifying definition. Robinson (1998) stated that ‘integration is a chaotic concept: a word used by many but understood differently by most. It is individualised, contested and contextual’. Given how the integration process is customised nationally by host countries, it makes sense that the word and concept carry different meanings and connotations. In an EU context, a common framework for integration was devised in November 2004 when the Justice and Home Affairs Council adopted the Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy in the EU. It is a list of eleven non-binding principles meant to help Member States construct effective integration policies. The document describes integration as ‘a dynamic, long-term, and continuous two-way process of mutual accommodation, not a static outcome’ (Council of European Union, 2004). Therefore, at its core integration is the interactions in different social, economic and cultural spheres between the newcomers and the locals. Scholarly definitions echo this sentiment and description from the Common Basic Principles (CBPs). Heckmann and Bosswick (2006) talk about this process, and state that once new individuals or groups are introduced into a system, it takes time to form social bonds and connections that develop and solidify into strong, meaningful relationships. Therefore, if the process is implemented successfully, the society can be described as an integrated one (Bosswick and Heckmann, 2006).

Employment is one of the most important aspects of integration. It is the most researched aspect of integration and also impacts many other parts of integration, such as meeting and developing a relationship with natives, building confidence and becoming self-reliant (Ager and Strang, 2008). Labour market integration is considered a key facilitator of overall integration in a new society.

Two Main Approaches to Integration

It is important to understand the different approaches to integration across the European Union in order to implement any given framework. The two mainstream approaches across EU Member States are: assimilation and multiculturalism (CSES, 2013). Concepts of assimilation and multiculturalism have dominated the discourse surrounding integration. While in practice integration does not tend to be as black and white as presented by these two polar concepts, they do present the foundational basis of how integration is expected to occur and unfold across different societies and countries. Both of these approaches encourage the integration of migrants into various aspects of the community: socially, culturally and economically, but go about that process in an opposite manner.

The classic assimilation approach can be understood as aiming to have a 'monocultural, homogenous society where the immigrant group assimilates with the host society culture and leaves behind their own, blending into the dominant group' (CSES, 2013). Immigrant groups are expected to adopt the norms, values and behavioural practices of the host society and under assimilation integration is viewed as a process of convergence of the migrants' various characteristics towards that of the receiving country (CSES, 2013). However, an approach might differ on a theoretical level versus practical implementation, for instance with assimilation it does not have to be measured via an immigrant becoming indistinguishable from a local in terms of culture, value and norms. The degree to which assimilation has been achieved can also be measured through assessing language skills, or socio-economic status of migrant population compared to natives, which can help determine whether policies in place are assisting immigrants settle in and build a better life.

In the multiculturalism approach, integration is a process where newcomers retain parts of their culture while embracing the new society they are in, and simultaneously the host society also accepts them and together a new heterogeneous society that represents all members is created, preserving different ethnic and cultural identities (CSES, 2013). Policies under this approach work to extend equal status to various groups by ensuring no single culture dominates (CSES, 2013). Sometimes, multiculturalism also permits legal recognition for special cases and

causes related to minority groups. For example, the Race Relations Act in the United Kingdom ensures migrants and ethnic minorities have the right for self-civic organisations (CSES, 2013). This type of regulation is related to the concept of diversity management which works to promote inclusion and build relationships between migrants and natives, and these policies are applicable in workplaces, schools, public institutions in countries where multiculturalism is prominent.

Some examples of the EU Member States that are inclined more towards assimilation are France, Italy and Spain, whereas Ireland, Netherlands, and Sweden go with a multiculturalism approach (CSES, 2013). However it important to clarify that though theoretically both approaches are very different, EU Member States usually adopt a system of integration with a combination of elements from both approaches between the two models at a theoretical level. Many EU countries adopt a pragmatic approach which combines elements of both approaches in their policies dealing with the integration of migrants and ethnic minorities (CSES, 2013).

Europeanization

In its simplest form, Europeanization can be described as ‘the process of downloading EU directives, regulations and institutional structures to the domestic level’ (Howell, 2000). However, that definition does not fully encompass the concept of Europeanization. Similar to integration, Europeanization is another term that is difficult to pin down with a universal definition. This challenge to clearly define the concept may stem from the fact that often Europeanization is used very broadly and in several different ways. Sometimes it is used to refer to EU legislation implementation, sometimes to address the EU’s effect on Member States’ domestic policies, structures and even identities. Nonetheless, the various explanations and conceptualisations of the term can be divided into three models: top-down model, bottom-up model, a combination of both.

The top-down model is concerned with how EU outputs affect Member States, in other words the response to EU policy and its implementation (Featherstone, 2003). The bottom-up model as the name suggests deals with the Member State’s influence on the EU and policy transfer to the European level. The third category combines top-down and bottom-up models. Borzel (2001) claims that Europeanization is a two-way process.

This is because EU policy is not formulated in a vacuum and comes into being without distinct negotiation, diffusion and interaction between several EU actors. The Union works more like an arena instead of an actor (Radaelli, 2003). Thus the third category approach treats Europeanization as a circular process where EU outcomes can feedback into policy formulation/reformulation. Radaelli (2003) concisely presents this as 'Member States uploading their preferences to Brussels via complex negotiations and downloading them from various EU policy menus'.

Since I will be looking at EU policy aimed at the labour market integration of migrant women and its effects or the lack thereof on the Member States, it is important to look at Europeanization of public policy for EU Members. I am interested in finding out how such a policy field of migrant integration reached the EU level and how member states, in turn, respond to it, especially with limited competence. I am not concerned as much with convergence or harmonisation of Member States when it comes to following EU guidelines on integration. In fact, Europeanization and harmonisation are not necessarily synonymous (Radaelli, 2003). Europeanization promotes changes in domestic policy, but the Member States often choose to implement these changes in different ways and add in or leave out parts accordingly (Radaelli, 2003). Harmonisation decreases regulatory diversity, while Europeanization outcomes can result in regulatory diversity (Radaelli, 2003).

Therefore I will be looking at the individual reaction and outputs of member states with regards to integration based on EU instruments, tools and policy recommendations that have developed over the years. For this purpose, I will be using Radaelli's (2003) conceptualisation of Europeanization for this report which he describes as 'processes of (a) construction (b) diffusion (c) institutionalisation of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, 'ways of doing things' and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the making of EU decisions and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structures and public policies' It's an encompassing definition that is not limited to only policies and legislation, but also mentions 'shared beliefs' (for example the Common Basic Principles which were simply guidelines) which can be useful when

discussing the topic of migrant integration that the EU has limited competence over.

4.3 Operationalisation

Since my research was based on already available information and no new data was collected, I tried to use various sources containing differing perspectives from equally reputable institutions in an attempt to avoid research bias, and also present a holistic view of the issue with well-rounded collection of information. Sometimes this was challenging to maintain as the topic of migrant women's labour market integration is not static, and newer documents containing recent developments were not always peer-reviewed or had alternatives. Nonetheless, every document came from reliable sources and the information in them was always double-checked and verified to the extent possible during the research and analysis process.

4.4 Population and Sampling Method

The population studied for this report was legally residing migrant women in the EU, who are third-country nationals and fall within the working-age limit. There is no specific distinction as far as race, ethnicity or religious background is concerned.

4.5 Validity and Reliability

In a qualitative study, validity refers to how appropriate the tools, process, and data were while conducting the research (Leung, 2015). It boils down to whether the means used to answer the research is valid and whether the measurement instruments are actually applied to what it was intended to find out. This includes everything from choosing the correct methodology to address the research question, then using the proper design, population sampling and data analysis in accordance with the question to gain a valid, contextual outcome (Leung, 2015). For this report, I chose to do a QDA analysis because I wanted to specifically find out the EU's policy response to migrant women's labour market integration and the best source to find that response on a public and official platform were EU documents and publications on this matter. Hence a QDA was conducted on documents released during the period of 2015 to 2019

addressing integration to find out how the EU was tackling challenges to migrant women's labour market integration. Triangulation is often used in qualitative research to form a more robust process of gathering data and reducing bias by testing validity through a convergence of different methods and information sources. Although only one type of document analysis method was used for this study as it was sufficient to answer the research question, multiple sources of information with varying perspectives were selected to ensure validity via triangulation of data sources.

In quantitative research, reliability refers to 'exact replicability of the processes and the results' (Leung, 2015). In the case of this qualitative research, this definition of reliability causes some inherent issues, especially when considering conceptualisations. For instance, this research may prove difficult to replicate because terms that work for this report may not fit as smoothly to another study aiming to replicate the research process. Particularly in the case of terms such as 'migrant' or 'Europeanization' that is not only broad but also can be interpreted in many various ways, all valid in their own right given the context within which the word is being used. These different interpretations can have divergent effects and produce slightly dissimilar results, and therefore a complete replication which does not take these effects into consideration may not be accurate. Thus, for qualitative research, reliability can refer to consistency instead (Leung, 2015). Some level of variability in outcomes is okay in qualitative research, given the methodology consistently shows results that are ontologically similar (Leung, 2015). Reliability for this study is thus measured in terms of consistency and using QDA for a research question in the same vein as this one would work to answer that question in a similar manner.

4.6 Limitations

One of the limitations is that in qualitative research, a triangulation of research methods and sources of information helps to create a more robust study. Document analysis is usually paired with other forms of research methods, such as interviews or participant observation. For this report, though, the only research method used was qualitative document analysis as the information pertaining to my research question was already available, and no new method of data collection was necessary. I did,

however, use multiple sources of information from credible institutions and peer-reviewed journals in order to make sure data presented came from reliable sources. Another limitation was that not every document used the terms 'migrant' in the same manner. It was not interchangeable when analysing documents so it was crucial to keep note of that, and it proved challenging at times when comparing the data.

Chapter 5

Findings

In this chapter, I will conduct document analysis on key EU policy documents and chart their practice in action through follow up progress documents selected from 2015 to 2019. These documents were chosen based on their significance on an EU level not only to the topic of migrant women's integration to the labour market but also as key moments of development of an EU integration framework. This is because as common integration measures are supported and pushed for on the EU platform, it is necessary to look at how many of these key policy documents are specifically highlighting migrant women, especially when encouraging member states to cater to their specific needs. As it stands, most Member States do not have a specific focus aimed at the integration of migrant women when it comes to their policies (ECA, 2018). Another 2018 report by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) also found little evidence throughout Member States of national action plans and policies having specific targets or focus for integration of female immigrants (FRA, 2018).

Incentives and measures (such as funding) from the EU level to support migrant women can lead to changes in domestic integration policies for the Member States. Therefore key policy documents (and practice documents connected with them) from 2015 to 2019 were chosen for the document analysis in this report.

I have divided the policy documents into three categories according to legal acts which can be taken to fulfil aims set out in treaties through EU legislation:

1. Binding legal instruments (regulations, directives and decisions).
2. Non-binding instruments (resolutions, opinions).
3. Other instruments (EU action programmes, agendas, calls for proposals).

I will use two separate measures while doing the document analysis. The first one will assess whether migrant women, labour market integration, and migrant women's labour market integration are mentioned in the document. If there are not sufficient references to these three topics, I will not use the second analysis measure to give the document a rating and simply provide reflections instead.

If there are sufficient references to these three topics, I will use the second analysis measure. The problem background describes the specific barriers migrant women face when it comes to labour market integration namely immigration status, pre-departure and arrival conditions, early introductory measures, family obligation and childbearing assistance, validation of skills, ethnic and cultural discrimination, employment conditions. These seven themes will be used as key areas of analysis to measure if and how the documents presented solutions to these prevalent barriers. The texts will be analysed with their context and meaning in connection with the themes and then based on these codes the document will be given a rating of 'beneficial', 'satisfactory', 'inadequate', or 'vague'.

Afterwards, I will use the practice documents to analyse what progress has been made for migrant women's labour market integration in terms of the plans and ideas laid out in the policy documents. I will only be conducting the QDA on the policy documents. The practice documents are ancillary for the research to track progress in the matter of labour market integration for migrant women.

The following documents will be analysed:

1. Regulation establishing the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund for 2014-2020.

2. 2015 European Agenda on Migration.
3. 2016 Action Plan on the integration of Third Country Nationals.
4. 2018 Interim Evaluation of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund.
5. 2019 Progress report on the Implementation of the European Agenda on Migration.

5.1 Document Analysis

(1) Policy Document Name: Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund Regulation.

Document Date: 16 April 2014 (Although this is before the time period (2015-2019) selected to analyse, this document was included because the AMIF falls under the multiannual financial framework from 2014 to 2020; therefore it is relevant).

Document Type: Regulation. In the European Union, a 'regulation' is a binding legislative act (European Commission, 2019). When a regulation is adopted, it is to be applied in its entirety throughout the EU. In the case of the AMIF, Denmark is the only country that does benefit from the AMIF due to the opt-out on the Home and Justice Affairs; therefore they did not take part in the adoption of the regulation (European Commission, 2019).

Published in: Official Journal of the European Union

Sourced from: Official EU Website

Purpose of the Document: The Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) was established to support the proper management of migration flows and the implementation, and development of a common Union approach to asylum, immigration and integration (EWSI, 2018).

For this policy document, I will use the first measure of analysis that finds whether migrant women, labour market integration, and migrant women's labour market integration are mentioned in the document, and

then analyses each mention with a contextual breakdown of the quote and its implications for the labour market integration of migrant women.

The AMIF Regulation contains two references to migrant women, where they are highlighted and classified as a distinct group. The direct quotes are presented below:

1. 'Eligible actions for the fund should take account of the human rights-based approach to the protection of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers and should, in particular, ensure that special attention is paid to, and a dedicated response is provided for, the specific situation of vulnerable persons, **in particular women**, unaccompanied minors and other minors at risk' (European Commission, 2015).

Contextual breakdown of mentions: The first mention highlights how special attention is needed for specific groups of people, including women and minors. This distinguishes migrant women as a distinct category that requires a dedicated response for their unique needs.

2. 'Pursuant to Articles 8 and 10 TFEU, the Fund should take account of the **mainstreaming of equality between women and men and anti-discrimination principles**' (European Commission, 2015).

Contextual breakdown of mentions: The second mention serves as a reminder that all actions of the fund should aim to affect men and women equally by maintaining gender mainstreaming of issues, therefore taking the gender perspective into account when dealing with men and women respectively and working for equality and non-discrimination.

The AMIF Regulation contains five references to labour market integration. Only 3 of the 5 mentions are presented, as the last two just

repeat the same point and therefore it would be redundant to include them. The direct quotes are shown below:

1. Under the subheading objectives:

‘to support legal migration to the Member States in accordance with their economic and social needs, **such as labour market needs**, while safeguarding the integrity of the immigration systems of Member States, and to promote the effective integration of third-country nationals’ (European Commission, 2015).

Contextual breakdown of quotes: Overall labour market integration mentioned, with no specific reference to migrant women.

2. Under the subheading integration measures:

‘measures focusing on education and training, including language training and **preparatory actions to facilitate access to the labour market**’ (European Commission, 2015).

Contextual breakdown of quotes: Highlighting the importance of integration measures such as education, language courses and preparatory actions for gaining access to the labour market for all immigrants. No specific mention of how migrant women and how they are particularly in need of these services and how in most Member States they are being involved/enrolled at a lower rate than migrant men in these measures.

3. Under the subheading practical cooperation and capacity-building measures:

‘supporting cooperation between third countries and the recruitment agencies, the employment services and the immigration services of Member States, as well as supporting Member States in their implementation of Union migration law, consultation processes with relevant stakeholders and expert advice or information exchanges on approaches **which target specific nationalities or categories** of third-country nationals with respect to the **needs of the labour markets**’ (European Commission, 2015).

Contextual breakdown of quotes: This mention is interesting because it talks about approaches targeting specific nationalities or 'categories' of third-country nationals with respect to the needs of the labour markets. Although it does not directly reference migrant women, the distinction of specific category and needs of the labour market is an allusion to not grouping all third-country nationals together and treat them based on their distinctions.

There were no mentions of the third category, which is the labour market integration of migrant women specifically in the AMIF regulation.

Reflections: Due to the lack of references to migrant women, I will not be using the second measure of using the 'barriers benchmark' to do further document analysis for the AMIF regulation. The first measure above demonstrates that although the AMIF regulation made references to migrant women, it was not connected to their labour market needs. The labour market integration references also vaguely touched upon targeting 'specific categories' without going into further detail about these categories or classes of individuals that would require a unique set of integration measures. Given that the fund is named 'Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund' it is lacking with respect to highlighting one of the key gaps in integration when it comes to migrant women entering the labour market.

Practice Documents for AMIF Regulation:

Document Name: 2018 Interim Evaluation of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund

The 2018 report evaluates the AMIF's impact till date and analyses potential future impact, along with recommendations based on their findings. One of the objectives of the AMIF is to promote the integration of third-country nationals. From the funding provided to the Member States through AMIF, at least 20 per cent is supposed to be allocated for integration purposes (unless justified otherwise), particularly via supporting actions of national, local authorities and civil society that promote and work towards the successful integration of third-country nationals (Ludden et al. 2018). The AMIF, therefore, has a significant role in fostering migrant integration.

In the policy document of the regulation establishing the AMIF, migrant women specifically were mentioned twice. Once when the Regulation stated that ‘special attention and a dedicated response should be provided for the specific situation of vulnerable persons, in particular women, unaccompanied minors and other minors at risk’ and the second time when it mentioned that ‘fund should take account of the mainstreaming of equality between women and men and anti-discrimination principles’ (European Commission, 2014). Even though none of these instances talks about migrant women’s labour market integration specifically, the idea behind gender mainstreaming of policies and principles should take into account the disproportionate rate of migrant women entering labour markets in comparison to migrant men (and native women).

In the progress report, migrant women were brought up many times. Under the AMIF’s 2015 overview of needs, and action and objectives based on those needs, in the migration and integration section, two direct goals related to migrant women were present:

1. Need: The Need to ensure effective integration of migrant women (Ludden et al. 2018).
2. Objective/ Action: Share knowledge and experiences of actions to support migrant women. Contribute to capacity buildings measures targeting women (Ludden et al. 2018).

However, in both 2016 and 2017, the focus on migrant women was notably missing. In 2017, both the needs and objectives mentioned labour market integration, but without specifying a special need for migrant women based on their low employment numbers. The disparity remained, as according to the European website on integration in 2018 54 per cent of migrant women in the EU were employed, which was 14 per cent less than native women and 19 per cent less than migrant men (EWSI, 2018).

The report stated that the Member States prioritised short-term integration measures such as civic orientation and to a lesser extent medium-term integration measures such as labour market access (Ludden et al. 2018). Both these measures were necessary, especially in the light of the refugee crisis as migrant numbers increased considerably. This rise in number also led to higher gaps in employment rate between migrants and

nationals as more migrants arrived. Although it is not possible to estimate fully to what extent the AMIF has helped reduce this gap, a total of 1,432,612 third-country nationals received integration assistance through the AMIF (Ludden et al). Thus the report states that progress has been made in the area of labour market integration, through National Programmes and Union Actions implemented under the fund (Ludden et al. 2018)). Especially in the case of national programmes, Member States reported that they added value by allowing countries to not only reach a wider volume of migrants, but also improve the quality of actions implemented and extend the type and scope of the actions and the specific target groups reached (women, elderly, unaccompanied minors) that they might not have been able to reach otherwise.

This demonstrates that though the mention of migrant women was removed from the objectives in 2016 and 2017, specific target groups were still paid attention to in the programmes under the Fund.

Similarly, in the table where activities the Union Actions implemented in order to help integration, it was shown that the actions focused on empowering migrant women by providing accredited training to them (Ludden et al. 2018).

Interestingly, the report showed that during the needs assessment questionnaire, in the proposed changes to the National Programmes section, only Sweden mentioned measures that facilitate newly arrived women's introduction to the Swedish labour market and society in response to a high influx of refugees (Ludden et al. 2018). No other member state made that distinction, in response to the same question and same challenge (rising number of migrants). Perhaps this is why they have higher female LFRP compared to other countries in the EU, as the prioritisation for women is emphasised.

This may also be why in a 2019 call proposal for funding of transnational actions of the AMIF, one of the topics was focused on the 'social and economic integration of migrant women'. The need to develop activities exclusively for their requirements under AMIF supported National Programmes, and Union Actions remains.

Policy Document 2

Document Name: 2015 European Agenda on Migration

Document Date: 13 May 2015

Document Type: Agenda outlining immediate measures in the field of migration in response to the refugee crisis.

Sourced from: Official EU Website

Purpose of the Document: The European Commission presented a comprehensive European Agenda on Migration in May 2015 in order to simultaneously address the immediate large migration inflows during the time and also to build up a cohesive approach for the long-term so that Member States can reap the benefits and address the challenges that come with migration.

For this policy document, I will use the first measure of analysis that finds whether migrant women, labour market integration, and migrant women's labour market integration are mentioned in the document, and then analyses each mention with contextual breakdown of the quote and its implications for the labour market integration of migrant women.

The Agenda on Migration contains no mentions of migrant women specifically, where they are highlighted and classified as a distinct group.

The Agenda on Migration contains one mention of labour market integration. Although the term 'labour' appears around 11 times in the Agenda, the subject of labour market integration is discussed once. The direct quote is presented below:

Under the subheading effective integration, the Agenda stated, 'funding is provided by the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF). But the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF) can also be of particular importance. For the new programming period (2014-20), at least 20 per cent of ESF resources will contribute to social inclusion, which **includes measures for the integration of migrants** with a particular focus on those seeking asylum and refugees as well as on children. The funds can support targeted initiatives to improve language and professional skills, improve access to

services, **promote access to the labour market**, inclusive education, foster inter-cultural exchanges and promote awareness campaigns targeting both host communities and migrants’.

Contextual breakdown of the quotes: The paragraph before the direct quote shown in the column talked about how in order for migration to be successful, effective integration is crucial. The Agenda stated ‘Our migration policy will succeed if underpinned by effective integration policies. Although the competence lies primarily with the Member States, the European Union can support actions by national governments, local authorities and civil society engaged in the complex and long-term process of fostering integration and mutual trust’. Funding is an important tool to support the Member States as they implement domestic integration policies, and also a way to incentivise them to implement certain measures.

The quote mentions inclusive education but no specific conditions for inclusivity in terms of the labour market and calls for overall better access to labour markets for migrants.

There were no mentions of the third category, which is the labour market integration of migrant women specifically in the 2015 Agenda on Migration.

Reflections: Due to the lack of references to migrant women, I will not be using the second measure to do further document analysis for the 2015 European Agenda on Migration. It is interesting how the document made no particular references to migrant women given how often the ‘labour market’ was brought up in the Agenda, and also the labour market shortage in the EU due to demographic changes were highlighted. The Agenda states that without migration, the EU’s ‘working-age population will go down by 17.5 million over the next ten years’ (European Commission, 2015). But it does not address how these shortages will remain if migrant women are not successfully integrated into the labour market, as it’s necessary to increase female participation to increase LFPR and decrease dependents under the system. Perhaps one explanation as to why this document did not feel the need to address this particular issue was that the agenda’s main concern was the large migration inflows that resulted in the humanitarian crisis along with overwhelming challenges on the migration front for the EU as an institution and Member States alike. Therefore the focus was on immediate actions to deal with the crisis

at hand, and not on detailed integration requirements of each category of migrants entering the EU. However, since labour market integration was brought up, along with funds to help the process, migrant women, in particular, should have been brought up as well.

Practice Documents for the 2015 Agenda on Migration:

Document Name: Progress report on the Implementation of the European Agenda on Migration

Document Date: 6 March 2019

Similar to the initial 'Agenda on Migration' document, this progress report too does not contain many mentions of migrant women or their labour market integration. Overall the report is more concerned with how migration and voluntary repatriation has developed from 2015 to 2019 in the EU, but some parts do focus on integration. For example, when talking about the key progress different areas have made under the European Agenda on Migration, the AMIF fund and its contribution (of over 140 million Euros) towards the integration of migrants were highlighted (European Commission, 2019). As for future steps to ensure further progress is made in this area, labour market integration of third-country nationals was emphasised. The report stated that supporting migrant integration 'is a focal point of the proposed Multiannual Financial Framework for 2021-2027' (European Commission, 2019). This support entails promoting actions geared towards the early introduction of integration courses, including language training, civic orientation, and advice centres (European Commission, 2019). The mention of migrant women specifically actually appeared in a footnote, in reference to the sentence, 'other types of measures would cover more systematic labour market integration' (European Commission, 2019). Linked to that statement was a footnote that mentioned what exactly these other types of labour market integration measures would be. The footnote states that 'this includes work-based language training, vocational education and training programmes, actions to support self-employment, the **promotion of women's labour market participation**, social inclusion, etc' (European Commission, 2019). The Agenda progress report thus briefly addresses the need for promoting migrant women's integration into the labour market.

Policy Document 3

Document Name: 2016 Action Plan on the Integration of Third-Country Nationals

Document Date: 7 June 2016

Document Type: Action Plan

Sourced from: Official EU Website

Purpose of the Document: The Action Plan provides a common policy framework for the Member States to use as they develop and strengthen their national integration policies for migrants. The plan also outlines the policy, operational and financial support which the European Commission will deliver to support the Member States in their efforts to improve integration (European Commission, 2016).

For this policy document, I will use the first measure of analysis that finds whether migrant women, labour market integration, and migrant women's labour market integration are mentioned in the document, and then analyses each mention with a contextual breakdown of the quote and its implications for the labour market integration of migrant women.

The 2016 Action Plan on the Integration of Third-Country Nationals contains 11 references to migrant women, where they are highlighted and classified as a distinct group. Direct quotes will be shown and contextually analysed in the 'barriers benchmark' analysis in the next segment.

The 2016 Action Plan on the Integration of Third-Country Nationals contains 36 references to labour market integration. Direct quotes will be shown and contextually analysed in the 'barriers benchmark' analysis in the next segment. Not all will be used as that is not necessary nor conducive for the analysis; therefore, only the relevant ones will be shown.

The 2016 Action Plan on the Integration of Third-Country Nationals contains 5 references to the labour market integration of migrant women specifically. Two of the direct quotes are presented below:

1. 'In 2015, third-country nationals' employment rate was 12.4 pp lower than the one of the host countries nationals, **with women having particularly low rates**' (European Commission, 2016).
2. 'In 2015, under half of the third-country national women population was in employment, **over 16 percentage points lower than the employment rate of women with EU nationality**' (European Commission, 2016).

Contextual breakdown of quotes: The two quotes shown here use data to demonstrate the significantly lower rates of migrant women labour market integration to emphasise the urgency of addressing this issue. Using statistics to paint a clear picture helps highlight why migrant women needs should be prioritised when it comes to labour market integration. The other three mentions are shown in the analysis in the next segment.

Due to a large number of references to all three categories (migrant women, labour market integration, and labour market integration of migrant women in particular) I will be using the second measure of conducting my document analysis on the Action Plan. The problem background describes the specific barriers migrant women face when it comes to labour market integration such as immigration status, arrival conditions, early introductory measures, family obligation and child-bearing assistance, validation of skills, ethnic and cultural discrimination, employment conditions. These seven themes will be used as key areas of analysis to measure if and how the documents presented solutions to these prevalent barriers. The texts will be analysed with their context and meaning in connection with the themes and then based on these codes the document will be given a rating of 'beneficial', 'satisfactory', 'inadequate', or 'vague'.

Barrier 1: Immigration Status

There were no mentions of this particular barrier in the 2016 Action Plan.

Barrier 2: Arrival Conditions

Women were not directly addressed, but the following quote takes into account the arrival conditions of migrant women who come for family reasons:

‘For the third-country nationals concerned, in **particular those coming for work or family** reasons but also for refugees to be resettled, **pre-departure language and job-related training can speed up integration** in their future environment’ (European Commission, 2016).

Contextual breakdown of quotes: Although the term ‘migrant women’ may not be used, a majority of women do come for family reasons as they join their spouses in the host country. Therefore pre-departure conditions assisting these individuals with language and job training will boost their labour market integration chances.

As for the mechanisms to implement the actions mentioned, there were two action tools provided to address this challenge. They are quoted below:

1. ‘Launch projects to support effective pre-departure and pre-arrival measures, including in the context of resettlement programmes, (e.g. language training, information about culture and values of the destination country, etc.) under AMIF’ (European Commission, 2016).

Key actors: Commission, Member States, civil society, third countries.

2. ‘Engage with the Member States to strengthen cooperation with selected third-countries on pre-departure measures under La Valletta Action Plan’ (European Commission, 2016).

Key Actors: Commission, Member States, third countries

Barrier 3: Early introductory measures (such as language courses)

Yes, this barrier is specifically addressed. The direct quote is presented below:

‘Learning the language of the destination country is crucial for third-country nationals to succeed in their integration process. Language integration programmes should be provided **at the earliest stage possible after arrival**, adapted to each person’s linguistic competences needs and combining language learning with the learning of other skills and competences or work experiences. **A special effort should be made to**

ensure that these courses reach women as well as men' (European Commission, 2016).

As for the mechanisms to implement the actions mentioned, there were several action tools provided to address this challenge. Three of them are quoted below:

1. 'Provide Erasmus+ online language assessment and learning for around 100.000 newly arrived third country nationals, in particular refugees' (European Commission, 2016).

Key Actors: Commission

2. 'Provide support to teachers and school staff on how to promote inclusive education and address specific needs of migrant learners and refugee integration through online courses and professional development activities using the online platform School Education Gateway' (European Commission, 2016).

Key Actors: Commission

3. Fund transnational projects and partnerships to support inclusive education, training and youth with a particular focus on projects related to migration and intercultural dialogue under Erasmus+' (European Commission, 2016).

Key Actors: Commission, Member States, civil society.

Barrier 4: Family obligation and childbearing assistance

There were no mentions of this particular barrier in the 2016 Action Plan.

Barrier 5: Validation of skills

Yes, this barrier is addressed. Migrant women were not mentioned directly when discussing the validation of skills initially, but in the action item mechanism, they were highlighted specifically. Below are the two direct quotes:

1. 'Facilitating **validation of skills and recognition of qualifications is crucial** to ensure that individuals' skills are used to their full potential' (European Commission, 2016).

2. 'At the Tripartite Social Summit of 16 March 2016, EU cross-industry social partners presented a joint statement on the refugee crisis, stressing the importance of refugees' integration in training, employment and society in general and **pleading for a comprehensive solution towards skills analysis and validation**, taking into account economic needs' (European Commission, 2016).

As for the mechanisms to implement the actions mentioned, there were two action tools provided to address this challenge. They are quoted below:

1. 'Fund projects promoting: "fast track" insertion into the labour market and vocational training (e. g. through **skills assessment and validation**, employment focused language training, on the job training) labour market integration of refugees and **of women** (EaSI/ AMIF)' (European Commission, 2016).

Key Actors: Commission, Member States, civil society.

2. 'Develop a 'Skills Toolkit for Third Country Nationals' under the New Skills Agenda for Europe to support timely identification of skills and qualifications for asylum seekers, refugees and other third-country nationals' (European Commission, 2016).

Key Actors: Commission, Member States.

Barrier 6: Ethnic and cultural discrimination

The term 'migrant women' was not used directly but emphasising paying attention to 'gender' aspects is an indication of taking heed of migrant women's needs. Below are the two direct quotes:

1. 'When developing integration policies at EU, national or local level, **special attention should be paid to gender aspects [...] and persons belonging to religious and ethnic minorities who could face discrimination or disproportionate integration hurdles**' (European Commission, 2016).
2. 'Everyone in the EU – EU citizen or not – is **protected by law from discrimination at work or in access to work on the grounds of racial or ethnic origin**, religion or belief and from discrimination in

education, social protection and access to goods and services on the grounds of racial or ethnic origin’ (European Commission, 2016).

As for the mechanisms to implement the actions mentioned, there were four action tools provided to address this challenge. They are quoted below:

1. ‘Continue to work with the European Parliament and the Council towards the adoption of the anti-discrimination Directive’ (European Commission, 2016).

Key Actors: Commission.

2. ‘Member States are encouraged to fully implement legislation on combating racism and xenophobia and on victims’ rights and strictly enforce equal treatment and anti-discrimination legislation’ (European Commission, 2016).

Key Actors: Member States

3. ‘Under the ESF, EUR 21 billion are available to all Member States for promoting social inclusion, combatting poverty and discrimination’ (European Commission, 2016).

Key Actors: Commission, Member States

4. ‘Create a one-stop-shop webpage to provide information on the relevant EU funding supporting projects and initiatives fostering tolerance and combatting racism, xenophobia and discrimination’ (European Commission, 2016).

Key Actors: Commission.

Barrier 7: Employment Conditions

Migrant women were not addressed separately, but unfavourable employment conditions for migrants was mentioned. The direct quote is shown below:

‘Many third-country nationals are overqualified or over skilled for their jobs or **work in less favourable conditions when it comes to wages, employment protection, over-representation in certain sectors and career prospects**’ (European Commission, 2016).

No specific mechanisms were mentioned to address this challenge.

Reflections

Out of the seven barriers migrant women face, six were addressed for all migrants and three also specifically mentioned migrant women. The majority of the barriers were accompanied by guidelines and proper action items (funds, policies, toolkits) to implement in order to reduce them. These reference numbers reveal little without examining them in light of a gender-based perspective. Feminist scholarship states that a mere reference in a policy document does not necessarily mean that said policy has fully incorporated and considered gender in a meaningful manner (Caglar, 2013). According to the official definition, the term gender mainstreaming implies 'the (re)organization, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making' (Council of Europe, 2019). This comprehensive and transformative way of presenting policy highlights gender instead of women, because often, women's neglect and disparities are interconnected with situations that lead to inequality between the sexes. Therefore if a policy were to focus on how to uplift disadvantaged women, it should also consider the role the men in her life play. For example, the case for paternal leave as well as maternal leave. Instead of increasing the mother's maternal leave and keeping her out of the workforce longer, introducing paternal leave levels the playing field in a sense, and works towards a more holistic approach to equality i.e. a gender-based approach rather than an approach focusing only on women. Under the section 'active participation and social inclusion' the Action Plan states how 'the Commission will engage in a dialogue with the Member States to ensure that concerns related to the gender dimension and the situation of migrant women are taken into account in planned policies and funding initiatives, including within actions co-financed by EU Funds (European Commission, 2016). The document itself, however, does not fully do that.

Rating: Out of the four categories: beneficial, satisfactory, inadequate, or vague, the 2016 Action Plan on the Integration of Third-Country Nationals is deemed satisfactory. The document does a decent job of including the gender dimension as shown in the breakdown and analysis above but

could have gone a step further in some areas such as employment conditions, family assistance and childcare specifically highlighting how women are disproportionately affected in these areas and require assistance based on their needs.

Practice Documents for the 2016 Action Plan on the Integration of Third Country Nationals

The 2016 Action Plan on the Integration of Third-Country Nationals does not have a single progress report assessing the impact of the plan; however, the European Website on Integration does have a page dedicated to tracking the implementation of the action plan points outlined in the document. It is too soon to draw any concrete conclusions about the reach and effectiveness of the plan, as most of the monitoring of the impact of each action point is still ongoing (Foti, 2019). However, some of the mechanisms mentioned in the barriers benchmark analysis above have been implemented. For the practice portion of this analysis, I will be looking at the progress made towards migrant women's labour market integration through some of the mechanisms suggested in the Action Plan.

In December 2016 the European Council adopted the Council Conclusions on the integration of third-country nationals legally residing in the EU, in which the Council invited Member States to 'address the specific needs of the most vulnerable third-country nationals, such as children, women, the elderly and the disabled' (European Council, 2016).

It is difficult to track actions geared towards migrant women specifically because other than the AMIF which is exclusively for third-country nationals, funds such as the European Social Fund (ESF), European regional development fund, and EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation are geared towards citizens and migrants alike. Therefore, it is hard to separate the impact on migrant women from these projects from the results showing the overall impact on women in the EU and gender mainstreaming of the process.

However, some funds do specify projects set up for migrant women in particular. The ESF, for example, has been supporting projects working for the labour market integration of migrant women in different Member States, such as the Univerbal project in Belgium, the Adelante programme

in Spain, the Mirjam project in Sweden and the Razkirte roke 3 project in Slovenia (Marangozov, 2019). Along with these projects, the ESF also has other initiatives that aim to improve migrant women's social integration, reduce discrimination against them and ensure better access to rights for them in the different Member States. (Marangozov, 2019).

These programmes, combined with the AMIF targeted measures towards migrant women assisted and improved the condition of many migrant women, but changes need to be implemented on a national level to tailored integration programmes in the Member States.

As discussed in previous chapters, integration is the domain of national competence for the Member States, and the EU's competence is limited. But in terms of policy recommendations, as the 2016 Action plan clearly demonstrates, the Commission strongly favours a gendered perspective to be included when developing integration policies, especially to address those who could face disproportionate integration hurdles. But the Member States' response in terms of the gender dimension has not been as robust as the appeal from the Commission.

A 2018 briefing paper by the European Court of Auditors highlighted this when they conducted surveys containing integration questions where they received replies from all members of the European Integration Network (27 member states, Norway, and 4 regions in Belgium). In response to the question 'what are the target groups of your integration policy?' out of the 32 only 7 mentioned having a particular focus on migrant women (ECA, 2018).

Another 2018 report by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) also found little evidence throughout Member States of national action plans and policies having specific targets or focus for integration of female immigrants (FRA, 2018).

Ultimately, this is where the main gap between men and women arises in labour market integration throughout the EU as the needs of women are not taken into account. Gender mainstreaming is not applied in national integration policies and programmes despite many calls for a gendered perspective on integration matters. A recent analysis done by the European Website on Integration found that even though over a third of

the EU countries surveyed have provisions tailored for target groups (such as migrant women and girls) only a few of the Member States make special considerations for these groups in their national integration strategy (Li, 2020). Targeted training that is based on proper assessment and validation of skills is also not widely available across the Member States (Li, 2020), which is one the stepping stones to labour market integration, especially for migrant women.

The discussion session next chapter will use theory to understand the reasoning behind the Member States' response and the next steps for the EU to ensure better labour market integration for migrant women.

Chapter 6

Discussion

Most Member States have developed a national integration policy, but the question remains whether a common EU integration framework is prioritised when developing these policies. Research from the literature review and document analysis combined showed how EU principles and policies highlighted migrant women's needs when it comes to labour market integration, and prioritised gender mainstreaming in policy creation and development. Funds aimed at the integration of migrants such as AMIF and EIF also have projects that target specific groups that face disproportionate hurdles in integration such as migrant women. The 2016 Action Plan for the integration of third-country national states that 'When developing integration policies at EU, national or local level, special attention should be paid to gender aspects...and persons belonging to religious and ethnic minorities who could face discrimination or disproportionate integration hurdles' (European Commission, 2016). This is clearly not the case for a lot of Member States. So the issue remains about the gap between the EU principles and national integration policies of Member States, and how core common EU integration frameworks encouraging gender mainstreaming are not being adopted.

Grand theories of integration can be used to interpret this gap or lack of response. As stated in chapter 3, this report uses neofunctionalism, liberal

intergovernmentalism, and postfunctionalism as the theoretical background for the analysis. Each school of thought presents different reasons for integration outcomes during a crisis. Neofunctionalism explains the different integration responses to crises based on the level of transnational interdependence and supranational capacity in the context of the crisis, liberal intergovernmentalism explains it based on the variation in intergovernmental bargaining structures, and postfunctionalism explains it based on the variation in national mass politicisation (Schimmelfennig, 2017). I use the migration crisis to demonstrate these theories in practice while explaining the reasoning behind the Member States' not conforming to EU principles when it comes to integration policies. This is because migration and integration are tied intrinsically, and so the response to both has similar ideologies behind them.

The multifaceted response to the migration crisis and the subsequent adoption of 'Europeanized' integration measures can be explained through all three of the theories. Immigration, like integration, is also a national competence for the Member States, but the EU has formal competence in this matter. The EU legislative framework that regulates asylum seekers and refugees, in particular, is called the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), and the Dublin Regulation under CEAS establishes which Member State will be responsible for examining and processing the asylum application, which is usually the first country an asylum seeker enters. This system could not handle the monumental number of people arriving due to the crisis, and eventually, after initial attempts to try and maintain the flow, the Schengen member states closed borders.

They also denied asylum-seekers entry and rejected implementing a relocation scheme they had legally committed to for around 160,000 refugees (Hooghe and Marks, 2019). These unilateralist actions align with liberal intergovernmentalism's interpretation during a crisis where a group of States choose not to compromise to a supranational power due to the bargaining structures in place. Member States considered individual sunken costs and exit costs and decided that it would be better to not cooperate (Hooghe and Marks, 2019). During the Eurocrisis, transnational finance led to deeper integration in an effort to save the Euro. But in the migration crisis, the cost was humanitarian, and unilateralism won out. Even from an economic standpoint, suspension of the Schengen area

would not impede those Member State's economies so much that they would not be able to recover from the consequences (Hooghe and Marks, 2019). Therefore, in this case, integration could be abandoned by those with least to lose, and they feared no repercussions if others decided to do the same based on the fact that disintegration would not lead to irreparable damage. This same idea can be applied to the national integration policies for the Member States. The countries that do not implement EU common principles while developing integration policies do not consider it a matter of utmost priority or relevance to follow EU integration frameworks as the EU does not have the main competence in this matter so integration cannot be legally enforced and the intergovernmental bargaining structures are stronger on the side of the Member States.

The Dublin system, however, did not collapse altogether and fold, instead, reforms were proposed. The reason for not dismantling the system goes back to neofunctionalism's idea of path dependency limiting disintegration. After decades of reliance on the system, to completely dismantle and build a new one in a time of poor economy is not something any national government was keen on. Therefore even though the Commission's plan for refugee relocation was not accepted, supranational cooperation did increase in order to improve the processing of immigrants and the monitoring the borders (Hooghe and Marks, 2019). Neofunctionalism thus explains the EU states that move towards further Europeanization in their integration policies are following a pattern of path dependency. The multiannual financial frameworks that shape many of these policies influence the level of Europeanization and supranational activity that will be accepted into national politics. Calls for a cohesive EU framework on integration that all Member States can adopt demonstrates that supranational intervention in this area is not entirely unwelcome, and funding assistance can help that process. Funds like the AMIF and ESF play a role in introducing gender mainstreaming of domestic policies through financial incentives and assistance. For the upcoming 2021 to 2027 financial framework, coordination between these two funds and gender mainstreaming integration policies for both can help raise the rates of migrant women's labour market integration.

Finally, postfunctionalism brings up identity politics when dealing with integration during times of crises. The migration crisis certainly delved into national identity politics and nationalistic tendencies of the populace because it required Europe to open its doors and grant a home to culturally dissimilar people (Börzel and Risse, 2018). Supranational authority and power on this matter is highly contested when it specifically touches the transnational divide on topics such as immigration and integration. The mass politicisation of migration throughout Europe led to national governments to impose restrictive measures not only in countries that were opposed from the beginning but also in countries that initially had a positive response to the immigrants. For example, Sweden's social democratic government ended up re-impose border controls as well as shrinking refugee welfare support (Hooghe and Marks, 2019). Identity politics plays a large role in disintegration if it clashes with supranational power on what is best for individual countries. A political cleavage can slowly erode integration bit by bit, and Euro-sceptics can especially push forward with their agenda and views during a crisis. Postfunctionalism can also explain why some countries prefer assimilation integration versus multiculturalism as nationalists might be heavily opposed to adhering to an EU wide integration framework for migrants in their countries. If the EU principles call for a multicultural approach in a country predominantly supportive of assimilation, then disintegration is bound to follow. If 'functionalism' or the economy is not the primary driver of improving integration rates of double disadvantaged populations such as migrant women, and pride in identity shapes national politics, then it would be difficult to implement supranational measures in national programmes for migrant integration. Gender mainstreaming and focusing on migrant women's labour market integration in particular would not be considered a top priority as such.

6.1 Recommendations

Europeanization and convergence of integration policies of Member States to reflect EU principles and gender mainstreaming would certainly help foster migrant women's labour market integration. More substantial legal competence of integration on the EU's part would also promote harmonisation of policies. However, with its limited competence now, there are various ways through which the EU can significantly impact

migrant women's labour market integration, such as legal instruments, funding, and soft law mechanisms.

Legal Instruments

Within the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), the Reception Conditions Directive and the Qualification Directive are both connected to integration. Article 15 of the Reception Conditions Directive states that access to the labour market for an asylum seeker should be given within a maximum period of nine months from the lodging date of the application (Foti, 2019). In 2018, two years after the EU announced plans to introduce reforms to CEAS, one of the reforms to the reception conditions directive with regard to labour market access was the proposal to shorten the waiting period from nine months to six months (Brauninger, 2018). However, despite the Council and the Commission's general agreement over the majority of reform proposal components, in this case, the Council opposes shortening the wait of access to the labour market to six months (Brauninger, 2018). Introducing this reform could improve integration for many migrants unable to work for the first nine months.

However, this measure alone will not ensure the migrant women will be granted the same labour market access as men due to their disproportionate integration hurdles. Therefore, the Qualification Directive, which concerns the treatment of refugees, should take note of this. Article 26 of the directive, named 'access to employment' states that 'Member States shall ensure that activities such as employment-related education opportunities for adults, vocational training, including training courses for upgrading skills, practical workplace experience and counselling services afforded by employment offices, are offered to beneficiaries of international protection, under equivalent conditions as nationals' (European Council, 2011). Gender mainstreaming should be included here, and an emphasis on ensuring both men and women sign up for and receive these training in order to have equal access and chances to enter the labour market.

For example, in Sweden's introductory programme called the Establishment Act, all refugees have to register for establishment talks, coaching and any introduction benefits (Hernes et al., 2019). This act was introduced in 2010 as a reform to the voluntary provision of municipality

integration programmes, and the reform specifically aimed at promoting the integration of women due to their lower participation rates in labour market programmes which then led to lower employment rates than their male counterparts (Hernes et al., 2019). This means that the act was designed to target both groups with their specific needs in mind and the introduction benefit was given as an ‘individual benefit’ rather than a household one so that both men and women would participate in the programme (Hernes et al., 2019). These types of measures should be held up as examples for harmonisation throughout the EU in order to promote gender mainstreaming from the very beginning.

Funding

Funding has played a significant role to develop convergence in integration policies through the Multiannual Financial Frameworks (MFF). From the 2007-2013 MFF which led to the development of the initial European Integration Fund (EIF), to the latest 2021-2027 MFF, the road to harmonisation has not been straightforward. EIF’s objective, as stated in Decision 2007/435/EC was ‘to support and encourage the efforts made by the Member States in enabling third-country nationals of different economic, cultural, religious, linguistic and ethnic backgrounds to fulfil the conditions of residence and to facilitate their integration into European societies’ (European Commission, 2007). This facilitation was to be done in compliance with the Common Basic Principles. The Commission specified this when they agreed upon four strategic priorities for the targeting of EIF resources, and the first strategic priority stated that Member States should aim to implement actions or policies designed to put CBP into practice. However, the convergence ambitions of the EIF was offset by the fact that the Commission did not have any legal basis or significantly limited control mechanism over the way Member States chose to use the funds and whether or not they followed CBPs during implementation.

With the 2014-2020 MFF, significant changes were made, such as the AMIF reducing substantive policy directives but increase in procedural developments raised the relevance and importance of the EU’s role (Van Wolleghe, 2019). Additionally, the Commission had a considerably higher share of the fund it was able to use. Compared to the EIF’s 7 per cent reserved for the indirect management of the Commission, the AMIF Regulation stated that 12 per cent of the entire fund was to be reserved for

indirect management spending on actions such as European Migration Network, emergency assistance, technical help for the Commission (Van Wolleghem, 2019). This gave the Commission greater room to express its preferences, thus being allowed to align programmes and projects with the EU framework when they have more power over funding management.

With the upcoming 2021-2027 MFF and the proposal presented in May 2018 shows a likely increase in the percentage of funds allocated under the Commission's discretion (Van Wolleghem, 2019). And even if the percentage does not increase, the total amount of money still would go up given that the 2021-2029 AMF's proposed fund is €10,415 million compared to the AMIF's €6,888 million (and this is after the refugee crisis led to a 120 per cent increase from the original budget).

If this proposal goes through, the Commission should take into consideration that many Member States do not have tailored national integration programmes that accommodate migrant women. Instead, from an EU wide comparative vantage point, efforts to increase migrant women's integration are led at least as much by bottom-up, community-based organisations as by top-down policies and public funding for migrants (Li, 2018). Non-governmental organisations (including civil and religious institutions) frequently cover the policy vacuum by offering different integration-related services to migrant women (Li, 2018). While the EU provides significant funds for labour market integration activities, these funds are granted to the Member States and are available to cities indirectly. Cities have also critiqued the gradual processing and allocation of EU funds from the national or regional level down to local authorities (Hooper et al. 2017). A clearer channel for access to EU funds such as smoother application processing for cities or direct links for organisations involved in integration activities could help increase migrant women's labour market integration in countries where this demographic is not prioritised.

Soft Law

The EU has influenced integration policies through soft law instruments since the early 2000s (Hooper et al. 2017). The Common Basic Principles is notably the cornerstone of the EU framework on integration, and since then plenty of communications, agendas, plans and actions have been adopted and implemented to varying degrees by the Member States. The

new EU migration pact and the new Work-Life Balance directive should both take migrant women's experiences into consideration when developing policy. President Ursula von der Leyen wrote that she would ensure the Work-Life Balance Directive, which aims to equalise the burden of responsibilities on women and men and encourage more women into the labour market, is properly and fully implemented (Leyen, 2019). She plans to use the ESF+ to sufficiently back up this directive with funding; however, the ESF+ proposal does not make it mandatory for the Member States to earmark a proportion of it for integration (Van Wolleghem, 2019). Therefore it will be up to the Member States to decide whether or not they will dedicate their allocation of the fund to migrant integration and migrant women in particular. Distinct allocations and references in policies, proposals and directive documents for targeting specific disadvantaged groups will help facilitate reaching out to migrant women with different requirements than migrant men or native women.

6.2 Conclusion

As the EU plans for the upcoming 2021-2027 multiannual financial framework, it is highly relevant to consider the impact and necessity of integrating migrant women into the labour market, especially considering current LFRP rates and rising ageing population across the EU. Several Member States do not adhere or fully implement common EU frameworks in their policies despite paper commitments, and this is compounded with topics like migration and integration that is tied so closely to national identity and politics. Legislative reforms on the EU's side may require more robust measures to ensure proper implementation, but till the competence of integration remains largely in the domain of Member States, different instruments such as funding and soft law can be used to facilitate labour market integration of migrant women. The EU has a significant part in ensuring successful integration of migrant men and women alike, and in the coming years, it needs to take up a more proactive role in amplifying the voices of migrant women.

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