



Pilsonības un migrācijas
lietu pārvalde



INTEGRATION OF MIGRANT WOMEN IN LATVIA: POLICIES AND MEASURES

Rīga, 2021.

Pursuant to Council Decision 2008/381/EC of 14 May 2008, the European Migration Network was established; its objective is to meet the information needs of institutions of the European Union and its Member States by providing up-to-date, objective, reliable, and comparable information on migration and asylum, with a view to supporting policymaking in these areas in the European Union. The European Migration Network also serves to provide the general public with information on these subjects. The Network is composed by the European Commission and the contact points designated by the Member States. Each contact point establishes a national migration network.

The contact point of each state prepares studies, whose topics have been set in the respective annual program of activities. The topics of studies are related to the area of migration of third-country nationals.

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1 BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

This study focuses on the integration of migrant women in the main sectorial areas covered by the EU Action plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027¹ including education and training, employment and skills, health and housing as the base for societal integration. While the term 'integration' is contested² and other terms such as 'inclusion' are increasingly preferred in policy, in this study the term 'integration' is used deliberately to refer to integration and inclusion policies and measures addressing migrant women.

In the EU, women account for almost half of the migrants from third countries (10.6 million or 49% of the migrant stock on 1 January 2020).³

Women, like men, migrate to Europe for a variety of reasons.⁴ Women may arrive as family migrants, labour migrants, students, asylum applicants or belonging to another group of migrants. This is reflected in the diversity of legal statuses and rights among migrant women. Migrant women's integration challenges differ depending on their resident status or reason for migration.^{5 6}

Recent studies show that migrant women face a so-called "double disadvantage", due to the intersection of being a woman and being a migrant.⁷ For example, migrant women in the EU generally have a higher unemployment rate than both non-migrant women and migrant men. For those women with young children, the employment rate is significantly lower for migrant than non-migrant women.⁸ Moreover, refugee women are worse off when it comes to education or employment compared to other migrant women, pointing to a "triple disadvantage".⁹

¹ European Commission, 'EU Action plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027', COM(2020) 758 final, <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/?action=media.download&uuid=CDFE0088-C151-66D5-846F7C422DE2A423>, last accessed on 9 July 2021.

² Schinkel, W. 'Against 'immigrant integration: For an end to neocolonial knowledge production', 2018, *CMS*, 6(31).

³ Eurostat, 'Population on 1 January by age group, sex and citizenship', 2021, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-datasets/-/migr_pop1ctz, last accessed on 21 July 2021 (without EL, HR, MT and PL).

⁴ European Commission, 'Integration of migrant women – A key challenge with limited policy resources', 2018, <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/feature/integration-of-migrant-women>, last accessed on 9 July 2021.

⁵ European Economic and Social Committee, 'Opinion on Inclusion of migrant women in the labour market', 2015, p.5, <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/librarydoc/inclusion-of-migrant-women-in-the-labour-market?lang=en>, last accessed on 9 July 2021; FRA, 'Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey – Migrant women – selected findings', 2019, p. 9–11, https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2019-eu-midis-ii-migrant-women_en.pdf, last accessed on 9 July 2021.

⁶ European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), 'Gender and Migration', 2020, p. 4, <https://eige.europa.eu/publications/gender-and-migration>, last accessed on 9 July 2020.

⁷ European Commission – Joint Research Centre, 'Gaps in the EU Labour Market Participation Rates: an intersectional assessment of the role of gender and migrant status', 2020, <https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC121425>, last accessed on 9 July 2021.

⁸ OECD, 'How to strengthen the integration of migrant women?', 2020, Migration Policy Debate No. 25, pp. 4 and 6, <https://www.oecd.org/migration/mig/migration-policy-debates-25.pdf>, last accessed on 9 July 2021.

⁹ OECD, 'Triple Disadvantage? A first overview of the integration of refugee women', 2018, pp. 16 and 19, https://www.oecd.org/employment/triple-disadvantage_3f3a9612-en;jsessionid=QdS1wA6MXnTSSOMYsBcF9LOj.ip-10-240-5-190, last accessed on 9 July 2021.

In addition, migrant women have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, e.g. through job loss, additional care and housework, domestic work or increased exposure when providing front-line services.¹⁰

On the other hand, there are also unique integration opportunities. Migrant women are – for example – equally likely to be as highly educated as non-migrant women and are more likely to be highly educated than migrant men.¹¹

The above elements shows the importance of a gendered approach in migrant integration policies and measures.¹² However, a 2017 study by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) found little evidence of a gendered approach in national action plans and integration strategies.¹³ The European Court of Auditors in its 2018 report identified a lack of policies for addressing the specific integration challenges of migrant women.¹⁴ Furthermore, a recent study published by the European Network of Migrant Women in 2020 identified shortcomings in addressing the needs of migrant women in Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) projects implemented through direct management, noting that: 'Although gender mainstreaming is briefly referred to in the majority of the calls, there seems to be a lack of clarity what this term implies in practical terms. The specific vulnerabilities and needs of women and girls are also largely overlooked'.¹⁵

In its 2016 Action Plan on the Integration of Third-Country Nationals, the European Commission made a commitment to engage in a dialogue with 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.¹⁶ The assessment of the action plan, however, noted that it only recognised to a limited extent the specific needs of certain categories and the possible intersections between the migrant status and other segments of discrimination including gender.¹⁷

In its Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021–2027, presented in November 2020, the European Commission proposed targeted integration support that takes into account individual characteristics that may present specific challenges such as gender through gender-specific

¹⁰ IOM, 'COVID-19 and women migrant workers: Impacts and Implications', 2020, <https://publications.iom.int/books/COVID-19-and-women-migrant-workers-impacts-and-implications>, last accessed on 9 July 2021.

¹¹ OECD, 'How to strengthen the integration of migrant women?', 2020, Migration Policy Debate No. 25, p. 4, <https://www.oecd.org/migration/mig/migration-policy-debates-25.pdf>, last accessed on 9 July 2021.

¹² OECD, 'How to strengthen the integration of migrant women?', 2020, Migration Policy Debate No. 25, p. 6, <https://www.oecd.org/migration/mig/migration-policy-debates-25.pdf>, last accessed on 9 July 2021.

¹³ The EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) 'Together in the EU - Promoting the participation of migrants and their descendants', 2017, p. 7, https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2017-together-in-the-eu_en.pdf, last accessed on 9 July 2021.

¹⁴ European Court of Auditors, 'The integration of migrants from outside the EU, Briefing Paper', 2018, p. 23, https://www.eca.europa.eu/Lists/ECADocuments/Briefing_paper_Integration_migrants/Briefing_paper_Integration_migrants_EN.pdf, last accessed on 9 July 2021.

¹⁵ European Network of Migrant Women, 'Follow the €€€ for Women and Girls', 2020, <http://www.migrantwomennetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/Follow-the-Money-for-Women-2020-AMIF.pdf>, last accessed on 9 July 2021.

¹⁶ European Commission, 'Action Plan on the integration of third-country nationals', 2016, https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/default/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/proposal-implementation-package/docs/20160607/communication_action_plan_integration_third-country_nationals_en.pdf, last accessed on 9 July 2021.

¹⁷ European Commission, 'Assessment Of The 2016 Commission Action Plan on the Integration of Third-Country Nationals', SWD(2020) 290 final, https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/default/files/pdf/20201124_swd-2020-758-commission-staff-working-document.pdf, last accessed on 9 July 2021.

processes that complement the mainstreamed approach.¹⁸ At the same time, the importance of a gender-sensitive response to different policy areas has been emphasised by the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025,¹⁹ which emphasised also the dual approach of targeted measures to achieve gender equality, combined with strengthened gender mainstreaming. Therefore, the 2021 EMN study on the 'Integration of Migrant Women in the EU: Policies and Measures' conducts a stock-taking exercise on where EMN Member States currently stand in terms of gender-sensitive integration policies and measures targeting migrant women.

2 STUDY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the 2021 EMN study on the 'Integration of Migrant Women in the EU: Policies and Measures' is to understand if and to what extent Member States and Norway consider the distinct situation of migrant women in their integration policies and measures. The aim is to provide information that will support policymakers developing integration policies and measures that better support migrant women in their integration process, taking their respective backgrounds into account. An overview will be provided of research and statistics available at the national level on the integration opportunities and challenges of migrant women.

The study's main objectives are:

- To map current national integration policies in the EU Member States and Norway that specifically target women;
- To provide examples of good practices and lessons learnt from EU Member States and Norway on integration measures for migrant women at the national but also regional or local level;
- To provide an overview of special policies or measures that have been developed to counteract negative consequences of COVID-19 for migrant women's integration.

The study targets policymakers interested in addressing the specific situation of migrant women in their integration policy as well as researchers, who may use the findings as a starting point for more in-depth research of the integration of migrant women, such as at the local and regional level. Also, the study is of interest to the general public, raising awareness on gender-specific integration issues.

3 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study defines a *migrant woman* as a third-country national female [migrant](#) (i.e. a regularly residing female migrant aged 18 and above) for the purpose of policy analysis; and as a female [third-country national](#) for the purpose of data analysis. However, the study also analyses those policies and measures that are not exclusively targeting third-country nationals, but which include them as part of a wider target group (e.g. women in general; or migrant women in general which may also include EU citizens with migrant background). EU Member States and Norway are encouraged to include information on such policies and measures, focusing on their relevance for the study's target group.

¹⁸ European Commission, 'EU Action plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027', COM(2020) 758 final, pp. 6-7, <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/?action=media.download&uuid=CDFE0088-C151-66D5-846F7C422DE2A423>, last accessed on 9 July 2021.

¹⁹ European Commission, 'A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025', COM(2020) 152 final, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0152&from=EN>, last accessed on 9 July 2021.

The policies and measures outlined in this study will be structured along specific categories of migrant women (for example low-/highly-skilled labour migrants, students, family migrants, asylum seekers) as far as possible.

Integration policies refer to targeted integration strategies and action plans but also broader policy instruments relevant to the integration of migrant women such as sector specific governmental programmes (health, education, employment, housing, etc.). *Measures* include systematic initiatives (multi-year / long term), projects (ad-hoc) and legislative (structural) measures that are used to implement the integration policies (including those funded by governments but implemented by NGOs on behalf of the governments).

Even though local communities are the places where integration happens and therefore regional and local authorities have their own integration policies and measures, the focus of this study is the national level for the simple reason that researching regional and local level policies and measures would require considerably more time and resources than available for an EMN study. However, questions on good practices have been incorporated to this study to allow for the provision of examples from the regional and local level.

Integration policies and measures will be categorised along the focus areas of labour market, entrepreneurship, education and vocational training, language training, housing, health and civic integration, and will open the door for Member States to report on any other areas that are significant.

The reporting period for this study ranges from 2016 to 2021, depending on the area of analysis (i.e. data, policies, measures):

- Data: 2016–2020, to capture trends over the past 5 years.
- Policies: 2021 and upcoming policy developments (i.e. the policies currently in place as well as planned developments).
- Measures: 2016–2021 in order to allow the inclusion of measures that might have already been evaluated.

4 EU LEGAL AND POLICY CONTEXT

Although migrant integration policies are a national competence of EU Member States, European institutions have the mandate to 'provide incentives and support for the action of Member States with a view to promoting the integration of third-country nationals' since the signature of the [Treaty of Lisbon in 2007](#). The EU has periodically set priorities and goals to drive EU policies, legislative proposals and funding opportunities on integration since the 1999 [Treaty of Amsterdam](#), that led to the 2004 [Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy](#). These have guided and continue to guide most EU actions in the area of integration. The [Common Agenda for Integration](#), presented by the Commission in 2005 and in effect until 2010, provided the framework for the implementation of the EU integration policy and contained a series of supportive EU mechanisms and instruments to promote integration and facilitate exchanges between integration actors. In 2009 the [European Website on Integration](#) was launched to provide a platform for good practices and news on integration in the EU. In July 2011, the [European Agenda for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals](#) was adopted. It covered the period 2011-2015, focused on increasing the economic, social, cultural and political participation of migrants and on fighting discrimination, with an emphasis on local actions. This was followed by the 2016 [Action Plan on the Integration of Third-Country Nationals](#). This was a goal-setting document published by the European Commission, providing a comprehensive framework to support Member States' efforts in developing and strengthening their integration policies and describing concrete measures the

Commission was to implement in this regard. In 2017, the [Skills Profile Tool](#) was launched to map skills of third-country nationals to be used by national authorities when planning integration. Building on the 2016 Action Plan, the European Commission revealed its new [Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion](#) (2021-2027) in November 2020, proposing concrete actions, giving guidance, and delineating funding for initiatives meant to bring inclusion for all.

Other relevant policy instruments include:

- The [EU Anti-racism Action Plan 2020–2025](#), which was published by the European Commission on 18 September 2020 to step up action against racism in the European Union. As the action plan points out, racism can be combined with discrimination and hatred on other grounds, including gender.
- The [Pact on Migration and Asylum](#), that was proposed by the European Commission on 23 September 2020. With the Pact, the Commission is proposing a fresh start on migration, bringing together policy in the areas of migration, asylum, integration and border management. In the area of integration, the Pact supports effective integration policies with a focus on local communities and early access to integration services for children and vulnerable groups.
- The [EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025, which](#) sets the key objective of achieving gender balance in decision-making and in politics for example. The Strategy pursues a dual approach of gender mainstreaming combined with targeted actions - intersectionality is a horizontal principle for its implementation.
- The forthcoming [Recommendation on Migrant and Refugee Women and Girls](#) which is currently being tasked to Drafting Committee on Migrant Women (GEC-MIG), a subordinate body to the Gender Equality Commission (GEC) of the Council of Europe.

5 PRIMARY QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED BY THE STUDY

The study seeks to address four primary questions:

- What does the available data /research tell us about the migration channels, the level of integration of migrant women in the EU Member States and Norway, and their integration challenges and opportunities?
- To what extent are migrant women specifically addressed in national integration policies (e.g. strategies, action plans and government programmes)?
- To what extent are there targeted integration measures available in the EU Member States and Norway, specifically addressing migrant women at the national but also regional or local level, and what has been identified as a good practice in this area?
- Have special integration policies or measures been developed to counteract the negative consequences of COVID-19 for migrant women's integration, and if yes, what do these policies or measures look like?

6 RELEVANT SOURCES AND LITERATURE

EMN Studies, Informs and Ad-Hoc Queries

- EMN Study (2019): [Labour market integration of third-country nationals in EU Member States](#).
- EMN study (2015): [The Integration of Beneficiaries of International/Humanitarian Protection into the Labour Market: Policies and Good Practices](#).

- EMN & OECD Inform (2020): [Inform # 1 – EU and OECD member states responses to managing residence permits and migrant unemployment during the COVID-19 pandemic.](#)
- EMN Ad Hoc Query (2020.74): [Measures regarding civic integration - Part 2.](#)
- EMN Ad Hoc Query (2020.73): [Integration measures regarding language courses - Part 1.](#)
- EMN Ad Hoc Query (2019.67): [Lines of intervention for the effective integration of persons entitled to international protection.](#)
- EMN Ad Hoc Query (2019.15): [Early language support.](#)
- EMN Ad Hoc Query (2018.1331): [Support measures to facilitate the labour market entry of family members.](#)
- EMN Ad-Hoc Query (2017.1168): [Integration measures regarding language courses and civic integration – Part 2.](#)
- EMN Ad-Hoc Query (2017.1167): [Integration measures regarding language courses and civic integration – Part 1.](#)
- EMN Ad-Hoc Query (2016.1097): [Content of integration programmes for applicants for/beneficiaries of international protection.](#)
- EMN Ad-Hoc Query (2015.683): [Monitoring report on integration.](#)
- EMN Ad-Hoc Query (2013. 497): [Immigrant Integration Plans.](#)

Other relevant sources

- European Commission (2021): [European Website on Integration – Integration Practices.](#)
- European Commission (2020): [A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025, COM\(2020\) 152 final.](#)
- European Commission (2020): [Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Action plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021–2027, COM\(2020\) 758 final.](#)
- European Commission (2018): [Integration of migrant women – A key challenge with limited policy resources.](#)
- European Commission – Joint Research Centre (2020): [Gaps in the EU Labour Market Participation Rates: an intersectional assessment of the role of gender and migrant status.](#)
- European Court of Auditors (2018): [The integration of migrants from outside the EU, Briefing Paper.](#)
- European Economic and Social Committee (2015): [Opinion on Inclusion of migrant women in the labour market.](#)
- European Institute for Gender Equality (2020): [Gender and Migration.](#)
- European Institute for Gender Equality: [Migration.](#)
- European Network of Migrant Women: www.migrantwomennetwork.org.
- European Network of Migrant Women (2020): [Follow the €€€ for Women and Girls.](#)
- European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2019): [Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey – Migrant women – selected findings.](#)
- Eurostat (2021): [Migrant integration statistics.](#) 2020 edition.
- International Organization for Migration (2020): [COVID-19 and women migrant workers: Impacts and Implications.](#)
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2020): [How to strengthen the integration of migrant women? Migration Policy Debate No. 25.](#)
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2018): [Triple Disadvantage? A first overview of the integration of refugee women.](#)

7 AVAILABLE STATISTICS

Eurostat, First permits by reason, age, sex and citizenship, [[migr_resfas](#)].

Eurostat, First permits issued for other reasons by reason, length of validity and citizenship, [[migr_resoth](#)].

Eurostat, Population on 1 January by age group, sex and citizenship, [[migr_pop1ctz](#)].

Eurostat, Unemployment rates by sex, age and citizenship (%), [[lfsa_urgan](#)].

Eurostat, Activity rates by sex, age and citizenship (%), [[lfsq_argan](#)].

Eurostat, Self-employment by sex, age and citizenship (1,000). [[lfsa_esgan](#)].

Eurostat, Population by educational attainment level, sex, age and citizenship (%), [[edat_lfs_9911](#)].

Eurostat, Overcrowding rate by age, sex and broad group of citizenship, [[ilc_lvho15](#)].

Eurostat, Self-reported unmet needs for medical examination by sex, age, main reason declared and groups of country of citizenship, [[hlth_silc_30](#)].

8 DEFINITIONS

The following key terms are used in the Common Template. The definitions are taken from the EMN Glossary Version 6.0²⁰ unless specified otherwise in footnotes.

Dual approach to gender equality: complementarity between gender mainstreaming and specific gender equality policies and measures, including positive measures.²¹

Gender: The socially constructed attributes, roles, activities, responsibilities and needs predominantly connected to being male or female in given societies or communities at a given time.

Gender mainstreaming: Systematic consideration of the differences between the conditions, situations and needs of women and men in all policies and actions.²²

Gender-sensitive: Policies and programmes that take into account the particularities pertaining to the lives of both women and men, while aiming to eliminate inequalities and promote gender equality, including an equal distribution of resources, therefore addressing and taking into account the gender dimension.²³

Integration: In the *EU context*, a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of EU Member States.

Integration indicators: Benchmarks used to measure the integration of migrants in specific policy areas, such as employment, education, social inclusion and active citizenship.

²⁰ EMN Glossary, https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/glossary_en, last accessed on 9 July 2021.

²¹ EIGE, 'Glossary & Thesaurus – dual approach to gender equality', <https://eige.europa.eu/thesaurus/terms/1092>, last accessed on 9 July 2021

²² EIGE, 'Glossary & Thesaurus - gender mainstreaming', <https://eige.europa.eu/thesaurus/terms/1185>, last accessed on 9 July 2021.

²³ EIGE, 'Glossary & Thesaurus - gender sensitive', <https://eige.europa.eu/thesaurus/terms/1211>, last accessed on 9 July 2021.

Intersectionality: Analytical tool for studying, understanding and responding to the ways in which sex and gender intersect with other personal characteristics/identities, and how these intersections contribute to unique experiences of discrimination.²⁴

Migrant: In the EU/EFTA context, a person who [...]: (i) 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.

Third-country national: Any person who is not a citizen of the European Union within the meaning of Art. 20(1) of TFEU and who is not a person enjoying the European Union right to free movement, as defined in Art. 2(5) of the Regulation (EU) 2016/399 (Schengen Borders Code).

9 METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

As with all EMN studies, the national reports should be primarily based on secondary sources. These may be supplemented by expert interviews. The identification of an integration measure as a “good practice” will utilise the European Website on Integration guidance that a good practice is defined as a measure that is “effective, efficient, sustainable and/or transferable, and that reliably lead[s] to a desired result”.²⁵ Furthermore, for the purpose of this study, an integration measure can additionally be considered “good” if it applies the concepts of gender-sensitivity or intersectionality. The selection of the measure should be made by an expert working in the field (e.g. policy maker; service provider; civil society organisation; migrant organisations) or based on studies or evaluations.²⁶

Common Template of EMN Study 2021

Integration of Migrant Women in the EU and Norway: Policies and Measures

National Contribution from LATVIA

1.1 TOP-LINE FACTSHEET

The national report for the European Migration Network study “Integration of Migrant Women in the EU and Norway: Policies and Measures” examines the integration of migrant women in Latvia in areas such as education, employment, health care, integration courses, and social inclusion.

In the European Union, 49 % of third-country nationals are women while in Latvia this proportion is 53 %. Women enter Europe for various reasons. Some enter for the purpose of family reunification, others to study or work, or to apply for asylum. Consequently, the challenges faced by migrant women in the areas of integration vary and depend on the new legal status and the reason for entry.

²⁴ EIGE, 'Glossary & Thesaurus – intersectionality', <https://eige.europa.eu/thesaurus/terms/1263>, last accessed on 9 July 2021.

²⁵ European Commission, 'European Website on Integration – What are 'good practices'?', 2014, <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/index.cfm?action=furl.go&go=/what-are-good-practices>, last accessed on 9 July 2021.

²⁶ A good starting point for researching „good practices” could be the [collection of good practices by the European Commission](#) as well as the Commission’s article on [Integration of migrant women – A key challenge with limited policy resources](#).

The purpose of the study is to look at whether the integration policies implemented by the Member States and Norway highlight and take into account the specific situation of migrant women as well as to identify examples of good practice on integration measures specifically targeting migrant women in both national and regional coverage.

In the context of the study, a migrant woman is a migrant third-country national who is legally residing in an EU Member State or in Norway.

The study covers the time period from 2016 to 2021.

The integration of migrant women in Latvia falls within the framework of national identity, civil society, and integration policies. In Latvia, integration policy is referred to as the “policy of a cohesive society”. Such concept appeared in Latvian regulatory enactments with the adoption of the Preamble of the Constitution in 2014.

The policy of a cohesive society in Latvia is implemented in a decentralized way or as a horizontal policy, when each ministry within its competence also ensures the solution of integration issues.

In the field of integration, the following policy planning documents are relevant in Latvia in 2016–2021:

- *Guidelines on National Identity, Civil Society and Integration Policy (2012–2018)²⁷;*
- *Plan for the Implementation of the Guidelines on National Identity, Civil Society and Integration Policy (2012–2018) in the Period from 2017 to 2018²⁸;*
- *National Identity, Civil Society and Integration Policy Implementation Plan 2019–2020²⁹;*
- *Guidelines for the Development of a Cohesive and Civically Active Society for 2021–2027³⁰;*
- *Action Plan for Movement and Admission in Latvia of Persons who Need International Protection³¹;*

The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia is the leading state governing body that elaborates the state policy in the field of development of a cohesive and civically active society. Together with the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Education and Science (in matters of education), the Ministry of Welfare (in matters of employment and social inclusion), the Ministry of Economy (in matters of housing), and the Ministry of Health (in matters of health care) are also involved in the development of a cohesive and civically active society.

The Ministry of Culture is the delegated authority of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (hereinafter – the AMIF) planning period 2014–2020 in Latvia. The tasks of the Ministry of Culture

²⁷ Approved by Order No 542 “Regarding Guidelines for National Identity, Civil Society and Integration Policies (2012–2018)” adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers on 20 October 2011.

²⁸ Approved by Order No 268 “Regarding the Plan for the Implementation of Guidelines for National Identity, Civil Society and Integration Policies (2012–2018) in the Period from 2017 to 2018” adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers on 31 May 2017.

²⁹ Approved by Order No 345 “Regarding the Plan for the Implementation of Guidelines for National Identity, Civil Society and Integration Policies in the period from 2019 to 2020” adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers on 18 July 2018.

³⁰ Approved by Order No 72 “Regarding the Guidelines for the Development of a Cohesive and Civically Active Society for 2021–2027” adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers on 5 February 2021. The guidelines are a policy framework that ensures the succession of national identity, civil society, and integration policies and the implementation of the objectives and tasks set in the Latvian National Development Plan for 2021–2027.

³¹ <https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/278257-action-plan-for-movement-and-admission-in-latvia-of-persons-who-need-international-protection>

within the framework of AMIF shall be establishment of a single coordinating body, capacity building for professionals in different areas, activities to promote intercultural communication, provision of integration courses, provision of support measures for international protection persons, promotion of access to information and services for third-country nationals, training for learning Latvian.

Within the AMIF, since 2016, projects supporting the integration of immigrants into the host society are introduced providing full information on support and integration activities, offering integration and the Latvian language courses as well as training for professionals working with the target group, journalists, and editors.

Integration policy issues related to integration into the local community are also dealt with in practice at municipal level, offering integration and Latvian courses, providing social assistance and access to health services, as well as providing support for housing issues.

Individual integration measures in the form of projects are also provided by the Society Integration Foundation and non-governmental organisations.

Integration policy issues related to inclusion in the local community are dealt with in practice at the municipal level; municipalities also offer integration and the Latvian language courses.

In the study, the integration approach is addressed in areas such as education, employment, entrepreneurship, healthcare, housing access, social inclusion, integration, and language courses. The study also contains information on four examples of good practice in Latvia where the target group of the implemented project is migrant women.

Section 1: Integration of migrant women – data and debates

Q1 Please analyse the data on first residence titles issued by reason in 2016–2020 in your country as extracted from Eurostat and included in the statistical Annex and describe the main forms of immigration used by third-country migrant women compared to third-country migrant men. What are the top 3 countries of citizenship in the period of 2016–2020? Did any significant changes occur in 2020 that might be related to COVID-19?

In the period from 2016 to 2020, the highest number of first-time residence permits was issued in 2018, making a total of 8,852³² (of them, 2,501³³ are issued to migrant women). On average, in all the years considered, the number of first-time residence permits issued to women amounts to one-third of the total. Comparatively, women entered Latvia most often for family reasons and least of all for paid employment. For men, on the contrary, the most common reason for entry is paid work. The top 3 countries of origin, whose citizens are issued residence permits in Latvia, are the Russian Federation, the Republic of Belarus, and Ukraine. Under the influence of COVID-19, the total number of first-time residence permits issued to both women and men has decreased.

Q2 Please analyse the data on population in 2016–2020 as extracted from Eurostat and describe the share of third-country national migrant women among the total population compared to third-country national migrant men.

The total population of Latvia has a tendency to decline between 2016 and 2020. In 2020, 1 907 675 people were registered in Latvia, of which 880 956 are men and 1 026 719 are women. On the other

³² Eurostat data

³³ Eurostat data

hand, the number of third-country nationals has increased from 90 382³⁴ to 98 328³⁵ between 2016 and 2020. Statistics on the sex of resident third-country nationals are not distributed in Latvia.

Please note: we have not used Eurostat data for this question as it also includes non-citizens of Latvia who are not equal to third country nationals with issued residence permits.

Q3 Please analyse the data on labour market, entrepreneurship, education, housing and health indicators in 2016–2020 as extracted from Eurostat and describe the main findings with specific focus on third-country national migrant women compared to third-country national migrant men. Did any significant changes occur in 2020 that might be related to COVID-19?

In 2016–2021, according to Eurostat, the unemployment rate among third-country nationals has decreased from 11.6 % to 7 %. The decline has occurred both among women and men. At the same time, the total number of self-employed third-country nationals has decreased from 11,100 to 9,300. But in proportion it has decreased among men and increased among women. In the period from 2016 to 2020, the number of third-country nationals (both women and men) with higher education has increased. On the other hand, there has been a decrease in the percentage of access to health services with a decrease in the number of third-country nationals who have not been able to afford health services because of their cost. The analysis of statistical data does not represent any significant changes caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Q4 What are the key opportunities and challenges for migrant women’s integration as identified in national statistical sources (e.g. integration monitors, census, administrative data) or available research (e.g. surveys among migrant women)?

In the assessment of the Migrant Integration Index (MIPEX) published in 2020,³⁶ Latvia has received only 37 out of 100 points, which means that the integration policy is rather unfavourable. The fewest points were given in the dimension of political participation. The dimensions of labour market mobility, education and health care, and access to citizenship are assessed as ‘rather unfavourable’. In addition, most ratings have remained at the level of the year 2014. The most highly rated areas of migrant integration are discrimination prevention and family reunification. An important point highlighted by the assessment is that, despite the fact that immigrants are given fundamental rights and protection, integration policy is not aimed at providing equal opportunities in the present and long term. The policy of migrants’ integration has also been seen as too fragmented and too dependent on project funding.

The State Employment Agency (the SEA) has pointed out that the most common reasons why people with refugee or alternative status are refusing job offers are mentioned: work is too heavy; cannot be combined with parenting; work is too far away from home; pay €600-700 “on hand” is too small.

According to the SEA, customers who are proactive are not afraid of new challenges, adapt to Latvia’s work culture and challenges, are able to achieve recognised results and employers are prepared to raise wages and enable growth.

³⁴ Data for valid residence permits from the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs, available <https://www.pmlp.gov.lv/en/residence-permits>

³⁵ Data for valid residence permits from the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs, available <https://www.pmlp.gov.lv/en/residence-permits>

³⁶ Migrant Integration Index – Latvia, <https://www.mipex.eu/latvia>

Q5 Are more disaggregated data or research available at national level (compared to what is available through Eurostat), e.g. by resident status/reason for migration, by number of children in households or by first/second generation of migrants?

When analysing Eurostat data, it should be taken into account that non-citizens living in Latvia are counted as third-country nationals. Their status provides more favourable conditions than the ones of third-country nationals to whom residence permits have been issued. The proportion of non-citizens per total population is around 10 % (197,888³⁷ non-citizens were registered in the beginning of 2020; 104,189 of them were women³⁸).

The Central Statistical Bureau has published a "Demography 2020"³⁹ statistical inventory, which publishes data on population and population changes, population sex, age and ethnic composition, demographic load, closed and divorced marriages, birth rates, mortality, long-term migration and nationality. However, third-country nationals are not distributed to the total number of immigrants.

Q6 What are the main public and policy debates regarding migrant women's integration (opportunities and challenges)?

In the public and political debate, the issue of the integration of migrant women is not topical. In the context of the integration of third-country nationals, the most significant challenges are related to successful integration into the labour market, access to health services and limited social protection.⁴⁰ Despite the wide range of practical skill improvement and support measures available to entrants, unequal access to the labour market has been observed, which consequently hinders the establishment of legitimate employment relations. In turn, the inequality in access to health services is related to the type of residence permit issued to the third-country national.

Section 2: National integration policies in the Member State

Q7 Please describe your country's overall organisational approach with regard to integration policy: who are the competent authorities for integration policy? Is integration policy a national, regional, local or shared competency and which responsibilities come with that competency?

In Latvia, the policy of a cohesive society is implemented in a decentralized way or as a horizontal policy. Each ministry, within the framework of its competence, also ensures dealing with integration policy issues.

The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia is the state governing body responsible for the policy of a cohesive society. Together with the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Education and Science (in matters of education), the Ministry of Welfare (in matters of employment and social inclusion), the Ministry of Economy (in matters of housing), and the Ministry of Health (in matters of health care) are also involved in the development of a cohesive and civically active society. Individual integration measures in the form of projects are also provided by the Society Integration Foundation and non-governmental organisations.

³⁷ Data from the Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia

³⁸ Data from the Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia

³⁹ Available on <https://www.csb.gov.lv/en/statistics/statistics-by-theme/population/number-and-change/search-in-theme/417-demography-2020>

⁴⁰ Study of the Situation of Third-Country Nationals in Latvia, 2017, study results report, https://www.km.gov.lv/sites/km/files/tpv_petijuma_zinojums_2017-biss1.pdf

The Ministry of Culture is the delegated authority of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (hereinafter – the AMIF) planning period 2014–2020 in Latvia. Within the AMIF, since 2016, projects supporting the integration of immigrants into the host society are introduced providing full information on support and integration activities, offering integration and the Latvian language courses as well as training for professionals working with the target group, journalists, and editors.

Integration policy issues related to inclusion in the local community are dealt with in practice at the municipal level as well.

Q8 Is the integration of migrant women a policy priority in your country?

No. Integration of migrant women in Latvian integration policy is not singled out. The integration of women is included in the overall policy of a cohesive society.

Q9 Is gender mainstreamed in national integration policies? Is this approach also complemented by gender specific policies (dual approach to gender equality)?

In Latvia, the policy of a cohesive society respects the common gender equality. On 17 Augusts 2021, the Cabinet of Ministers approved a Plan to Promote Equal Rights for Women and Men in 2021–2023⁴¹. According to the plan, particular attention will be paid to promoting gender equality in the labour market by reducing gender stereotypes and implementing targeted measures to reduce gender segregation in the labour market, the pay gap between women and men, and to provide support for a more successful balance of work and family life.⁴²

Q10 Are migrant women specifically addressed in national integration policies (e.g. strategies, action plans, government programmes)?

1.1.1.1 Table 1: Policies addressing migrant women

Yes		No ⁴³	n/a (no national integration policy available)
Third-country nationals	Migrants in general (that might also include EU citizens with migrant background and third- country nationals)		
		X	

⁴¹ Approved by Order No 578 "Regarding the Plan for Promoting Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men in 2021–2023" adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers on 21 August 2021, <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/325509-par-planu-sieviesu-un-viriesu-vienlidzigu-tiesibu-un-iespeju-veicinasanai-20212023-gadam>

⁴² <https://lvportals.lv/dienaskartiba/331385-tuvakajos-gados-uzmaniba-tiks-pieversta-dzimumu-lidztiesibas-veicinasanai-darba-tirgu-2021>

⁴³ If women are not specifically mentioned but if the policy implies women. (e.g. as parents), that should be reported as "yes". But if the policy is not specific to women but addresses everyone (men, women, boys, girls) this should not be reported and the answer should be "no".

Please continue with Q11	<i>Please continue with Q10a</i>	<i>Please continue with Q10b & Q11</i>
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a) If migrant women are not specifically addressed in national integration policies, what is the reason or underlying approach (e.g. mainstreaming approach)?

In Latvia, gender equality is respected in the policy of a cohesive society by paying equal attention to both male and migrant women. For the successful integration of immigrants into the local community, the development of appropriate skills and support is necessary equally for representatives of both genders.

b) If no national integration policy is available in your country, are migrant women specifically addressed in national policies across different sectors relevant to integration?

Please briefly describe. Please note that a detailed description is asked for in Q11.

Q11 How are migrant women addressed with regard to the following sectors: labour market, entrepreneurship, education and vocational training, language training, housing, health, civic integration, other?

Please fill out the tables for each focus area by answering the questions included in the tables for each policy (i.e. integration policy or – if not available – sector specific policy). Please add columns, as necessary. Please include information such as the competent authority, the aim of the policy, and the target group.

1.1.1.2 Table 2: Labour market integration

Labour market	Name of integration policy or sector specific policy	Please add columns as necessary
How are migrant women addressed with regard to labour market integration?	<p><i>Integration into the labour market</i></p> <p>The State Employment Agency (hereinafter – the SEA) offers support measures in accordance with the person's wishes, abilities, previous experience and education as well as specific requirements, if any are established (for example, measures for persons with disabilities).</p>	
Are migrant women specifically targeted or are they addressed as part of a wider group?	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Specifically third-country national migrant women targeted</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Third-country national migrant women addressed as part of a wider group of migrants (including also EU citizens with migrant background)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Migrant women addressed as part of a wider group of women</p>	
Are specific categories of migrant women targeted (for example low-/highly-skilled labour migrants, students, family migrants, asylum seekers, etc.)?	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p>In order to receive the support measures offered by the SEA, a person must register as an unemployed person or a job-seeker.</p> <p>Persons with refugee or alternative status have the right to receive the same SEA services as the ones available to Latvian nationals including finding out personal skills and motivation, drawing up an individual job</p>	

Labour market	Name of integration policy or sector specific policy	<i>Please add columns as necessary</i>
	<p>search plan, career advice and assistance in job search. ⁴⁴</p> <p>Individual support measures are available for asylum seekers:</p> <p>Introductory course “Labour market in Latvia“ and individual consultations at the Centre for Asylum Seekers “Mucenieki” (upon request); in addition, visits of asylum seekers to employers are organized.</p> <p>Moreover, cooperation with employers is established, as well as assistance to unemployed people with refugee or alternative status during job interviews is provided.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	
At what stage of the integration process does the policy start (e.g. recently arrived or no differentiation)?	The services are available to third-country nationals who have received a permanent or temporary residence permit and who have registered with the SEA as unemployed persons or job seekers.	

1.1.1.3 Table 3: Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship	Name of integration policy or sector specific policy	<i>Please add columns as necessary</i>
How are migrant women addressed with regard to entrepreneurship?	The SEA's “Measures for the commencement of commercial activity or self-employment” are offered with the purpose of providing advisory and financial support to assist unemployed persons with pre-training ⁴⁵ and orientation to conducting a commercial	

⁴⁴ In the period from the year 2016 to the end of June of the year 2021, support was provided to 84 women and 147 men with refugee or alternative status.

⁴⁵ Support is provided to unemployed persons who have received the appropriate education or completed professional or non-formal education programmes offered by the SEA (e.g. project management or other courses).

Entrepreneurship	Name of integration policy or sector specific policy	<i>Please add columns as necessary</i>
	<p>activity to start a commercial activity or self-employment and to successfully operate in the chosen field for not less than two years.</p> <p>Within the activity, unemployed persons receive consultations in the preparation and implementation of business plan, financial support (grant) for the implementation of the business plan – up to 5,000 EUR according to the approved business plan estimate and monthly subsidy at the initial stage of implementation of the activity (the first six months) in the amount of the national minimum wage.</p> <p>Since 2016 the SEA has registered 255 persons (90 women, 165 men) with refugee or alternative status.</p> <p>Since 2016, 88 persons (15 women and 73 men) were recruited through the SEA, several of them repeatedly.</p>	
<p>Are migrant women specifically targeted or are they addressed as part of a wider group?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Specifically third-country national migrant women targeted</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Third-country national migrant women addressed as part of a wider group of migrants (including also EU citizens with migrant background)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Migrant women addressed as part of a wider group of women</p>	
<p>Are specific categories of migrant women targeted (for example low-/highly-skilled labour migrants, students, family migrants, asylum seekers, etc.)?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><i>If Yes, please indicate the category(ies) and describe how their specific backgrounds and needs are addressed?</i></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>	
<p>At what stage of the integration process does the policy start (e.g. recently arrived or no differentiation)?</p>	<p>The service is available to third-country nationals who have received a permanent or temporary residence permit and who have registered with the SEA as unemployed persons or job seekers.</p>	

EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING	Name of integration policy or sector specific policy	<i>Please add columns as necessary</i>
<p>How are migrant women addressed with regard to education and vocational training?</p>	<p>Obtaining higher education.</p> <p>Foreigners who have a valid residence permit must pay for the studying in higher education programs in accordance with the concluded contract with the relevant educational institution.</p> <p>The Law on Higher Education Institutions provides conditions for foreigners to whom a temporary residence permit has been issued, namely, they can be admitted to Latvian higher education institutions and colleges if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - secondary education documents of the person comply with Latvian standards; - the person's knowledge meets the requirements of the admission rules of the relevant higher education institution or college; - the person is sufficiently fluent in the language in which the studies will take place. <p>Foreigners to whom a permanent residence permit has been issued are subject to the same conditions as citizens of the Republic of Latvia.</p> <p>Separate preferences for obtaining higher education for women are not provided.</p>	<p>The SEA offers the unemployed persons a variety of training activities, including acquisition of a new profession (continuing education), professional development, acquisition of additional skills (the Latvian language, foreign languages, computers, management categories, etc.), online platform courses, training at the employer.</p> <p>In 2020, the SEA began offering online learning options (<i>MOOC</i>) to persons at risk of unemployment, unemployed persons, and job seekers. One of the objectives of the online measures is to diversify the offer of training courses according to the needs of the target groups, including balancing work and family life for women and men, persons on parental leave raising children, persons with disabilities, etc. In 2020, most (70 %) of online Coursera course participants were women.</p>

<p>Are migrant women specifically targeted or are they addressed as part of a wider group?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Specifically third-country national migrant women targeted</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Third-country national migrant women addressed as part of a wider group of migrants (including also EU citizens with migrant background)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Migrant women addressed as part of a wider group of women</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Specifically third-country national migrant women targeted</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Third-country national migrant women addressed as part of a wider group of migrants (including also EU citizens with migrant background)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Migrant women addressed as part of a wider group of women</p>
<p>Are specific categories of migrant women targeted (for example low-/highly-skilled labour migrants, students, family migrants, asylum seekers, etc.)?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><i>If Yes, please indicate the category(ies) and describe how their specific backgrounds and needs are addressed?</i></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><i>If Yes, please indicate the category(ies) and describe how their specific backgrounds and needs are addressed?</i></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>At what stage of the integration process does the policy start (e.g. recently arrived or no differentiation)?</p>	<p>The acquisition of higher education is not a part of the integration process provided by the state.</p>	<p>The service is available to foreigners who have received a permanent or temporary residence permit and who have registered with the SEA as unemployed persons or job seekers.</p>

1.1.1.5 Table 5: Language Training

LANGUAGE TRAINING	Name of integration policy or sector specific policy	Please add columns as necessary
<p>How are migrant women addressed with regard to language training?</p>	<p>The SEA organizes the Latvian language learning for unemployed persons and job seekers within the informal education program activity "National language learning"⁴⁶ and within the competitiveness promotion activity "Support for education of unemployed persons"⁴⁷. Each person receives a scholarship in the amount of 5 EUR for the study of the national language for a period of 12 months. All municipalities and the national language organizations offer additional basic language courses for foreigners. The teaching methods is designed for persons without preliminary knowledge of the Latvian language.</p>	<p>Opportunities for learning the Latvian language are offered to third-country nationals who are legally residing in Latvia. Provision of the Latvian language courses is included in the Guidelines for the Development of a Cohesive and Civically Active Society for 2021–2027.</p> <p>At the basic level, unemployed persons and job seekers can take the national language courses at the National Centre for Education. Russian is the basic language (English is also used in courses at the basic level). The teaching methods is designed for persons without preliminary knowledge of the Latvian language.</p>

	prepared an electronic Latvian language learning material for self-study.	
Are migrant women specifically targeted or are they addressed as part of a wider group?	<input type="checkbox"/> Specifically third-country national migrant women targeted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Third-country national migrant women addressed as part of a wider group of migrants (including also EU citizens with migrant background) <input type="checkbox"/> Migrant women addressed as part of a wider group of women	<input type="checkbox"/> Specifically third-country national migrant women targeted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Third-country national migrant women addressed as part of a wider group of migrants (including also EU citizens with migrant background) <input type="checkbox"/> Migrant women addressed as part of a wider group of women
Are specific categories of migrant women targeted (for example low-/highly-skilled labour migrants, students, family migrants, asylum seekers, etc.)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <i>If Yes, please indicate the category(ies) and describe how their specific backgrounds and needs are addressed?</i> <p>Separate Latvian language courses are organized for asylum seekers and persons who have been granted international protection status.</p> <p>Within the framework of the Latvian language courses, persons have the opportunity to acquire the language knowledge and skills necessary in the work and domestic environment, as well as to develop the main language learning skills.</p> <p>The SEA offers the Latvian language courses without an intermediate language; in 2017, these courses were improved according to the needs of the clients by dividing the training into 6 sub-levels (during the training, each person receives a scholarship of 5 EUR per training day). Persons with refugee or alternative status and other unemployed persons may participate in the courses.</p> <p>In 2018, the SEA launched a new service "Latvian language mentor</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

	<p>for employed refugees and persons with alternative status”, which focuses on adaptation in the work environment and the development of professional vocabulary.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	
<p>At what stage of the integration process does the policy start (e.g. recently arrived or no differentiation)?</p>	<p>Third-country nationals may participate in the Latvian language courses after obtaining a permanent or temporary residence permit.</p> <p>Courses intended only for persons of international protection are started after the submission of a request for asylum or after the granting of refugee or alternative status.</p> <p>A person may take part in the language courses offered by the SEA after registering with the SEA as an unemployed person or a job seeker.</p>	<p>No differentiation</p>

1.1.1.6 Table 6: Housing

HOUSING	Name of integration policy or sector specific policy	<i>Please add columns as necessary</i>
How are migrant women addressed with regard to housing?	<p>Third-country nationals, when submitting documents for a residence permit, must prove that they have sufficient means to maintain and care for themselves and their family, including adequate housing.</p> <p>In Latvia, foreigners who have been granted a temporary residence permit, do not have access to state-guaranteed social assistance and services, including a social apartment or social housing.</p> <p>Social mentors provide support in finding a place of residence to persons granted refugee or alternative status.</p>	
Are migrant women specifically targeted or are they addressed as part of a wider group?	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Specifically third-country national migrant women targeted</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Third-country national migrant women addressed as part of a wider group of migrants (including also EU citizens with migrant background)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Migrant women addressed as part of a wider group of women</p>	
Are specific categories of migrant women targeted (for example low-/highly-skilled labour migrants, students, family migrants, asylum seekers, etc.)?	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><i>If Yes, please indicate the category(ies) and describe how their specific backgrounds and needs are addressed?</i></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>	
At what stage of the integration process does the policy start (e.g. recently arrived or no differentiation)?	<i>No differentiation</i>	

1.1.1.7 Table 7: Health

HEALTH	Name of integration policy or sector specific policy	<i>Please add columns as necessary</i>
How are migrant women addressed with regard to	A third-country national, in order to obtain a temporary residence permit, needs a health insurance policy that guarantees	

HEALTH	Name of integration policy or sector specific policy	<i>Please add columns as necessary</i>
health (including mental health)?	<p>coverage of health care related expenses in Latvia.</p> <p>In turn, third-country nationals who have been issued a permanent residence permit can receive state-paid health services.</p> <p>Similarly, an employed third-country national has the right to receive health care services within the framework of compulsory state health insurance.</p> <p>The spouse of an employed third-country national who holds a temporary residence permit has the right to receive state paid health services if he or she is raising a child under seven years of age or at least three children under 15 years of age.</p>	
Are migrant women specifically targeted or are they addressed as part of a wider group?	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Specifically third-country national migrant women targeted</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Third-country national migrant women addressed as part of a wider group of migrants (including also EU citizens with migrant background)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Migrant women addressed as part of a wider group of women</p>	
Are specific categories of migrant women targeted (for example low-/highly-skilled labour migrants, students, family migrants, asylum seekers, etc.)?	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><i>If Yes, please indicate the category(ies) and describe how their specific backgrounds and needs are addressed?</i></p> <p>If the third-country national is a spouse of a Latvian citizen and holds a temporary residence permit, it is possible to receive care services intended for pregnant women and maternity assistance free of charge.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	
At what stage of the integration process does the policy start (e.g. recently arrived or no differentiation)?	<i>No differentiation</i>	

1.1.1.8 Table 8: Civic integration⁴⁸

CIVIC INTEGRATION	Name of integration policy or sector specific policy	<i>Please add columns as necessary</i>
<p>How are migrant women addressed with regard to civic integration?</p>	<p>Integration courses.</p> <p>Integration courses are implemented by the Society Integration Foundation, individual non-governmental organisations, and municipalities.</p>	<p>Integration courses are available to all third-country nationals legally residing in Latvia. Provision of the integration courses is included in the Guidelines for the Development of a Cohesive and Civically Active Society for 2021–2027.</p> <p>Civic courses cover the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History, culture, and values of Latvia; • Public administration and the rule of law (including the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia, democracy, promotion of tolerance and reduction of discrimination, courts, police, illegal activities, violence, and hate crimes); • Education, social, and healthcare services (including paid or free, insurance, support, and counseling); • Latvian language at work and in everyday life (requirements, learning opportunities, including self-study opportunities); • Business opportunities (regulatory framework, social entrepreneurship, business incubators, and other forms of support); • Society and everyday life (gender equality, relations between men and women, family, marriage); • Leisure time (active recreation, sports, and cultural events, social activities);

⁴⁸ For example validation of skills, civic courses, political participation or other.

CIVIC INTEGRATION	Name of integration policy or sector specific policy	<i>Please add columns as necessary</i>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in local community activities, leadership, and cooperation skills. <p>Civic Courses are 16-30 academic hours long.</p>
Are migrant women specifically targeted or are they addressed as part of a wider group?	<input type="checkbox"/> Specifically third-country national migrant women targeted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Third-country national migrant women addressed as part of a wider group of migrants (including also EU citizens with migrant background) <input type="checkbox"/> Migrant women addressed as part of a wider group of women	<input type="checkbox"/> Specifically third-country national migrant women targeted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Third-country national migrant women addressed as part of a wider group of migrants (including also EU citizens with migrant background) <input type="checkbox"/> Migrant women addressed as part of a wider group of women
Are specific categories of migrant women targeted (for example low-/highly-skilled labour migrants, students, family migrants, asylum seekers, etc.)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <i>If Yes, please indicate the category(ies) and describe how their specific backgrounds and needs are addressed?</i> <p>Individual integration courses are organised for asylum seekers and persons granted refugee or alternative status.</p> <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
At what stage of the integration process does the policy start (e.g. recently arrived or no differentiation)?	<p>Third-country nationals may participate in integration courses after obtaining a permanent or temporary residence permit.</p> <p>Courses intended only for persons under international protection are started after the submission of a request for asylum or after the granting of refugee or alternative status.</p>	No differentiation

1.1.1.9 Table 9: Other⁴⁹

OTHER	Name of integration policy or sector specific policy	Please add columns as necessary
<p>How are migrant women addressed with regard to other areas?</p>	<p><i>Social worker and social mentor support for asylum seekers and persons with refugee and alternative status. The social mentors provide the support in the Asylum seekers reception centre and outside. The support is very crucial for families with children. Main tasks of a social worker and social mentor in their work with asylum seekers, refugees, and persons under subsidiary protection:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Identify your needs and desires for starting a life in Latvia.</i> • <i>Arrange an interview with you and your family members on average within 3 working days after your arrival at the Accommodation Centre for Asylum Seekers "Mucenieki".</i> • <i>Develop an individual plan for socio-economic inclusion, meet regularly, and discuss with you and your family members the progress of the implementation of the plan.</i> • <i>Help to find alternative solutions to various problems, attract and recommend the necessary resources.</i> • <i>Provide support in dealing with everyday situations, helping to create an understanding of life in the society of Latvia.</i> • <i>Build and expand the social support network, namely, with people who want and are able to help.</i> • <i>Provide support in dealing with individuals and legal entities.</i> • <i>Provide support for receiving identity documents and opening a bank account.</i> • <i>Provide information on the procedure for receiving benefits.</i> • <i>Ensure that you are accompanied to the places where you and/or your children will study, work, or receive a service.</i> 	

⁴⁹ For example anti-discrimination measures, measures against racism, hate speech and violence against women, measures to enhance exchanges with the majority population, measures focusing on specific groups e.g. parents/families, or other.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ensure that you are accompanied to humanitarian aid spots where you can get clothing, footwear, and other items.</i> • <i>Ensure that children and their parents are accompanied to the school, and promote co-operation between you and school teachers.</i> • <i>Help in finding housing using the available resources and assist in concluding a rental agreement.</i> • <i>Help you in dealing with other individuals and legal entities.</i> • <i>Help to register with the State Employment Agency and a family doctor.</i> • <i>Represent your interests and rights in other institutions.</i> • <i>Involve interpreters for implementation of the socio-economic inclusion plan.</i> 	
<p>Are migrant women specifically targeted or are they addressed as part of a wider group?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Specifically third-country national migrant women targeted</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Third-country national migrant women addressed as part of a wider group of migrants (including also EU citizens with migrant background)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Migrant women addressed as part of a wider group of women</p>	
<p>Are specific categories of migrant women targeted (for example low-/highly-skilled labour migrants, students, family migrants, asylum seekers, etc.)?</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><i>If Yes, please indicate the category(ies) and describe how their specific backgrounds and needs are addressed?</i></p> <p><i>The support is available while the person is as an asylum seeker and 12 months since the person has been granted refugee status or alternative protection.</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	
<p>At what stage of the integration process does the policy start (e.g. recently arrived or no differentiation)?</p>	<p><i>After lodging application for asylum.</i></p>	

Section 3: Integration measures in the Member State

Q12 Is national funding available in your Member State for measures to support the integration of migrant women? Do structural funds / EU programmes fund integration measures targeting or addressing migrant women and if yes, to what extent (as a share of total funding)?

A program for integration of third-country nationals financed entirely from the state budget is not implemented in Latvia. Integration courses and language courses mainly take place with the support of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund. Support measures to promote employment receive co-financing from the European Social Fund.

Since 2016, the Ministry of Culture as the delegated authority of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund in Latvia in the field of integration implements projects that support the integration of immigrants providing full information on support and integration measures, offering integration and the Latvian language courses as well as training for specialists working with the target group, journalists and editors, and coordinating the implementation of measures for integration of third-country nationals in accordance with the tasks set out in the policy planning documents.

The Ministry of Culture regularly organizes open project competitions in the following activities:

- *"Involvement of third-country nationals in the social life of Latvia including support for participation of vulnerable persons (women, children, old people) and persons under international protection";*
- *"Establishment of a national coordination system to provide support for the participation of migrants who have received the right to reside in the territory of Latvia";*
- *"Development of the use of the Latvian language in the public space including diverse approaches to learning the Latvian language";*
- *"Support measures for international protection persons (refugees and persons granted subsidiary status)"*
- *"Integration of third-country nationals into Latvian society, involving the media in this process".*

Q13 What integration measures (systematic initiatives, projects or legislative measures) are available in the Member State that specifically address migrant women and have been identified as "good practice"? Please provide, if possible, up to three examples from the period 2016-2020 and note why the example was selected.

For methodological guidance on identifying "good practices" please refer so Section 10 (Methodological considerations) of the Common Template.

Note: A mapping of all reported integration measures will be provided in an annex. The study will include an analysis of the reported measures, including examples.

Please fill out Table 10 below describing the first good practice measure, and copy Table 10 to fill out to describe up to three further measures from the period 2016-2020.

1.1.1.10

1.1.1.11

1.1.1.12 Table 10

Measure 1	
a) Overview	
Name	Project "Let's have time together"

Type	<input type="checkbox"/> Systematic initiatives (multi-year / long term) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Projects (ad-hoc) <input type="checkbox"/> Legislative (structural) measure
Area	<input type="checkbox"/> Labour market <input type="checkbox"/> Entrepreneurship <input type="checkbox"/> Education and vocational training <input type="checkbox"/> Language training <input type="checkbox"/> Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Health <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Civic integration <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>please specify</i>)
Access	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Third-country nationals <input type="checkbox"/> Migrants in general (not only third-country nationals, but also EU nationals)
Target group	<input type="checkbox"/> Tailor-made measure (only migrant women) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mainstream measure (migrant women are taken into account while the measure has a wider target group). <i>Please describe how migrant women are specifically targeted in the measure.</i> <i>The project consists of three blocks of the measure, where one of them is the "Women's support group"</i>
Stage of the integration process (e.g. recently arrived or no differentiation)	<i>No differentiation.</i>
Coverage	<input type="checkbox"/> National <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regional <input type="checkbox"/> Local
Link	https://www.redcross.lv/darbibas-jomas/projekti/projekts-pabusim-kopa/
Source and justification	<p><i>Please indicate the source/who proposed the practice as good and explain why the measure is considered a "good practice" (see Section 10 Methodological Considerations).</i></p> <p><i>The project was recommended by the Society Integration Foundation. This is mentioned as an example of good practice as it is one of the few projects where a separate part of the project is dedicated specifically to migrant women.</i></p>

b) Description

i) What is the objective of the measure and underlying integration opportunity/challenge to be addressed?

The direct purpose of the project is promoting the active involvement of refugees, asylum seekers, and third-country nationals in public activities by attending classes offered to them, to encourage them and provide an opportunity to explore ways to spend leisure time with local people thus contributing to their integration into the local community.

Within the project, a women's support group was organized, which met once a month to discuss topics such as the upbringing of children, psychology, education, employment, and improvement of skills and knowledge.

ii) When was the measure introduced and what was/is its duration? Is/was it a pilot measure? Is funding provided to ensure sustainability?

The project was implemented in the period from 1 June to 30 November 2020. It continues in a new project in 2021 (see Measure 2).

iii) How and by whom (agency, government institution, NGOs, private sector, etc.) is/was the measure implemented?

The project was implemented by non-governmental organization "Latvian Red Cross".

iv) How/by whom is/was the measure funded?

The project was financed by the Department of Education, Culture and Sports of the Riga City Council.

v) What strategies have been adopted to reach migrant women?

The support of social mentors and close cooperation with the Centre for Asylum Seekers "Mucenieki" was used. Mentors contacted both women who still reside in Mucenieki, and women who already live elsewhere.

vi) Are evaluations of the measure available? If yes, did the measure meet the anticipated objectives in relation to migrant women? What are the main outcomes?

Results of women's support groups:

- *22 third-country nationals, women with refugee or asylum status, and their interpreters (3 persons) were involved;*
- *The level of self-esteem and self-confidence of the target group was increased;*
- *Improvement of cooperation, communication and participation skills of the target group was encouraged;*
- *Five women's support group meetings were held, where eight different topics were discussed;*
- *In the women's support group, it was concluded that the most useful lesson was about the small business, and it was also important to hear the story of the young businesswoman,*

cake baker, cake designer, and founder of confectionery "Kapok?" Natrada Rienthong from Thailand. Also, the meeting on the upbringing of children and, of course, the meeting on social care and the available social services was useful. Of course, the rest of the lessons were also expedient and it was a pleasure to be together.

- When asked what would they like to attend when the next project of this kind will be held, it was concluded that currently there is a lack of conversation clubs to practice the Latvian spoken language and lack of information on where to look for advice regarding various laws and regulations.

vii) Where there any obstacles during implementation and if yes, how were they overcome (i.e. what are the lessons learnt)?

At the beginning of the activities, women were reluctant to apply because they had nobody to look after their children. This was quickly solved by attracting volunteers from the organization. Women's group meetings were held in the premises of the youth centre, so that women could meet in one room, and in the next room young volunteers were taking care for their children, playing various games, creating handicraft projects and other things.

The second issue which caused difficulties was public transport tickets because the project included e-tickets with 2 trips but usually this was not enough for women. By rescheduling the issuance of e-tickets, the situation was resolved.

The third issue was the language barrier but in cooperation with the Society "Shelter "Safe House"", the necessary interpreters were provided.

Measure 2	
c) Overview	
Name	Project "One sun, one world for all"
Type	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Systematic initiatives (multi-year / long term) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Projects (ad-hoc) <input type="checkbox"/> Legislative (structural) measure
Area	<input type="checkbox"/> Labour market <input type="checkbox"/> Entrepreneurship <input type="checkbox"/> Education and vocational training <input type="checkbox"/> Language training <input type="checkbox"/> Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Health <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Civic integration <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)
Access	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Third-country nationals

	<input type="checkbox"/> Migrants in general (not only third-country nationals, but also EU nationals)
Target group	<input type="checkbox"/> Tailor-made measure (only migrant women) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mainstream measure (migrant women are taken into account while the measure has a wider target group). <i>Please describe how migrant women are specifically targeted in the measure.</i> <i>The project consists of three blocks of measures, where one of them is "Classes to improve women's working skills"</i>
Stage of the integration process (e.g. recently arrived or no differentiation)	<i>No differentiation.</i>
Coverage	<input type="checkbox"/> National <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regional <input type="checkbox"/> Local
Link	https://www.redcross.lv/darbibas-jomas/projekti/projekts-viena-pasaule-visiem/
Source and justification	<p><i>Please indicate the source/who proposed the practice as good and explain why the measure is considered a "good practice" (see Section 10 Methodological Considerations).</i></p> <p><i>The project was recommended by the Society Integration Foundation. This is mentioned as an example of good practice as it is one of the few projects where a separate part of the project is dedicated specifically migrant women.</i></p>

d) Description

viii) What is the objective of the measure and underlying integration opportunity/challenge to be addressed?

The overall goal of the project is to promote the quality of life and integration of refugees, asylum seekers, and third-country nationals aged 7–50 years and older into society by promoting a more cohesive society in Riga.

The direct aim of the project is to promote active involvement of refugees, asylum seekers, and third-country nationals in public activities by offering lessons, to encourage them and provide them with the opportunity to explore ways to successfully engage in the labour market or start their own business by learning new and useful skills as well as to spend their free time with locals expediently thus promoting their integration into the local community.

Within the project, for women of the target group, sewing courses are organized for 2 months, as well as business training on 5 topics:

- 1. business basics,*
- 2. business plan elaboration,*
- 3. profitability planning,*
- 4. legal framework and taxes,*

5. *experience story from the owner of a small business.*

ix) When was the measure introduced and what was/is its duration? Is/was it a pilot measure? Is funding provided to ensure sustainability?

The project was implemented in the period from 1 April to 15 November 2021.

x) How and by whom (agency, government institution, NGOs, private sector, etc.) is/was the measure implemented?

The project is implemented by non-governmental organization "Latvian Red Cross".

xi) How/by whom is/was the measure funded?

The project is financed by the Department of Education, Culture and Sports of the Riga City Council.

xii) What strategies have been adopted to reach migrant women?

The support of social mentors and close cooperation with the Centre for Asylum Seekers "Mucenieki" was used; they contacted both women still residing in Mucenieki and women already living elsewhere.

xiii) Are evaluations of the measure available? If yes, did the measure meet the anticipated objectives in relation to migrant women? What are the main outcomes?

The project is still in process, but one of the already known results of the project is that one of the members of the target group as a result of sewing training has obtained a job in a sewing workshop.

xiv) Where there any obstacles during implementation and if yes, how were they overcome (i.e. what are the lessons learnt)?

COVID-19 restrictions do not allow to fully implement the planned activities in the originally expected amount and way. There are activities that need to be implemented remotely thus losing the process of socializing and the opportunity to spend time together outside the home.

Measure 3

e) Overview

Name	Project "Art coaching as a support tool for integration"
Type	<input type="checkbox"/> Systematic initiatives (multi-year / long term) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Projects (ad-hoc) <input type="checkbox"/> Legislative (structural) measure

Area	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Labour market <input type="checkbox"/> Entrepreneurship <input type="checkbox"/> Education and vocational training <input type="checkbox"/> Language training <input type="checkbox"/> Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Health <input type="checkbox"/> Civic integration <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>please specify</i>)
Access	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Third-country nationals <input type="checkbox"/> Migrants in general (not only third-country nationals, but also EU nationals)
Target group	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tailor-made measure (only migrant women) <input type="checkbox"/> Mainstream measure (migrant women are taken into account while the measure has a wider target group). <i>Please describe how migrant women are specifically targeted in the measure.</i>
Stage of the integration process (e.g. recently arrived or no differentiation)	<i>No differentiation</i>
Coverage	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National <input type="checkbox"/> Regional <input type="checkbox"/> Local
Link	https://patverums-dm.lv/lv/makslas-koucings-ka-atbalsta-riks-integracijai
Source and justification	<p><i>Please indicate the source/who proposed the practice as good and explain why the measure is considered a "good practice" (see Section 10 Methodological Considerations).</i></p> <p><i>The project was recommended by experts of the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs as this is the first project targeting only women.</i></p>

f) Description

xv) What is the objective of the measure and underlying integration opportunity/challenge to be addressed?

The project "Art coaching as a support tool for integration" is about the involvement of migrant women in the labour market through a variety of interactive support methods. The project activities provide for both the development of a new training program and the approbation of this program. With the help of the programme, the project implementers hope to provide an opportunity to help women who have come to live in another country to integrate into local society and labour market more quickly.

xvi) When was the measure introduced and what was/is its duration? Is/was it a pilot measure? Is funding provided to ensure sustainability?

The project was implemented in the period from 1 October 2019 to 30 August 2021.

xvii) How and by whom (agency, government institution, NGOs, private sector, etc.) is/was the measure implemented?

The project was implemented by non-governmental organization Society "Shelter "Safe house"".

xviii) How/by whom is/was the measure funded?

The project was fully funded by the "Nordplus" programme.

xix) What strategies have been adopted to reach migrant women?

Electronic means of communication, a database available to the Society, and advertising on social media were used.

xx) Are evaluations of the measure available? If yes, did the measure meet the anticipated objectives in relation to migrant women? What are the main outcomes?

Evaluation of the project is still being prepared. The project organizers believe that the project goal has been achieved because, in addition to the formal project objectives, the circle of contacts has expanded for the project participants, which is an essential aspect for successful integration into the local community.

xxi) Where there any obstacles during implementation and if yes, how were they overcome (i.e. what are the lessons learnt)?

The project promoters had planned that all the project activities would take place in person, since these classes would immediately promote closer contact and social networking between participants during the classes, which would, in turn, facilitate the integration of women into the community. Often, individual participants were not able to attend a lesson because there was no possibility to have a babysitter for their children at that time. In view of this circumstance, future projects will look for activities and solutions to ensure the possibility for migrant women with young children to successfully attend classes by providing babysitting during lessons. Another obstacle is that not always all participants have a sufficient level of language proficiency to master the programme provided for in the project qualitatively.

Measure 4

g) Overview

Name	Project "Diversity promoting"
Type	<input type="checkbox"/> Systematic initiatives (multi-year / long term) <input type="checkbox"/> Projects (ad-hoc) <input type="checkbox"/> Legislative (structural) measure
Area	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Labour market <input type="checkbox"/> Entrepreneurship

	<input type="checkbox"/> Education and vocational training <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Language training <input type="checkbox"/> Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Health <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Civic integration <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>please specify</i>)
Access	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Third-country nationals <input type="checkbox"/> Migrants in general (not only third-country nationals, but also EU nationals)
Target group	<input type="checkbox"/> Tailor-made measure (only migrant women) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mainstream measure (migrant women are taken into account while the measure has a wider target group). <i>Please describe how migrant women are specifically targeted in the measure.</i>
Stage of the integration process (e.g. recently arrived or no differentiation)	<i>Recently arrived</i>
Coverage	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National <input type="checkbox"/> Regional <input type="checkbox"/> Local
Link	https://www.sif.gov.lv/lv/projekts/dazadibas-veicinasana
Source and justification	<p><i>Please indicate the source/who proposed the practice as good and explain why the measure is considered a "good practice" (see Section 10 Methodological Considerations).</i></p> <p><i>The project was recommended by the Society Integration Foundation since this project covers migrant women in several categories: persons exposed to risk of social exclusion and discrimination; employers and their employees; asylum seekers and persons with refugee or alternative status.</i></p>

h) Description

xxii) What is the objective of the measure and underlying integration opportunity/challenge to be addressed?

The overall goal of the project is to promote the employment and socio-economic inclusion of persons at risk of social exclusion and discrimination, while promoting public awareness and general awareness of anti-discrimination and an inclusive society.

One of the project stages is the provision of services by a social worker and a social mentor to asylum seekers and persons with refugee or alternative status. More information about the type of services provided is available at: <https://www.sif.gov.lv/lv/begliem-patveruma-mekletajiem-un-personam-ar-alternativo-statusu>.

xxiii) When was the measure introduced and what was/is its duration? Is/was it a pilot measure? Is funding provided to ensure sustainability?

The project implementation period is from 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2022.

xxiv) How and by whom (agency, government institution, NGOs, private sector, etc.) is/was the measure implemented?

The project is implemented by the Society Integration Foundation in cooperation with the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs and the Provision State Agency.

xxv) How/by whom is/was the measure funded?

The project is co-financed by the European Social Fund.

xxvi) What strategies have been adopted to reach migrant women?

Electronic means of communication and advertising in social networks were used.

xxvii) Are evaluations of the measure available? If yes, did the measure meet the anticipated objectives in relation to migrant women? What are the main outcomes?

*At the end of 2020, the Interim Evaluation was prepared⁵⁰. Based on the recommendations and advices received during the Interim Evaluation, **the programme of motivational promotion and support services was updated**, a new procurement was announced and, in the second half of the year 2020, new agreements were concluded so that the motivation-rising measures could be continued throughout Latvia until the end of 2022. So far, 56 women who continue to live legally in Latvia have received the services of social worker and social mentor. According to the information available in the project, three women have established official employment relations and one works voluntarily. Within the project, it is concluded that migrant women rarely enter the labour market due to the following reasons:*

- *individuals tend to be illiterate or with a very low level of education;*
- *large number of children in families;*
- *no work experience, no practical skills and knowledge;*

- *no knowledge of Latvian or other intermediate language;*
- *the person's education documents have no legal force, it is impossible to be assimilated to the Latvian labour market, very high costs for the equalizing of documents;*
- *the person's qualification does not correspond to the offer of the labour market (for example, a doctor is offered to work as a sanitary worker);*
- *health problems.*

In the course of the project, it has also been concluded that community support, both practical and emotional, is essential for the integration of migrant women.

xxviii) Where there any obstacles during implementation and if yes, how were they overcome (i.e. what are the lessons learnt)?

There have been mostly practical obstacles that have not affected the progress of the project.

⁵⁰ The interim evaluation is available at <https://www.sif.gov.lv/lv/jaunums/kas-paveikts-2020-gada-dazadibas-veicinasana>

Section 4: Responses to COVID-19

Q14 Were integration policies or measures developed to counteract the negative consequences of COVID-19 specifically for migrant women's integration?

a) Integration (or sector specific) policies

No. Specific measures aimed at mitigating the negative effects of COVID-19 were not implemented in the field of integration of migrant women.

b) Integration measures

With the cessation of activities in person, integration and the Latvian language courses were transferred to remote mode and continued on online platforms. The provision of services and consultations of rare language interpreters in an online format, via e-mail or by telephone was carried on.

In March 2020 due to a state of emergency, the Riga City Local Government endorsed a crises benefit for international students, who remained in Latvia in conditions of Covid-19, studied remotely and had no means of subsistence to provide for their basic needs- as provided for by amendments to the Law on Functioning of Public Institutions During the Emergency due to the Spread of Covid-19" and the Law on Social Services and Social Assistance. Only those foreign students might apply to the Riga Social Service remotely, who were unable to provide for their basic needs due to the emergency and whose declared place of residence is the territory of the Riga City Municipality. The amount of the grant was 128.00 EUR per person.

On 16 December 2021, the Parliament adopted amendments to the Covid-19 Law on Management of the Effects of spread of infection in order to provide support to persons and families with alternative status. Amendments to the law include:

- one-off allowance of EUR 500 for children granted alternative status during the period from 1 March 2021 until the country-wide emergency of Covid-19 spread, i.e. till 7 April 2021;*
- one-off allowance of EUR 200 for persons under retirement age and persons with disabilities who were granted alternative status during the period from 1 March 2021 to the point where the country-wide emergency situation had been declared due to the spread of Covid-19.*

Section 5: Plans and future outlook

Q15 Please provide information on planned policy developments as well as plans to introduce new measures, also in light of the impact of COVID-19:

a) Does your Member State plan to develop new or revise existing national integration policies that address challenges faced by migrant women?

The integration policy is implemented in accordance with the Guidelines for the Development of a Cohesive and Civically Active Society for 2021–2027 (approved by the Cabinet of Ministers on 5 February 2021). Changes in the regulatory enactments will be related to the adoption of the new Immigration Law. It is expected that the Ministry of Culture will have to prepare a draft Cabinet Regulations on the early integration program.

b) Does your Member State plan to develop any new integration measures that address challenges faced by migrant women?

The Plan for Development of a Cohesive and Civically Active Society for 2021–2023 provides for establishment of a one-stop agency. It will aim to promote the integration of new arrivals into the local community by providing a single and high-quality service set. It is also planned to review and improve the functioning of the advisory mechanism.

Proposal for an amendment to the National Social Benefits Act have been made to support and to review the criteria for providing social aid to persons who have been granted alternative status, stating that: persons who have received a temporary residence permit in Latvia shall not be entitled to State social benefits, except if persons who reside permanently in the territory of Latvia and have been granted alternative status. The amendments propose for the payment of the childbirth allowance and the funeral allowance, as well as the State social benefits to be regularly paid, if the temporary residence permit has been granted repeatedly. At the same time, the amendments propose for the payment of the benefits referred to the spouse and children of the person who acquired alternative status, who are granted only temporary residence permit (not an alternative status) in accordance with the regulation of the Asylum Law, if the spouse and child have arrived in Latvia as a result of a family reunification.

Section 6: Conclusions

a) What are the main integration opportunities and challenges for migrant women identified in your country?

In Latvia, the integration of third-country national migrant women is a part of the common policy of a cohesive society and the proposed integration measures. A wider set of integration measures, such as the Latvian language courses, integration courses and employment support, is available to women asylum seekers and those granted refugee or alternative status. But also, these events are participated by women and men together. Often, in the form of projects, integration events are organised for young people and families with children. In certain cities integration activities co-financed by municipalities, such as the Latvian language and integration courses, are available.

The main challenges to successful participation in integration activities may be insufficient knowledge of the language, lack of practical skills, inadequate education, or lack of supporting documents. In addition, women who raise a larger number of children in the family cannot participate at and devote full time to participation in integration activities.

Without additional support for housing, the opportunities to start a life in Latvia are very limited: it is difficult to concentrate on learning the Latvian language, find a job, provide a decent living for the family or try to start a permanent residence and become a part of Latvian society.⁵¹

There is a number of restrictions on the employment of third-country nationals: firstly, some foreigners need a work permit; secondly, many professions require knowledge of the Latvian language, which remains one of the most important obstacles in the field of employment; thirdly, a limited number of jobs is available only to Latvian citizens.⁵²

b) What are the key characteristics of the national integration policies and measures presented in terms of categories, focus area, stage of the integration process, etc.?

⁵¹ <https://providus.lv/raksti/divu-gadu-macibas-beglu-uznemsana-pilnveidot-vai-izmest/>

⁵² https://www.km.gov.lv/sites/km/files/tvp_petijuma_zinojums_2017-biss1.pdf

The integration of third-country nationals in Latvia is gender neutral; Latvia offers equal integration measures for both women and men. Integration activities, such as integration courses and language courses, mostly have the form of a project and are a single activity without a sustainable continuation. Funding from the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and other programmes is used to provide measures. Individual integration measures are organised on the own initiative of non-governmental organisations. The proposed integration measures are mostly available regardless of the time when a migrant woman has arrived in Latvia and the reason for issuing a residence permit. The exception is asylum seekers and persons granted refugee or alternative status.

The information provided by experts indicates that women are more active than men in registering for support measures in the field of employment.

c) How do special integration policies or measures developed to counteract the negative consequences of COVID-19 (Section 4) differ from those previously in place (Sections 2 and 3)?

Under the influence of COVID-19, no new integration measures for migrant women have been developed in Latvia. During the period covered by the study, measures that have already been planned within the framework of various activities are still being implemented. The effect of COVID-19 is the changed format of the measures to online communication.

d) How do planned new integration policies and measures link to the main opportunities and challenges identified and/or responses to COVID-19?

On 5 February 2021, the Cabinet of Ministers approved "Guidelines for the Development of a Cohesive and Civically Active Society for 2021–2027"⁵³. The guidelines ensure the succession of national identity, civic society and integration policies. They are elaborated in accordance with the policy of a cohesive society: it is a national, solidary, open, and civically active society. The guidelines provide for the following action lines: national identity and affiliation, democratic culture and inclusive citizenship, integration.

The Plan for the Development of a Cohesive and Civically Active Society for 2021–2023 provides for establishment of a one-stop agency. It will aim to promote the integration of arrivals into the local community by providing a single and high-quality service set.

⁵³ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/320841-par-saliedetas-un-pilsoniski-aktivas-sabiedribas-attistibas-pamatnostadnem-2021-2027-gadam>