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EMN ES CONFERENCE

"Integration and inclusion of migrant women: reality, challenges and opportunities"

30 JANUARY 2025 (MADRID)

EMN SPAIN

1. RATIONALE AND AIMS

Integration and inclusion are essential for people arriving in Europe and for local communities, as well as for the long-term well-being of our societies and the stability of our economies. To help our societies and economies thrive, we must support all the people in society and make integration a right and an obligation for all.

The integration of migrant women can be seen as a particular challenge within the broader objective of integration and inclusion of the migrant population in general. The recognition of the existence of the situation of double discrimination suffered by migrant women reinforces and recognizes the need to carry out interventions that favor their integration and inclusion.

In fact, in the European Commission's [Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027](#), reference is made to the fact that the implementation of the 2016 Action Plan confirmed that, specifically, stronger measures are needed to promote the integration and inclusion of migrant women.

The group of migrant women does not exclusively become part of the society in a new country. It also shares the economic, social and cultural problems of the host society. Furthermore, it is a particularly vulnerable group to social exclusion mechanisms because it does not participate in many of the exchanges, practices and social rights that shape social inclusion and integration, such as the access to the labour market, healthcare, education/training or housing.

Likewise, migratory flows reproduce female roles. Women migrate to overcome poverty and ensure the economic security of their families. In most cases, they tend to take low-skilled jobs, in particular, in the service sector, as domestic workers or caregivers of the sick and elderly.

Recent studies, including the EMN report on [Integrating migrant women in the EU: policies and measures](#), show that one of the most important social changes in Europe

in recent decades is the transformation and feminisation of migratory flows. The 2023 and 2024 censuses reflect the increase in the immigrant population where the intensification of migratory flows is characterised by being eminently labour-based (economic migration) and by the high degree of feminisation.

If we pay attention to the data provided both globally and in the European Union (EU) in the [World Migration Report 2024](#), published by IOM, women make up around 50% of migrants. While by mid-2020 migrant women accounted for just under half of the global migrant population (135 million or 48.1%), in the EU they constituted just over half of all migrants (33 million or 51.6%).

The reasons why women migrate to Europe are diverse. Although women arrive mainly for family reunification, they may also arrive for work, as students, as asylum seekers or as part of another group of migrants. Thus, there is a great diversity of legal statuses and rights among migrant women, which is reflected in a disparity of opportunities and challenges in the inclusion and integration of these women.

Also, depending on the Member state of destination, the origin of migrants arriving in the EU presents notable differences which tend to persist over time. According to the data contained in the Eurostat publication on [Migration and Asylum in Europe – 2024](#), in Spain, as in Italy and Sweden, migrant entries from outside the EU predominate, representing approximately 60% to 80% of total entries. On the other hand, in countries such as Germany or the Netherlands, the weight of migrants arriving from outside the EU is below 50%, with the exception of very specific times, such as 2015, with the arrival of refugees from the war in Syria, or 2022, with the refugees from Ukraine. In the case of Spain, migrants from South America, Central America and the Caribbean – mostly Spanish-speaking – accounted for 50% of the total flow of entries and almost 65% of migrants from outside the EU in the pre-pandemic years (2017-2019).

It is worth noting that, taking into account the data provided by the Economic Bulletin published in 2024 by the Bank of Spain, [A characterisation of migratory flows to Spain and other countries of the European Union](#), in terms of gender distribution, Spain stands out as the destination country with the highest percentage of immigrant women (50.5% in the pre-pandemic years and 49% in 2022, if immigrants from Ukraine are excluded), a relevant feature due to the important contribution of women as caregivers of children and the elderly.

However, the percentage of women in other EU countries is below 50%. This is the result of the geographical composition of the migrants' origin. Thus, among migrants from Africa, Asia and other EU countries, the percentage of women is very low, especially in the case of the African continent. On the contrary, it is above 50% among immigrants from Latin America, the main origin of migrants heading to Spain.

The aforementioned studies also show that migrant women face the so-called "double disadvantage" due to their dual status of being a woman and being a migrant. Migrant women in the EU tend to suffer from a higher unemployment rate than non-migrant women and migrant men. For women with young children, the employment rate is significantly lower among migrant women than among non-migrant women.

Furthermore, refugee women are also worse off when it comes to education or employment compared to other migrant women, pointing to a "triple disadvantage".

Migrant women in the EU have a prominent presence in sectors such as the domestic and care work (54%), the agriculture (12%) and the hospitality (15%), being essential for sectors such as the care of the elderly, children and dependents, thus contributing critically to social well-being and the sustainability of the economic system. However, these occupations are usually marked by job insecurity, low wages and high informality. 40% of migrant women work in informal conditions, which limits their access to labor rights such as social security.

In addition, migrant women face barriers such as gender and ethnicity discrimination. Many migrant women are more vulnerable to gender-based violence due to their irregular administrative situation and lack of support networks. For example, according to the [State Observatory on Violence against Women](#), 43% of victims in Spain, during the period 2006-2022, are foreign women. Administrative irregularity also hinders access to health care and decent housing.

On the other hand, there is also an educational and professional gap. Although many migrant women hold academic qualifications awarded in their countries of origin, they sometimes have to face recognition procedures that, at an economic cost, relegate them, at least during the processing, to low-skilled jobs.

It is therefore crucial to ensure flexibility in the procedures of administrative regularisation and access to the labour market by promoting job training programmes and, where appropriate, speeding up the procedures for the recognition of qualifications so that their professional integration and inclusion is facilitated. It is also necessary to promote strategies for the integration and inclusion of migrant women in rural communities, offering specific incentives and support services.

Likewise, it is necessary to combat stereotypes and prejudices towards migrant women promoting a more inclusive society which extends to migrant women the access to support services, shelters and community awareness programs on gender violence.

In Europe, with a declining birth rate, migrant women have contributed to the rejuvenation of the population and natural growth by bringing a great baggage of culture, diversity, stories, regeneration, youth and resilience. All of this represents a substantial contribution to the old continent in all areas, promoting cultural exchange in local communities, which also poses a challenge for migrant women to leave the private, domestic sphere and achieve political and social resonance

In its [Action Plan for Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027](#), presented in November 2020, the European Commission proposed targeted support for integration that takes into account individual characteristics that may present specific challenges such as gender. At the same time, the [EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025](#) has highlighted the importance of a gender-sensitive response in different policy areas.

The purpose of this conference is to address the situation of migrant women in our country and in other Member states, highlighting the challenges and problems they face and what measures are being taken to ensure their integration and inclusion, especially with regard to access to the labour market and housing. There will also be the opportunity to learn about the experiences of several women who have emigrated through their testimonies.

2. AGENDA (DRAFT)

30 January 2025	
08:30 09:00	Registration
09:00	<p>Welcome</p> <p>Ainara Dorremochea, Deputy General Director for Legal Affairs Secretary of State for Migration</p>
09:00 09:15	<p>Inauguration</p> <p>Pilar Cancela Rodriguez, Secretary of State for Migration Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration</p>
09:15 09:20	<p>Greetings</p> <p>Magnus Ovilius, Chair and Manager of the European Migration Network (EMN)</p>
09:20 09:40	<p>Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Karoline Fernández de la Hoz Zeitler, Director of the Spanish Observatory on Racism and Xenophobia (OBERAXE) ▪ Giuliana Benedetto, Directorate-General Migration & Home Affairs - HOME C2: Legal pathways and integration, European Commission
09:40 09:55	<p>Presentation: The migrant woman in data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ María Ramos Charbonnier, Coordinator of the Permanent Observatory of Immigration (OPI)
09:55 10:45	<p>Panel 1: Migrant women facing housing problems</p> <p>Access to housing is a key factor in social exclusion. This access for the migrant population is especially difficult due to the confluence of structural and circumstantial factors that increase their vulnerability, namely, economic difficulties, racism, prejudices against foreigners and the gender factor. In line with this, the particularly precarious, ethnically segmented and widespread labour sector in which migrant workers are inserted, makes them one of the profiles with the highest risk of exclusion in housing issues.</p> <p>Moderator: Luis Rodríguez Calles, Technical Assistance Tragsatec, Spanish Observatory on Racism and Xenophobia (OBERAXE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Javier Burón Cuadrado, Manager of Navarra de Suelo y Vivienda (NASUVINSA) ▪ Elisa Brey, Junior Lecturer at Faculty of Information Sciences, Universidad Complutense de Madrid (UCM) ▪ Amaya Renes, Responsible for Migration and Refuge in Provivienda ▪ A representative of the SAFE HOMES programme, Red Cross (TBC) <p>Q&A and key takeaways by the moderator</p>
10:45 11:15	Coffee break
11:15 12:30	<p>Panel 2: Migrant women and the labour market</p> <p>The integration of migrant women into the labour market is a key issue that Member states must address. Barriers such as the lack of recognition of qualifications, language</p>

	<p>barriers, often a lack of awareness of their rights, lack of social networks or childcare are key factors to take into account in the fight against labour exclusion. The aim of this panel is to draw particular attention to the need to facilitate migrants' access to the labour market by developing policies and action plans aimed at promoting their integration (with special provisions for women) into the labour market, addressing their specific needs and developing effective cooperation between governments, trade unions, social entities and employers' organisations in the design and financing of specific training paths for migrant women.</p> <p>Moderator: Maria Jesús Herrera, Head of Mission, International Organization for Migration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ana María del Corral, Confederal Migration Area of the General Union of Workers (UGT) ▪ Dr. Tanja Fendel, Scientific Associate, Institute for Employment Research (IAB), Nuremberg (Germany) ▪ Carine Charvet, Public Employment Service of Wallonia (Forem) Belgium ▪ Pablo Montes, Representative of YMCA Spain, Initiative RED MOSAICO <p>Q&A and key takeaways by the moderator</p>
<p>12:30 14:00</p>	<p>Panel 3: The challenge of migrating</p> <p>This panel will discuss the testimonial narratives of migrant women and their reality. The objective is to learn about their experience through different testimonies. This way, it will be possible to understand the factors that force hundreds of thousands of people to seek opportunities in other countries. During this panel, the various reasons why people migrate will be learned: international protection, training, labour or entrepreneurial migration.</p> <p>Moderator: Alejandra Temprano, Spanish Observatory on Racism and Xenophobia (OBERAXE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Razan Ismail, Founder and Managing Director of Asociación Kudwa and migration expert for ICF ▪ Nicole Ndongala Nzoiwidi, Managing Director of Asociación Karibu ▪ Ivette Barreto Palacios, Managing Director and Founding Member of AMEIB Pachamama ▪ Jamileth Chavarría, Member of Cooperative La Comala ▪ Fathia Chennaoui, Intercultural mediator <p>Q&A and key takeaways by the moderator</p>
<p>14:00 14:15</p>	<p>Closing of the conference</p> <p>Elma Saiz Delgado Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration</p>
<p>14:15 15:15</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Lunch</p>

3. PRACTICAL INFORMATION

The conference will take place in Madrid in a face-to-face format, and translation from Spanish to English will be available throughout the meeting.

The venue is located at Calle Pez Volador 2, **access through Calle Cruz del Sur 2 (Madrid)**.

There are several hotel accommodation options in the area, among which we highlight three:

- **Voco Madrid Retiro 4***. Calle Pez Volador, 11. Reservations (Patricia Rick): Tel. +34 91 400 99 00. Email: patricia.rick@cpmadridcentreretiro.com

Metro: Sainz de Baranda (Lines 6 y 9).

Participants are offered a special rate at [Red EU Migraciones](#)

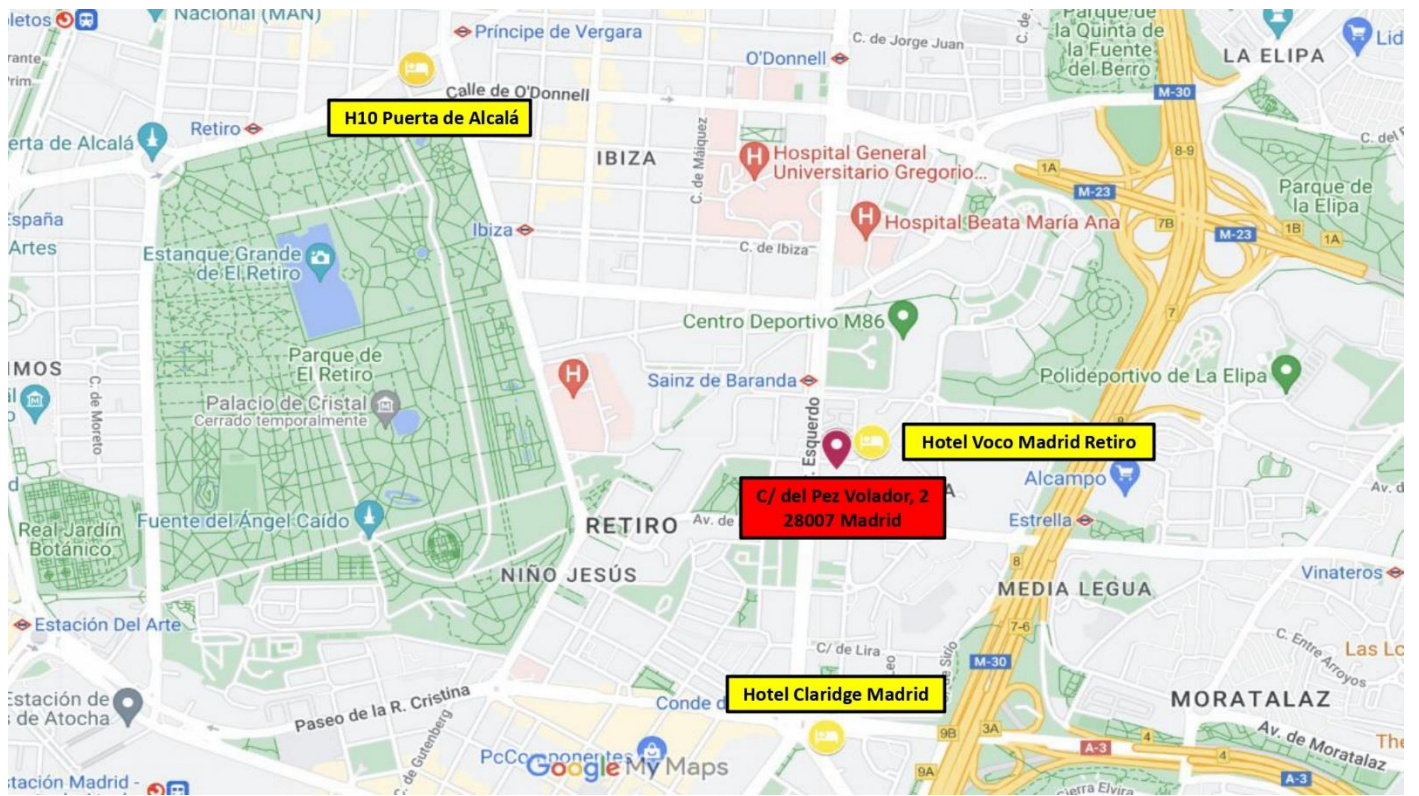
- **Hotel Claridge Madrid 4***. Plaza del Conde de Casal, 6. Reservations: Tel.: + 34 91 551 94 00. Email: recepmanager@hotelclaridge.com

Metro: Conde de Casal (Line 6).

- **H10 Puerta de Alcalá 4***. Calle Alcalá, 66. Reservations (Irene Casal): Tel.: +34 91 435 10 60. Email: grupos.hal@h10hotels.com

Metro: Príncipe de Vergara (Lines 2 y 9).

You can check the proximity of these hotels to the conference venue on the following map of the area:



Please confirm your attendance by registering in the form that can be accessed from the following link or QR code:

<https://forms.office.com/e/hS2d8sSKDm>



We are looking forward to welcoming you all to our National REM Conference soon.