



MIGRATION, GENDER, AND LABOR: THE CASE OF GERMANY

July 2021

United Nations High Level Political Forum Report

CENTER FOR MIGRATION, GENDER, AND JUSTICE

Email: info@migrationgenderjustice.com

Web: www.migrationgenderjustice.com

Facebook: [@migrationgenderjustice](https://www.facebook.com/migrationgenderjustice)

Instagram: [@cmgj_ngo](https://www.instagram.com/cmgj_ngo)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In Germany, labor market participation of refugee women is governed by mismatches between lived experiences and policy.

As of 2019, only 6% of refugee women in Germany are employed compared to 27% of refugee men. While these numbers reflect an increase from 2013, they point to a pervasive gender gap that is evidenced in underemployment rates, type of employment, and wage differences. Out of the 6% of employed refugee women in Germany, nearly one third are underemployed.

Furthermore, refugee women find themselves to be three times more likely than refugee men to hold part-time jobs rather than full-time job; refugee women also earn on average 100 Euro less a month than refugee men (IAB, 2020).

Yet, neither Germany's Voluntary National Review (VNR) to the 2021 High Level Political Forum (HLPF) nor its revised Sustainable Development Strategy (2021) adequately address these intersectional experiences of refugee women. Indeed, while Germany's VNR and the revised Strategy both speak to migration policy and gender policy, they do so in disconnected ways and operate along policy silos: in matters of migration policy, the focus on migratory movements is guided by conceptions of securitization and control rather than human rights, while in matters of gender policy, the focus on labor market participation is guided by conceptions of presumed uniformity rather than complexity in lived experiences.

In centering lived experiences in discussions around labor market participation of refugee women, we draw on a collaborative research project with one of our community-based partner organizations and member of our Advisory Group - Europe, WoW – WithorWithout, for this report. WoW is a local, non-profit, human rights NGO that is based in Stuttgart, Germany. As part of our collaborative work, we collected data and made observations at various programs for refugee women in June/July 2019.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

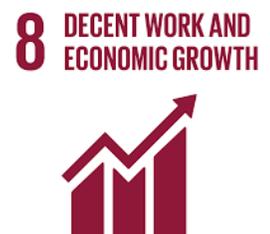
Based on our research, we have identified four key challenges that refugee women face to access and to succeed in the German labor market: language skills, professional and educational opportunities, socio-cultural dynamics, and self-determination.

These challenges point to the intersectional discrimination that refugee women encounter due to their gender, migration status, nationality, ethnicity, and religion, for instance. Relevant SDGs to consider in regards to labor market participation of refugee women are SDG 5, 8, 10, 16, and 17 - all of which are discussed in Germany's 2021 VNR.



According to Germany's 2021 VNR, the gender wage gap remains pervasive (pp. 30-31). This is particularly the case for refugee women. Closing the gender wage gap requires a comprehensive gender-responsive framework that addresses the intersectional challenges that refugee women face to access and to succeed in the German labor market.

Decent work for refugees is compromised by discriminatory labor market practices. Especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, refugees have been pushed into precarious work and underemployment. To ensure decent work for refugee women, social, legal, and political change is necessary (see: Germany's 2021 VNR pp. 16-17).



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



Socioeconomic inequality is high throughout Germany (see: Germany's 2021 VNR p. 50). Inequalities are especially steep for refugees and policies aimed to lessen these disparities have failed to address the specific needs of refugee women. Intersectional approaches that recognize the complexity of challenges faced by refugee women in the German labor market are imperative to sustain livelihoods.

Institutions provide an important framework for labor market participation of refugee women. As labor market access and migration policies have become more restricted over time, refugee women have been further excluded. Refugee women must be involved in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of policies that (are to) govern them (see: Germany's 2021 VNR p. 74).

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



A society committed to leaving no one behind is one that is committed to the vision of a global sustainable future. This undertaking begins at home with shared agency, representation, and accountability (see: Germany's 2021 VNR p. 13). Partnerships between civil society organizations and the government are crucial in sustaining livelihoods for refugee women in Germany.



INTRODUCTION

According to a 2020 report by the Institute for Employment Research (IAB), only 6% of refugee women in Germany are employed. In comparison, the rate for refugee men is measured at 27%.

While these numbers show an increase from 2013 when the employment rate of refugees was at 9% overall, they point to a significant gender gap which is evidenced in underemployment rates, type of employment, and wage differences.

Out of the 6% of employed refugee women in Germany, nearly one third are underemployed. Furthermore, refugee women find themselves to be three times more likely than refugee men to hold part-time jobs rather than full-time job; refugee women also earn on average 100 Euro less a month than refugee men (IAB, 2020).

The IAB attributes this compromised labor market participation of refugee women to factors such as language skills, completion of integration programs, participation in professional advising services, and household structures (see also: Brücker et al. 2020 & 2019).

There is a strong correlation between refugees (not disaggregated by gender) who complete language and integration courses, and employment.

For instance, refugees who completed an integration course were twice as likely to be employed than those that didn't. Even more telling is the correlation between language skills and employment.

According to the IAB report, one third of refugees who finished a government-sponsored language course at elementary level (A2) were employed (IAB, 2020).

Besides completion of language and integration courses, participation in professional advising services is similarly crucial to refugee employment: the employment rate of refugees doubled with receiving professional advising services.

Additionally, household structure presents another indicative factor for refugee labor market participation.



INTRODUCTION

The IAB report shows that the employment rate for refugee women with children under the age of three lies at close to zero for full-time and part-time employment.

Even with older children and no children in the household, employment rates of refugee women remain low. Employment rates for refugee men, on the other hand, rise respectively with the age of children - or not having children (IAB, 2020).

These findings speak to our collaborative research conducted with WoW - WithorWithout.

WoW is a non-profit human rights NGO that promotes equality and diversity in the German labor market. WoW focuses on women who experience intersectional discrimination because of gender, migration history, and religion.

For this report, we draw on data collection and observations at WoW's empowerment and anti-discrimination workshops with refugee women in June/July 2019.

Participants agreed that data and observations from these trainings may be used for research purposes. The research process was conducted under our "Ethical Guidelines for Working with Migrant Communities."

Drawn from our data collection and observations, we have identified the following factors that inform labor market participation of refugee women in Germany. These factors were self-reported / self-identified by the women:

- Language



- Professional Development and Education



- Sociocultural Dynamics



- Self-Determination



INTRODUCTION

Adding to these factors, two important insights must be highlighted: refugee women go through great lengths to further their opportunities in the labor market.

The immense dedication that refugee women show to prepare themselves for employment is commendable. This dedication is rarely reflected in official statistics and deserves attention here as it defies stereotypical views of refugee women not wanting to work or being deterred from working.

The second insight concerns the legal-institutional framework that governs labor market participation of refugee women.

While we elaborate more fully on this throughout the report, findings from the empowerment and anti-discrimination workshops show that there is not only a lack of knowledge on labor and civil rights, but also significant misinformation spreading in refugee communities which has hindered access to and success in the German labor market.



Pictures by Annika Gordon



REVIEW OF LEGAL-INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

The legal-institutional framework that governs labor market participation of refugee women in Germany includes the 2005 Residence Act, the 2006 General Act on Equal Treatment, the 2016 Integration Act, and the 2020 Migration Package. Although expansive integration measures have been created within this framework, most of these efforts remain gender-negligent in content, scope, and trajectory. In the following, we discuss aspects that have informed the compromised labor market participation of refugee women.

The 2005 Residence Act formalizes and institutionalizes Germany's integration measures. Key components of these measures include legally-required integration and language courses. The Residence Act also establishes a structure for labor market access based on residence titles (migration status). Within this structure, refugees/otherwise protected with residence titles have largely unrestricted temporary access to the labor market while asylum-seekers and tolerated persons (both without residence title) have restricted temporary labor market access (Residence Act, 2005).

2005 Residence Act

2006 General Act on Equal Treatment

The 2006 General Act on Equal Treatment transposes the European Union Equality Directives into German law. The Act prohibits discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, religion, belief, disability, age, and sexual orientation in various areas (i.e. education, employment etc.). Though discrimination on these grounds is prohibited according to the law (Article 7), permissible difference in treatment based on occupational requirements is allowed (Article 8) (General Act on Equal Treatment, 2006).

REVIEW OF LEGAL-INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

The 2016 Integration Act focuses on labor market participation of refugees and asylum-seekers. This includes improving regulations to support vocational training, legally securing residence titles before and after vocational training, suspending the “preference clause” conditional to the employment situation of respective states, and introducing asylum-seekers to the labor market through low-threshold, precarious work (FIM Program) (Integration Act, 2016).

2016 Integration Act

Germany’s 2020 Migration Package is a set of laws that addresses aspects of the 2016 Integration Act and the 2005 Residence Act. The package facilitates recruitment of highly-skilled migrants while expediting the detention and deportation of rejected asylum-seekers. Regarding employment and livelihoods of refugees/asylum-seekers, the Migration Package grants rejected asylum-seekers who can speak German and are employed tolerated stay or “Duldung” so long as they maintain their employment and don’t become a liability of the state (i.e. receive social protections) (Migration Package, 2019).

2020 Migration Package

REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION

Based on our research, we find that the enactments of the 2016 Integration Act and the 2020 Migration Package, as well as the permissible difference in treatment clause as per the 2006 General Act on Equal Treatment and the hierarchical structure of labor market access based on migration status as per the 2005 Residence Act compromise efforts in implementing and achieving the SDGs, especially SDG 5, 8, 10, 16, and 17.

We hold that Germany's migration politics remain gender-negligent in content, scope, and trajectory which has led to mismatches between policies and the needs and challenges of refugee women in the German labor market.

These mismatches, as empirical data and our findings show, have contributed to significant un- and underemployment of refugee women. In the following, we discuss important factors that inform labor market participation of refugee women and that speak to the outlined legal-institutional framework as a means of highlighting the disconnect that prevails between migration policy and gender policy as reflected in Germany's 2021 VNR and revised Sustainable Development Strategy:



Language



Professional Development
and Education



Sociocultural
Dynamics



Self-Determination



REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION

LANGUAGE



Language was named as a pertinent challenge by participants of WoW's empowerment and anti-discrimination workshops.

As noted, completion of language courses is strongly correlated with employment. While language courses have been a critical part of Germany's integration measures, we find that access to and completion of language courses carry strong gender dynamics.

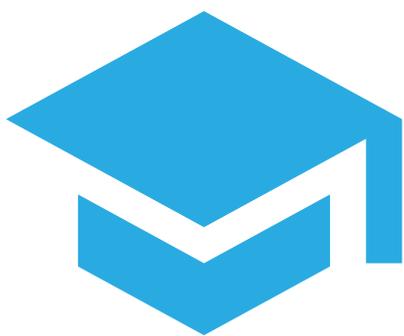
Our observations at a church-run language course for refugees in Stuttgart offers a point in case here: all of the fifteen participants were men with the exception of one woman who was unable to stay the entire duration of the course due to childcare responsibilities.

This suggests significant gender discrepancies in acquiring and furthering language skills which are crucial to labor market participation.



REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION



Professional development and education present further challenges to refugee women in Germany.

In WoW's empowerment and anti-discrimination workshops, participants reported that identifying suitable professional development opportunities and education has proven difficult. Often so, these opportunities are conditioned by migration status and don't provide childcare services.

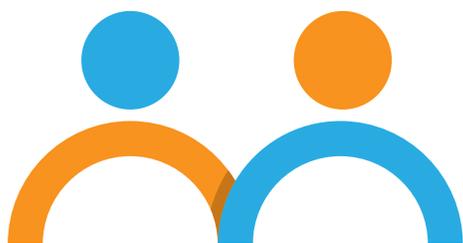
A majority of participants at the workshops were highly educated. They attended university and/or worked professionally in their countries of origin. Upon their arrival in Germany, many, however, had to re-start their careers or have been pushed into precarious work.

These observations speak to findings of the IAB report which showed that one third of employed refugee women are underemployed.



REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION

SOCIOCULTURAL DYNAMICS



Sociocultural Dynamics constitute another challenge for labor market participation of refugee women in Germany.

Participants of WoW's empowerment and anti-discrimination workshops named household responsibilities, childcare, and family planning as explicit obstacles.

The gender-negligence in many of the policies that govern labor market participation of refugee women is detrimental to sustaining livelihoods. To reiterate, employment of refugee women with a child under the age of three was close to zero for full-time or part-time employment.

Even with older children and no children in the household, employment of refugee women remains low (IAB, 2020).



REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION

SELF-DETERMINATION



Self-Determination, particularly regarding the choice of wearing a headscarf (Muslim refugee women), presents another pressing, yet overlooked challenge in labor market participation of refugee women in Germany.

Discrimination because of the headscarf was discussed throughout our observations.

Given the legal-institutional framework that allows for permissible difference of treatment based on occupational requirements (2006 General Act on Equal Treatment), Muslim refugee women often find themselves in the dilemma of having to choose between their self-determination, religion, and employment.

This dilemma was evidenced in initial experiences in the German labor market. Some participants reported being questioned about their headscarf in job interviews as well as at the workplace.



REVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS

Germany has committed itself to various international and regional agreements that fall in line with Agenda 2030. For the purposes of this report, we focus on international and regional commitments that address the intersection of migration and gender, and provide additional comments on commitments made in the last two years in alignment with our research project (2019-2021).

This review is not comprehensive.

In 2000, the contents of the Charter of the Fundamental Rights of the European Union were codified in directives developed by the European Commission. The four Equality Directives categorize and encompass a variety of areas pertaining to anti-discrimination principles for all people residing in the European Union (European Commission, 2000).

As mentioned, Germany has transposed the Equality Directives into its national legal framework vis-à-vis the 2006 General Act on Equal Treatment. Regular reviews of Germany's implementation of the Equality Directives have raised flags about the country's anti-discrimination measures, especially as it concerns the labor market.

For instance, dismissals from employment are not included in the scope of protection against discrimination, there is a lack of 'right to return' to one's job following parental leave, and intersectional discrimination is seldomly tried or acknowledged as such (European Commission, 2018).

2000 European Union Equality Directives

REVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS

2005 Common European Asylum System (CEAS)

The Common European Asylum System (CEAS) provides fundamental rights to asylum in line with the 1951 Refugee Convention. Minimum standards under the CEAS were adopted to harmonize the asylum process across the European Union and to set out standards for stronger co-operation during times of high migration.

In our analysis, Germany and the CEAS have had a “convoluted” relationship, although Germany has generally supported the CEAS through the adoption of policies consistent with its aims. Among actions which proved difficult was the single-handed sovereign suspension of the Dublin Regulation in 2015 which has left renewed and improved CEAS regulations pending (Asylum Information Database, 2013).

Germany’s 2016 National Sustainable Development Strategy is a response to Agenda 2030 that consists of twelve rules to guide policy-making, monitoring, and evaluation of SDG implementation. The strategy is the result of collaborations between state and non-state actors, including civil society organizations. With regards to migration and sustainable livelihoods for refugees/asylum-seekers, the strategy focuses on refugees/asylum-seekers abroad rather than in Germany.

As part of the strategy, Germany has committed itself to continuously provide humanitarian and development assistance, hereby externalizing its efforts regarding migrant livelihoods while neglecting needs and challenges of migrants within its own national borders (National Sustainable Development Strategy, 2016).

2016 National Sustainable Development Strategy



REVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS

2018 Global Compact for Migration

Germany spearheaded the 2018 Global Compact for Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees, two non-legally binding, global agreements that seek to address migration at the local, national, regional, and international level. Although non-legally binding, Germany's lead in creating a global system for migration is telling.

2018 Global Compact on Refugees

Particularly relevant to refugee employment are provisions to facilitate fair and ethical labor recruitment, safeguard conditions that ensure decent work, empower migrants and societies to realize full inclusion and social cohesion, and to invest in skills development, qualifications and competences. While reviews on country implementations of the Compacts are ongoing, we hold that Germany's limited efforts in fulfilling the noted commitments is evidenced in our research and other referenced data.

In 2017, the Council of the European Union explicitly called for a universally applicable rights-based approach towards the SDGs across the European Union. In a recent assessment of the European Union's implementation of the SDGs, the European Commission presented three different scenarios for the structures, tools, and policies to be adopted by European Union institutions for achieving the SDGs.

At the point of writing, we find that none of these scenarios have been fully developed.

2019 European Report on the Implementation of SDGs at the European Union



REVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS

The EU Gender Equality Strategy aims to achieve significant progress towards a gender-equal Europe by 2025.

The strategy addresses six themes: being free from violence and stereotypes; thriving in a gender-equal economy; leading equally throughout society; gender mainstreaming and intersectional perspectives in EU policies; funding actions to make progress in gender equality in the EU; and, gender equality and women's empowerment across the world.

2020 EU Gender Equality Strategy

More specifically, the strategy seeks to end gender-based violence, challenge gender stereotypes, close gender gaps in the labor market, achieve equal participation across different sectors of the economy, address the gender pay and pension gaps, close the gender care gap, as well as achieve gender balance in decision-making and in politics.

While we generally welcome the efforts and objectives outlined in the EU Gender Equality Strategy (2020-2025), we are extremely concerned with the persistent lack of (planned) action at the intersection of migration and gender.

Women*, girl, LGBTQIA+, and gender diverse migrants face heightened rights violations, lack of protections, and endangerment of livelihoods due to their intersecting experiences; they also face severe levels of discrimination, vulnerability, and marginalization while on the move and in host countries, including in Germany.

REVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS

In November 2020, the European Commission published its new Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion for the period 2021-2027. The Action Plan aims to promote inclusion for all and to address barriers that can hinder participation and inclusion of people with a migrant background. It sets out new actions that build on the previous Action Plan from 2016.

The main actions are: inclusive education and training from early childhood to higher education; improving employment opportunities and skills recognition; promoting access to health services, including mental healthcare; and, access to adequate and affordable housing.

All of these actions are imperative to labor market participation of refugee women in that they are interconnected in the ways that they shape migrant livelihoods.

Notably, the Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion recognizes the heightened experiences of women* and girl migrants, however, it remains largely silent on LGBTQIA+ and gender diverse migrants.

This must not be replicated at the national level, especially in Germany where the federal government wants to centralize the storage of personal data of non-Germans irrespective of warnings by experts that data leaks could lead to persecution of LGBTQIA+ and gender diverse migrants in their country of origin.

2020 New EU Action Plan for Integration and Inclusion

REVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS

2020 New EU Pact on Asylum and Migration

The New Pact on Migration and Asylum is linked to the Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion. The Pact aims to create more efficient and fair migration processes, reducing unsafe and irregular routes, and promoting sustainable and safe legal pathways to those in need of protection.

The Pact sets out the European Commission's new approach to migration, addresses border management, and ensures more coherence to integrate the internal and external dimensions of migration policies.

In June 2020, we issued recommendations to ensure that the new Pact on Migration and Asylum is anti-discriminatory, rights-based, and gender-responsive. The recommendations included - but were not limited to - the development of a rights-based framework for migration policy that protects migrants irrespective of nationality (third-country nationals) and migration status (regular, irregular, asylee, refugee, other displaced), the establishment of an evidence-based framework for migration policy that is premised on thorough research, critical analysis, and disaggregated data, and that explores the breadth of migrant experiences, and the institutionalization of a gender-responsive framework for migration policy that addresses gender justice beyond borders and binaries.

While we issued these recommendations for migration policy at the regional level, they similarly apply to the national level (Germany).

CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION

The participation of civil society is crucial to refugee women's employment. Persistent space, figuratively and literally, between refugee women's experiences and policies that govern these experiences has led to compromised outcomes in refugee women's employment.

We, the Center for Migration, Gender, and Justice, seek to shrink these spaces by ensuring migrant agency, representation, and accountability in order to achieve gender justice beyond borders. This includes putting migrant communities front and center of our work through engagement of Advisory Group members such as WoW.

WoW supports labor market participation of refugee women by offering free, multi-lingual anti-discrimination and empowerment courses, as well as workshops that prepare women to succeed in the German labor market. Within their six years of existence, WoW has reached more than two hundred women who have experienced intersectional discrimination in the German labor market. WoW provides tailored workshops and seminars to refugee women as well as women of second or third generation migration background.

As a local, community-based organization, WoW understands their work as complementary to state-sponsored programs. Rather than focusing on integration, a concept that WoW as an organization is highly critical of, the NGO emphasizes anti-discrimination trajectories.

WoW holds that knowing one's rights is a significant factor in labor market access and success. By providing one-on-one mentoring and empowerment training, WoW complements professional advising services offered by the government. WoW's programs are specific and targeted to refugee women and involve long-term engagement as a means of ensuring sustainable livelihoods.



CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION

Besides these targeted services for refugee women which are part of the NGO's "Job Ready Program," WoW takes a comprehensive approach to promote equality and diversity in the German labor market. WoW addresses four main stakeholders: employees (Job Ready Program), employers (I Pledge Campaign), society (WithorWithout Campaign), and politics (Political Change Campaign).

The I Pledge Campaign (employers) involves the formulation and implementation of collective approaches to combat intersectional discrimination. WoW offers free workshops and working groups on topics concerning diversity in the German labor market. The annual WoW Diversity Day has been a great success in bringing together employees, employers, society, and politics.

The WithorWithout Campaign (society) raises awareness about intersectional discrimination in the German labor market. WoW offers interactive online and offline engagement that encourages society to promote equality and diversity in employment. In 2016/2017, the NGO developed two ongoing campaigns in cooperation with the Forum of Cultures - Stuttgart. The bags and postcards with the statement "What matters in the job market is what's in the head, not on it", as well as a card game on "Muslims and Islam in Germany," have been effective awareness-raising tools.

The Political Change Campaign (politics) furthers the active participation of women with a migration background in politics. In 2017, WoW participated in the European Union Commission's Annual Colloquium on Fundamental Rights and engaged with key international stakeholders during the 2018 United Nations General Assembly. In 2019, WoW hosted a parallel event at the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women and was part of the first ever European Union Anti-Racism Week in Brussels ahead of the European elections.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Six years into Agenda 2030, much remains to be addressed in matters of migration, gender, and labor.

While Germany's 2021 VNR and its revised Sustainable Development Strategy both speak to migration policy and gender policy, they do so in disconnected ways and operate along policy silos: with regards to migration policy, the focus on migratory movements is guided by conceptions of securitization and control rather than human rights, while with regards to gender policy, the focus on labor market participation is guided by conceptions of presumed uniformity rather than complexity in lived experiences.

Based on our research and community collaboration, we make the following recommendations to foster sustained labor market participation of refugee women in Germany.



RECOMMENDATIONS

SDG 5 - GENDER EQUALITY

Gender equality in the German labor market remains a goal yet to be achieved. This is particularly the case for refugee women. Gender equality in the German labor market necessitates not only legal, but also social and political change in the way that the intersection between migration and gender is conceived and addressed within migration policy and gender policy.

With specific regards to refugee women and their intersectional challenges in the labor market, we recommend that Germany incorporates anonymized application procedures into its national anti-discrimination framework.

In Germany, it is common practice to include a picture and other personal information (i.e. nationality) on résumés. Studies have shown, however, that including pictures and other personal information in applications carries significant discriminatory effects.

A 2016 study by the Institute for Labor Economics, for instance, found that women with migration background from a Muslim majority country wearing a headscarf are significantly disadvantaged in the German labor market.

By using a correspondence test experiment, the Institute found that only 4.2% of all applications featuring a Turkish name and a picture of a woman wearing a headscarf received invitations for interviews (IZA, 2016). Incorporating anonymized application procedures into Germany's anti-discrimination framework presents a sustainable approach to achieve gender equality in the labor market



RECOMMENDATIONS

SDG 8 – DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Decent work for refugees requires a legal-institutional framework that does not allow for permissible difference in treatment. Yet, the current legal-institutional framework that governs refugee women's employment has loopholes that allow for difference in treatment (2006 General Act on Equal Treatment).

We recommend amendments to Germany's anti-discrimination framework in order to ensure decent work for all.

Besides legal-institutional change, we also acknowledge that employers have an important role to play in upholding decent work standards. For employers, we recommend that they be included in the assessment of labor market needs, challenges and opportunities so that un- and underemployment of refugees, particularly refugee women, can be eliminated.

It is however not only employers that need to be included in such assessments. We hold that first and foremost refugee women must be involved in identifying their own needs and challenges as part of any institutional structure that is to govern them, including the labor market.



RECOMMENDATIONS

SDG 10 – REDUCED INEQUALITIES

To reduce inequalities for refugee women in Germany, we find it to be crucial to increase support for professional advising services. Refugee women go through great lengths to further their opportunities in the labor market. The great dedication that refugee women show to prepare themselves for employment is commendable and providing accessible and targeted professional advising services is critical in this process.

Besides supporting professional advising services, we also recommend that employers are held accountable to commit themselves to close the gender gap for all women.

For example, while the Wage Transparency Act requires German companies with more than 200 employees to release an annual report on employee wages disaggregated by gender, companies of smaller size are not being held accountable.

Requiring all German companies (irrespective of size) to report gender discrepancies in wages creates a comprehensive system of accountability that ensures that companies are engaging in fair labor practices and are hereby contributing to reduce inequalities.



RECOMMENDATIONS

SDG 16 – PEACE, JUSTICE, AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

Refugee women deserve peace, justice, and strong institutions in their host communities.

For Germany to achieve SDG 16 relative to labor market participation of refugee women necessitates a re-thinking of the current socio-legal framework that governs refugee women's livelihoods.

Fostering anti-discrimination efforts is a first step in this process. Rather than measuring success of labor market participation by extent to which refugee women are able to access pre-existing structures (that may pose a mismatch with refugee women's needs and challenges), we find that an anti-discriminatory and gender-responsive trajectory is necessary.

Such trajectory must be intersectional given the complexity of refugee women's experiences. For instance, tensions concerning the headscarf and labor market access must be addressed. Specific intersectional challenges such as this are rarely reflected in big data analyses while they often represent a particularly pressing issue to those affected.

We thus recommend an intersectional approach to policy-making that matches the complexity of challenges that refugee women face.



RECOMMENDATIONS

SDG 17 – PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

Partnerships between civil society and government are key to labor market participation of refugee women in Germany. We are particularly concerned with the lack of consultation with local organizations (such as WoW) in the policy-making process. In our assessment, this lack of consultation has led to compromised outcomes as it concerns refugee women's employment.

We hence urge the government to engage in more transparent multi-stakeholder discussions with civil society organizations in order to create coherent policies that address refugees' challenges.

Germany prides itself in multilateralism towards the achievement of SDGs at the global stage, yet when it comes to policy-making in domestic affairs, civil society and other non-state actors are rarely regarded as serious partners.

This lack of recognition of community-based knowledge and expertise is particularly detrimental to partnerships with migrant communities and local NGOs working with migrant communities, and needs to be addressed immediately.



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Authors and Contact Details:

Lead-Researcher: Dr. Lara-Zuzan Golesorkhi (Ph.D. Politics / Founder, Executive Director, Advocacy Director at the Center for Migration, Gender, and Justice / Founder and Executive Director of WoW - WithorWithout)

Research Team (Contributors):

WoW - WithorWithout: Torrie Webb, Annika Gordon, Jennifer Mickelson, and Maddy Nohr

Center for Migration, Gender, and Justice: Andrea Thompson Guiza

Center for Migration, Gender, and Justice

P.O. Box 600413

70304 Stuttgart, Germany

info@migrationgenderjustice.com

www.migrationgenderjustice.com

WoW e.V.

P.O. Box 600413

70304 Stuttgart, Germany

infowow2015@gmail.com

www.wow-withorwithout.com



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