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Training Programme: ‘Migrants’ Integration in the Primary Sector: Ensuring Decent Working and Living Conditions’

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Module 1 – Introduction and Key Concepts Related to Migration

1.1 Module overview

Number of stimated hours: **5.**

1.1.1 Introduction

This module provides an overview of migratory dynamics in Europe, exploring the key data and the realities underlying them. It focuses on offering a solid conceptual framework to understand who the migrants arriving in our societies are and what specific challenges they face throughout their integration process.

1.2 Module objectives

- To provide the basic definition of integration (International Organization for Migration, IOM).
- To understand the importance of the integration of migrants for host societies, for the migrants themselves, and for the labour market and the primary sector.
- To show key data on migration in Europe. Origins: social, political, and economic realities. Know about the different types of migration in Europe.
    - Trends influencing migration in the EU:
      (a) demographic changes (including the ageing of European populations),
      (b) environment / extreme weather events, and
      (c) geopolitical instabilities (wars, conflicts, political instability).
- To perceive the distinction between the definitions of migrant, refugee, stateless person, and asylum seeker.

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1.2.1 Learning outcomes

By the end of this module, learners will be able to:

- Identify and understand the main data on migration in Europe, as well as the main geographical origins of migrants and the socio-political and economic dynamics shaping these movements.
- Understand the importance of integration of migrants in host societies.
- Recognise the different migratory routes existing in Europe.
- Analyse the different types of migration (economic, forced, climate-related, family-related, etc.) and understand their implications within the European context.
- Conceptually distinguish between migrant, refugee, stateless person and asylum seeker, and correctly apply these definitions in analysis and discussions.

1.3 Main content

1.3.1 Basic definition of integration

Integration is a bidirectional process of mutual adaptation between migrants and host societies. According to the **International Organization for Migration (IOM)**, this concept implies that societies must be inclusive and cohesive, enabling migrants to function as autonomous and productive members.

1.3.2 Importance of migrants' integration

Effective integration is essential for three main reasons:

1. **For host societies:** It is critical for social cohesion and for public acceptance of immigration, especially in contexts where public opinion often expresses concern. Integration helps build more united societies and prevents geographic segregation.

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It also generates **cultural enrichment**, as integration promotes the development of **intercultural sensitivity** and communication between different groups, strengthening the social fabric.

2. **For migrants themselves:** Integration is fundamental to protecting their **rights**, **autonomy**, and **well-being**. It helps overcome structural barriers and improves access to resources and services. It also fosters a sense of belonging and cohesion.

3. **For the labour market and the primary sector:** The economic contribution of migrants is a determining factor for the stability and growth of host societies, as illustrated by the key elements outlined below:

   - **Labour market and primary sector.** Migration plays a crucial role in addressing **labour shortages and demographic gaps**. One of its most significant impacts is its ability to respond to labour market needs, especially in a context of population ageing across Europe and other OECD countries.

     Labour migration helps fill vacancies in sectors where there is a critical shortage of local workers, enabling the economy to continue functioning efficiently.

     In the **primary sector and rural areas**, migrants play an essential role in meeting labour demand, contributing directly to the economic sustainability of these regions.

   - **Productivity and human capital.** Current trends show that migrant populations are increasingly educated and highly skilled.

     In fact, in 2023, migrant employment rates reached their highest levels ever recorded across the OECD, demonstrating their capacity to integrate as autonomous and productive members of society.

     Additionally, there is growing global competition to attract foreign talent, as highly skilled workers drive innovation and enhance the competitiveness of companies in host countries.

   - **Impact on public finances and economic growth.** Migration has a direct impact on public finances and labour markets.

     By entering the active workforce, migrants contribute to the tax system and help sustain public services, mitigating the fiscal effects of demographic decline.

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Moreover, effective integration allows migrants to contribute not only as workers but also as consumers and entrepreneurs, fostering social cohesion and long-term economic development.

1.3.3 Key data on migration in Europe

Realities of origin:

These are complex and driven by an interconnected set of **social, political, economic, and environmental** factors. They can be grouped into the following key points:

1. Geopolitical conflicts and persecution

Political instability and violence continue to be major drivers of displacement to Europe.

- **Force displacement:** As of late 2024, an estimated 123.2 million people worldwide were forcibly displaced due to persecution, conflict, and human rights violations.
- **Specific crises:** Conflicts in countries such as **Syria** have forced entire families to seek refuge in European cities following years of exile.
- **Other hotspots:** Critical situations persist in **Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, the Democratic Republic of Congo,** and **Sudan**, along with the active humanitarian route from **Ukraine** since 2022.

2. Economic and social realities

Many migratory movements respond to the search for economic security and social well-being.

- **Poverty and lack of opportunities:** Extreme poverty and limited access to basic services (education, healthcare, clean water) in countries of origin push people to migrate in search of a dignified life.
- **Family reunification:** This represents a majority share of migratory flows. Many people begin their journey to join relatives already settled in OECD countries.

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- **Demography:** The "demographic boom" in emerging markets—where large young populations face severe employment shortages—contrasts with the ageing population in Europe, generating labour-migration pressures.

3. Impact of climate change

The environment and climate have become critical origin factors affecting community resilience:

- **Climate hazards:** An estimated **19.8% of the world population** is at high risk due to climate-related hazards such as extreme temperatures, droughts, storms, and floods.
- **Loss of livelihoods:** Climate change affects the lives of nearly **425 million people**, particularly those engaged in agriculture and grazing, who lose their income sources and food security, forcing displacement.

1.3.4 Types of migration according to origin

Based on the realities described above, different profiles arriving in Europe can be identified:

- **Humanitarian migration:** Individuals fleeing war or targeted persecution (refugees and asylum seekers).
- **Labour migration:** People seeking employment in sectors such as the **primary sector**, or services across Europe.
- **Free-mobility migration:** Specifically, within Europe, this represents the largest category of migratory flows.

In summary, migrants do not usually leave their homes for a single reason but due to an accumulation of factors and crises that severely disrupt public order and/or undermine any possibility of a safe future in their countries of origin.

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1.5. Migratory Routes: Migratory routes towards the European Union are mainly divided into three geographical corridors, with an additional temporary route resulting from the conflict in Ukraine. Below are the characteristics of each route and the countries involved, according to data updated as of February 2026:

1. Western Route: This route includes both the **Western Mediterranean** and **West African** pathways.

- **Involved countries:** The main entry point is **Spain**.

2. Central Route: This refers to transit through the **Central Mediterranean.**

- **Involved countries: Italy** is the key country along this route. A critical geographical point is the island of **Lampedusa**.

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3. Eastern Route: This route corresponds to flows crossing the **Eastern Mediterranean**.

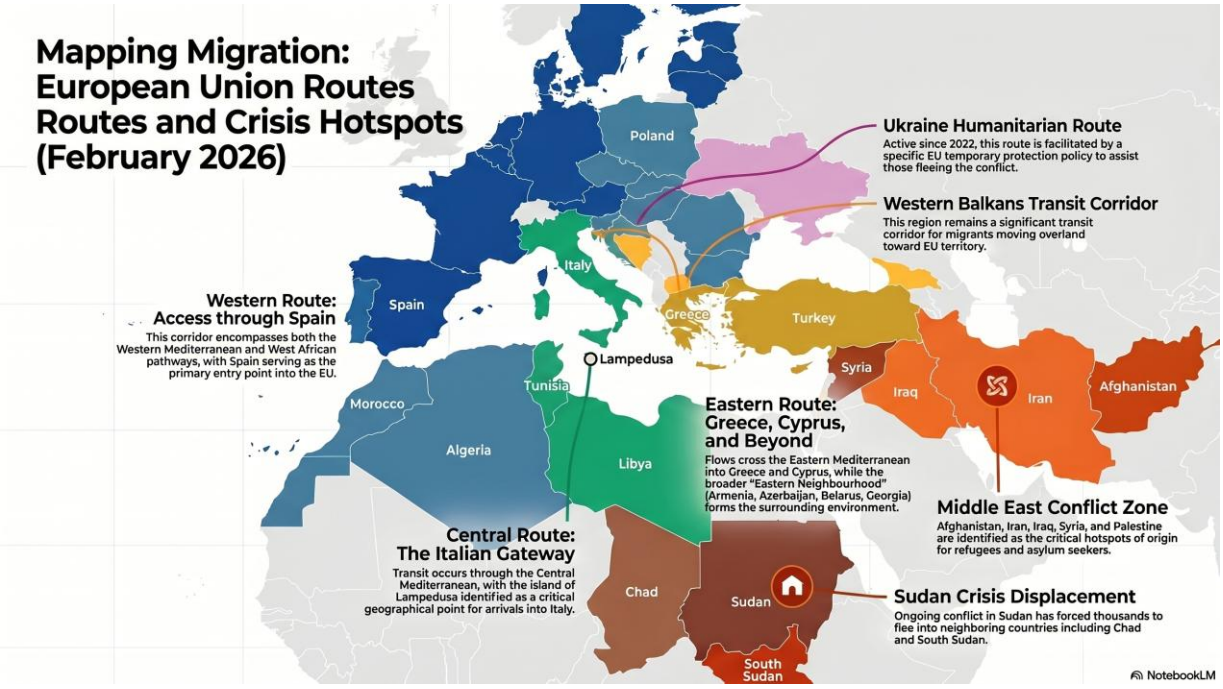
- **Involved countries: Greece** and **Cyprus** are the EU Member States most directly affected in terms of migration management. More broadly, countries within the "Eastern Neighbourhood" (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, among others) also form part of this broader geographical environment.

In addition to the entry points mentioned, the sources identify countries of origin and transit that feed these flows due to specific crises:

- **Regional conflicts: Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Palestine** are critical hotspots of origin for refugees and asylum seekers.
- **Ukraine route:** A humanitarian route has been active since 2022, supported by a specific temporary protection policy within the EU.
- **Western Balkans route:** Also identified as a significant transit corridor toward EU territory.
- **Sudan crisis:** Ongoing conflict has forced thousands of people to flee to neighbouring countries such as **Chad** and **South Sudan**.

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1.3.5 Distinction between key definitions

When discussing migration, it is essential to distinguish between these categories for appropriate technical and legal management:

- **Migrant:** According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the term migrant broadly refers to **any person who moves to reside outside their habitual place of residence**. Statistically, this population is often identified as individuals born abroad or foreign nationals residing in a host country. Currently, nearly **one in seven people living in the European Union** was born outside the EU.

- **Refugee:** According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), refugees are individuals who have been forced to leave their country of origin and therefore seek protection in another State. They cannot return because they risk persecution due to their identity, beliefs, or speech, or because their home country is affected by violence, armed conflict, or other events that severely disrupt public order. International law defines who qualifies as a refugee.

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The 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol are the main legal instruments establishing this definition. One of their core principles is non-refoulement (Article 33), which states that no refugee should be returned to a country where their life or freedom would be at risk.

- **Asylum Seeker:** an asylum seeker is someone who requests international protection after being forced to flee their country due to violence, war, or persecution.

  Unlike a refugee—whose status has already been legally recognised—an asylum seeker is a person who has submitted a formal request and is **awaiting a final decision** from the competent authorities.

  - **Legal and procedural aspects:**

    Uniform treatment in the EU: Under the new Pact on Migration and Asylum, the European Union aims for all asylum seekers to receive uniform treatment across EU territory, improving efficiency and solidarity among Member States.

  - **Reception and needs:**
    Upon arrival, asylum seekers are usually hosted in reception centres where they receive essential support (accommodation, food, basic items).

    Their integration is considered critical to enable them to function as autonomous members while their legal situation is processed.

  - **Denials management:** For those whose asylum applications are rejected, OECD and EU policies prioritize **sustainable return and reintegration** in their countries of origin.

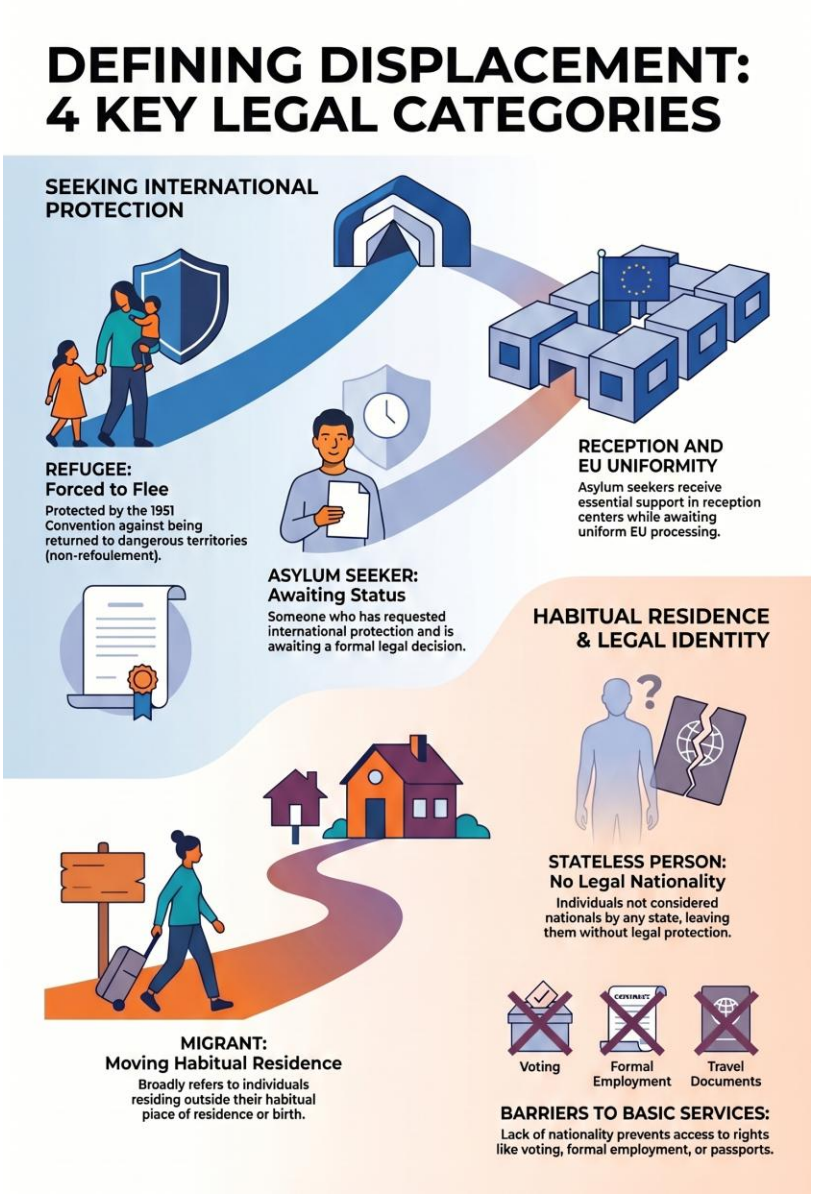
- **Stateless Person:** According to UNHCR, a stateless person is someone who is **not considered a national by any State** under the operation of its law. In practice, this means the person has no legal nationality anywhere in the world.

  - **Characteristics and Vulnerability:**

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- **Lack of State protection:** Stateless individuals lack the legal bond of nationality, which often means they face major obstacles in accessing protection or basic services. Their central problem is the **absence of nationality**, preventing them from exercising rights that depend on citizenship (e.g., obtaining a passport, voting, or accessing formal employment in many cases).



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1.4 Evaluation questionnaire

1. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), what is the essential definition of the concept of integration?

a) A unilateral process in which the migrant must abandon their culture of origin.

b) A bidirectional process of mutual adaptation between migrants and host societies.

c) An exclusively administrative legal procedure for obtaining nationality.

2. Which is the main country of entry involved in the so-called "Western Route" towards the European Union?

a) Spain.

b) Italy.

c) Greece.

3. Which geographical point is identified as critical within the "Central Route"?

a) The island of Cyprus.

b) The island of Lampedusa in Italy.

c) The border between Poland and Belarus.

4. In relation to the labour market and the primary sector, what is one of the most significant impacts of migration in Europe?

a) An increase in unemployment among the highly skilled local **population**.

b) Covering labour shortages, especially in rural areas and in response to demographic ageing.

c) A reduction in productivity and human capital in OECD countries.

5. According to the sources, which category represents the largest migratory flows specifically within European territory?

a) Forced migration due to climate-related causes.

b) Free-mobility migration.

c) Humanitarian migration linked exclusively to the Sudan crisis.

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6. What is the fundamental difference between a refugee and an asylum seeker?

a) A refugee has already had their status legally recognised, while an asylum seeker awaits a final decision.

b) A refugee travels for economic reasons and an asylum seeker for political ones.

c) There is no difference; both terms are legally interchangeable within the European Union.

7. According to the sources, what is the estimated impact of climate change in terms of livelihoods and displacement?

a) It affects only urban populations in developed countries.

b) It affects the lives of nearly 425 million people, particularly those working in agriculture and pastoralism.

c) It is not yet considered a factor driving forced human displacement.

8. How is a "stateless person" technically defined?

a) Someone who holds more than two active nationalities.

b) An individual who is not considered a national by any State under the operation of its law.

c) A person who voluntarily renounces their nationality to work abroad.

9. What is the objective of the new European Union Pact on Migration and Asylum mentioned in the texts?

a) To eliminate all migratory routes towards the Eastern Mediterranean.

b) To prioritise only high-skilled labour migration.

c) To ensure that asylum seekers receive uniform treatment throughout the EU, promoting efficiency and solidarity among Member States.

10. Why is labour migration considered a key factor for the primary sector and rural areas in Europe?

a) Because it allows replacing agricultural machinery entirely with manual labour.

b) Because it helps cover critical shortages of local workers in the context of demographic ageing and sustains regional economies.

c) Because its main purpose is to reduce wages in the agricultural sector to increase competitiveness.

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- European Migration Network: https://www.emnspain.gob.es/es/home
- European Parliament Migration: Migration | Topics | European Parliament
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Module 2 – Legislative Framework on Migration

2.1 Module overview

Number of estimated hours: **6.**

2.1.1 Introduction

This module is a bridge between the theoretical understanding of migration, as discussed in Module 1, and the actual application of the subject in the context of employment and integration.

The legal framework that regulates migration is multi-layered, comprising international, European, and national laws that regulate the entry of migrants, the conditions under which they may work, and the protection of their rights.

Knowledge of the legal framework is crucial for stakeholders, especially in the primary sector of employment, as the presence of migrant workers is high in this sector, and the knowledge of the legislation is vital for the provision of fair working conditions, reducing the likelihood of exploitation of migrants, and promoting their smooth integration into the employment market.

2.2 Module objectives

- To facilitate the introduction of the basic legal frameworks in the international, European, and national contexts of migration.
- To enable the understanding of the basic principles of human rights, humanitarian law, and international protection as far as migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and stateless persons are concerned.
- To enable the participants to gain a clear understanding of migration and employment legislation in the national context.

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- To examine the role of the legal frameworks in the regulation of access to the labour market, employment conditions, and social inclusion in the primary sector.

2.2.1Learning outcomes

At the end of this module, learners will be able to:

- Understand the basic principles of the framework of human rights, humanitarian law, and international law and be able to identify the key international instruments that frame the regulation of the treatment and protection of migrants.
- To be familiar with, analyze, and apply knowledge acquired regarding migrant rights and work, taking into consideration each country's particular framework.
- To have acquired a critical understanding of how law can be used both as an inclusion and exclusion strategy.

2.3 Key content:

2.3.1 Understanding Migration Governance in Europe

Migration rules in Europe work within a system that involves levels. This system includes laws, policies from the European Union (EU) and laws from individual countries that are part of the EU. Even though each country handles migration on its own, EU guidelines help set rules and ways to work together.

Here are some things that affect migration in Europe:

-Needs of the job market
-Changes in population, like population ageing
-Conflicts taking place in other countries
-What happens at the EU borders

There are some groups of people who move to Europe:

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-People who live in the EU and can move freely
-People from countries outside the EU
-People seeking asylum and refugees
-Workers who come for a determined period or have low-skilled jobs

Even though these groups are similar across countries, the rules and how they are applied are different. This leads to diverse experiences for people who move to different countries, in Europe.

2.3.2 International Legal Framework

All European Union Member States are subject to the same international legal framework controlling migration, which serves as the cornerstone for migration policies throughout the continent. This framework is founded on important human rights documents including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which set forth essential values like equality, human dignity, and non-discrimination. Furthermore, the 1951 Geneva Convention and its 1967 Protocol outline the rights and status of refugees and establish the concept of non-refoulement, which forbids sending people back to nations where they might be persecuted. Conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO) make an additional contribution by establishing guidelines for equitable treatment, fair working conditions, and protection from exploitation. Although their application may differ between nations, these universal standards serve as the moral and legal foundation for the development of national and EU immigration policies throughout Europe.

2.3.3 European Union Migration and Asylum Framework

A shared framework intended to foster collaboration and set basic standards among Member States shapes migration and refugee policies at the European level. In order to guarantee uniform

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treatment of asylum seekers and recipients of international protection, the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), which includes directives like the Asylum Procedures Directive, the Reception Conditions Directive, and the Qualification Directive, is crucial. The Dublin Regulation also establishes which Member State, usually the nation of first entry, is in charge of reviewing an asylum application. Directives like the Single Permit Directive and the Seasonal Workers Directive aim to control third-country citizens' employment, residency, and entry rights in the area of labour migration. Notwithstanding these attempts at harmonisation, there are still substantial implementation-related variances among Member States, which result in persistent issues such uneven burden-sharing, differences in recognition rates, and differences in reception circumstances throughout Europe.

2.3.4 National Legislative Framework in Council of the European Union (CEU) Member States

Migration governance ultimately falls under the jurisdiction of individual Member States, who create their own national legal systems in accordance with EU directives and international commitments, even though the EU offers a shared legal framework. National frameworks in Europe usually have measures for giving international protection as well as regulations governing admission, residency, and repatriation. The national authorities in charge of managing migration and asylum proceedings put these mechanisms into place. However, how laws are administered varies depending on institutional structures, administrative capabilities, and governmental agendas. This illustrates a key feature of the European migrant system: a balance between national sovereignty preservation and EU harmonisation, which results in different legal and practical strategies among Member States.

2.3.5 Access to the Labour Market in Europe

Both national policies and EU-level laws influence migrants' access to the labour market in Europe, creating a system that is structured but inconsistent among Member States. The idea of

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free mobility benefits EU residents by granting them unimpeded employment opportunities across all Member States. Third-country nationals, on the other hand, are typically subject to certain residency and work visa requirements, which are frequently associated with specific industries or companies. Depending on national laws, asylum seekers usually have limited or delayed access to the employment market. The goal of labour migration policy throughout Europe is to alleviate labour shortages while controlling workforce participation by striking a balance between economic demands and migration restrictions. The prevalence of migrant workers in industries including construction, agriculture, domestic work, and hospitality is indicative of a larger European trend in which migrants are essential to the survival of labour-intensive and low-skilled industries.

2.3.6 Working conditions and rights in Europe

International norms, state labour laws, and EU legislation all work together to defend migrant workers' rights and working conditions throughout Europe. These frameworks seek to guarantee that all workers, regardless of nationality, have equitable compensation, safe working conditions, and access to social protection. However, the reality for a lot of migrant workers in many Member States confront serious obstacles, such as undeclared employment, unstable working conditions, and reliance on employers, especially when residency permits are linked to certain occupations. These structural elements may restrict access to legal remedies and make a person more susceptible to exploitation. These difficulties are particularly noticeable in industries that depend significantly on migrant workers, underscoring persistent discrepancies between law safeguards and their efficient implementation throughout Europe.

2.3.7 Social inclusion and integration policies in Europe

Given the lack of a single, cohesive European integration model, social inclusion and integration policies for migrants in Europe differ significantly throughout Member States. Language instruction, access to healthcare and education, and job assistance programs that promote social

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engagement are common measures across nations. However, disparities in institutional capability, political priorities, and welfare systems result in different outcomes and uneven assistance for migrants. In addition to the participation of local governments, non-governmental organisations, and members of civil society, European financial sources frequently assist integration initiatives. This diversity draws attention to one of the main issues facing Europe: maintaining uniform and successful integration programs while honouring national distinctions.

2.3.8 The primary sector in Europe: A legal and social perspective

The primary sector, which includes fishing, livestock, and agriculture, among other, is vital to the European economy and heavily relies on migrant labour in several Member States. Seasonal work schedules, local labour shortages, and the extensive use of temporary migrant programs are characteristics of this industry. In the primary sector, migrant workers frequently experience difficult working conditions, such as restricted job mobility, especially when work permits are linked to employers, and increased susceptibility to informal or undeclared work. These circumstances are not specific to any one nation; rather, they reflect larger structural dynamics found throughout Europe, especially in areas with significant agricultural production. Because of this, employment conditions and worker protection in this industry are greatly impacted by the legal and regulatory frameworks governing migration.

2.3.9 Challenges and critical perspectives

Migration governance in Europe still faces several structural and practical obstacles despite the existence of extensive legislative frameworks at the international, European, and national levels. These include the continuation of informal labour markets, inequalities in the allocation of responsibilities among Member States, pressure on reception systems, and delays in asylum procedures. Additionally, there is frequently a discrepancy between the application of legal rules and their actual implementation. Migratory law can be viewed critically as having two purposes: it protects migrant rights, but it also functions as a means of regulating migratory patterns, which

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may result in forms of exclusion, especially for disadvantaged groups. In the context of European migration, this conflict between control and protection continues to be crucial and influences policy discussions and changes.

2.4 Evaluation questionnaire

1. Which principle prevents migrants from being returned to their country of origin where they could be harmed?

a) Equal treatment
b) Non-refoulement
c) Freedom of movement

2. Which legal instrument outlines the status of refugees?

a) Universal Declaration of Human Rights
b) Geneva Convention (1951)
c) EU Charter

3. What is an important characteristic of human rights law?

a) Only for citizens
b) Only for workers
c) For all individuals

4. Which EU directive deals with the regulation of seasonal workers?

a) Dublin Regulation
b) Seasonal Workers Directive
c) Schengen Agreement

5. What is an important concern of workers in the primary sector?

a) Overregulation
b) Informal work
c) Lack of workers

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6. Who is responsible for implementing labour laws?

a) Only employers

b) Labor inspection and employers

c) Only migrants

7. What does non-discrimination mean?

a) Equal treatment

b) Special treatment

c) No legal rights

8. What must be obtained for migrants to work legally?

a) Informal agreement

b) Authorization for work

c) Verbal contract

9. Which sector of the economy is very dependent on migrant workers?

a) Technology

b) Finance

c) Primary sector

10. What is one of the roles of legislation?

a) Only exclusion

b) Only inclusion

c) Inclusion and exclusion

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Module 3 – Migration and Employment in the Primary Sector

3.1. Module overview

Number of estimated hours: **7.**

3.1.1 Introduction

In Europe, the agricultural sector is vital to the continent's food production; however, agricultural workers are often not adequately protected. Since the 1980s, the European agricultural sector has undergone profound changes, shifting from family-run production to industrial-scale production. This shift has led to a growing demand for low-cost labour, which migrant workers have met by providing their labour. Today, in countries such as Italy, Spain, Greece and Cyprus, migrant workers represent a vital resource in the agricultural sector; however, in many cases they work in conditions of labour exploitation, precarious housing, isolation from the local community and services, vulnerability, and linguistic and administrative barriers.

This module focuses on the specific characteristics of the agricultural sector, with particular regard to the needs and challenges faced by migrants in this context. Therefore, by exploring issues such as informal employment, bureaucratic complexity, the fragmentation of services, and inadequate housing and transport, the module will provide an overview of the main obstacles to the social and labour market integration of migrant workers.

3.2. Module Objectives

- To analyse the characteristics and opportunities for labour integration in the primary sector and rural areas.
- To strengthen the employability and integration of migrants through resources and tools adapted to the host society.

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- To better understand the employment needs and challenges in the primary sector, the migrants' profiles and needs, and the effective application of the proposed mechanisms.
- To develop intercultural sensitivity, as well as intercultural communication and migrant support skills.

3.2.1 Learning outcomes

By the end of this module, learners will be able to:

- Analyse the specific characteristics, challenges and needs of employment in the primary sector and rural areas, identifying their economic, social, and labour-related specificities.
- Recognize the main profiles of migrants and workers in the primary sector, differentiating their paths, motivations and conditions of labour integration.
- Identify and describe the most frequent needs of migrants in recruitment and job search processes in the primary sector.
- Detect and evaluate the main challenges and barriers migrants face in socio-labour integration in general and in the primary sector in particular, considering structural, legal, cultural, and social factors.
- Propose approaches and tools to facilitate labour inclusion of migrants in the primary sector from a rights-based, inclusive, and equitable perspective.

3.3 Key Content

3.3.1 Agricultural sector in Europe and Migrant workers

Since the 1980s, the European agricultural sector has undergone profound changes. The protectionism implemented through the European Commission's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), along with the associated subsidies, led to a specific division of labour and industrialisation was promoted. Mediterranean countries in particular became responsible for a large part of agri-food production.

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Consequently, there has been a shift from traditional agriculture to large-scale production led by cooperatives and large companies. This has resulted in a transition from family farming to wage labour, establishing industrial agriculture as the dominant source of agri-food products for European markets. This system employs thousands of farmers to produce vast quantities of fruit and vegetables for export across the continent.

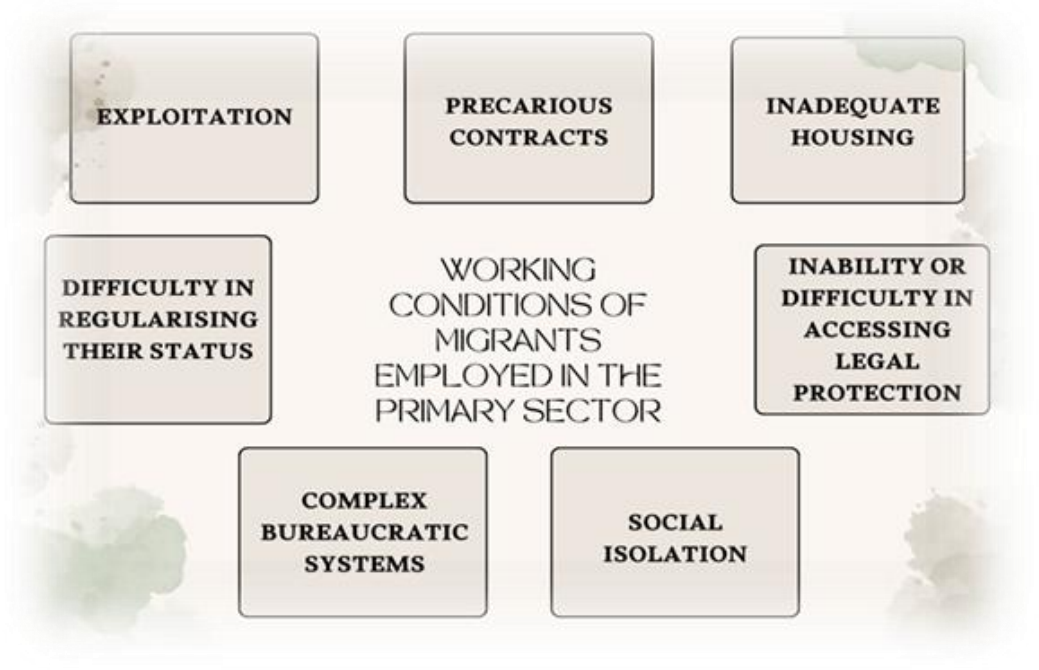
As these industrial transformations took place, more and more young people moved to the cities, resulting in a significant exodus from the countryside. Alongside this migration, there was a growing need for labour in an agricultural sector experiencing a decline in the young workforce, as well as in rural areas with an ageing population. Since then, migrant workers have represented a significant proportion of the agricultural workforce. They had easy access to agricultural work and were thus able to earn enough to support themselves. Today migrant workers have become a significant part of the agricultural workforce. However, their work is often characterised by labour exploitation and the systematic violation of human rights and labour laws.

In particular, in Belgium the farming population is ageing significantly, whilst in Greece and Cyprus the trend for young people to move into other sectors, coupled with urbanisation, has led to a sharp decline in the number of nationally born agricultural workers. This labour shortage has had a number of consequences. A case in point is Greece, where the decline in the domestic agricultural workforce has led to rising production costs and wages, resulting in reduced competitiveness of agricultural products on the international market. These trends have been observed across Europe, prompting employers in the agricultural sector and governments to seek alternative sources of labour. Consequently, migrant workers have become a necessary and fundamental component of Europe's agricultural workforce. In Italy, for example, the Observatory on Foreign Nationals shows that in 2024 there were around 4 million foreign workers employed in the private sector; specifically, around 314,000 of these were employed in the agricultural sector (75.4% of whom were men), particularly in the production of fruit, vegetables, wine and olives. In Spain too, and particularly in areas such as Huelva, Murcia, Almería and Lleida, there is a high proportion of migrant workers. In Belgium, seasonal work and migrant labour are particularly crucial in horticulture, meat processing and fruit and vegetable harvesting. In conclusion, it can be said that the work of migrant workers is essential to the functioning of European agricultural production.

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3.3.2 Migrant worker profiles and their needs in the primary sector



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Despite the importance of the migrant workforce in the agricultural sector, the working conditions of migrants employed in this sector are often characterised by exploitation, precarious contracts, inadequate housing, social isolation, and inability or difficulty in accessing legal protection and regularising their status. Indeed, complex bureaucratic systems, documented in various countries including Cyprus and Greece, make the transition from informal to formal employment difficult. Furthermore, employers often lack the necessary knowledge to fulfil the required bureaucratic formalities.

In various European countries, migrant workers may fall into different categories, each with its own distinctive features:

- **Seasonal workers:** This status allows employers to benefit from a low-cost and flexible workforce during the harvest period without having to manage the presence of workers

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at other times of the year. In particular, Moroccan women workers in Spain are recruited in their country of origin and selected on the basis of their gender and their status as single mothers with dependent children. This situation makes them more vulnerable, susceptible to exploitation, likely to accept seasonal work without continuity, and lacking bargaining power. In this case, recruitment takes place within a specific framework in which two states enter into a bilateral agreement.

- **Irregular workers:** Migrants who arrive in the destination country illegally often remain in a state of irregular employment; indeed, the difficulty in obtaining residence permits makes it hard for them to secure legal work and leaves them more vulnerable to exploitation. A case in point is Italy, where, although many migrant workers in the agricultural sector from North Africa, Eastern Europe and South Asia work legally, some of them are unable to acquire this status due to bureaucratic difficulties in obtaining legal residence in the country.
- **Asylum seekers with temporary work permits:** Asylum seeker status can also lead to a state of uncertainty due to the application of the Dublin Regulation, which determines which country is responsible for processing an asylum seeker's case. In Italy, the protracted nature of the asylum process combined with limited access to housing and healthcare, means that workers falling into this category are more likely to be exploited by employers.

3.3.3 Migrants' needs in job search and hiring processes

There are several obstacles that limit migrants' access to formal employment in the agricultural sector. Among the barriers identified are:

- Language difficulties (which can lead to problems understanding and navigating bureaucratic procedures).
- The lack of recognition of existing qualifications.
- Difficulties in dealing with administrative procedures and the slowness of these processes.
- Informal employment.
- The high costs that can be associated with the regularisation process.
- Fragmentation of institutional coordination.

To address these difficulties, certain measures could be implemented, such as:

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- Measures to simplify access to residence permits and the conclusion of secure contracts that can reduce migrants' vulnerability.
- More effective institutional coordination.
- Recognition of migrants' professional skills and qualifications.
- A legal framework that facilitates the regularisation of migrants' status.
- Facilitating access to training programmes.
- Tailoring training to the specific needs of migrant workers, particularly language comprehension and legal procedures.
- Digitalisation of Permit Processes.
- Streamline and modernise the permitting system to reduce delays and improve efficiency.



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Simplifying access to legal documentation can help break down the barriers to obtaining the legal documents required for formal employment; this would help reduce informal work.

3.3.4 Challenges of migrant workers in their socio-labour integration

The integration of migrant workers into the European labour market, particularly within the agricultural and primary sectors, is hindered by a complex web of systemic, administrative, and social barriers. While these workers are essential to the functionality of the sector, they often operate within a framework characterized by service fragmentation and institutional gaps that push them toward informality and exploitation.

3.3.4.1 The European context: systemic and administrative barriers

At the European level, a primary obstacle is the fragmentation of support services. Although legal aid, employment and social support exist, the lack of coordination between responsible bodies leads to significant inefficiencies. This failure often forces migrants to rely on informal networks rather than institutional support; a trend particularly pronounced in rural areas where services are already scarce.

Administrative complexity serves as another critical barrier. Constant delays in issuing or renewing residence and work permits, coupled with bureaucratic hurdles, create a state of legal limbo. In many cases, the legal framework itself creates structural dependency; for instance, systems that link a migrant's legal status directly to a specific employer make workers highly vulnerable to abuse, as leaving an exploitative situation could result in becoming undocumented. Furthermore, employers, especially small and medium enterprises, often find the administrative burden of formal hiring, such as "single permit" applications, so prohibitive that they may revert to informal hiring practices.

3.3.4.2 Living conditions, mobility, and rural isolation

The geographical isolation of agricultural workplaces, combined with inadequate public transport, reinforces the invisibility of migrant workers. For example, in regions like Huelva

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(Spain), the situation is particularly dire for Moroccan migrant women, who have reported being provided with neither food nor transport, forcing them to walk miles to reach basic services. This isolation is not merely physical but also social and institutional, as workers are frequently cut off from medical, legal, and social services located in urban centers.

Housing remains one of the most critical challenges. Across various regions, migrant workers are often subjected to overcrowded and substandard accommodation, ranging from informal settlements made of plastic and cardboard to garages and shacks lacking basic amenities like running water, electricity, or sanitation. Workers in Manolada (Greece) for example, have been found living in nylon or cardboard tents, and this is also a significant issue in Cyprus where regular labor inspections in remote mountainous areas are almost non-present. When inspections do occur, they often focus on detecting undocumented workers rather than monitoring employment and living conditions. In many instances, the cost of this inadequate housing is even deducted from their already low wages. Additionally, the system also allows for the retention of official documents by employers and restrictions on workers' movement, which are clear violations of personal autonomy.

3.3.4.3 Socio-cultural barriers and gender dynamics

Beyond the physical and legal hurdles, language barriers, the digital divide and the lack of recognition for previous skills significantly hinder long-term integration. These are often exacerbated by discriminatory perceptions, where migrants are stereotyped as "less productive" or "unwilling to learn," discouraging employers from investing in their retention. Gender-specific challenges are also prominent. For example, Italian public authorities often provide essential information only in digital formats, effectively excluding many migrant workers who may lack the necessary tools or literacy to access them. Moreover, migrant women face a heightened risk of social isolation and verbal abuse. Those with caregiving responsibilities are frequently pressured into unstable contracts, risking the loss of integration support if they need to attend to their children.

3.3.5 Approaches and tools to facilitate labour inclusion

The primary sector across Europe relies heavily on migrant labor, yet these workers remain structurally vulnerable due to fragmented services, bureaucratic hurdles, and social isolation. Transitioning from a reactive to a proactive integration model requires the identification and

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implementation of specific tools that bridge the gap between institutional frameworks and the lived experiences of migrants.

3.3.5.1 Administrative and legal facilitators

Good examples of digitalization processes that can support migrants and employers match for seasonal work can be found in Greece, in fact the "METAKLISI" system governs the recruitment of third-country nationals for seasonal work, however it is currently hampered by significant complexity that often discourages employer participation. To address this, sources recommend a transition to a fully digitalized application process to eliminate delays and reduce the administrative burden on both employers and workers. Key features of this proposed digital and institutional modernization include:

- **One-Stop-Shops**: The creation of centralized service points offering multilingual digital services to resolve the issue of opaque and fragmented procedures.
- **Mobile Permit Services**: Deploying mobile units in rural agricultural hotspots to facilitate on-site permit renewals and recruitment, ensuring that workers in remote areas do not fall into irregularity due to lack of access to urban centers.
- **Linking Systems**: Proposals include connecting job-matching platforms with training programs, transforming administrative touchpoints into opportunities for skill development.

Another best practice comes from Spain, where **Royal Decree 316/2026 of 14 April 2026** represents a significant step forward in the regularisation of migrants with established ties to the country. Building on the existing 'arraigo' (rootedness) framework, the decree introduces two new exceptional pathways specifically designed to address the situation of long-term undocumented residents.

In particular, this reform addresses certain shortcomings in the previous regularisation system:

- **Agility and immediate protection:** One of the most notable reforms is provisional authorisation to work. From the moment a case is formally opened for processing, applicants are provisionally authorised to reside and work. This eliminates the period of legal limbo that previously left workers vulnerable to exploitation whilst awaiting a decision.

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- **Administrative speed:** Through these innovations, the timeframe within which procedures must be resolved is set at three months. This reduces the significant delays that were identified as a structural problem in the regularisation system.
- **Decriminalisation and accessibility:** The decree explicitly provides that where an applicant is subject to deportation or return proceedings for being undocumented, the granting of the new authorisation entails the automatic suspension of the expulsion proceedings and, where applicable, the revocation of the order.
- **Access points and inclusion:** Rather than concentrating procedures in specialist immigration offices, public offices across the country will be made available for submitting applications (such as post offices or immigration offices). This ensures greater accessibility, including for those living in rural areas.

However, there are still some weaknesses that need to be addressed. Indeed, applications must be submitted by 30 June 2026. This deadline means that these measures are treated as one-off rather than being designed to address structural problems on a permanent basis. Furthermore, vocational training remains inaccessible to those without documentation, which prevents some migrants from using educational pathways as a means of regularisation. Nonetheless, the decree marks a notable shift towards a more protective, flexible and dignity-centred approach to migrant regularisation in Spain.

By streamlining and digitalising administrative procedures, institutions can eliminate the bureaucratic delays that often push workers into shadows. Moreover, when combined with access to secure contracts, these systems can significantly reduce migrants' vulnerability to unscrupulous intermediaries and illegal recruitment schemes. However, digitisation carries the risk that some members of the migrant population may be left behind due to a lack of access to digital tools or an inability to use them. To achieve equitable participation in the digital society and bridge the widening digital divide, governments must make meaningful digital opportunities available to all, beyond basic connectivity, including for migrants, refugees and other marginalised groups. Therefore, in practical terms, the digitalisation of immigration procedures must be accompanied by targeted support measures such as digital literacy training, multilingual online content, and the retention of physical offices where migrants can seek help and submit applications in person, to ensure that administrative modernisation does not inadvertently create new barriers for those it is designed to help.

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3.3.5.2 Economic empowerment and ethical employment tools

To combat the "black economy" and exploitative systems like Italy's *caporalato*, stakeholders recommend tools that promote employer accountability and entrepreneurship.

Caporalato is a system involving illegal forms of labour brokerage, recruitment and workforce organisation. It acts as a mechanism of exploitation that creeps in between labour demand and supply, primarily affecting those vulnerable situations or in need, such as migrants. Some suggested tools to avoid it are:

- **The Migrant Integration Scorecard**: A certification tool for employers to evaluate legal compliance and the quality of workplace inclusion, fostering transparency and trust;
- **Social Farming and Cooperatives**: Italy's "Sicilia Integra" and community-based agriculture programs provide sustainable employment while fostering social bonds. In Spain, worker cooperatives are identified as an effective tool for self-employment and decent working conditions, leveraging the previous experience many migrants have with cooperative structures in their home countries.
- **Labor Inspection Reform**: Inspections must be reoriented to monitor not only legal documentation but also living conditions and wage deductions, ensuring that housing provided by employers meets basic dignity standards.

3.3.5.3 Holistic and gender-sensitive support measures

Integration tools must account for intersectional vulnerabilities, particularly for migrant women. Intersectionality, as applied to migrant women, refers to the way in which multiple social categories, such as gender, race, and class, overlap and interact simultaneously to produce distinct and compounded forms of disadvantage. Belgium's Nyampinga Program stands as a best-practice model, utilizing a trauma-informed approach that combines language instruction with art therapy and psychosocial support.

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Practical social tools include:

- **Childcare Services**: Linking childcare to training pathways to ensure women can participate in the labor market without risking their integration support.
- **Community Mediation**: Funding for cultural mediators and interpreters to facilitate access to healthcare and public services.
- **Housing Initiatives**: Tools like rent subsidies and "Housing First" models address the critical barrier of substandard accommodation and prevent the formation of ethnic enclaves.

3.3.6 Conclusions

This module has provided an overview of the conditions faced by migrant workers in the European agricultural sector, the challenges they face and their needs. Furthermore, it has highlighted how their contribution is essential to the European primary sector. Indeed, the sector relies heavily on migrant agricultural labour. However, despite this reliance, migrant workers are often subject to precarious working conditions, poor integration and a lack of protection.

In this context, migrant workers find themselves trapped in a grey area between informal work and the impossibility of regularising their status. In particular, various challenges faced by migrants were identified, such as bureaucratic complexities, language barriers, precarious housing conditions and geographical isolation. Considering the challenges highlighted, a number

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of good practices have also been presented which can provide effective solutions, ranging from digitalised permit systems to multilingual one-stop shops, from the Spanish Royal Decree 316/2026 to Italian social cooperatives, and including psychosocial support programmes such as the Belgian Nyampinga.

It is important that practitioners and professionals working with migrant communities do not merely focus on implementing measures to facilitate access to work. Indeed, they should also, and above all, promote genuine inclusion, in which the rights, dignity and skills of migrant workers are taken seriously. Only through this approach will it be possible to make the European agricultural sector fair and sustainable for every worker.

3.4 Evaluation questionnaire

1. Since the 1980s, what major transformation has affected the European agricultural sector?

a) A shift from industrial-scale production back to family farming
b) A transition from family farming to large-scale industrial production
c) A decline in exports of agri-food products across the continent

2. Which of the following is identified as a key reason for the increasing reliance on migrant workers in European agriculture?

a) A rise in wages making agriculture more attractive to local workers
b) An increase in the young rural population across Europe
c) The exodus of young people to cities and an ageing rural population

3. Which category of migrant worker is particularly vulnerable because their legal status is directly tied to a specific employer?

a) Asylum seekers with temporary work permits
b) Workers covered by the Royal Decree 316/2026
c) Workers in systems that link residency to employment with a single employer

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4. What is one of the main barriers migrants faces when trying to access formal employment in the agricultural sector?

a) Excessive employer willingness to offer permanent contracts
b) Overabundance of multilingual administrative services
c) Bureaucratic complexity and delays in residence/work permit procedures

5. What does the Greek 'METAKLISI' system govern?

a) The integration of unaccompanied minors into the school system
b) The recruitment of third-country nationals for seasonal agricultural work
c) The allocation of EU agricultural subsidies to Greek cooperatives

6. What is the main purpose of Spain's Royal Decree 316/2026?

a) To increase border controls and reduce the number of migrants entering Spain
b) To regularise the situation of undocumented migrants who have established ties to Spain
c) To replace the existing 'arraigo' framework with a completely new immigration system

7. Which of the following best describes the housing conditions frequently faced by migrant agricultural workers?

a) Subsidised housing provided by municipal authorities
b) Overcrowded and substandard accommodation, including informal settlements
c) Shared urban apartments funded through EU integration programmes

8. What gender-specific challenge is highlighted in the module regarding migrant women in agriculture?

a) They are legally excluded from seasonal work contracts
b) They benefit from special regularisation pathways unavailable to men
c) They face heightened social isolation, abuse and unstable contracts due to caregiving responsibilities

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9. Which tool is described as a certification mechanism to evaluate employer legal compliance and quality of workplace inclusion?

a) The One-Stop-Shop model
b) The Migrant Integration Scorecard
c) The National Referral Mechanism

10. According to the module's conclusions, what should practitioners working with migrant communities prioritise beyond facilitating access to work?

a) Encouraging migrants to return to their countries of origin after each harvest season
b) Focusing exclusively on digitising permit renewal systems
c) Promoting genuine inclusion that respects migrants' rights, dignity, and skills

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Module 4 – Social and Labour Integration Models for Migrants. Labour Orientation

4.1 Module overview

Number of estimated hours: **7.**

4.1.1 Introduction:

The integration of migrants into society is one of the burning issues of European societies and remains a major challenge of national integrational policies. Integration is considered as 'a two-way process that encompasses both migrants and the receiving society' (De Coninck & Solano 2023). It is a multifaced and multidimensional issue that involves, among others, human and civil rights, social cohesion, economics, employment, health and welfare. Labour integration – including employment of migrants, labour orientation and skills' recognition – is fundamental for full and comprehensive integration of migrants into society. The role of the national context (i.e., national-level policies) and local context (i.e., availability of job positions locally, regional economics), the extent and the link between regular and irregular migration within a geographical area/region or county, as well as the status of migrants (i.e., asylum seekers, refugees, economic migrants) are also key factors of integration influencing the attainment of 'integrational model' to which they apply.

Social and labour integrational 'models' or approaches of integration vary across the EU member states and across regions despite the EU directives on integration and despite the commonalities that one can identify between different EU geographies. In the following pages of this training module, we discuss the different models or approaches of integration and how migrants become part of the labour and social fabric of their host societies. We also make an attempt to assess the

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advantages and limitations of each model and why some work better than others. In doing so, we present practical examples and case studies that promote smoother integration for migrants.

4.2 Module objectives

- To present the major social and labour integrational models for migrants.
- To explain the features and limitations of the different models of integration.
- To elaborate on migrants' self-employment and entrepreneurship.
- To present the latest available data on migrants' self-employment and entrepreneurship and explain the barriers that migrant groups face.
- To discuss the importance of training and labour orientation.

4.2.1 Learning outcomes

By the end of this module, learners will be able to:

- Analyse different socio-labour integration models, evaluating their advantages, limitations, and adaptability to migrant realities.
- Present examples of good practices as references to promoting decent and sustainable labour inclusion in rural areas and the primary sector.
- Develop proposals for socio-labour integration pathways based on training, social innovation, and active participation of migrants.
- Identify and understand self-employment and entrepreneurship as viable pathways to labour market and primary sector integration.
- Understand the importance of training and labour orientation as key tools for migrant inclusion.

4.3. Key Content

4.3.1 Models of Integration

4.3.1.1 Multidimensional Integration Model

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The **Multidimensional Integration Model** is one of the most widely used models developed by the Immigration Policy Lab (IPL) in partnership with the International Organisation of Migration (IOM). This model, unlike the single or one-dimensional approaches, **acknowledges that integration occurs across multiple and interconnected domains**. The **holistic approach** of the model is considered among its advantages as it captures the **complexity of migrants' lives and the realities** that they experience in their host societies. The founders of the model, IPL and IOM, provide a comprehensive, survey-based tool for measuring how migrants settle into society (IOM, 2018). This makes the model even more advantageous over other models as it allows the studying on how different **dimensions influence each other** but also allows **comparisons** among different countries, among different groups of migrants and time periods (Harder et al, 2018). It measures the integration outcomes from the **migrants' perspective** as opposed to measuring integrational policies as such. The key dimensions of the multidimensional integration model go as follows:

- **Psychological:** captures respondents' feeling of connection with host country, their wish to continue living there and their sense of belonging.
- **Linguistic:** captures' respondents' assessment of their ability to read, speak, write and understand the dominant language of their host country or region.
- **Social:** captures social ties and interactions with nationals in the host country, as well as bridging social capital as evidenced by participation in organisations with nationals.
- **Economic:** captures income, employment, satisfaction with employment situation and the ability to meet different levels of unexpected expenses.
- **Political:** captures understanding of political issues facing host the society and the degree to which respondents engage in discussion and political knowledge.
- **Navigational:** captures the ability to manage basic needs in the host country, such as seeing a doctor, addressing legal problems and searching for jobs.

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Source: IOM (2023), Multidimensional integration measurement toolkit: Offering a multidimensional approach to measure migrant integration outcomes, p. 7.

4.3.1.2 Labour Market (or economic) Integration model

The **Labour Market Integration Model** is defined by the European Commission (EC) as *'the extent to which migrants will achieve the same range of labour market participation as nationals of EU Member States by using their skills and realising their economic potentials (*EC, 2025). While it is arguably easier to assess the 'labour market integration model' than the 'multidimensional integration model' (see above section), there are several indicators that require simultaneous consideration. The indicators it involves include the national strategies for the reduction of employment gaps among nationals and migrants, language training on the dominant language of the host country, recognition of the skills that migrants bring with them, validation of qualifications and targeted job services promoting comprehensive participation in the labour market. While there are common principles on integration of migrants among the EU Member States and EU action plans (see for example the EC Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027), member states still apply **diverse approaches on labour market** integration of migrants.

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For example, Scandinavian countries, Sweden, Denmark and Norway, pursue more **rapid employment approaches** focusing on quickly placing migrants in the labour market to reduce welfare dependence of refugees and asylum seekers and cover immediate labour shortage needs in specific sectors of the economy, at the same time (Hernes et al., 2020). Similarly, **Germany's Job-Turbo and Belgium's Turboplan approaches** combine language learning with fast employment placement and employer engagement to boost early integration (OECD, 2025). Several other countries including Finland, Belgium, Luxemburg and Ireland are **shifting responsibilities** of integration of migrants from the central government to **local or regional authorities** (ibid). They are shifting the coordination of **essential services** for migrants, such as housing, schooling and employment services, to local or regional authorities 'making their involvement critical to responsive and inclusive integrational system; this **decentralization** is often accompanied by a framework aiming to empower municipalities to tailor support to local labour market and community needs (ibid). The case of Finland is exceptionally good and comprehensive highlighting the decentralization model and the shifting of coordination of essential services to municipalities.

Case Study – The Finnish Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration - 2025

The Act entered into force in January 2025 and facilitated migrants' integration into society through employment, language learning and skills development by providing a critical role to municipalities in the provision of integrational services. The Act aims to improve the integration, employment and social inclusion of migrants and promote gender equality, equal opportunities, and positive interactions among the native population and migrants. In particular, the reform aims to:

- Support faster integration and enhanced implementation of early-stage integration services.
- Improve employment of migrant women.
- Enhance quality of language classes and exams.
- Consider the needs of businesses considering alongside these changes.
- Increase the role of the third sector and liberal adult education.

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Finally, the Act provides individual integrational plans for adult individuals, children and families, promotes multisectoral collaborations at local level and reimbursement of cost paid by the state to municipalities arising from measures that referred to the Act.
Source: *Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration (1386/2010)*

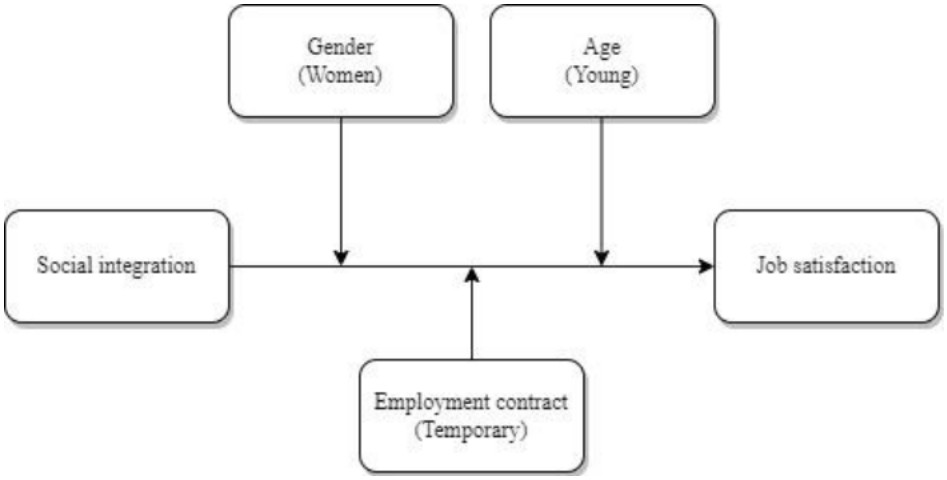
4. 3.1.3 Social Integrational Model

Although there is not a universal understanding on what 'social integration' stands for, the **Social Integrational Model** often refers to the extent to which migrants are included or excluded from social structures. The relationships of migrants to the larger community are often distinguished in three levels**: contact with the community, social networks and intimate and confiding relationships.** The level of social integration and the sense of belonging (often defined as emotional integration, see Becker 2022) of migrants are often defined by voluntary participation in community acts, regular contact with neighbors, having friends and family nearby and being a member of social groups. In the absence of social integration, migrants might experience poor mental health and psychological well-being.

Key research study from the Netherlands (Komstra, 2023) shows that the level of social integration of migrants affect job satisfaction, thought the relationship is often complex and determined by factors like employment contracts, working conditions, age, gender and vulnerability of the person (see figure below). The higher the level of labour migrants' social integration, the higher the level of job satisfaction. The author employees the intersectionality theory to suggest that apart from the individual characteristics of the person (i.e., age, gender) and personal resources, the group characteristics or group categories of the individual determine job satisfaction. These group categories are intertwined to lead the group to have different experiences in terms of power and inequalities. This is the reason that some groups experience greater inequalities and greater disadvantages than others.

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** Infographics were developed using IA*

4.3.1.4 Self-employment and entrepreneurship

Migrant self-employment and entrepreneurship are becoming increasingly important to labour market integration, job creation and economic dynamics among the EU member states and the OECD countries. According to the International Migration Outlook 2024 (OECD, 2024), which includes a special focus on entrepreneurship, migrants represent a growing share of total entrepreneurs in OECD countries. The Outlook, inter alia, shows:

- 10 million migrant entrepreneurs in OECD countries (2022).
- 17% of the total self-employed (2022) in OECD countries are immigrants, increased by 6 percentage points since 2006 (11%).
- From 2011-2021, migrant entrepreneurs created 3.9 million jobs, accounting 15% of the total employment growth.
- Migrant entrepreneurs create jobs in all sectors of activity but are over-represented among entrepreneurs in accommodation and food services and transport and storage in all OECD regions with available data.
- In two-thirds of OECD countries, newly self-employed migrants were previously unemployed.

The two main reasons that push labour migrants to start their own businesses are (1) the difficulty they experience to find a paid employment to integrate into the labour market (the

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necessity entrepreneurship) and the (2) the willingness for more freedom in working hours (the opportunity entrepreneurship). The data from OECD supports that the majority of self-employed migrants choose self-employment due to difficulty accessing wage jobs, often linked to language, credential recognition, or discrimination.

Migrants in the EU and OECD countries seem to face distinctive obstacles in becoming self-employed and entrepreneurs, including:

- Legal and administrative barriers (i.e., residency, permits, business registration).
- Language and cultural barriers in business environments, lack of networks with suppliers, customers and mentors.
- High exit rates, migrants are 50% more likely to exit self-employment, often into unemployment.

These barriers suggest that targeted supporting programmes for migrant self-employment and entrepreneurship (also under the cooperativism model) are viable pathways to labour and social integration. The EU Entrepreneurship Action Plan 2020 aims, among others, to facilitate entrepreneurship among migrants already present and residing in the EU. It supports access for migrants to existing micro-credit assistance schemes, which considered a vital channel to foster third country nationals' contribution to economy and society.

Migrant agricultural entrepreneurship in the EU is growing, which is seen as strategically important for rural revitalisation, and increasingly recognised in EU policy but it remains constrained by structural barriers such as land access, credit, and administrative complexity. Immigrant-owned agricultural businesses are expanding in key EU countries, with Italy providing a clear example: foreign-owned farms grew by 18.2% between 2018–2022, even as Italian-owned farms declined. Migrant-owned farms now represent 2.7% of all agricultural enterprises, contributing to rural vitality and helping address labour shortages (De Andreis & Paoloni, 2026).

4.3.1.5 Training and Labour Orientation

Training and labour orientation of migrants are essential in the EU; they determine principally whether migrants can shift from their vulnerable status to full economic participation, reduce skills waste, and meet Europe's labour-market needs. The European Commission's Labour

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Migration Platform highlights that EU Member States increasingly rely on legal migration to fill labour and skills gaps, especially in sectors such as care, agriculture, construction, and long-term care. Effective labour orientation ensures that migration is well-managed and targeted to real shortages, improving matching and reducing irregular or exploitative employment (EC, 2022). Across the EU, **39.4% of non-EU citizens are over-qualified** for the jobs they hold — far higher than EU citizens (31.8%) and local people (21%). This reflects a systemic failure to recognise skills and guide migrants into appropriate roles. The EU's **Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion (2021–2027)** identifies **Vocational Education and Training (VET)** as a powerful tool to help migrants enter the labour market at the right level. Without structured training and orientation, migrants remain trapped in low-skilled jobs regardless of their actual qualifications.

EU and IOM (2018) guidance emphasise **early intervention**: the sooner migrants receive orientation, skills assessment, and job-matching support, the better their long-term outcomes. The IOM's *From Skills to Work* guidelines stress:

- Early skills-based job matching.
- Easing labour-market access.
- Engaging stakeholders.
- Validating qualifications.

Engaging stakeholders – employers and trade unions – when it comes to integration, training and labour orientation is particularly important. It is very important for governments to align their actions and policies that aim to enhance the skills of migrants and provide incentives to mobilising them. They often possess valuable knowledge on migrants' qualifications and skills needs and are in a better position than national authorities when it comes to designing vocational and training programmes for migrants. Governments need to acknowledge the role of employers in the process of labour integration and provide the necessary support, services and incentives so they can recruit and retain migrants in a fair and sustainable manner.

It is also important to understand that labour orientation is the best possible way to match the skills of migrants with the needs of the labour market. Multi-stakeholders' collaborations, including employers' organisations, trade unions, chambers, governments and migrants' organisations, ensure better integrational results. These collaborations are effective when they

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combine assessments of the skills of migrants, vocational training, job placement and local integrational networks. Such multi-stakeholder collaborations can potentially protect the rights of migrant workers, prevent undeclared work, combat labour exploitation and abuse and enforce migrants' communities. They also support migrants to understand their employment contracts, the wage system in the country, the health and safety rules in the workplace and the mechanisms for complaints.

4.4 Evaluation questionnaire

1. Which of the following statements best describes the 'Multidimensional Integration Model'?

a) It allows comparisons of the provisions of the migration policies and implementation of EU directives among the EU member states.
b) It provides survey-based tools for measuring employers' integrational outcomes and migrants' work performance.
c) **It is a holistic approach as it captures the complexity of migrants' lives and realities experienced in the host society by providing survey-based tools for measuring how migrants settle into society.**

2. Which of the following is true for the 'Labour Market Integrational Model'?

a) The basic idea of the model is to shift the responsibility for the employment of migrants from the state to the local authorities.
b) The model refers to the extent to which migrants can achieve labour market participation in compare with migrants.
c) The model is applied in common in all EU member states based on the EU directive and action integrational plans.

3. Which of the following statements refers to the idea of decentralization?

a) It is the common practice applied in all EU member states that aim to quickly provide job placement of migrants upon their arrival.

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b) **It is the practice applied in some EU member states in which the responsibility of basic services for migrants is shifted from the central government to local authorities, often accompanied with frameworks for the empowerment of the local community.**
c) It is the practice applied in Germany that aim to combine language learning and job placement and the responsibility is shifted from the local authority to employers.

4. Which of the following cannot define the level of social integration of migrants?

a) **Paid participation in community acts.**
b) Regular conduct with neighbours.
c) Being a member of a social group.

5. True or false? Social integration of migrants does not affect job satisfaction by no means.

a) True
b) **False**

6. Which of the following statements captures the 'Social Integration Model'.

a) It refers to the individual and group characteristics of migrants that allow quick recruitment and sustainability in the workplace.
b) It is the process by which allows migrants to assimilate with the local population, defined by the individual characteristics of the individual such as age and gender.
c) **It is the extent to which migrants are included or excluded from social structures.**

7. Which of the following are not included in the factors that push migrants to become self-employed.

a) The strong connections that migrants maintain with entrepreneurs in their home countries.
b) The difficulty to find a paid employment to integrate in the labour market.
c) The willingness for more freedom in working hours.

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8. Which of the following are considered among the major set of obstacles that migrants face in becoming self-employed and entrepreneurs in the EU?

a) **Legal, language, culture barriers, lack of networks with suppliers and customers.**
b) Emotional problems and psychological well-being.
c) Lack of access in voluntary community activities, lack of IT skills, lack of permanent employment contracts.

9. Which of the following statements is more accurate with regard to training and labour orientation of migrants?

a) Vocational Education and Training is not necessary for migrants as it is not considered essential for the integration of migrants in the labour market.
b) **The EU member states rely on migrants to fill labour and skills shortages and encourages structured training and labour orientation for the support of migrants to enter the labour market.**
c) It is not important if migrants receive training and orientation early in their arrivals for the long-term outcomes in the labour market.

10. The engagement of stakeholders when it comes to training and orientation is important because:

a) **They often possess valuable knowledge on migrants' qualifications and skills needs.**
b) They are gatekeepers of undeclared work.
c) Both A & B.

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Module 5 – Skills, Resources and Tools for Employability and Integration

5.1 Module overview

Number of stimated hours: **10.**

5.1.1 Introduction

This educational module adopts a holistic approach, combining theoretical principles and application tools. It focuses on developing core support skills such as active listening, empathy, and neutrality, which are prerequisites for building trust relationships and effective communication. At the same time, it highlights the importance of the psychology of migration as a fundamental framework for understanding the experiences, needs, and behaviours of migrants, drawing on the theoretical models of cross-cultural psychology to interpret migrant adaptation processes.

Particular emphasis is placed on intercultural communication and the development of intercultural competencies, as well as on the role and use of mediation tools for the prevention and management of conflicts, recognising that cultural differences can substantially affect interaction.

The educational module also includes the identification and mobilisation of available resources and access to integration services, with special reference to the primary sector, where needs and challenges present specific characteristics, as well as the advisory process of informing migrants about their rights and benefits.

Finally, it is important to note that throughout the module a range of competencies are highlighted, some of which are translated into practical tools.

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Purpose of the Module: a holistic approach to migrants combining theoretical principles and application techniques that contribute to the empowerment and smooth integration of migrants.

5.2 Module objectives

- To develop basic skills for workers giving support to migrants. To develop basic skills for employability and entrepreneurship.

To learn about general concepts on migration psychology and good practices for work with migrant people.

- To practice some mediation tools.
- To be aware of the importance of communication and interculturality.
- To gain resources and tools for socio-labour integration of migrants. Practical cases.
- To be familiar with benefits, grants and subsidies for migrants. Practical cases.

5.2.1 Learning outcomes

By the end of this module, learners will be able to:

- Combat prejudices and stereotypes.
- Interact with individuals from different cultures.
- Recognize and identify the cultural factors that determine the behavior of migrants and affect communication.
- Understand and become aware of the concepts of “identity”, “cultural shock” and “acculturative stress”.
- Distinguish the different adaptation strategies adopted by migrants.
- Explore the profile of migrants and identify their needs.
- Shape attitudes and behaviours.
- Recognize the causes of conflict situations in intercultural environments.
- Apply conflict prevention techniques.

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- Recognize and interpret elements of non-verbal communication as behavior.
- Create environments that foster inclusive communication.
- Use skills and techniques that contribute to intercultural communication.
- Migrants' referral to appropriate support structures.
- Develop cooperative relationships with public and private bodies and with local businesses.
- Cooperate with agricultural cooperatives and agri-businesses for the equal integration of migrants.
- Provide accurate and timely information on available benefits and allowances.
- Facilitate the completion of necessary written and electronic forms.

5.2.2 Core Support Skills – Development of competencies for staff providing support to migrants in social and workplace settings

Intercultural competence is the most important support skill when working with migrants, and it is composed of a range of skills, including:

Active Listening: characterized by full focus on the speaker, use of body language (such as eye contact, nodding and facial expressions) to demonstrate that the professional is listening and understanding, repetition of what the interlocutor has said to confirm correct understanding, clarifying questions, avoidance of interruptions, and paraphrasing that shows the counsellor has understood and values what was heard.

Empathy: Carl Rogers considers empathy one of the most fundamental values in communication and in the development of authentic relationships. Every professional should strive to understand the migrant, to place themselves in the migrant's position, and to comprehend their thoughts and feelings.

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Professionalism and Ethics: maintaining high ethical standards and professional conduct, as well as observing the confidentiality and privacy of migrants' information.

Patience and Perseverance: understanding that the adaptation process may be lengthy and that ongoing support and encouragement may be required, even in difficult moments.

Adaptability and Flexibility: adapting to the different needs of migrants and being ready to change approach, when necessary, in order to better meet their needs.

Intercultural Sensitivity: understanding and respecting the different backgrounds, values and experiences of migrants to avoid prejudice.

5.3 Key content

5.3.1 Psychology of Migration

Migration is not merely a geographical movement but a process that affects the identity, relationships and psychological balance of the individual.

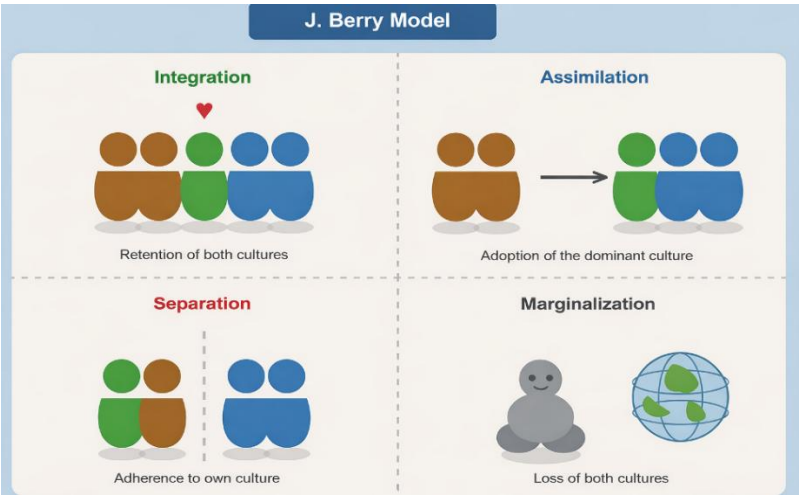
The principles it establishes are specific and can be summarized as follows:

- ***Psychosocial and cross-cultural approach***: Migration is addressed at the intersection of individual psychological processes and the social context (power dynamics, politics, culture). It analyses how the individual articulates their original cultural framework with that of the host society.
- ***The dynamics of acculturation***: This is the process of psychological and cultural change that results from the encounter between two cultures. John Berry proposed a model of cross-cultural adaptation, which is a two-dimensional theory of cultural integration that describes how immigrants adapt to the new culture of the host country. This model categorizes individual adaptation strategies into two dimensions: the first dimension concerns the preservation or rejection of the native culture, while the second concerns

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the adoption or rejection of the host country's culture. These two dimensions give rise to four strategies: integration, assimilation, separation and marginalization.



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- *Integration:* preservation of the culture of their country of origin while simultaneously adopting the culture of the host country. Integration is the most effective adaptation strategy, leading to the successful socioeconomic integration of immigrants.
- *Assimilation:* the adoption of the host country's culture and the abandonment of the culture of one's country of origin.
- *Separation:* maintaining the culture of one's country of origin while avoiding the influence of the host country's culture.
- *Marginalization:* rejection of both the culture of origin and the culture of the host country, which most often leads to a loss of identity.

- ***Migration grief and the sense of loss***: Migration involves multiple ruptures (family, language, social status, place). The psychology of migration helps manage "migration grief", which is a complex, often lengthy and multi-faceted process linked to these losses.

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- ***Migration trauma***: Many migrants, particularly refugees, experience violence before, during or after the migration journey, resulting in specific traumas that may lead to post-traumatic stress disorder or various forms of psychological disturbance.
- ***Identity Strategy***: Migrants often need to renegotiate their identity in the face of host society. This can lead to the creation of a "false self" by adopting the codes of the host culture at the expense of their authenticity (a superficial adaptation to meet external expectations), which may lead to psychological distress or conflicts between their culture of origin and their culture of arrival.
- ***The Principle of Resilience***: Despite the difficulties, the psychology of migration recognizes the capacity of migrants to mobilize internal and external resources to overcome trauma and rebuild their lives.
- ***Reorganisation of Attachment Bonds***: Departure disrupts primary attachment bonds, forcing individuals to restructure their emotional relationships in an unfamiliar environment. Migration is perceived as a rupture of primary attachment bonds (land, family, language). This disruption activates the individual's attachment system, affecting their capacity to recreate secure connections in the host country.

Based on the above, we can identify the core psychological experiences of migrants as: loss and grief, cultural shock, the process of adaptation, renegotiation of identity, and experiences associated with anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress.

Finally, it should be noted that the psychology of migration has a complementary relationship with cross-cultural psychology, which provides its theoretical framework.

5.3.2 Mediation Tools

Use of tools for the prevention and conflict management

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Intercultural mediation is a structured approach that aims to prevent and resolve conflicts between individuals or groups from different cultures, creating safe, equal and respectful spaces for dialogue. The causes of conflict typically vary. They may include:

- Language barriers.
- Misinterpretation of messages and behaviours.
- Different value systems.
- Stereotypes and prejudices.
- Difficulties in adaptation, and so on.

Before taking any action, the professional must be aware of their own values, stereotypes, and prejudices.

Tools and techniques used for conflict prevention and management:

- **Active listening**: A fundamental technique consisting of listening without interruption, which, combined with paraphrasing and reformulation, increases the effectiveness of mediation and leads to understanding not only the words, but also the emotions and cultural context. For example, when a migrant visits a public service to renew their residence permit and expresses frustration about delays and unclear procedures, the professional listens carefully without interrupting and allows them to fully express their concerns. Instead of immediately providing solutions or defending the system, the professional responds calmly in a way that reflects the migrant's experience, such as: "It sounds like this process has caused you a lot of frustration and confusion, especially since the requirements are not clear. I understand how difficult that can be, particularly in a new country. Let's go through what is needed step by step so we can move forward." With this phrasing, they acknowledge the emotion without causing conflict, assigning blame, or dismissing the migrant's words, and invite them to find a solution.

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- **Non-verbal communication management**: This technique is based on "observation" of body posture, gestures and facial expressions, which vary significantly from one culture to another. Non-verbal communication sometimes conveys more meaning than words. Silence in many cultures is not emptiness but a space for reflection. For example, during a meeting with an immigrant who appears anxious and hesitant and avoids eye contact, the professional may use appropriate phrases to show empathy, but if their tone of voice is sharp, their body language is closed off, they avoid eye contact, their movements are abrupt, or they are constantly fiddling with papers, this may be interpreted as indifference or rejection, even if there is no such intention. Conversely, the professional can enhance the migrant's sense of security and acceptance through nonverbal behavior, by maintaining a calm tone of voice, a slight lean of the body toward the speaker, steady eye contact, and a thoughtful facial expression.



Figure 1: A professional demonstrates active listening through steady eye contact, and a calm, attentive presence, fostering trust and understanding.

- **Neutrality**: The professional remains objective, does not take sides, maintains equal distance and does not judge. Neutrality is particularly important in cross-cultural settings, where differing perceptions, values, and modes of expression can lead to

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misunderstandings. Through a neutral and balanced approach, the professional acts as a stabilizing factor that facilitates understanding and communication. For example, when an immigrant expresses strong dissatisfaction with how the service operates and accuses a specific employee of indifference, a non-neutral intervention such as “but you’re wrong” will lead to further tension. In contrast, a neutral intervention, such as “Let’s look at what happened together; what’s the problem? Let’s discuss it,” avoids confrontation and shifts the conversation from a personal conflict to understanding the problem.

- **De-escalation**: This technique involves managing three factors in combination: a low tone of voice, the use of the simplest possible language, and the avoidance of any confrontation. For example, when a migrant expresses intense anger by saying, “No one is helping me,” and raises their voice. A response that attempts to correct or refute their claim may escalate the conflict. Instead, a de-escalating approach, using a calm tone and low volume—such as “I understand that this situation has caused you stress; let’s try to look at it together calmly”—helps reduce tension and paves the way for meaningful communication.
- **Focus on the problem**: Separating the problem from the person — in essence, separating the behaviour from the problem. In truth, this is a difficult technique that requires practice. Focusing on the problem means shifting the focus away from individuals, potential accusations, and emotions, and towards a specific issue, the process, and the migrant’s needs. The professional is the one who determines whether the discussion will end in conflict or become productive; for example, if the migrant says that the professional is not helping them, the professional’s appropriate response is to focus on what is needed to move the process forward and move past what the migrant said.
- **Collaboration with interpreters**: In the case of a language barrier, the presence of intercultural interpreters — not merely translators — must be ensured in order to understand the full context.

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These tools, applied together, help move from a stereotypical view — "they are like that because they come from such-and-such a country" — to a genuine understanding of migrant behaviours.

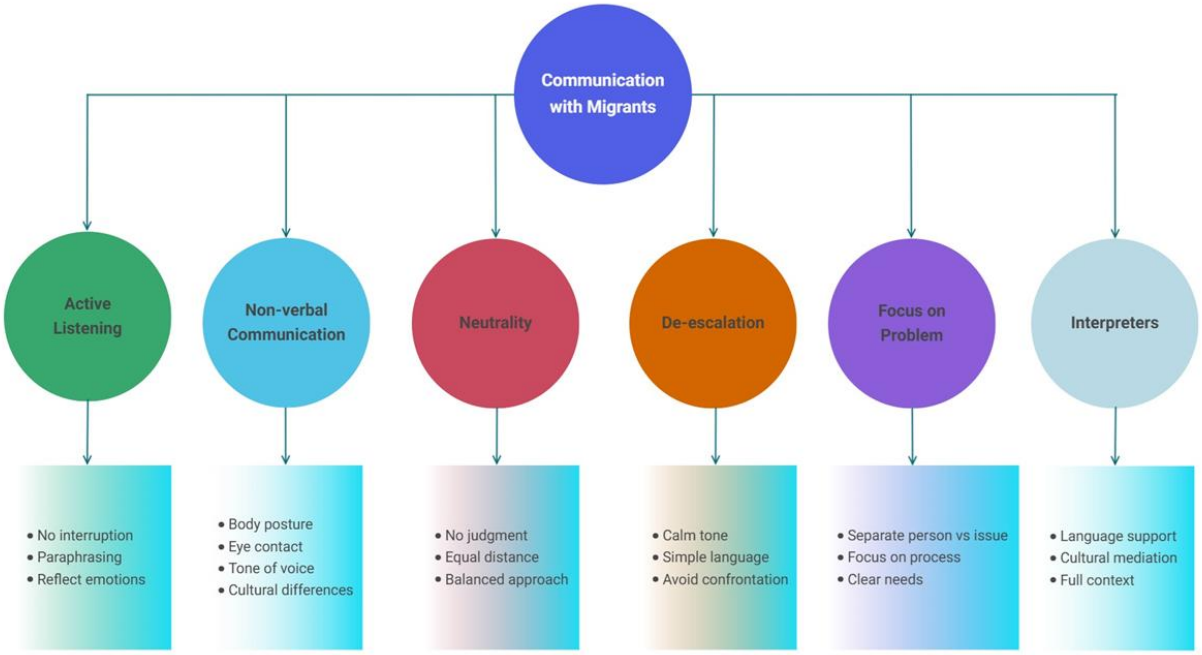


Figure 2: Mind Map of Mediation Tools

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5.3.3 Intercultural Communication

Application of communication principles for the promotion of mutual understanding and inclusive spaces.

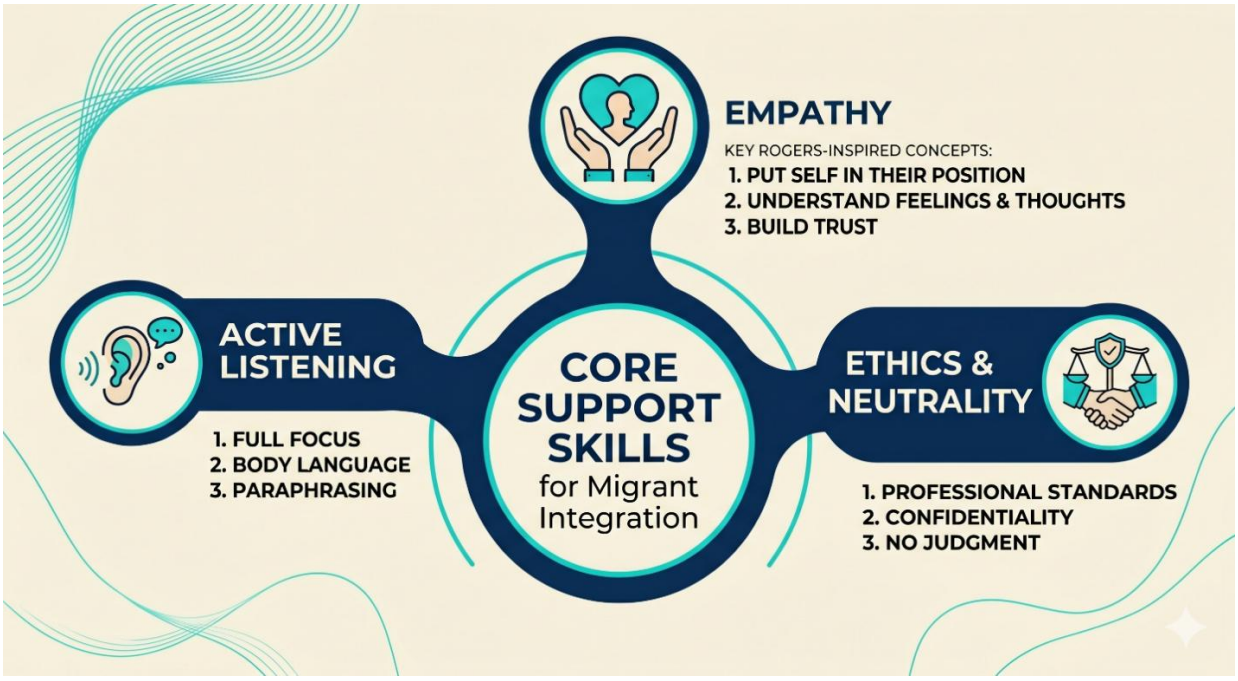
Intercultural communication refers to interactions between people from different cultures, going beyond a simple exchange of information. It is a dynamic process that aims to create shared meaning. It involves recognising differences, adapting language (both verbal and non-verbal) and overcoming stereotypes. This entails an open attitude and mutual respect.

Intercultural communication is culturally determined and presupposes:

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- ✓ **Development of cultural awareness**: understanding the values, stereotypes, prejudices, and customs of migrants.
- ✓ **Active listening**, which in intercultural communication focuses on understanding the intention behind the words. When ambiguities arise, clarifying questions must be asked.
- ✓ **Empathy and adaptability**: recognising and understanding the emotions, needs and concerns of migrants, and adapting our behaviour accordingly.
- ✓ **Verbal and non-verbal communication**: verbal communication is not merely language, but the expression of thoughts, feelings, events, views and interaction. It is therefore understood that, for the migrant, both understanding and using verbal communication poses a barrier, while non-verbal communication — common to all individuals — is nonetheless subject to different interpretations across cultures.



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For the above reasons, regarding verbal communication, we use clear and simple language without idiomatic expressions, jargon or specific cultural references. Regarding non-verbal

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communication, we adapt body language, eye contact and tone of voice, as these differ significantly between cultures. In essence, all the above relate to ***adapting the communication style to the cultural norms of the "other"***, which is critical for effective interaction, as it ensures that the message is understood, respected and accepted.

5.3.4 Resources and Services

Identification and mobilisation of tools for integration, with special emphasis on the primary sector.

The integration of migrants is a dynamic, bidirectional process of adaptation. It is not a simple assimilation, but a process of mutual adaptation on the part of both migrants and the host society (employers, local community). Integration into the labour market involves equal access; however, it requires effort because there are barriers and forms of discrimination.

The identification, categorisation and mapping of resources and services provided by local public bodies, regional and local authorities, chambers of commerce, NGOs, and agricultural cooperatives — covering employment, education/training, health and mental health, and psychosocial support — constitutes a primary tool for engaging with migrants.

The mobilisation of local bodies for the integration of migrants into the labour market is achieved through a holistic, collaborative approach that connects municipalities, businesses, chambers of commerce, NGOs, cooperatives and civil society. The goal is to create a supportive ecosystem that facilitates equal access to employment, reduces discrimination and leverages migrants' skills.

The mapping of this ecosystem spans across four main pillars:

- **Employment and vocational education/training:** Linking skills to local market needs.
- **Health and mental health care:** Access to medical facilities and psychosocial support.
- **Psychosocial support:** Guidance for the reduction of acculturative stress.

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- **Administrative and Legal support:** Assistance with documentation and rights.

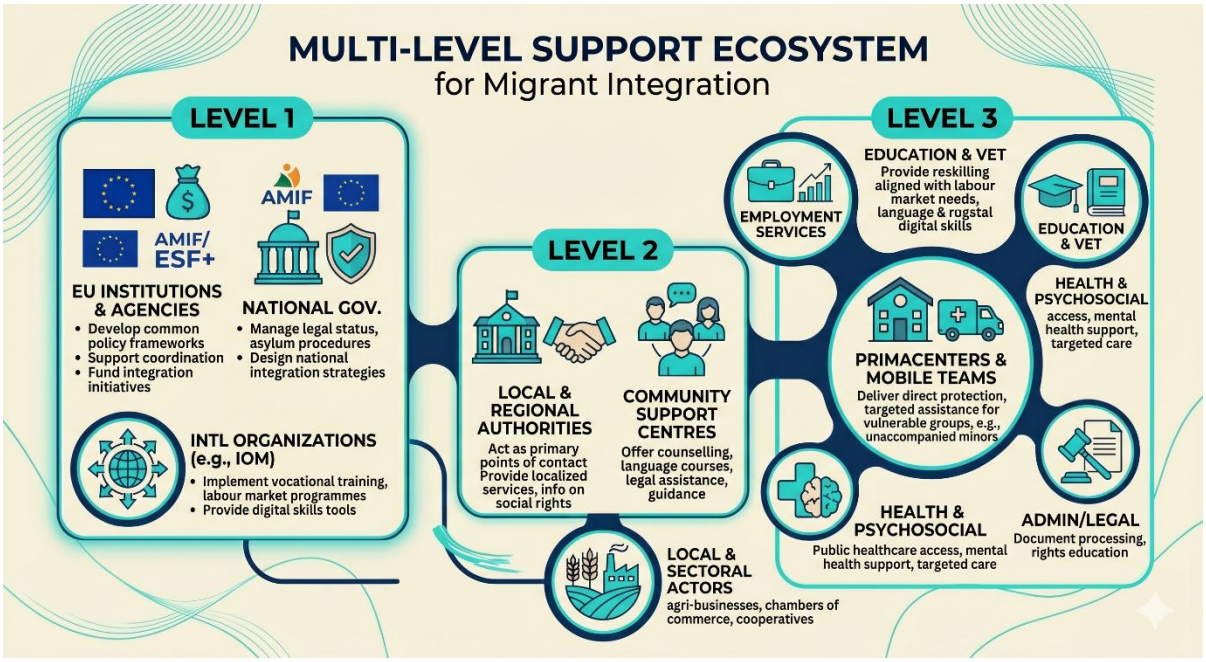
	Pillar	Goals / Actions
	Employment & Vocational Ed.	**Linking skills to local market needs** (e.g., primary sector, agricultural work).
	Health & Mental Health Care	**Access to medical facilities** and support for physical and mental health.
	Psychosocial Support	**Guidance for the reduction of acculturative stress** and management of traumatic experiences.
	Administrative & Legal Support	**Assistance with documentation management** (e.g., permits) and information on labor rights.

Special emphasis is placed on the primary sector (agriculture, livestock, fisheries, and forestry). Achieving this requires direct and ongoing collaboration with agri-businesses and agricultural cooperatives to ensure dignified, legal, and stable employment opportunities.

The support structures for the employment and social integration of migrants across Europe constitute a multi-level system involving European institutions, national authorities, regional and local governments, as well as international organizations and non-governmental organizations, with the aim of facilitating their integration into the labor market and society.

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Central Structures and Frameworks

- **European Union Institutions and Agencies:**
  - Develop common policy frameworks on migration, asylum, and integration.
  - Support coordination and knowledge sharing between Member States.
  - Fund integration and inclusion initiatives through targeted EU programmes (e.g., Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund - AMIF, and the European Social Fund Plus - ESF+).
- **National Ministries and Authorities:**
  - Manage legal status, asylum procedures, and residence permits.
  - Facilitate access to employment and public services.
  - Design and implement national integration strategies.
- **Local and Regional Authorities:**
  - Act as primary points of contact for integration at the community level.
  - Provide localized services such as counselling, legal support, and information on social rights.

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- **International Organisations (e.g., IOM):**
  - Implement integration, vocational training, and labour market access programmes in cooperation with national authorities.
  - Provide digital tools and resources for skills development and language learning.
- **Support Centres:**
  - Offer targeted counselling, language courses, and guidance on social inclusion.
- **Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs):**
  - Deliver protection, social support, and integration services, including targeted assistance for vulnerable groups such as unaccompanied minors and victims of human trafficking.

5.3.4.1 Employment Support Services

- **Career Counselling Services:**
  - Offered through public employment services and partner organisations across Member States.
  - Include CV preparation, job search support, interview training, and mentoring.
- **Job Placement and Labour Market Integration Services:**
  - Facilitate matching between migrants and employers.
  - Support access to subsidised employment schemes and assist in navigating bureaucratic procedures related to employment contracts.
- **Education and Training Programmes:**
  - Provide upskilling and reskilling opportunities aligned with labour market needs.
  - Include vocational education, language training (L2 - host country language courses), and digital skills development.

5.3.4.2 Local and Sectoral Support Structures

- **Municipal and Regional Social Services:**
  - Provide welfare support and assistance at the local level.
- **Community Integration Centres:**
  - Offer advisory services, social inclusion programmes, and administrative support.
- **Vocational Education and Training (VET) Institutions:**

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  - Deliver technical and professional training aligned with labour market demands.
- **Public Employment Services:**
  - Provide job placement, counselling, training programmes, and employment subsidies.
- **Employers' Associations and Chambers of Commerce:**
  - Support labour market access and employer engagement initiatives.
- **Sector-Specific Actors (e.g., agriculture and industry):**
  - Facilitate employment opportunities and vocational pathways in key economic sectors, directly collaborating with primary sector enterprises.

5.3.4.3 Health and Social Support Services

- **Public Healthcare Systems:**
  - Ensure access to primary and secondary healthcare services.
- **Mental Health Services:**
  - Provide psychological and psychosocial support, particularly for vulnerable migrants experiencing trauma or acculturative stress.
- **Social Care and Day-care Services:**
  - Support the integration and welfare needs of individuals and families in need (e.g., childcare or elderly care facilities).

Summing up, the integration of migrants as a multi-level and bidirectional process requires the synergy of multiple actors, ranging from European and national institutions to local authorities, cooperatives, and civil society organizations. The effectiveness of this process depends on the identification, categorization, and holistic mobilization of resources that cover needs in employment, health, psychosocial, and legal support. By focusing particularly on the primary sector and creating a cohesive local support network, it is possible to remove barriers, protect rights, and utilize the skills of migrants, ultimately leading to a fairer and more inclusive society.

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5.3.5 Rights and Benefits

Advisory services relating to allowances and grants to ensure access to opportunities.

The counseling process of providing information is of paramount importance in supporting immigrants in making decisions regarding their socioeconomic integration. It is not merely a presentation of information but a structured form of communication, support, and interaction that helps the individual connect the information to their own needs. Information counseling is the link between data and understanding. It involves providing advice and information that helps immigrants understand their rights and make informed choices.

For the information to be useful, the professional must ensure that it is up-to-date, reliable, clear, specific, and objective, and that its content reflects reality.

An important prerequisite for providing information in a counseling context is to assess the profile of migrants and their needs. Before providing information, the counselor identifies what kind of information the individual needs (e.g., financial, educational, labor market, legal issues), while respecting the principles of equality and non-discrimination to ensure equal access to rights and services.

The information-sharing process involves both verbal and nonverbal communication, both of which are equally important for accurate transmission of information. Information should be provided in plain language and clearly.

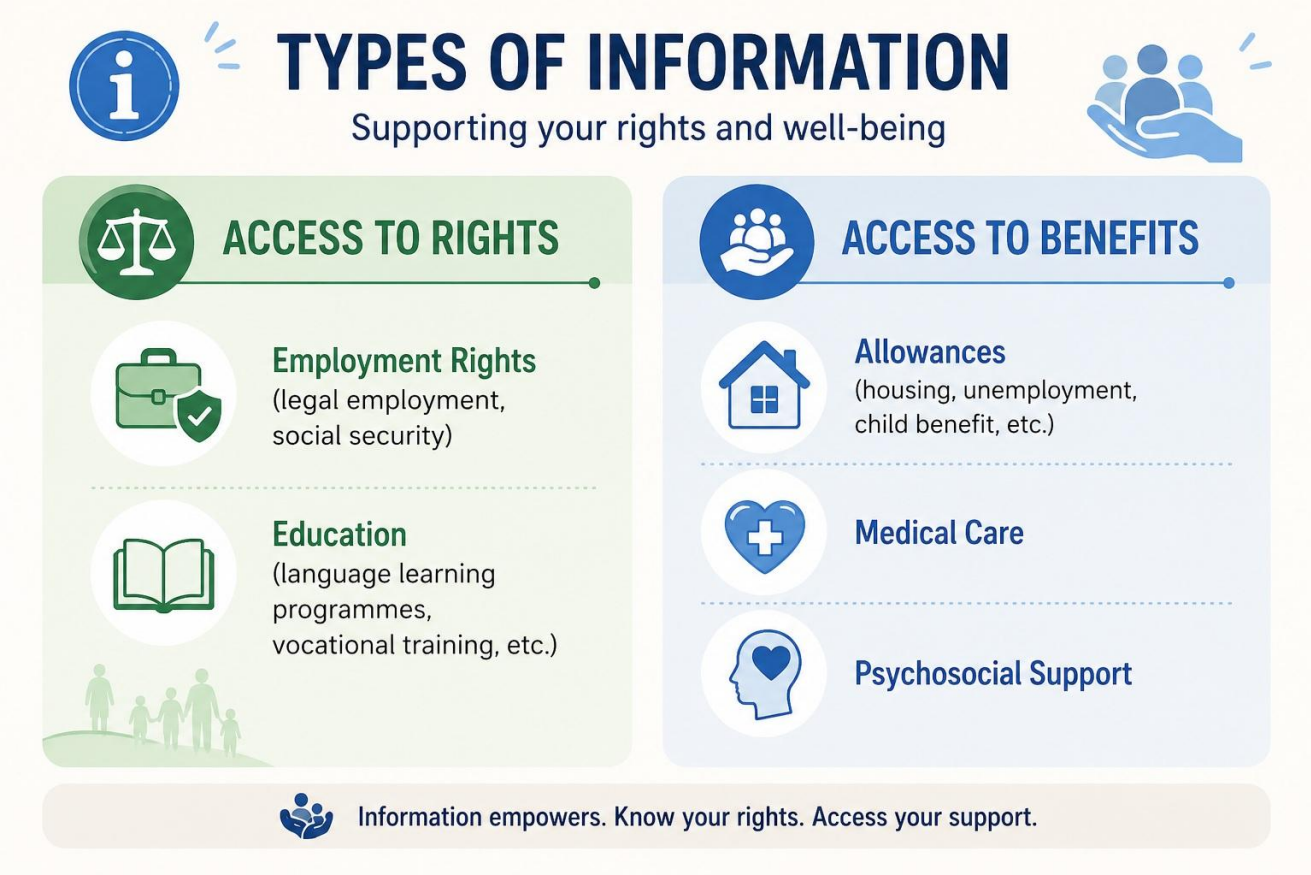
Types of information:

- **Access to Rights**:
    - Employment rights (legal employment, social security).
    - Education (language learning programmes, vocational training, etc.).

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- **Access to Benefits:**
    - Allowances (housing, unemployment, child benefit, etc.).
    - Medical care, psychosocial support.



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Across Europe, the rights and entitlements of immigrants are determined by national legislation and vary according to their legal status.

5.3.6 Case Studies

See annex.

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5.4 Evaluation questionnaire

1. A female migrant presents intense anxiety and confusion following migration. What do you think is happening?

a) Mental disorder

b) **Cultural shock**

c) Depression

2. A migrant states that he feels "lost" between two cultures and avoids contact with the new society. What is the most appropriate approach?

a) Suggest that he distances himself from his original culture

b) Reinforce the integration strategy

c) Pressure him into social contact

3. During a mediation process, the professional immediately provides a solution so as not to waste time. This indicates:

a) Effectiveness

b) Good practice

c) Intervention outside the professional's role

4. The employee maintains absolute neutrality without expressing any emotional response. What is the risk?

a) Being perceived as ineffective

b) **Being perceived as indifferent**

c) Losing control

5. In intercultural communication, the use of "formally correct" language is not sufficient because:

a) It is difficult

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b) **It does not convey meaning**

c) It is time-consuming

6. In the agricultural environment where the migrant works, he does not report the exploitation problem he faces. What is your interpretation?

a) There is no problem

b) He does not know his rights

c) **Fear of losing employment and dependence on the employer**

7. During mediation, focusing on the "correct side" leads to:

a) A faster solution

b) A clear decision

c) **Escalation of conflict**

8. A newly arrived migrant tries to fit into the new environment by rejecting his origins. Which concept is this related to?

a) Integration

b) **Assimilation**

c) Marginalisation

9. You work as a support professional in a migrant integration facility. What do you consider to be your core ethical principle?

a) To make decisions on behalf of the migrant

b) To empower and support them

c) To provide them with accurate information

10. You work as a support professional in a migrant integration facility. A newly arrived migrant does not speak the language well, avoids contact with others, displays anxiety and distrust, and states that "he does not trust the system". What do you do first?

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a) Refer him for psychosocial support

b) Gather information and assess his needs

c) Inform him about his rights

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Module 6 – Concept, Functionality and Service Model

6.1 Module overview

Number of estimated hours: **5**.

6.1.1 Introduction

The objective of this module is to provide a clear and operational understanding of the PRIMACENTERS model as an integrated mechanism designed to support migrant employment and socio-economic integration in the primary sector.

Drawing on the findings of the country reports, the PRIMACENTERS Framework, and the outcomes of local and transnational workshops, the module introduces both the conceptual foundations and the practical functioning of these centers. It aims to bridge the gap between theory and implementation by presenting PRIMACENTERS not as an abstract model, but as a response to concrete, field-identified challenges.

By the end of the module, participants are expected to understand the rationale behind the creation of PRIMACENTERS, explain their core functions and services, and recognise how they contribute to more effective labour market integration. The module also supports participants in situating PRIMACENTERS within their own professional context, enabling them to reflect on how such a model could be applied or adapted at local or regional level.

6.2 Module objectives

This module contributes to the development of a set of interrelated competences that combine knowledge, practical understanding, and professional attitudes.

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At the level of knowledge, participants will:

- Understand the structural challenges affecting migrant integration in the primary sector.
- Gain knowledge of the PRIMACENTERS framework and service model.
- Recognise the importance of integrated, multi-stakeholder approaches.

6.2.1 Learning outcomes:

By the end of this module, in terms of skills, learners will be able to:

- Analyse gaps in existing service provision.
- Identify how integrated service models can improve outcomes.
- Apply the PRIMACENTERS logic to their own institutional or regional context.

At the level of attitudes, participants will be able to:

- Develop a systemic understanding of migrant integration challenges.
- Strengthen their openness to cooperation and coordination.
- Foster empathy and awareness of migrant and employer realities.

6.3 Key Content

6.3.1 Context and Problem Definition

The starting point for understanding PRIMACENTERS lies in recognising a structural contradiction identified consistently across all participating countries. On the one hand, the primary sector, particularly agriculture, faces persistent labour shortages, especially in rural and remote areas. On the other hand, migrants already present in these countries encounter significant obstacles that prevent them from accessing stable and legal employment.

The evidence collected through country reports and workshops demonstrates that this mismatch is not the result of a lack of labour supply or demand. Rather, it reflects systemic inefficiencies in

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how services, institutions, and labour market mechanisms are organised. Barriers such as fragmented service provision, complex administrative procedures, limited access to coordinated support, and weak job-matching systems create a situation in which both migrants and employers are unable to fully benefit from existing opportunities.

In rural areas, these challenges are further intensified by geographic isolation, limited transportation, and insufficient outreach of services. At the same time, housing constraints and a lack of reliable labour market data contribute to a broader environment of uncertainty and inefficiency.

From a stakeholder perspective, this context implies that the key challenge is not necessarily to create new services, but to improve the way existing services are organised, coordinated, and delivered.

6.3.2 The Concept of PRIMACENTERS

PRIMACENTERS are conceived as local, integrated employment and support centers that aim to address these systemic gaps. They are designed as structured mechanisms that bring together different types of services within a single, coordinated framework, allowing for a more coherent and accessible response to migrant integration needs.

Rather than functioning as isolated service providers, PRIMACENTERS operate as coordination hubs that connect migrants, employers, and institutional actors. Their role is not limited to service delivery, but extends to facilitating communication, improving market matching, and supporting the navigation of administrative and legal processes.

In this sense, PRIMACENTERS can be understood as both operational structures and organisational models. They represent a shift from fragmented interventions towards integrated systems that are capable of addressing the multiple and interconnected dimensions of migrant integration.

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6.3.3 Core Principles of the PRIMACENTERS

The functioning of PRIMACENTERS is grounded in three interrelated principles.

The first principle is **integration**. Services that are traditionally provided separately—such as employment support, legal assistance, and training—are brought together within a single framework. This reduces complexity for users and allows for more coherent support pathways.

The second principle is **accessibility**. The model is designed to respond to the specific conditions of rural and remote areas, as well as to the needs of vulnerable groups. This includes adapting service delivery methods, for example through mobile outreach, and ensuring that services are accessible regardless of legal status.

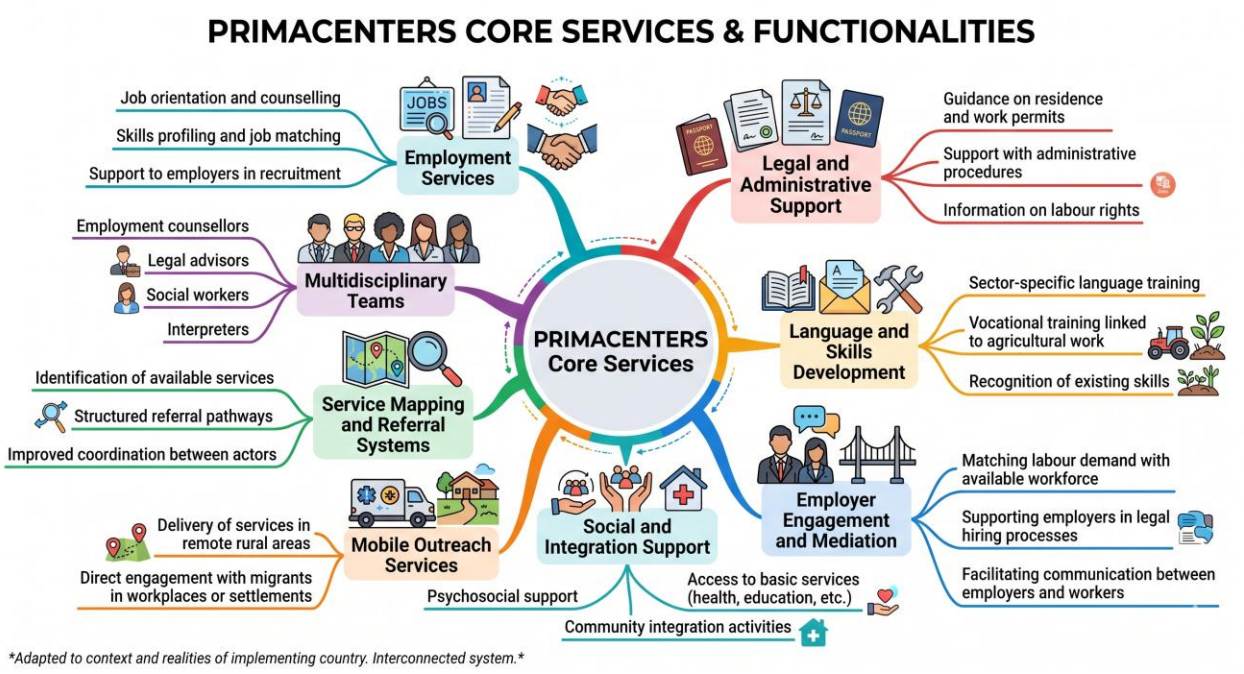
The third principle is **coordination**. PRIMACENTERS rely on structured collaboration between different actors, with clearly defined roles and referral mechanisms. This ensures that services complement rather than duplicate each other, and that beneficiaries can move smoothly between different forms of support.

6.3.4 Core Services and Functionalities

PRIMACENTERS will provide a comprehensive set of services that reflect the needs identified during the workshops and country analyses. These services are not intended to operate in isolation, but as part of an interconnected system. The specific core services will be adapted to the realities and context of each implementing country.

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** Infographics were developed using IA*

Employment Services

- Job orientation and counselling
- Skills profiling and job matching
- Support to employers in recruitment

Legal and Administrative Support

- Guidance on residence and work permits
- Support with administrative procedures
- Information on labour rights

Language and Skills Development. Guidance on:

- Sector-specific language training
- Vocational training linked to agricultural work
- Recognition of existing skills

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Employer Engagement and Mediation

- Matching labour demand with available workforce
- Supporting employers in legal hiring processes
- Facilitating communication between employers and workers

Social and Integration Support. Referral to:

- Psychosocial support
- Access to basic services (health, education, etc.)
- Community integration activities

Mobile Outreach Services

- Delivery of services in remote rural areas
- Direct engagement with migrants in workplaces or settlements

Service Mapping and Referral Systems

- Identification of available services
- Structured referral pathways
- Improved coordination between actors

Multidisciplinary Teams

- Employment counsellors
- Legal advisors
- Social workers
- Interpreters

6.3.5 Operational Model

PRIMACENTERS operate through a **hybrid structure**, including physical centres in key locations, mobile units for outreach and digital tools for coordination and data management. Centres are typically located in areas with high demand for agricultural labour, while outreach mechanisms extend their reach to more remote locations.

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A key feature of the model is the use of a case management approach. Each beneficiary is supported through an individual pathway that begins with an assessment of needs and continues with tailored interventions and follow-up. This approach ensures that services are not only accessible, but also relevant and effective.

The model also relies on multidisciplinary teams, bringing together expertise from different fields and referral options if necessary. This allows for a more holistic response to complex situations, where legal, social, and employment-related issues are often interconnected.

6.3.6 Target Groups

PRIMACENTERS place particular emphasis on groups that face higher levels of vulnerability. These include seasonal and circular migrants, women who may be exposed to specific risks, and newly arrived migrants with limited knowledge of the local context. The model is designed to be inclusive, ensuring that access to initial services is not restricted by legal status and that specific measures are in place to address gender and cultural considerations.

6.3.7 Partnership and Governance

The effectiveness of PRIMACENTERS depends on the active involvement of a wide range of stakeholders. Public authorities, employment services, employers, civil society organisations, and service providers all play a role within the network.

This multi-stakeholder approach allows for the pooling of resources and expertise, while also ensuring that different perspectives are taken into account. It reflects the understanding that migrant integration is a shared responsibility that cannot be addressed by a single actor.

6.3.8 Sustainability and Long-Term Functioning

Key conditions for sustainability include:

- Integration into existing institutional structures
- Stable funding mechanisms

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- Strong local ownership
- Continuous collaboration between stakeholders

PRIMACENTERS are intended as **long-term infrastructure**, not temporary interventions.

6.3.9 Expected Impact

By improving coordination and accessibility, PRIMACENTERS aim to enhance the efficiency of labour markets in the primary sector. They contribute to reducing informal employment, facilitating legal pathways, and improving working and living conditions for migrants.

At a broader level, the model supports rural development by addressing labour shortages and strengthening local economies. It also contributes to more inclusive and cohesive societies by promoting integration and equal opportunities.

6.4 Complementary and Optional Exercises and Documentation

6.4.1 Exercise 1 – Service Mapping

This exercise connects the module content with participants' local reality.

Instructions:
Participants work individually or in small groups.

Steps:

- List of existing services in their region related to:
  - Employment
  - Legal support
  - Training
  - Social services
- Identify overlaps and gaps.

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- Reflect on accessibility (who can access these services and how).

Guiding questions:

- Are services coordinated or fragmented?
- Are there services missing for specific groups?
- Are rural areas adequately covered?
- Where do users face the most difficulty navigating the system?

Participants share key findings in plenary.

6.4.2 Exercise 2 – Designing a PRIMACENTER

Participants apply the model to their own context.

Instructions:
Participants work in small groups.

Steps:

- Define a local context (region, target group, main challenge).
- Select the core services that would be most relevant.
- Identify key partners and stakeholders.
- Outline how the PRIMACENTER would operate (basic structure).

Guiding questions:

- What are the priority needs in your context?
- Which services should be prioritised?
- Which actors need to be involved?
- How would coordination be ensured in practice?

Groups present a short concept (5 minutes each).

Suggested Documentation

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For further reading and deeper understanding, participants are encouraged to consult the PRIMACENTERS Framework and the document "Mechanisms & Services Blueprints & Tools" developed under the PRIMACENTERS project. They are included as annexes of the course.

6.5 Evaluation questionnaire

1. What is the main purpose of PRIMACENTERS?

a) To provide financial support to migrants
b) **To coordinate and integrate services supporting migrant employment**
c) To replace existing public services

2. What structural issue is most identified?

a) Lack of available workers
b) Excessive training opportunities
c) **Fragmentation of services**

3. What characterises an integrated service model?

a) Services provided independently
b) **Services provided in a coordinated framework**
c) Services provided only online

4. Which of the following is a core function of PRIMACENTERS?

a) Tourism development
b) **Job matching and employment support**
c) Export promotion

5. Why is outreach important?

a) **To ensure access in rural and remote areas**
b) To reduce operational costs

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c) To replace physical centres

6. What is the role of employers within the model?

a) No active role
b) Limited administrative role
c) **Active participation in labour matching**

7. Which factor significantly affects employability?

a) Excess services
b) **Language barriers**
c) Overregulation

8. What supports long-term sustainability?

a) Short-term funding
b) **Institutional integration and stable resources**
c) Individual initiatives

9. What is the role of data systems?

a) Administrative storage only
b) **Supporting planning and matching processes**
c) Replacing human services

10. What is the main added value of PRIMACENTERS?

a) Creating new policies
b) Reducing migration flows
c) Improving coordination of existing services

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