

Working conditions

How your birthplace affects your workplace



When citing this policy brief, please use the following wording:

Eurofound (2019), *How your birthplace affects your workplace*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.

Authors: Isabella Biletta, Tina Weber, Julie Vanderleyden and Nils Brandsma

Research manager: Isabella Biletta

Research project: Analysis of the 6th EWCS – Series of concise analyses (190104)

Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union

This policy brief and any associated materials are available online at <http://eurofound.link/ef19004>

© European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2019

Reproduction is authorised provided the source is acknowledged.

For any use or reproduction of photos or other material that is not under the Eurofound copyright, permission must be sought directly from the copyright holders.

Cover image: © fizkes/Shutterstock

Other images: p. 1 © EUP-image; p. 2 © Gorodenkoff/ Shutterstock; p. 5 © Ianaid12/ Shutterstock; p. 21 © Rawpixel.com/Shutterstock; p. 23 © Thomas Bethge/Shutterstock.

Any queries on copyright must be addressed in writing to: copyright@eurofound.europa.eu

The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound) is a tripartite European Union Agency established in 1975. Its role is to provide knowledge in the area of social, employment and work-related policies according to Regulation (EU) 2019/127.

Print: ISBN 978-92-897-2002-1 ISSN 2599-8110 doi:10.2806/51897 TJ-AR-19-005-EN-C

PDF: ISBN 978-92-897-1998-8 ISSN 2599-8153 doi:10.2806/094280 TJ-AR-19-005-EN-N

European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

Telephone: (+353 1) 204 31 00

Email: information@eurofound.europa.eu

Web: www.eurofound.europa.eu



Introduction

Having a foreign background can be a barrier to smooth labour market integration and obtaining a job in line with one's qualifications. Employment is consistently lower in the foreign-born population; for instance, in 2018, the EU employment rate for foreign-born people of working age was 68%, compared to 74% for natives. Foreign background can also be a source of discrimination both in searching for employment and in the workplace.

Policy discussions around the level and quality of the integration of individuals with a foreign background into the labour market are not new but have attained a heightened profile with the arrival in the EU of high numbers of migrants since 2015. An extensive body of research, including work by Eurofound, documents and

assesses the barriers facing migrants seeking to access the labour market in their host countries and the reasons why – in some cases – labour market disadvantages persist into the second generation. However, less is known about the working conditions of non-natives and whether there are significant differences between the first-generation migrants and their offspring.

This policy brief is a contribution to filling this knowledge gap, bringing together various elements to provide a picture of the overall experience of work among workers with a foreign background, based on data from the 2015 European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS).



Policy context

Ensuring high quality of integration

The policy debate around the integration of individuals with a foreign background into the EU labour market has several strands, based on country or region of origin. A major focus continues to be the mobility of EU nationals in the context of freedom of movement, as set out in Article 45 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. The EU has long promoted the freedom of EU workers to move across borders and has emphasised equal treatment, including in relation to working conditions.

The EU also seeks to boost economic development and address labour market imbalances through the legal migration of third-country nationals and was given the power to legislate in this area by the Amsterdam Treaty of 1997. Since then, the EU has adopted several directives covering the employment of non-EU nationals, all of which include measures to ensure a level playing field and to promote equal treatment. These include the Blue Card Directive (2009/50/EC) to admit highly skilled workers, which the Commission is proposing to revise in order, in part, to make it more inclusive and to improve workers'

rights. The Single Permit Directive (2011/98/EU) has among its objectives to ensure equal treatment of third-country workers and nationals of the Member State of residence. The Directive on Seasonal Workers (2014/36/EU) includes rules to help prevent exploitation and to protect the health and safety of seasonal workers, and it provides them with a complaints mechanism.

The Commission adopted an Action Plan on the Integration of Third-Country Nationals in June 2016 to support Member States in developing actions to integrate legally resident non-EU nationals. Among the priorities it identifies are language learning for newly arrived migrants and vocational training to upgrade their labour market skills.

In light of the 2015 migration crisis, there has been a specific policy focus more recently on the labour market barriers faced by refugees and asylum-seekers. The European Partnership for Integration, signed by the European Commission and the social partner organisations in December 2017, concentrates on the integration of refugees, laying down key principles and commitments to support and strengthen opportunities for them.

Enabling the comparability of competencies and qualifications of workers coming from different parts of the world is critical to facilitating access to employment or training. Within the EU, this is promoted through established and evolving systems, such as the mutual recognition of qualifications for specific professions established under the Professional Qualifications Directive (2005/36/EC) and the European Qualifications Framework, which makes national qualifications transparent and comparable across Europe. For qualifications obtained outside the EU, an EU Skills Profile Tool for Third Country Nationals was launched in November 2017. This is aimed at organisations operating at local level within the Member States and gives them a means to map the skills and work experience of third-country nationals.

Overall, despite the variety of target groups, these initiatives share an emphasis on making the most of human capital by recognising existing skills and delivering appropriate language training. Raising cultural and institutional awareness is also incorporated so that non-nationals have basic skills to get work, such as how to conduct a job search. Measures may go beyond support to access to labour markets, addressing various issues some second-generation migrants continue to face when in work.

The European Social Fund (ESF) is the main tool supporting measures designed to assist the effective integration of workers with a foreign background into the labour market. Many of the policy approaches developed with the assistance of the ESF recognise that accessing employment on its own is not sufficient, but that the quality of the match and of the job attained is equally important for its sustainability.

Addressing discrimination at work

Guaranteeing equal treatment for all is one of the founding principles of the EU. Article 7 of the Treaty of Rome prohibited discrimination based on nationality. This was expanded by

Article 13 of the Amsterdam Treaty, which provided a legislative basis for the EU to actively fight against discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. The equal treatment principle is also contained in the European Charter of Fundamental Rights. More recently, the European Pillar of Social Rights re-emphasised the importance of the principle of equal opportunities, regardless of gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation in the areas of employment, social protection, education, and access to goods and services.

EU legislation also defends the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the workplace (Directive 2006/54 recast) and in relation to equal pay and access to social protection among other things. Furthermore, the Employment Framework Directive (Directive 2000/78/EC) establishes a general framework to ensure equal treatment in the workplace on grounds of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

Job quality for all

Job quality is central to policy concerns about sustainable growth and workers' well-being, as both the EU and international organisations such as the OECD recognise. The Europe 2020 strategy for economic growth in the EU underlines the need to ensure the effective functioning of labour markets by investing in 'appropriate skills development, rising job quality and fighting segmentation'. Improving job quality will benefit both workers and employers in the context of the achievement of the Europe 2020 goals.

To contribute to advancing knowledge in the field, this policy brief explores the available evidence on the impact of workers' foreign background on their employment prospects and working conditions, including on job security and well-being.

Key findings

In this study, workers with a foreign background include **first-generation migrants** (people born outside the country where they reside, whose parents were not born in that country either) and **second-generation migrants** (people born in the country where they reside, with one or both parents not born in that country).

- The findings of this study suggest that your birthplace, or that of your parents, affects many aspects of your working life. Having a foreign background has a negative influence on workers' employment prospects, the types of job they get and their working conditions. This picture can change considerably, however, depending on many factors, such as what aspect of working life and which sex we look at. Being a first- or second-generation migrant is a decisive factor in many respects.
- In terms of employment, first-generation migrants are performing better – they have higher employment rates than natives in almost half the Member States, the reason being that the main objective of their move to another country is usually to take up employment. Employment of second-generation migrants is lower than of natives in most Member States. But being of EU origin upends this statistic, because the highest employment rate in the EU as a whole is found among second-generation migrants of EU origin. Overall, workers with a foreign background are more likely to be unemployed than natives in a majority of countries.
- In many other aspects of work, second-generation migrants outperform the first generation and show positive labour market integration. Second-generation migrants are more likely to occupy high-skilled, high-paying jobs and are overrepresented in management (and professional jobs in the case of males) compared to natives and the first generation. On several measures of working conditions, they are close to native workers – similar percentages work in the public sector, for instance. In other areas, however, they continue to struggle, experiencing poorer working conditions than even first-generation migrants.
- First-generation migrants are more likely to work in the poorest-quality jobs and are strongly overrepresented in elementary occupations – jobs such as porter, caretaker, delivery worker and cleaner. They are less likely to have a permanent, full-time job than native workers, while they are more likely to feel job insecurity and to have difficulty making ends meet.
- Particularly among workers with a tertiary education, the jobs obtained by workers with a foreign background are not always commensurate with the level of education they have attained. This is reflected in the fact that, in most EU countries, first-generation migrants are more likely than natives to consider themselves to be overqualified for the jobs they hold. Language barriers and a lack of recognition of skills and qualifications are the likely reasons behind the poor match between human capital and occupation.
- The labour market disadvantage faced by women is exacerbated by having a foreign background.
- Higher shares of workers with a foreign background, particularly first-generation migrants, report experiencing discrimination linked to race, religion and nationality compared to natives. Both among higher and lower earners, experiencing discrimination based on nationality and race is linked to poorer working conditions and difficulty making ends meet.



Exploring the evidence

This section describes the labour market integration and working conditions of people with a foreign background in the EU. The analysis compares their experiences of work with that of natives – defined as people born in the country where they reside, whose parents were also born there.

The study also breaks down the broad group of workers with a foreign background into two:

- first-generation migrants: individuals not born in the country where they reside, whose parents were not born in that country either
- second-generation migrants: individuals born in the country where they reside, with one or both parents not born in that country

As well as distinguishing the generations, the analysis looks at gender differences to discover if these are amplified by having a foreign background. Layering the analysis in this way will highlight contrasting experiences within the non-native working population.

The analysis is based on two data sources. The data on working conditions come from the

2015 European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS). Statistics on employment are taken from Eurostat's 2014 EU Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS) ad hoc module on the labour market situation of migrants and their descendants. The ad hoc module data have been used because they are temporally comparable with the EWCS data and because, unlike the annual EU-LFS migration data, they provide separate information on first- and second-generation migrants.

EU and non-EU origin

The EU-LFS identifies the country of origin of respondents, which enables the analysis of employment to distinguish between workers with a foreign background born in the EU and those born outside the EU. The EWCS, however, does not record respondents' country of origin, so in the examination of working conditions, it is not possible to differentiate the experiences of people with EU and non-EU backgrounds.

Prevalence of foreign background

According to Eurostat data, in 2014, 12% of individuals of working age residing in the EU were foreign born (first generation): 8% were born outside the EU and 4% in an EU Member State other than the reporting country.

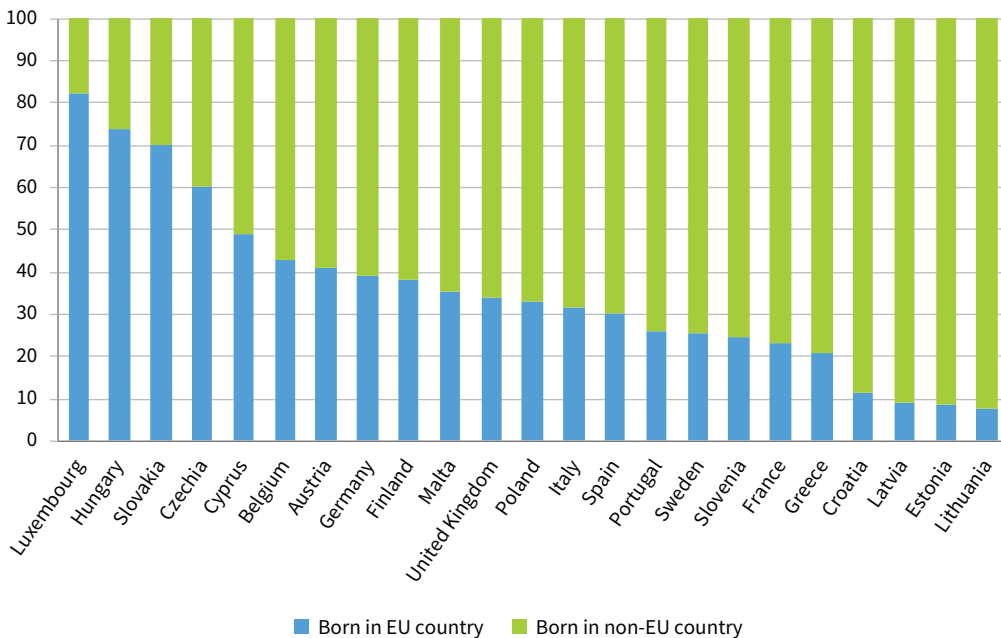
A further 6% of individuals of working age had a foreign or mixed background (second generation). The distribution of people with a foreign background was roughly equal by sex, with a slight predominance of women.

Significant differences exist between countries in terms of the breakdown of foreign-born nationals according to whether they were born inside or outside the EU (Figure 1). Among the countries with available data, in only four – Luxembourg, Hungary, Slovakia and Czechia –

do the majority of foreign-born individuals have their origins in another EU country. For most countries, the origins of foreign-born individuals reflect geographical, linguistic or historical ties, including the history of colonialism.

Looking at data including all workers with a foreign background (Figure 2), Luxembourg has by far the highest share of residents who are either first- or second-generation migrants (65%) followed by Estonia (33%), Sweden (31%), Latvia (29%) and Austria (29%). First-generation migrants outnumber second-generation migrants in most countries where data are available except in Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, France, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Slovakia. The lowest shares of population with a foreign background can be found in Bulgaria and Romania (1% and 0.2%, respectively).

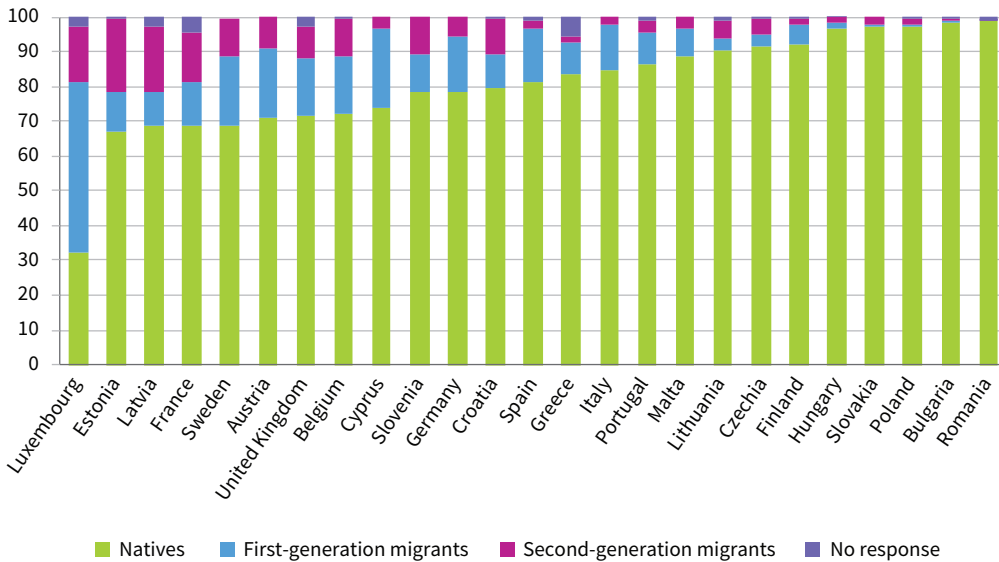
Figure 1: Origin of foreign-born individuals in EU Member States (%), 2014



Notes: People aged 15–64 years. No data for Bulgaria, Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands and Romania.

Source: Eurostat, Population by sex, age, migration status, country of birth and country of birth of parents [lfsa_14pcobp]

Figure 2: Breakdown of working-age populations based on migration status (%), by Member State, 2014



Note: No data for Denmark, Ireland and the Netherlands.

Source: Eurostat, Population by sex, age, migration status, country of birth and country of birth of parents [lfsa_14pcobp]

Labour market integration

Employment rates

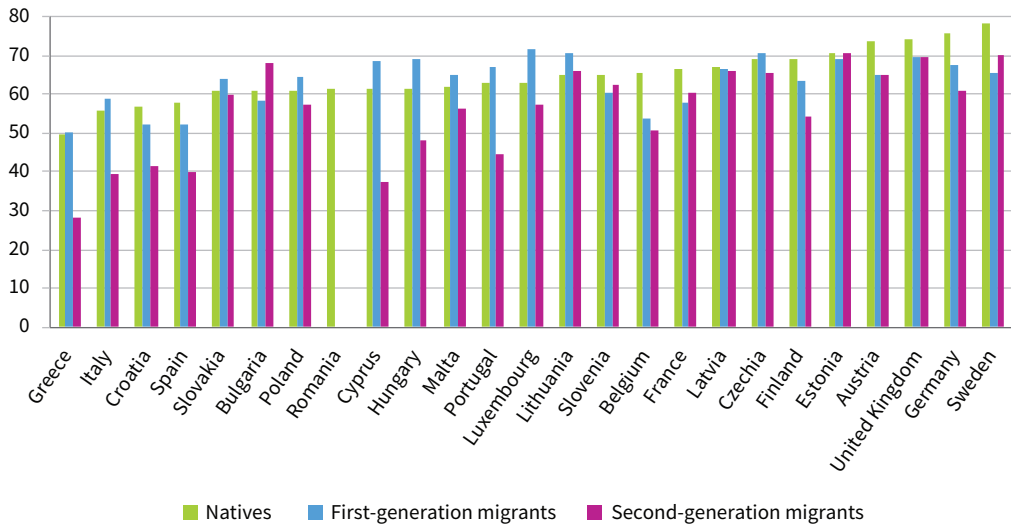
Overall, individuals with a foreign background have lower labour market integration rates than natives. This is particularly true for second-generation migrants. In 21 Member States, they have lower employment rates than natives, and in 10, the gap is over 10 percentage points (Figure 3, overleaf). In just under half of EU countries, first-generation migrants perform better than natives in terms of employment. They are likely to have moved from their country of birth in search of employment, which is part of the reason for their relatively high employment rates in some countries. Consistent with the overall gender segregation of the labour market, employment rates are generally higher among male than among female migrants. On average, male first-generation migrants perform better in the labour market than natives in 15 out of 24 countries for which data are available; this is the case in just 9 countries for female first-generation migrants. However, the

lowest employment rates are among female second-generation migrants in some countries. In 6 out of the 23 countries where such data are available – Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain – their employment rates are below 45%. This indicates that women with a foreign background experience a ‘double disadvantage’ due to their origin and sex.

Mixed impact of education

Generally speaking, people with higher levels of education are more successfully integrated into the labour market than those with lower levels of education, whether native or not. Among individuals with the lowest levels of education (no higher than primary), first-generation migrants have higher employment rates than the native population, except in Austria, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Among those with the highest levels of education (third level or higher), however, natives are at a significant labour market advantage in the majority of Member States. Exceptions are Hungary and Slovakia, where first-generation workers have higher

Figure 3: Employment rates (%), by migration status, Member States, 2014



Notes: People aged 15–64. No data for the Netherlands, Denmark and Ireland; no data on first- and second-generation migrants in Romania.

Source: Eurostat, Employment rate by sex, age, migration status, citizenship and educational attainment level [lfs14_lempr]

employment rates, and Czechia, Luxembourg, Poland, Slovenia and the United Kingdom, where employment rates are highest among second-generation migrants. Among individuals who have completed secondary education, natives tend to perform better, but the difference between them and first-generation workers is less significant.

Women experience additional disadvantage when it comes to the match between their qualifications and the level of labour market integration. Second-generation female migrants, particularly, have lower employment rates than their male counterparts even among those with tertiary qualifications.

Higher unemployment

Workers with a foreign background have higher unemployment rates than natives, especially second-generation migrants. Despite their relatively positive employment performance in almost half of EU countries, first-generation migrants are more likely to be unemployed than natives in a majority of countries (see Figure 4).

Female migrants, particularly in the first generation, are more likely to be unemployed than their male counterparts.

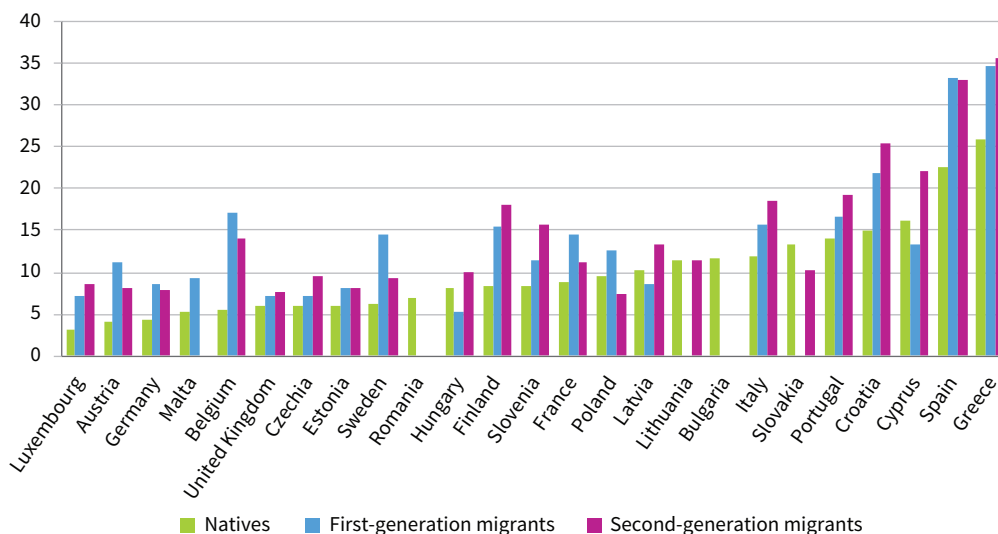
Explanatory factors

To isolate specific factors underlying the differences in labour market integration, the EU-LFS data were analysed in more detail, distinguishing workers with a foreign background according to country of origin, timing and reason for migration, among other things.

The data show firstly that when employment rates are broken down by EU and non-EU country of origin, having an EU background confers significant advantage on both first- and second-generation migrants despite differences between the two groups.

Second-generation migrants with at least one parent born in the EU had the highest employment rates (81%), followed by natives (79%). After these two groupings come first-generation migrants with an EU background (77%), second-generation migrants with a non-EU background (74%) and finally, first-generation migrants with a non-EU background (66%).

Figure 4: Unemployment rates (%), by migration status, Member States, 2014



Notes: People aged 15–64. No data for Denmark, Ireland and the Netherlands; no data for first- and second-generation migrants available for Bulgaria and Romania; no data for first-generation migrants for Lithuania and Slovakia.

Source: Eurostat, Unemployment rate by sex, age, migration status, citizenship and educational attainment level [lfsa_14luner]

EU origin is also an advantage when employment rates are analysed in relation to level of education attained. Among individuals with low levels of education, second-generation migrants of EU background, followed by first-generation migrants of EU background perform better than natives, with first-generation non-EU migrants at the greatest disadvantage. Among those with high levels of education, the highest employment rates can be found among second-generation migrants with an EU background, followed by natives and first-generation migrants with an EU background. Non-EU first-generation migrants are again at the greatest disadvantage.

An analysis of the same Eurostat data carried out by Eurofound (2018) found that region of origin, timing of migration, reason for migration and the socioeconomic context of migration play a significant role in determining labour market outcomes. Region of origin was shown to have a bigger impact than whether an individual was a first- or second-generation migrant. Specifically, workers of North African origin and Asian women were found to be most disadvantaged, and more likely to suffer this

disadvantage into the second generation (and beyond). With the exception of North America, all regions of origin result in worse employment outcomes for workers than EU origin.

For unemployment too, EU background was significant: second-generation migrants of EU background have lower unemployment rates than natives, whereas both first-generation migrants of EU background and migrants with non-EU background are at an added disadvantage when it comes to unemployment rates. Worst impacted are non-EU first-generation migrants.

Similar patterns can be found for men and women in terms of the impact of region of origin, though, interestingly, second-generation EU and non-EU women have lower unemployment rates than their male counterparts.

Reasons for migration were also particularly significant when it comes to comparing the labour market, employment and occupational status of different groups – for example, refugees and asylum-seekers. This is in part because of the different treatment of such

groups with regard to labour market access and the policies in place to support them, such as language training, validation and recognition of qualifications as well as access to employment support, housing, medical services and other social support.

The study also found that in countries with more dynamic labour markets and higher levels of occupational mobility, labour market integration outcomes tend to be more positive.

Segregation in employment

Differences between natives and individuals with a foreign background are apparent not only in relation to employment and unemployment rates but also persist with respect to various features of employment including sector, occupation and employment status. Segregation is relatively high in relation to these aspects of work and is only moderately attributable to the individual

characteristics of these workers, such as their level of education, migration status (first or second generation) and sex.

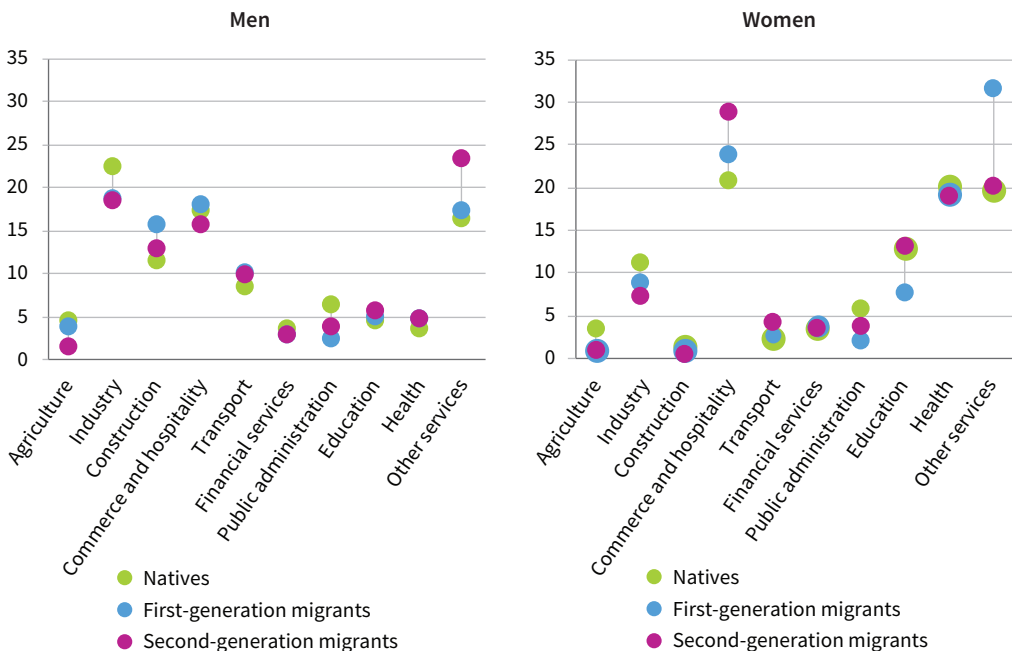
Imbalances across sectors

Workers with a foreign background tend to be overrepresented in sectors dominated by lower-skilled employment, including commerce and hospitality, transport, construction and other services.¹

Differences by migration status and sex stand out (Figure 5). Among men, first-generation migrants are highly represented in construction, whereas second-generation migrants are overrepresented in other services. Native male workers are more likely to be found in public administration and industry than first- and second-generation migrants.

Female workers with a foreign background are highly represented in the commerce and hospitality sector. Second-generation female

Figure 5: Sectoral distribution of male and female workers (%), by migration status, EU, 2015



Source: EWCS 2015

¹ 'Other services' encompasses the following sectors: information and communication; professional, scientific and technical activities; administrative and support service activities; arts and entertainment; households as employers; activities of extraterritorial bodies.

workers are also slightly more likely to be found working in transport and education.

Differences between native and second-generation workers in terms of their presence in public, private and non-profit sector employment are relatively small. First-generation workers, on the other hand, are more likely to be found in the private sector and are underrepresented in the public sector.

When this information is broken down by sex it shows that male first-generation workers are still more likely to be employed in the private sector: 83% are private-sector workers, compared to 76% of second-generation men and 77% of native men. Meanwhile, second-generation male workers are slightly more likely to be found in the public sector than native male workers (18% and 17%, respectively), while the first generation are underrepresented in this sector (12%) and in NGOs (4.5% compared to 7% of second-generation male workers and 6% of natives).

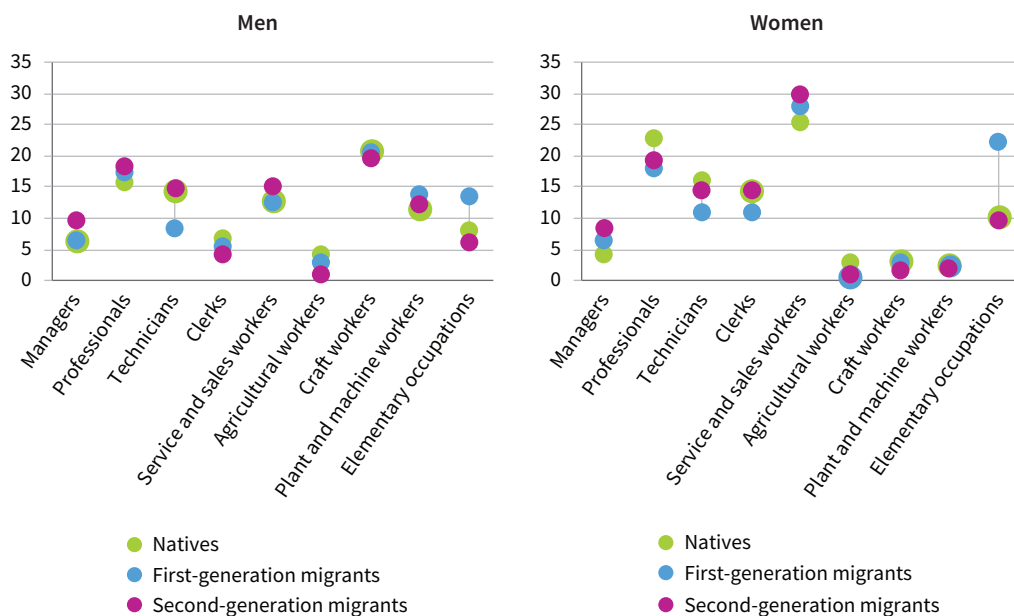
First-generation female migrants are also overrepresented in the private sector (74% are private-sector workers compared to 66% of female second-generation migrants and 65% of native women), albeit to a lesser extent than first-generation male migrants. They are also less likely to work in the public sector: 18% compared to 27% among the second generation and 27% among native women.

Imbalances across occupations

According to EWCS data, as illustrated in Figure 6, first-generation migrant workers tend to be overrepresented in the elementary occupations – jobs such as porter, caretaker, delivery worker and cleaner. They are in turn underrepresented in the professional and managerial categories – in jobs such as doctors, lawyers, scientists and engineers.

This pattern can be attributed to several factors, including the greater difficulty first-generation migrants have in getting recognition for qualifications obtained in

Figure 6: Occupational distribution of male and female workers (%), by migration status, EU 2015



Source: EWCS 2015

another country, as well as language difficulties. Among EU-mobile workers (particularly those migrating from east to west), there are indications that individuals move with the aim of securing higher salaries than in their home country. In most host countries, they can achieve those salaries even in jobs that do not match their educational qualifications, where there is often a high demand for labour.

Moreover, the distribution of the first and second generations across occupations varies depending on the worker's sex. First-generation male and female migrants are both strongly overrepresented in elementary occupations. In the second generation, however, male migrants are overrepresented in higher-status occupations – managerial and professional jobs and somewhat too among technicians. They are also more likely to work in service and sales jobs. Second-generation female workers are similar, being slightly overrepresented among managers and service and sales workers.

Employment status

The EWCS asks respondents several questions about their employment status, including whether they are employees or self-employed, whether they have a permanent or fixed-term contract or have 'other or no contract' (a category that covers a wide variety of contractual arrangements, see the 2015 European Working Conditions Survey overview report). The responses to these questions show big differences in relation to migration background.

In terms of contractual status, first-generation migrants are less likely to be in standard employment – in other words, in a permanent, full-time job. They report above-average levels of having 'other or no contract' (around 11%) compared to native workers (8%). They are also more likely to be employed on a fixed-term contract (14% versus 10% for natives).

Breaking down the findings by sex shows that male first-generation workers are overrepresented among workers with

fixed-term contracts, with 15% having this type of contract. Female first-generation workers are overrepresented among those with 'other or no contract'; 14% are in this category compared with 8% of female natives. The share of second-generation male workers working with 'other or no contract' is two times the share of male natives in this category (13% compared to 7%).

The share of first-generation migrants who report that they are self-employed with employees is almost half that of natives (3% compared to 5%). Among the self-employed, first-generation migrants are more likely to be found in dependent self-employment, defined as significantly reliant on one client and with limited autonomy over decision-making.

For second-generation migrants, the proportions in different employment and contractual statuses are more similar to those of native workers, with the few exceptions outlined above.

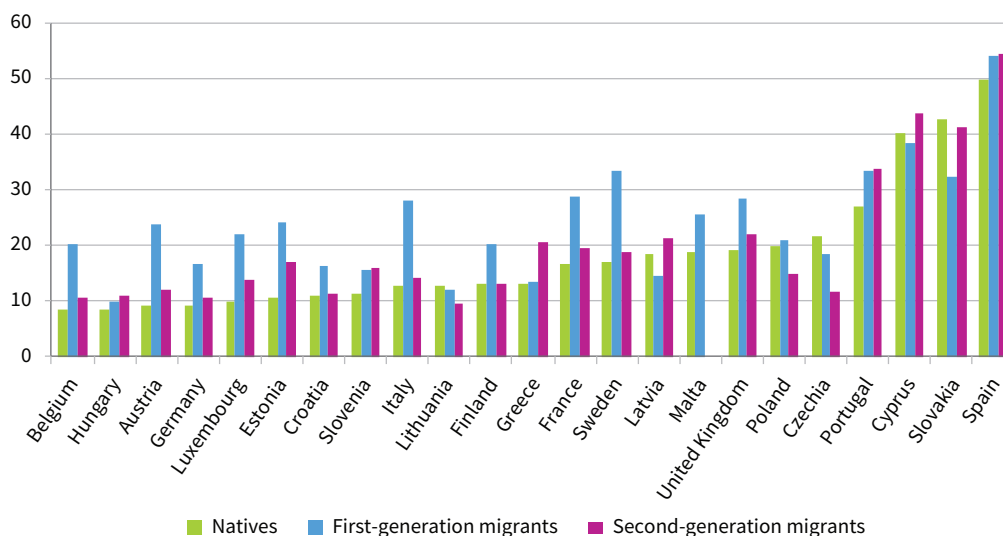
Educational attainment and overqualification

There are sharp contrasts in the educational attainment of native workers and workers with a foreign background. According to EWCS data, the latter are more likely to be found among workers with elementary and tertiary levels of education, while they are less likely to have completed secondary education. Among first-generation migrant workers, the share with primary education only is particularly high at 6%, versus 3% among natives.

The EU-LFS also indicates an overrepresentation of first-generation and, indeed, second-generation migrants among those having completed less than primary, primary only or lower secondary education compared to natives. There are a few exceptions to this among the Member States, including Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Malta, Portugal and the United Kingdom.

First-generation migrants (both women and men) are significantly more likely to have attained tertiary qualifications than natives and second-generation migrants. In Estonia,

Figure 7: Share of individuals who consider themselves to be overqualified (%), by migration status, Member States, 2014



Notes: People aged 15–64. No data for Bulgaria, Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands and Romania.

Source: Eurostat, Self-declared over-qualified employees as percentage of the total employees by sex, age, migration status and educational attainment level [lfsq_14loq]

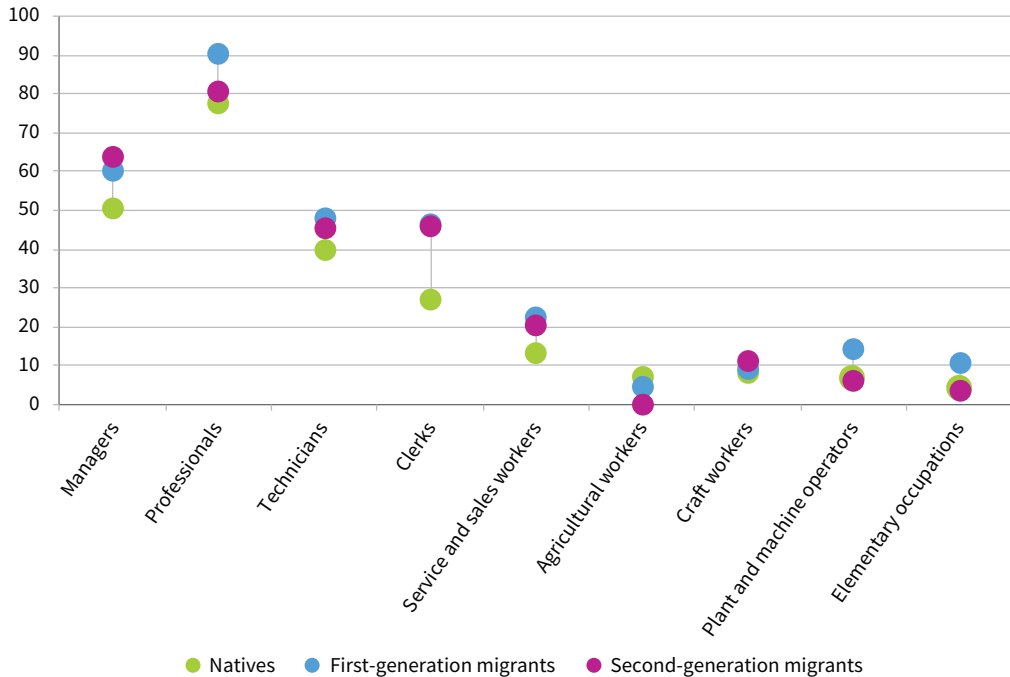
Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, second-generation female workers are also more likely to hold tertiary qualifications than female natives. This is also the case for male second-generation workers in France and Slovenia.

In this context, it is notable that, according to Eurostat data, in most countries, workers with a foreign background are more likely to consider themselves overqualified for their jobs than natives. This perception tends to be more prevalent among first-generation workers, except in Cyprus, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Portugal, Slovenia, and Spain, where second-generation workers are most likely to consider themselves to be overqualified (Figure 7). Czechia and Slovakia are the only countries where natives are more likely to consider themselves to be overqualified.

These findings are confirmed by data from the EWCS linking occupational categories with the qualifications held by individuals (Figure 8, overleaf). For those with tertiary education, it demonstrates that with the exception of agricultural workers, workers with a foreign background (and particularly first-generation migrants) in the different occupational groups are more likely to hold tertiary qualifications than natives.

Research shows that lack of language skills and lack of recognition of qualifications are among the main barriers preventing first-generation migrants, particularly, from obtaining jobs equivalent to their qualifications. Given the efforts at EU level to achieve greater comparability of qualifications, migrants from non-EU countries especially encounter this barrier.

Figure 8: Share of workers with tertiary qualifications (%), by occupational category and migration status, 2015



Source: EWCS 2015

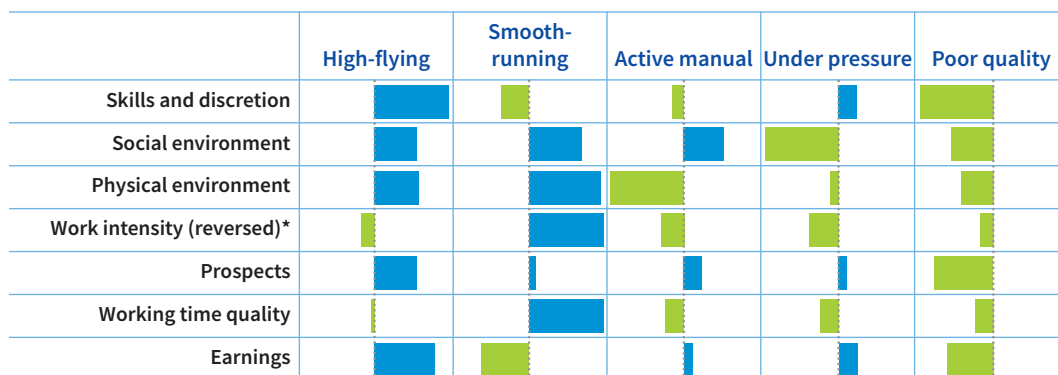
Job quality

Now we turn to the job quality of workers with a foreign background. Job quality is multifaceted, and Eurofound captures this in identifying seven dimensions of job quality:

- physical environment: the degree to which there are physical risks to workers in the workplace
- social environment: the extent to which workers experience both supportive social relationships and adverse social behaviour
- working time quality: the duration, scheduling and flexibility of working time arrangements
- work intensity: the level of demands (including emotional demands) putting pressure on workers
- skills and discretion: the opportunities for workers to exercise autonomy, apply their skills, participate in the organisation and develop professionally
- prospects: job security and opportunities to progress in one's career
- earnings

By analysing the EWCS data through the prism of these dimensions, Eurofound identified five job quality profiles across the EU working population:

- high-flying: high-skilled, high-paying jobs that are demanding of workers' time
- smooth-running: good jobs that are relatively low pressure and do not demand long hours
- active manual: jobs involving greater physical risk and time demands, but with good social environments
- under pressure: well-paying skilled jobs but with poor social environment and high intensity
- poor quality: low-paying, low-skilled jobs with poor prospects

Figure 9: How the five job quality profiles compare on the seven job quality dimensions

* In contrast to the other dimensions, a higher level of work intensity lowers job quality.

Note: Blue bars indicate favourable associations, green bars indicate unfavourable associations.

Source: EWCS 2015

Figure 9 shows how the job-quality profiles perform on the seven job-quality dimensions. It highlights that high-quality jobs allow individuals to exercise their skills and autonomy, have good social and physical working environments, and offer positive career prospects and earnings. Poor-quality jobs, on the other hand, rank low in all these dimensions.

The different job-quality profiles are associated with specific aspects of working conditions that are linked to the nature of the job itself rather than the worker who occupies it. However, given the segregation in labour markets and in occupations, the profiles are also indicative of the working conditions different groups of workers experience.

Polarisation of job quality profiles

The job-quality profiles of workers with a foreign background show a contrast in the

types of jobs occupied by first- and second-generation migrants. First-generation migrant workers are overrepresented in active manual and poor-quality jobs while being underrepresented in the smooth-running category. Conversely, second-generation migrant workers are overrepresented in high-flying jobs and under pressure jobs and underrepresented in poor quality and smooth-running jobs. So, although the second generation continues to struggle with labour market integration, the quality of the jobs they have access to tends to be better than for the first generation.

There is, nevertheless, considerable polarisation among the second generation as Table 1 demonstrates. A quarter of second-generation workers are in high-flying jobs, indicating a successful and qualitatively high level of labour market integration. Still,

Table 1: Job quality profiles by native or foreign background

	High-flying (%)	Smooth-running (%)	Active manual (%)	Under pressure (%)	Poor quality (%)
Native	22	26	21	13	18
First generation	20	20	23	13	24
Second generation	25	21	22	15	17
Total	22	25	21	13	19

Source: Eurofound, 2017

one-third of them faces significant difficulties, as their job-quality profiles are either under pressure or poor quality.

The first-generation group is almost equally split between the better profiles – high-flying and smooth-running (40%) – on the one hand, and the most problematic – under pressure and poor quality (37%) – on the other.

This polarisation is consistent with the occupational distribution and educational attainment of workers with a foreign background described above. It also encapsulates the lower job quality first-generation migrants experience.

Pay, security and discrimination

For several key aspects of work, having a foreign background has an impact on people’s experience, as does their sex. These aspects include making work pay, benefiting from job and employment security, and discrimination.

Making work pay

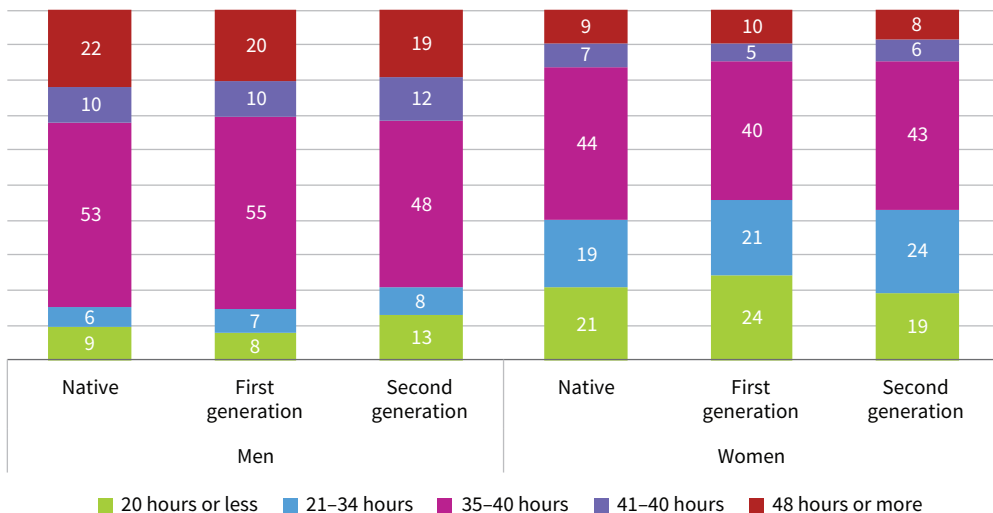
Individuals’ ability to make ends meet is influenced not only by their ability to find a job corresponding to their education, but also by securing enough paid working hours.

Working hours

Workers with a foreign background are more likely to work fewer hours (34 hours or less per week) in their main paid job than natives (Figure 10). The highest share of workers employed on this basis are found among first-generation women. Among men, it is second-generation migrants who are more likely to work fewer hours. First-generation male migrants and male native workers, on the other hand, have the same pattern of working time: around 85% work more than 34 hours.

Looking at shorter part-time work – 20 hours or less – first-generation migrant women again are more likely to work these hours, almost three times more so than their male counterparts. The proportion of second-generation women working such limited hours is lower, but it is still much higher than the proportion of second-generation men. Among natives, around twice as many women than men work limited part-time hours.

Figure 10: Breakdown of working hours per week by migration status (%), according to sex, 2015



Source: EWCS 2015

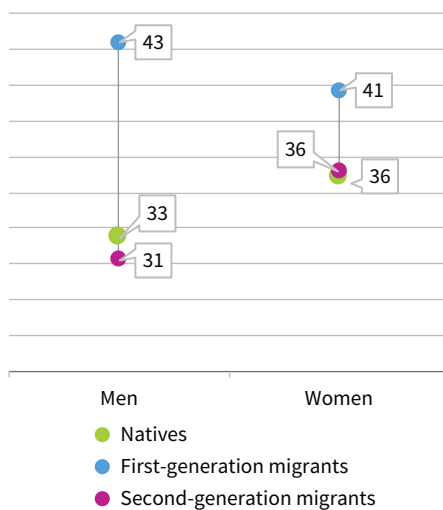
These patterns have an impact on people's level of satisfaction with working hours. While almost 60% of natives are happy with the hours they are currently working, the figure is 48% for workers with a foreign background. First-generation migrant workers are most likely to express dissatisfaction with their working time (wishing to increase their hours), indicating that much low-hours part-time work could be involuntary.

Making ends meet

Around 35% of the EU workforce indicate that they face difficulty making ends meet. Breaking the data down by migration status and sex, first-generation men (43%) followed by first-generation women (41%) are most likely to experience this challenge (Figure 11).

Looking at workers according to their working hours, first-generation men working 35–40 hours report the greatest difficulty making ends meet (24% do so), followed by first- and second-generation women working 34 hours or less (19% and 17%, respectively).

Figure 11: Share of workers reporting difficulty making ends meet (%), by sex and migration status, EU, 2015



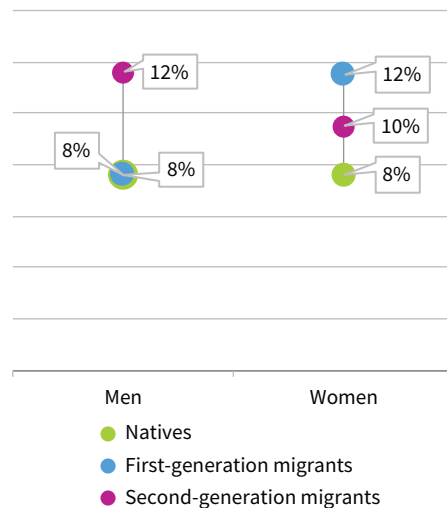
Source: EWCS 2015

Second paid job

Insufficient earnings in one job can lead individuals to seek additional employment to increase their income; 8% of all workers report having a second paid job, generally to help make ends meet. Workers with a foreign background are slightly more likely than natives to have a second job: 9% among the first generation and 11% among second-generation migrant workers compared to 8% among natives.

The same patterns hold when only male workers are considered, with second-generation males most likely to have a second job (12% compared to 8% among natives and first-generation migrant workers, Figure 12). Among female workers, both first- and second-generation migrants are more likely to report having a second job than native women (8% of natives, 12% of the first generation and 10% of the second generation).

Figure 12: Share of workers with a second job (%), by sex and migrant status, EU, 2015



Source: EWCS 2015

Job and employment security

Type of contract – whether permanent or fixed-term – or having no contract has a significant impact on perceived job security. Furthermore, employment security is influenced, among other things, by access to training.

Job security

According to EWCS data, a majority of the workforce feels their job is secure in the short term (over the next six months). However, 16% of workers report they ‘might lose their job’ in the same period. The proportion is higher among first-generation migrant workers: 20%, compared to 16% among natives. In addition, this concern is more likely to be reported by male first-generation workers than the female first generation: 22% compared to 18%, respectively.

Training

The EWCS asks workers whether they received training in the previous 12 months to improve their skills and, by implication, their employability. While there is little difference between native and second-generation workers on this measure, first-generation workers are less likely to have participated in training: 67% report having received no training, compared to 59% of natives.

Experiencing discrimination

The EWCS asks workers whether they have been subjected to discriminatory behaviour in work, based on the grounds established in EU law.

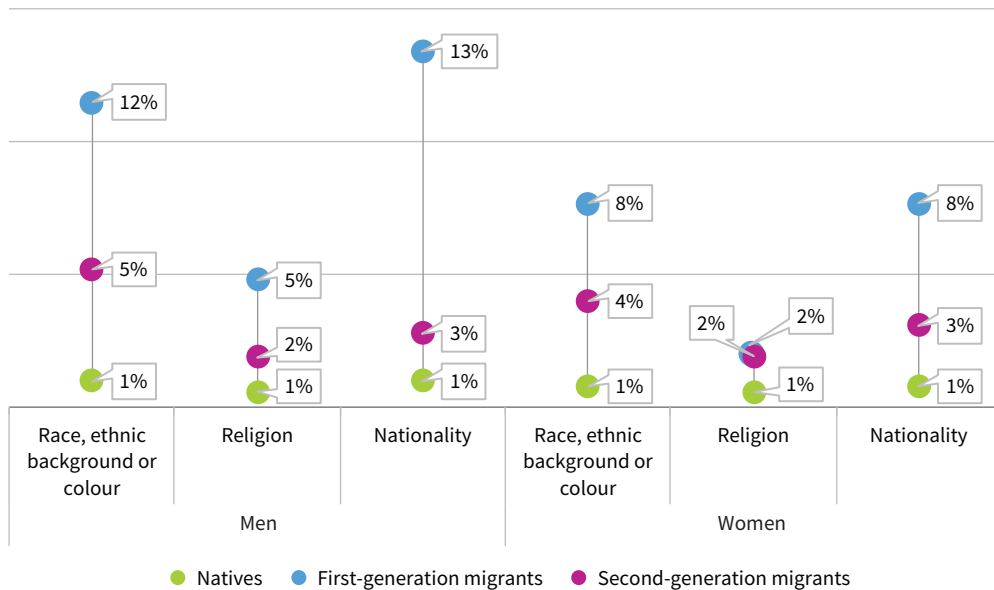
Overall, very few workers report discrimination linked to race, ethnic background or colour, just 2%. However, the share of workers with a foreign background reporting it is much higher, at 10% for first-generation workers and 5% for the second generation. This discrimination primarily targets male (12%) and female (8%) first-generation migrant workers, while only 1% of native workers report being subject to such discrimination (Figure 13).

The experience of discrimination linked to religion remains marginal overall, at 1%. However, this is not the case for foreign-born workers. Among first-generation migrant workers, 4% report having been subjected to religious discrimination; the figure is 2% among second-generation migrants. Most at risk of facing discrimination on religious grounds are first-generation male workers (5%), followed by first- and second-generation women (2%).

Most prevalent is perceived discrimination on the grounds of nationality. This was reported by 11% of first-generation migrants and by 3% of second-generation workers (1% among natives). Again, male first-generation migrant workers appear most likely to be affected (13%), followed by first-generation female workers (8%).

The feeling of being discriminated against in the workplace can go hand in hand with poorer job quality. Further statistical analysis of the EWCS data identifies a subset of workers with a foreign background who experience discrimination and also report poorer job quality. Interestingly, this is independent of earnings: these subsets of foreign workers experiencing discrimination can be found among high-earning as well as low-earning workers.

Figure 13: Share of workers reporting discrimination on different grounds (%), by migration status and sex, 2015



Source: EWCS 2015

Other groups of workers with a foreign background with otherwise similar characteristics but who do not experience discrimination, report better job quality. This pattern can be found among both first- and second-generation migrants, with the distinction that second-generation migrants are overall less likely to consider that they face discrimination.

Gender differences

Gender differences in labour market integration are amplified by having a foreign background. With regard to contractual status and working conditions, some significant differences emerge between native male workers and first- and second-generation migrant male workers and between native women and first- and second-generation women, as well as between the sexes. Table 2, overleaf, summarises the key features of these differences.

Table 2: Summary of differences in working conditions between native workers and workers with a foreign background, by sex, 2015

	Men		
	Native (%)	First generation (%)	Second generation (%)
Employment/Contractual status	More likely to be self-employed or hold permanent contract	Overrepresented in fixed-term contracts	Overrepresented in other or no contract
Works less than 34 hours	15	16	2
Second paid job	8	8	12
Difficulty making ends meet	33	43	31
Might lose job in next six months	15	22	16
Discrimination due to race/ethnic background/colour	1	12	5
Discrimination due to religion	1	5	2
Discrimination due to nationality	1	13	3
	Women		
	Native (%)	First generation (%)	Second generation (%)
Employment/Contractual status	More likely to be self-employed or hold permanent contract	Overrepresented in fixed-term contracts	Overrepresented in other or no contract
Works less than 34 hours	41	47	44
Second paid job	8	12	10
Difficulty making ends meet	36	41	36
Might lose job in next six months	16	18	16
Discrimination due to race/ethnic background/colour	1	8	4
Discrimination due to religion	1	2	2
Discrimination due to nationality	1	8	3



Policy pointers

Action should be taken on three fronts to improve both the quality of work available for, and the employment of, workers with a foreign background: integration, job quality and discrimination.

- There is a clear need for a nuanced approach to policymaking regarding the working lives of workers with a foreign background. The region of origin, reason for and context of migration have to be taken into account. The differences between first- and second-generation migrant workers must be addressed, as they do not face the same types of difficulties. While the second generation outperforms the first generation in many aspects of work, they still struggle in regard to some working conditions, demonstrating that the passage of time is insufficient to ensure enhanced labour market outcomes for people with a foreign background and underlining the need for
- targeted interventions. Specific emphasis is also required on the effective integration of women with a foreign background, who face even deeper labour market gender segregation than native women.
- While improving job quality is important for all workers, several features of the working conditions of first-generation migrant workers – men and women – raise concern. A particular issue is the overrepresentation of the male first generation among workers on temporary contracts and the overrepresentation of the female first generation among those on contracts other than permanent or fixed-term or on no contract.
- Effective allocation of human capital goes beyond ensuring that migrants find employment; it also requires that such employment be commensurate with the qualifications and needs of migrants to allow them to integrate into wider society.

Despite ongoing efforts to ensure or enhance the comparability and mutual recognition of qualifications, the information presented in this policy brief serves to highlight that more remains to be done to ensure the effective use of human capital. This specifically pertains to addressing the current situation where a large share of first-generation migrants in particular work in occupations and in sectors for which they are overqualified. Efforts to speed up the assessment and recognition of EU and third-country qualifications need to take priority, together with support for language acquisition. Mechanisms for the validation of competencies also have a contribution to make in this regard.

- The high levels of discrimination experienced by workers with a foreign background indicate that more needs to be done to effectively tackle workplace discrimination. This should be borne in mind in reviewing existing EU anti-discrimination legislation and its implementation and enforcement. Social partner organisations have an important role to play in shaping workplace and sectoral practices in this regard.
- The differences in labour market integration outcomes demonstrated in different Member States show that there is potential for the exchange of experience and mutual learning.



Resources

All Eurofound publications are available at www.eurofound.europa.eu

Eurofound web topic 'Migration and mobility', <http://eurofound.link/migrationmobility>

Ballarino, G. and Panichella, N. (2017), 'The occupational integration of migrant women in Western European labour markets', *Acta Sociologica* 2018, Vol. 61, No. 2, pp. 126–142.

De la Rica, S., Glitz, A. and Ortega, F. (2013), *Immigration in Europe: Trends, policies and empirical evidence*, IZA Discussion Paper No. 7778, Institute for the Study of Labor, Bonn.

Eurofound (2009), *Occupational promotion of migrant workers*, Dublin.

Eurofound (2017), *Sixth European Working Conditions Survey – Overview report (2017 update)*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.

Eurofound (2018), *Labour market integration of migrants and their descendants*, Dublin.

European Commission, ETUC, BusinessEurope, ETUC, CEEP, UEAPME, Eurochambres (2017), *A European Partnership for Integration*, available at https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/e-library/documents/policies/legal-migration/integration/docs/20171220_european_partnership_for_integration_en.pdf

Frattini, T. (2017), 'Evaluating the labour market integration of new immigrants in the UK', *Social Policy and Society*, Vol. 16, No. 4, pp. 645–658.

OECD (2015), *Measuring and assessing job quality: The OECD Job Quality Framework*, OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers No. 174, OECD Publishing, Paris.

Ronda Perez, E., Benavides, F. G., Levecque, K., Love, J. G., Felt, E. and Van Rossem, R. (2012), 'Differences in working conditions and employment arrangements among migrant and non-migrant workers in Europe', *Ethnicity and Health*, Vol. 17, No. 6, pp. 563–577.

Getting in touch with the EU

In person

All over the European Union there are hundreds of Europe Direct information centres. You can find the address of the centre nearest you at: <http://europa.eu/contact>

On the phone or by email

Europe Direct is a service that answers your questions about the European Union. You can contact this service:

- by freephone: 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11 (certain operators may charge for these calls),
- at the following standard number: +32 22999696
- by email via: <http://europa.eu/contact>

Finding information about the EU

Online

Information about the European Union in all the official languages of the EU is available on the Europa website at: <http://europa.eu>

EU publications

You can download or order free and priced EU publications from EU Bookshop at: <http://publications.europa.eu/eubookshop>. Multiple copies of free publications may be obtained by contacting Europe Direct or your local information centre (see <http://europa.eu/contact>).

EU law and related documents

For access to legal information from the EU, including all EU law since 1951 in all the official language versions, go to EUR-Lex at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu>

Open data from the EU

The EU Open Data Portal (<http://data.europa.eu/euodp>) provides access to datasets from the EU. Data can be downloaded and reused for free, both for commercial and non-commercial purposes.

Employment statistics consistently show that having a foreign background has an influence on people's employment prospects. Less is known about the types of jobs workers with foreign backgrounds hold and their working conditions. This policy brief contributes to filling this gap. It compares the experience of workers with a foreign background to that of native workers; it also distinguishes between the experiences of first-generation and second-generation migrants and between those of women and men.

The evidence shows that having a foreign background can have a negative impact both on labour market integration and working conditions. However, significant differences emerge between different groups of migrants. The findings highlight the clear need for a nuanced approach to policymaking to ensure a level playing field in the labour market for workers with a foreign background.

The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound) is a tripartite European Union Agency established in 1975. Its role is to provide knowledge in the area of social, employment and work-related policies according to Regulation (EU) 2019/127.

