

## EMN Finland National Conference and Webinar

### *Diversity of migrant women – How to improve labour market integration of migrant women*

25<sup>th</sup> November 2022

Paasitorni, Helsinki

#### Programme (CET + 1)

Conference languages: Finnish and English (interpretation is provided from Finnish-English and English-Finnish)

- 9.15 – 10.00 Registration and refreshments
- 10.00 – 10.20 Welcoming words, **Mr. Rafael Bärlund**, Head of EMN Finland
- Opening of the conference, **Ms. Tuula Haatainen**, Minister of Employment, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment
- 10.20 – 11.00 Keynote: Diverse migrant women in the Finnish working life, **Dr. Tytti Steel**, Docent, University of Helsinki
- 11.00 – 11.20 Integration of migrant women in EMN Member Countries, **Ms. Saskia Heilemann**, Advisory Group -lead of the EMN study, EMN Austria
- 11.20 – 11.50 Experiences from Norway: Jobbsjansen-project facilitating migrant women's access to the labour market, **Mr. Manzoor Qadeer Khan**, Senior Advisor, The Directorate of Integration and Diversity of Norway (IMDi)
- 11.50 – 12.00 Discussion on the topics
- 12.00 – 13.00 Lunch**

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- 13.00 – 13.20 Labour market integration of immigrant parents who have stayed at home to take care of children, **Ms. Emilia Virtanen**, Project Planner, Smoother transitions from family leave to working life -project
- 13.20 – 14.00 The situation of Ukrainians in Finland who fled the war, **Dr. Arseniy Svytnarenko**, Researcher, Finnish Youth Research Society
- Comment of the presentation, **Ms. Anna Suchodolski**, Helsinki Employment Services
- 14.00 – 14.30 Coffee break**
- 14.30 – 16.00 Panel discussion: How to improve the inclusion of migrant women in working life?  
Moderator: **Ms. Kamilla Sultanova**  
Panelists:
- **Ms. Sara Al Husaini**, Refugee Woman of the Year 2021 and Project Designer of the Osallisenä-Project
  - **Ms. Olga Silfver**, Project manager, Competence Centre for Highly Educated Immigrants
  - **Ms. Minna Perokorpi-Sulin**, Project manager, Your turn, mothers -project
  - **Ms. Lucia Vuillermin**, International Working Women of Finland
- Comment of the panel discussion, **Mr. Mikko Räsänen**, Adviser, Confederation of Finnish Industries
- 16.00 – 16.10 Reflections on the day, **Ms. Varpu Taarna**, Senior Specialist, Centre of Expertise in Migrant Integration, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment
- 16.10 – 16.15 Closing words, **Mr. Rafael Bärlund**, Head of EMN Finland

## EMN Finland National Conference

### *Diversity of migrant women –*

### *How to improve labour market integration of migrant women*

#### Speaker biographies



**Tuula Haatainen, Minister of Employment, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland**

Tuula Haatainen is the Minister of Employment in the current Cabinet of Prime Minister Sanna Marin. Ms. Haatainen has previously served as a councillor and a Member of Parliament, in addition to which she has been a Minister of Education and a Minister of Social Affairs and Health. Ms. Haatainen has also worked as a Deputy Mayor of Helsinki in the department of Cultural and Human Resource Services. During this time her responsibilities were, among other things, to develop the integration of immigrants. Ms. Haatainen has a Master's degree in Political Science and she is also a nurse.



**Rafael Bärlund, Director, European Migration Network (EMN) Finland**

Rafael Bärlund has worked at the EMN Finland from its inception in 2008, first as a Senior Adviser, and from January 2021 as the Director of EMN Finland. He is also the co-chair of the EMN Working Group on Communication and Dissemination. Previously, he has worked at the Finnish Immigration Service as a Planning Officer and at the Embassy of India for Finland and Estonia as a Visa Officer. Prior to that, he has been employed by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in Geneva. Mr. Bärlund has a Master's degree in Political Science.

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**Tytti Steel, PhD, Postdoctoral Researcher, University of Helsinki**

Tytti Steel is an ethnologist who works as a Postdoctoral Researcher at Gender Studies at the Department of Culture, University of Helsinki. Her research interests include working life and employment especially from the point of view of minorities and people who have difficulties in finding employment. Currently, she works in two projects, which focus on gig work and platform economy, and care work during and after the pandemic. Dr. Steel has a PhD in Philosophy.



**Saskia Heilemann, Lead of the EMN study on the integration of migrant women, International Organization for Migration (IOM) Austria and European Migration Network (EMN) Austria**

Saskia Heilemann is a Research Associate at the International Organization for Migration, IOM Country Office for Austria, and a long-standing member of the National Contact Point Austria in the European Migration Network (EMN). She is responsible for supervising the research activities of EMN Austria and has conducted various reports and studies herself. In 2021, Ms. Heilemann took the lead in conceptualizing and implementing the EMN study on the integration of migrant women.



**Manzoor Qadeer Khan, Senior Adviser, Norjan kotoutumis- ja monimuotoisuusvirasto (IMDi)**

Manzoor Khan is a Senior Adviser at the Directorate of Integration and Diversity of Norway. He has many years of work experience with different public bodies and has worked mainly on different projects regarding the integration of immigrants in Norway. At the conference, he is presenting the 'Jobbjansen' project, which aims to increase the employment of immigrant women in Norway. Mr. Khan has a Master's Degree in Political Science.



**Emilia Virtanen, Project Planner of the ‘Smoother transitions from family leave to working life’ project, Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment**

Emilia Virtanen works as a Project Planner of the ‘Smoother transitions from family leave to working life’ project at the Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment. The project aims to promote a smooth transition of all parents from family leave to working life. Ms. Virtanen is a specialist in international politics and work force mobility, and an advocate for participation in working life. She also has working experience in international development cooperation and from employment administration at the Employment and Economic Development Office. She has lived in three countries on two continents and has successfully reintegrated to Finland after over 10 years of living abroad. Ms. Virtanen is a Master of Social Sciences from the University of Helsinki.



**Arseniy Svynarenko, PhD, Researcher, Finnish Youth Research Society/ Finnish Youth Research Network**

Arseniy Svynarenko is a sociologist and a research fellow at the Finnish Youth Research Network. His research focuses particularly on youth identity and youth culture in Finland, Ukraine and Russia. He is currently working on a part of a research consortium project on ‘Democratic epistemic capacity in the age of algorithms (DECA)’, which is funded by the Strategic Research Council (SRC). The research focuses on access to, as well as reception and production of information from the point of view of Finland’s most notable language minorities, particularly from the point of view of Russian and Ukrainian speaking young persons, who have recently arrived in Finland. Dr. Svynarenko has PhD in Philosophy.



**Anna Suchodolski, Project Designer, Helsinki Employment Services**

Anna Suchodolski works as a Project Designer at the Helsinki Employment Services, where she has participated in the organisation of employment events, fairs and information events on the job market, taxation, entrepreneurship and the rights of workers for beneficiaries of temporary protection. She also does voluntary work and coordinates the work of the Ukrainian Association in Finland’s Help Center for Ukrainians in Vallila, Helsinki. Through her voluntary work as well as work in the public sector, Ms. Suchodolski has gained a solid insight into responding to the needs of persons escaping war.

### **Kamilla Sultanova**



Kamilla Sultanova is a speaker, an event host, and a DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) consultant. She works with organizations and communities on integration and inclusiveness. She has worked on various regional projects with a focus on employment of internationals and immigrants. One of the projects Hanken School of Economic's 'HankenHIT' programme was listed by Business Finland as one of the best ways to help international students find employment. Ms. Sultanova has solid experience in the non-profit sector and has coached immigrants and international talents through Global Dignity, which she co-founded with Tanja Lankia. Before her consulting career, she worked in corporate sales in the shipping industry. Her work on inclusion has been noted by the Barack Obama Foundation and by Sitra's Sitralab Changemaker Academy. Ms. Sultanova is an alumnus of the '40 under 40 European Young Leaders' network.



### **Sara Al Husaini, Refugee Woman of the Year 2021 and Project Designer of the 'Osallisena' -project, Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment**

Sara Al Husaini works as a Project Designer at the Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, where she has worked on the 'Osallisena' project, which promotes the inclusion of refugees in the development of integration services. On her free time, she promotes the human rights of persons of Middle Eastern background, particularly regarding equality issues by speaking out on discriminatory practices, honour-related violence and forced marriages. She is also a member of the board of Amnesty International and a member of the equality and equity working group of the National Union of Students in Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences – SAMOK. Ms. Al Husaini was elected the Refugee Woman of the Year 2021 and she is currently studying English at the University of Helsinki.

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**Olga Silfver, Project Manager, Competence Centre for Highly Educated Immigrants (Koske) and Chair of the Board of Multicultural Women's Association Monika**

Olga Silfver works as a Project Manager at the Competence Centre for Highly Educated Immigrants (Koske) in Espoo. She has 13 years of experience in municipal integration policy, inclusion, community dialogue, adult education and immigrant employment. She has created service concepts such as the immigrant NGO forum, NGO development subsidy, orientation groups for stay-at-home parents and Finnish Integration fair. Silfver is the Chair of the Board of Multicultural Women's Association Monika. She is a Master of Social Sciences with specialization in integration of immigrants in Finland.



**Minna Perokorpi-Sulin, Pedagogic Advisor, Project Manager, 'Your turn, mothers' - project, Careeria**

Minna Perokorpi-Sulin works as a pedagogic advisor at the Careeria vocational school. She has participated in several national and international projects, developing new educational methods and innovative solutions to teaching in diverse schoolrooms. As a part of the 'Your turn, mothers' -project, she has contributed to developing a new model, which aims to enhance immigrant mothers' integration and participation in working life. Ms. Perokorpi-Sulin has a Master's Degree in Education as well as vocational education and training degrees in Special Needs Teaching and Guidance Counselling.



**Lucia Vuillermin, Vice-Chair, International Working Women of Finland (IWWOF)**

Lucia Vuillermin is the Vice-Chair of the International Working Women of Finland Association. She started the Turku Chapter of IWWOF and manages the association's communication. She has also started the 'Empower Wednesday' programme to support international talents in their working path in Finland. She is running her own company and is part of the 'DigiMesh' project to support digital networking for internationals. Prior to moving to Finland, she was working in the communication and event organization field for 17 years.

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**Mikko Räsänen, Senior Adviser, the Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK)**

Mikko Räsänen works as a Senior Adviser for employment and migration policy at the Confederation of Finnish Industries. He has several years of experience in migration and international social security related legislation drafting at both national and EU-levels. Mr. Räsänen also participates as industry representative in several working groups and advisory boards on labour and education related migration. He has also worked as an advisory member of the Insurance Court for 15 years.



**Varpu Taarna, Senior Specialist, the Centre of Expertise in Immigrant Integration, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland**

Varpu Taarna works as a Senior Specialist at the Centre of Expertise in Immigrant Integration, which based at the Labour Migration and Integration unit of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland. Her work includes developing multisector collaboration and partnerships between different stakeholders, particularly with the non-profit sector and on issues regarding equality and equity.

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### *Diversity of migrant women – How to improve labour market integration of migrant women*

**25 November 2022**

#### Background

Women account for around 50 per cent of migrants in Finland. Migrant women form a diverse group having different reasons for migrating and different personal attributes: women arrive to Finland as family migrants, labour migrants, students, asylum seekers, refugees, and beneficiaries of temporary protection.

Despite of their different backgrounds, migrant women seem to face the same obstacle: it is challenging to gain access to the Finnish labour market. This applies to both highly educated migrant women, and to those with lower levels of education. A significant proportion of migrant women are highly educated, but their employment rate is not improving as could be expected. The Finnish labour market includes many discriminatory structures, and a high level of education does not necessarily guarantee success to migrant women when it comes to accessing the working life. On the other hand, migrant women of lower educational levels face other notable obstacles as well, such as being able to participate in the integration and language training.

Employment is a significant factor in successful integration and it has wide-ranging impacts on individual well-being. The impacts of the low employment rate of migrant women extend beyond the women themselves to subsequent generations. The weak labour market position of mothers with a migrant background is seen as having a negative impact on the school performance and integration of their children. The low employment rate of migrant women is also a problem for Finnish society: for a society that is trying to bridge the sustainability gap, increasing the employment rate of migrant women would be very important.

One of the key questions of the integration policies in Finland is how to guide migrant women towards integration services and the labour market more effectively. Both the Government Programme and the Government's Action Plan for Gender Equality state that the access of migrant women to

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integration and language instruction have to be ensured. Effectively guiding migrant women towards integration services and the labour market is also a key development target in the report of the Finnish Government on the need for a reform in integration promotion.

In 2022, Ukrainians fleeing the war form a new group of migrants arriving to Finland. These migrants, most of them women, are beneficiaries of temporary protection and have access to the Finnish labour market and partly to services supporting integration. It is not yet known how permanent the situation will be and how many Ukrainians will decide to stay in Finland.

## Objective

The conference of EMN Finland will tackle the abovementioned issues of employment of migrant women. Solutions will be sought from best practices in Finland and abroad. A comparative EU-level study on integration of migrant women in EMN member countries, published by EMN in September 2022, will be introduced in the event. Additionally, experiences from Norway will be shared, as Norway has succeeded better than Finland in the employment of migrant women. The floor will be given to Finnish experts of immigration, migrant women, and representatives of governance. Additionally, the situation of Ukrainian beneficiaries of temporary protection will be discussed from the viewpoint of integration and employment.

## Information about EMN

The European Migration Network (EMN) was established in 2008 by a decision of the European Council and it receives funding from the European Union. The European Migration Network supports policymaking in the European Union by providing up-to-date, objective, reliable and comparable information on migration and asylum in the EMN Member Countries and EMN Observer Countries, and distributes it to national and EU-level policymakers and authorities. Additionally, EMN distributes information on migration and asylum to the general public.

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