

## **Migrants, refugees and asylum applicants integration via labour markets: in Short on legal frameworks from the SIRIUS Research**

**Research topic:** The integration of migrants, refugees and asylum applicants (MRAAs) via labour markets is not a straightforward task, due to the specific issues relating to migration and refugee/asylum statuses and to the extent of heterogeneity apparent across contemporary labour markets in Europe. SIRIUS understands the labour market integration of MRAAs as being dependent on a pattern of concurring circumstances and features located at different analytical levels: at the macro (state, sub-state and supra-state), at the meso (intra-societal), and at the micro (individual) levels. In this policy brief we present evidence about the ‘macro’ dimensions of integration by assessing how far legal and institutional frameworks of migration and asylum as well as labour law work as enablers or obstructers of post-2014 MRAAs integration in European labour markets.

**Research data:** Our research focuses on policies in seven European countries, namely the Czech Republic, Denmark, Greece, Finland, Italy, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. Besides these we also focus on EU political arenas. Our research is based on the comparative analysis (1) of the political, legal and institutional context of migration governance, integrated with critical insights on the cultural and socio-economic environment of the SIRIUS countries, and (2) of the different legal status, rights, and entitlements of migrants, refugees and asylum applicants in the SIRIUS countries.

**Findings:** MRAAs integration heavily depends from the country they settle in and from the legal status that is recognized to them. The comparative analysis has delivered five main findings as regards **barriers** to labour market integration: (1) deep unevenness among Sirius countries as regards MRAAs related legislation and their rights and entitlements in the policy-domain of labour (results: making it difficult to understand who has the right to do what, when, how and where in Europe; favouring secondary movements); (2) complexity of the legal frameworks, fragmentation and multiplicity of entities involved in migration management and in favouring access to labour markets (results: landscape difficult to navigate and subject to sudden and continuous changes); (3) a broadened discretionary power of almost every single actor involved in the governance of the phenomenon (results: violation of the axiom of the certainty and predictability of law and segregating MRAAs in a legal limbo); (4) narrowing of the access to both international protection and legal entry for working reasons (results: more undocumented migrants, more informal working conditions); (5) creation of a hierarchy in terms of access to rights and in terms of capacity and opportunity of integration (results: creation of legal peripheries). Four are the main findings concerning the **enablers** of MRAs integration: (a) the vivid intervention of NGOs; (b) courts often grant remedies to those whose rights have been violated; (c) regional and international obligations are still enablers providing for granted statuses; (d) legal statuses enable people to become full members of the host societies and to contribute to the overall well-being of those societies.

**Recommendations:** Our main recommendations are (1) better evidence-based harmonization and coordination of countries’ asylum and immigration policies and laws; (2) simplification and stability of national legal frameworks on migration and asylum and immigration regulated mainly through primary legislation, which is subject to the democratic control of Parliaments, and not through secondary legislation; (3) encouraged, but well coordinated, collaboration between the public and the private sector, especially NGOs and non-profit associations; (4) effective guarantee of MRAs fundamental human rights and policies that actually favour legal immigration also for economic reasons; (5) widening the access to refugee and beneficiary of subsidiary protection statuses or enlarging rights and benefits connected with other statuses; (6) lowering the barriers that prevent MRAAs to work as nationals do (improving language skills, recognizing skills and qualifications, providing vocational training and education, granting unemployment benefits, the right to self-employment and to work in the public sector).