

PR3: Online Survey Research

# FINAL REPORT



Co-funded by  
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# INTRODUCTION

Integration, Counselling and Upskilling of Migrants and Refugees from Latin America and the Caribbean into the Labour Market, also known as **InteLACMarket**, is a project co-funded by the European Union under the Erasmus+ programme. Its main objective is to help people of Latin American and Caribbean origin arriving in Europe in their inclusion in the European labour market, through the development of soft skills.

The inclusion of migrants in the labour market is crucial for their effective integration and contributes to Member States' economies. The project aims to tackle the challenge of integrating migrants and refugees from Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) into the European labour market by bringing together experienced partners and academia and promoting a network of cooperation from countries that are amongst the most affected. To achieve this, the project aims to develop and pilot research-based educational training, as well as guidance and counselling for refugees and migrants from LAC countries to develop their potential to become active and productive members of society.



# Online Survey Research

One of the results that are part of IntelLACMarket is a survey aimed at its target group, namely people from Latin America and the Caribbean living on the European continent, with the intention of finding out directly about the challenges, opportunities and obstacles they may face, as well as their current employment situation and education.

The aim of this project outcome is to acquire information directly from the target groups, having their opinions, thoughts and needs at the centre of the study and throughout the development of the project.

While the questionnaire is intended for all LAC migrants and refugees in Europe, the consortium has focused primarily on the countries from which the various partners originate (Spain, Austria, Belgium and Italy), with a special emphasis on the Iberian country as the main destination of the survey's target audience. The questionnaire, composed of a total of 74 questions, is available in five languages (English, Spanish, German, French and Italian). The data presented in this report was collected between April and July 2023, collecting a total of 435 responses, although this is not the total number of answers for each question. The questionnaire can be found here

<https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/eb3f543e-ce79-1948-a2f8-6bcf457c8b18>

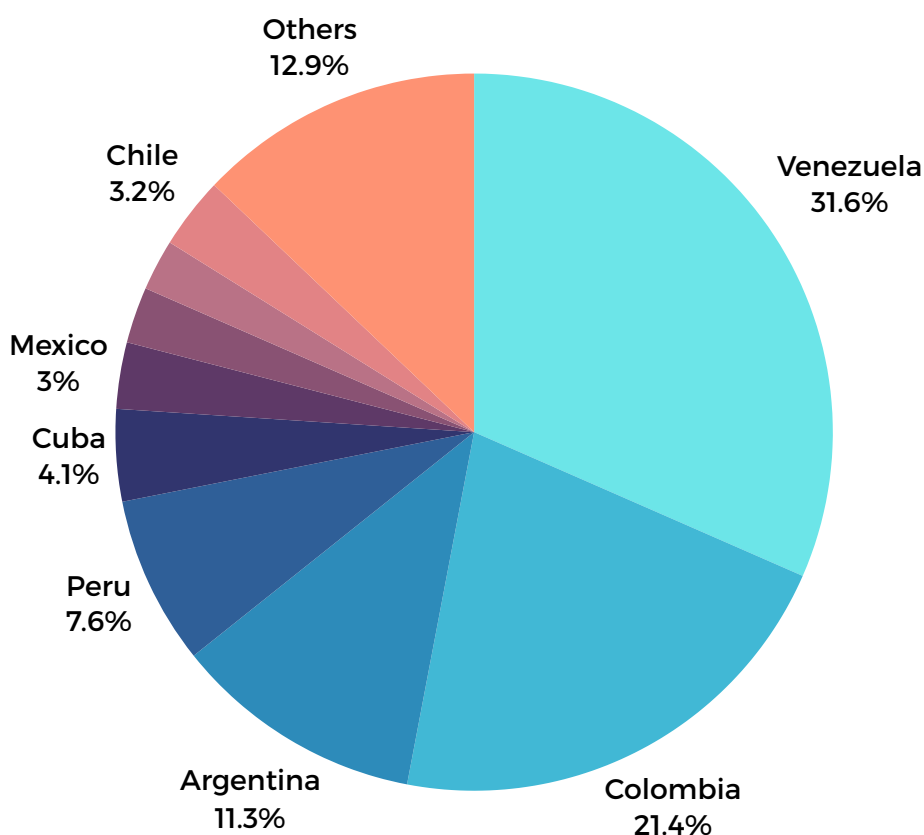


# SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

As mentioned above, although the survey was distributed among the different project member countries, the consortium focused on Spain as the main entry route to Europe for migrants and refugees from LAC, as well as their main destination. **It is therefore not surprising that almost three-quarters of the responses were sent by residents of Spain (320 out of 435), while Austria collected 13%, Belgium 8%, and Italy 4%.**

In terms of country of origin, **Venezuela** has emerged as the main exporting country for these respondents (31.6% of the total), which is in line with official statistics from European countries, which show a strong upward trend in the number of Venezuelans arriving on the continent in recent years.

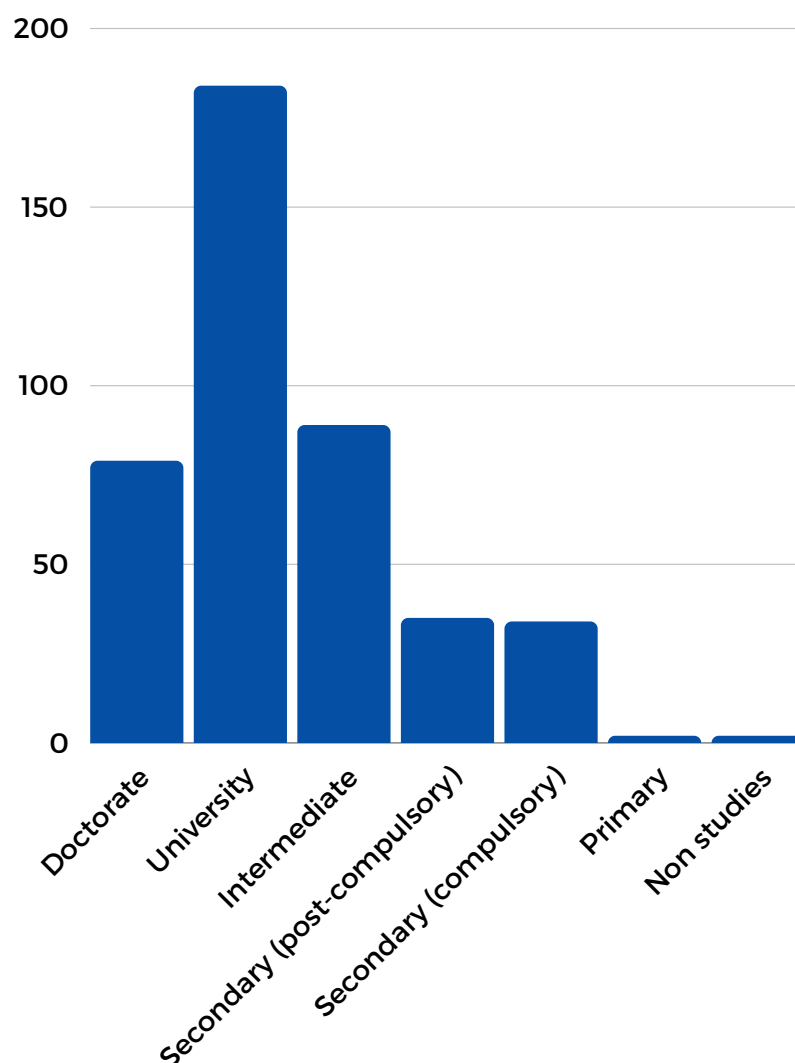
**Colombians (21.6%) and Argentines (11.3%)** also make up a large number of the responses obtained, followed by **Peruvians (7.6%), Cubans (4.1%) and Chileans (3.2%)**. Other countries that also participated in the questionnaire were **Mexico, Nicaragua, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Paraguay, El Salvador, Guatemala, Bolivia, Honduras, Brazil, Haiti and Uruguay.**



To begin to understand the profile of the respondents, it is worth noting the large gender bias, with more than two-thirds of the responses coming from women (69.6%), leaving male participants at a meagre 30.4%. This is perhaps due to the fact that women may be more in contact or more involved with the different associations and entities that the consortium reached to carry out the questionnaire, reflecting a trend that is part of the feminisation of Latin American migration, a phenomenon that has been gaining relevance in recent decades.

When asked about their age, the range of responses extended to the group of octogenarians, although the average age of respondents is 41 years old. On the other hand, the most repeated age range is 25-34 years (30.3%), closely followed by the later decade of 35-44 years (28.6%).

**The educational level of those surveyed is remarkably high, with 43.3% having obtained some type of university studies, and another 18.5% have gone further, achieving a doctorate, which results well above the national average in the host countries.** On the other hand, 21% opted to pursue some form of vocational or intermediate training, and 8.2% continued with post-compulsory secondary education. Only 8% stopped after completing compulsory education, and the percentage of people who did not reach this level of studies is less than 1%.



Logically, the vast majority obtained their degrees in their countries of origin (72.2%), while almost a quarter (24.9%) did so in their current host country. The rest of the participants obtained their degrees in a third country, whether it was an EU country or not.

The problem of accreditations is a major barrier for migrants arriving from LAC countries to Europe, as shown by the fact that 56% of them have not been able to get their qualifications accredited, which prevents them from applying for jobs for which they are qualified, as opposed to the 26% who were able to do so. One in six people surveyed is still in the process of regularizing their studies in the host country.

Finally, no surprises were found with regard to marital status, since the vast majority declared themselves to be single (47.9%) or married (42%); only 8.9% of respondents reported themselves to be divorced, while the number of widowers was negligible (5 responses).

The most common in these cases is to live with the partner, either without children (36.3%) or with them (25%); in a few cases (4%), the partner even lives with other adults in the same dwelling. Those migrants who do not live with their partner choose to live with other adults or live independently (17% in both cases). On the other hand, 46% of people recognize that they live with dependents, who are usually minors in two out of three cases.

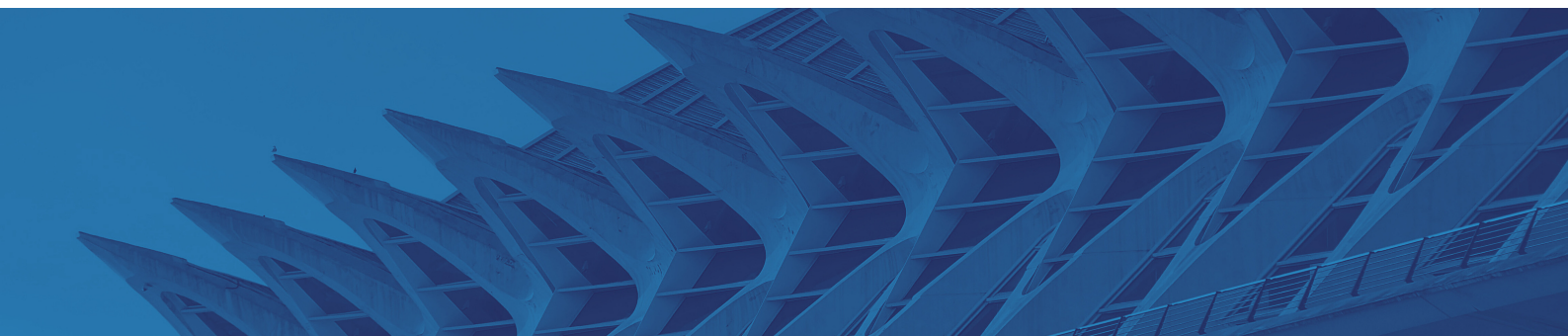
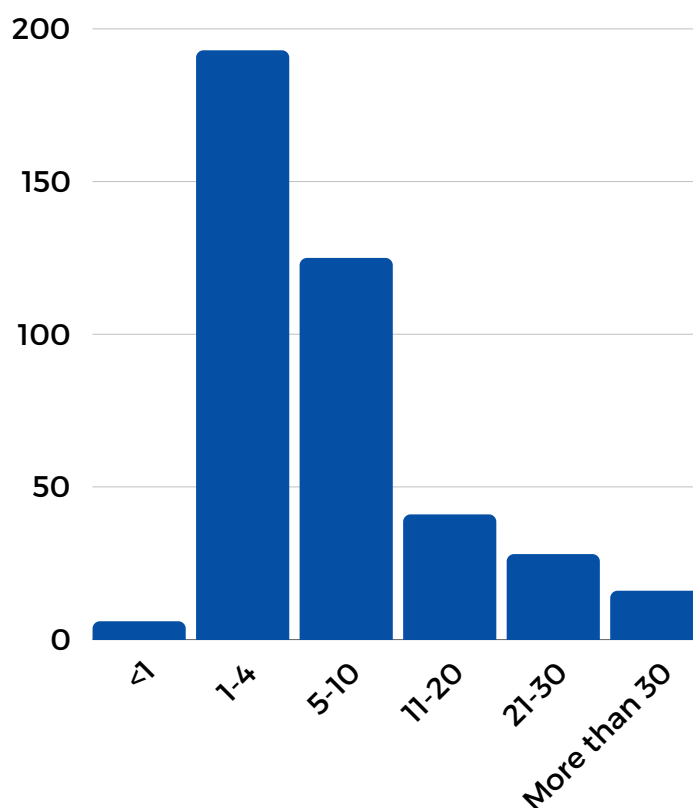


# MIGRATION PROCESS

As mentioned in the previous section, almost two-thirds of the respondents come from Venezuela, Colombia and Argentina, although responses were collected from almost all Latin American and Caribbean countries.

Although the average length of time they have lived in their current country of residence is 8 years, almost 80% of respondents have not yet reached a decade in their current country of residence; in fact, half of the respondents have not even been living in their respective countries for 5 years. Yet this average is largely due to a small number of migrants who have significantly exceeded this time. One in ten people have more than 20 years of residence, with a small group of 5 people (1.2%) having reached half a century living in their current country of residence.

If we look at this information according to country of residence, there are notable differences. While the vast majority of respondents residing in Spain have been living in that country for an average of 6.31 years, this number increases in the other countries, being 10.55 years in Austria, 12.89 years in Belgium, and a surprising 21.06 years in Italy. This data can be justified by the fact that Spain is the main country of entry of migrants from LAC, for linguistic and cultural reasons, and the increase in their arrival in recent years causes this 'rejuvenation' of Latin American migration in Spain.



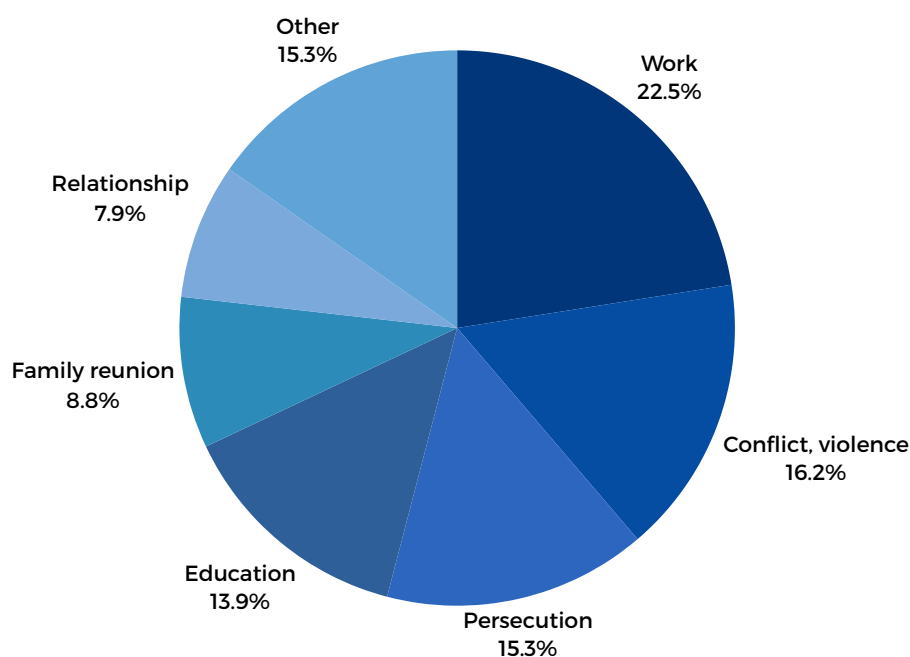
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Sometimes the migration process can be very lonely, as was the case for 43% of the respondents, who acknowledge that they did it on their own and without support from anyone. However, this is not the main group, as another 46% say they were accompanied by family members with whom they already lived. These two situations make up the vast majority of the cases received; however, another 5% claimed to have relied on family members with whom they did not live together, while the others did so with acquaintances (3%) or others (2%). When asked about their current migratory status, 44% of the responses were from foreign residents, while 25% already have a European nationality, either from their current country of residence or from any other country. One of the most common reasons for migrating is education, and this seems to have been the case for 6% of those who admitted to being foreign students, while temporary workers barely exceed 2%. Of the more than 400 responses to this question, 16% were asylum seekers; of this group, 38% claimed to have obtained refugee status, while the same percentage applies to those who have not yet received a response from the public administration. Finally, 23% of asylum seekers have had their applications rejected, joining the small group of irregular migrants (2%).





The reasons why people are forced to migrate from their country can be very diverse, as evidenced by the answers given to this questionnaire, but the most repeated was the lack of job opportunities (22.5%), followed by conflict and violence in the country of origin (16%), and persecution for political reasons (15%). Other top reasons were education (14%) and being able to reunite with their family in the host country (9%). Although it was not one of the options offered, it is noteworthy that a considerable number of participants acknowledge having migrated because of persecution and discrimination suffered as a result of belonging to the LGTB collective.



**The process of regularization of a migrant can be long and tedious, although sometimes they arrive in the country with the documentation in order; this is the case of 13.4% of respondents who arrived with a student visa, or 5.5% who arrived with a work visa. For those who have tried to regularize their status once they have arrived in the host country, the situation is different.** Thirty-three per cent claimed to have succeeded within one year, although another 9% extended the process for a second year, and 10% did so for a third year. In addition, 11% needed more than three years to regularize their situation. When questioned about the difficulty of this process, 45% found it difficult or very difficult, while only 18.8% thought the procedure was easy or very easy. Being a member of a group, association or organization can be useful for adapting more quickly to a new place and thus expanding the social network of the emigrant. However, when asked about this, two out of three respondents said that they do not belong to any organization. Of the remaining third, and considering that some of them belong to more than one organization, 47.8% are part of some recreational association, such as sports, music or cultural associations. Of the remaining third, 33% are members of trade unions, and migrant or women's groups, while 24.2% are members of religious associations. Finally, only 8.8% are involved in some kind of political party or group. Of all the associations explicitly mentioned, the Red Cross stands out as the main association to which these respondents belong.

The network of contacts that can be developed upon arrival in a different country can vary; on occasions, people seek to maintain contact with nationals with whom they share traditions and culture and thus remain linked to their country of origin, while on the other hand, there are those who seek to improve their adaptation to the host country by relating more with the local population. When asked about this, 57.9% stated that they regularly interact with both population groups, but there seems to be a greater tendency to interact mainly with locals (13.7%) than with nationals of the country of origin (7.9%). There are also those who interact with a more international and cosmopolitan group of people, with 15.5% of the responses indicating that they interact mainly with people from third countries. Finally, it is worth noting the 5% of migrants who say they do not maintain social relations with anyone, a factor that can negatively affect both their mental health and their employment options.



# LABOUR MARKET ISSUES

The Inclusion of immigrants in the labour market refers to the process of facilitating and encouraging the active participation of immigrants in the labour market of the receiving society, providing them with fair and equitable opportunities to access jobs and develop their skills and talents. In this section, we will see the results obtained in relation to this issue, which is in turn the main focus of the project.

32.9% of the participants in the study claim to be currently working as salaried employees, while 19.7% do so part-time, which means that just over half of the respondents are working, at least on a regular basis with an employment contract, as another 6% admit to doing so irregularly.

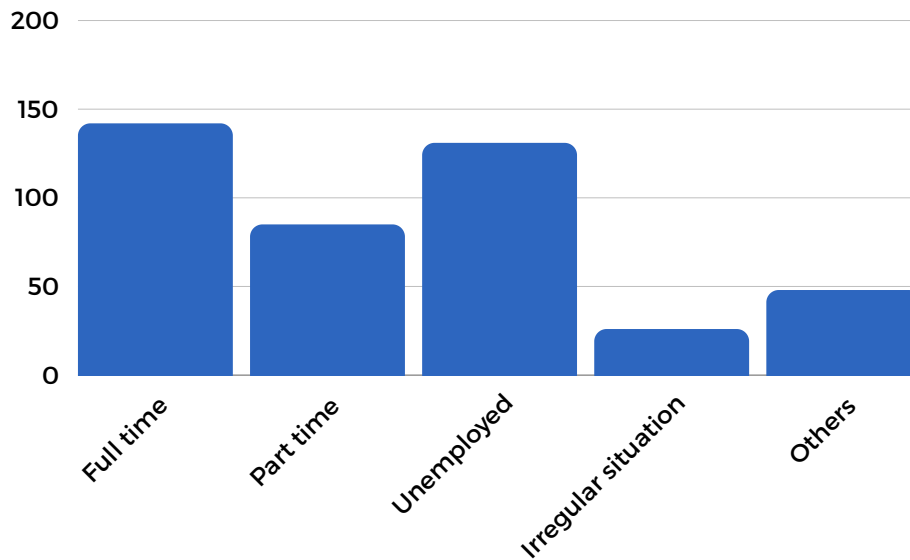
The population that declares itself unemployed exceeds 30%, to which must be added those who have already reached retirement (2.8%), those who work unpaid (1.6%) and those who neither have nor are looking for paid employment (1.4%). The remaining 5% are mostly self-employed or students, although there are also cases of sick leave.

Focusing a little more on the type of contract held by those who are working, almost 70% of the responses come from salaried workers with a contract, while another 4.2% are without a contract. There are also those who are self-employed, either as freelancers (14%) or as entrepreneurs (3.5%), and those who work sporadically (7%) or simply as support for a family business, without a contract or remuneration (1.5%).

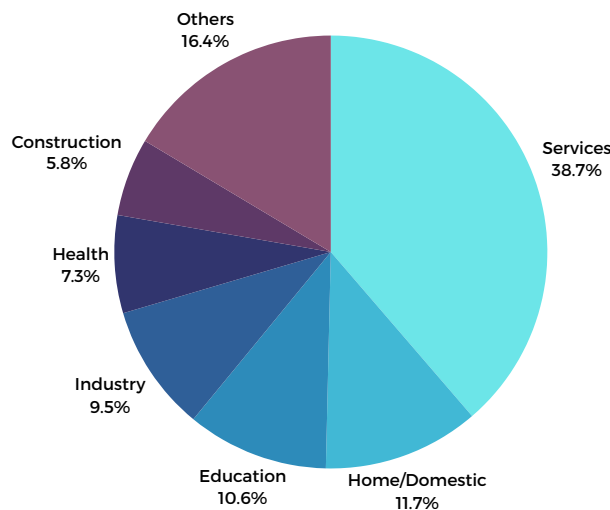
As for the number of hours worked per week, 52% report working between 20 and 40 hours, while 25.3% exceed that number. On the other hand, 7% work less than 10 hours per week, while 15.6% do not manage to work more than 20 hours.

Regardless of the worker's qualifications and experience, the difficulty of accessing the labour market tends to force the migrant to work in low-skilled jobs. This is consistent with the results of the study, as 48.7% of respondents state that their current job has absolutely nothing to do with their previous training and studies, while 25.5% and 24% state that it is partially or completely related, respectively.





In terms of sectors, 38.7% of workers say they work in the service sector, followed by domestic work (11.7%) and education (10.6%). Despite the crisis in the construction sector in recent years, almost 6% of those surveyed work there; a percentage similar to those in the health sector, but lower than in the industrial sector (9.5%).



The process of finding a job can be complicated, and the support or help that can be obtained to find a paid job is very important. However, 39.6% of respondents said they found a job on their own, while 22.2% found a job through online platforms, followed by those who had the support of family and friends (18.1%) or an organization (6.8%). On the other hand, there are those who did not need to look for a job upon arrival, because they arrived either with a signed contract (3%) or with a job offer (3.8%).

The time needed to find a job can vary greatly depending on a multitude of possible variables, such as contacts, qualifications or the employment situation in the host country. When asked about this, 31.4% needed more than a year to be able to start working, while 22.9% took less than a month. However, the most common period of time is between one and six months, which reaches 35.1%, while between six and twelve months corresponds to 20%.

# SOCIAL AND EMPLOYMENT INCLUSION PROCESS

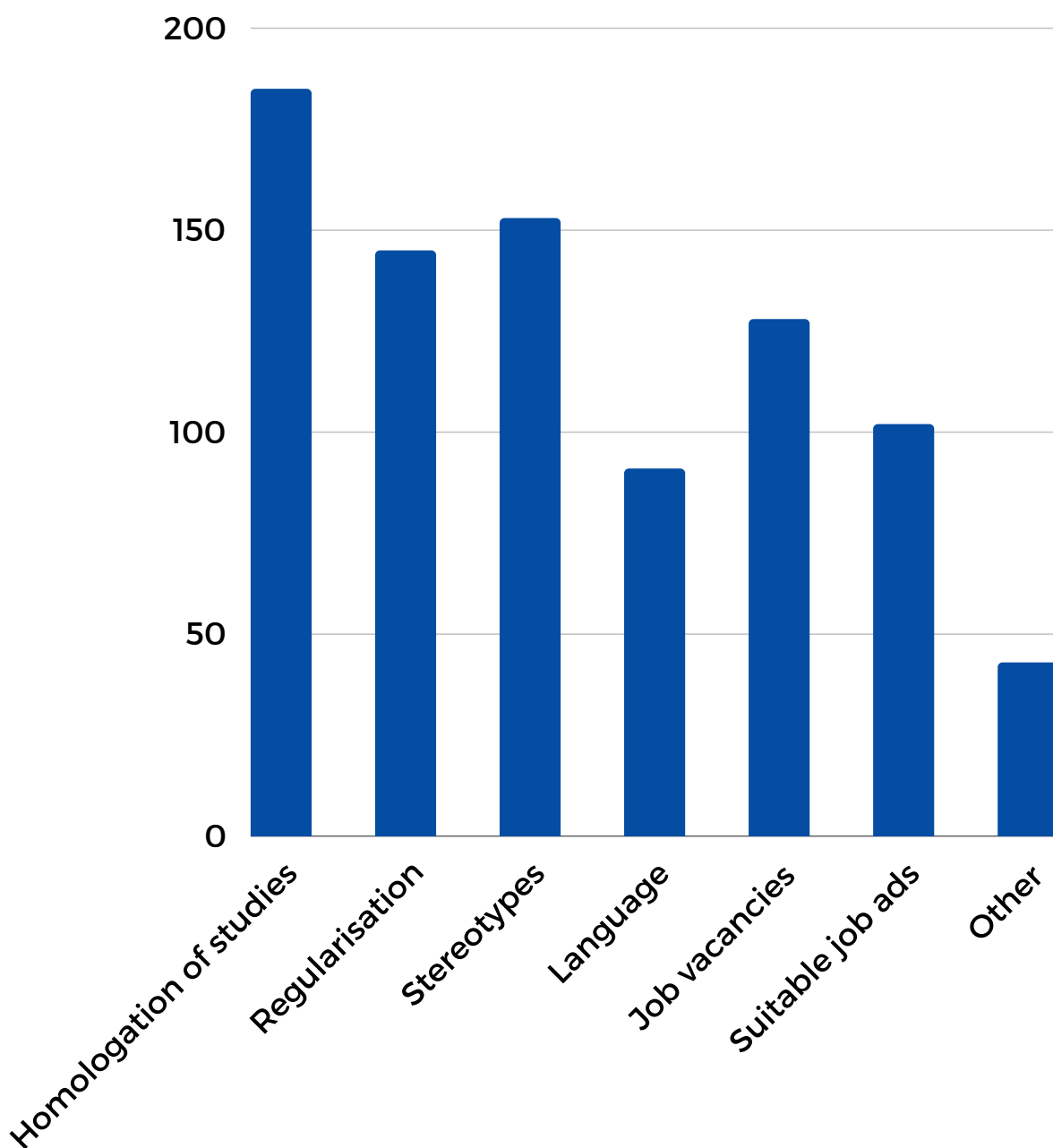
The process of adaptation and inclusion in a new society can be complicated, and migrants sometimes face harassment or discrimination based on their origin or culture. Although 36.6% of those surveyed stated that they had never suffered any type of discrimination, this figure indicates that a high percentage of those surveyed had been victims of some type of marginalization. The largest group is made up of those who have felt discriminated against "sometimes" in the process of accessing a job, with 38.9%, followed by those who have suffered discrimination on rare occasions (16.6%). Finally, 7.8% of the participants in the survey reported feeling "always" discriminated against during the job placement process.

Sometimes, one of the main barriers for an immigrant is linguistic; in the case of Latin American and Caribbean immigrants in Spain, this should not be the case, as indicated by the fact that 93.7% of residents in the Hispanic country speak the local language "well" or "very well"; in fact, more than 90% already spoke it when they arrived in the country. The percentage of migrants who speak the language of their host country drops to 72.6% when we talk about the rest of the consortium countries (Italy, Belgium and Austria), and barely 20% spoke it upon arrival.

The percentage of monolingual and bilingual respondents is practically the same (35.4% vs. 35.2%), but there is a considerable group that speaks at least three languages (29.4%), which indicates the willingness of this group to adapt to new places and acquire knowledge when necessary so that the language barrier should not be considered as such.



**When questioned about the main difficulties in accessing employment, the responses were very diverse and there is no obvious main factor. The homologation of studies is the most prominent, with 21.8% of responses, closely followed by stereotypes/prejudice (18.1%) and regularization of residential status (17.1%). Another relevant factor is that of labour supply, which is the main problem for one in seven respondents. Of the options provided, the least important seem to be the language barrier (10.7%) and the lack of suitable job advertisements (12%). Some respondents mention especially the discrimination they suffer when they reach a certain age, and the issue of experience, either because of a shortage or because companies do not value the experience they have.**



# SUPPORT FOR LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION

There are various institutions that offer their help to those who are in the midst of a job search, with more or less success, but 29.3% of the responses were from people who said they had not received any help from anyone. On the other hand, one out of three people who did receive some kind of support got it from family and friends, while public employment services were also very active in this regard (30.4% of the responses).

We also found that the many existing NGOs have been helpful in finding work, as they have helped 15.4% of respondents. Finally, social services and religious organizations are the least helpful in the search for a job, with 9.5% and 6.2% respectively, perhaps because they mainly cover other types of assistance such as food, housing or education.

The type of support they have received has been mainly counselling (33%) and training (25.4%), although the social and emotional support offered by family and friends is also relevant (20%). On the other hand, mediation with companies and economic support were the services least offered by the different institutions, with 12.4% and 7.8%, respectively.

When rating these institutions, participants were asked to rate them from one to five, the latter being the highest score. Using this method, we can see that those who offered the best support were family and friends, with an average score of 3.9 out of 5, well ahead of public employment services (2.9), NGOs (2.7) and social services (2.6). Religious organizations came in last place, with a score of 2.2. When asked directly about public employment services, more than three-quarters stated that they had been helpful in their job search.

In terms of the shortcomings they have found in the support and help received to find a job, job search stands out notably (26%) as the main aspect to be improved. The remaining options, such as training, work permit procedures and regularization of their situation in the country, are at fairly similar levels, at around 20% each. Finally, support at the time of arrival in the host country seems to be the aspect least in need of improvement, with only 9% considering that they had a lack of support in this area.



Despite the different types of support offered by public institutions in the various countries where the project and therefore the survey is being carried out, more than 50% of participants say that they have never received any type of support from the public administration. On the other hand, unemployment benefits tend to be the most common type of assistance, with 22.8% of respondents having received it, ahead of food subsidies (14%) and housing (6.5%).

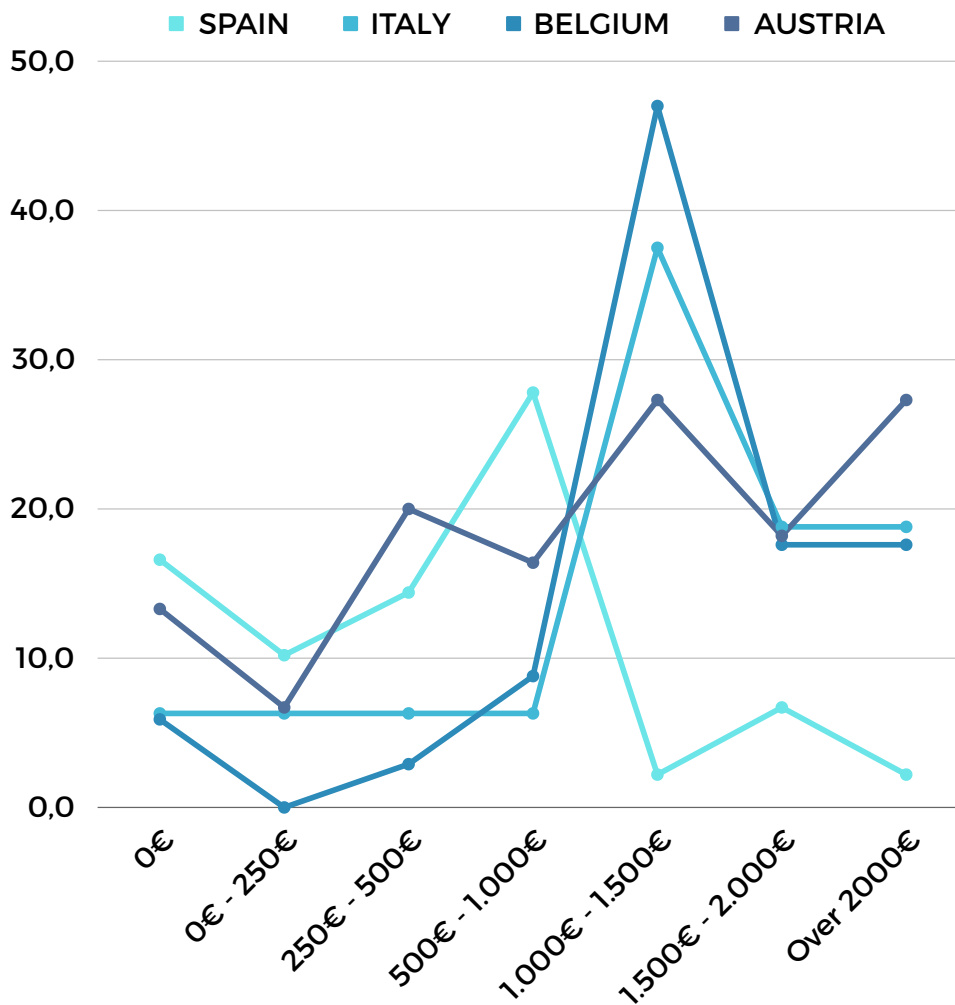
When evaluating salaries, it is clear that an important factor is the economy of the host country, which is why it is most useful to see the results obtained in each of them. In the case of Belgium, for example, the range between €1,000 and €1,499 clearly stands out, with 47% of respondents in that country; although it is also the most repeated range in Italy (37.5%) and Austria (27.3%), they do not reach such a high percentage. If we look for an income above 1,500 euros, we find that almost half (45.5%) of migrants living in Austria reach it, followed by those living in Belgium (37.6%) and Italy (35.2%); in Spain, this figure is a dream that is only within the reach of 8.9% of respondents. In fact, the most repeated scale in Spain is between €500 and €999, with 27.8% of responses, followed by those who declare having no income at all (16.6%). This marks a clear difference between the Iberian country and the rest of the consortium.

In most cases, the main source of this income comes from the respondents' own salary (60%), followed by family support (12.4%), either from the home or host country, and the social benefits they receive (11.5%).

When asked about their future intentions regarding residence, an overwhelming 85.5% of people say they want to stay in their current host country, as opposed to 10.5% who want to emigrate to another country; only 4% of survey participants say they want to return to their country of origin.







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Despite the resources offered to help this population, the responses provided in relation to the need for educational materials to promote labour market inclusion show a number of recurrent themes and concerns on the part of immigrants:



- **Homologation:** Many immigrants mention the need for homologation or validation of their educational qualifications in order for them to be recognised in the host country.
- **Language learning:** Learning languages, especially local ones, such as Catalan or German, is essential for integration into the labour market.
- **Specific training:** Immigrants often seek specific training in fields related to their studies or interests. This includes refresher courses, certificates of professionalism and practical training in companies.
- **Access to job opportunities:** Migrants want to have access to job opportunities and internships that allow them to gain work experience.
- **Financial support:** Financial assistance to cover training and living costs while studying is a recurring theme. Some also mention the need for paid employment during training.
- **Job counselling and guidance:** Migrants seek support in job search, creating CVs, preparing for interviews and understanding the local labour market.
- **Recognition of work experience:** Many migrants have work experience in their countries of origin and want this experience to be valued and recognised in the host country.
- **Cultural integration:** Training related to cultural integration and understanding the customs and society of the host country is also mentioned as important for labour market inclusion.
- **Flexibility in courses:** Migrants often request online courses, flexible schedules and courses that suit their personal needs and circumstances.
- **Government and policy support:** Many mention the need for more inclusive government policies, support for migrants and greater visibility in the labour market.



# EMPLOYMENT SURVEY

The meaning of work for Latin American immigrants in Europe is profoundly diverse and multifaceted, reflecting an amalgam of personal motivations, economic needs and work experiences. Through their responses, a range of perspectives on work emerges, from viewing it as a simple commercial exchange of services for money to seeing it as an opportunity for self-fulfilment and social contribution.

For many, work is an essential means of maintaining a dignified life, satisfying basic needs and enabling economic stability for themselves and their families. In addition, the importance of professional specialization and personal growth is emphasized, considering work as an opportunity to develop skills, demonstrate competencies and achieve personal and professional goals. However, not all perspectives are positive, as some also express frustration at the lack of recognition and exploitation at work.

Work is also perceived as a contribution to society and the economy, where knowledge and services are exchanged for financial reward. Some mention the need to balance work with personal life and to find satisfaction in performing meaningful tasks. In addition, challenges such as the difficulty of finding suitable employment and finding a job that aligns with vocation and skills are explored.

Overall, these responses highlight how work is not only a source of income but also a means for personal fulfilment, professional development and contribution to society. Work occupies a central place in the lives of Latin American immigrants in Europe, and their perceptions of it reflect both the complexities of the labour market and individual aspirations in search of a dignified and meaningful life in their new homeland.

When asked specifically about decent work, respondents defined it in a variety of ways, but there is a common thread: it involves respect for human and labour rights, as well as fair remuneration for services rendered. Fairness and equal treatment are fundamental values in the definition of decent work, and employers are expected to respect diversity and not discriminate on the basis of factors such as gender, religion or nationality.

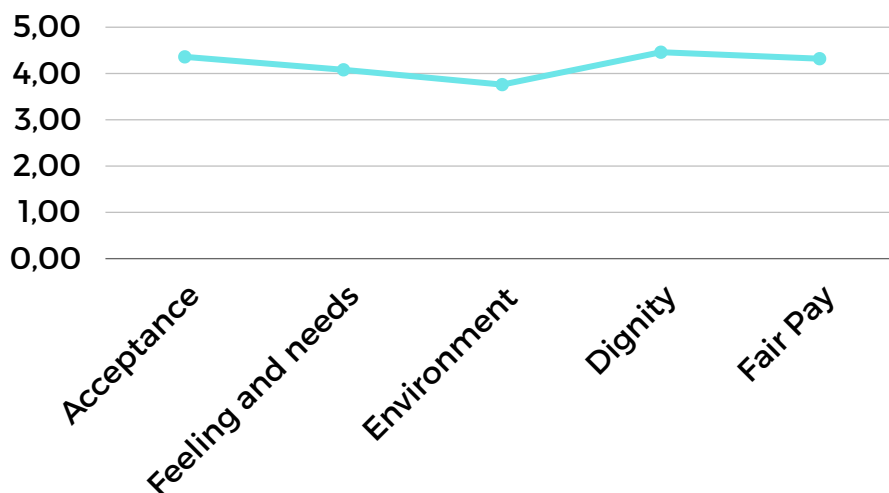
Adequate and respectful remuneration is an essential component of decent work. Respondents emphasize that a fair wage, which complies with labour laws and reflects the value of the tasks performed, is a crucial part of ensuring workers' dignity. In addition, job stability and recognition of labour rights, such as personal days and vacations, are considered essential for dignified work.

The work environment is also an important concern. Respondents mention the importance of a healthy environment both physically and psychologically. This includes safe and healthy conditions in the workplace, as well as respect and appreciation of individual capabilities and contributions. Some respondents also emphasize the importance of training and the tools needed to perform tasks effectively.

**Work-life balance is another fundamental aspect of decent work.**

Respondents seek an adequate balance between work and family life, as well as sufficient time off and breaks to preserve mental and physical health. In summary, the responses reflect that for Latin American immigrants in Europe, a decent job is one that offers fair remuneration, respectful treatment, compliance with labour rights, a safe and healthy environment, and the possibility of reconciling work and personal life. This definition highlights the importance of guaranteeing working conditions that value the dignity and fundamental rights of workers.

The survey includes a series of statements on some important aspects of the job, assessing the extent to which the worker must accept certain aspects in order to have the job, and showing their agreement (1 for strongly disagree; 5 for strongly agree). In short, what workers are not willing to give up in a job is dignity (4.46), not being discriminated against because of who they are (4.36) and a fair wage (4.32). The right to express oneself freely is also rated highly (4.19), higher than respect for the feelings and needs of employees (4.08). Lastly, the issue given the lowest priority by respondents is that the products created and offered by the company should be environmentally friendly, with a score of just 3.76 on the scale.



# CONCLUSIONS

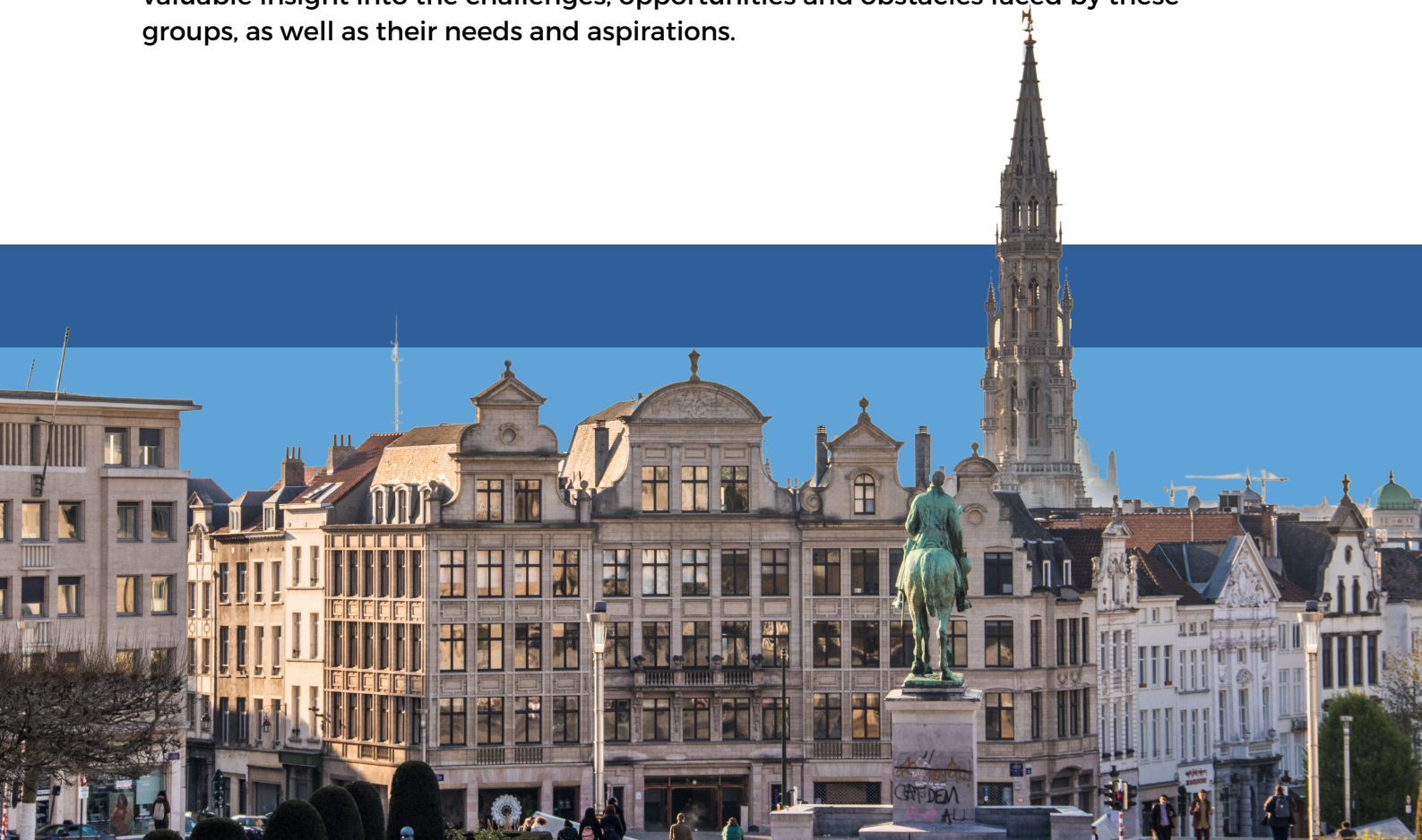
The online survey conducted as part of the project provided valuable information on the challenges, opportunities and obstacles faced by these groups, as well as their needs and thoughts.

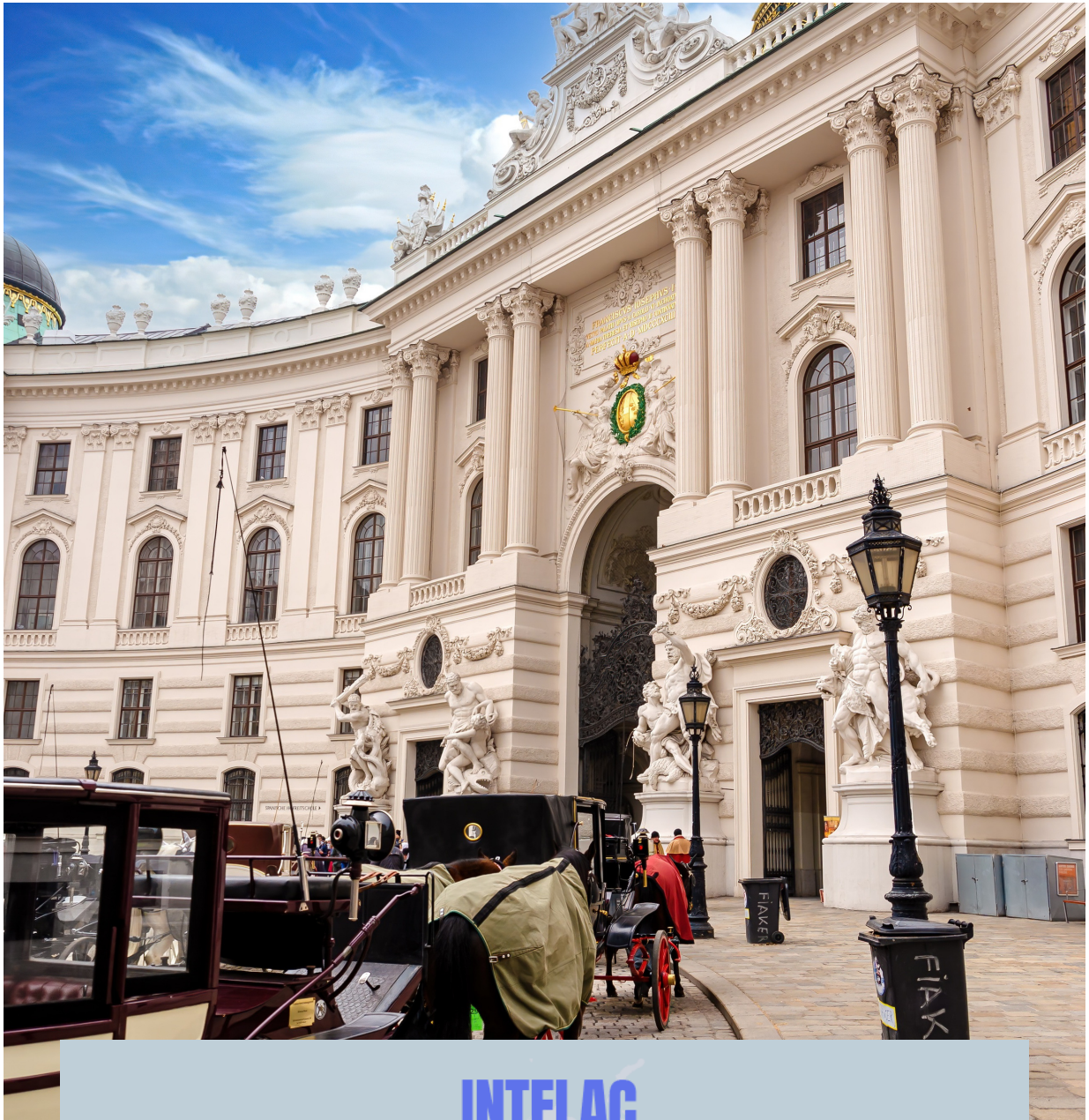
The average profile of the respondent is a female resident in Spain, aged 25-54, with higher education in her country of origin, who intends to stay in her host country.

Among the most salient results of the survey, it was found that just over half of the respondents are working on a regular basis, mainly in the service sector, while another significant percentage is working irregularly. However, beyond these figures, it is important to highlight that the value that respondents attach to their work goes beyond mere occupation; they underline the importance of dignity at work, non-discrimination based on their origin, and the perception of a fair wage as essential aspects of their work experience.

Finally, these immigrants face a wide variety of problems and situations in order to enter the labour market. According to the results, they are particularly concerned about the difficulty of accrediting the studies carried out in their countries of origin, and demand greater and more flexible access to different training courses that allow them to improve their skills, both technical and theoretical.

In conclusion, this study highlights the crucial importance of the inclusion of migrants in the labour market not only as a means for their effective integration into the host society but also as a fundamental pillar in the economic growth and prosperity of Member States. The online survey carried out in the framework of this project provided valuable insight into the challenges, opportunities and obstacles faced by these groups, as well as their needs and aspirations.





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