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# Policy recommendations

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## 1 Introduction

The **MIMY** project (*EMpowerment through Liquid Integration of Migrant Youth in vulnerable conditions*) investigates the integration processes of non-EU young adult migrants who find themselves in vulnerable conditions. MIMY is a comparative, interdisciplinary research project which aims to empower young non-EU migrants. Using an innovative mixed-methods research design and an original theoretical framework at the intersection of liquid integration, resilience, and vulnerability, MIMY aims to contribute to integration studies with new data and an innovative perspective on the phenomenon of migrant youth integration.

This policy brief presents policy implications and recommendations based on MIMY's first year findings addressing European policymakers in the field of migrant integration and youth. The findings of this first stage of the project include an extensive overview of previous academic literature on migrant youth integration and the development of the concept of 'liquid integration', an overview of statistical data on young migrants in vulnerable conditions in the EU and an analyses of integration policies and opportunity structures targeting young migrants in the EU. Elaborating the implications of these results, this brief aims to facilitate evidence-based policymaking.

Policy recommendations on integration policies often focus on "migrants" as a general category, neglecting to account for different age groups, as well as other differences (such as gender, coming from diverse regions of origin, potential conditions of vulnerability), which may strongly influence the integration process. The MIMY project focuses on **young non-EU migrants** (18-29) as they represent a unique and important group of migrants. Young migrants are a dynamic part of European societies by counteracting the ageing population in Europe (COM, 2016), but this is also a group at high risk to be exposed to exclusionary practices (due to impact of legal status, health, gender, sexuality, ethnic group, and areas of exclusion in the labour market, education, political participation). These young people not only face the critical life stage of transition to adulthood proper of youth, when identity, attitudes, aims and ambitions are developed, but also the migration-related transition into the host country. For example, a disruption of the "school-to-work pathway" can lead to exclusion of young persons with long-term effects at the individual and societal level but for a young migrant employment is also essential as it positively influences well-being and attachment to the new place and host country. Also, lengthy waiting procedures and being in limbo when applying for international protection, negatively impact mental health and well-being (COM, 2016; Skrobánek and Jost, 2019). Therefore, studying the integration of young migrants in vulnerable conditions is highly relevant.

Considering the current COVID-19 pandemic, it becomes even more important for research **to provide evidence-based policy recommendations** to improve the situation of young non-EU migrants in Europe. The various challenges and vulnerabilities young third-country nationals (TCNs) face in Europe have been exacerbated by the ongoing **COVID-19 pandemic** (EU, 2020). Migrants health vulnerabilities are often related to their socio-economic status, limited access to services (esp. health), often living in overcrowded accommodations, and facing linguistic barriers (IOM, 2020). The **holistic and migrant-centered approach** of MIMY is well suited to explore these complex relationships, for example by considering the interconnections of different integration services (e.g. legal status, employment, education, housing and health). Therefore, this policy brief represents a crucial step to fulfill MIMY's strong commitment to support the integration and well-being of young non-EU migrants living in vulnerable conditions.

## 2 MIMY in a nutshell

MIMY is an EU-funded project, involving 14 partners and aiming to improve the situation of young migrants who find themselves in vulnerable conditions throughout Europe. Specifically, MIMY sets out to investigate young non-EU migrants' integration processes across 18 case studies, two in each of the nine countries involved in the consortium (Germany, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Poland, Romania,

Sweden, and the UK). To derive evidence-based policy recommendations, we examine the effectiveness of integration policies in an interdisciplinary research endeavour. Most importantly, MIMY will put the experiences of young migrants at the centre of its activities by directly involving them as peer researchers, as well as participants in several research activities.

#### Central research question:

Theoretically, the research project centres around the concept of **liquid integration** by suggesting a dynamic and multi-dimensional perspective on integration. The concept underlines that integration is a process of continuous mutual changes and adjustments of individual and institutional practices and actions, which should be simultaneously analysed. The integration processes of any young migrant must be examined in its connection with the other people in the local context with whom that person interacts (or not), the systems of services the young person has access to (or not), the wider systems of policies, laws, and institutions that regulate the life paths and experiences of a young migrant.

Guided by this approach, the research project aims to answer the following central concern:

***How can the liquid integration processes of young migrants (especially in the age of 18 to 29 years) in vulnerable conditions be supported, increasing the social and economic benefits of and for young migrants in Europe?***

During this three-years project (February 2020- January 2022) MIMY applies a step-by-step research design. First, **desk research** and **literature review** provide further insights on integration of young migrants and the theoretical understanding of MIMY - the concept of liquid integration - is elaborated. Second, a '**contextual description**' which includes both a **statistical overview** of youth migration and its consequences in Europe and an examination of **policy and opportunity structures** for young migrants in the MIMY's countries of focus based on **secondary data analysis**. Third, **empirical research** in 18 case studies (interviews, focus groups, participatory action research and Delphi study with stakeholders) explores integration processes at the local level by involving the young local population, practitioners and local and national stakeholders, and young migrants as research participants and peer researchers to foster well-being and active participation. Fourth, we will synthesis our findings, establish synergies and provide evidence-based policy recommendations and present promising practices.

The **National Expert Committees**, the **stakeholder platform**, and the **Delphi study** enable direct involvement of national and local stakeholders. Also, migrant youth is directly involved in the project in different ways: Peer Researchers actively participate in the empirical research and reflect on these experiences through the creation of blog posts, the Migrant Youth research and policy Network (MYN) gathers to discuss youth and migration policy making and comments, reflects on and help disseminate MIMY results.

At the end, the project publishes a **Synthesis Report** and a **Handbook on promising integrative practices** based on evidence from empirical research. These documents aim to support policymakers and practitioners at the EU, national and local level to set up innovative actions and strategies in the field of migrant youth integration in Europe.

### 3 Policy recommendations

The project aims at delivering evidence-based policy recommendations addressing the EU, national and local level. At the end of the project a **Handbook on promising integrative practices** will be produced based on evidence from interviews, focus groups, participatory action research and Delphi study involving stakeholders, practitioners, young adult migrants and migrants from the previous generation and local population.

The current policy recommendations are based on the first MIMY results. Therefore, these first recommendations focus on the concept of integration and include critical reflections on the

understanding of the term integration and offer a liquid approach instead– by accepting that integration is a process of continuous changes and adjustments. The interlinkages between integration, vulnerability, and resilience are explored and offer specific recommendations to policymakers. Additionally, the recommendations address issues on the availability and accessibility of statistical data (macro-level) and vulnerabilities TCNs might encounter from an individual perspective according to data from the European Social Survey (micro-level).

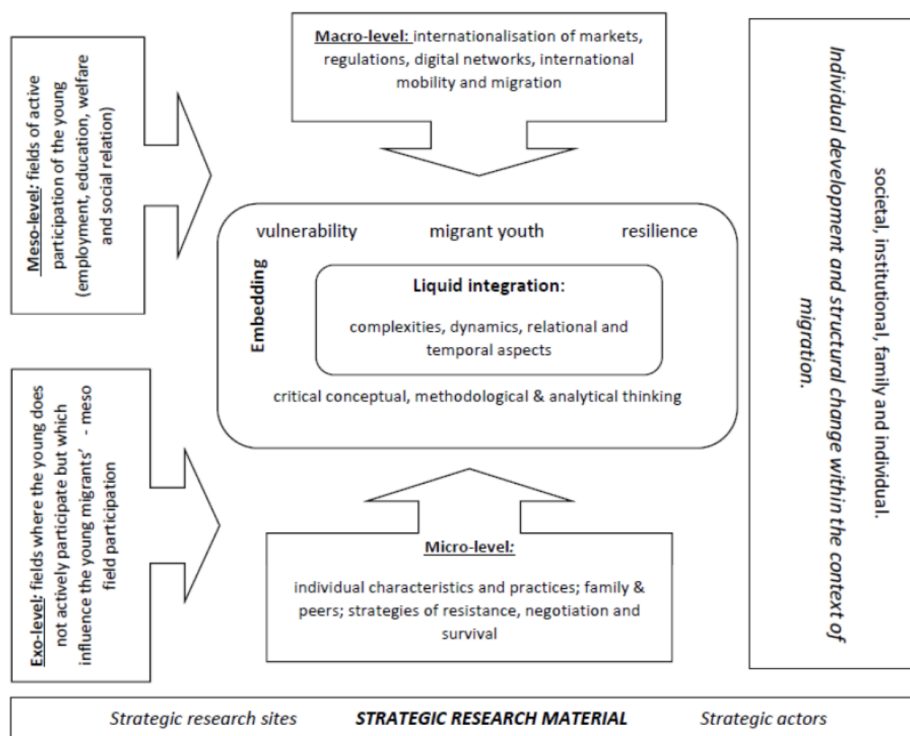
### 3.1 Policy recommendations based on the conceptual framework

#### Concept and methodological ground of MIMY

The **liquid integration** concept suggests that the integration of young migrants should not be understood as a start-end process and instead highlights the **constant changes and adjustments** on an individual and institutional level. Interactions at different levels and individual practices of young migrants in vulnerable conditions are influenced by the spatial, social, structural and temporal contexts.

Therefore, MIMY suggests an **all-encompassing model** by embedding the perspectives of young migrants in a **micro, meso, exo** and **macro contexts**. Herewith, the micro-level focuses on the individual practices; the meso-level considers regional and local employment, education, welfare and social relation systems. The exo-level includes settings and structures that affect migrants from above without actively participating or influencing them (e.g. contemporary discourse, politics, extended family). The macro-level considers the broader settings of integration processes of young migrants: European and national migration policies and regulations, labour markets.

Infographic 1: Heuristic model of *MIMY* project



Source: MIMY Team's elaboration.

This multi-level approach aims to analyse the interplay of all levels to understand the adjustment of young migrants and their manoeuvring by recognising the dynamics and open nature of integration processes. MIMY also recognises the spatial dimension by including 18 different case study localities in 9 countries.

The following recommendations for policymakers active - in the various spheres of integration on EU, national and local level - emerged from our multifaceted MIMY consortium reflections and analysis:

- **The term integration should be used carefully** in political and public debates. Yet, it is also difficult to completely abolish it. Instead naming it “liquid integration” helps to highlight that it is an ever-changing dynamic process to foster open multifaced discussions.
- Based on MIMY’s theoretical insight we also suggest that integration should be conceived as a never-ending, contingent and dynamic process. In terms of integration policies, this implies that comprehensive integration frameworks should **involve all residents** and an **holistic approach** – ensuring intersectional cooperation between different services (between youth, health, employment etc.).
- MIMY recommends that local, national and EU **integration regimes should be more open to subjects of change** and take into account the perspective and social, economic and cultural capital of migrants by becoming more diverse by employing more non-EU migrants in the integration services on local, national, and EU level.
- We recommend policymakers and stakeholders to design more **integration programmes** and services specifically **targeting young migrants** as they face a **unique set of challenges** and uncertainties produced by their ‘double transition’ into the host country and into adulthood.
- **Time is central** to understanding the processes of integration. Integration processes evolve in all their complexity and are open in their direction and outcome. For young migrants, the time period can be especially difficult during their transition to adulthood while also having migrated to a new country. Long waiting times (e.g. for residence permits or diploma recognition) can have strong negative impacts in other areas of the migrants' lives. MIMY recommends that integration services should reduce waiting times for young migrants to help them adjust more easily in the beginning, and with that ensure easier access to enter the labour market and more long-term benefits.
- It is crucial to understand how factors affecting **vulnerability, resilience and integration are mutually interrelated**. MIMY recommends that pioneering policies and intersectional approaches directly targeting young migrants (e.g. offering free mental health services for migrants and increasing direct participation of young migrants in research and on a political level) can foster resilience and reduce the vulnerabilities of young migrants.
- Policymakers should consider that **local integration models** are significant, as a one-size-fits-all approach on the national level cannot address the local realities. It is essential to consider the specific geographical, demographic and cultural context on a local level. Even in countries with a very high number of immigrants, on municipality level high differences exist (e.g. differences between big and larger cities, suburbs and rural municipalities). Especially big cities become increasingly diverse. Earlier migration and globalisation led to transnationally linked communities (described as ‘**super-diversity**’ by Steven Vertovec). Policymakers should ensure that this **diversity** is also reflected on institutional level.
- **Focus on disability, traumas and mental disorders is missing**: The literature review of MIMY showed that disabilities, traumas, and mental disorders among young migrants are not yet in focus. Hence, further research is needed to strengthen the focus on the interplay of gender and inequality, but especially policies on disability, traumas and mental disorders in integrating young migrants in vulnerable conditions.

- MIMY suggests to policymakers to **include young migrants and their opinions** and experiences in the development of integration models and policies. By actively involving the beneficiaries, policymakers would ensure that integration policies address the needs of young migrants. MIMY also recommends that policymakers and policy users should recognise the **social, economic and cultural capital of migrants**. European initiatives and projects on migration should make sure migrants, and migration initiatives are represented.

## 3.2 Policy recommendations based on quantitative data

### A quantitative overview of youth migration in Europe

MIMY conducted an exploratory analysis of the availability and accessibility of statistical data on young migrants in vulnerable conditions<sup>3</sup>. The MIMY project selected the most relevant data depicting their demographic characteristics and some indicators pointing to their integration in the host societies (*age, gender, marital status, duration of stay, country of origin, reasons of migration, education level, labour market status and housing*). To gather the most accurate information on our target group and simultaneously assess data availability for this group, specific data requests were made by the MIMY partners in the consortium countries to the most relevant national data providers and institutions. The institutions were national statistical offices, and public authorities such as national agencies for migrants or international bodies' representatives (UNHCR, IOM).

In terms of **data collection** of third-country nationals in the EU, improvements have taken place, and several databases on a broader scale exist (e.g. MIPEX). Nevertheless, focusing on young adult non-EU migrants (18-29) in vulnerable conditions, the analysed existing data sets (EU or international databases and national sources in part directly collected through MIMY partners' exchanges with national organizations as data was not publicly available) showed that data is fragmented, partly missing/not collected and sometimes non-comparable between the different data providers. Several different international and national institutions collect data on similar immigrant groups, for various purposes (e.g. education or labour market integration, legal status etc.). Partly the data is not even digitalised and therefore making the statistical aggregation and data usage difficult. Additionally, depending on the country, access for researchers is also limited.

In order to make informed and evidence-based decisions, more **widely collected and harmonised data on non-EU young adult migrants at EU level** is needed. This leads to a **better monitoring and evaluation system on socio-economic indicators** of young non-EU migrants in the EU. This information is necessary to develop sound integration policies for young third-country nationals.

- We suggest that a **standardised approach** concerning data collection on young non-EU migrants should be initiated on a **European level** with clear instructions on what information should be collected and how (anonymously, digital and well-protected). More variables and indicators (especially for refugees, asylum seekers, stateless and unaccompanied minors), including age, gender, educational attainment level, employment rate, health, risk at poverty, should be **collected on national and local level** to give a more accurate picture of the position of young third-country nationals in the host society.
- To achieve this, we suggest establishing **partnerships** between different **data providers** – connecting data providers from local, regional, national and EU levels – to further improve the data collection and management. In some countries, data providers should make more efforts to **digitalising** the data collection process.

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<sup>3</sup> Focusing on refugees, asylum seekers, stateless and unaccompanied minors in the consortium countries of MIMY.

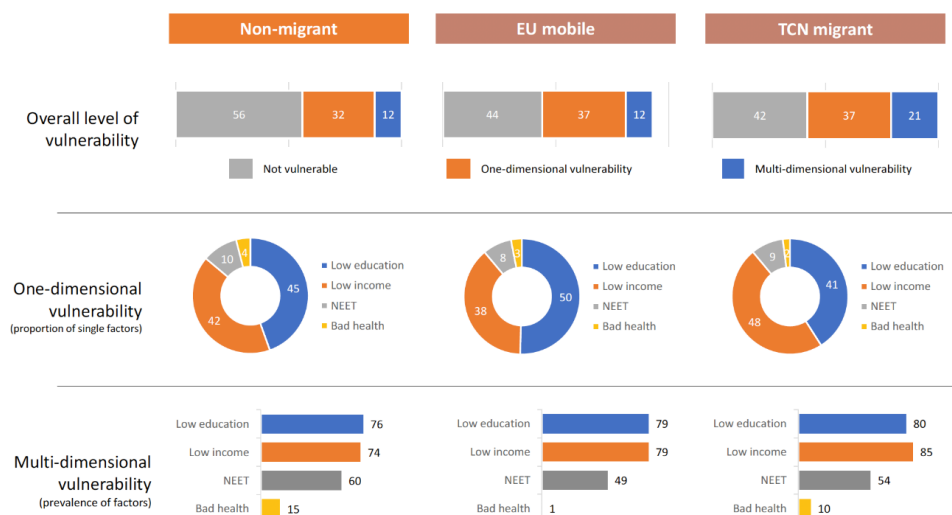


- Additionally, a new EU policy should encourage data providers to make anonymised **data available to the research community** (similar to Open Access policy/ European Open Science Cloud).

### Analysing microdata related to analyse the ‘conditions of vulnerability’

MIMY analysed the ‘conditions of vulnerability’ by aggregating a dataset of the European Social Survey (ESS) from all nine rounds.<sup>4</sup> According to this analysis, third-country national (TCN) youths (15-29)<sup>5</sup> are more likely to experience vulnerable conditions than non-immigrant youth (esp. multi-dimensional vulnerabilities). The most important source of vulnerability for TCN youths is a low level of education and low income.

The share of young TCN immigrants by categories of vulnerability and the internal structure of their vulnerability



Source: Deliverable 2.2 "Public Report on the influence of youth migration on macroeconomic and social development in main receiving European countries", based on data from the European Social Survey

Integration services and programmes should aim to reduce the risk of young migrants phasing multiple vulnerabilities.

- We suggest that EU and national policymakers should focus on the specific situation of young TCNs. The data show that TCNs face more multifaceted challenges than young nationals, probably due to their double transition from youth to adulthood and into a new country, and should thus be supported by **specific policies** and services addressing young TCNs. Offering tailor-made and **individual support** and services for **migrant youth** and young adults (e.g. psychological support, broader access to education and training programmes) could decrease their multiple vulnerabilities.
- We suggest that to tackle the multiple challenges young TCNs face **inter-sectoral cooperation between integration services and youth services and education and health** is essential. Therefore, we recommend forming **working groups/partnerships** to foster **collaboration** and inter-sectoral cooperation and promote an holistic approach to TCNs support.

<sup>4</sup> All nine ESS survey rounds from between 2002 and 2018.

<sup>5</sup> The sample includes 58,458 respondents aged under 30 out of which 3,187 are TCN immigrants (1,653 are EU mobile youth and the rest, over 53,000 are the native youth).

### 3.3 Policy recommendations based on the analysis of integration policies for young migrants in eight European countries

MIMY examined integration policies for young migrants in general and focused on asylum seekers and refugees in particular. We examined opportunity structures in the nine partner countries (in domains such as the labour market, education, health, civil rights, social welfare, housing, family, etc.). As a result, MIMY provided a comprehensive overview of the historical development and current EU and national integration policy frames, measures, and governance. Our findings show that, although the EU is an important actor in the field of integration, Europeanisation of integration policies is limited and support measures differ significantly across Europe. On the EU level, no common and specific integration policies address young migrant adults (18-29), and existing EU directives on integration (mainly against discrimination) have limited influence and do not target specifically young non-EU migrants.

Additionally, the *Qualification Directive of 2011* on standards for the qualification of third-country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection does place an obligation for the Member States to guarantee certain rights and provide support measures (esp. for unaccompanied minors with international protection). Still, significant differences in implementation between the countries exist. Yet, non-binding EU policy instruments (esp. funding) play an essential role in implementing integration policies on the local level.

The comparative analysis showed different integration approaches and policies applied by the eight studied countries (Germany, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Poland, Romania, Sweden, and the UK). Historically, the eight countries had different experiences with migration and have followed different integration approaches.

MIMY also reviewed national literature on past experiences of vulnerable migrants, revealing areas that can produce vulnerabilities (e.g. legal status, accommodation, language acquisition and education, labour market, health, identity and intergroup contact, support structures and local participation, trafficking, as well as discrimination and racism).

According to our analysis of integration policies and opportunity structures based on secondary data, young non-EU migrant adults encounter various **major difficulties** in their new host country, but also differences across EU countries exist.

To support young adult migrants in vulnerable conditions, policies need to take into account the specific needs of young migrants and work closely together with youth services and other services (e.g. health, education, housing) to ensure direct benefits for young migrants. But as the microdata on the perception of migration showed, further action is needed to reduce discrimination and negative attitudes. In the course of the MIMY project, MIMY will involve young migrants as peer researchers and in various participatory art-based actions (e.g. digital storytelling workshops) together with young locals, to exchange perspectives and experiences and to empower young migrants to raise their own voice and to become active citizens.

The policy recommendations described below to support young migrants fit most of the main topics highlighted in the EU Action Plan for Integration and Inclusion (2021-2027). In terms of implementation, they were thought to be applicable **within the same timeline (2021-2027)** and they address the **same target groups**, most of the time at the **regional and local level**. They are sorted into the following categories: participation; education; employment; housing; mental health; and legal status.

#### PARTICIPATION

### **Ensure an equal and fair participation of young migrants in their host societies**

Young migrants' participation may not only serve and empower them as key element of their integration process, but also benefit the host society at large. It can indeed raise awareness on existing structural obstacles, racism and discrimination faced by young migrants. ESS data showed how heterogeneous attitudes of the population towards TCNs can be (between "eastern" and "western" countries and also within countries).<sup>6</sup>

#### Actionable policy recommendations

- Support the organisation of common social life activities especially at the local level (e.g. cultural or sports activities) to increase intercultural exchange and understanding, and to create opportunities for positive interactions and shared experiences between the different members of the society.
- Support the coordination and cooperation of stakeholders (NGOs, public services, etc.) already working with and for young migrants and make sure young migrants are actively included into the design, implementation, evaluation of services and activities.
- Encourage the creation of safe spaces of encounter for youth (including young migrants and youth with migration background) to express, organize and empower themselves.
- Develop and promote a positive narrative acknowledging the already existing diversity within the host society and, do not adequate anti-discrimination measures
- Promote greater diversity within the EU institutions and their staff to fight existing systemic issues at the EU level.
- Systematically collect data on how a person's race influences their education and labour market opportunities, chances in finding housing and health treatment.

## **EDUCATION**

### **Provide efficient, tailored pre- and post-migration language learning opportunities**

Lack of language proficiency due to the lack of efficient language learning opportunities has a cost for migrants and for their host societies. Not only does it delay the entry into the labour market and the successful completion of further education, but it also strongly impedes social contact, participation, and shows negative consequences on migrants' wellbeing, belonging feeling and integration process in general.

#### Actionable policy recommendations

- EU and national policymakers involved in language policy should shift their perspective when it comes to linguistic integration: linguistic integration policy and measures should target young migrants irrespective of their legal status, conditions of arrival, resources, location and potential duration of stay in the country.
- Online and/or in person free languages classes should be made available in origin and transit countries prior to young migrants' arrival.
- Transparent information about available language learning opportunities as well as procedures to access classes in the host society should be made available in advance.
- Providers of language classes in host societies should tailor their teaching approach based on young migrants' current individual needs and skills. Flexible and accessible languages classes (outside traditional working hours, babysitting for parents) should be developed.
- Outsourcing (when applicable) of language learning opportunities should be carefully evaluated and monitored through the collection of learners' feedback. Special attention should be paid to learning conditions and effective linguistic acquisition.

### **Offer adequate education & training opportunities**

Policies should strongly invest in offering young migrants' further education. Based on the assessed skills and needs of young migrants upon arrival, tailored, personalised educational paths should be offered to them (i.e. graduation from upper secondary education, professional training) and -as for the

successful integration within the workplace- the inclusiveness of the educational space should also be insured.

#### Actionable policy recommendations

- Make the free implementation of initial skills & needs assessment of young migrants upon arrival the rule, in order to better design a tailored approach fitting young migrants' specific needs, objectives, and resources.
- Financially and materially support educational interventions targeting migrants at the local and regional level.
- Remove administrative obstacles preventing young migrants to be enrolled in the school system.
- Make sure the educational or training environment is inclusive and welcoming to young migrants and also youth with migration background.

#### **Ensure transparent, quick, free-of-cost recognition process of diplomas obtained abroad**

Many migrants suffer sudden halts and delays in their plans and integration processes in the host country due to the non-recognition of their diplomas and qualifications obtained abroad and long waiting periods.

#### Actionable policy recommendations

Specific competent authorities in member states (i.e. Ministry of Higher Education) should be strongly encouraged to:

- End taxes related to the recognition procedure and/or provide free translation of diplomas directly by governmental services (to avoid supplementary costs for applicants).
- Develop transparent and quick process with appeal permitted or solution (gateway) for applicant to have diploma recognized (offers for further education or formation to prevent de-skilling).
- Develop online procedure or/and satellite offices in areas where young migrants already are- at the very local level- to make the recognition procedure more accessible (in case of lack of resources, public transport, etc.).

## **EMPLOYMENT**

#### **Foster inclusive and welcoming workplaces for all**

Not only a swift entry but also a sustainable stay into the labour market should be envisioned when it comes to migrant youth professional integration. In order to achieve this, all actors (employers & employees, administrations) have to be involved on an ongoing basis.

#### Actionable policy recommendations

- Promote policies giving work permits early on (during the asylum process) to reduce waiting times as much as possible.
- Financially support subsidised employment in all fields and actively advertise/reach out to employers to implement it.
- Support the urgent implementation of training on intercultural aspects (relation to time, hierarchy, money, social relations) as well as daily issues faced by young migrants (e.g. unconscious bias, racism and discrimination, structural obstacles) targeting job centers, employers, workforce already employed.
- Diversity Equity Inclusion professionals should be trained on an ongoing basis on specific issues faced by young migrants as well as by EU young citizens with a migration background
- Special attention should be put on young migrant parents entering the workforce: support mechanism like childcare services or flexible working hours should also applied to them.

## **HOUSING**

#### **Provide young migrants with safe, sustainable housing opportunities**

Housing allocation for young migrants should be completely rethought based on specific criteria such as migrants' existing resources (family, network) and needs, facilities' location (connection with public transportation & distance to services/administrations) and current social and educational offers on site. Considering these criteria helps avoiding that allocated housing becomes another hurdle for the integration process of young migrants instead of the resource it should be.

#### Actionable policy recommendations

- Make sure young migrants can make the choice to join family members, friends, or other resource persons identified by them into already allocated joint housing or facilities located close to them.
- Young unaccompanied minors turning 18 should automatically be offered a sustainable housing solution until they can independently find and finance one. When a deposit and financial guarantor are required (as it is most of the time when applying for housing in the private sector), alternative solutions (i.e. state acting as guarantor) should also be offered.
- Specific housing opportunities to victims of gender-based violence (women with or without children) and other discrimination (LGBTIQ+ community) should be developed.
- Further EU funds and projects should be implemented to test different housing models and initiatives (e.g. [H2020 Merging housing project](#) designs and puts in place participatory pilot initiatives aimed at integration through housing).

## MENTAL HEALTH

### **Address young migrants' specific needs with regard to mental health**

Young migrants often experience traumatic experiences before, during and after their migration process. They rarely have the resources, opportunities, time to receive the accurate support they may need. Besides, the uncertainty and the many restrictive measures due to the Covid19 pandemic may have also deepened the vulnerable conditions in which young migrants evolve and jeopardized further their mental health.

#### Actionable policy recommendations

- Assess young migrants' specific needs (mental health support) upon arrival and inform them about the existing offers.
- Secure young migrants' access to a system of health care coverage on a basis equal to national citizens in all EU member states.
- Generalize free counselling and alternative mental health resources/support on the long term, and make sure it is available in young migrants' mother tongues at the local level.
- Raise awareness among the host society at large on pre- and post-migration specific traumatic experiences lived by young migrants (and also potentially youth with migration background) and their consequences on learning processes, social interaction, participation.

## LEGAL STATUS

### **Secure access to legal status**

Most of the policy recommendations introduced above are based on the assumption that the administrative status of young migrants who recently arrived on the European soil actually allows them to benefit from these. This is unfortunately not always the case, since many young migrants survive in an administrative limbo for years. Precarious legal status has detrimental effects on all other aspects of migrants youth's "integration trajectories" and contributes to their vulnerability. Therefore, access to secure legal status (permanent residence permits or citizenship) would help to overcome several vulnerabilities for migrant youth. However, secure legal status is still difficult to access in several European countries and the legal frameworks of member states differ greatly, with especially restrictive frameworks in Hungary, and Germany having many different legal statuses determining their rights and opportunities.

#### Actionable policy recommendations

- Politically promote an harmonization of legal framework across the EU to secure a rapid and transparent process to acquire a secure legal status.
- Quick allocation of permanent residency permits should be the rule for newly arrived young migrants (especially when unaccompanied) to enable them to (re)build a life in the host society and start their integration process.
- When applicable, taxes related to the administrative procedure should be removed and governmental services should offer free translation of required documents (to avoid supplementary costs for applicants).
- Online procedure or/and satellite offices should be developed in areas where young migrants already are- at the very local level- to make the administrative procedure more accessible (in case of lack of resources, public transport, etc.).

## 4 Next steps and future contribution

These policy recommendations addressing EU, national and local policymakers who can take part in the integration process of young migrants from the outset are based on the MIMY project's first insights focusing on the concept of integration and a quantitative overview of youth migration on a macro and micro level in Europe. They offer the reader a better theoretical understanding by suggesting a new approach of "**liquid integration**". An overview of macro and micro-level data presents first insights into the vulnerabilities of third-country national young migrants in Europe, especially in the nine consortium countries.

We recommend that integration policies and programmes on the EU and national level for young migrant adults consider the **transition from youth to adulthood**. This is a critical phase when young people are transitioning from education to work. Yet, pre-migration and migration experiences and difficult arriving conditions in the host country influence this transition. At the same time, when **turning 18**, migrants often **lose much of the support from authorities**, and this abrupt change is challenging to handle. Therefore, specific attention on the EU and national level for this target group is necessary to ease this process and offer specific support.

These actionable policy recommendations are also consistent with and complementary of the objectives set in the EU Action Plan for Integration and Inclusion (2021-2027), unveiled in late 2020. Indeed, several recommendations are made with regard to the areas identified as priorities in the Action Plan (education, employment, health, housing).

MIMY aims to **empower young migrants** and to offer young migrants the possibility to directly take part in a research project as peer researchers during the second and third year of the project. MIMY is exploring in **18 local case studies** (2 per country in 8 countries) opportunity structures in terms of service provisions and the personal experiences of young adult migrants to explore more in-depth findings of the first year. Interviews and group discussions with stakeholders, young migrants, young locals, migrants from previous generations will give further insights, especially from a local perspective.

MIMY recommends that **exchanges between policymakers, stakeholders active in the field of integration services, and young migrants** should be taken place on a regular basis. Such exchanges enable young migrants to report from their own perspective, and they can be empowered to become **active citizens in European societies**.

Based on the results of the MIMY project, a **Synthesis Report** and a **Handbook on promising integrative practices** – also including additional policy recommendations were published. These documents aim to support policymakers and practitioners at the EU, national and local levels to set up innovative actions and strategies in the field of migrant youth integration in Europe.

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