

The background of the slide features a photograph of three diverse women sitting at a table, looking at a laptop screen. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. The top of the slide has a large orange shape that resembles a mountain peak or a stylized roofline.

Empowering Migrant Workplace Integration in a Digital World

“The Digital Transformation will eventually bring a reconfiguration of labour market, with the likely disappearance of jobs in which migrants tend to be concentrated.”

(European Union, 2018)

Executive Summary

Migration shapes today's workforce, bringing diverse skills and perspectives that drive the success of businesses.

However, integrating migrants brings challenges, especially in leveraging digital skills and fostering inclusivity. This toolkit highlights the value migrants bring, emphasizing how digital skills and best practices can enhance their integration and success in organizations.

Ultimately, it will lead to businesses having positive impact on society, as well as potentially benefitting financially, by following this toolkit.

This toolkit includes 4 core take-aways for employers:

- 1) Organize workshops on Dutch laws, workplace norms, and culture
- 2) Build trust in media through transparency and data security policies
- 3) Foster inclusive workplaces with mentoring, training, and cultural events
- 4) Invest in digital upskilling to empower migrants and retain talent

Introduction

Empowering Migrant Integration

In today's globalized world, migration has become a significant force shaping the modern workforce. Migrants bring diverse perspectives, valuable skills, and unique experiences that contribute to the success and growth of businesses.

However, integrating migrants into the workplace can pose challenges for employers, especially when it comes to leveraging their digital skills and ensuring an inclusive work environment. This brochure addresses the migration challenge by focusing on the value migrants bring to the workforce, with a particular emphasis on how digital skills can help migrants thrive and how best practices can support their integration into organizations.

Why the research?

Employers need data and insights to create more inclusive and productive workplaces that embrace the potential of migrant employees.

Understanding how digital skills can be harnessed for workplace inclusion is key to supporting the transition of migrants into new jobs and helping them navigate the digital aspects of the modern workplace.

Additionally, exploring how migrants perceive the role of media and digital tools in finding and maintaining employment is essential for designing strategies that meet their needs and enhance their job security. This research will provide actionable insights for employers looking to build stronger, more diverse teams and foster an inclusive work culture.

Key insight #1:**Bridging the Knowledge Gap:
Migrants, Dutch law, and culture**

When migrants arrive in the Netherlands, they're often faced with a steep learning curve about how things work—legally, culturally, and in everyday life. Understanding Dutch laws and workplace norms is key to finding stability, but it's not always easy.

Many migrants struggle with practical issues like obtaining a BSN (citizen service number) or navigating unclear work permits. On top of that, cultural differences—such as understanding how to take initiative at work or what's expected in terms of communication—add extra layers of challenge. Without a solid grasp of these systems and norms, it's hard for migrants to feel confident or integrated.

“When I came here, I found myself a little bit confused. Because I need to learn again here. But I'm a little bit confused because I didn't find my road, my way to go. Because I had no advice for anything to do. So some introduction to how everything works legally in the country would be a good start.”

(From a conversation with a migrant)

Key actions to take as an employer

- 1 Host workshops on Dutch labor laws, workplace norms, and cultural practices to improve understanding**
- 2 Clarify workplace hierarchies, employee rights, and local practices for easier integration**
- 3 Pair migrants with mentors to bridge cultural and professional gaps**
- 4 Foster collaboration and cultural exchange while supporting migrants' growth**

Key insight #2:**Migrants need to trust media to search for employment online**

When migrants arrive in a new country, online media can be a great way of finding employment possibilities. However, such possibilities are often not being realised, due to a lack of trust in media.

Migrants tend to have low trust in media, expressing security concerns about their personal information, often caused by their data being exploited in their arrival to a new country. So instead, they rely on other ways previously used to find a job, often trying to contact their personal network or family. This doesn't work, as such connections mostly don't exist when arriving in a new country.

Other ways of trying to find a job, like approaching local business owners face-to-face, seem to be a workaround for a familiar way of applying for a job. While this can be successful, a low trust in media hinders a broader and more effective application process.

Key actions to take as an employer

- 1 Provide data security measures and keep the application process as transparent as possible.**
- 2 Clearly communicate data policies**
- 3 Show successful applications of employees with migration background to increase trustworthiness**
- 4 Offer a smooth user experience in the online application process**

Key insight #3:**Inclusive workplace integration requires both company efforts and wider community support**

For migrant workers to truly feel included in the workplace, it's important that companies do more than just hire them. Successful integration requires a mix of company-level efforts and support from broader society. Research shows that simple actions, like offering peer mentoring or having understanding managers, can help migrants feel welcomed, especially when overcoming challenges like racism or cultural differences. Big companies, like multinational corporations, also use activities like training, shared meals, and social events to bring people together and make the workplace more inclusive.

However, this workplace support needs to go hand-in-hand with community-wide efforts. Policies that help both migrants and local communities adapt to each other are important, as are local services that support migrant integration. For example, companies like IKEA go the extra mile by offering workshops and job placements specifically for refugees, showing how targeted support can make a difference.

"So I think the key factors in order to get a job in the Netherlands are not related to your qualifications, are not related to your experience or language, it's a matter of networking. Which I don't have."

(From a conversation with a migrant)

Key actions to take as an employer

- 1 Foster an inclusive workplace where all backgrounds are valued and respected**
- 2 Invest in diversity training and host cultural events to raise awareness and celebrate diversity**
- 3 Implement mentorship programs to support migrant employees' integration and confidence**
- 4 Work with local municipality to match company's needs with the skills and qualifications of migrants in your area**

Key insight #4:**Digital upskilling is essential for migrants to adapt to changing job market demand**

Migrants are more likely to be employed in high-routine jobs compared to native born workers. Such tasks are at risk of being automated, due to the digital transformation and autonomous machines. The jobs that stay, often involve operating these automated processes, requiring the necessary digital skills. Without digital skills, migrants are more likely to lose their jobs and face difficulty to re-entering the workforce.

Studies have shown that migrants tend to receive less training and investment in their human capital from employers, limiting their growth and safe employment. However, migrants work effort is higher than the one of comparable native-born workers.

This means that employers are losing a more motivated workforce due to not investing in their digital skillset.

“80% of business executives actively intend workplace automation to eliminate redundant work processes while deploying new technologies” (World Economic Forum, 2020)

Key actions to take as an employer

- 1 Invest in digital skills employed migrants, keeping motivated workforce within the company**
- 2 Provide accessible training for employees with migration background**
- 3 Collaborate with local NGOs to implement digital skills training specifically tailored to migrants.**

Conclusion

Societal impact

Helping migrants integrate into the workforce has real benefits for society. It reduces unemployment and supports diversity in workplaces and communities. Migrants bring new ideas and experiences that can help businesses grow and create stronger connections across cultures. When companies invest in their success, migrants are more likely to feel included and able to contribute fully. This creates a more resilient and innovative society overall.

Why your company can make the difference

Your company has a chance to make a real impact by supporting migrants. Simple steps like providing digital training or mentorship programs can help them overcome barriers and feel part of the team. Investing in these efforts improves workplace culture and productivity while showing your commitment to inclusion.

By acting today, you help to shape a workforce that's better prepared for tomorrow.

This toolkit was realized in a joint effort by Re-Starter and Erasmus University Rotterdam.



Re-starter

<https://re-starter.org/>

info@re-starter.org

+31 638479343

**Erasmus
University
Rotterdam**



<https://www.eur.nl/>