

Keys and recommendations for promoting the social-labor integration of women in a condition of vulnerability

Edited:

Asociación Mujeres Opañel

Plaza de Cantoria, 2 bajo. 28019. Madrid.

www.amo.org.es

Federación de Asociaciones de Madres Solteras

Calle Bravo Murillo, 4 despacho 13. 28015. Madrid.

www.federacionmadresolteras.org

Fundación Mujeres

Calle Ponzano, 7, planta 4ª. 28010. Madrid.

www.fundacionmujeres.es

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1. PRESENTATION

This document aims to provide a number of methodological keys, as well as a list of recommendations, to improve and complete the actions that are taking place in the area of labor insertion of women and especially of those belonging to vulnerable groups.

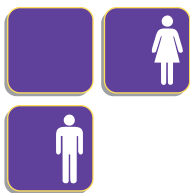
It is aimed at both public entities and non-governmental organizations and private organizations that directly or indirectly develop measures to drive, promote and favor the improvement of the social-labor inclusion of women.

First, it provides a theoretical and technical vision, highlighting the urgent need to incorporate a gender perspective in these measures. In addition, it will specify how this can be implemented in a tangible and concrete way, not only in the technical development of projects and tools, but also in the direct intervention with women who use employment services and devices.

The document was made within the framework of the "Employment Equality" Project, subsidized by the Financial Mechanism of the European Economic Space, in order to boost female employment, entrepreneurship, labor conciliation and the social-labor insertion of groups of women in a vulnerable situation.

This project and its final product, the present document, have been made by three non-governmental organizations with extensive backgrounds in interventions with women and the struggle for gender equality. The entities are the following:

- **Opañel Women Association.** Born in the early nineties, with the aim of working in favor of Human Rights and Equal Opportunities. Currently it is a professional model in the



fields of Social Intervention, Immigration, Employment, Equal Opportunities and Family and Children.

- **Single Mothers Associations Federation (FAMS).** Founded in 1994 to provide support to the various organizations of single-parent families in our country. Its objectives are to make single mothers visible as rights-entitled families, as well as improving their overall situation, emphasizing employment, conciliation, education and housing.
- **Women Foundation.** NGO that, since 1994, has been working in various fields and lines of action in our country, (Employment, Equality Policies and Mainstreaming, Gender Violence, Development Cooperation...) in pursuit of a condition of equal opportunities for women and men that is real and effective.

Our contribution is nurtured, therefore, from the experience gained through decades of work and commitment to the rights of women in general and to their professional training in particular. In addition, the specificity of all the associations that participate in the project allows us to say, without any doubt, that we are experts in the matter at hand.

Thus, Women Opañel focuses on immigrant women, FAMS on those who head single-parent families and Women Foundation on informal caregivers who work with dependent persons, especially those that are unemployed or over the age of 45.

The three groups, immigrant women, single mothers and caregivers, are particularly vulnerable to poverty and exclusion, and likely to be left out of the itineraries and routes for labor insertion that are made by employment agencies that do not incorporate a vision of gender. We'll analyze, therefore, their specific difficulties when getting and / or keeping a job, the factors involved in their job search process and the characteristics of the current labor market,



proposing concrete tools and recommendations for intervening in these women's groups with a high risk of social exclusion.

The entities that have participated in this project are particularly convinced that without real equality we cannot talk about Justice, and that the positive action measures aimed at improving the employability of women will result in a more just, egalitarian and sustainable society. Without this real equality the fact is that women are not fully entitled right-holders, but second-class citizens. And this is unacceptable for a democratic state.

**The three groups,
immigrant women, single
mothers and caregivers,
are particularly vulnerable
to poverty and exclusion**



2. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE USERS

We performed a study of the users that throughout 2014 used the employment programs offered by the entities partnered with the project. The sample represents 931 women, which have had their social, family, administrative, labor and economic characteristics analyzed. This profile helps to describe the women that we serve, through the objective characteristics presented below.

2.1. General characteristics of the analyzed groups

Immigrant women

The administrative situation is one of the variables that have a significant influence on the lives of people who decide to emigrate. It determines the access to the social security and health insurance systems, since it is possible to contribute to social security, which in turn allows access to a minimal protection, creates a feeling of acceptance, empowerment and equality and influences their physical and emotional quality of life, and that of their families. By contrast, an irregular administrative situation heads towards the depressed economy, a lack of guarantees, exploitation, and conditions the loss of the authorizations by not contributing the amounts which are necessary to renew, with the great burden of anxiety that this entails.

Even for those who find themselves in a regular situation, they may also find that their employment opportunities are limited to a few highly feminized activities and related to domestic service and activities traditionally performed by women. Even when they have educational degrees obtained in their countries of origin they



find many difficulties in the recognition of their education and the acquisition of related jobs.

Although gender roles are universal, these roles are more or less highlighted in certain countries, influenced by many variables such as religion, education, family structures, so it is also important to know the geographical area from which they come and the beliefs and values regarding the role of women that exist in their original environments.

On the other hand, the habitual condition of sharing living quarters with other people outside the family circle, in a precarious economic situation, determines their living conditions. Not all the homes they have access to possess the basic habitability needed to maintain a healthy and dignified life; they have to reach an agreement, in the best possible case, or adapt to the rules of the people they live with and it is possible that difficulties may arise when cleaning or doing the laundry, generating conflicts and emotional turmoil with harmful consequences to their employability and the deterioration of their personal image.

Women without shared family responsibilities

Women who, for one reason or another, exercise motherhood alone (single-parent families) face special difficulties in reconciling their family and professional lives. When, in addition, they lack the necessary resources and support for taking care of their family responsibilities, which they bear alone, they encounter serious problems in adapting to the conditions and schedules offered by the current labor market. In many cases they are eligible only for precarious and low-skilled jobs, which in general, offer greater work-hour flexibility, making their social exclusion even more chronic.

The absence of a specific law for single-parent families that ensures their basic rights, as well as the still incipient visibility and



valuation of single mothers in our society, place this collective in a special state of vulnerability that, combined with other psychosocial situations such as poverty, social isolation, low skills, gender violence or uprooting, contribute to push this collective into a condition of labor uncertainty which, far from facilitating their social-labor inclusion, generates greater tension, both inside the professional and the family spaces.

Women caregivers related to dependent persons

The unequal sharing of family responsibilities conditions the definition of the private life projects of women and men. This fact has the immediate effect, in some cases, of women not joining the work force (the 10% of our users), and in other cases, the ins and outs associated with caregiving, first related to motherhood and child care, and later to the care for other dependent persons. The more years spent, the more people served, the closer the relationship and the greater dependence that this implies, the fewer the employment opportunities will be.

Many of the women entering the work force from this situation, either by their own choice or due to economic needs within the family, pose problems regarding their relation to their jobs. Dealing with the centrality of employment in these profiles is essential to prevent labor relations from being understood as a form of punishment or something strange and separate from their lives.

2.1.Social-labor characteristics of the women participating in the project's reference groups

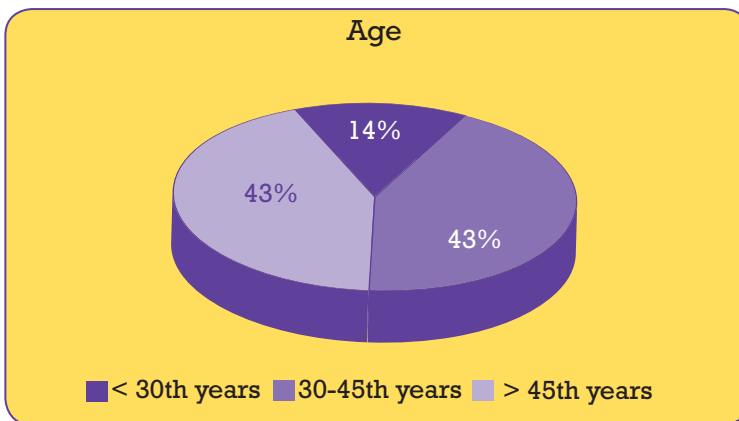
The profile of women analyzed for the development of the contents of this document is as follows:



Age

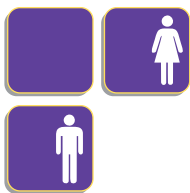
The most common age ranges are 30-45 and over 45 years. The first corresponds to ages related to child care, and also coincides with the age of professional maturity. The average age for maternity in Spain stands at 32.2 years, and in the case of foreign mothers the average lowers to 29.7. This age has been increasing in recent years for multiple reasons, the incorporation of women into the work force being the most notable one. The attribution of a greater value to professional fulfillment and economic independence has contributed to the delay of the age of motherhood in the first pregnancy.

Regarding women over 45 years, in many cases they are re-entering the labor market after moving away from employment by assuming reproductive and care functions. This age is characterized by greater difficulties in finding employment, despite having a great capacity for work, an important wealth of experience and talent to contribute to the productive activity.

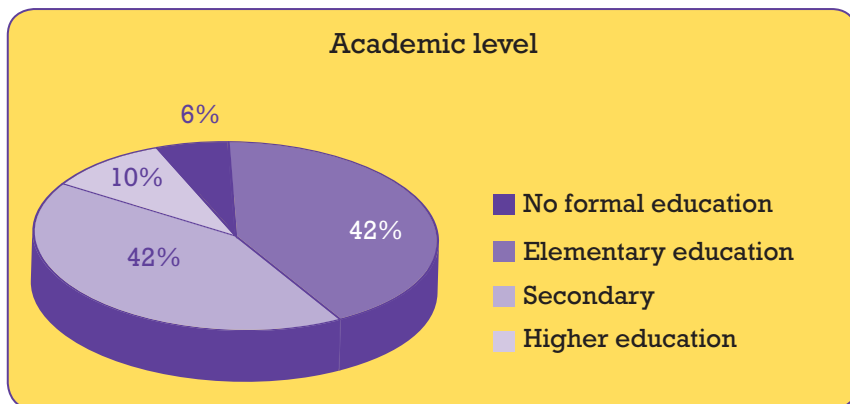


Academic Level

The most common academic levels are elementary education (42%) and secondary (42%), most of them without specialized

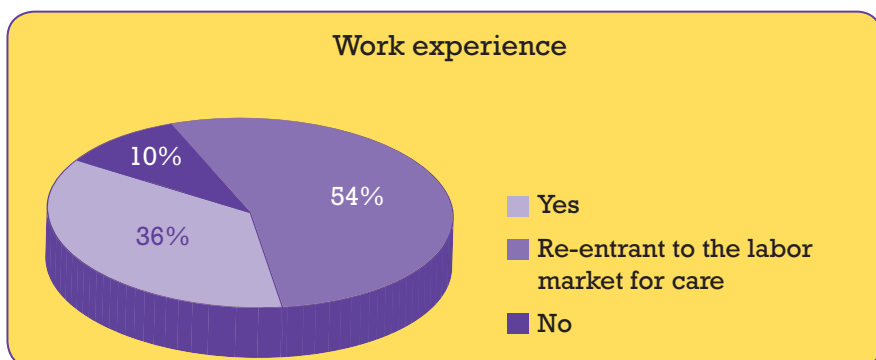


professional training, at least at a formal level. This feature leads them to obtain unskilled jobs, with great levels of occupational and gender segregation, which results in low quality jobs with less financial rewards, and reporting very little empowerment and few opportunities to acquire and keep quality jobs.



Work Experience

90% of women have previous work experience. The uneven and irregular presence of women and men in the labor market is linked, in the case of women, to the different stages of their life project.



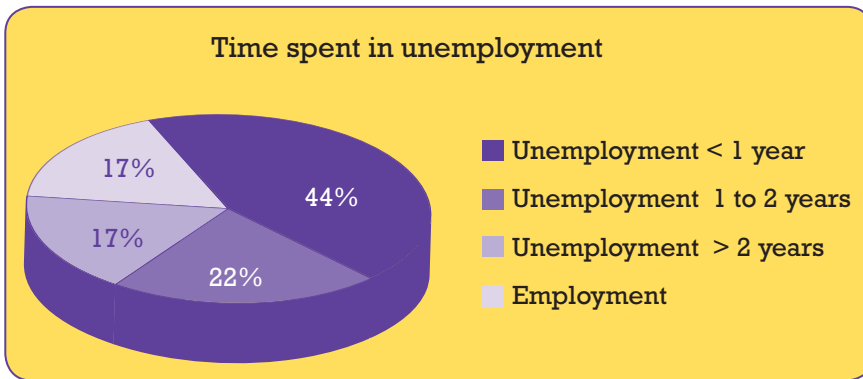
Time spent in unemployment

More than half of the unemployed women who use our services have been in that situation for less than a year. This piece of information



is an indicator that shows the temporary nature of the jobs that they have access to and the meager labor and economic stability that they experience.

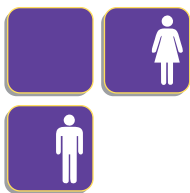
In addition, this item is related to the fact that the tasks of childcare and the care of other dependent persons are socially assigned to women (42% have persons under their care) and that they are single-parent families, 43% have no partner, which generates in them the need to be financially independent and stay active as part of the workforce.



Origin and the administrative situation in Spain

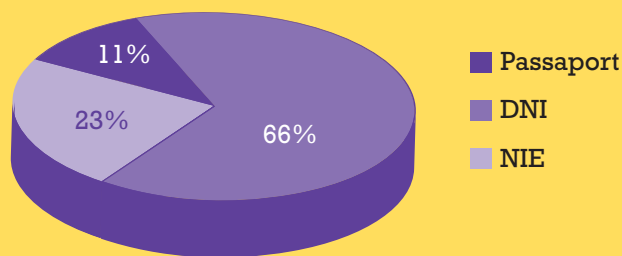
66% of users have DNI, which is an advantage that favors their processes of social and labor inclusion, and diminishes the heavy burden of anxiety that comes from the possible loss of authorizations caused by not contributing the necessary time and / or not having an employment contract.

Although the vast majority of women users have a Spanish nationality, this does not mean that this is their original nationality, but that a high percentage of them have acquired this status from residency, and therefore, they have not detached themselves from the conditioning factors linked to being a migrant.

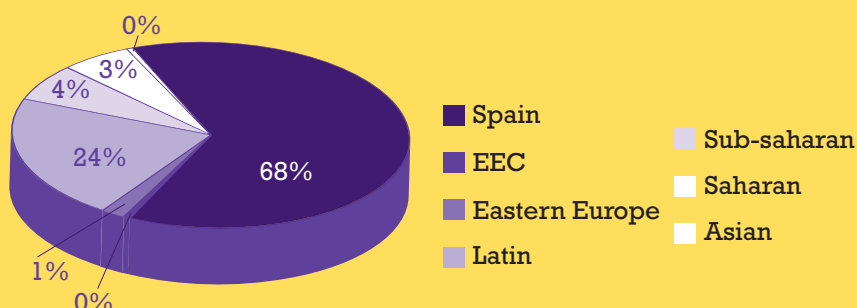


Among the rest of the nationalities there is a predominance of Latin origin (24%), followed far behind by Maghreb (4%) and sub-Saharan (3%) origins.

Administrative situation in Spain



Origin



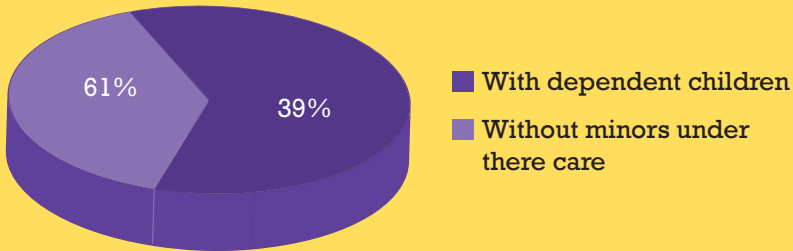
Family situation

The composition of the family unit, its number of members, how many family members are minors and/or dependent persons, and who it is that supports the family financially: are conditioning factors which highlight realities and priorities, which in turn differentiate one person from another.

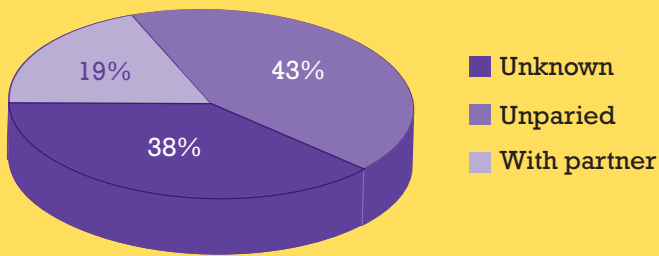
A high percentage of women in the sample, 42%, have persons under their care, with minors constituting a 39%. In addition, these are mostly single-parent families (with the difficulties that this entails in matters of conciliation, adjustment of work schedules, financial responsibility...)



Dependent children



Family situation

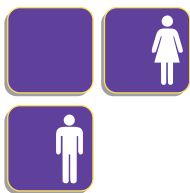


Economic situation

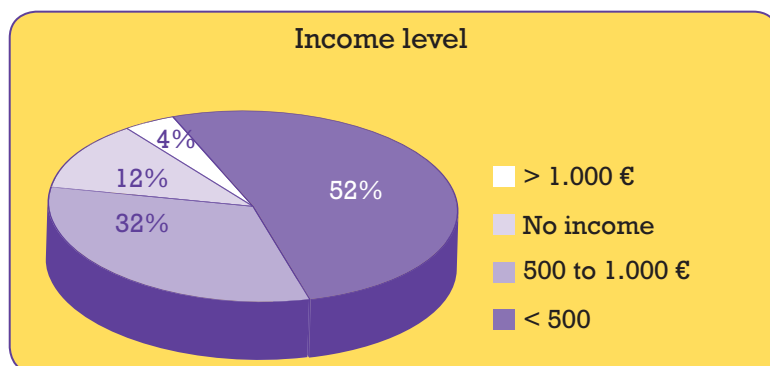
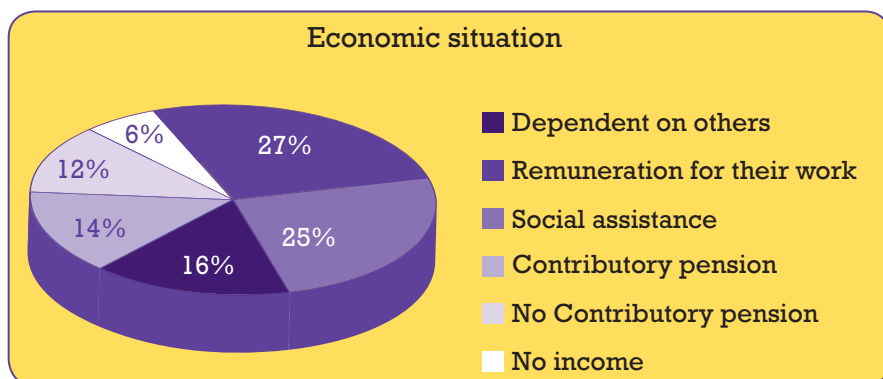
The economic profile of the women we serve is precarious; 12% have no income; 16% are dependent on others, like their partner or their family; 43% live on social assistance or state benefits, subsidies, aid for a dependent child, Active Insertion Income..., and only a remaining 27% are remunerated for their work.

We must clarify that this is not absolute data, since there are cases where they live with more than one type of income at a time, which guarantees their support.

These women live with very low incomes: 52% with less than 500 euros, 32% with something between 500 and 1,000 euros per



month. This data about the feminization of poverty is aggravated by the fact that 42% of these women have dependent persons under their care.



PROFILE SUMMARY:

According to the data, we provide here a summary of the socio-demographic characteristics of the analyzed women:

- The profile of our users is a woman of Spanish nationality, even among the group of immigrant women.
- The median age occurs in the group of 30-45 years or over 45 years.



- Regarding education, 80% has elementary or secondary studies.
- Regarding labor, 90% of them provide experience, with 36% of them having re-entered the labor market after being dedicated to caregiving tasks. More than half of them have been unemployed for less than a year.
- 42% have dependent persons under their care and 43% of them have no partner, so they are mostly single-parent families.
- These women experience a precarious economic situation, 51% have less than 500 € a month. 43% have an income based on social assistance or state benefits, subsidies, aid for a dependent child, Active Insertion Income ...



3. KEYS FOR AN EFFECTIVE INTERVENTION MODEL

3.1. Factors affecting employability

What do we talk about when we talk about employability? If we are to stick to a definition we must say that employability is the quality that favors the possibility that someone, a woman in our case, can obtain and keep a job in today's market. To develop this definition we must emphasize two different areas:

- The contents: that is, what qualifications and skills are required to achieve certain career goals. This area refers to the traditional curriculum, the necessary education and training, as well as the handicaps and difficulties that women find when looking for education, training and the expansion of their employment possibilities, or an improvement of their employment situation, in a market that does not offer equal opportunities. This also implies knowledge of the labor market, of its possibilities and demands at the present time.
- The job search process itself: if in the previous area the focus was placed on the "what" here the emphasis is on the "how", that is to say, how to find employment, or in other words, what specific itinerary must be followed to increase the odds of success. The work schedule is individualized and each user must receive entirely personalized counseling, where we can perform an in-depth analysis of various factors of a personal, social, familiar and educational-labor order; all of which, and taking into account the gender perspective, should empower women and allow them to make their own decisions, to make their own personal and career goals (since both are related) and, ultimately, become active agents of their own lives.



How to define this route to insertion? Here we present the main factors that affect the employability of the vulnerable women discussed in this document. Starting from a gender analysis, we assessed the impact that these factors have in their employability and that determines the need to integrate them into the employment insertion process.

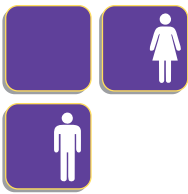
To facilitate its implementation, we have grouped them into three types:

- a) Attitudinal and personal factors
- b) Social and family factors
- c) Educational and occupational factors

A) Attitudinal and personal factors

These are related to the perceptions and the personal positions that women have as a result of their situations, and which affect their interests, motivations and expectations, the perceptions that they have of themselves and of their role in their environment, and to the value and meaning that they confer to their jobs within the framework of their personal context.

Thus, in the process of labor insertion, the following factors must be addressed:



a) Related to their personal situation:
Relation with caregiving

Analyzed elements	Conditions	Impact on employability
Relation with caregiving	Type of caregiver (primary, secondary, former caregiver, potential)	<p>The greater the caregiving responsibility, the greater the emotional burden will be, and the lower the availability for employment.</p> <p>While a commitment to caregiving conditions the person in emotional terms and availability, these aspects vary depending on the person's position as a caregiver, therefore we can find different profiles with different degrees of distance to the labor market, time of commitment and involvement with the caregiving tasks, and with different emotional stress levels that will influence their personal welfare, as well as their relation with labor insertion.</p>
People under their care	Kinship (daughters, sons, spouse, father/mother, mother/father-in-law, aunts/uncles, sisters, brothers, grandchildren)	The greater the emotional involvement and cohabitation, the greater the emotional burden will be, and the smaller the availability for employment.
	Number of people under their care	The more people under their care, the less time they have available for employment and the greater the emotional burden.



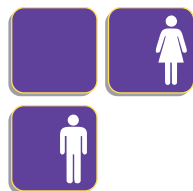
Analyzed elements	Conditions	Impact on employability
People under their care	Features of the caregiving	The more aid the dependent person needs to perform Basic Activities of Daily Living (ADL) ¹ , Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADL) ² and others (<i>surveillance, company</i>), the lower the availability for employment and the greater the effect on their physical and emotional wellbeing.
Time invested in caregiving	Number of years	The greater the amount of years spent, the greater the distance from the labor market, the smaller the capabilities for development, and the greater the effect on their physical and emotional wellbeing.

Health, physical and emotional wellbeing.

Analyzed elements	Conditions	Impact on employability
Physical and emotional wellbeing	Health status perception	A perception of increasingly poor health will lead them to a worsened condition, and this will affect their predisposition towards employment.
	Associated problems	The more problems associated with the caregiving situation (low self-esteem, isolation, absence of healthy habits and emotional or physical problems), the worse their condition will be and they will have a lower predisposition towards employment, as well as greater difficulties in labor insertion.

1.- Personal care, mobility in the home, food

2.- Housework, mobility outside the home



Analyzed elements	Conditions	Impact on employability
Place of origin	Health education	The less the education and knowledge of self-care and healthy habits, the greater the impact on personal well-being, which can affect, among others, their physical appearance or their psychological or emotional state, as well as cause major sanitary problems that will limit their access to employment.
Place of residence	Rural / urban	The smaller the population, the less access to health resources, moving only when afflicted by serious problems, and making diseases chronic, which can hinder their access to employment.
Social unit	With / without family responsibilities	The greater the amount of family responsibilities, the less time they'll have available, and the less use of sanitary resources for themselves, but not for their families; in addition to diseases becoming chronic, and to a greater somatization, which can limit access to certain types of employment.
	Cohabitation or lack thereof	Coexistence implies an unequal distribution of time and domestic responsibilities, which added to family responsibilities, cause an overload of tasks, limiting their availability for employment. In some cases, gender violence may take place, generating physical and/or emotional consequences that will move them away from the labor market.



Analyzed elements	Conditions	Impact on employability
Economic situation of the family	Economic urgency	The worse that the economic situation of the unit is, and the greater the dependence on income of said unit, the fewer the resources for health issues will be, increasing the instances of self-medication, which impedes the early detection of diseases and opens the way for chronic diseases that can limit access to employment.

b) Related to the centrality of employment:**Motivation**

Analyzed elements	Conditions	Impact on employability
Employment value	Employment objective	The smaller the value that is granted to employment, by putting their caregiving role first and foremost, the larger the distance from the labor market, and the more unlikely it is for them to incorporate an employment goal into their life project.
Labor expectations	Information about the labor market	An unclear employment objective blurs job expectations and makes it difficult to approach the reality of the labor world, so the imbalance between employment expectations conditioned by its availability and the lack of information about the labor market, move them apart from the reality of the labor world.



Labor expectations	Relation with employment	The smaller the relationship that they have had with employment, the less motivation they'll have to set a work goal. The smaller the previous labor experience and/ or further from the present, the longer and more difficult the route to labor insertion and the larger the risk of losing motivation in the process.
Predisposition to learning	Degree of motivation	The greater the degree of commitment to the goal of insertion, the greater the recognition of the need to improve their knowledge.

Availability

Analyzed elements	Conditions	Impact on employability
Perception of their availability	Situation	The less availability, the less the motivation for a personal employment project.
	Interest in having a greater availability	The greater the interest in labor insertion, the greater the interest in having a greater availability.
Features of their availability	Schedule	Many women who have long been out of the labor market expect to find a job that fits their available hours and this can severely limit the type of jobs they can accept and therefore their chances of integration.
	Geographic	Limitations in geographical mobility also limit the opportunities to access employment.



B) Social and family factors

This refers to the elements that condition access to employment due to their social and family situations, the role played, and the family and social pressures received, which press them into their role as caregivers.

a) Social situation:

Administrative situation

Analyzed elements	Conditions	Impact on employability
Type of authorization	Work and residence permits	Not having the proper authorization prevents access to employment, leading to underemployment, which does not generate social rights and guarantees, and limits their employability.
	Duration of the work and residence permits	The less stability, the higher the priority to find employment as this becomes a condition for the renewal of authorization, which favors the centrality of employment, however, administrative instability hinders the development of employability.
Reason behind the authorization	Regrouping / Independent	Regrouping and an unequal distribution of family and domestic responsibilities that can affect availability, motivation and job expectations, thereby narrowing employability.

**Economic situation**

Analyzed elements	Conditions	Impact on employability
Own income	With / without income in the family unit	The less stable the income, the less choice of employment, which forces them to accept precarious jobs, with little opportunity to develop employability.
Income originating from the Administration	Aids / receptions	The precariousness of the jobs that they often perform does not make them attractive because they assume, in many cases, the suspension of benefits (e.g. social wage), while the reactivation time is too long and does not cover their financial needs, opting thus for an informal economy that complements their income. However, this situation does not facilitate the development of their employability.



Housing situation

Analyzed elements	Conditions	Impact on employability
Access to housing	Housing supply	The limited supply of housing, caused either by the prejudices of the host society or by the need for a proper labor contract to grant access, or by the reduced economic capacity, results in greater emotional fatigue and stress, which has negative effects on the search of employment.
Housing conditions	Habitability	The limited supply implies access to housing with poor health and hygiene conditions that may have an impact on their health and can separate them from the labor market.
	Overcrowding	The lack of supply and the high prices on housing causes the need to share accommodation with others in the family or from outside the family circle, thereby increasing situations of conflict that, in extreme cases, can lead to the increased vulnerability of immigrant women to male companions.
Temporary nature of housing	Duration of the lease	A shorter duration of the lease, caused either by job instability, distrust of the leasing party or accumulation of lease debts, among others, requires constant changes in housing, which implies new processes (search for a lease, new registration, school transfers...) which have an impact on the availability for work during the process of moving, due to the many steps involved, and also adds greater stress that affects health and leads to a distancing from the labor market.

KEYS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
for promoting the social-labor integration of women in a condition of vulnerability



b) Family situation:

Cohabitation situation

Analyzed elements	Conditions	Impact on employability
Cohabitation unit	Couple living together or not	Coexistence implies an unequal distribution of time and domestic responsibilities which, added to family responsibilities, cause an overload of tasks, which limits their availability for work.
	With / without family responsibilities	The greater the amount of family responsibilities, the less time there is available for job hunting, as well as fewer employment opportunities if the availability is reduced.

Role within the family and derived characteristics (relation with dependent person, years spent on caregiving, number and family relationships with the people under their care and characteristics of caregiving...)

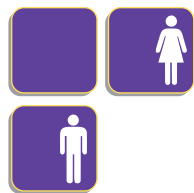
See *centrality of care*

Joint responsibility

Analyzed elements	Conditions	Impact on employability
Joint responsibility	Social network support	The less that the caregiving tasks are shared with family and friends, the less time there'll be available and the greater the emotional burden, which will have a negative effect in their motivation and availability for work.
	Coverage degree	The less support they obtain from social networks, the heavier the burden of responsibilities will be, resulting in the reduction of availability and motivation towards employment, limiting, in turn, the development of their employability.

**c) Access to resources:****Resources and benefits**

Analyzed elements	Conditions	Impact on employability
Type of resources	Minors / dependence	The less the supply, and the access to information and/or the access to public resources, the less the availability and motivation towards employment, limiting, in turn, the development of their employability.
Adaptation to the needs	Coverage degree	The smaller it is, the greater the burden of responsibilities and, therefore, the less the availability and motivation towards employment, limiting, in turn, the development of their employability.



C) Education-labor factors

This refers to elements that operate in the area of labor. The level of approach between the individuals and the demanded requirements will determine, to a large extent, their degree of employability.

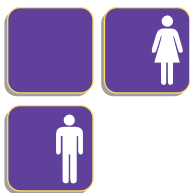
a) Professional competence:

Education and work experience

Analyzed elements	Conditions	Impact on employability
Personal competence/abilities and skills	Context of development	The development of skills and personal and social abilities is done in live environments; the smaller they are, the less chance for development, which reduces employability. However, the caregiving environment provides knowledge, skills and abilities that can be oriented towards a goal of employment.
	Degree of recognition	The recognition of capacities, skills and abilities acquired in non-work environments contribute to promote employability.
Professional competence	Professional knowledge	The longer she has been away from the labor market, the greater the obsolescence and the fewer the employment opportunities. Similarly, the less education, the less recognition of professional skills, which reduces employability.
	Labor and non-labor-related experience	The shorter the experience and / or further away in time, the greater the difficulties for the recognition of professional competence and, therefore, the smaller the employability.
	Degree of recognition	The recognition of professional skills and competence developed in the context of their labor and non-labor-related experience helps to promote their employability.

**b) Distance from the labor market:**

Analyzed elements	Conditions	Impact on employability
Relation with the labor market	Length of unemployment / inactivity	The greater the number of entries and exits of the labor world due to caregiving or unemployment, and the longer the periods of "inactivity" and/or unemployment, the greater the loss of professional skills, thus reducing their employability.
Knowledge of the labor market	Functioning of the labor market	The centrality of caregiving, the length of unemployment and the factor of recent immigration, all have an impact on the lack of information on the functioning of the labor market, which is necessary to make decisions when looking for employment.
	BE tools	Likewise, the further away they are from the labor market, the greater their lack of knowledge on how to find work and keep it, hindering their development in the field of labor.



Here we present the **degree of relevance** of employability factors for each of the participating groups:

Factors	IMMIGRANTS	CAREGIVERS	SINGLE-MOTHERS
Attitudinal and personal			
Centrality of caregiving	-	Indispensable	Relevant
Centrality of employment	Relevant	Indispensable	Relevant
Motivation	-	Indispensable	Relevant
Availability	Relevant	Indispensable	Indispensable
Physical and emotional wellbeing	Indispensable	Indispensable	Relevant
Social and family			
Administrative situation	Indispensable	-	-
Economic situation	Indispensable	Relevant	Relevant
Housing situation	Indispensable	-	Relevant
Cohabitation situation	Indispensable	Indispensable	Indispensable
Role within the family	Relevant	Indispensable	Indispensable
Social network support	Relevant	Indispensable	Indispensable
Joint responsibility	Relevant	Indispensable	Indispensable
Access to resources and benefits	Indispensable	Indispensable	Indispensable
Education-labor			
Knowledge of the labor world	Indispensable	Indispensable	Relevant
Social-labor skills	Indispensable	Indispensable	Indispensable
Training / qualification / professional competence	Relevant	Relevant	Relevant
Work experience	Relevant	Relevant	Relevant
Time spent in unemployment	Relevant	Relevant	Relevant
Distance from the labor market	Relevant	Indispensable	Relevant



3.2. Methodological keys of intervention

To work efficiently on the different factors that affect the employability of the vulnerable groups which are discussed in this document, it is necessary that the model of intervention integrates suitable criteria and instruments for its development.

Here we summarized the main intervention criteria and instruments whose consideration provides a better approach to the needs and obstacles presented by women belonging to these groups, for the execution of a better approach to the intervention.

a) Intervention criteria

COMPREHENSIVE FOCUS. The proposed intervention is comprehensive because it focuses not only in labor factors, but also personal, social, of origin and gender, which condition the process of joining the labor market.

DYNAMISM AND FLEXIBILITY. An individual itinerary that each user passes is designed, based on a diagnosis of employability that takes into account their needs, starting situation, expectations, availability and employment objectives.

DIVERSITY. This implies taking into account that each woman has her own story, needs, weaknesses, strengths, aspirations and demands.

AUTONOMY = EMPOWERMENT. This requires a learning process conducted by the person and aimed at improving their job skills, approached from the primary role of the user, respecting their schedules, decisions and priorities, avoiding any unnecessary condescension. This is done to facilitate decision-making by promoting personal autonomy, which results in an improvement in their employment opportunities, which is essential to achieve the



individual empowerment of women, especially when they are in a situation of social vulnerability.

POTENTIAL VS DIFFICULTIES. The intervention is performed by identifying the potential of each participant, highlighting and valuating their skills and attitudes, in order to increase their self-awareness, motivation and self-esteem, critical to achieving their job objectives.

Likewise, working transversely to the various actions included in the itinerary, the key aspects of the insertion process that come from the disadvantage situation of women in the labor market, such as:

- The motivation towards employment
- The motivation to participate in the itinerary
- The centrality granted to employment
- The motivation towards education
- Self-knowledge, expectations, availability and time management, and the use of resources.
- The management of emotions and life goals.

NETWORKING. This means, to intervene in a coordinated manner between entities and social service professionals, institutions and NGOs, complementing and reinforcing interventions that could not be addressed individually.

At the same time, using the group methodology promotes the creation of networks made of women who share similar situations, promoting cooperation, sisterhood and mutual support, crucial to people with poor social networks and economic resources.

a) Methodological tools

DIAGNOSIS OF EMPLOYABILITY. Conducted through an in-depth interview, this allows us to analyze how the above-mentioned



employability factors impact the user, and sheds light on their professional objectives, while the professional will assess whether or not their goals have been adjusted and in this way analyze their degree of approximation to the labor reality. We must remember that our role is in no way to take responsibilities that only correspond to these women. Having finally set the goal, the employability diagnosis facilitates the definition of a customized itinerary, with a series of activities aimed at improving their employability, methodological tools available to the intervention model, amongst which we now present the most notable.

INDIVIDUAL TUTORIALS: They allow in-depth work and more effective advice, and the possibility to analyze attitudinal and personal factors that may require specific interventions (personal and social skills, time management, etc.). Sometimes individual interventions may be used in cases of specific difficulties that occur during the process, or in case of new challenges that require greater support for women, such as preparing for job interviews or providing feedback to the user.

ACTIVE JOB SEARCH GROUPS: The group intervention maximizes the resources of the entity that develops employment devices. Group work also allows women to implement their social skills and negotiation skills and leadership, and to create a support network, a central issue in the search for employment and bio-psycho-social wellbeing. The development of active job search groups allows the professional to analyze the level of overall functioning of women with computing and information technology, thus being able to recommend specific workshops, as the case may be.

MONOGRAPHIC WORKSHOPS: The teaching of monographic workshops is a concrete and specific response to an identified need, through the continuous diagnosis that must be performed along the whole itinerary. The monographs can be about more curricular topics such as the use of new technologies, notions of social networks and their potential in the professional field, and



about more general issues of rights and/or specific legislation on employment. Other workshops are aimed at training women in social skills, assertiveness, problem solving, effective time management, relaxation, etc., as these psycho-social factors, as we have been saying, are associated with the active search for employment.

MONITORING: It is essential to set up follow-up interviews, both during the itinerary, to continuously evaluate the interventions and make pertinent adjustments, and after its finalization. Contact, when the user does not have availability, can be carried out by phone or via email. Sometimes it is productive when the woman that has entered the labor market can attend workshops or pre-programmed group activities, thus promoting group cohesion and providing the other women with a model of success. Do not forget that the ultimate goal is to achieve independence for the women users, and in this sense the group provides critical support and a reinforcing perspective, which promotes self-esteem and the sense of personal worth.

Finally, we believe it is important to note that when we are performing interventions with women, we cannot lose sight of the need for a viable and realistic plan for reconciling work and family life. We must always consider whether the schedule of activities and interventions is compatible with the caregiving activities that women perform, and therefore carry out consistent actions, such as offering babysitting, nursery or playroom services.



4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROMOTING THE SOCIAL-LABOR INTEGRATION OF VULNERABLE WOMEN THROUGH PUBLIC POLICIES

While promoting the employment of women has been one of the objectives of public policy for years and, in particular, women with difficulties in labor insertion and at risk of exclusion addressed by policies of employment, equal opportunities and social inclusion, the obstacles they face when accessing employment are still far from being resolved.

There are many factors that contribute to the difficulties faced by women, derived from gender stereotypes that still persist in the labor world, as well as those arising from particular elements that determine their situation of vulnerability, in our case, immigrants, women with unshared family responsibilities and caregivers of non-professional dependent persons.

To effectively address these obstacles and improve the employment position of these women, it is necessary for public policies to integrate the objectives and resources required for the implementation and development of interventions that address, specifically and adequately, the needs of these women.

It is essential that these needs appear in the diagnosis and that the objectives be set and specifically aimed at their labor insertion. It is also necessary for intervention programs to recognize the specificity of these groups and to enable the development of measures targeting these groups, from a comprehensive focus of support that pays special attention to personal work and social activation and that addresses the centrality of employment.



For the implementation of these programs, it is essential to establish stable lines of collaboration between the public administrations responsible for policies of employment and equality and the specialized civil society organizations, which have the commitment, closeness, knowledge of inequality, and experience necessary to properly define and address the needs of women who are in situations particularly affected by inequality and gender discrimination.

This document is proof of that. But in addition to identifying the factors that determine the vulnerability of women for their integration into the processes of social inclusion, it is necessary for public policies to incorporate these elements in order to facilitate the development of these processes.

For this reason we propose a series of **recommendations** aimed at ensuring the integration of the needs of these groups of women, from the design of public policies on employment and equality, to the facilitation of the development of interventions and the collaboration of civil society in their implementation and, finally, the improvement of the results of public policies on matters of social inclusion and employment.

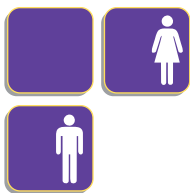
These recommendations are grouped around three areas of intervention:

- a) Improvement of employability
- b) Financial support and/or improvement of the quality of life
- c) Labor market and employment offer.



a) In relation to the improvement of employability:

- It is imperative that all administrative actions ensure the mainstreaming of the equality principle between women and men in the design of public policies and in their development. This requires a proper coordination of the various administrative departments with the departments responsible for equality between women and men.
- In the case of active employment policies, general objectives regarding equality between women and men should be incorporated into the labor market and specifically, objectives and measures to promote access to employment and the improvement of the employability of women in situations of particular vulnerability.
- With regard to the analyzed women's groups with special needs of insertion, the programs of personal, social and labor activation, developed from a gender perspective, are essential to achieve full employment inclusion of many women with special difficulties of insertion, for they respond to the needs arising from the factors that affect their employability, hence their development should be supported by public policies.
- It is necessary to provide recognition and support for women's organizations specializing in intervention with particularly vulnerable groups, and to establish funding lines and collaborative programs with public administrations that are stable over time and that allow for continuity in the interventions.
- The participation of civil society in the design of policies is also important, reason why it is imperative that the coordination mechanisms that ensure mainstreaming and social participation in public policies, work properly in all phases



of the process. This collaboration between governments and civil society, with the corresponding systems for coordination, should be maintained throughout its implementation.

- The systems for monitoring and evaluating the development of inclusion, employment and equality policies are essential, in order to verify and ensure proper compliance with the requirements and criteria that, from the perspective of gender and integration of the principle of equal treatment and opportunities between women and men, must incorporate and report the results in relation to the objectives of equality.

b) Regarding economic support and/or improvement in quality of life:

Addressing the complex needs posed by women with special insertion difficulties arising from their single-mother status, their dedication to family care, or their immigrant status, demands from public policy a coordination that makes existing social resources available for social-labor integration processes.

- Coordination of the processes of labor insertion with other public resources (housing aid, scholarships, resources for conciliation, aid and subsidies, social wage...) aimed at ensuring the economic support and/or improved quality of life for women at risk of exclusion while they are participating in programs of personal, social and labor activation and enhancement of employability.
- Improvement of existing social benefits which, among others, allows us to merge the guarantee of income and/or resources for conciliation and/or dependence, with labor insertion, and to facilitate and streamline the administrative formalities necessary to access public resources, making



them compatible with employment in the case of situations that do not provide enough income to support their families.

- Generalization of conciliation and support resources for dependence, especially for women with needs that participate in processes of labor insertion.
- Review and/or adjustment of the rules that make difficult the access to resources, especially those related to financial support (basic social wage), in particular the re-activation procedures derived from the entries and exits from the labor market.
- Compensatory fiscal measures with reductions in retentions or increases in annual returns when the wages earned for a job are low or very low.

c) In relation to the labor market and employment offer:

As measures to encourage and strengthen the recruitment of women, especially those who face greater insertion difficulties, we propose the following:

- Promoting the recruitment of women in sectors where they are underrepresented, in order to reduce horizontal segregation in the labor market and to increase employment opportunities for women.
- Strengthening the development of equality plans in companies, monitoring and evaluating their results, including objectives related to the wage gap and women with special insertion difficulties.



- Municipal employment plans that incorporate measures to facilitate and encourage the recruitment of women with special difficulties in finding work.

Introduction of social clauses in public tenders, giving positive assessments to those candidacies which have incorporated into their strategy of staff recruitment the hiring and continued employment of women with special insertion difficulties.

