

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the Expat Center in Vienna!

I would particularly like to thank the organiser, Anelise Gomes de Araujo, for coordinating this important event.

Today's discussions concern a vital topic: highly skilled migrant women and their opportunities and challenges on the labour market.

Vienna is committed to providing an environment where all women can live independent and self-determined lives. To achieve equality, however, it will be necessary to make progress on this topic. Because women can only live independent and self-sufficient lives if paid and unpaid work is equally distributed, the gender pay gap is closed, and housework is distributed equally between the partners in a household.

“Work-life balance” is the key-word to create equal career opportunities for women and men.

Skills and qualifications, however, are also a vital topic: the “Integration and Diversity Monitor of the City of Vienna” shows that the majority of migrant women have jobs that do not match their skills. There is so much potential here that is lost.

At the same time, we also want to support women in further education and training to achieve better qualifications as this results in better opportunities on the labour market.

The City of Vienna has reached a milestone with the implementation of the “Vienna Qualification Plan”, which is vital for the future of the city. Because we want women in Vienna to lead independent, self-sufficient lives, and this depends on the equal distribution of unpaid work as well as on their qualifications.

The higher the qualifications women obtain, the better their opportunities on the job market will be. And this is essential to guarantee equal opportunities.

Migrant women often face manifold problems on the job market:

our task here is to support them to lead independent and self-sufficient lives, and find careers that match their skills.

It is important – however – when talking about migrant women to always keep in mind that this group is not a homogenous group as such, it is diversified. Women migrating to Vienna and aiming to enter the labour market bring different educational and professional backgrounds and potentials with them. Different groups need different answers and specialised support.

At first sight highly qualified migrant women belong to a privileged group of people. Therefore there is the risk to forget, that they also face challenges when aiming to enter the labour market here in Austria. It is therefore a great opportunity today to focus on the highly skilled group of migrant women and to ask: which are THEIR needs? Which support service do THEY need?

On this note, I wish you all a fruitful and interesting morning!