

Migration and Integration: The Impact on Women

EPP Women



Having regard to the fact that:

- The EU is facing an unprecedented level of migratory pressure, including from people fleeing war and persecution and who are eligible for international protection, as well as from migrants leaving their country to seek improved living conditions. Women and children represent a significant percentage of refugees and a substantial portion of economic migrants;
- Women and children have specific protection needs and different concerns from men which require gender sensitivity from the European Agenda for Migration and its related policies;

The EPP WOMEN, gathered in Sofia for its annual Congress on 7 October 2016:

1. Underlines the importance of addressing the root causes of migration and the need to commit to a long-term investment in this respect; Recalls that violence against women, in particular enslavement, exploitation, as well as female genital mutilation is a cause of departure for women; Highlights that investing in women contributes to the economic growth of developing countries by reducing poverty: for this reason, barriers such as low investment in female education and health, restricted access to services and assets and legal and regulatory constraints must all be lifted; Stresses that women's empowerment, protection of women's rights, women's full participation in peace-building, political and decision-making processes are instrumental to promoting stability in migrants' countries of origin;

- Appeals for better coordination among all European Commissioners involved in asylum and migration policy, in particular paying attention to the special needs and opportunities concerning women and children through an adapted Daphne programme.
- Calls on the EU to commit to a long-term investment in addressing the root causes of migration in order to create future prospects for women and children in their respective countries of origin or region and investing in women's entrepreneurship and children's education;
- Calls on Member States to respect their commitment for financing the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa;
- Asks the EU High Representative/Vice-President to insist on women's representation in all peace negotiations and in migration summits / dialogues in which the EU is represented;
- Asks the European Commission to prioritise projects led by women and on women's empowerment through the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa;

2. Stresses that women and girls are particularly vulnerable to exploitation by smugglers and that some migrant women become victims of human trafficking for labour or sexual exploitation; underlines that refugees and migrants are vulnerable to gender-based violence during their journey;

- Calls, therefore, on the EU and its Member States to ensure that law enforcement and border authorities, as well as EU agencies such as Frontex and European Asylum Support Office, effectively implement the gender dimension of asylum and migration policy in their work;
- Demands that the new European Border and Coast Guards Agency staff receive adequate training to take into account the special needs of women and children, in particular unaccompanied minors;

3. Notes that migrant women are often victims of double discrimination: as migrant in their host country as well as within their community of origin; remarks that in this situation, their access to justice is often limited, in particular in the case of gender-based violence; highlights in this regard that the integration of migrants – as well as refugees – in European societies constitutes a double investment: it is a way to share and promote our values within communities of refugees and migrants from culturally different backgrounds, and it is a way to meet the growing challenge of demographic decline with regard to our European labour markets;

- Asks Member States to ensure access to education for all refugee and migrant children present in the EU regardless of the status of their parents and enforce if necessary the school attendance of female minors; underlines that schooling for refugee children in those EU neighbourhood countries hosting Syrian refugees must remain a priority;

- Appeals to Member States to provide health care and adequate housing to all refugees present in the EU;

- Calls on the European Commission and on Member States to make funding and other resources available for civil society, including women's and human rights organisations which provide assistance, promote inclusion, and develop/produce awareness-raising programs for gender-related issues;

- Encourages the sharing of best practice among Member States as regards the involvement of grassroots, community-based organisations fostering the integration of female migrants;

- Calls for female women asylum seekers and migrants to be granted an independent legal status from that of their spouse, in order to avoid exploitation, decrease vulnerability and achieve greater equality;

4. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the EPP Political Assembly, the EPPW national member organisations and EPP member parties and to the EPP Group in the European Parliament.