



EURO-MEDITERRANEAN PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY



Athens, 28 March 2008

RECOMMENDATION

of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly

on:

- **women and immigration** : the role and place of immigrant women in the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership
- **women and science**

adopted on the basis of the draft tabled on behalf of the ad hoc Committee on women's rights in the Euro-Mediterranean countries

by Mrs Anna ZIELINSKA-GLEBOCKA, Chairwoman and by the rapporteur:

Mrs Rodi KRATSA-TSAGAROPOULOU, delegation of the European Parliament
Mr Mohamed EL ANSARI, Morocco

The Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly:

- having regard to Article 13 of the EC Treaty on combating discrimination,
- having regard to the Commission Communication entitled ‘On immigration, integration and employment’ (COM(2003)0336),
- having regard to the Commission’s Green Paper entitled ‘On an EU approach to managing economic migration’ (COM(2004)0811),
- having regard to the Commission’s Green Paper entitled ‘On the future of the European migration network’ (COM(2005)0606),
- having regard to the Commission Communication establishing a framework programme on solidarity and the management of migration flows for the period 2007-2013 (COM(2005)0123),
- having regard to the Commission Communication entitled ‘Migration and development: some concrete orientations’ (COM(2005)0390),
- having regard to the Commission Communication entitled ‘A common agenda for integration. Framework for the integration of third-country nationals in the European Union’ (COM(2005)0389),
- having regard to the Commission Communication entitled ‘Policy plan on legal migration’ (COM(2005)0669),
- having regard to the communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament entitled 'Tenth Anniversary of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: a work programme to meet the challenges of the next five years' (SEC (2005) 483), presented at the Summit of Heads of State and Government in Barcelona on 27 and 28 November 2005,
- having regard to the communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament entitled 'The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: time to deliver' (COM (2006)620 final),
- having regard to the conclusions of the 9th Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs held in Lisbon on 5-6 November 2007,
- having regard to the conclusions of the first Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers on Migration held in the Algarve on 18-19 Novembers 2007,
- having regard to the provisions of the Beijing Declaration,
- having regard to the Convention against Discrimination in Education, adopted by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on 14 December 1960,
- having regard its last recommendation, adopted on the basis of the draft tabled on behalf of the ad hoc Committee on Women’s Rights in the Euro-Mediterranean Countries (Tunis 17th of March 2007),
- having regard to the conclusions of the last meeting of its ad hoc Committee on Women's Rights in the Euro-Mediterranean countries, held in Brussels, on the 17th October 2007, on women and immigration and women and science,

On women and immigration

1. Stresses that the number of women immigrants is constantly increasing in the EU, accounting for approximately 54% of the total number of immigrants and covering an increasingly broad range of categories (economic migration, immigration because of disasters, family reunification, political refugees or those fleeing armed conflicts, illegal immigration, asylum);
2. Recalls that immigration is an integral part of the European Union's European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plans, which include a commitment to cooperation on migration issues, and is increasingly on the agenda of EU relations and cooperation with other regions of the world;
3. Points out that the entry of immigrants into and their movement between EU Member States have been a historical reality since the 1950s (from southern to northern European countries), but are also bound to be a feature of the future in the opposite direction (from EU countries to the Mediterranean partner countries), especially in the view of the establishment of a free trade area in the Mediterranean region;
4. Emphasizes that the integration of immigration aspects in the external action of the Community must respect the overall consistency of the external policies and actions and the dialogue and actions with third countries in the field of migration must therefore be part of a comprehensive approach, but also differentiated, taking due account of the situation of each individual third country;
5. Notes that women immigrants, as a general rule, encounter significant problems in integrating, primarily in terms of poverty, social exclusion, 'ghettoisation', limited access to public and social services, health services and difficulty in accessing the labour market, low employment rates and high rates of unemployment, employment in temporary or low-paid jobs - often without social and economic protection - or in sectors of the 'grey' economy and undeclared employment, limited linguistic skills, a low rate of participation in basic and, above all, tertiary education, limited participation in social, political, trade union and cultural life of the host country and ignorance of the language, legislation and the culture of the host country ;
6. Stresses that according to the findings of recent studies, the citizens of host countries seems to be concerned about the presence of immigrants and that negative reactions to immigrants are all-pervasive; points out, furthermore that the population of host countries clearly expects foreigners and immigrants to integrate in the host country;
7. Notes that the integration process is a two-way process at two levels :
 - a) not only involving the legal and financial instruments available in the host countries, but also entailing substantial cooperation with the countries of origin and the migrants themselves in order to fight illegal immigration, to prepare their smooth social integration into the host country and to inform them regarding the economic, social and cultural conditions of the host countries;

- b) requiring a willingness on the part of immigrant women and their families to assume responsibility for integration in their host society and a willingness among EU citizens to accept and integrate immigrant women, including mutual commitment, consisting of rights and obligations for the host society and for immigrants;
8. Emphasizes that the "Community acquis" already enshrines the rights of immigrant women, as both women and migrants, such as, for example, the labour rights enjoyed equally by Europeans and by migrant workers and underlines the importance of providing migrant women with information on their rights, so that they are able fully to enjoy those rights and be actively involved in their host society;
 9. Recalls the first Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers of Migration (Algarve, on 18-19 Novembers 2007) which emphasized the need for a comprehensive and balanced approach to ensure properly managed migration, to ensure full respect and protection for the rights of migrants and human rights, in particular those of female migrants and children, and to provide effective international protection for those in need, on the basis of the principles enshrined in international law and the specific commitments of each country, based on its adherence to specific instruments or agreements;
 10. Calls on the Member States of the EU and the partner countries to ensure, through bilateral labour agreements relating to the entry of third-country nationals or other methods, that women immigrants enjoy a secure legal and labour status in their host countries and that they do not suffer discrimination on the basis of either gender or origin, in accordance with the "Community acquis";
 11. Notes that the European legal framework on the admission and stay of third-country nationals, through the directives concerning the right to family reunification, the status of long-term residents, students and researchers, prescribes equality of treatment and according rights of access to employment, education/training and other key social rights;
 12. Underlines that Directive 2003/86/EC on family reunification and on the status of third-country nationals who are long-term residents regulates an important issue which directly concerns women immigrants : a) the right to family reunification, in accordance with the obligation to protect the family and respect family life - a right which the spouse of the applicant for reunification may request b) in addition to a residence permit of equal duration to that of the applicant, members of his family have access to education, employment and vocational training c) after five years of residence, at the latest, the spouse or the unmarried partner, and any child which has come of age in the meantime, are entitled to a personal residence permit;
 13. Stresses that Directive 2003/86/EC has not yet been satisfactorily implemented by all Member States, leaving substantial scope for discriminatory treatment of women immigrants and recalls that this Directive should be applied without any discrimination and that the definition of integration conditions and integration measures should not undermine its effectiveness;
 14. Recognises the difficulties faced by newly arrived immigrants, particularly women, who are the most vulnerable category because they suffer twofold discrimination based on ethnic origin and on sex and who may also face additional discrimination if they belong to

a minority faith; calls on the Member States of the EU to strengthen the structures and social services which enable immigrants to settle in smoothly and to provide them with information about their rights and obligations in accordance with the principles and legislation of the EU Member States;

15. Calls on the countries of origin to provide their populations with systematic and responsible information about the EU's immigration policies and challenges and about the opportunities and obligations of immigrants, both men and women, in the host countries, with the aim of preventing the negative impact of illegal immigration and the marginalisation and economic and sexual exploitation of women immigrants in the host countries;
16. Calls on the Member States of the EU and the European Commission to make provision for the funding of programmes specifically for women, providing information on the preconditions for immigrants to enter and reside in the EU; calls also for the strengthening of consular and diplomatic structures to tackle the needs of immigration more effectively;
17. Welcomes the new European Integration Fund (budget : 825 million euros), established within the Programme "Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows" for the period 2007 to 2013 which provides for the possibility of financing measures targeted to the integration of specific target groups, in particular women and children;
18. Calls on the Member States of the EU to incorporate, in their national action plans on employment and social integration, measures to promote the participation of women immigrants in the labour market, fight undeclared work, ensure respect for women's social rights (equal pay, social security, pension rights, etc.), provide support for entrepreneurship, ensure that elderly women immigrants do not suffer poverty and exclusion and promote the role of the social partners and trade unions, in the process of women's social and economic integration;
19. Urges those EU Member States and partner countries which have not already done so to ensure that effective and deterrent penalties apply under their criminal codes to all forms of violence against women and children, particularly forced marriage, polygamy, sexual harassment, marital and domestic violence, crimes of honour and female genital mutilation in countries which practise or practised extreme violations of human rights, and to increase the awareness of police and judicial authorities concerning those issues;
20. Stresses the role of organised immigrant communities and of the NGOs, which provide advice, information and support for immigrant women; notes that these organisations should constitute a forum for dialogue with the host society, which is precisely the reason why the participation of women in those organisations is considered to be essential;
21. Is aware that the complexity of the social and economic changes and constraints of modern life have profoundly altered the role of the mother in relation to her children; calls for effective means to be found to ensure that a complementarity is created between the roles of the school, the family and the components of the civil society so as to thwart the efforts of extremists and the terrorists seeking to exploit this vacuum for their own benefit;

22. Welcomes the two new proposals that will be unveiled in the near future by the European Commission , notably:
- a) the proposal for a framework directive aimed at closing the "rights gap" regarding third-country workers - male and female - as opposed to nationals by granting them employment-related rights (e.g. working conditions including pay, access to vocational training and core social security benefit) comparable to those granted to nationals, recognizing that third-country workers contribute to the European economy through their work and tax contributions;
 - b) the Highly-Skilled Directive proposes favourable family reunification conditions and would grant the right of access to the labour market to the spouses of highly skilled migrants;
23. Welcomes the decision to designate 2008 the Year of Intercultural Dialogue, which is to be used to raise awareness of discrimination (violations of fundamental rights) against women and girls and provide society with a wider range of information on the position and role of women immigrants, their culture and their aspirations in the host countries; notes that there should be a two-way process of promoting information and the participation of women immigrants in European social events;
24. Pays tribute to the resistance and endurance of all women suffering under the burden of war and conflict, which causes many women to leave their countries of origin; strongly recommends that this category of migrant women be given special assistance in their new countries, including psychological and physical rehabilitation;

On women and science

25. Recognises that the wealth and quality of life of the citizens of Member States of the EU and the partner countries are dependent upon the successful development of excellence in science;
26. Underlines that women play a very secondary role in decision-making on scientific policies and research priorities and that relatively few of them pursue scientific careers;
27. Points out that women experience “gatekeeping” from senior scientists who can either support their younger colleagues or impede their careers as well as facing a “glass ceiling”, barriers within the hierarchy of an organization halted at a particular level because of different forms of discrimination;
28. Notes that women in science should have an equal opportunity to make a contribution to the world of science, to enjoy the benefits of a scientific career as well as to have access to scientific discoveries, researchers, conferences and seminars without any limit;
29. Recognizes the need to stimulate a constructive and broad dialogue with society on issues concerning science, to promote the role of women in science and to stimulate their career prospects in the field of science and science management;

30. Urges EU Member States and partner countries once more to strengthen and continue efforts to promote gender mainstreaming and undertake all necessary steps to ensure better support so as better to understand the gendering of science and scientific careers;
31. Calls on EU Member States and partner countries to narrow the gap between levels of male and female scientists and promote gender equality in the academic environment by envisaging actions aimed at boosting the presence of women in the scientific and technical branches of teaching and training institutions, at empowering and rehabilitating women so as to enable them better to adapt to the requirements of the information and knowledge society and to consolidate the control of new technologies in order to facilitate their access to the trades they generate;

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32. Instructs its President to forward this recommendation to the Council of Ministers of the European Union, the European Commission, the Parliaments and Governments of the countries participating in the Barcelona Process and the European Parliament.