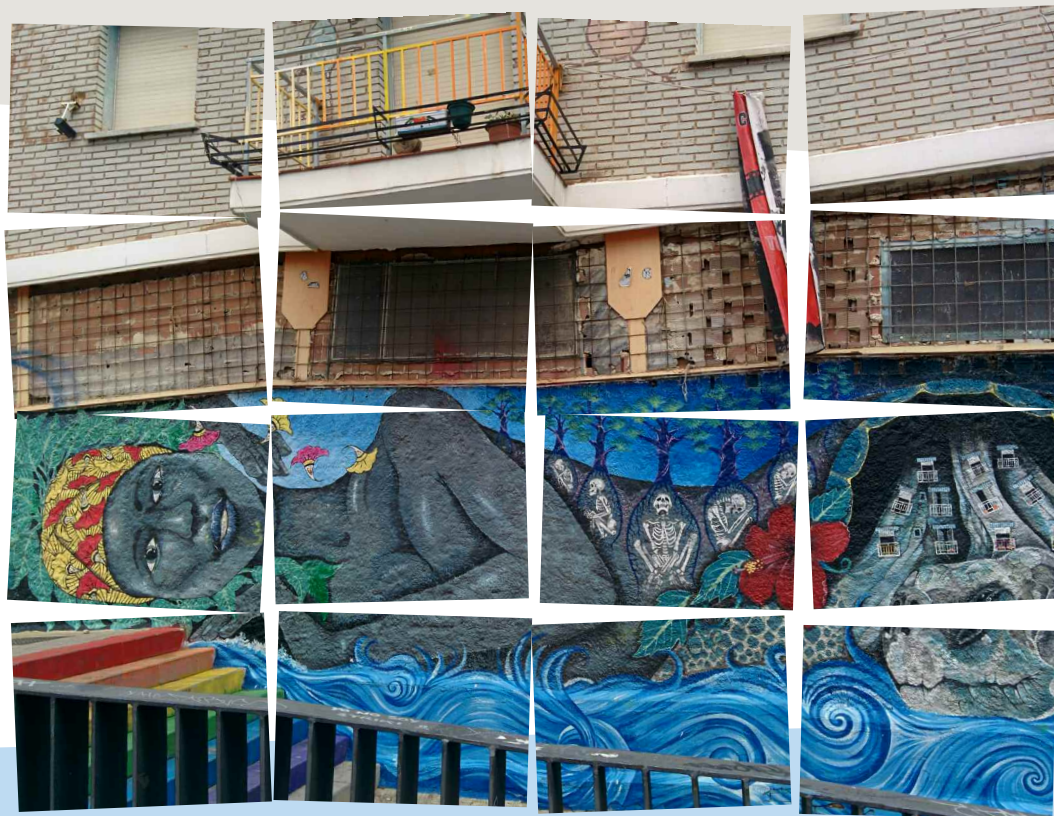


# The Europe we want?

Feminist approaches to gender,  
migration and democracy



Edited by WIDE  
2018

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Le Monde selon les femmes (Belgium)

GADIP – Network Gender and Development in Practice (Sweden)

Karat Coalition (Poland)

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Le Monde selon les femmes (Belgium)



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## 1 • INTRODUCTION

“Feminist approaches to gender, migration, and democracy” was the sub-title of our Erasmus+ project, which brought partners from five countries together in 2017 and 2018.

The main title and guiding question throughout the project was: Is this the Europe we want? A Europe that winds up fences, builds visible and invisible walls, cultivates exclusionary and racist discourses, implements more and more restrictive refugee policies, violates women’s rights and undermines fundamental European values?

As we reject the idea of a ‘Fortress Europe’, we have been searching for progressive, gender-sensitive answers that can play a role in adult education. Some of the issues we tackled were: How do feminist human rights activists analyse the current migration discourses and politics at national and European level? How do human rights-based, gender-just answers to right wing populist movements across Europe look like? Which challenges with regards to migration are identified from a feminist perspective? What are refugee and migrant women’s motives and perspectives? What are the needs in adult education to strengthen anti-racist and equality-oriented discourses as well as the political participation of refugee and migrant women in European societies?

This publication builds on various sources: On the one hand, it is a collection of speakers’ contributions at the Conference “Democracy and equality beyond borders: Promoting and strengthening asylum seeker, refugee and migrant women’s rights” on 7th March 2018 in Brussels. This conference was organized by the Belgian women’s organisation *Le Monde selon les femmes* in the context of one of four the transnational partnership meetings which took place in 2017 and 2018. The conference included a workshop on the topic “Women’s migration between agency, exploitation and resistance”, and a panel session on “Gender and migration” at the “Feminist Forum”, a side-event on the occasion of the International Women’s Day at the European Parliament.

On the other hand, the publication unites analysis on gender, migration, and democracy by the five project partners from Austria, Belgium, Poland, Spain and Sweden. Most of this input was produced as a result of the transnational partnership meetings which took place in Madrid (February 2017), Vienna (October 2017), Brussels (March 2018) and Gothenburg (May 2018), and of the local workshops which the project partners carried out for adult educators, human rights activists and/or migrant women in the above mentioned countries.

Beyond representing a documentation of the discussions that took place in the context of the Erasmus+ project “The Europe we want?”, the publication is meant to serve as a resource for adult educators and the interested public. We hope that it will allow (further) insights to the challenges related to migration politics in Europe from a feminist



perspective, and shed light on a broad range of civil society initiatives, inspired by the feminist aim of equal rights for women and men.

The publication is structured in three chapters: "Spotlight on global contexts", "European refugee and migration politics", and "Country specific challenges" with analysis and examples from the five countries of the project participants: Belgium, Spain, Poland, Sweden and Austria.

Additionally, a (non-exhaustive) list of resources on law of the European Union relevant for gender and migration and useful educational and training material for adult education are annexed.

We thank all authors and the project partners for their contributions!

We hope you appreciate the readings, and hope that both the critical analysis and the examples of civil society engagement be relevant and inspiring for further action!

*Claudia Thallmayer and Kinga Lohmann  
(Editorial team)*





## SPOTLIGHT ON GLOBAL CONTEXTS

### 2 • INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION: WHAT ABOUT GENDER ?

*Chloé Rousset and Déborah Schoenmaeckers*

Women make up half of the world's international migrants but yet they remain widely invisible and inaudible in the discussion. Gender is directly related to the causes and consequences of migration, and reconfigures migration dynamics. Despite its importance however, gender remains an undervalued factor. To integrate gender into migration policies and to end their discriminatory effects on migrant women, we must understand these links and adopt a feminist and intersectional perspective.

Gender and migration are dynamics that influence each other. These links can be analyzed from multiple angles: from the assessment of traditional gender roles in the family, in the community, the country of origin and in the host country; from the perspective of a redefinition of masculinities<sup>1</sup>; or considering if an employment has an emancipatory effect or not<sup>2</sup>. Given the broad scope of the subject, we will focus on the status and the rights of migrant women, including female asylum seekers, showing how gender, understood as a social and hierarchical construction of social relations between women and men impacts the causes and consequences of migration. An intersectional approach will allow us to highlight different forms of domination and discrimination.

According to UN Women (see ONU Femmes, 2018), in 2017, women represented 48% of international migrants. To Belgium, women immigrate on average as much as men (even if we observe differences according to the countries of origin). Globally, 50% of refugees are women. In contrast, only 28% of asylum seekers in Belgium were women (in 2015). All these numbers matter. Yet the impact of gender on migration flows is still largely ignored. Let's try to see the issue more clearly by applying a 'gender lens' to our analysis.

<sup>1</sup> See in particular Francesca Scrinzi's research (Scrinzi et al. 2016)

<sup>2</sup> Migration can facilitate the empowerment of women who enter the labour market (economic independence, better social status, especially through financial transfers), but it can also make them more vulnerable to domestic violence and they too often face the sexual division and ethnic work.

## Although women migrate as much as men and have autonomous projects, they remain invisible

In the 1960s, women represented 47% of international migrants, a rate almost equivalent to today (see *Le Monde selon les femmes* 2018). Although proportionally, female migration has not increased over the past 20 years, the interest in the topic has increased. Until the 1990s, researchers were not particularly interested in gender. Women were either considered as passive persons (dependent on a male figure, whether husband, father or brother), or gender was simply not taken into account, or it was considered that women have the same migratory behaviour as men. Thus, migrant women were invisible to the world of research and migration policies. Even today, the European collective perception of a migrant is that of a man. Immigrant women have little voice and are underrepresented (if not absent) in the media and the political discourse.

This invisibility is problematic because the gender of individuals – or in other words, the hierarchical construction of social relations between the men and women – impacts the causes and consequences of migration. Not taking this into account means to prolongate forms of violence that migrant women may already be suffering.

## The impact of gender on the “push- factors” of the migration

Gender dynamics play a central role on who emigrates, and why and how this decision is made. Women may want to leave their country for economic, social, political or environmental reasons, and all these factors are often interwoven. A person may want to emigrate to study, to work (in order to support his/her family economically, to earn independently and autonomously), to marry and/or to join his/her family. Far from being passive, women often have their own migration projects.

But women can also migrate for specific reasons different to those of men. Whether their motivation is related to economic, social, political, humanitarian or climate-specific reasons, gender-based structural discrimination impacts the migration patterns in countries of origin, during the migration process and in the host countries. We can mention the women’s migration in order to escape gender-based social pressure (such as lack of opportunity for professional training and employment opportunities, an inability to get divorced, or the difficult access to property rights). We would also like to highlight different forms of gender-based violence against women (sexual and physical violence, forced marriage, lack of access to reproductive and sexual rights and care, female genital mutilation, transphobia, lesbophobia or others) and the feminization of poverty (due the disposability of a female workforce for unqualified and informal jobs in the country). Gender-based violence is multiple and can accumulate: it can be individual or collective, take place in the public or the private sphere, within a context of peace or conflict. This multifaceted violence is based on gender stereotypes and roles assigned to men and women. Other factors, such as the colour of the skin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, are overexposed to violence. Women may want to flee their countries to escape such types of violence.

Also the disregard of sexual and reproductive rights can push women to migrate. These human rights inform personal decisions of women and girls with regards to their health, their bodies, their sex lives and their sexual identity; whether or not to marry; the question



when, how and if to have children; the right not to be sexually assaulted, to make decisions about one's own health and to have the necessary information to do so. These fundamental rights are all too often violated, by forced marriage, rape, female genital mutilation, unwanted pregnancy, criminalization of abortion, homophobic and trans-phobic laws and behaviour, or lack of access to family planning. According to Amnesty International<sup>3</sup>, in 2013, one out of five women in the world has or will become victims of rape or of attempted rape in her lifetime, and annually 14 million girls are under eighteen years old at the time of their marriage. According to UNICEF, in 2013, three million girls – the majority of them under the age of 15 – were at risk of female genital mutilation. It should also be noted that in 2017, in 72 countries homosexuality is being criminalized (in some countries, sexual violence against lesbians is used by pretending to correct a behaviour that is considered as deviant, not compatible with a woman's traditional role of getting married and having children). Transgender people are often victims of violence because of their non-standard gender identity. Recognizing and applying sexual and reproductive rights means empowering women, girls and LGBTQI+ people to emancipate themselves and gain physical, social, political and economic autonomy.

Gender structures can be a 'push factor' for migration, but they can also be a barrier to the mobility of migrants (this is an issue of autonomy and of accessing the means for migration: For example, it may be more difficult for women to migrate, because they are held responsible for raising their children. Despite such realities, the impact of gender-norms as 'push factors' for migration are still underestimated, and this has a negative impact on the type of migration and reception policies, in particular for women and girls, but also for members of the LGBTQI+ community.

### European migration policies hardly consider gender issues

In recent years, the European Union has been increasingly interested in migration. The theme of female migrants has become important (e.g. production of gender-specific statistics for migratory movements; funding for research; influence of gender mainstreaming<sup>4</sup>. Yet the European directives (the regulations related to asylum right, family reunion, skilled employment, for example) do not sufficiently take gender into account. Often, gender is associated with 'vulnerability' and the need for protection of migrant women, which is a simplistic view of the reality. The EU directives related to asylum right, for example, mention sexual violence, the need to conduct separate interviews for family members, or to be able to testify to a female clerk. These points are indeed important. But the discriminatory character of hardly taking into account gender-based discrimination as a motive for obtaining international protection (based on the 1951 Geneva Convention) is not called into question. Thus gender integration remains on the surface. The concept of 'gender' is a powerful tool to analyse the situation of women and men and the differential impact of migration policies, in order to understand the discriminatory or non-discriminatory nature of a policy. These tools are not utilized sufficiently in policy making. The fact that the criteria for family reunification (such as a sufficient income) encourage a male model of a 'bread-winner', or that the conditions and procedures for the entry of qualified 'third-country' nationals promote the migration of men while indirectly discriminating women, is not analysed. These policies are

<sup>3</sup> See *ai/campaign "My body my rights"*

<sup>4</sup> This integrated approach to equality between women and men is a political strategy to mainstream gender systematically into all policies, measures and actions in all areas and in all phases of the implementation of policies (see Miguel-Sierra 2011).

considered gender-neutral, obscuring the discriminatory effects they may have on migrant women (see Miguel-Sierra 2011). Considering women and their vulnerability is a step forward, however a better job needs to be done by applying gender and intersectionality lenses to understand and deconstruct gender roles, in order to achieve real equality.

## Woman and immigrant: A double discrimination

According to the OECD, the more educated, the more women are mobile. They even migrate more than men with the same level of education! However, the qualification of immigrant women is less recognized and oftentimes women occupy jobs for which they are overqualified. Indeed, access to the labour market is particularly difficult for immigrant women because of the global sexual and ethnic division of labour<sup>5</sup>. Immigrant women face violence and socioeconomic discrimination based on their gender, their migrant status and their origin.

Family reunification is a good example: Out of 28,771 long stay visas issued by Belgium for nationals of 'third countries' in 2016, 50% were used for reasons of family reunification. More women seek family reunification to join their spouses and/or families, and they represent a majority in obtaining such a residence title (see MYRIA 2016). However, access to the job market and right to residence of a "reunified" person depends on the status of as a wife or mother, which creates a situation of legal dependence vis-à-vis the sponsor (we speak about a "dependent right of residence", depending on the cohabitation and relationship with the family member to be joined, during two years). The economic dependence of the unified person on the working family member is also accentuated. A woman leaving her spouse to escape domestic violence, for example, will be deprived of her residence permit (see CIRE 2017). More generally, the model of family reunification in itself is not neutral, because women have more difficulties to bring their families due to the established criteria, including the criterion of sufficient income ('bread winner' model, as mentioned above; see Kofman et al. 2010).

Thus, Belgian legislation does not sufficiently take 'gender' into account, while the complexity of the (gendered) impact of policies has concrete consequences on the lives of women.

When immigrant women manage to work, they are too often limited to labour market sectors which are socially and economically devaluated, being victims of prejudice and sexist and racist discrimination. It can be observed that a woman who has many children has lower chances to work than men. Immigrant women also face more difficulties than men in translating their diploma and their professional qualifications or to follow a professional training course. They are drawn towards the field of care<sup>6</sup> (domestic or nursing/care work) and/or to jobs in the informal sector which do not require

<sup>5</sup> This division refers to the place, responsibilities and work assigned to women and men respectively, based on the gender roles of people and their 'race' (social relations understood as a product of ascribing a 'race', invented and produced by racist ideology which operates with a categorization and prioritization based on the colour of the skin; it can be spoken of the phenomenon of "racialization of the employment sector") and not on the abilities and skills of each person (see Scrinzi 2005).

<sup>6</sup> Care includes as the daily provision of social, physical, psychic and emotional attention to people. This care can be done through paid or unpaid work, on the basis of voluntary agreement, by moral obligation or in a professional framework.

qualifications and are poorly paid (the “3D-jobs”: dirty, dangerous, demanding); however these are more accessible. Indeed, the globalisation of domestic tasks carried out by women represents the main employment sector for immigrant women. Thus, one domestic worker out of six is an international migrant, and women represent 73,4% of domestic migrant workers (see *Le Monde selon les femmes* 2018). These sectors are poorly regulated by the labour law and put women in precarious situations.

Faced with sexist and racist discriminations in the host countries and the difficulty of finding jobs in the legal job market, the risk of exploitation is big, especially of getting into trafficking and prostitution networks (see Agirregomezkorta 2017). There are estimations that between 1,6 and 3,8 million undocumented migrants live in the European Union (see Miguel-Sierra 2011). Too often, migrant women do not know enough about their rights and remain invisible. The desperate search for income, also linked to the increased control of borders (which pushes the migrants to take more dangerous routes) rise the vulnerability of people to fall into trafficking networks, though this is contrary to the idea that a strong migration control can effectively combat trafficking in human beings (see Amnesty International 2015). While asylum and residence procedures have become increasingly complicated, women without a valid residence permit, so-called “illegal immigrants”, find themselves in situations of dependency and /or insecurity, lack of access to health care (except medical emergency assistance). Too often, these women prefer not to report abuses and violence which they experience (at family level, in the workplace) out of the fear of being deported. This particularly precarious situation makes them invisible and marginalizes them all the more.

### Being a refugee woman: Journey of a fighter

Women who flee violence and persecution also face gender-specific barriers. Globally, 50% of refugees are women, but in Europe, one applicant out of three asylum seekers is a woman. Throughout their journey, women suffer a high risk of gender-specific violence. On migration routes, they can become victims of harassment, sexual assault, gender violence, racism or economic violence by smugglers, security forces or the military. Women are also the first to bear the brunt of European migration politics of closing the borders, thus forcing migrants to find new and more dangerous routes while they hope to find a shelter. Once in the host country, gender-based violence does not end. The non-recognition and non-consideration of the gendered nature of migration and gender-specific forms of violence in asylum procedures tend to reproduce and extend the violence. Thus, the fact that gender-based violence does not make up a part of the five grounds for obtaining refugee status on the Geneva Convention of 1951 is particularly problematic. A woman who flees her country to escape forced marriage will not necessarily be identified as a refugee, because the violence is not directly committed by the state but happens in the private sphere. Moreover, if this person emigrates from a country considered as “safe”, her application will be refused, while safety criteria do not take into account the respect and protection or lack of women’s rights in the country of origin.

Additionally, the reception procedures are not very gender-sensitive. In fact, one must report about his/her experience and the suffered violence in order to obtain international protection, and this can be very intimate and painful. Having to testify to a male officer, eventually in the presence of her children and her husband, without a female translator,

makes it difficult for women to share their stories. In the reception centres in Europe, the absence of non-mixed spaces especially dedicated to women and the living conditions in appalling detention camps make women particularly vulnerable to harassment and aggression (see Margolis 2018).

## Migration and gender: what does international law say?

Thus, the fact that gender is not taken into account in migration policies has direct consequences for the lives of migrant women and girls. There are, however, international and regional legal instruments which would make it possible to provide a legal framework for these situations and to protect migrants and particularly migrant women. These include the ILO Convention No. 189 which entered into force in September 2013, providing a framework for decent work for domestic workers, including immigrant women working in the precarious and informal care sector.

The *Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence* ('Istanbul Convention'), which entered into force in August 2014, is also a very important framework. Not only has this text recognized the specificity of gender-based violence (physical, sexual, economic and psychological violence, both in the private and public spheres), recognizing it as a motif for the concession of international protection, but it also establishes the principle of 'due diligence' (article 5). Accordingly, the State has the obligation to "prevent, investigate, punish and provide reparation for acts of violence (...) that are perpetrated by non-State actors". Finally, the Convention deals with the status of immigrant women and includes measures to protect them, such as the right to an autonomous residence permit. States that have ratified this Convention are obliged to apply it (these are the four 'Ps': integrated Policy, Prevention, Protection and support, Prosecution). Nevertheless, its operationalisation requires substantial financial means and a real political will that is missing in the current discourses.

Thus, migrant women continue to face many obstacles. Invisible, inaudible and marginalized, these women still organize themselves and create spaces to meet, for support, for sharing and advocacy. They make social transfers to the host countries but this positive impact is ignored. Such spaces and actions – though hardly supported – are essential to make their voices heard. It is time to restore the visibility and rights of migrant women, so that their gender will be no longer a burden, but their rights be respected and that their contributions valued accordingly.

**Note:**

This text was originally published under the title “Mais ou est le genre ? Les impacts du genre sur la migration internationale” in: l’observatoire, n° 95, Femmes et violences de l’exil - 2018,  
<http://www.revueobservatoire.be/Mais-ou%CC%80-est-le-genre-Les-impacts-du-genre-sur-la-migration-internationale?return=publication>

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### 3 • THE NEXUS OF DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND MIGRATION – EXAMPLES FROM AFRICA

*Christa Wichterich*

In the EU there is a lot of talk about the objective of development policies and development aid to combat migration by creating growth economies in Africa which are supposed to provide opportunities and jobs for people and thereby eradicate the economic root causes of migration.

In the first part of my presentation I will analyse the current development paradigm fostered by the EU for the Global South, in particular Africa. The focus of my analysis is on macro-economic programmes, with a feminist perspective. In the second part, I will change the bird's view perspective and present three voices from the grassroots in Africa with regards to this macro-economic development paradigm. Finally, I will draw conclusions for our discourse about root causes of migration and migrants' rights.

#### Discourse on women's economic empowerment

As a kind of prologue, let me start by recalling a scene of the recent WTO ministerial in December last year (2017) in Argentina. The talks did not achieve any significant outcome, however, the governments released with much fanfare a declaration on "Trade and women's economic empowerment". More than 160 women's rights organisations and feminist networks objected the declaration as 'pink washing', because of its focus on the inclusion of women into value chains, entrepreneurship and trade and not on their needs and livelihood rights. Instead of inclusion into an economy which destroys people's livelihoods and their common bio-resources, the critical women's organisations rejected free trade as development model and claim sovereignty.

#### Macroeconomic perspective: EPAs

The Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) for West, East and Southern Africa cause multiple shock waves to the economies, policies and people in African states. As many studies over the years have shown the EPAs will cause a triple shock (apart from eventual volatile currency rates): 1) on state budgets because of less revenues due to tax reduction resulting in less public funds available for service provision, education, health and social security, 2) on the weak industrial and resource processing sector that cannot compete with the highly developed industries in the EU (this is the main reason why Nigeria and Tanzania refuse to ratify the EPAs) and 3) on the local level of production because small local peasants and producers get outcompeted by the cheap, highly subsidised products from the EU. The interim-EPAs concluded with Ghana and Ivory Coast, Kenya and Rwanda disturb the attempts for regional integration, cause a fragmentation of geopolitical relations in African regions, break up the fragile solidarity and the will to cooperate amongst African countries. That means that finally African countries encounter the old colonial divide and rule strategy.

## EU support for large private investments

However, the EPAs should not be seen in isolation, they are part of a macro-economic and geopolitical package and come along with other ambitious plans by the EU such as the Renewable Energy Directive and the External Investment Plan which supports private investments of 44 billion euro by at least 10 % public money. These programmes amend the “New Alliance for Food Security” launched by the G7 in 2012 and the huge infrastructural projects planned by the G20 with 80-90 trillion US-dollar to be invested till 2030 in the sectors of energy, traffic, water and communication plus programmes like the “Marshall Plan for Africa”.

These programmes make use of the commodification and financialization of land and natural resources which have been accelerated since the financial crisis of 2008/9. In particular, the agricultural sector is restructured towards intensification and genetic engineering, bio-economy and high-tech based and digitalised precision agriculture along with an infrastructure of development corridors. This adds on to the ongoing privatisation in the service, health and education sector marginalising public provisions. Through this package EU policies pushed a paradigm shift from a development, poverty reduction and human rights discourse to a narrative of investment partnership and migration control.

## People's perspectives

The second perspective is bottom up, a view at EU's macro-economic, investment and infrastructural programmes through the lens of people at the grassroots level, women's civil society organisations and transnational feminist networks who are partners of WIDE+.

People on the ground in many African countries experienced that trade and investors' activities cause massive land grabbing, resource extractivism and monocultures of agrofuels or flex-crops. They systematically deplete local livelihoods which are based on bio-resources and on regional trade while the promises of jobs, food security and wealth were not kept for the majority of the local population, and processing industries are still not set up in the countries. The corporatisation and industrialisation of agriculture including genetic engineering and commodification of seeds, and the cheap imports from the EU marginalise the traditional female agriculture in Africa and undermine women's subsistence and caring work and their knowledge systems. For women, this development model implies a devaluation of the work they do, and in case they get included in the labour and other markets, they get little recognition of their work and new subjectivities.

## Poverty and disappointment amongst the youth

These macro-economic processes cause new forms of poverty, insecurity and vulnerability, of disappropriation and hierarchies, not only income poverty, but water, energy, land & resource poverty e.g. in the fisher communities in West Africa, on the fields and kitchen-gardens run by women for their own subsistence and local markets, and even for the export producers of vegetables, flowers, cacao etc. In many places this resulted in a disappointment with 'modern' developments, despair and anger, in

particular amongst the youth. This is a fertile ground for various forms of religious fundamentalism, and a point of departure for migration. Let's listen to three people's voices from the ground.

### A peasant's critique of asymmetric EU-Africa relations

Esther Bett is a Kenyan small-scale peasant. She followed the directive of her growth-oriented government: 'Cash first and cash crops first', planting beans on her plot for European supermarkets. It is a widespread pattern that governments want to export and get small peasants and fertile soils included into transnational value chains. However, when Kenya refused to adopt the EPAs, the EU sanctioned this resistance and imposed high taxes on the import of beans so that the producers in Kenya were outcompeted by producers in other countries. After that Kenya accepted the EPAs.

But Esther is tired of getting always new instructions and directions. "We don't accept any longer dictates what to plant and how to plant." She has become a peasant and trade activist, and despite all the partnership rhetoric calls the basic structures of EU trade still colonial and so asymmetric that reciprocity between the EU and African countries is illusory. Esther claims that trade should not do harm to the local economies and agitates for food sovereignty because her prime interest is to care for the needs of her family and the people in her region. On the international level she demands economic justice and on the local level she wants to mobilise the potentials for an economy of solidarity.

### WoMin demands the right to say NO

The transnational network *WoMin* (*Women in Mining against resource extractivism*) is very clear in their feminist analysis: women subsidize with their unpaid care work and their knowledge and skills the prevailing development model, but their caring economy based on local bio-resources gets destroyed by the macro-economic projects and they have to carry again and again extra burdens. Therefore they claim a right to say "no" to the trade, investment and infrastructural agenda imposed on them from outside or top down, a "no" according to the ILO convention 169 and the right of indigenous people to 'free and informed consent' and self-determined identification of priorities in development and resource use. As they feel that in the wake of such megaprojects and resource-extractivism their life at the grassroots is no more worth living, *WoMin* demands development sovereignty, including food, land, water and energy sovereignty instead of new dependencies from corporations and EU trade, investment and resource governance.

### AfricAvenir: migration as a way of taking initiative

The same is echoed by *AfricAvenir*, a network of young people in West and East Africa and Europe. They highlight that African youth face a severe lack of opportunities, and a lack of social security schemes. The EU and the African governments have lost credibility. At the same time, the youth is sick and tired of being told how they have to live and to behave. They want their agency to be respected and aim at building new self-confidence and dignity through taking initiative. During Macron's visit to West Africa last year they protested against the increasing militarisation forged by France, and demanded

decolonisation. Even the president of Ghana told Macron that they want to achieve “real independence” now. *AfricAvenir* calls this ‘Afrofuturism’ with a strong component of identity building. In their eyes, migration is one way of being proactive and taking a risk for changing their life. In particular for young men, migration to the EU appears to be a pattern of survival and a strategy of hope. Some feel obliged to migrate for the purpose of supporting their family. Why shouldn’t they give it a try as they feel that they have nothing to lose at home? Migrants are those who make a difference and reconstruct belonging and subjectivities.

## To tackle root causes of migration: fair terms of trade needed

To conclude: A change of paradigm in trade and investment policies and in the whole development model is necessary because Africa urgently needs justice and fair terms of trade. The needs, rights and the resources of local communities have to be protected, supported and enhanced as starting point for local and regional economies based on commons and biodiversity, ‘caring’ economies which return control over resources to people and create an enabling environment that they can build food, water, energy and democratic sovereignty, as well as dignity of their labour and their life. This is essential for women’s agency, livelihood and identity. As the current development paradigm and macro-economic policies harm the livelihoods of people they actually co-construct root causes of migration. However, our argument should avoid the trap of saying: fairer EU policies towards Africa will end migration. We have to change our narrative and have to accept that in a globalised world, mobility of people has increased. People have a right to stay, a right to go and a right to return. Those who stay have a right to an enabling environment and fair chances to realise their needs as well as livelihood and labour rights.

## Migration as a survival strategy

As feminists we challenge development and trade policies to make sure that they won’t harm but empower women to secure their rights. Those who decide to go should have secure ways to migrate, encounter fair migration policies and access to livelihood and labour rights in another country because migrants have become a huge pool to be channelled into modern slavery which is highly gendered.

Migration is here to stay, and should no longer be considered to be deviant or default behaviour but as a survival strategy which is shaped by intersectional social categories like gender, race, class, age etc. Governments tend to divide migrants into good “real” refugees and bad economic refugees, into useful and useless people, skilled professionals and much needed care workers, and unwanted others. Additionally, they prefer to focus on trafficking as an entry point for criminalisation and victimisation instead of talking about migration and refuge, and phrasing fair immigration policies which refer to the universal liberal norm of freedom of movement.

In order to ensure migrants’ rights, European countries must phrase human rights-based immigration laws beyond ethnisation and culturalisation, racism and xenophobia and the securitisation discourse. As feminists we challenge policies and public opinion in our countries to ensure that the work, agency and identities of migrant women are respected, and that they don’t face violence and any rights violation. Let’s explore and invent new spaces how to fight for this in solidarity.

**Note:**

This text is based on the presentation of Christa Wichterich at the workshop “Women’s migration between agency, exploitation and resistance”, organized by Le Monde selon les femmes on 7.3.2018 in Brussels, in the framework of the Erasmus+ project.





## 4 • WHY DO WOMEN EMIGRATE FROM ERITREA?

### *Network of Eritrean Women*

Eritrea is a small country in the Horn of Africa that won its independence from Ethiopia after 30 years of war in 1991. The ruling party in the country is the only party in power since independence; a ratified constitution of 1997 has never been implemented.

### Women in the national liberation struggle

Eritrean women made up one third of the military force during the armed struggle for independence of Eritrea. Like Eritrean men, many women joined the liberation fronts to equally contribute their share towards the struggle for independence as well as hoping to achieve greater gender equality within Eritrean society. The dream and aspiration of independence was to build a democratic country ruled by rule of law where individuals' rights are respected and all citizens have the same opportunity for a better life.

After independence former female fighters faced many challenges to reintegrate into civilian life. The progress made to advance gender equality during the 30 years struggle has deteriorated post-independence.

### Post-independence: gender-based discriminations

Currently, the political and social situation in Eritrea is hostile to women and the general population. Women in Eritrea remain discriminated in all areas of life. There is a number of legal reforms aimed at formalizing gender equality, however they are not upheld in practice.

Women are disproportionately affected by the inability to access justice. Customary and religion-based laws are applied particularly in family disputes and inheritance issues, and they are not in favour of women. Economic hardship and repression, the social and cultural hierarchy deprive Eritrean women from equally accessing land and other resources, and more importantly, women have limited control of their lives as human beings. In their aspiration for higher education, many women and girls face negative attitudes from their families, community and teachers.

There is a high incidence of domestic violence in Eritrea, but as there are no independent NGOs in the country, it is impossible to know the extent and to provide support to these women. There are also other forms of traditional harmful practices toward girls like FGM.

## Political repression and its gendered impact

Former female fighters except those few in the government positions and who are educated, are mostly dependent on their families without any support from the government. And some of the senior former female fighters are languishing in prison without a legal due process. They have no right to defend themselves, no family visitation; they haven't seen their kids since their illegal detention, no financial support to their immediate family.

The Eritrean government's repressive policies affect all segments of Eritrean society, but women are by far worse affected, due to the sexual and gender-based violence in the military. Young women have to serve in the indefinite national service. To avoid the harassment and abuses in the military service, they are exposed to take dangerous and unplanned decisions. For example, the number of Eritrean girls marrying at the age of 14 or 15 has increased, as families marry them off early, so they may avoid military service. Many girls also get pregnant so that they can be demobilised from the military but do not have the skills or education to get decent employment. The extent of single parenting has increased.

Some women leave the country illegally, risking their lives. Upon leaving Eritrea, they are exposed to sexual harassment, rape, sexual slavery and pregnancy by traffickers. Some are kidnapped, tortured and killed for organ harvesting, others find death in the Sahara and the Mediterranean Sea. Survivors suffer sustained physical, mental and emotional trauma.

## Exiled women engage for empowerment

The *Network of Eritrean Women (NEW)* is an independent organisation of exiled Eritrean women that promotes the rights of women and advocates against all forms of gender-based violence in the Eritrean society.

Like the African proverb says, "If you educate a girl, you educate the whole nation", a society has to educate and empower girls and women to achieve a healthy, self-sufficient and happy family as a basis for a positive impact in the society and national development.

It is important that the voice of Eritrean women is heard, and without the participation of women, peace cannot come to Eritrea. "I am not free while any woman is unfree, even when her shackles vary from my own" (Audre Lorde).

The *Network of Eritrean Women* works with all Eritrean groups to ensure that the needs of Eritrean women are addressed and that they are part of the discussions on peace, sustainable development and stability.

**Note:**

- Text compiled from the brochures:
- Network of Eritrean Women (n.d.): The Status of Women in Eritrea
- Network of Eritrean Women (2017): A Brief look at the Network of Eritrean Women
- The brochures were shared at the discussion on "Gender, Migration and Security. Security concerns of female refugees from Eritrea and the Horn of Africa" organized by WIDE in cooperation with the Network of Eritrean Women on 13.10.2017 in Vienna, in the framework of the Erasmus+ project.

**For further reading:**

- Grotti, Vanessa et.al. (2018): Shifting vulnerabilities: gender and reproductive care on the migrant trail to Europe. Comparative Migration Studies, 2018, Volume 6, Number 1, <https://comparativemigrationstudies.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s40878-018-0089-z>
- The Guardian (2018): Captured, raped, ransomed: the kidnappers preying on Eritrean refugees, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2018/jan/19/everyday-thing-kidnappers-preying-on-eritrean-refugees>



## 5 • VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN A CONTEXT OF SECURITIZATION AND CRIMINALIZATION OF NGOS AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS DEFENDERS

*Rosa Belen Agirregomezkorta*

The United Nations define violence against women as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life” (UN 1993).

In the international arena, violence against women in conflict contexts has gained attention over the last years through the 1325 UN Security Council Resolution on women, peace and security. The dynamics of gender-based violence in “peace” situations have since then been addressed by new human rights tools (e.g. the Istanbul Convention or the Palermo Protocol). Nevertheless, the level of gender-based violence remains outrageously high.

### Violence against women and global economic features

Activists from the global South have largely denounced and made visible that there are connections between feminicides and violence against women with depredatory extractive economic activities. Global corporations’ appropriation of land and their production and business practises with disregard to human rights and protection of the environment have an impact on livelihoods and women’s bodies. The murder of the Honduran activist Berta Cáceres<sup>7</sup> reflects how women who are leading the fight against transnational capital and defending human rights and indigenous rights, are specifically targeted.

According to Rita Segato (2016), these phenomena can be interpreted as symptoms of interlinked dynamics and processes where patriarchy and exploitative capitalism are central. Rita Segato views these current violent dynamics against women as a “war against women”.

For the last years we have been observing the predominance of a security agenda over democracy and freedom, a serious backlash for human rights, a growing disabling environment for civil society organisations (see CIVICUS 2013), and a rise of neoconservative discourses against ‘gender’ and women’s rights, especially those

<sup>7</sup> Co-founder of the Council of Indigenous and Popular Organizations of Honduras (COPINH); she received the prestigious Goldman Environmental Prize in 2013 for her work organizing against the Agua Zarca hydroelectric dam, a project disrupting the Gualcarque River and Río Blanco, considered sacred by Lenca people. Read interview with Berta Cáceres at <https://www.jacobinmag.com/2016/03/berta-caceres-murder-honduras-agua-zarca-dam/>

referring to sexual and reproductive rights and LGBTBIQ rights.<sup>8</sup> Also, the austerity measures in the name of 'economic crisis' (originated by speculative practices and inexistence of control over banks and corporations), have seriously reduced and undermined social policies, affecting seriously vulnerable groups and people and as well NGOs and CSOs, as instruments of social action and solidarity work.

## **Criminalisation of social protest in the global South**

Private actors and corporations' interests are put in the core of policymaking processes, leaving at the margins the civil society organisations' contributions and agendas. All over the world we observe a tightening of rights and freedoms affecting citizenship, unions and CSOs (e.g. freedom of association, right of expression, right to seek and secure funding), and a criminalization of social movements and protests as well as attacks against women and women activists. The Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders has highlighted that certain groups of human rights defenders face particular risks (UN 2010, 2015), noting that women human rights defenders who work on sexual and reproductive health and rights are more at risk of being targets of certain forms of violence, as they are perceived as challenging 'traditional' notions of the family.

In Honduras, Guatemala and Mexico, many women human rights defenders have been murdered in the past few years, while many more have received threats to their lives, have been forced to flee, or have suffered physical attacks, often including sexual violence, and this increase is, in large part, due to authoritarian policies and militarization (see Carlsen, 2012).

## **The EU's security agenda and violence against women**

In the case of Europe, we can find a nexus between the EU's security agenda and violence against women. The so-called 'migration crisis' in Europe was on the one hand a result of the ongoing conflict in Syria where millions of people were forced to flee their homes, and on the other hand an expression of the EU's member states' shameful rejection to protect human rights and undermining refugee protection system.<sup>9</sup> Testimonies and research have shown the high risk to which especially women and girls are exposed to suffer gender-based violence during the migration process. Their situation puts them in a state of higher vulnerability to male violence, including in those spaces alleged to be safe and protective for them, like shelters, camps and centres.

The main concern for European governments currently seems to be the reinforcement of security through counter-terrorism measures that undermined human rights. In Amnesty International's words "2016 witnessed a profound paradigm shift: a move from the view that it is the role of governments to provide security so that people can enjoy their rights, to the view that governments must restrict people's rights, in order to provide security. The result has been a dangerous redrawing of the boundaries between the powers of the state and the rights of individuals." (Amnesty International 2017, 43)

<sup>8</sup> See for instance the "One of Us" initiative, lead by right wing conservative politicians of diverse European countries advocating to stop the EU funding to NGOs which provide sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) services in developing countries; or the Trump so called "gag rule" on abortion.

<sup>9</sup> But this is not new. As Amnesty International states, "the lack of solidarity with refugees and fellow EU member states was typical of the migration policies of most EU countries, which united in their plans to restrict entry and expedite return." (Amnesty International, 2017, p. 41).



Minority groups and collectives, human rights and women's rights are being left behind in the name of security and social order, as it was reflected by activists both in the WIDE+ 2016 Conference held in Brussels on "Movements, Borders, Rights? Feminist Perspectives on global issues in Europe", and years before, at the WIDE Annual Conference on "Migration in the Context of Globalisation: Women's Human Rights at Risk", held in Bucharest, Romania in 2010. The lack of progress over the last years shows the increasing disabling environment for fulfilling women's rights and the zero interest of governments in accomplishing their responsibilities and commitments.

What do women do to confront this situation? Women's organisations and feminist movements all over the world are advocating and demanding the respect of human rights and the application of existing protection mechanisms, such as Istanbul Convention<sup>10</sup>, CEDAW and the 1325 UN Resolution through the collection of data and the elaboration of shadow reports at national level (see CEDAW Sombra España 2017). Women are continuously organising themselves, and they denounce human rights violations and the multiple forms of gender-based violence in all kind of fora.

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<sup>10</sup> The Istanbul Convention is the first European instrument which creates a comprehensive legal framework and approach to combat violence against women.



# EUROPEAN REFUGEE AND MIGRATION POLITICS

## 6 • GENDER EQUALITY, MIGRANTS, REFUGEES AND EUROPEAN LAW

Aleksandra Solik

### Introduction: Universal human rights instruments

Equality between women and men is one of the basic principles on which the European Union (EU) has been founded and one of its fundamental values. The EU draws on the values that are rooted in the Universal Bill of Human Rights and other UN documents such as the *Convention on all forms of discrimination against women* (CEDAW) and the *Beijing Platform for Action*. The approach of EU towards non-EU citizens who seek international protection is also founded on the UN treaty - the 1951 *Convention relating to the status of Refugees* (Geneva Convention) and its 1967 Protocol.

Other universal documents such as the 1325 *Resolution on women, peace, and security* of the UN Security Council (1325 Resolution) and relevant complementary resolutions significantly contribute to understanding the forms of violence that women are exposed to during the conflict and post-conflict situations. CEDAW in turn provides two General Recommendations (GR) which are dedicated specifically to *working migrant women* (GR No 26) and to *the gender-related dimensions of refugee status, asylum, nationality and statelessness of women* (GR No 32).

Moreover, the alternative protocol to CEDAW provides the concrete tool – the communication procedure – that allows the victims of alleged violation of the rights protected by the Convention to submit an individual or a group complain to the Committee monitoring its implementation. In addition, the legal framework of the Council of Europe sets additional women's human rights standards for the EU and its Member States in the *Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence* (Istanbul Convention) which was signed by but has not yet entered into force in the European Union.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> The recent information about the status of ratifications of the Istanbul Convention is available at the Council of Europe Convention website, <https://www.coe.int/en/web/istanbul-convention/about-the-convention>

## EU Fundamental Rights

Both EU Treaties<sup>12</sup> as well as the Charter of Fundamental Rights of European Union (which has an equal rank to that of the Treaties), guarantee the right to equality between women and men in all areas with respect for human dignity, right to non-discrimination, to justice and to pluralism. Under the European as well as International human rights law, the European Union and all Member States (MS) also have an obligation to mainstream gender equality into all their policies, including these dealing with migration and asylum.

*Equality between women and men must be ensured in **all areas**, including employment, work and pay.*

*Charter of Fundamental Rights of European Union, Article 23*

All EU directives which regulate the common EU immigration policy, contain the statements confirming the respect for gender equality. However most of them do not provide the MSs with guidelines how to translate their responsibility to gender mainstream into practice. They also lack the provisions that would, for instance, make the MS accountable for monitoring the observance of gender equality in their own laws and policies.

This shortcoming of EU law shall not keep the MSs from fulfilling their obligation to ensure that their laws and policies on migration, refugees and asylum are free from gender discrimination and to guarantee that female migrant and refugees can enjoy the equal rights of women and men. Since all EU MS are parties to the CEDAW, both above-mentioned General Recommendations shall be used as a binding guidance on how to shape the gender sensitive policies free from gender and other intersecting forms of discrimination against women.

## Migrant women's multiple discriminations not adequately addressed

The EU gender equality legislation, transposed into the MSs' law systems, seems to provide a good legal protection against the discrimination on the grounds of gender at the labour market to the legally working migrant women. The Equal Treatment Directive<sup>13</sup> provides protection from direct and indirect discrimination which include inter alia: harassment and sexual harassment, instruction to discriminate against persons on grounds of sex, any less favourable treatment of a woman related to pregnancy or maternity leave.

However, even in case of legally working migrant women, the equal treatment State laws may prove ineffective due to the gender dimension of the phenomenon of migration. Migrant women often experience multiple discriminations where, for instance, sexist attitudes towards them intersect with racism and xenophobia. The EU directives lack provisions that would allow to effectively address the cases of working women, including female migrants, who face multiple discrimination where gender is only one of the grounds.

<sup>12</sup> Consolidated versions of the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union

<sup>13</sup> Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation (recast)

The fact that the EU equality directives are regulated by separate laws – the Equal Treatment Directive referring to gender equality, and the Racial and Ethnic Directive<sup>14</sup> – may additionally complicate the approach towards multiple discriminations. The latter imposes the obligation on the Commission to gender mainstream the report on the application of the Directive, and notes that in implementing the principle of equal treatment irrespective of racial or ethnic origin, the Community should promote equality between men and women. However, also in this case the law does not provide any specific provisions that would hold the MSs accountable for taking adequate measures to achieve this aim. The Equal Treatment Directive in turn does not recognize other grounds of discrimination than gender, thus missing the issue of multiple discrimination against women, including against migrant women. In addition, both directives fail to cover the same areas of protection. These gaps may influence the approach to multiple discrimination by the MSs and be reflected in their legal frameworks.<sup>15</sup>

### CEDAW recommendation on women migrant workers

The importance of CEDAW should be highlighted as it is the only International treaty which addresses in a comprehensive way the issue of women's human rights. Its *General Recommendation No. 26 on women migrant workers* defines clearly the obligations of the State parties towards the working migrant women and constitutes a good tool to advance the rights of migrant women.

#### **Women migrant workers**

*States parties should ensure ... that contracts for women migrant workers are legally valid. In particular, they should ensure that occupations dominated by women migrant workers, such as domestic work and some forms of entertainment, are protected by labour laws, including wage and hour regulations, health and safety codes and holiday and vacation leave regulations. The laws should include mechanisms for monitoring workplace conditions of migrant women, especially in the kinds of jobs where they dominate;*

*CEDAW General Recommendation No. 26 on women migrant workers, par. 26(b)*

Under the *EU Charter of Fundamental Rights* all workers have the right to appropriate working conditions. This is however problematic in case of migrant women who work in the low-paid jobs and/or within the informal labour market which is often related to care, cleaning and other domestic works. Such types of work make migrant women vulnerable to different forms of discrimination. They may be at risk of not receiving or receiving delayed or diminished payments and of being exposed to sexual abuse or exploitation.

#### **Fair and just working conditions**

1. *Every worker has the right to working conditions which respect his or her health, safety and dignity.*
2. *Every worker has the right to limitation of maximum working hours, to daily and weekly rest periods and to an annual period of paid leave.*

*Charter of Fundamental Rights of European Union, Article 31*

<sup>14</sup> Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin

<sup>15</sup> Burri et al (2013a)

The *EU Employer Sanctions Directive* imposes an obligation on the employers who illegally employ workers to pay any outstanding remuneration also to illegally employed non-EU citizens. Moreover, the agreed level of remuneration should be at least as high as the minimum wages or established practice in the relevant occupational branches.<sup>16</sup> This provision may seem useful in case of migrant women who are denied remuneration. However, it is rather unlikely that it would be applied by those whose status of stay is irregular unless the fact of illegal employment is revealed by the authorities. Before it happens the fear of deportation will rather prevent them from claiming their right to payment. Nevertheless, it is the obligation of the MSs to guarantee that migrant women who are entitled to work are employed in the legal way.

## The EU Family Reunification Directive

The *Family Reunification Directive* and the *Action Plan on the integration of third country nationals* (2016-2017) reflects the special attention that is given by EU to the integration of the third country nationals with special attention given to the needs of women. The latter document names the following areas of crucial importance to implement the EU integration policies: (1) education, (2) labour market integration and access to vocational training, (3) access to basic services, (4) active participation and social inclusion. In the Action Plan the EU Commission confirmed their commitment to ensure that concerns related to gender and the situation of migrant women are taken into account in relevant policies and funding initiatives, and declared to engage in a dialogue with MS to ensure it. The document points to the concrete actions which are being expected from the MS and which can be a subject to monitoring led by NGOs.

### **Family reunification**

*The verification of willingness to integrate may take the form of an examination on basic skills deemed necessary for this purpose. This examination should be gender sensitive to take into account the specific situation of some women that might, for instance, have poor level of education. (...)*

*Special attention should also be paid to the fact that in several parts of the world women and girls have less access to education and might have a lower literacy level than men. Therefore, MSs may not refuse entry and stay on its territory to a family member ... on the sole ground that this family member, while still abroad, did not succeed in the integration examination provided for in the legislation of that MS.*

*Guidance for application of Directive on the right to family reunification, p. 16*

The *EU Family Reunification Directive*, which regulates the right to family reunification by non-EU citizens who reside lawfully in the territory of the Member States, refers to the situations of the dependent family members who often are women. The guidelines<sup>17</sup> interpreting how the law should be implemented draw the attention of the MSs to their specific responsibilities related to the process of verifying whether the female family members are willing to enter the EU meet the necessary conditions such as their ability and willingness to integrate. The MSs are obliged to make sure that relevant procedures are gender sensitive and take into account the background of women, including their economic

<sup>16</sup> Directive 2009/52/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2009 providing for minimum standards on sanctions and measures against employers of illegally staying third-country nationals, Article 6.1(a)

<sup>17</sup> Communication on guidance for application of Directive 2003/86/EC on the right to family reunification



situation, level of education, position in the country of origin, etc. In case when a woman has to pass the specific examinations, MSs should ensure that their level of difficulty, their costs or other factors which might be difficult for a woman to overcome will not become barriers to achieve the permit.

Also the situations that frequently become part of the women's and girls' experience are addressed by the Family Reunification Directive. Accordingly, the MSs should apply a gender sensitive approach to women who entered the EU by virtue of family reunification but whose family relations have broken down and who are in particularly difficult situation. For example, such situations may be the risk of female genital mutilation, the cases of violence against a woman and her children, certain cases of forced marriages, or cases where she would be in a particularly difficult situation if forced to return to the country of origin. Women who meet these conditions should be granted an autonomous residence permit and hence be protected from further violations of their rights.

The interpretation of this EU law is strengthened by the provisions of the Istanbul Convention which also imposes the obligation on the State Parties to grant an autonomous residence permit to female migrants and refugees who are victims of violence against women or domestic violence and whose residence status depends on that of the spouse or partner. It should be noted, however, that not all EU MSs have acceded the Convention whereas the EU directives are binding within all EU states.

***Overcome dependency related to family reunification***

*the integration of family members should be promoted. For that purpose, they should be granted a status independent of that of the sponsor, in particular in cases of breakup of marriages and partnerships, and access to education, employment and vocational training on the same terms as the person with whom they are reunited, under the relevant conditions.*

*Council Directive on the right to family reunification, par. 15*

## **Refugee women and girls**

The *Charter of Fundamental Rights of European Union* in Article 18 is the first EU document that guarantees the right to asylum with due respect for the rules of the Geneva Convention of 1951 and the Protocol of 1967 relating to the status of refugees. The interpretation of the Geneva Convention, which was gender-blind at the time of adoption, evolved throughout the years to eventually incorporate the women's human rights perspective into the treaty.

Under the *Geneva Convention* the refugee status can be granted to a person facing a well-founded fear of persecution because of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, which means that there has to be a link between one or more grounds of the Convention and the fear of being persecuted. Because of the closed catalogue of grounds, which additionally does not include gender, women are usually considered as part of a *particular social group* unless they can be linked to other Convention ground or grounds. This solution, however, does not transform the Convention automatically into a gender sensitive treaty. Therefore steps have been taken to ensure that it becomes consistent with the framework of women's experience and meets their gender-related needs.

## Geneva Convention and Gender

The UNHCR Guidelines on International Protection<sup>18</sup> respond to this demand and present the gender-sensitive interpretation. It notes that the tendency to perceive women seeking refugee status as 'particular social group' may result in overlooking other grounds that could prove applicable in their case. It is also recognized that women are often persecuted by the private actors and that documenting the persecution may become a serious challenge for them. Moreover, the Guidelines name the forms of States' neglect to provide women with proper protection from persecution.<sup>19</sup>

### ***Gender-specific criteria for determining refugee status***

*There is no doubt that rape and other forms of gender-related violence, such as dowry related violence, female genital mutilation, domestic violence, and trafficking, are acts which inflict severe pain and suffering – both mental and physical – and which have been used as forms of persecution, whether perpetrated by State or private actors.*

*Handbook and Guidelines on Procedures and Criteria for Determining Refugee Status under the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, 2011, p. 81*

## Common European Asylum System

The Common European Asylum System (CEAS) regulates the issues of international protection to third-country nationals and stateless persons in accordance with the Geneva Convention and the fundamental values of the European Union. The directives set the standards of reception of persons seeking international protection<sup>20</sup>, of granting asylum<sup>21</sup>, subsidiary protection or the refugee status as well as the content of the protection<sup>22</sup>.

According to these directives the MSs are responsible for taking into account gender-related aspects when examining and recognizing the acts of and reasons for persecution and well-founded fear. The list of acts of persecution names specifically the sexual violence and acts of a gender-specific nature. The Directives state that private actors become actors of the persecution if their victim is not provided with the effective protection by the state or the agents that control the state.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, the MSs' obligations which can influence the situation of women are related to access to and the quality of the interviewing process. The Directives ensure that each dependent adult shall be given the opportunity of a personal interview. The individual interviews aimed to examine the qualifications for international protection, and the relevant assessment process should be carried out in a gender-sensitive way.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Guidelines on International Protection in: UNHCR, 2011, Handbook and Guidelines on Procedures and Criteria for Determining Refugee Status under the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, Reissued Geneva

<sup>19</sup> UNHCR 2011, Handbook and Guidelines on Procedures and Criteria for Determining Refugee Status under the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, Reissued Geneva, pp. 79-89

<sup>20</sup> The Reception Conditions Directive (2013/33/EU)

<sup>21</sup> The Asylum Procedures Directive: (2013)

<sup>22</sup> The Qualification Directive (2011/95/EU)

<sup>23</sup> The Qualification Directive (Articles 6,7,8,9,10)

<sup>24</sup> The Asylum Procedures Directive, Articles, 4.3, 14-16.

There are some minimum standards that should be met by MS, which include some gender-related aspects. The CEAS directives address the specific situations of the vulnerable persons and require that they should be taken into account in the national laws. The term “vulnerable” refers *inter alia* to pregnant women; persons who have been subjected to torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence, such as victims of female genital mutilation; victims of human trafficking and single parents with minor children who often are women. The areas where minimum standards should be ensured include: housing; prevention of and protection from gender-based violence within the premises and accommodation centres, health care providing at least treatment of illnesses and of serious mental disorders. Attention given to gender-related aspects whenever relevant is also required.

Moreover, an obligation of the MSs to provide the beneficiaries of the international protection with the same access to employment, to procedures for recognition of qualifications and to health care as the nationals is included in one of the Directives. The issue of social assistance is regulated on different rules. Nevertheless, no gender discrimination is allowed in any of these areas.

## UN Security Council Resolution 1325

The *1325 Resolution on Women, Peace and Security* (2000) of United Nations plays an important role in shaping the EU MSs’ policies addressing the situation of female refugees. The Resolution acknowledges the disproportionate impact that the armed conflicts have on women and girls and recognizes the urgent need to respond to such situation. It calls upon all actors to incorporate a gender perspective into the peace processes and conflicts resolution, to increase the participation of women in these processes, to protect women and girls from gender-based violence and to put an end to impunity for such crimes. Since the implementation of the Resolution is an obligation of all UN Member States, the majority of EU MSs adopted the relevant Plans of Action in order to fulfill their commitments. These Plans of Action usually play an important role on the agenda of organisations dealing with situation and rights of female refugees.

## Istanbul Convention and asylum: recognition of gender-based violence

The Council of Europe *Istanbul Convention*<sup>25</sup> is a first human rights treaty that directly regulates the issues of women’s right to asylum and recognizes gender-based violence against women as form of the persecution. The Convention designs a comprehensive framework for the protection of and assistance to all victims of all forms of violence against women, both during peace and conflict situations, and without discrimination on any ground where the catalogue of grounds includes: sex, gender, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, state of health, disability, marital status, migrant or refugee status, or other status.

<sup>25</sup> Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence

***Istanbul Convention, Article 60***

- 1. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that gender-based violence against women may be recognised as a form of persecution... and as a form of serious harm giving rise to complementary/ subsidiary protection. ...*
- 3. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to develop gender-sensitive reception procedures and support services for asylum-seekers as well as gender guidelines and gender-sensitive asylum procedures, including refugee status determination and application for international protection.*

***General Recommendation to CEDAW N° 32***

*Asylum procedures of State parties should ensure that women are able to lodge individual asylum applications and be heard separately, even if there are part of a family seeking asylum.*

These grounds together with the Convention's definitions of violence against women, domestic violence and gender-based violence as well as with the forms of violence that it names, constitute the basis for interpreting the right to refugee status and/or to asylum that should be guaranteed to women and girls who seek protection.

Under the treaty the State Parties are responsible for ensuring that all Convention grounds are given a gender-sensitive interpretation as well as for granting refugee status and asylum to women and girls seeking protection when it is established that they fear the persecution for one or more of these grounds.

## **CEDAW General Recommendation on gender-based violence and asylum**

CEDAW Convention through the *General Recommendation N° 35 on gender-based violence against women* names the obligations of the State parties related to the asylum centres. Under Article 31 the States should ensure effective measures for protection of and assistance to women who are complainants of and witnesses to gender-based violence throughout the process of legal proceedings. The States are also responsible for providing mandatory, recurrent and effective capacity-building, education and training for persons working with women in asylum centres so that they could adequately prevent and address gender-based violence against women.

The *General Recommendation N° 32* to CEDAW goes beyond the gender-related dimension of refugee status and asylum and addresses also the issues of nationality and statelessness of women. It draws attention to the consequence of the nationality laws which may seem gender-neutral but in practice may have disproportionately negative impact on the situation of women. GR gives the examples of the regulations and requirements that may, for instance, increase the risk of statelessness of women (e.g. the prohibition of dual nationality) or limit their access to citizenship (e.g. gender-insensitive procedures related with education level or language skills).

## CEAS: Principle of non-refoulement in case of gender-based violence

Article 33 of the *Geneva Convention* of 1951 prohibits the State parties to expel or return a refugee to the frontiers of the territories where *his* life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion. Despite the gender-blind sounding of this principle, it is now interpreted, as already mentioned above, accordingly to the UNHCR Guidelines on International Protection which mainstreams gender perspective into different aspects of international protection in order to ensure that women's cases are not being assessed through the experience of men and that women are not returned to countries where their life or freedom would be at risk or where they would be exposed to gender-related persecution.

The Common European Asylum System recognizes the obligation to protect female victims of different forms of gender-based violence and those who face the well-founded fear of gender-based persecution against refoulement and imposes the obligation on the MSs to respect the principle of non-refoulement in accordance with their international obligation and specifically with Geneva Convention.<sup>26</sup>

### **Common European Asylum System, Article 21**

*1. Member States shall respect the principle of non- refoulement in accordance with their international obligations.*

*The Qualification Procedure*

## Istanbul Convention and non-refoulement

The Istanbul Convention is the first treaty which guarantees that female victims of gender-based violence the protection from refoulement. The Convention does not allow any exceptions to this rule if in the country of return their life would be at risk or where they might be subjected to torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. The States are also responsible for taking all necessary measures in order to put this rule into life.

### **Istanbul Convention, Article 61**

*2. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that victims of violence against women who are in need of protection, regardless of their status or residence, shall not be returned under any circumstances to any country where their life would be at risk or where they might be subjected to torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.*

## Holding the states accountable

Civil societies play an important role in keeping the states accountable for fulfilling their international commitments. The UN human rights mechanisms, and CEDAW in particular provide the non-governmental organisations with procedures that support their monitoring and advocacy activities. These procedures allow them to contribute to and participate in the reporting processes of the States' parties. Organisations can also contribute to general discussions focused on different issues that affect women and which require more attention from the State parties.

<sup>26</sup> See: The Qualification Directive, Article 21, and the Asylum Procedures Directive, Articles 9.3, 35, 38.

### Note on the resources:

All resources for European and international law this article is based on can be found in Annex a.

### Further resources (selection):

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## 7 • SITUATION OF REFUGEE WOMEN IN THE CONTEXT OF CURRENT REFUGEE POLICIES IN EUROPE

*Ulla Björnberg*

### Refugees in Europe: general trends

The number of migrants from non-EU countries peaked in 2015-2016, from 627 thousand in 2014 and around 1.3 million in both 2015 and 2016 (see Eurostat 2017). The massive immigration in 2015 propelled the EU to take actions to somehow distribute the refugees between the member states and to develop political measures to support and control the relationships between national citizens and migrants. Of those asylum seekers who arrived in Europe in 2015-2016 about 52 % (2,1 million persons) were still waiting for decisions about a permit to stay in 2017. Afghans, Syrians and Iraqi citizens made the majority (53%). About 40% received their applications approved at least temporarily in 2017. Among those who have received a negative response on their first time application, a majority applies a second time. The waiting period for final decisions can be more than a year or even longer depending on the country (see Pew Research Center 2017).

There are differences between countries in regards to migration patterns and gender balance in granting asylum protection. In general, more men than women migrate into the EU. Gender balance in migration is also a matter of rules for family reunification.

### Regulations of refugee migration in EU

A recent publication by the EU on immigration and asylum displays a large number of measures that have been undertaken in membership countries (see European Migration Law.eu 2017). The report investigates on the basis of membership reports what different changes in laws and regulations that have been undertaken in their countries. In general, most measures have to do with restrictions of rights in dealing with refugees, asylum seekers and refugees who remain in the countries where they have been denied asylum or decisions that they shall return.

Gender differences were not reported. However, some countries have listed vulnerable groups, among which persons with mental disorders, children and victims of trafficking are mentioned, especially in regards of reception and application procedures. Few references to the vulnerabilities of women are mentioned. However, special actions and initiatives have been undertaken within a framework of the EU strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings 2012-2016 including women, men, boys and girls.

A few countries have simplified requirements for family reunification, but most countries have introduced legislative measures that restrict family reunification of refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection. Restrictions in family reunification have gender consequences. Regulations regarding family reunification have consequences for women and children who may start to embark on a refugee route on their own. It changes the gender balance in refugee strategies. Families might be separated for an unforeseeable time. It brings reduced safety for women and children.

The EU *Reception conditions directive* demands that the reception of refugees within the member states should meet with similar standards (see [EuropeanMigrationLaw.eu](http://EuropeanMigrationLaw.eu) 2017). There should be common standards and respect of justice and human rights of refugees. Research from ongoing studies in hot spots in Greece gave some examples (Bousiou, 2016). Bousiou argued that on the basis of her studies that “there is a considerable lack of adequate material reception, there are severe violations of refugee’s rights, and detention of refugees is mainstreamed and applied in most cases. In this context, the practice stands in outright opposition to the EU directive. Member states implement the directive differently and treat refugees differently. Reports from UNHCR, Amnesty International tell that there is an overall lack of basic protection in refugee and transition camps. Camps are overcrowded and often fail to provide appropriate accommodation and protected facilities.

## Female refugees and asylum seekers

The issue of integration give ample evidence of the vulnerability and discrimination of female refugees. Women are exposed to violence and rape in the hands of smugglers. They risk getting involved in trafficking for sexual exploitation but also for work in a black economy. The kinds of risks vary depending on the specific migration routes. For instance women from Africa moving to Italy and Spain are to a very high percent exposed to sexual exploitation of various kinds (see CEDAW Sombra España 2017). Women travelling from Syria and Afghanistan, Libya, Morocco are often harassed, sexually exploited and exposed to risk of trafficking.

Women in so called hot spots in refugee camps are facing uncomfortable circumstances in refugee camps where they don’t have access to proper health care, sheltered spaces for hygiene and walking areas where they can move without being exposed of threats and poor information on rights and health care. The hotspots are consequences of the EU and Turkey agreement on sending refugees to Turkey. Refugees arriving in Greece are put into hot spots while waiting to be transported (back) to Turkey, where they are supposed to apply for asylum.

## Women and security

Women’s security in enforced migration is a part of a chain of strategies in societies for creating security for their own security. Securitization can lead to vicious circles and even escalation of feelings of threats and demands for stronger security measures. Various approaches to create security at the level of society have an impact on the security for the individual women (and men). Security for one part may create insecurity for another part. Responses to threats can create new threats and security problems.

Rhetoric used is important; the ways in which risks and security is labelled and framed within a causal model of thinking. Risk rhetoric propel policy makers to focus on restriction measures, based on negative thinking of risks and threats towards citizens and of social costs in the host country. From this discourse xenophobic attitudes are developed. As a result, there are numerous unintended consequences of securitization, according to Karyotis (2016). The unintended consequences are often only poorly analysed. A continued reluctance to receive refugees is discernible in many EU member states, as is the rise of right-wing xenophobic political groups that encourage suspicion and objection toward the reception of refugees.

#### Note:

This text is based on presentations and discussions at the conference on "Gender, Refugees and Security", hosted by GADIP (Gender and development in practice), 21-22 October 2016, in Gothenburg, Sweden.

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## 8 • REFLECTIONS ON CARE AND MIGRATION

*Marcela de la Peña Valdivia*

Migrations and migrants are too often misunderstood and oppressed by very restrictive policies both in the developed and developing countries. Migrant women have been invisible for a long time. Gender statistics only appeared in the 1990s and revealed stereotypes: men migrate and economically contribute to their families and home countries, while women do not have a migratory project, if not a family project – they are only followers.

### Motives for women to migrate

Women migrants are looking for work opportunities and a better life. Migratory phenomena are linked to the willingness of people to migrate to rich countries which are close to their borders. Various reasons push women to migrate. It may involve developing a strategy to bypass an economic crisis and/or a lack of employment in their home country; to support their family economically and the aspiration to gain more independence and autonomy.

On the labour side, the qualifications of immigrant women are poorly officially recognized by the host country, even though many of them are highly qualified. When they have the right to work, the majority of them are oriented toward domestic work or industrial cleaning for companies and public places. The globalization of domestic tasks carried out by women (care for children, sick persons and the elderly) is the main employment sectors for immigrant women (see *Le Monde selon les femmes* 2018).

### Care in the economy

The economy consists of agreements and institutions. Within these, women and men participate in a process of creating well-being through the management of available resources, mutual care and social security.

It is Carol Gilligan in her book “*In a Different Voice*” (1982) who first used the word ‘care’ as a reflection on ‘moral’ from the experiences of women who have developed interpersonal relationships and who created social bonds. The goal is that the entire society may develop it and live well. She also criticizes the economic and social system that advocates for productivity as a value and prefers to externalize the harder part to poor and migrant women instead of distributing housework and care between women and men.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the care became professional inside the house (nurturing care) with the domestic staff, nurses, and maids – white women – were in charge of it.

Nevertheless, 'dirty' work was done by non-white and/or migrant women (Laurent 2017). True Knijn and Monique Kremer (see Batthyany 2001) define care as the daily provision of social, physical, psychic and emotional attention given to people. This care provision can assume different characteristics. Care can be provided by a paid or unpaid work, professionally and by moral obligation.

In every society men's role are more visible and recognized than women's. This is mainly because men are being paid for their productive work while women receive lower wages or none or are to be monopolized by reproductive work. In these societies men perform jobs which are taken into account in national accounts systems. Most often they do not do domestic or household work which remains invisible. In a community, they are generally the ones occupying decision-making positions while women carry out practical and logistical work.

### ***Sexual division of labour***

*The term 'sexual division of labour' refers to the place, responsibilities and works assigned to women and men based on 'gender roles' and not on the abilities and skills of each one (see Le Monde selon les femmes 2007). There are three roles assigned to women:*

- *The reproductive role: it includes domestic task - necessary to ensure maintenance and biological reproduction (the responsibility to give birth and to raise children); social reproduction (care and maintenance of the workforce: adults and children, sick and addicted persons, the elderly); care for the future workforce (babies and school-aged children) or of the older generation (care for the elderly). The reproductive role covers the various aspects which are fundamental for life sustainability.*
- *The productive role: it includes paid work (in cash or in kind) for the production of goods having exchange value; for subsistence or domestic production of goods having a use value and also a potential exchange value. For women involved in agricultural production it includes their work as independent farmers as well as being farmers' wife or salaried workers.*
- *The social and community role: it includes community administration activities that ensure the services and cohesion of the community. This role is assumed (partially) by public authorities, groups or individuals. A person raising its voice as a citizen endorses this role. Communities often make it possible to ask questions on politics, justice or human rights.*

### **Who takes decisions at household level?**

Women's activities significantly contribute to societies' development but paradoxically they also often represent an obstacle to freedom, independence and women development. Within many communities, women and children (girls and sometimes boy) are the only ones to bear daily tasks. This accumulation of work and the lack of time can make women vulnerable to certain illnesses due to fatigue and stress. That is why women and men must work closely together for the wellbeing of the household. Beyond the division of labour within the household it is also important to reflect on the way decisions are being taken inside the house. Who takes the important decisions? What kind of decision? By valuing the contribution of women to the family and community wellbeing they are allowed to claim their role in terms of decision-making.

The tasks performed by women, are widely regarded as “natural” and are not recognized. This factor severely limits their access to paid work and is in opposition to the fundamental right to work.

The distribution of these three roles between men and women (and young/old, girls and boys) will change according to the place, the culture and the socio-economic environment. In the same society these roles will evolve in time.

## Women's work widely invisible

Women's contributions to economic development are rarely accounted and remain invisible. The fact that domestic tasks are systematically unpaid leads to economic dependence and a lack of autonomy.

Women's roles are often defined by their family and community and are considered as “natural”. Since those tasks do not yield money, they are not classified as productive activities and they are not given value. However, when women take care of others they create emotional bonds and social cohesion. Their role is therefore and should not be reserved only to women.

### **Conceptualisation of ‘care’**

*‘Care’ is defined as the daily provision of social, physical, psychic and emotional attention to others: vulnerable people in the family or community, persons with disabilities, children, and the elderly or people around us. The time spent on others is too often made at the expense of time for oneself, to rest or relax. The care is an activity of the humankind which covers everything we do in order to maintain, perpetuate and repair our world so that we can live as well as possible. This world includes our bodies, the people and our environment as well as everything we seek to connect into a complex network supporting life. Care can be provided by a person, whether paid or unpaid, by a professional or by moral obligation; spontaneously, voluntarily.*

*Care is at the same time a practice (availability, feelings, attitudes, work, services) and a concept of organization of the society where the care of others would be central to maintain, perpetuate and repair our world in order to live there as well as possible together. For the Latin American feminist movements, it is the foundation of life's sustainability and it must be at the centre of the economy.*

## Stereotypes around female migrant workers

According to essentialist assumptions, migrant women are seen as caregivers. The feminization of the immigrant population and a familial vision hide the existence the female workforce:

- The idea of under-qualification of work is based on the belief in ‘supposed feminine qualities’ combined with a racist vision that gives ‘innate’ characteristics to women according to their country of origin;
- Discriminatory public policies contribute to create a cheap and docile workforce, that strengthen the power relations of employers;
- If some sectors are occupied only by a certain segment of the population, we can consider that those dominations or social relations are racial;
- Those social relations of work reproduce relations of domination.



The level of qualification does not protect immigrant women from unemployment, salary gaps, or from being excluded from the political world and from position of responsibility. The intersectionality of discrimination must be taken into account: migrant women are victims of double or triple discrimination based on their biological sex, their origin and economic status.

'Utilitarianist' immigration policies distinguish 'good immigrants' – those who are useful to the immigration society, especially in the care sector – from 'bad immigrants', considered as difficult to employ.

## **Stereotypes lead to discrimination**

Stereotypes about migrant women in the care sector are reflected in different public policies in France and Italy for instance. In France, their integration is done within a Universalist framework seeking to erase all cultural differences. In Italy, the cultural difference is valued but stereotyped. For example, some Italian care training centres point out the bigger 'aptitude' for Latin American migrants to care for the elderly. In those two countries women are still considered to have an 'innate characteristic' for care and thus the sexual division of labour is being promoted.

Women migrants are represented as a burden rather than as a resource, and this representation can be qualified as schizophrenic. Even though they represent a significant source of profit for companies and despite their contribution to public revenues or the crucial role they play in the host country in particular in the developed countries, their contribution remains invisible. They also play an essential economic role regarding the support of households in the developing countries.

On the other hand, professional integration policies orient migrant men towards the construction sector, typically male and visible. This contributes to the achievement of social rights, although there are also men with diplomas who are being "recycled" as cheap labour.

## **Self-organization of (undocumented) migrant women**

Undocumented women are generally the most precarious: they are threatened with eviction and often live in insecurity. They are exploited because they don't have a legal status and the few activities open are poorly paid.

Some women without legal status organize themselves in associations to help each other, to share knowledge and experiences. In Belgium, the *Committee of undocumented women* demands respect for fundamental rights for all, equality between men and women, with or without papers. In Switzerland, the *Collective of Workers without Legal Status* in Geneva was created to make visible undocumented persons and to claim for collective regularization, freedom of movement and the ending of expulsions.

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## 9 • OPEN SOCIETIES WITHIN A FORTRESS? GENDER, MIGRATION AND SECURITY DISCOURSES IN EUROPE

*Annemarie Sancar*

Today, migration is mainly discussed in the context of the war against terrorism and security – as a threat, a danger, a crisis, which allows the states to implement almost any practice of securitization to control potentially suspicious people. This is all sustained by a prejudice-driven media coverage. How can we address these alarming shifts from a humanistic to an exclusively neo-imperialistic European society (Switzerland being part of it), that is still calling itself liberal? I will address a few dominant concepts, contextualizing them from a gender perspective, to stimulate and trigger, to elaborate political projects together.

### Narratives about migration as a threat

The migration regime, in the popular uncontested narrative, is referring to a threatening scenario of criminal energy and terrorism, the fear of losing our standard of life and the modern cultural values, which are to be protected by the states, mainly their security sectors. The narrative is effectively used by stakeholders and institutions, according to economic and political interests of the powerful players. This becomes evident when looking at the political decisions and shifts in the legal and financial systems (see CONCORD 2018).

On the one hand, this is the narrative about the 'other', communicated and perceived and as a threat to 'we' and inserted into the securitization policies. The bordering politics are highlighted as a most effective control mechanism, justifying all sorts of investments including legal and financial shifts. On the other hand, the narrative can be emphasized in the name of the local community, conjuring up the ghost of a looming demographic crisis which can only be prevented with domestic austerity programs, which means budget cuts in social infrastructure. Thus an inner border is created as well, separating the useless from the useful people - evident indeed for migrants crossing the European border to benefit – so the suspicion – from our welfare systems.

### Borders separate in 'we' and 'the other(s)'

Border regimes represent power, and the border lines can be shifted according to the needs to externalize problems, and they are gendered as well. The narrative underpins therefore the idea of a fortress excluding the other for the sake of our security – except if the individual responds submissively to the asylum policies –for women it is the identity of a victim and not as an individual fighting for rights and resisting the hegemonic procedures (see Rigo 2017).

What does security mean when it is based on something called 'war against terrorism'? What kind of securitization does it entail? Looking at the austerity programs, it is certainly not about social security with inclusive health care schemes or provisions. The narrative about "our" security and the 'we'-community is only a way to justify a migration regime focused on the militarization of public space which means: More control, arrests on suspicion, violence as well as victimization of female members of the 'we'-community.

## Gendered images about refugees and violence

The elements of militarization strategies change over time, as a response to the economic and political development. In the logic of anti-terrorist securitization, male, young and foreign looking persons are particularly suspicious not only as potential asylum seekers, but also because they are easily associated with a Muslim culture, and with a foreign patriarchal system contrasting the western liberal concept of equality, and they are often seen as a constant source of violent behaviour. Such narratives, hyped by scandals prepared by the media, push women to the core of securitization and bordering politics. (They may even reaffirm the underlying hierarchical gender relations of the liberal western society by contesting the sovereignty of women as right holders.)

Projects to protect and empower women and girls in marginalizing situations, implemented by highly motivated NGOs engaged in the prevention of gender-based violence in and around the refugee sites in- and outside Europe, are very important, alleviating the conditions of women deprived of their voice. Such initiatives are worth getting all our support and cooperation. Still, this should not impede the analysis of the broader picture, including structural shifts in the legal, financial and symbolic systems. Even the best empowerment project may become an intrinsic element of the securitization policy, giving it a human soft face (see CONCORD 2018).

## Entry points for common actions

From the feminist perspective, such activities have to be contextualized within the dominant system of power relations. With the emphasis on the interfaces between experienced discrimination and exclusion and the institutional structure, feminist analyse unpacks the hidden consequences of securitization measures for the lives of people, female and male, and of different socioeconomic class. Such analysis provides entry points for collective, coordinated actions even in financial policies.

For me, such insights are a precondition for the planning and implementing projects for transnational democracy and women's human rights. Sometimes it also demands a self-critical distance and time for reflection. Many of us feminist activists operate with scarce resources, exposed to insults and criminalization. Time outs help to discover our very own post-colonial veil which may provide protection from high pressure. This is even more important, since we live in a period of reinforced post colonialism going hand in hand with militarized and militarizing nationalism. This workshop opens an ideal space to discuss the dynamics, to analyse our roles and options and to identify entry points for common actions.

## Instrumentalization of women's rights

We remember the public discussion during the US-intervention in Afghanistan, when women's organisations collected signatures to protect Afghan women and to legitimize the intervention for the sake of the 'liberation of women' from the patriarchal corset. The formation of a *Female Engagement Team*, declared as an act of 'empowerment' falls in this period; its task was to sound out Afghan women in their homes for useful information for the military. Today, media and official politics talk about a 'flood' or 'invasion' of migrants crossing the border (illegally). These persons do not only challenge the effectiveness of the border management, they are also the embodiment of the inequalities of the global system, visualizing the problems that have been successfully externalized by the politics of the powerful states.

In the current narrative, the majority of migrants match the above-mentioned picture of suspicious people. There are many incidents of violence including gender-based attacks in our countries ('Cologne'). No doubt; and it is the responsibility of our states to act according to the rule of law. Any occurrence of physical violence has to be persecuted, according to the national penal laws. Each person, women and men, victim of any type of violence, has the individual right to defend her/himself. That was the idea of liberalism!

But there is another level which may lead activists and politicians to the wrong track (which at the beginning may look so logical and technically simple). I would like to mention one alarming shift criticized by a few feminists only. It is about the extension of 'Women, peace and security' with the UN Security Council Resolution 2242 in 2016 on the gender sensitive prevention of violent extremism programming. In spite of many interesting details in the resolution it allows policy makers to subordinate women's safety needs to a strategy of securitization, such as the increased control of the public space and the involvement of women in their role as women and neighbours to provide useful information for the security forces.

## Racial profiling and other prevention strategies

The mere fact of the presence of migrants can legitimize strategies of securitization and militarized control to prevent any violent action being possibly effected by the "other" now inside our borders. Not only racial profiling and reporting on suspicion leads to a generalization of the perpetrators. It is the embodiment of the idea of prevention using women as safeguards and soft informants to reinforce the effectivity of security politics, even if shown as women's empowerment. And, observed by critical human rights advocates, in the course of time even the penal law has changed into a law of prevention on suspicion. This development may as well limit the field of action of the potential victims, especially in situations where gender-based violence is at the core of the incidents. Women may also be represented as category of vulnerable people in the national community, in need a generalized protection as a means of prevention.

But what should it look like, this prevention strategy, is it about limitation in the access to public space? And why is the need for shelters being contested and counselling offices closed down due to austerity packages? We have to be critical and look carefully behind such narratives in order to know what kind of impact they can have in different political domains such as the fiscal or social security policy.

In the current laws, asylum seekers are not necessarily prosecuted as perpetrators, they can easily be expelled. The administrative law facilitates such measures. But what happens to the potential or real victims? We have to be attentive enough to see whether the space of women to press charges also shrinks, whether they are cheated out of their individual right of defence and profiled as victims.

### Access to and exclusion from mobility

Before I finish, I would like to mention another gender-biased aspect of migration, which is the acceleration of the whole process. On the one side, we observe the rapid changes in the weapons industry and in surveillance technology. On the other, the mobility of human is being characterized by the enormous divide between those with and those without access to the relevant assets. Reading mobility as an asset for capitalist accumulation, its exclusiveness becomes evident to us every day in photos and in front of our houses. By means of visa restrictions, border crossing becomes illegalized and criminalized. The refugee camps in Lesbos or Serbia turn into last stops. "Useless" citizenship hampers other ways to cross the border. The consequence: an accelerated border management in order to become even more effective, represented by Frontex.

What are the gender aspects here, and what are the relevant political questions? Gender based violence is increasing in all refugee camps. The reaction on the positive side is indignation, activism, warning, often characterized by consternation and uncertainty. At the same time, there is the emphasis on women's empowerment projects and aid on site. Unfortunately, such programs miss the link between gender inequality and poverty in the global South and the global system of exploitation of powerful states. The burden women carry in doing care work, small agricultural production or informal wage labour restricts their mobility, so they stay behind due to their roles. Simultaneously, all structural adjustments call for budget cuts in social infrastructure.

### For an alternative common political project

By screening the European migration management, feminist analysis helps to reveal hidden changes in political economy, their impact in social security, democratic rights, health services or any other field of gender biased daily life. Feminist activist should encourage politicians to look behind power relations, as manifested in migration. We have to understand the interfaces of narratives and effected political decisions, we have to carefully analyse the power behind and the conflicting interests. There may be contradictions and weaknesses, which we can use as a link to alternative politics. We need time and space for an exchange of different experiences between politicians and feminist activists. We should find out together the sites of political action and the spheres of influence. Based on such knowledge it is possible to elaborate political projects, this may be in education, community work, care infrastructure, health services or any other domain relevant for the quality of daily life of people living together and sharing a common space.

I am sure that there are many interesting projects at the community level. Economic literacy is as well a 'must'. We have to understand macroeconomic processes from a feminist perspective, analysing the way productivity and success are measured and rewarded. And finally, it is the transnational approach, which is challenging but essential, it is absolutely key. With a long breath, with networks and space for exchange such as this workshop, it is still possible to bring forward a common political project at cross borders of nation-states.



**Note:**

This text is based on the presentation of Annemarie Sancar (WIDE Switzerland) at the Feminist Forum 2018 “Feminism without borders” on 7.3.2018 in the European Parliament (Brussels), in the framework of the Erasmus+ project.

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## COUNTRY SPECIFIC CHALLENGES

### 10 • AUSTRIA: GENDER, MIGRATION AND SECURITY DISCOURSES

*Claudia Thallmayer*

The 'long summer of migration' 2015 has left deep marks in the collective memory of many Europeans. Refugees crossing the borders to Europe and borders within Europe visibly were a phenomenon not seen before, unveiling the humanitarian crisis in European neighbouring regions. The collective refugees' movement and the large support refugees found among the population seemed to abrogate the restrictive European border regime for a short time.

As a counter reaction to this 'loss of control', right wing forces mobilized. By manipulating anxieties, they massively gained political ground in many European countries. For most European politicians, no other option seemed feasible but to let down the bars again. Hungary and other states winded up fences; Austria installed barriers and check points at the most frequented border crossings and promoted the closure of the 'Balkan route', leaving Greece alone to deal with the arriving refugees.

Parallel, the EU negotiated an agreement with Turkey to take back refugees which became effective in March 2016. It was highly contested from a human rights perspective, but nevertheless immediately put in place. For the purpose of further externalizing the restrictive EU border regime towards countries of transit and even origin of refugees, the EU and its member States intensified the cooperation with Northern and Eastern Africa countries to hold back refugees and not allow them to reach the geographical European borders. These politics leave vulnerable individuals – men, women, children on the move – exposed to the arbitrary treatment by different actors.

#### Security discourses in the context of migration

The connection between migration and security is not per se given, but discursively produced, and 'security' seems to be the 'trump card' in the political debate. According to the Austrian migration expert Rainer Bauböck (2004), it is a general assumption that uncontrolled immigration puts at risk security in a double way: directly, as it makes cross-border criminal activities easier; and indirectly, as it leads to situations that undermine the government's ability to guarantee the public order and societal security in a more comprehensive way.

This second argument has played a major role in the Austrian political debate since 2015. It has led to a change of the asylum law in 2016 which now allows the Austrian government to decree an emergency status and limit the number of asylum seekers in such a situation. The argument is the protection of the public order and the internal security, while emergency is defined as an overload of public institutions. With this definition, implicitly a certain institutional capacity is assumed as given, without taking into account a possible increase of capacities in cases of emergencies.

The 'border control' approach aims at the restriction of migration while masking or subordinating other considerations under the security paradigm. On the one hand, restrictive border regimes have high social and human costs: The needs of refugees and migrants for personal security and respect for their human rights fall by the wayside in a security debate focussing exclusively on the security of European citizens. The restrictive European border regime represents a high human security risk for refugees and migrants. Many men, women and children have died in the Mediterranean Sea over the last 20 years, and now increasingly people die in the Sahara, due to more dangerous, illegalized transit routes. Women run an extremely high risk of sexual exploitation and violence and of getting caught in trafficking networks. The high risks and costs related to illegalized transit routes also explains why the number of women refugees reaching Europe has been lower than that of men (around 30% of asylum applicants; see Eurostat 2018).

On the other hand, utilitarian aspects of migration (like economic demand, demographic dynamics and the compensation of regional and global income disparities) also remain excluded or are only considered in the interest of a cheap labour supply. The rights of refugees and migrants (international human rights, labour rights) and other values (like mobility as an expression of agency and autonomy) are disregarded. Following Bauböck's argumentation, migration controls in the name of internal security must be balanced against the economic and social benefit, as well as against the political value of the freedom of mobility (see Bauböck 2004).

### **Migrants' remittances and development**

*The (partial) compensation of regional and global income disparities through migration is an aspect which has been widely discussed in international fora. It is a fact that the remittances of international migrants (3% of the world's population, almost half of them women) to their families in their home countries constantly amount to around the triple of the international development cooperation flows. These are very significant financial flows that arrive directly in poorer households in developing countries. The money is used to cover urgent livelihood needs, for the education of children etc. Due to the demand for goods and services they also stimulate the local economies. From this point of view, it seems even more absurd that the development cooperation in Austria and in the EU is increasingly put into the service of the national and European defence politics against refugees and migrants (see CONCORD 2018).*

## Gender in the anti-immigration discourse

Politically effective narratives hook on real problems but reduce the complexity of societal problems by offering simple solutions.

The terrorist attacks in several Western European countries, linked to rise of 'political Islam' or 'Islamic fundamentalism' in several regions of the world, namely in Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq, were used by the right-wing populist forces in Europe as an argument against hosting refugees. Discursively, male refugees from Muslim countries were directly linked to terrorism, despite the fact, that most refugees flee from violent extremism and civil wars and are eager to re-build their lives in a safe environment. It seems that rather (young) people from the second generation of migrants (as well as converts) can become susceptible for extremist positions and terrorist actions, and this raises questions in relation to experiences of discrimination, as well as about the role of religious communities and their political instrumentalization. At the same time, Muslim women are either stigmatized as victims of patriarchal Muslim societies or as accomplices of Islamic fundamentalism.

The collective sexual assaults of young migrant men against women and girls during the New Year's eve in Cologne (Germany) were grist to the mills of right wing populists. They mark a turning point in the discourse about refugees. 'Cologne' has since then become a catchword for the right-wing movements and parties in Germany and Austria, to describe and stigmatize Muslim men collectively as aggressive sexual perpetrators (see AEP 2016). This and other incidents of sexual violence and violent criminality were used to reinforce an image around a "dangerous foreign masculinity" (Scheibelhofer 2016). The Austrian right wing, anti-immigration party FPÖ used 'Cologne' as an opportunity to present itself as a defender of women's rights, while discrediting women's rights organisations: "Who keeps silent now, has lost all legitimacy to claim to defend women's rights" (Freiheitlicher Parlamentsklub 2016).

## Capturing of women's rights demands by nationalist discourses

Some feminist authors (see Hess 2016) have described this phenomenon as a 'capturing' of women's rights' demands, whereas gender-based violence is highlighted, as long as the perpetrators are 'the others'. It is not new for Western discourses on 'civilization' for nationalist/racist purposes to build on such gendered images.

Most feminists though do not want to see their demands be exploited by a racist anti-immigration discourse. As the Austrian feminist journalist Brigitte Theißl put it: Women's rights achievements are presented as a high value, insofar as they serve the discourse of Western values and a right-wing agenda. But nationalist and conservative parties do not show much interest in long-term financing of women's shelters, investment in prevention and the work with perpetrators, or in a good social safety net that promotes the independence of women from their partners' income. For them, security is linked with alleged threats from outside (see Theißl 2017). Her judgement should prove true: In 2018, with two right wing populist parties in government, a range of feminist organizations has suffered severe financial cuts, while a ban of the (Muslim) headscarf for girls at kindergartens and schools has been demanded (and seems to become implemented), with the argument of the protection of girls' rights.

## Anti-Muslim racism

In the recent political debates on asylum and migration control in Austria, negative images of a dangerous foreign masculinity have played an important role. Especially (young male) Afghans and Chechens have suffered from a negative image as violent, while (young male) Africans have been stigmatized as drug-dealers in Austria. The images hook on real incidents, but the political and media discourses can be described as "alarmist".

### Political function of negative stereotyping

*The Austrian sociologist and gender expert Paul Scheibelhofer has analysed how after the short period of relatively open borders and broad solidarity with refugees in 2015, the right wing movements aimed at regaining the discursive hegemony: "(...) to regain ground in political debates on asylum control in Austria, images of problematic and dangerous foreign masculinity in which notions of gender, sexuality, age and Islam intersect were an important resource. Politicians invoked these negative images to shift the dominant perspective away from an empathic view on the experiences, struggles, needs and rights of refugees and re-establishing a securitising view. (...) this was accomplished by drawing on and reconfiguring elements of an already existing archive of knowledge about dangerous foreign masculinity. The representations that emerged in the course of the 'refugee crisis' are an amalgam of already existing images of masses of dangerous, conning asylum seekers, on the one hand, and assumptions about archaic fundamentalist Muslim patriarchs, on the other. Alarmist discourses about violence and crime by refugees drew upon culturalising arguments, according to which the majority of the men harboured misogynist attitudes and supported violence against women."*

*(Scheibelhofer 2017, p.106)*

While negative images of male refugees and migrants are very present in public discourses, it is Muslim women who have increasingly been exposed to anti-Muslim hate speech and aggression in public spaces. Anti-racist initiatives, namely ZARA and Dokustelle (2016, 2018) have made this visible. The aggression against (visible) Muslim women is linked to images about Muslim women both as victims and accomplices of Islamic patriarchy and fundamentalism, whereas sexism and (culturalised) racism intersect (see Hess 2016).

## Prevention of gender-based violence

Generalisations and negative stereotyping of immigrant communities has a stigmatizing effect and brings about discrimination of refugees and migrants (thus exacerbating social problems). But of course, (larger scale) immigration brings about challenges for the host societies which must not be negated or overlooked. Social problems need to be tackled, including all forms of violence.

In cooperation with the women's movement, namely the women's shelters network, the Austrian government has implemented an internationally respected model of combating gender-based violence over the last 20 years. However, the cooperation of shelters and institutional actors with the police forces has been weakened recently (see interview with Rosa Logar, Große Töchter 2018).

As an autonomous migrant women's organisation, the association *Orient Express* has carried out counselling, educative and cultural work for many years. *Orient Express* organizes German language and other courses for migrant women, offers shelters for victims of gender based violence (with a focus on abduction and forced marriage), and helps migrant women claim their rights.

## Solidarity initiatives with a gender focus

During 2015, many new solidarity initiatives were started throughout Austria, many of them led by women who invested a lot of their time and energy to support refugees in their communities. For example, the women's organisation *Neighbours (Nachbarinnen)* started with an innovative concept of social work, reaching out to migrants who live in relative isolation, to help them solve daily problems and promote their integration and participation in the larger society, with the explicit goal (among others) to prevent the establishment of "parallel societies".

The 'Vienna Institute for International Dialogue and Cooperation' (VIDC) initiated a cooperation with an Afghan youth organisation and an Austrian association working with men and boys, and offered "gender competence workshops" for young male Afghans, in order to overcome traditional patriarchal gender roles and explore alternative options. In 2017, VIDC started a mentoring initiative for female refugees from Arabic speaking countries, to bring together migrant women who have lived in Austria for a longer time with recent newcomers, to help them get familiar with Austrian society and also facilitate access to the labour market.

A thematically new initiative in 2015 was the foundation of the "Queer Base" in Vienna, to help and support lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans\* and inter- persons (LGBTIQ) who were persecuted in their country of origin or discriminated against because of their sexuality or gender identity.

## Creative forms of (feminist) protest

Another form of solidarity with refugees is theatre work, as practised by Tina Leisch and the artists' collective 'The silent majority', founded in 2015. Working with refugees from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan as actors, they produced the play "Schutzbefohlene performen Jelineks Schutzbefohlene", based on a text of the Austrian writer and Nobel prize winner Elfriede Jelinek.<sup>27</sup> In another play (musical) the situation in the overcrowded main refugee camp in summer 2015 was set in scene with a musical, again with refugees as the main protagonists.

A unique way of protest against right wing nationalists was the creation of the *Burschenschaft Hysteria (Men's league Hysteria)*. This artistic intervention – led by the feminist writer Stefanie Sargnagel – makes fun of the masculinity rituals of the men's leagues which are mostly very nationalist and stand for conservative gender roles; several practise fencing as a ritual of masculinity. At several occasions the members of *Hysteria*, dressed in a typical uniform of the men's leagues, showed up at public events, either

<sup>27</sup> English title of Jelinek's text "Die Schutzbefohlenen": "Charges (the Supplicants)"



parading, or acting as security (e.g. for the above mentioned play “Schutzbefohlene” after it had once been attacked by right wing extremist *Identitarians* at the Vienna University), or in 2017 at a prominent right-wing society dance event where ‘Hysteria’ showed up in their uniforms and enrolled a banner.

## Right wing populists in power

Based on the Austrian parliamentary elections in 2017, a right-wing populist coalition government was formed, composed by the conservative ÖVP and the far right-wing anti-immigration party FPÖ (with several of the FPÖ members who ascended to high positions belonging to the above mentioned men’s leagues).

Since the formation of the current government coalition, the discourse against refugees has been further exacerbated. The Minister for Interior (FPÖ) once announced that asylum seekers should be “concentrated in one place” (see *Kurier* 2018), instead of living in smaller and private units spread over the country. The use of such language is an expression of the far-right shift of public discourses which has an effect on opinions and on the asylum and integration politics and practise.

In 2018, the government announced a massive reduction of funding for German language courses and job training opportunities for refugees, thus obstructing the main integration measures for recent newcomers.

Another governmental idea was to increase the punishment for sexual violence; a plan designed in service to the image of the dangerous, violent Muslim men. Noteworthy, the FPÖ had before opposed a major law reform on sexual harassment in 2015.

Furthermore, a debate about banning the head-scarf for girls in child care institutions is ongoing, while a full veiling in public spaces has already been banned under the former government. There is a broad consensus in the Austrian society against such fundamentalist religious practises, but the measures are very selective and are only carried out on women’s dress codes and bodies. For good reasons, activists have criticized the discussions about the veiling as pseudo-debates and a projection of social problems on the Muslim community (see *Dokustelle* 2016).

## Discrimination of care workers

As a decision with regards to a social benefit for families with children shows, the right wing populists use any chance to discriminate against migrants and bring in their anti-Muslim discourse. For instance, the ÖVP-FPÖ government has decided to scale the family support according to the living costs in different EU countries. This affects workers from lower income EU countries, among them many women from Eastern European countries who work in the care sector in Austria and have children back home. Most of them earn very modest wages and are excluded from labour rights, e.g. in case they work as self-employed 24-hours assistants in private households, taking care of elderly people. Although such a law – according to experts – is not in accordance with European law, the government sticks to the proposals. Doing so against common sense, means to act against the idea of European solidarity and equality. EU institutions have criticized the law and the EU Commission has recently announced to start an infringement procedure against

Austria. The law proposal may fail, but by then, it will already have fulfilled its aim: to spread hatred against migrants. The pictures of Muslim women posted by the FPÖ party leader on facebook, meant to illustrate his message “Family support for children in foreign countries will be cut”, clearly show the racist intention, as most Muslim migrants are not EU citizens whereas family support is only paid for children living in EU and EEA countries (see Der Standard 25.10.2018).

## Neoliberal (EU) politics – fertile ground for nationalists

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Austria’s recent withdrawal from the *Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration*, a voluntary (non-binding) agreement that shall be signed in December 2018, alongside with the USA and Hungary, is another piece of a puzzle that shows where the government positions itself, and how it sacrifices international and European cooperation for the sake of a hardliner’s image in migration politics.

The refugees’ movement in 2015 and the following discursive and political turnaround have shed light at a deep political divide within European societies. The democratic deficits and the neoliberal approach inherent to the constitution of the European Union aggravate the situation. With the focus on the security narrative, the lack of solidarity, social insecurity and persisting gender-inequality are masked. While feelings of powerlessness become widespread, the neoliberal paradigm is not much questioned in public discourses and mainstream politics. This situation is a dangerous ground, easy to play with by populist parties which give simple nationalist answers. Against this background, WIDE+ insists that to fight against authoritarian tendencies, also the neoliberal economic paradigm has to be tackled (see WIDE+ 2016).

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## 11 • POLAND'S DUAL APPROACH TO MIGRATION

Aleksandra Solik

### State policy on migration

The migration policies have never been an issue of priority to Polish State authorities. In its evaluation report of 2015 the Supreme Audit Office concluded that the State's refugee support system had not been conducive to the integration of the third-countries nationals in the society and in fact had not helped them start an independent living. For example, the language learning, which is a prerequisite for sustained integration, was provided almost exclusively by non-governmental organizations and only due to the EU funds.

Since the Parliamentary election in autumn 2015, when the traditionalist and authoritarian political turn took place, the State's policies towards refugees and migrants has been harshly subjugated to the nationalistic and xenophobic rhetoric which encourages hate-speech and racist behaviour. The Polish government does not confine its actions to rhetoric. It not only repealed the document *Poland's Policy on Migration* (in force since 2012) but also blocked access to the European Funds, thereby depriving NGOs of the resources they used for initiatives to compensate at least partly the shortcomings of the State's policies. In fact, now only some local governments of bigger cities undertake initiatives related to the integration of migrants.

### Nationalist and xenophobic rhetoric

The State migration policy translates directly into the attitude of the Polish Border Guard towards the refugees whose right to asylum is being openly violated. Poland did not comply with EU obligations concerning accepting Syrian refugees (no one refugee from assigned quota of 6200 persons was admitted). Also the number of the people granted with refugee status is extremely low in comparison to the number of applications (for 12 321 persons applying in 2016, 108 were granted it).

The public media, completely subordinated to the ruling party, have also contributed to the atmosphere of hostility towards "aliens", to islamophobia, and to the growth of the hate crime. Moreover, government's hostile attitude towards migrants and refugees is unfortunately shared by a large part of the population. The research shows that only 22% of Poles are in favour of accepting refugees from the Middle East and Africa, and only 55% would like to accept refugees from Eastern Ukraine (see Gumowska 2017). In 2016, almost 80% of young Poles claim they encountered islamophobic, 75% anti-Semitic and 71% anti-Ukrainian hate speech in the Internet (see Winiewski et al 2017).

## Lack of protection for refugees

The only State office in Poland which consequently calls for and defends the human rights of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers is the Ombudsman (*Commissioner for Human Rights*). For example, the Ombudsman repeatedly interceded with the Chief of the border guard on behalf of non-EU citizens who were denied the right to apply for international protection as well as those who are refused entry into Poland despite the decision of ECHR on the interim measures which Poland should have applied in their case.

## Gender dimension of migration

The declaration made by the government that the Istanbul Convention, which Poland is party to, will not be respected means in practice that the gender dimension of migration and seeking international protection as well as the multiple discrimination that women face in such situation, will never be taken into account. The refugee women, in particular, are vulnerable to additional layers of discrimination connected with the conditions accompanying the process of escaping the home country and with the intersection of sexism, racism and xenophobia in Poland. Moreover, very few organizations addressing xenophobia and intolerance pay attention to the gender aspect of these phenomena. Unfortunately, migrant and refugee women are not allied in any network, neither do they cooperate with women's organisations in Poland, which in turn prevents their voices to be heard, and their experiences to be included in more general feminist agendas, advocacy policies etc. Besides, many activities for the sake of foreigners, especially campaign and policy making are being done without participation or even a consultation with the most interested.

## Ukrainian migration

The largest group of immigrants in Poland are Ukrainians. The number of Ukrainian citizens legally staying in Poland tripled between 2013 and 2016, mainly because of the political and economic situation in Ukraine and enormous need of the Polish labour market for foreign workers caused among others by a huge migration of Poles to EU countries. Migrants from Ukraine are usually hired according to "simplified procedure" as of May 2014. The simplified procedure does not imply any kind of integration process, neither does it require the Polish state to provide social support, such as: schools and kindergartens for children, pension fund, unemployment benefits, communal housing (see Jó wiak 2017). While Poland's economy is likely to benefit from the influx of new employees, rise of xenophobic attitudes observed by researchers does not help the integration process of almost a million newcomers.

Lack of feminist values in the country of origin as well as an anti-feminist stance of the Polish government does not help Ukrainian women to deal with their vulnerable position as women. Very often their lives in Poland are lacking the crucial element that once helped them to feel respected in the country of origin – prestigious and well-paid job. Traditional roles preserved in their homes (dealing with home issues, being providers for food, clothes, cleaning, taking care of family) are now reinforced by usual jobs performed while in Poland – home care and cleaning although the vast majority of Ukrainian women have higher education. In such a situation the feeling of agency and self-fulfilment is limited to the fact of contributing to the family budget.

## Conclusion

The recent political development does not allow for optimism as regards the improvement in migration policies. EU Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund was recently allocated to the governmental local administrations which decide about the further distribution of funds. In most cases the grants were received by organisations ideologically close to government like Caritas (see Witold 2017, p.10). This constitutes a serious risk to a pluralism of actors dealing with migration and leads to excluding human rights and gender equality NGOs. Another critical threat is related to the dismantlement of democracy including recent subordination of courts to government which can have an impact on immigrants' access to justice.

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## 12 • SPAIN: HUMAN TRAFFICKING DUE TO THE EXTERNALIZATION OF EU BORDERS

*Rosa Belen Agirregomezhorta*

The route from Northern Africa via Morocco to Spain is one of the traditional migration routes to Europe. Today, the border between Spain and Morocco is highly securitized and managed jointly by both countries.

The Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla represent a border territory where the “latent war against migrants”<sup>28</sup> is waged. A territory where human rights vanish as result of the European Union requests and demands of a rigorous control of borders. To make it possible, the EU sells arms, supports the building of wired fences and walls, and delivers millions of euro to the neighbouring countries such as Morocco and Algeria, Mauritania and Libya as part of the externalisation of its ‘immigration’ and ‘security’ policies.

This highly hypocritical policy, as while talking about human rights the EU pays others to undermine them, has direct effects on migrants as well as on refugees and asylum seekers, mostly sub-Saharan, although in recent years the number of Syrian refugees has increased as other routes were being locked. There have been several reports from NGOs (see AI 2017) but also from the EU and UN (see EC 2005; UN 2015) denouncing the human rights violations in Ceuta and Melilla mainly referring to illegal expulsions, violence (use of force and even deaths), incidents around the fence and the wall (these attempts to cross the wired wall are mainly led by young men), and the non-application of asylum and refugee laws.

### How do women get to Europe?

Women and men face the migration experience in a differentiated way, while travelling and while staying blocked in the other side of the border, but also the modalities of crossing the securitized borders.

Women face specific gender violence and sexual violence (rape, sexual assault and harassment, trafficking, forced prostitution, forced marriage) from different perpetrators (these can be family members, husbands, other migrants, smugglers and traffickers as well as police and security forces or public officers all along the route while travelling, also while trying to get access to food, housing or transport. It is estimated that people from Sub-Saharan Africa remain at the Ghorougou at the mountain in Morocco for months, even years, before being able to attempt the crossing. Neither humanitarian organizations nor the police hardly ever access the Ghorougou, a territory in which women are subjected to sexual exploitation.

<sup>28</sup> In words of *Migreurope - Observatoire des frontières* in an article written in 2005, before the current so-called ‘refugee crisis’

Even this phenomenon is well known by local authorities and the Spanish government, as prosecutors and police units specialized in the fight against trafficking estimate that more than 95% of Subsaharian women who reach Spanish territory are victims of trafficking, as it was reported by a research conducted by CEIM in 2014-2015 (see Agirregomezhorta 2016). During the collection of data for the 2017 CEDAW intermediary shadow report, CEIM jointly with other feminist organisations found the absence of guarantees of adequate procedures and resources to detect trafficking victims and survivors of any gender violence due to the lack of proper interviews and procedures for detection, not just trafficking but female genital mutilation, forced marriages victims, LGBTI discrimination, rape or domestic violence (see CEDAW Sombra España 2017).

## Victims of trafficking

But this is not just an issue of foreign countries or border countries such as Spain. The European Parliament Resolution of March 8, 2016, on the "Situation of women refugees and asylum seekers in the EU" stressed the urgent need to improve the security and safety of women and girl refugees, for instance opening safe and legal routes to the EU, and taking gender into consideration and incorporating measures and interventions for the detection and protection against gender violence, as well as the ratification of the Istanbul Convention.

### Factors that increase women's vulnerability on the move to be trafficked and/or exploited

- Disintegration of the family unit;
- Loss of socio-economic support systems;
- Insufficient Specialized and individualized intervention and mostly blind assistance;
- Lack of effective protection for gender violence victims as they are not identified;
- Gender discrimination, as women are not given the right to an individual claim for asylum as men are considered to be the head of the family and women under their protection;
- Inexistence of female translators;
- Growing number of lonely minors and young women pregnant or with children;
- Victims, and traffickers ("lover boys") together at shelters;
- Remaining domestic violence situations as well as sexual harassment and assaults in shelters;
- Lack of specialized organizations. Need for more training and sensitization among public officials (border police, migration shelters staff...);
- Uncertainty about refugee status and/or irregular legal situation.

Despite the legal framework on human rights, gender mainstreaming and women's rights which guarantees the fundamental rights of every woman to be protected from gender-based violence at individual, institutional and structural level, regardless of her legal status, and despite the fact that the victim should be at the centre of all measures, we find again that the specific situation and specific vulnerabilities of migrant women, including asylum seekers, refugee and undocumented women, are not taken into account and no efforts are taken to develop strategies to protect the most vulnerable and to prevent and combat all forms of violence that can affect women on the move.

## Civil society initiatives

The *Southern Border Observatory* (*Observatorio Frontera Sur*, OFS)<sup>29</sup> is a collective project focused on defending human rights in the Spain's southern border, especially at the border fences of Melilla and Ceuta. It is composed by voluntary activists coming from different NGOs, most of them members of the *Malaga's Solidarity Migrant Platform*. This initiative arises as a result of the *Tarajal* tragedy, where 15 immigrants drowned while trying to reach Spanish soil. 16 *guardias civiles*<sup>30</sup> were charged by the courts for the first time, although one year later the case was filed.

## Málaga's Solidarity Migrant Platform

The *Malaga's Solidarity Migrant Platform* has been giving support to immigrant people for decades as well as monitoring national immigration policies in Spain. The strategies develop by this platform varied from condemning and reporting bad practices, acting as a *whistle blower*, organizing demonstrations and campaigns, claiming political parties and institutions and raising awareness through articles. The most significant of its actions was the closure of Málaga's *Detention Center for Foreigners* (CIE) which was finally closed in 2013, after numerous allegations of police abuse, including sexual abuse of migrant women by policemen.

However, the attempts to jump the fences at the Spanish-Moroccan border, the diverse modalities of crossing the border, the illegal *refoulements* (immediate deportation upon arrival to Spanish territory), the *pateras* (precarious boats) heading to Spanish coasts, the absence of human rights at the borders shown the need of re-new strategies and efforts for advocating, condemning and raising awareness. It was in March 2014 when the initiative of the *Southern Border Observatory* was set up guided with this ambition of exploring new strategies and covering spaces in where traditional organizations do not work.

## The Southern Border Observatory initiative

The OFS is, therefore, focused on monitoring the situation of Melilla-Nador and Ceuta-Tanger borders as well as the Andalusian coasts, and although many activities developed (raising awareness, workshops for CSOs and university students, conducting research, advocating), seem to be 'business as usual', the developed methodology is guided by a *Participatory-Action-Research* approach aimed at humanizing the reality of migrants on the Spanish southern border.

Through the case study methodology, OFS seek to describe, comprehend and make visible the visible and invisible processes of migration in the southern border. To this end, interviews are held at the border and on Moroccan soil with migrants and CSOs working in the field in order to obtain first-hand information about the migratory process (situation, experiences and perceptions), and human rights violations documented. Life stories, role-playing and theatre, and "Art of Dissent" are used both as reporting and awareness tool.

<sup>29</sup> More information : *Observatorio Frontera Sur*, <http://observatoriofronterasur.com>

<sup>30</sup> It is the oldest law enforcement agency in Spain. It is organized as a military force with police duties under the authority of both the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Defense.

In addition, voluntary groups have been set up on topics such as research, awareness, art and creativity, law and communication organized horizontally as decision taking is collectively taken. Some OFS's initiatives and actions are for instance "Breaking the Wall" – a youth exchange project aimed at generating a space of analysis and awareness, raising on the migration in the Mediterranean Sea; workshops organized jointly with the Malaga's University and secondary schools, and art exhibitions.

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## 13 • SPAIN: VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS OF TRAFFICKING IN ANDALUSIA AND CEUTA

*Carla Cingolani*

The women's association *Mujeres en Zona de Conflicto* (MZC) has carried out a study on human trafficking in the South of Spain. The objective was to generate relevant information on the phenomenon of trafficking of women in the Autonomous Community of Andalusia and Ceuta, to serve as a basis for intervention.

### Trafficking: mostly for sexual exploitation

The investigation showed that trafficking in Andalusia and Ceuta is directed almost entirely towards sexual exploitation. Also, some cases of labour trafficking and for begging purposes were detected. Most of the victims are foreigners in an irregular administrative situation. The majority are women from Eastern Europe (especially Romanians) and from Sub-Saharan Africa (Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Guinea Conakry).

Regarding the response from the administration, there are no specific public resources available. The main resources and services are managed by civil society organisations. The services are aimed at victims of gender-based violence and / or women in situations of exclusion. There are no specific resources for males, transgender or minors, victims of trafficking. This undermines the protection and attention to the victims.

### Lack of public resources

Public budgetary reduction has affected 60% of the specialized NGOs that were surveyed. There is a lack of specific resources and integral autonomous legislation that addresses the trafficking of women and girls.

The researchers also noticed an "institutional apathy", with the effect, that care and protection are limited to cases of victims of trafficking who decide to report and whom the authorities have identified. They also highlighted insufficient actions in prevention regarding the demand for prostitution and actions aimed at the restitution of rights. They found that a rights approach was broken, and a welfare approach reduced, thus undermining the ability to address the causes of the TSH, nor question its maintenance elements.

### Rights based approach to support

As recommendations, a political will to promote a strategy against trafficking of solidarity and not a strategy against immigration is demanded. The international instruments that exist need to be implemented consistently. Assistance and support have

to be thought in terms of rights, so the victim of trafficking must be considered and treated as a subject of law, with the ability to make decisions.

In the words of some women who have experienced human trafficking in the first person: "Victim and vulnerability were words that we reflected on because we do not like the way they are used. They are used in excess to define women who have been trafficked. And we have been expected to recognize ourselves as eternal victims and always as vulnerable women."

It needs interventions with a focus on gender, human rights and the best interests of the child. This means detection, identification and referral to specialized resources from the arrival, and legal assistance in the whole process in an individualized way.

*Mujeres en Zona de Conflicto* propose to create a European emergency telephone number for victims, of three figures, easy to memorize, taking into account the reality of a citizenship in movement. Furthermore, it would be useful to promote transnational coordination between organizations in countries of origin, transit and destination in order to prevent and protect.

#### Note:

This text (edited by WIDE) is based on the presentation of Carla Cingolani on 7.3.2018 at the workshop "Women's migration between agency, exploitation and resistance" in Brussels, organized by Le Monde selon les femmes in the framework of the Erasmus+ project.

#### Resources:

Mujeres en Zona de Conflicto (ed.) (2018): Estudio sobre Prevención Persecución Protección y Asistencia. Estrategia de Intervención con Víctimas y Supervivientes de la Trata en Andalucía y Ceuta, <http://www.mzc.es/investigacion/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2016/11/EstudioTrataMZC.pdf>





## 14 • BELGIUM: GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN THE MIGRATION AND ASYLUM PROCESS

*Halimatou Barry*

*GAMS Belgique*<sup>31</sup> is an organisation that engages for the abolition of female genital mutilation (FGM) in Belgium. GAMS promotes the prevention of FGM for girls, and accompanies women who have become victims.

### Violence is used to control and keep women in status of submission and inferiority

The people whom we receive at GAMS are mostly women and young girls who have fled their countries because of gender-based violence, such as FGM, forced marriage, sexual violence, domestic violence, violence within the family and domestic, economic and sexual exploitation/slavery. Some have also arrived for family reunification purposes. We work with refugee and migrant women, with mothers, spouses, house-wives, single women without and with children, adventurers, deracinated women, asylum seekers or *sans papiers*. Our approach is to consider them as culturally rich, as pioneers, as bearers of knowledge and competences.

Many women have attended school only for a short period or not at all; they mostly lack professional skills. They came to seek protection and respect for their rights which are violated in their country of origin in order to have a better life. They have made a choice that has changed the course of their lives; that is refusing the violence.

### To surrender or to flee

Many women have left their country with a smuggler who is paid by a third party, whether a family member or a friend of the family, who may act in solidarity with their suffering, or with a person whom they believe that he is benevolent, but for whom these women or girls are a merchandise for trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation. They leave a situation of persecution to an unknown destination with a stranger who sometimes abuses them. Most of these women did not choose to leave, they just wanted to put an end to situations of experienced violence or risk they face; they become a kind of 'package' to be delivered somewhere because they do not know the plans of this person on whom they completely depend.

Sometimes, some of them are abused by this "smuggler/trafficker" as sexual slaves because he considers that he has not been paid well enough for the performed "work", until he gets tired or the woman becomes pregnant (and she is then no more suitable to this type of "employment").

<sup>31</sup> GAMS: Groupe pour l'abolition des Mutilations Génitales; Group for the abolition of Genital Mutilation

Others are left alone in public spaces without having been given any explanation, as in the Midi train station or the North train station for days even for weeks before they can meet the services or go to the asylum bodies, where they can apply for the sought protection. Upon their arrival in Belgium, they discover the asylum application and its path which is full of contingencies and twists as they thought that leaving the country would be enough to find security.

## Consequences of the non-recognition of gender-specific persecutions

Women get in touch with GAMS in different ways, for example via professionals in the health system or lawyers. What matters is the evidence, the story. The analysis and the processing of the asylum application are largely based on the credibility of the person. The person must not contradict herself. She must give details, remember all events chronologically, dates, precise information about the violence that she has suffered. Despite this, a large part of women and young girls who we meet are dismissed by the asylum bodies from the asylum procedure by the non-recognition of violence experienced and described, either for lack of credibility or lack of sufficiently probative elements. For example, a woman who has studied is considered sufficiently strong by the CGRA<sup>32</sup> to defend herself: As she has been able to oppose, go and make her life elsewhere, she could have asked for protection in her country of origin. It is an ignorance of the social pressure to comply with the choices made by the parents and the community and the complacency of the authorities, who are supposed to defend the rights of women. Many women who have tried to denounce violence in their countries to the law enforcement agencies were told that marriage issues had to be resolved in family; that they could not interfere in family affairs.

## Women sans papiers in Belgium

Many of the unsuccessful female asylum seekers are living in Brussels, mainly stay (homeless) at the North and South railway stations, only at the mercy of some predators who offer them a shelter, an accommodation, committed to the requirement of an exchange either in kind or performing household chores. Others are forced to stay in existing settlements in Brussels, but sometimes at what price? Some of these squats have been built and settled in certain quarters for many years, others have to move constantly due to lack of infrastructure on site, or following the dismantling requirement by the municipal authorities.

A majority of them do not speak the language or the languages of the host country, do not know their rights (most even think that they have no rights) or do not know that they can be protected in the case of violence on Belgian territory. They are often isolated, exposed to power struggles with a third party, which are harmful to their physical, mental and social health. Their poverty and their situation make them more vulnerable to sexual violence (rape, prostitution and trafficking), diseases such as sexually transmitted infections (including HIV/AIDS), unwanted pregnancies and other forms of gender-based violence.

<sup>32</sup> CGRA: Commissariat Général aux Réfugiés et Apatrides; Belgian Directorate in charge of the Refugees and Stateless

## Limited access to health care

They are invisible, forming part of a discriminated population experiencing a daily inequality by their lack of status in Belgium which does not allow them to have access to their rights, access the labour market, to training courses, and they are sometimes not covered by the health care. Their only right to access the health care is the request for a medical card via the *Emergency Medical Assistance* granted by the CPAS<sup>33</sup> when they can show that they have an address, always under the condition of having the authorization of the person or people who host them. Some municipalities do not take into account the preventive measures aspects but only the prior existence of diseases (the curative aspect).

Women without a legal status must “manage” to cover their basic needs and protect themselves from the risks of violence which implies living in the streets. Sometimes, in exchange for shelter or food, they must accept any condition. They wonder when exactly and where they will be safe? And when will their rights finally be respected?

At present, the issues of gender-based violence and persecution women and girls are suffering, both during their journey and once arrived in our territory, are not yet sufficiently integrated in the care and support system of asylum seekers and refugees.

## Domestic violence

There are other forms of violence against women that happen in the context of family reunification, like a family pressure not to leave the house, physical violence, or sequestration. We ask for a change in the women’s right to residence who came by family reunification and are victims of domestic violence. Many of these women are subjected to blows in silence because they are afraid to leave their husbands out of fear of ending up on the streets without rights or protection. We demand an end of institutional violence like the cancellation of the residence status of women who seek protection from domestic violence.

### Note:

This text is a slightly edited (English) version of the presentation of Halimatou Barry (GAMS) at the Feminist Forum on March 7, 2018, in the European Parliament.



<sup>33</sup> CPAS: Centre Publique D’action Sociale: Public Center for Social Action

## 15 • INTEGRATION OF REFUGEES/IMMIGRANT WOMEN IN SWEDEN

*Ulla Björnberg*

In 2015, 162.877 asylum seekers arrived in Sweden. Due to changing border controls and to stricter rules for asylum seekers, the number decreased dramatically in 2016 compared to 2015 and was back to half the numbers in 2016. In 2016, 71.571 refugees were granted residence permit in Sweden; 38% of whom were women.

In response to the political concerns about the number of refugees and asylum seekers, reception is a major focus. Considering the various measures taken to restrict the numbers, we now can discern seven categories of refugees to be hosted. 1. Those refugees who are waiting for decisions of their asylum application – first and second application. 2. Those who receive temporary permit to stay. 3. Those that are waiting for expulsion. 4. Those who cannot be expelled, since the sending countries refuse to take them back. 5. Those who remain as illegitimates. 6. Those who get a permanent resident permit but are denied family reunification. 7. Those with permanent permit to stay.

### Waiting period: a situation of limbo

It is a mixed category of people that are living in the host countries and should be included in measures undertaken by local authorities and civil society organisations. The seven categories have one crucial condition to face: insecurity about their future and their rights during their waiting period, which can be long. It is a situation of limbo, being in between social contexts where they can control their individual living conditions. We know from research that the insecurity and stress related to waiting for a “normal” life can be harmful for health, both physical and psychological.

The civil society organisations take many initiatives to support the various categories of refugees, not the least women and children travelling alone. Local civic organisations meet people in their daily lives. Experiences from local organisations show that interactions between the civil society organisations and local authorities and policy are an important approach in order to enlarge the knowledge base of relevance for adaption strategies. It is about intercultural communication about needs and conditions for support. Civil organisations have the advantage to be able to develop informal methods. The workers have the advantage to get a deeper knowledge of individual needs and circumstances and they can mediate between the formal authorities and the individual women. The disadvantage is however the unstable working conditions and the temporal financing of their activities.

## Complementary education for health workers

In order to strengthen employability of new arrivals who have acquired a healthcare education in their home country the Swedish government has commissioned training programs to two hospitals in Stockholm and Gothenburg. Persons with a health care education in sending countries (from non EU countries) are offered complementary education and practices. The financing is temporary and will last three years.

Within the training program participants also transfer knowledge to Swedish healthcare workers about typical problems and diagnoses among immigrants. This education is aimed at providing full speed in learning Swedish. They also have to learn a more complex level of Swedish language, a condition for obtaining professional legitimacy.

## Cultural interpreters in women clinics

The hospital that is running this program has a goal to provide a good, safe and satisfactory healthcare for foreign-born/migrant women. The purpose is to hire some women who can act as intercultural mediators in order to develop personalized healthcare. Cultural differences can be a limitation in offering personalized care. Migrants /refugee women have experiences and life history which can be a valuable factor on how these women experience the given healthcare and support. Two kinds of skills are used in the program: An 'intercultural interpreter' is professional and impartial but can be part of two-party conversation and have a personal approach to the patient. An 'intercultural mediator' acts as a language supporter for those who have limited understanding of the Swedish language and need support in contact with the healthcare providers when they are to deliver a child. A very important factor when interpret a language is the adaptation of the language in Swedish in order to increase the understanding between the individuals. When adapting the language it is important to think about different concepts, metaphors etc.

## Equal start in life

Another project is taking place within an Association - *Homeless, pregnant and early motherhood support to new mothers* - which started in 2012. It is a voluntary organization financed for a three years period by the Swedish *Inheritance Fund (Allmänna arvsfonden)*. The idea is to integrate delivery services with the help of 'doulas' (cultural interpreters). The 'doulas' assist with translation in connection with deliveries of a child and other kinds of support. A 'doula' differs from a professional translator; she is professional but provides personal and continuous support. Doulas learn about the problems, fears, diagnoses and insecurities as new comer in Sweden. They often see a pattern of issues that migrant mother face, such as: isolation, mistrust for the Swedish society, PND, lack of support in the household (especially for those women that are single mothers or widows) or lack of support from the Swedish healthcare in those cases when the woman suffers of injuries after the delivery.

The 'doulas' work at a family centre where migrant mothers are invited to attend information meetings about different support that the Swedish society can offer, to seek help in their contact with different actors in the healthcare system, parenting support so those who do not speak the language can benefit of helping actions and integrate easily. In order to help the migrated mothers in their role as new mothers and help them learn how different things use to be done when having a child, the doulas are doing home visits too.

## Teenage mothers' empowerment organization

The organization started in 2015 on the initiative of a migrant women from Uganda with the aim to help young mothers to reach a higher level of empowerment and independence. This is to be accomplished through counselling and help to the girls to widen their perspectives and seek social advice and someone to lean on. In Sweden, the girls are facing different kind of problems as isolation, they do not agree with their parents, their partners end the relationships and many end up in in psychiatry. Girls from other countries, who get pregnant, might have been sexually abused, raped and have a child as a result. Girls that have been exposed to this kind of traumatic experience are facing stigmatization, guilt and isolation. They have little or no social support from authorities or family. The initiator, who is a midwife and trained in psychiatry, has experiences of the risks for both the young mothers and their children are facing, both in terms of physical problems, mentally and socially. They risk poverty, isolation, low self-esteem, have higher exposure to violence and other kinds of abuse.

## Violence prevention work in collaboration with municipalities and associations

Violence against women and girls is at a global level now regarded as a phenomenon which must be counteracted at all possible levels. Laws have been introduced in many countries to make violence against women illegal, but this is not enough. Implementations of the laws must be made at many levels of society. There is a need to change norms and habits through education, including men, women, authorities. In Gothenburg, the local government has introduced an overarching program on security, including violence prevention. The aim is to establish cooperation between those NGOs organizations that meet the victims and the municipal institutions. On the basis of accumulated knowledge on activities for violence prevention and rehabilitation of victims the program aims at changing norms at community level, local environment level, relations level and individual level. The program leader shall coordinate cooperation between the city institutions and organizations that are working with persons that have experience of violence or are at greater risk to be exposed to violence more than other people.

Concrete examples were presented from Turkish experiences, where laws are introduced to protect women, but barely implemented due to norms and attitudes. Initiatives from voluntary organizations provide knowledge through workshops in order to educate men about this issue. The organization is also providing workshops for migrant women with focus on empowerment where the women are learning about their legal rights, psychological abuse, coping strategies but also which kind of support they can get from the community and state. Authorities deny helping the women victims due to reluctance to accept the vulnerability of women and girls. Male cultural attitudes of rape is accepted, teen age marriages as a way to solve economic issues in families is widely applied. The media counteract opinions that violence against women and children is a huge problem within the society. Rather, victims are often blamed for the kind of violations that they experience.



## Training for labour market in study circles

Since several years new arrivals have to attend courses “Swedish for immigrants” (SFI) which is required to access social and economic support while waiting for decisions on permit to stay and work. The SFI training courses mix classes regardless of skills already acquired by some participants. The idea is that those persons who know better can assist those participants with fewer skills in the language. For those persons who have professional skills and training from their sending countries, various forms of “fast tracks” have been introduced after the introduction course. For those, mostly women and young people, with little or no education, a workers organization, ABF, is Sweden’s largest adult education association. The abbreviation stands for *Arbetarnas Bildningsförbund* (*Workers’ Educational Association*).

ABF is based on a pedagogical model of learning in study circles, where participants study together and discuss among them. An example was presented where women were engaged in sewing and learning the language at the same time. The teacher solely speaks Swedish and the participants are made to learn while learning from those who are faster to grasp the meaning of words and to find information. They help the migrants to adapt to the Swedish way of life and create new routines. To avoid cultural disputes on ways of life the teacher tries to put the focus on human rights perspective. By making things with their hands the participants get relaxed, which improves the ability to understand language codes at the same time as learning something practical. Sewing activity is a language channel and a way to learn the language but also a way to empowerment and better self-esteem which can also lead to economic sufficiency. It also helps the women to focus on the task and forget about their problems, which can be a way to cope with their issues.

## Summary and reflection

Civil society organisations and civil activities are developing measures with the aim to mitigate the problems that refugees have to deal with in everyday lives. A recent publication has documented good and promising practices that are also innovative and can serve as inspiring examples for other European countries (World Future Council 2016). The study provides examples of how to protect and create security for women and children. In the report special attention has been put on projects that are developed in collaboration with refugee women with the aim of strengthening their self-empowerment and self-organising.

Experiences lifted in the meetings show that language learning should involve both practical/professional issues and activities to strengthen self-esteem and social mutuality. The necessity of integrating learning skills for a particular job should also take into consideration the need for self-esteem and self confidence in the learning process. Language is about learning cultural codes and meanings, not only learning vocabulary and building of sentences. It is a pedagogical tool also to mix new arrivals and older arrivals who can help to interpret meanings by reference to culture of origins. Intercultural interpretations in various forms are being developed in healthcare, women clinics and hospitals in order to serve both professional staff in healthcare and the clients.

On a social level at large migrant segregation has a negative impact on learning. All the participants agree that there is a big problem with the gender segregation in the workplace, and that the women dominated workplaces have lower wage rates, and have a bad and stressful working environment that is not always prioritized, those who are foreign born and moved to Sweden are placed in workplaces where they experience segregation and exclusion, intercultural difficulties and misunderstanding and lack of support from the employer to integrate and do a good job.

For those foreign born, that have a higher level of education, the practices are few and that is an issue when trying to learn the language. New initiatives in health care have to develop cooperation between complementary education, hospital and practice.

When it comes to single mothers that are foreign born, there is an obvious lack of support and helping actions, especially for the young mothers. And this issue is more evident for those who live in vulnerable and segregated areas of the city and have limited language skills.

It was commented by participants that Swedish society in institutions can be quite compact and bureaucratic, which complicates cooperation between states / politics, municipalities / regions and organizations and non-profit associations.

As a conclusion from the workshop it was emphasized that we the need to give space for social activities that draw on human rights and positive thinking. Organisations in European countries take initiatives to develop capabilities of the persons who come to settle in our countries. To think and talk differently, to identify shared values would mean to highlight commonalities, to invest in human capital and skills potential.

#### Note:

This text is based on the presentation and discussions at the workshop "Women in Diaspora – How do they meet and how are they approached in society?" held by GADIP in October 2017 within the framework of ERASMUS+ project "The Europe we want? Gender migration and democracy" in Gothenburg, Sweden. It focussed on three themes: Women's health; violence and threats towards women; integration. Invited representatives of NGOs were asked to present their model of work, to identify obstacles as well as factors behind good achievements in their work.

#### Resources:

- Arbetarnas Bildningsförbund (n.d.): About ABF in English, <http://www.abf.se/Om-ABF/About-ABF-in-English1/>
- World Future Council (2016): Protecting refugee Women and Girls from Violence, <https://www.worldfuturecouncil.org/protecting-refugee-women-and-girls-from-violence/>



## 16 • AUSTRIA: MIGRANT WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND DEMOCRATIC CHALLENGES

*Claudia Thallmayer*

While the 1960/70ies were a period of recruitment of migrant workers from former Yugoslavia and Turkey in Austria (the so-called 'guest workers' model which was thought to be a temporary form of migration), after the 'Fall of the iron curtain', a series of restrictions in the asylum and migration laws were successively put in place. Thus, a hierarchical model of migration management has emerged. Today many different forms of short and long-term residence permits exist, from precarious short term working permits (e.g. for seasonal work), students' visa with limited working permits, renewable long-term residence permits, up to the exemption from any working permit for EU citizens. The asylum law knows further distinctions of the residence status of refugees, so that different groups of refugees and migrants have de facto different rights.

### Indirect discrimination of women in foreigners' law

For migrants from 'third countries' outside the EU, very restrictive conditions, including quota, are in place. Income barriers also play a critical role in migrant's ability to apply for residence permits, even in the context of family reunification. The restrictive law foments a dependency of women on their husbands' income and residence status during the first years in Austria. The regulations generally put migrants with a low income in a disadvantaged position, which affects women even more, as women have a considerably lower income than men: On average, employed women earn 38% less than men in (in 2016 and 2017). Austrian citizens who want to live with their foreign spouse are affected by these regulations as well. They need to show an income that covers the living costs of both partners, in case the partner is a newcomer and needs a residence permit. In 2006, an NGO initiative called *Ehe ohne Grenzen (Marriage without borders)* was formed on this issue, providing counselling for bi-national couples and organizing protest actions, to claim the human right to a family life.

### Exclusion from citizenship – intersection of class and gender

Similar restrictive regulations are applied to the acquisition of the Austrian citizenship, as applicants need to fulfil several conditions, beyond a certain length of their residence in Austria. They need to show quite a good level of the German language knowledge, of Austrian history and the political system. The required level of language knowledge represents a major obstacle for less educated, for example for illiterate refugee women. Applicants also need to show a certain income higher than the minimum social standard which even varies according to the size of the applicant's family. These legal obstacles and limitations represent a discrimination of low income groups and are an indirect

discrimination of women, whereas class and gender intersect. The regulations exclude part of the residents from the right to political participation as granted for citizens. It should be noted that in Austria the citizenship is inherited. Therefore, Austrian-born children of migrants with a foreign citizenship are not automatically granted the Austrian citizenship but they need to apply for it, under the above-mentioned conditions.

### Nationalist citizenship approach

Austria allows its citizens only in exceptional cases to possess a double nationality. Migrants from Turkey who have acquired the Austrian citizenship in the past, have recently been suspected to have re-acquired the Turkish citizenship later again. Several long-term migrants have experienced an abjudication of their Austrian citizenship.

On the other hand, the government has recently announced that Italian citizens from the province South Tyrol who identify themselves as part of the 'ethnic' German (or Ladin) speaking community, should get the possibility to acquire the Austrian nationality additionally to their Italian one. This proposal has caused tensions with Italy, as the province South Tyrol (Trentino - Alto Adige) has enjoyed a status of autonomy for many years. This political autonomy was the result of a successful conflict resolution between the South Tyrol with its German speaking majority and the central Italian government.

The proposal is also a slap in the face of long-term migrants who are not allowed to possess a double nationality, and even more for those who do not have the chance to acquire the Austrian citizenship due to the restrictive conditions.

It is a strange understanding of democracy to include non-residents into democratic decision making processes while excluding residents. Today, a significant part of the resident population – more than a sixth (16% are 'foreigners') – is excluded from the democratic right to vote, just because they are or their parents were migrants.

#### Resources:

- Statistik Austria (o.J.): Bevölkerung nach Staatsangehörigkeit und Geburtsland, [http://www.statistik.at/web\\_de/statistiken/menschen\\_und\\_gesellschaft/bevoelkerung/bevoelkerungssstruktur/bevoelkerung\\_nach\\_staatsangehoerigkeit\\_geburtsland/index.html](http://www.statistik.at/web_de/statistiken/menschen_und_gesellschaft/bevoelkerung/bevoelkerungssstruktur/bevoelkerung_nach_staatsangehoerigkeit_geburtsland/index.html) [8.10.2018]
- Statistik Austria (o.J.): Einkommen, [https://www.statistik.at/web\\_de/statistiken/menschen\\_und\\_gesellschaft/soziales/gender-statistik/einkommen/index.html](https://www.statistik.at/web_de/statistiken/menschen_und_gesellschaft/soziales/gender-statistik/einkommen/index.html) [8.10.2018]





## CONCLUSIONS

### 17 • CONCLUSIONS FOR ADULT EDUCATION

*Ulla Björnberg*

Contemporary migration brings about new challenges to host countries as well as to the countries of migrants' origin; to migrants and the host communities. The articles in this publication highlight a range of interconnected issues around gender, migration, economic development and current political trends.

They provide insightful information about contradictory elements within policies implemented both at national (in five EU member states) and at EU level under an umbrella of "protection" and security. Migrants and refugees who flee situations of violence and repression or who decide to migrate due to the lack of economic perspectives are often regarded as people with illegitimate claims and are rather treated as a security risk than as individuals in a situation of vulnerability who need protection and support. Right wing populist movements have exploited the fear of immigration and fomented ('culturalized') racist stereotypes which intersect with gendered images about refugee and migrant women and men. Political measures implemented in order to reduce an overarching sense of insecurity tend to undermine human rights and democracy.

On the basis of our findings, we summarise the following points:

- **Neoliberal economic development can spur migration**

A conclusion based on analyses within the project is that processes on a macroeconomic scale can serve as push factors behind migration, including women's migration, from the global South. A closer look was taken at the consequences of unfair trade agreements between developed and developing countries. The neoliberal bilateral and regional EU trade agreements bring about imbalanced competition that works as a drawback for developing countries. Large investments in food production for export and in infrastructure projects tend to increase environmental problems and add to historic disadvantages of local and regional economies and survival structures. Investment driven economic activities tend to marginalise and undermine the subsistence, local market production and care work of women. Land grabbing and large infrastructure projects usually only benefit a few whilst causing poverty among the young who lack perspectives for their future. The asymmetry in power relations between countries and within societies, including gender relations, needs to be

analysed more in depth and taken into account in EU trade and investment and development politics.

Development education activities and NGO activism, together with scientific research play a major role in building critical consciousness about global relations of inequality, including gender inequalities. The Human Rights system and international declarations like the Beijing Platform for Action (1995) on women's rights, or the Agenda 2030 (Sustainable Development Goals), provide guidance and inspirations for social, economic and gender justice and a 'good life for all'.

- **Migrant women face multiple discriminations**

Almost half of the international migrants and refugees are female. In order to understand specific push factors for women leaving their countries, unique disadvantages for women and girls must be taken into account, such as structures of discrimination against women in civil life and culture, for example a lack of education for girls, absence of sexual and reproductive rights and other factors that impede the personal development, economic perspectives and the well-being of women and girls.

It was highlighted that migrant women face multiple challenges in the EU. They tend to be discriminated in the labour market, due to their gender, their (precarious) status as migrants, and/or due to negative stereotypes and racist attitudes in the society (e.g. against black or Muslim women). Frequently, women who migrate are offered jobs below their level of qualification, such as *au pairs* (day care providers), or industrial or domestic work with low pay and insecure working conditions. Under precarious conditions, women are exposed to an increased risk of sexual harassment and violence.

- **Need to take into account the needs of refugee women**

A major conclusion to be drawn from the analysis of gender issues points to the need of learning from the number of specific situations that women face in their emigration/refuge experiences.

Many women refugees have been confronted with threats, terror or repression and a lack of personal safety in their home country. When migrating or seeking refuge, in order to create a safe life for themselves and their children, many face even worse forms of violence on their way. During the routes towards the expected host country, many are exposed to different types of violence and exploitation. As survivors and refugees applying for asylum in the EU, they often experience long waiting periods that cause uncertainty, ambivalences and fear.

It was pointed out that asylum examinations must be made more gender sensitive, in order to serve the specific needs of women like the protection from all forms of violence and a guarantee that they are treated with respect and dignity.

Adult education programmes for refugee women should take gender-specific needs and different backgrounds into account. For the empowerment of refugee women, much can be learnt from good practise in different countries on how to contribute



positively to the physical and psychological health of women and their empowerment. Some examples are cultural interpreters, mentoring programmes, courses in self-defence, pedagogy for collaborative learning, or the practise of “learning and doing” (language learning combined with craft training) at various levels of language skills.

### • Increased controls in the name of security put human lives at risk

The high human and social costs of restrictive border control and anti-immigration politics must no longer be ignored. Border control and migration policies have to respect human rights, first of all the right to life, enshrined (among others) in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union!

- All forms of gender-based and sexual violence against refugee and migrant women need to be tackled.
- Measures taken in the name of the protection of the citizens need be balanced and analyzed regarding their impact on refugees and migrants. The vicious circle of increased control and militarization in the name of security must be broken.
- Instead, the focus must be shifted towards social security, empathy and solidarity, equality and democracy. The universality of human rights and democratic principles and values must be highlighted and promoted.
- Racialized discourses, interwoven with gender stereotypes, around migration and migrants must be countered, whilst reflecting on global inequalities and the drivers of migration.
- Alternative visions like the Agenda 2030 with the ‘sustainable development goals’ or the vision of a ‘good life for all’ should be promoted, the benefits of migration be taken into account, and mobility as a choice be valued.
- The human rights of women have been fought for and stated in numerous documents within the UN and the EU, and states have signed up to comply with and protect these rights. The follow-up and the implementation of the agreements are insufficient though, or in some cases, non-existent. Various instruments, such as the ones accomplished within the CEDAW, should be developed. These could be prepared through educational initiatives and increased international exchange on experiences and advantageous methods for fulfilling women’s human rights, thus counteracting gender-based and other intersecting forms of women’s discrimination.

### • Acknowledgment of the role of NGOs

The contributions to this report have provided positive examples about how civil society has created service, support and protection to women, where policies have failed to do so.

- Austerity measures at national and EU level and anti-migration policies have eroded the public sector and the resources provided by the states for the protection and support for migrant women, disregarding their vulnerable situation. Such policies will have long lasting negative consequences for refugee women, but also for migrant women who migrate for jobs within the service sector, often lowly paid and with poor labour rights. Civil society organisations, including (migrant) women’s

rights organisations and trade unions, play a critical role as watch-dogs.

- Some governments do not want to provide space for human rights and gender equality organisations to operate in favour of migrant and refugee women. Civil society can do much, but voluntary support must be complemented by financial support from the national and local governments. This support can for instance include collaborative projects between policy makers and civil society organisations.
- Migrant women's organisations that have the biggest potential to reach out to the most discriminated women should be strengthened and included in policy making processes.
- The EU should contribute to spreading a positive attitude towards human rights organisations and underline their positive impact on democracy and human rights.

- **Adult education**

We therefore conclude that various themes should be covered in educational programs:

- A better understanding of global power relations, inequalities, conflicts and push-factors for migration, including the drivers for women's migration.
- Awareness-raising about the specific challenges around migration for women.
- Analysis of the consequences of contradictory elements in security policies for women.
- Promotion of local and international exchange on good practise in the area of refugee and migrant women's rights, empowerment and democratic participation, both at state and civil society level.
- Awareness-raising about 'culturalized' and gendered forms of racism, and critical media competence on this issue.





## ANNEXES

### ANNEX α: EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL LAW – RESOURCES

#### Law of the European Union

##### Treaties

- Consolidated version of the Treaty on European Union, 2016/C 202/01
- Consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, 2016/C 202/01
- Charter of Fundamental Rights of European Union, 2016/C 202/02
- Source: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/collection/eu-law/treaties.html>

##### EU equal treatment directives

- Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and of The Council of 5 July 2006 on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation (recast)
- Council Directive 2004/113/EC of 13 December 2004 implementing the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services
- Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation
- Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin

##### EU directives on migration

- Family reunification Directive (2003/86/EC)
- Communication on guidance for application of Directive 2003/86/EC on the right to family reunification
- Long-Term Residents Directive (2003/109/EC), as amended by Directive 2011/51/EU (consolidated version disclaimer)
- Students and Researchers Directive (EU) 2016/801 (recast of Directives 2004/114/EC on students and 2005/71/EC on researchers).
- EU Blue Card Directive (2009/50/EC)
- Single Permit Directive (2011/98/EU)
- Seasonal Workers Directive (2014/36/EU)
- Intra-Corporate Transferees Directive (2014/66/EU)
- Directive (2016/801/EU) of the European Parliament and of the Council on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of research, studies, training, voluntary service, pupil exchange schemes or educational projects and au pairing (recast )  
[http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/legal-migration\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/legal-migration_en)
- Employer Sanctions Directive: Directive 2009/52/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2009 providing for minimum standards on sanctions and measures against employers of illegally staying third-country nationals

### EU directives on asylum

- The Asylum Procedures Directive (2013/32/EU): [Directive 2013/32/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on common procedures for granting and withdrawing international protection \(recast\)](#)
- The Reception Conditions Directive (2013/33/EU): [Directive 2013/33/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection \(recast\)](#)
- EASO guidance on reception conditions: operational standards and indicators
- The Qualification Directive (2011/95/EU): [Directive 2011/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on standards for the qualification of third-country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection, for a uniform status for refugees or for persons eligible for subsidiary protection, and for the content of the protection granted](#)
- Council Directive (92/85/EEC) on pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding (with amendments)

### EU Policy

- Action Plan on the integration of third country nationals, Communication From The Commission To The European Parliament, The Council, The European Economic And Social Committee And The Committee Of The Regions, Strasbourg, 7.6.2016, COM(2016) 377 final [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/proposal-implementation-package/docs/20160607/communication\\_action\\_plan\\_integration\\_third-country\\_nationals\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/proposal-implementation-package/docs/20160607/communication_action_plan_integration_third-country_nationals_en.pdf)
- Common Basic Principles For Immigrant Integration Policy in the European Union, Annex to Immigrant Integration Policy in the European Union, Council of European Union, 14615/04(Presse 321) [https://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/en/jha/82745.pdf](https://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/jha/82745.pdf)

## Law of the Council of Europe

- Istanbul Convention: [Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence](#)
- [Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings](#)

## Law of the United Nations

### UN Conventions

- 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees
- Convention on elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW)
- General recommendation No. 26 on women migrant workers
- General recommendation No. 32 on the gender-related dimensions of refugee status, asylum, nationality and statelessness of women
- General recommendation No. 35 on gender-based violence against women, updating general recommendation No. 19

### UN Resolutions

- New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants adopted on 19 September 2016
- Resolution 1325 of UN Security Council; UN Security Council Resolutions that followed are available at: <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-documents/women-peace-and-security>

### UNHCR resources

- UNHCR (2011): Handbook and Guidelines on Procedures and Criteria for Determining Refugee Status under the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, Reissued Geneva
- UNHCR (2010): Improving Asylum Procedures. Comparative Analysis and Recommendations for Law and Practice, 2010, <http://www.unhcr.org/4ba9d99d9.pdf>
- UNHCR (2010): Improving asylum procedures: Comparative analysis and recommendations for law and practice: Key Gender Related Findings and Recommendations, <http://www.unhcr.org/4be01d0a9.pdf>

- UNHCR (2009): Guidance Note on Refugee Claims relating to Female Genital Mutilation, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/4a0c28492.html>
- UNHCR (2008): Guidance Note on Refugee Claims relating to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/48abd5660.html>
- UNHCR (2006): Guidelines on International Protection No 7: The application of Article 1A(2) of the 1951 Convention and/or 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees to victims of trafficking and persons at risk of being trafficked, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/443679fa4.html>
- UNHCR (2004): Istanbul Protocol: Manual on Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/training8Rev1en.pdf>
- UNHCR (2002): Guidelines on International Protection No 1: Gender-Related Persecution within the context of Article 1A(2) of the 1951 Convention and/or its 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, <http://www.unhcr.org/publications/legal/3d58ddef4/guidelines-international-protection-1-gender-related-persecution-context.html>
- UNHCR (1991): Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women, U.N. Doc. ES/SCP/67, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/category,POLICY,,THEMGUIDE,,3ae6b3310,0.html>

## Further resources

- European Asylum Support Office (2016): Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the European Union 2015, [https://www.easo.europa.eu/sites/default/files/public/EN\\_%20Annual%20Report%202015\\_1.pdf](https://www.easo.europa.eu/sites/default/files/public/EN_%20Annual%20Report%202015_1.pdf)
- European Commission (n.d.), Migration and Home Affairs [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum_en)
- European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2014): Handbook on European law relating to asylum, borders and immigration, <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2013/handbook-european-law-relating-asylum-borders-and-immigration>
- European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2011): Migrants in an irregular situation employed in domestic work: Fundamental rights challenges for the European Union and its Member States, <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2012/migrants-irregular-situation-employed-domestic-work-fundamental-rights-challenges>
- UNFPA (2016): Initial assessment report: protection risks for women and girls in the European refugee and migrant crisis, <http://eeca.unfpa.org/publications/initial-assessment-report-protection-risks-women-and-girls-european-refugee-and-migrant>
- UNGA (2016): In safety and dignity: addressing large movements of refugees and migrants, Report of the UN Secretary General, [http://refugeesmigrants.un.org/sites/default/files/in\\_safety\\_and\\_dignity\\_-\\_addressing\\_large\\_movements\\_of\\_refugees\\_and\\_migrants.pdf](http://refugeesmigrants.un.org/sites/default/files/in_safety_and_dignity_-_addressing_large_movements_of_refugees_and_migrants.pdf)
- WHO (2016): Sexual Violence against Refugee Women on the Move to and within Europe, [http://www.euro.who.int/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0018/319311/9-Sexual-violence-refugee-women.pdf?ua=1](http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/319311/9-Sexual-violence-refugee-women.pdf?ua=1)



## ANNEX b: MATERIAL FOR ADULT EDUCATION – RESOURCES

### Educational & training material in English

- GADIP (2016): Gender Refugees and Security. International conference on gendered conditions for refugees during and after refuge,  
[https://globalstudies.gu.se/digitalAssets/1613/1613872\\_gadip\\_rapport\\_20170201\\_webb.pdf](https://globalstudies.gu.se/digitalAssets/1613/1613872_gadip_rapport_20170201_webb.pdf)
- GADIP (2018): Women's voices: Civil society and immigrant women's rights. May 29, 2018, Gothenburg, Sweden, <https://gadipblog.wordpress.com/2018/08/21/womens-voices-2018>
- GADIP (forthcoming): Collaborative learning for empowerment of women. October 12, 2018
- UN WOMEN (2013): Gender on the Move. Working on the Migration-Development Nexus from a Gender Perspective. Training Manual, <http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2013/12/gender-on-the-move>
- WIDE+ and EWL: International Conference "Movements, Borders, Rights? Feminist perspectives on global issues in Europe", 24-25 October, 2016. Final Conference Statement. Brussels, Belgium, [https://wideplusnetwork.files.wordpress.com/2016/07/statement\\_conference\\_20161.pdf](https://wideplusnetwork.files.wordpress.com/2016/07/statement_conference_20161.pdf)
- UN WOMEN: Women refugees and migrants, <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/women-refugees-and-migrants>
- EPRS / European Parliamentary Service (2016): Gender aspects of migration and asylum in the EU: An overview. Briefing, [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2016/579072/EPRS\\_BRI\(2016\)579072\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2016/579072/EPRS_BRI(2016)579072_EN.pdf)

### Educational & training material in French

- Conseil des Femmes Francophones de Belgique (2014): Protocoles de prise en charge des victimes de violences sexuelles à destination des professionnel.le.s de la santé et de la justice, [https://www.cffb.be/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/CFFB\\_actes\\_DEF2\\_web\\_planches.pdf](https://www.cffb.be/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/CFFB_actes_DEF2_web_planches.pdf)
- Le Monde selon les femmes (2018): Les essentiels du genre No. 15: Genre et migration internationale
- Le Monde selon les femmes : Les essentiels du genre, [http://www.mondefemmes.be/genre-developpement-outils\\_theories-analyse\\_essentiels-genre.htm](http://www.mondefemmes.be/genre-developpement-outils_theories-analyse_essentiels-genre.htm)
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- EfEU (Association for the Development of Feminist Educational and Teaching Models): Publikationen des Vereins EfEU, <http://efeu.or.at/publikationen.html>



## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Agirregomezkorta, Rosa Belén** is the director of the *Centro de Estudios e Investigación sobre Mujeres* (CEIM), based in Málaga (Spain). She has studied Political Sciences and Sociology, Human Rights and Development and holds an International Humanitarian Assistance Postgraduate Diploma. She is an active member of feminist networks at international and local level: *CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness / Feminist Group*, *WIDE+* network, the *Platform CEDAW Shadow Spain* and *Alianza para una Cooperación Feminista* (*Alliance for a Feminist Cooperation*).

**Barry, Halimatou**, has been in charge of the coordination of the activities of *GAMS - Groupe pour l'abolition des Mutilations Génitales* (*Group for the abolition of Genital Mutilation*) in Namur (Belgium) since 2013, which consist in supporting women refugees originated from countries with a high rate of gender-based violence.

**Björnberg, Ulla**, Professor em. since 2011 at the Department of Sociology and Work Science, Gothenburg University. Her research areas are family policy/welfare, work and family, gender, intergenerational relationships, and refugees and migration. Engaged in the Swedish women's human rights organization *GADIP - Gender and development in practice*, aiming at cooperation between gender research and practices. She is a member of the *WIDE+* caucus, an advisory body to the *WIDE+* board.

**Cingolani, Carla**, has studied Economics at the University of Ancora (Italy). She has been working with *Mujeres en zona de conflicto*, Spain, where she is responsible for the strategic priority on human trafficking. She coordinates a programme on prevention, protection and assistance to victims of trafficking in Andalusia. She is a member of the Spanish network against human trafficking, of the Platform "*Antena Sur contra la trata*" and also of the Andalusian Network of development NGO, where she actively participates in the gender group.

**De la Peña, Marcela**, is a sociologist, a gender and development expert and trainer at *Le Monde selon les femmes* (*The world according to women*), Belgium. She has an extensive experience in gender-related issues and has published many articles. Originated from Peru, Marcela has always been a very active member of the South American diaspora in Belgium.

**Lohmann, Kinga**, is a feminist activist and has been working as a director of *Karat Coalition* – a gender equality network – for 20 years. She elaborated and edited several reports and papers on gender equality policies, intersectional discrimination in the labour market (including migrant women), feminist movement. She is a member of the *WIDE+* caucus. Historian by training.

**Sancar, Annemarie**, is an academic and an activist. Her research focused on the construction of ethnicity among refugees in a given national context. She has worked for *swisspeace* as a senior program officer for gender in the *Policy and Platform Program* and at the *Center for Peacebuilding* (KOFF). Previously she worked at *cfed* as an expert in feminist peace policies and migration, and as gender senior advisor for the *Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation*. She is the coordinator of *WIDE-Switzerland* and member of *WIDE+*.

**Solik, Aleksandra**, has been engaged in the activities of *Karat Coalition* since its establishment in 1990s. Her expertise includes international women's human rights mechanisms and gender equality standards as well as the area of women's reproductive rights and health.

**Schoenmaeckers, Déborah**, is in charge of South programmes for the Belgian organisation *Le Monde selon les femmes* (*The world according to women*) since 2017. She is a gender and human rights expert and has been working for various international organisations in various countries.

**Rousset, Chloé**, is a student at Political Sciences in Paris and cooperates with *Le Monde selon les femmes*.

**Thallmayer, Claudia**, has studied psychology and worked on development education and awareness-raising in different capacities. Since 2009, she is a (co-)coordinator of *WIDE – Network for Women's Rights and Feminist Perspectives in Development* in Austria. Her areas are the facilitation of communication and exchange, and advocacy for women's rights in the development context. Currently, she is a board member of *WIDE+*.

**Wichterich, Christa**, sociologist, works as university lecturer, author and researcher; she published widely on topics of globalisation, development and gender, women's movements, feminist economics and feminist political ecology. Presently she is a member of the *WIDE+* caucus.



# ACTIVITIES

WIDE - Erasmus+ project

- **The Europe we want? Feminist approaches to gender, migration, and democracy**

Project number: KA 2016-1-AT01-KA204-016703

Time frame: 1.12.2016 – 30.11.2018

Project partners: WIDE (Austria), CEIM (Spain), GADIP (Sweden), Karat Coalition (Poland), Le Monde selon les femmes (Belgium)

Four transnational partnership meetings were held in the course of the project, to exchange with and learn from local organizations who work with refugees/migrant women and/or on gender equality. The transnational meetings served as a basis to carry out workshops within the thematic frame of the project. The workshops took place in Austria, Belgium, Poland, Spain and Sweden.

- **Transnational partnership meeting in Madrid**

**“Violence against women in a context of securitization and criminalization of NGOs and women’s rights defenders”**

Organized by Centro de Estudios e Investigación sobre Mujeres (CEIM)

Date: 17. & 18.2.2017

Places: Centro Comunitario Casino de la Reina & Centro Cultural La Corrala (Madrid, Spain)

- **Transnational partnership meeting in Vienna**

**“Gender, migration and security discourses in Europe”**

Date: 12. & 13.10.2017

Places: WIDE, Orient Express, Südwind and Otto Mauer Zentrum (Vienna, Austria)

- **Transnational partnership meeting in Brussels**

**“Democracy and equality beyond borders: promoting and strengthening asylum seeker, refugee and migrant women’s rights”**

Date: 6. & 7.3.2018

Places: Red Cross Reception Centre (Yvoir) & Maison des associations internationales, Le Monde selon les femmes, European Parliament (Brussels, Belgium)

- **Transnational partnership meeting in Gothenburg**

**“Women’s voices, civil society and the rights of refugee and migrant women”**

Date: 28. & 29.5.2018

Places: Kvinnofolkshögskola, School of Global Studies / University of Gothenburg, Hotel Eggers (Gothenburg, Sweden)



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Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

## PROJECT PARTNERS



WIDE – Network for Women’s Rights and Feminist Perspectives in Development (Austria)  
[www.wide-netzwerk.at](http://www.wide-netzwerk.at)



CEIM – Centro de Estudios e Investigación sobre Mujeres (Spain)  
[www.ceim.eu](http://www.ceim.eu)



Le Monde selon les femmes (Belgium)  
[www.mondefemmes.be](http://www.mondefemmes.be)



GADIP – Network Gender and Development in Practice (Sweden)  
<https://globalstudies.gu.se/english/cooperation/gadip>



Karat Coalition (Poland)  
[www.karat.org](http://www.karat.org)

Cooperation partner:



WIDE+ – Women in Development+ (Belgium)  
<https://wideplus.org>



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für Frauenrechte und feministische Perspektiven



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