



## BUREAU OF THE EUROPEAN MIGRATION FORUM

Minutes of the meeting of 3 October 2017

### Participants:

#### Bureau members:

- **Irini Pari**, European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)
- **Laura Corrado**, European Commission (EC), DG Home Affairs
- **Saïd Elouizi** (Maison des Migrants), Bureau member representing civil society organisations at national level
- **Pablo Rojas Coppari** (Migrant Rights Centre Ireland), Bureau member representing civil society organisations at national level
- **Annica Ryngbeck** (Social Platform), Bureau member representing civil society organisations at European level
- **Kadri Soova** (PICUM), Bureau member representing civil society organisations at European level

#### Staff:

- **Justyna Głodowska-Wernert**, European Commission (EC), DG Home Affairs
- **Luca Lixi**, European Commission (EC), DG Home Affairs
- **Barbara Walentynowicz**, European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)
- **Annemarie Wiersma**, European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)
- **Anna Krasny**, European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)
- **Anna Morandi**, European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)

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### 1. Summary of the consultation with civil society organisations on the topic of the 4th European Migration Forum on 6-7 March 2018, organised by EESC IMI Group

A form of continuous dialogue with civil society organisations, the consultation fostered a bottom up approach to selecting the topic for the next EMF. Laura Corrado briefly explained the topics that had been proposed via the questionnaire and Annemarie Wiersma presented the results of the questionnaire. A total of 23 organisations responded to the questionnaire<sup>1</sup>, with 20 being in favour of "inclusive labour markets for all migrants" and 3 in favour of return. Suggestions for workshops were grouped under nine headings, being 1) good practices for labour market integration, 2) role of the private sector/multi-stakeholder approach, 3) education, skills etc., 4) gender issues, 5) irregular migration/exploitation/regularisation, 6) vulnerable migrants, 7) anti-discrimination strategies, 8) intra-EU

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<sup>1</sup> A total of 365 persons received the questionnaire. The majority of respondents were grass root or national level organisations.

mobility, coordination in border regions, 9) entrepreneurship, 10) access to the labour market (comparison of policies).

A debate then took place, during which members of the EESC Permanent Study Group on Immigration and Integration and civil society representatives took the floor. The main issues raised were:

- the importance of housing for (labour market) integration and other potential barriers for integration;
- The need to send a strong political message about the management of migration flows, supporting welcoming strategies and solidarity, while being critical of the current trend to negotiate deals with transit countries
- the failure of the EU to create genuine common policies and recommendations on how to create a proper common European asylum system;
- The topic of inclusion in the EU Urban Agenda;
- The link with the European Pillar of Social Rights;
- How to ensure organisations can transition their projects from (temporary) European funding to more lasting local funding;
- gender issues;
- education and training of police staff on how to engage with migrants;
- the double importance of social economy both in supporting and integrating migrants in the society;
- Recognition of skills and qualifications; life-long- learning
- education and training for low-skilled migrants;
- Social and cultural inclusion;
- The role of education in the inclusion of migrant children;
- Rights of migrants whose status is unclear or irregular; regularisation
- concrete examples of partnership between governmental level and civil society organisations working together for integration
- labour exploitation.

It was also mentioned that there is a need for sustainable and long-term policies and that it could therefore be useful to focus on the exchange of good practice.

Annica Ryngbeck pointed out that we should be mindful of the different expectations of European civil society and local/national civil society. EU civil society expects the EMF to feed into relevant ongoing policy processes (and that their inputs and time actually lead to a chance to influence decision and policy makers), while participants from local level rather emphasised the space to network, share experiences and be listened to.

## **2. 4th meeting of the European Migration Forum: theme, format and planned outcome**

### **DATE**

The 4<sup>th</sup> EMF will take place on 6 and 7 March 2018, starting at 2.00 p.m. on 6 March and lasting all day on 7 March.

### **FORMAT**

As agreed in the previous Bureau meeting, the participatory format would be used again, while also leaving some space in the programme for a few speakers. Up to five workshops will be organised in parallel on Day 1, with only short introductory presentations. After some brainstorming, it was decided not to repeat exactly the same workshops on Day 2, but to continue with the same topics, but from a different angle. Each double workshop should be prepared by the same team. The practice of EMF3 of having a team composed of EC officials and NGO representatives (or possibly other stakeholders, like

employers) should be replicated. The Bureau members could also be involved in those preparations.

Efforts should be made to involve high-level representatives of the Council and the European Parliament, as well as the representatives of all the Member States governments and 20 representatives of local and regional authorities, directly involved in integration. There should be a session devoted to a political debate with high-level representatives at the start of the event.

Bureau members were in favour of keeping 'the Floor is Yours' sessions. There is only a challenge of timing.

The "walking gallery" with results of these sessions did not seem to work in EMF3 and this session will not be organised.

An exhibition space should be planned, where participants could present their projects related to the theme of this Forum. Ideally, it should be placed close to the catering space, to allow participants to visit it during meals and breaks and it should be properly prepared by the Secretariat (early information to participants etc.). The Bureau members suggest to do it during the cocktail reception (18.00-19.30 on the first day) and after 'the Floor is Yours' on the second day.

The interactive tool 'Sli.do' could potentially be used at the plenary and workshops, to enable participants to reply to polls, ask questions etc. It would still need to be discussed how to use it efficiently in the EMF4 context. Time should be foreseen in the beginning of the Forum to explain how Sli.do works.

Other successful practices from previous Forum meetings should be reused, like the procedure of selection of participants via an open call for interest or interactive sessions reporting from workshops, animated by the same external moderator. Also, the catering should be provided by a social enterprise again.

## THEMES

The Bureau members reflected on the outcomes of the consultation with civil society. They all agreed that the proposed subject of funding should be dealt with in one dedicated session of ca. 1,5-2 hours.

Irini Pari suggested concentrating on best practice and positive narrative. While agreeing with this proposal, Annica Ryngebeck called for looking at practices that have EU added value – for example projects funded by AMIF that can be replicated. Pablo Rojas suggested looking at more innovative projects, outside the typical scheme; he also found that exchange between governmental actors can be more successful than between NGOs and governmental actors; Laura Corrado indicated that many activities are developed at the local level and that a multi-stakeholder approach (linking employers, local authorities and NGOs) is worth showcasing/exploring. She also indicated that the Commission's DG for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (DG EMPL) would be involved in the EMF4, possibly Commissioner Thyssen could be invited.

As it was decided not to repeat the set of 5 workshops twice, but to continue them from a different angle, the Bureau members discussed how to structure the two sets of workshops, eg.: first discussion on good practice ("what works"), then challenges and solutions; or the opposite. Annica Ryngebeck noted that challenges and barriers come out in discussions anyway, and that it is better not to focus on them; therefore the structure could be: 1/ concrete examples of what works; 2/ solutions to challenges, with a more long-term vision.

After some brainstorming on possible topics for workshops (with focus on issues of regularisation/preventing exploitation (of irregular migrants but not only) and barriers in the access to the labour market, Irini Pari asked each Bureau member to choose one or two preferred topics:

Kadri Soova: Access to labour market (including regularisation); barriers to decent work

Pablo Rojas: irregular migration and regularisation; prevention of labour exploitation (including labour inspection....); he warned against joining the topic of prevention of exploitation and regularisation in one workshop.

Said Elouizi: regularisation

Irini Pari: role of the private sector; entrepreneurship and social economy

Laura Corrado: all the issues related to skills (skills validation, recognition of qualifications, Life-long learning)

Annica Ryngebeck: design the workshops in a way that Local Regional Authorities and Member States find it valuable and relevant to participate actively; complementary to topics focusing on forthcoming EU initiatives also allow for more “futuristic”/long-term vision (e.g. on regularisation).

#### FOLLOW UP

The organising team will prepare two versions of a draft programme with five workshops and present it to the members of the Bureau for input and consultation.

The organising team will prepare the text of the open call for expression of interest and present it to the Bureau for consultation and approval, with the aim of publishing the call by early or mid-November.

### **3. Planning of next Bureau meetings**

No more Bureau meetings will be held in 2017. The next Bureau meeting could take place in January 2018. On the occasion of this meeting, a preparatory meeting on the design of the workshops could be held with NGOs that are involved in one of the workshops.

### **4. AOB**

Staff changes: Barbara Walentynowicz and Anna Krasny are leaving the Secretariat of EESC SOC Section/EMF. The recruitment of their replacements is under way. Justyna Glodowska-Wernert with Luca Lixi will deal with organisation of the EMF4 from the EC side.

The Bureau members thanked Barbara and Anna for their excellent work and support to the Bureau.