**CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST**

**The 3rd meeting of the**

**EUROPEAN MIGRATION FORUM**

***Migrants' access to the EU, to rights and to services***

***Challenges and ways forward***

**Brussels, 2-3 March 2017**

**Background & Main Objectives**

The [**European Migration Forum**](http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.immigration-and-asylum-european-migration-forum)[[1]](#footnote-2)**,** organised by the European Commission and the European Economic and Social Committee, is a platform for dialogue between civil society and European institutions on issues related to migration, asylum and the integration of third-country nationals**.** The aim of the Forum is to **enhance coordination and cooperation between key players involved in the multilevel European governance of migration**. It brings together European policy makers and civil society representatives to discuss and consult on key migration issues. The Forum aims to providing more information on the latest policy developments but also to gather information on how European policies are implemented at regional, local and grass-root levels; it should help to better understand the main challenges that civil society organisations and social partners face in the field and to identify ways to better support them in their efforts to address migrants' needs.

The3rd Forum meeting will take place on **2-3 March 2017 in Brussels.**

The **topic** of the 3rd European Migration Forum was chosen following consultations with civil society representatives. Public consultations, both in the form of a [hearing](http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.events-and-activities-consultation-emf) (held on the 7th of October) for Brussels-based NGOs and in writing for CSOs in all Member States, allowed organisations to give their input on the proposed topics. The contributions received seem to have converged towards the key issue of **ACCESS, including: migrants' access to Europe, to rights and to services**. In a nutshell, the content of the meeting will include a discussion on safe legal alternatives to the perilous journeys migrants undertake, as well as a reflection on the way migrants can access services upon their arrival, together with the rights to which they are entitled to, and how to ensure continuation of such provisions to facilitate their integration process. Moreover, an underlining theme will be that of communication and the media – changing the current narrative on migration, with a view to explore how public discourse can influence public perceptions on migration and integration of migrants in receiving communities.

This call for expressions of interest aims to **select** for participation those organisations active in the field of migration whose expertise and contributions could bring an added value to the European debate on the topics mentioned above. A separate selection procedure is held for each meeting of the Forum.

**Format of the event**

Following the positive feedback received from the participants of the 2nd Forum, the 3rd meeting will keep an interactive, **participatory approach**. The Forum will feature an opening and closing plenary, but the core of the event will consist of workshops, discussion islands and other opportunities to participate in the debate. This will maximize the opportunity for members of civil society organisations to interact with each other and with policy makers.

While the organisers aim to provide participants with interpretation services in more languages, it is highly recommended that they have a good command of English or French.

**Selection of participants**

This call for expressions of interest is open to all civil society organisations that:

* are **legally based** in one of the EU Member States;
* **have experience** in the areas listed above, at EU/national/local level;
* are **able to raise awareness** of the issues mentioned above in their own constituency, national and European networks;
* commit to actively **participate** in the meeting and contribute to the dissemination of the results of the Forum.

To apply, **please complete, no later than 12 December 2016, the application form on-line:**[**http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.events-and-activities-european-migration-forum-3**](http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.events-and-activities-european-migration-forum-3) **including a scanned copy of the registration certificate of your organisation in your country.** Please note that late applications will not be considered.

The main selection criterion will consist of **proven relevance of the activities and expertise of the organisation to the topic of** the meeting**.** Moreover, the selection will be based on the need to ensure:

**a)** **geographical balance**

**b) diversity of fields of expertise, activities and** **types of organisations.**

A maximum of **120** organisations will be selected. Approximately 1/3 will be organisations active at EU level (umbrella organisations, EU networks, platforms, etc.) and 2/3 will be national, regional and local level organisations.

European Commission and the European Economic and Social Committee are in charge of the selection procedure. The final list of participants will be approved by the Forum's Bureau.

**Once all applications have been reviewed, applicants will be notified accordingly in the week of 9 January 2017.**

**Next steps**

After the selection procedure of the applications is completed, the selected organisations will receive an invitation to register for the event (including the programme and a link to the registration form).

\*\*\*Please note that European Commission is in charge of organising the travel and accommodation arrangements for one representative per selected organisation, via its travel agent. The Commission will not be able to reimburse the costs of travel arrangements which were made directly by the participants.

1. This forum follows on from the [European Integration Forum](http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.immigration-and-asylum-european-integration-forum) (EIF). 11 editions of the EIF took place between 2009 and 2014. The European Migration Forum employs a participatory approach, which entails the close involvement of civil society organisations in the preparation and organisation of meetings. Conclusions and a summary report from 2015 and 2016 meetings can be found under: <http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.tags&t=European%20Migration%20Forum> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)