



Recommendation 915 (1981)¹

Situation of migrants workers in the host countries

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Considering that, as a result of the large-scale migration that has taken place in recent decades, some fifteen million foreign workers and their families are living in Council of Europe member states, and that this figure is rising annually because of the reunion of families and births in the host countries ;
2. Considering that migrant workers have greatly contributed to economic expansion in the immigration countries over the last twenty years, but that most of them, despite prolonged residence, still live on the fringe of the host society ;
3. Believing that the economy of many Western European countries will continue to require the assistance of migrant workers, even in the future, and that there is a humanitarian duty to improve their situation and foster the development of harmonious relations between the local and foreign populations ;
4. Considering that the governments of immigration countries should pursue a policy aimed at establishing equal treatment for indigenous and foreign workers, especially as regards housing, social protection, employment and promotion opportunities, through the gradual abolition of advantages accruing to nationals of the host country, and being aware that implementation of these measures will require increased co-operation between countries of origin and host countries ;
5. Considering that discrimination mainly affects the young, who are handicapped notably in their education and vocational training, and also by their often ill-defined legal status in the host country ;
6. Considering that new migration trends have emerged, particularly since the economic crisis which started in the mid-1970s, and that these have altered the behaviour patterns of migrants, who experience difficulty in returning to their countries of origin and therefore desire to stay longer than they expected in the host countries ;
7. Noting that in numerous spheres immigrants do not enjoy genuine equality of opportunity with the local population ;
8. Condemning all forms of unfair discrimination on grounds of race, religion, sex, colour, language, political opinions, birth or other circumstances, and deploring all manifestations of hostility towards minority immigrant groups ;
9. Convinced that paramount importance should be given to the conditions of migrants in programmes and in national policies, and emphasising the debt owed by societies in the host countries to migrants for the cultural enrichment they bring ;
10. Recalling its [Recommendation 453 \(1966\)](#) on measures to be taken against incitement to racial, national and religious hatred, and Resolution (68)30 of the Committee of Ministers on the same subject, its [Recommendation 583 \(1970\)](#) on suppression of and guaranteeing against unjustifiable discrimination, [Recommendation 712 \(1973\)](#) on the integration of migrant workers with the society of their host countries, and [Recommendation 841 \(1978\)](#) on second generation migrants, and bearing in mind the conclusions of the

1. Assembly debate on 30 January 1981 (27th Sitting) (see [Doc. 4584](#), report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Demography). Text adopted by the Assembly on 30 January 1981 (27th Sitting).



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Conference of European Ministers responsible for Migration Affairs, held in Strasbourg in May 1980, and the work of the Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education, and in particular [Resolution No. 3](#), adopted at their 11th Session held in The Hague from 10 to 13 June 1979 ;

11. Bearing in mind also its [Resolution 356 \(1967\)](#) and [Recommendation 504 \(1967\)](#), on the political, social and civic position of women in Europe, and the provisions of the European Social Charter concerning migrant workers ;

12. Considering that the European Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers has so far been ratified only by Portugal, Spain and Sweden,

13. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers :

13.1. invite the governments of member states :

- a. to take into account, in their policies concerning migrants, the recent fundamental change in migration patterns, which are now characterised by a marked tendency for migrants to remain in the host country for an extended period, and to take the necessary legislative and administrative steps to facilitate migrants' genuine integration in the host countries, so that they enjoy an equal footing with the local population while safeguarding their cultural identity ;
- b. to improve their legislation and administrative practices aimed at eliminating the various forms of discrimination still suffered by migrants ;
- c. to facilitate acquisition by migrants of the nationality of the host country, by significantly reducing the period of residence required for naturalisation, and to simplify procedures ;
- d. to grant to migrants, in legislation and in administrative procedures, the right to have their families (wives and children) join them in the host country ;
- e. to grant second generation migrants a legal status which recognises their residential and employment rights in the host country ;
- f. to promote intercultural activities, in particular in the field of information for the public, in order to give it a better understanding of the position of migrants, and to increase their efforts in the field of education and vocational training of migrants, taking account of the specific aspects of these points (such as the specific problems of migrant women's education and the vocational training of adult migrants and their children, including the need to provide migrants' children with education from the pre-school stage right up to the higher level) ;
- g. to ratify the European Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers, and the European Social Charter, if they have not yet done so ;

13.2. to continue to give priority to questions relating to migrants in the framework of the medium-term plan and the intergovernmental activities programme of the Council of Europe.