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Securing refugee and migrant women's economic future in Europe – from fair work to funded entrepreneurship

Motion for a resolution
tabled by the Committee on Migration, International Protection and Economic Co-operation

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This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

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Refugee and migrant women in Europe continue to face persistent barriers to full economic participation, including lower employment rates, a significant gender pay gap, concentration in lower paid sectors and disproportionate unpaid care responsibilities. These inequalities accumulate over the life course into a substantial gender pension gap and a higher risk of poverty in older age. Refugee and migrant women's entrepreneurship remains an underused engine of innovation and growth, with businesses owned by them facing higher rejection rates, smaller loans and reduced access to venture capital and financial networks.

Youth surveys show that young refugee and migrant women place particular emphasis on collaboration, inclusion and accountability in leadership, and are at the forefront of social innovation and community based economic initiatives. Unlocking refugee and migrant women's full economic potential is therefore essential both for fairness and for Europe's long-term resilience and competitiveness. Council of Europe member States should treat refugee and migrant women's economic empowerment as a central pillar of their strategies for the integration of refugees and migrants. Recalling Resolution 2589 (2025) "Women in the economy: employment, entrepreneurship and gender-responsive budgeting", which highlights the need to combat racism, intolerance and intersectional discrimination in the labour market, more should be done to:

– expand affordable, high-quality childcare and long-term care services, enabling refugee and migrant women's full-time participation in the labour market and career progression;

– promote refugee and migrant women's access to quality jobs in green, digital and AI related sectors through targeted skills programmes, mentoring and measures against racism and intersectional discrimination in access to employment;

– strengthen dedicated instruments for refugee and migrant women entrepreneurs, including guarantee schemes, tailored credit lines, and advisory programmes with banks, building on existing European Union and international initiatives.