



Recommendation 1732 (2006)¹

Integration of immigrant women in Europe

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly refers to its [Resolution 1478 \(2006\)](#) on the integration of immigrant women in Europe.
2. The Assembly recalls that the heads of state and government at the 3rd Summit in Warsaw (16-17 May 2005) strongly condemned “all forms of intolerance and discrimination, in particular those based on sex, race and religion, including anti-Semitism and Islamophobia” and undertook to continue to “implement equal opportunity policies in ... member states ... to achieve real equality between women and men in all spheres of our societies”.
3. The Parliamentary Assembly further points out that it is essential to ensure the protection of the fundamental rights of immigrant women in the Council of Europe member states. It expresses its concern at the legal shortcomings identified in relation to the protection of the human rights of immigrant women and compliance with the principle of equality between women and men in immigrant communities. Bilateral agreements, the application of personal law to immigrant women or women of immigrant origin or the absence of any legal status independent of that of the principal right-holder may all weaken this protection.
4. In this context, the Council of Europe must assert the paramount importance of human rights and the rules of international private law which secure the legal protection of immigrant women, and of migration and integration policies which include a gender equality dimension. It must pursue its activities to promote equal opportunities for immigrant women and men in host societies, building on the work of the Council of Europe's 7th Conference of European Ministers responsible for Migration Affairs (Helsinki, 16-17 September 2002).
5. The Parliamentary Assembly calls on the Committee of Ministers to:
 - 5.1. gender mainstream all its work concerning migration in Europe;
 - 5.2. with this in mind, instruct the competent steering committee(s) to put emphasis on strengthening protection of the fundamental rights of immigrant women, and in particular to:
 - 5.2.1. encourage the granting of an independent legal status to immigrant women having joined a principal right-holder, if possible within no more than one year from the date of their arrival, in the follow-up to Committee of Ministers Recommendation Rec(2002)4 on the legal status of persons admitted for family reunification, and Parliamentary Assembly [Recommendation 1686 \(2004\)](#) on human mobility and the right to family reunion;
 - 5.2.2. ensure that applications for independent legal status submitted by immigrant women who are the victims of violence are processed by member states with the utmost diligence and by means of expedited procedures;
 - 5.2.3. ensure that any provision in foreign legislation relating to immigrant women in the member states of the Council of Europe which is contrary to the European Convention on Human Rights (ETS No. 5), Protocol No. 7 to the Convention (ETS No. 117) or the fundamental principle of equality between women and men is identified and not applied and/or that any

1. Assembly debate on 24 January 2006 (3rd Sitting) (see [Doc. 10758](#)[Doc. 10758](#), report of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, rapporteur: Mrs Bilgehan). Text adopted by the Assembly on 24 January 2006 (3rd Sitting).



sections of bilateral agreements and rules of international private law which violate the fundamental principles of human rights, in particular with regard to personal status, especially in the field of marriage, divorce or child custody, are renegotiated, rejected or denounced;

5.2.4. prepare a recommendation on the transcription and validation, by the competent authorities of the host states, of judgments in matters relating to marriage, divorce and child custody delivered by courts in non-member states of the Council of Europe and states which have not ratified Protocol No. 7 to the Convention;

5.3. invite the Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men, in conjunction with the European Committee on Migration to:

5.3.1. pursue its activities to promote the integration of immigrant women, based on accurate sex-specific data and scientific studies, placing particular emphasis on the participation of men in this process, bearing in mind the need to promote equal opportunities for immigrant men and women;

5.3.2. take into account the specific problems of immigrant women in an irregular situation;

5.3.3. initiate a dialogue with migrants' countries of origin, to include equality between women and men in the migration process in the activities of the Council of Europe Political Platform on Migration – a North-South, East-West dialogue, to exert pressure on the countries of origin to encourage them to promote equality between women and men as a principle of human rights and call upon them to prohibit practices which are contrary to human rights, such as polygamy, repudiation, forced marriages, divorce without mutual consent and the automatic granting of custody of children to the father.

6. The Assembly invites the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) to ensure the implementation by member states of the recommendations of the Parliamentary Assembly and of the Committee of Ministers to promote the integration of immigrant women and to continue examining the situation of immigrant women in the Council of Europe member states.

7. The Assembly encourages the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe to pursue its activities on the integration of migrants and cultural diversity at local level, paying particular attention to measures to facilitate the integration of immigrant women in host countries.