



LAUNCH OF THE EUROPEAN MIGRATION FORUM

26-27 January 2015, Brussels

Background

Back in 2009, the European Commission together with the European Economic and Social Committee launched the **European Integration Forum**, a **platform for dialogue with civil society on issues related to integration of third-country nationals**. Since its launch, the Forum has met twice a year and discussed different topics related to migrants integration. After 11 meetings, it has reached a certain level of maturity and it has been considered up to now as a successful event and platform for exchange.

This year, it was decided to **extend the scope of the current Forum** to cover topics related to immigration and asylum, as many aspects related to integration have now been addressed and other issues related to migration and asylum would benefit from a discussion with civil society. This approach has also been welcomed by civil society at the occasion of a consultation organised by the EESC in September 2014.

The **new European Migration Forum** will continue to be a platform for civil society, and its participatory approach will be enhanced by ensuring a closer involvement of civil society organisations in the preparation and organisation of its meetings. The first meeting will take place on 26-27 January 2015, and will ask for the contribution of civil society to address the migratory flows in the Mediterranean, from the situation of migrants in countries of origin and transit before departure, to their journey and their reception once arrived to the EU. In the last year, the number of migrants who attempted to cross the Mediterranean on unseaworthy vessels and risked their lives to reach Europe, very often seeking international protection, has significantly increased, while the conditions of travel have worsened. Migrants are exposed to severe violation of human rights by the criminals who organize the journeys, and sometimes to death. At the same time, the magnitude of this phenomenon requires new resources and solutions to ensure an appropriate management of these migratory flows, responding fully to the humanitarian emergencies while maintaining fair and effective migration and asylum systems.

This call for interest aims at **selecting the organisations that will participate to the first meeting of the Forum**. A similar procedure will be carried out for each of the future meetings, so that organisations with the most adequate expertise in relation to the chosen topic for discussion can be selected. The selection will be carried out by the European Commission and the European Economic and Social Committee.

Main Objectives

The Forum will serve as a platform for civil society to engage at the EU level and exchange experiences in order to **enhance coordination and cooperation amongst key actors**. Bringing together civil society organisations from EU Member States working at European, national and local levels, the Forum will facilitate the creation of partnerships and synergies in this field. Participation of civil society organisations from third countries is also foreseen, according to the topic discussed.

The Forum will also **inform the implementation of the EU decision making** in the areas of migration, asylum and integration. Through the work of the Forum, the European institutions will be better informed about the main challenges that civil society organisations face on the ground and on how to contribute more constructively to the needs of migrants.

The first meeting of the European Migration Forum – How to participate?

The first meeting will take place on the **26-27 January 2015 in Brussels**, and will be jointly organised by the European Commission and the European Economic and Social Committee. Participants will be encouraged to engage in a discussion on the situation in the Mediterranean, and to help the European Institutions assess possible solutions in addressing the migratory flows in the Mediterranean.

The call for participation to the first meeting in January 2015 is open to all civil society organisations which:

- are **legally based** in one of the EU Member States;
- have **demonstrated experience** in the areas of migration, asylum and integration of migrants, at EU/national/local level;
- are **able to raise awareness** on issues concerning migration, asylum and integration among their own constituency, national and European networks.

To apply, **please complete the following form and send it to eu-migration-forum@eesc.europa.eu no later than Monday 17th November, together with a scanned copy of the registration certificate of your organisation in your country.** Please note that late applications will not be considered.

Applications will be examined and chosen allowing for a maximum number of participants, and the selection will be based on the need to ensure:

- a) geographical balance** (balanced representation of organisations from all Member States),
- b) diversity of areas of expertise, activities, and type of organisation,**
- c) relevance of the organisations' expertise** to the chosen topic of discussion and their motivation.

The overall number of selected organisations will be of maximum 130, of which one third will be organisations active at EU level (umbrella organisations, EU networks) and two thirds will be national and regional organisations.

Once applications are reviewed, all applicants will be notified accordingly and no later than Monday 1st December 2014.

Please note that the event will be multilingual. During the plenary, you will be able to speak and listen to English, French, German, Italian and Spanish. In the workshops, interpretation will be provided from all above languages, into English and French only.

Please note the Commission will be able to provide travel arrangements for the selected, registered participants via its contracting travel agent. The Commission will not be able to reimburse after the meeting the costs of travel arrangements which were made directly by the participants. The Commission will cover accommodation, based on the travel plans previously approved. Further information on the meeting, including registration forms will follow during the month of December, and will be provided on the European Economic and Social Committee website <http://www.eesc.europa.eu>.

Please also note that **this open call only refers to the first meeting of the European Migration Forum**. Organisations that will be selected to participate to the meeting in January 2015 will not automatically be given the right to participate to future meetings. **A selection will take place each time**, and will be carried out jointly by the European Commission and the European Economic and Social Committee.

INFORMATION NOTE

The European Commission would like to inform applicants for the first meeting of the EU Platform of civil society organisations working on asylum, immigration and integration that the following data are being collected, organised, recorded, stored and used to contact the selected applicants.

'Call for participation in the first meeting of the European Migration Forum

Purpose: The purpose of the collection of the processing of the personal data is:

1. to examine applications for the purpose of selecting participants of the first meeting of the European Migration Forum;
2. to contact the selected applicants.

Data Controller:

Legal Basis: The Legal basis of the processing operation for which the data are intended is Article 5 (a) of the Regulation 45/2001.

Access to the Data:

Data Subjects are informed of the following rights in line with Article 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 of Regulation 45/2001:

Right to access data –

Right to block –

Right to rectify –

Right to erase – The data subjects have the right to have their data erased. This right is applicable if the processing of data is unlawful.

Right to object – The data subjects have the right to object at any time, on compelling legitimate grounds relating to their particular situation, to the processing of data.

Right to obtain notification to third parties –

Right to have recourse at any time to the European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS).