

**Migrant Women Cannot Be Left Behind in EU Policymaking –  
Results from WIDE+ Review Paper**

On behalf of the Women in Development Europe+ (WIDE+) network, along with its members and partners in the Migration and Gender Working Group, I would like to share with you the conclusions of our latest review paper, titled, “[Marginalizing Migrant Women in EU Policies: Tracking EU Funds](#)”. In this report, we assess the support in programmes towards migrant women in the EU, specifically the financial support to migrant women’s associations. Overall, the rights of migrant women, one of the most marginalised groups in European societies, have not been prioritised by the EU and its Member States. We would like to ask you to consider the conclusions of this report in your work as a Member of the European Parliament. We would be very happy for our network and its members to have exchanges with you on this issue.

As an introduction, WIDE+ is a European network of feminist activists, scholars, and women’s rights organisations that reaches out to 300 associations, through its national membership-based networks and organisations across Europe. It aims to promote women’s rights by analysing the systemic causes of inequality and advocating for transformative change. The network’s Migration and Gender Working Group itself is made up of 15 organisations comprising of grassroots organisations that are led by migrant and refugee women, feminist NGOs that provide support for migrant women through training and shelters, or national networks that work on development, migration and gender topics. These associations are based across Europe in countries like Serbia, Spain, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Italy, the Netherlands and more.

The review paper mentioned above looks at EU-level fund allocations and whether these financial flows reach migrant women associations. At WIDE+, we regard migrant women as all women and girls, including LGBTQI+ and gender non-conforming persons, who have been displaced between countries, trafficked or who have moved from a third or European country to a destination in Europe. One of the most significant takeaways of this review is that there is a weak EU policy focus on migrant women. During the pandemic, it was evident that women, especially migrant women, have been at the frontlines of COVID-19 responses. The over-representation of migrant women in domestic and caregiving roles within informal sectors also mean that they face higher risks of exploitation by employers, while receiving little or no social support. There have also been widespread reports about how various types of violence against migrant women have intensified. This leads to migrant women facing increased isolation and precarity, including lack of access to food and safe housing. Based on the review, which synthesises findings from different sources that have evaluated the EU budget and funding lines, migrant women are simply not prioritised in policymaking. In policy areas where migrant women are considered, the approach is often economic-oriented and fails to address the multiple intersecting issues they grapple with, including racism, xenophobia, and sexism.

To support the findings of this review, WIDE+ also organised a dialogue between private foundations and migrant women leaders in May 2022 titled, [“Resourcing Migrant Women Activism in Europe”](#). The dialogue discussed how migrant women’s work in combating discrimination and advocating for social justice are often ignored, resulting in the lack of institutional and funding support. Migrant women need to be regarded as experts with valuable knowledge and lived experiences and should be part of policymaking processes at the EU level. The dialogue also outlined how migrant women groups struggle to fundraise to sustain the important work they do to ensure other women in their communities achieve a basic standard of living. The immense work carried out by migrant women associations, despite operating on thin resources, indicate a huge failure on the part of EU Member States and their governments to protect the rights of migrants and refugees, especially women.

WIDE+ strongly urges the EU to adopt intersectional policymaking and to ensure targeted support that acknowledges the vital role migrant women’s associations play in protecting the rights of migrant women. This can advance social justice for migrant women so they can lead dignified and empowered lives in Europe.

Thank you for taking time to read this letter. We look forward to hearing from you and engaging you further on this important topic.

Warmest regards,  
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