

**VII CONFERENCE OF THE ASSEMBLY OF EUROPEAN REGIONS (AER) ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEN AND WOMEN  
Timisoara (Timis, Romania), 11-12 October 2007**

**Declaration of Timisoara (2007)**

**Women and Migration**

- Unimously adopted -

The VII Conference of the Assembly of European Regions (AER) <sup>(1)</sup> on Equal opportunities for men and women, at their meeting on 11 and 12 October 2007 in Timisoara (Romania),

*In view of* the declaration of Turin (Piemonte) of 7 November 1998, the Manifesto of Barcelona of 26 October 2002, and the Declarations of Venice (2003) and Kiruna (2006), unimously adopted by the AER General Assembly and positively accepted by the President of the European Convention, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, the President of the European Commission at the time, Romano Prodi, the European commissioner Viviane Redding and many European deputies;

*In view of* the positions taken and the different activities on the issue of migrant women by, in particular, the Council of Europe, the European Parliament, the European Commission, the International conference of socialist women and the European women's lobby;

**I.**

**I.1. Recognises** the precious contribution made by migrant women to their home and host countries;

**I.2. Highlights** the multiple forms of discrimination and violence, especially of a sexual, intra-familial and/or institutional nature, that a great number of women suffer both in their country of origin and in that of destination.

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<sup>1</sup> - The AER is the political organisation of the regions in Europe and their speaker at European and International level. Its mission is to defend the interests of the regions in political processes and develop interregional cooperation. More than 250 regions from 32 European countries and 14 interregional organisations are AER members.

**I.3. Notes** that migrant women are the first to suffer from unequal treatment, and more likely to be victims of abuse and trafficking than other types of women;

**I.4. Emphasises** that the absence of equal opportunities in terms of legal migration and the absence of risk, render these women victims of illegal workers searching for new agents, which subsequently leads to various forms of exploitation and trafficking;

**I.5. Reiterates** the role that women – just like men – play in educating children. The future of their children, as responsible citizens, able to actively participate in their host society in a productive manner, depends on the integration of migrant women, in particular by helping them learn the language.

**I.6. Launches a call** to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) for it to develop and implement regulations accounting for the specific rights and needs of women, to assist countries of destination in creating legal migration opportunities, which could offer an effective alternative to illegal migration;

**I.7. Launches** a call to governments, particularly those of countries of destination, to ratify the International convention of the UN on the protection of the rights of all migrant workers and members of their families;

**I.8. Launches** a call to the member regions of the Assembly of European Regions for the general distribution of this declaration, and the promotion of a voluntary-based policy in favour of equal opportunities and the consideration of the specific rights and needs of migrant women;

**I.9. Supports the European women's lobby** (EWL) in its demand concerning the need for a European immigration policy based on human rights and not the simple management of migration flows, limited to the economic and demographic requirements of the EU.

**I.10. Reiterates** its commitment to the defense of cultural diversity in Europe, but rejects the use of cultural diversity as justification for the breaching of women's fundamental rights, in particular those resulting from patriarchal customs and the application of norms on social status, including their sexual and reproductive rights.

**I.11. Considers** that the work of NGOs in the field of migration and integration should aim to ensure the independence and reinforce the ability to act of migrant women. As an NGO, the **AER intends to participate** in these activities, and decided to **create an AER Observatory on Migrant women** in Timisoara (AEROMW). It hopes to contribute to improving the living conditions of migrant women and the respect of their fundamental rights in Europe, via, among other elements, the exchange of information and experience, the creation of a group of experts, and the organization of thematic seminars, for instance on micro-credit. These tools will assist these women, and the regional authorities welcoming them, to further develop and publicize their potential for action, to achieve economic independence and meet with networks able to assist them in ensuring their social integration <sup>(2)</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> The presentation of the Observatory may be downloaded from (FR, EN, ES):  
<http://www.a-e-r.org/fr/themes-majeurs/equal-opportunities.html>

**I.12. Strongly encourages** all of its member regions to contribute to the complete success of the AEROMW.

## II.

**II.1. Reiterates** that **without public policies and the necessary financial resources, that support** 1) the elimination of gender-related stereotypes in society (basic foundation of misogyny and homophobia), 2) the achievement of equal economic independence for men and women, and 3) the eradication of sex-related violence and trafficking in human beings, **there can be no effective equality between men and women.**

**II.2.** Is at the **disposal of the European Commission** for collaboration, particularly via the new European Institute for gender equality, which will be launched in Vilnius (LT) in 2008, and the European Agency for Fundamental Rights located in Vienna (AT), for the **effective** implementation of the priorities defined by the Institute for EU action in terms of gender equality over the coming years <sup>(3)</sup>. The AER has encouraged the promotion of the equal participation of men and women in regional decision-making for the last 10 years, both inside and outside the EU. The results of recent regional elections in France have proved the effectiveness of its action and that the appropriate legal provisions can enable the achievement of a **democracy grounded in parity.**

**II.3. Confirms** the validity of its positions taken in the Manifesto of Barcelona in 2002 and in the Declarations of Venice (2003) and Kiruna (2006) <sup>(4)</sup>.

*Timisoara, Timis (Romania), 12 October 2007*

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<sup>3</sup> "EU roadmap for equality between men and women 2006-2010":

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/gender\\_equality/gender\\_mainstreaming/roadmap\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/gender_equality/gender_mainstreaming/roadmap_en.html)

<sup>4</sup> All of these documents may be downloaded in several languages from:

<http://www.a-e-r.org/fr/themes-majeurs/equal-opportunities.html>