



CONFERENCE OF INGOs
OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

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CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Migration Committee on the rights of migrants

Meeting of the General Assembly of the Conference of INGOs
5 and 6 October 2021

Following the creation of the Migration Committee on the rights of migrants by the General Assembly of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe convened from 26 to 29 April 2021, the members and participants of the Committee have met several times to :

- Build the basis for their work
- Establish the networks necessary to achieve the objectives and carry out the activities proposed in the Committee's presentation document

1. First approaches :

The Committee members first defined the issues and their rationales around two main axes:

- **The access of NGOs to people in migration situations** (access to camps but not exclusively). The experience collection, a research of texts and other recommendations already written on the issue are part of the first activities carried out by the group.
- **The access of migrants to their fundamental rights** is at the heart of the Committee's issues. The following have already been carried out:
 - A general overview of access to rights
 - On access to health and mental health in particular
 - Access to education in all its forms
 - The necessary security of people inside refugee camps and in general (in particular protection against human trafficking)

2. Links with other Council of Europe organs and other European bodies .

Once the creation of the Migration Committee had been adopted by the General Assembly of the Conference, some members of the Committee were able to meet with :

- **Mr Stefanek**, Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRS) of the Council of Europe for Migration, Refugees and Asylum Seekers.

A comparative analysis of the SRS's action plan and the Committee's objectives enabled fruitful exchanges and the establishment of a regular dialogue between the two bodies.

- **Mrs Fabienne Keller**, MdP, rapporteur in the European Parliament for the draft New Pact on Migration and Asylum.

The exchanges were appreciated and gave rise to a follow-up to the various remarks and proposals made by members of the Committee.

3. Projects currently underway

As indicated in the project that was voted by the General Assembly of the Conference, the following are planned

- Position statements by the Committee supported by the Conference

- The realisation of events to raise awareness but also to question the INGOs of the Conference, the Civil Society in general, the various bodies of the Council of Europe and through them, the States.

3. Monitoring and taking account of current events

The arrival management of migrants at Europe's borders poses serious problems and highlights the various ways in which states manage migratory flows.

In this context, and more particularly with reference to the situation at the Polish-Belarusian border, the Committee proposed the intervention of two Polish INGOs at the meeting of General Assembly on 6 October, to highlight the various failures to respect the human rights of migrants and the serious obstacles encountered by NGOs in pursuing their missions.

Similarly, the Committee wished to join the Commissioner for Human Rights and PACE in reminding states "that they must commit themselves unequivocally to fulfilling their human rights obligations in dealing with the arrival of people fleeing the appalling situation in Afghanistan"¹

Call for participation :

The Migration Committee calls on all INGOs member of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe to support it by **disseminating its interventions and message**

But above all

- By contributing their expertise in the fields of
Health
Security
Education

The participation of civil society through field experience, however simple it may be, is expected by the other pillars of the Council of Europe.

We are waiting for testimonies from NGOs that are concerned with :

- **NGOs' access to migrant persons**
- **Access of migrants to their fundamental rights.**

Contact :

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¹ [In their response to Afghans seeking safety, Council of Europe member states should not undermine human rights protections - View \(coe.int\)](#) Declaration of Commissioner for Human Rights.