

Session June 2020

## Webinar: Migrants and refugees facing the Covid-19 crisis What lessons for the post-pandemic time?

Date: 22 June  
14.30-17.00

### Topic and Rationale

During this pandemic period, the management of the migration phenomenon has been and remains, depending on the States and contexts, an indicator of the way in which the human rights for all are taken into account and protected. The health emergency has created and amplified tensions at the local, national and European levels; the situation at the global level does not in any way reduce these tensions.

During this webinar, the Migration Task Force of the Conference of INGOs proposes to discuss three topics which seems essential:

- 1) How can we go beyond declarations regarding respect for Human Rights and Rule of Law in the field of migration?
- 2) What are the European legal standards, supporting NGO and CSO work with migrants and refugees
- 3) What are the positive effects and difficulties encountered by NGOs and CSOs working in the field of migration during and out of confinement? From your experience what actions need to be taken to facilitate the work of NGOs/CSOs in this field.

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### Draft programme

**Moderator(s):** Daniel Guéry, Coordinator of Migration Task Force, Conference of INGOs

**Introduction:** Anna Rurka, President of the Conference of INGOs

#### 1) Exchange of views with Mr Drahoslav Štefánek, Council of Europe Special Representative on Migration and Refugees.

*Respect of Human Rights and Rule of Law in the field of migration: let's go together beyond declarations?*

- What rules should guide the public authorities and civil society sector in order to overtake the migration crisis?
- During the Covid-19 pandemic, migrants and refugees have shown an unprecedented contribution to national and international solidarity. Some States have regularized the situation of certain migrants and refugees so that they can

benefit from medical and social assistance. However, deconfinement has once again placed them in a state of great uncertainty, how do you see this process at the micro and macro level? How to stabilize this situation and allow a real process of reception and inclusion in the respect of human rights for all? How the state and non-state actors can overcome the tensions that separate them, in order ensure the safety and stability need for inclusion?

#### Exchange with participants

### **2) CSOs and NGOs work in the field of migration**

*Presentation of the Guidelines on Protecting NGO Work in Support of Refugees and Other Migrants, followed by an exchange of views with Carla Ferstman, Expert Council on NGO Law of the Conference of INGOs*

Generalized lockdown has reinforced the restrictions towards NGOs helping migrants. What are the existing and missing legal standards in this area which may answer uncovered needs in terms of regulations ?

*Exchange of views with Frédéric Penard, Directeur of Operations and François Thomas, President of SOS Mediterranean*

What are the positive effects and difficulties encountered by NGOs and CSOs working in the field of migration during and out of confinement? From your experience what actions need to be taken and what advocacy would be relevant to facilitate the work of NGOs/CSOs in this field.

#### Exchange with participants

### **3) Contributions by participants and partners**

Leila Bodeux –Caritas International

Marie Héléne Halligon – Religious in Europe Networking Against Trafficking and Exploitation (RENATE )

Mathias Mertens – European Must Act Campaign

Chris Nash – European Network on Statelessness (ENS)

Marie Salphati – International Federation of Action by Christians for the Abolition of Torture (FIACAT)

**Conclusive remarks by the speakers and moderator of the webinar**

## Resources:

Expert Council on NGO law (CONF/EXP(2020)3); [Guidelines on protecting NGO work in support of refugees and other migrants](#). Prepared by the Expert Council on NGO Law of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe

Expert Council on NGO Law (CONF/EXP(2019)1). [Using criminal law to restrict the work of NGOs supporting refugees and other migrants in Council of Europe member States](#). Thematic Study prepared by Dr Carla Ferstman on behalf of the Expert Council on NGO Law of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe.

[Policy brief on Migration](#), prepared by the Task Force on Migration