



European Council

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Resolution 2026/0001

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Protecting and Advancing the Rights of Migrant Workers Within Europe

The European Council,

Affirming the strong need for an integration program for immigrants, especially from outside the European Union (EU),

Alarmed by persistent brain drain from Western Balkan countries, which weakens their long-term economic development and accelerates demographic decline,

Emphasising the sovereign right of Member States to regulate labour market access while respecting EU legal frameworks,

Having considered the effects of uncontrolled labour migration on the infrastructures of the European Union,

Recognising that migrant workers, making up more than 10% of European society, continue to play an important role in maintaining labour supply in several European economies, especially in agriculture, transport and seasonal employment sectors where labour shortages, due to an ageing population, remain common in a variety of European states,

Aware of the fact that limited knowledge of the local language can prevent migrant workers from fully understanding employment contracts, seeking legal assistance when abuse occurs, and having access to social life,

Taking into consideration that some countries of origin continue to depend economically on temporary labour migration and remittances sent home by citizens working abroad,

Deeply concerned by high numbers of undocumented migrant workers in the European Council,

Alarmed by the exploitation, discrimination and unsafe working conditions migrant workers can face,

Encouraging Member States to ensure migrant workers legal protection and access to justice,

Reaffirming the objectives of the International Labour Organization (ILO) regarding humane work, fair wages, remuneration, and safe working conditions for all workers and the role of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in promoting safe, orderly, and regular migration,

Taking note of the European Union Anti-Trafficking Directive (2024/1712) and the Employer Sanctions Directive concerning the prevention of labour exploitation and trafficking in human beings,

Recognising that human trafficking and labour exploitation is increasing and frequently linked to criminal intent,

Acknowledging the particular challenges faced by countries of origin, transit, and destination in managing migration flows,

Guided by the principles of human dignity, equality before the law, national sovereignty, and respect for fundamental human rights, and thereby recalling the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948),

1. **Urges** the use of employer-verified work permits to reduce illegal employment while ensuring that workers are protected under national labour law;
2. **Resolves** the enforcement of minimum labour standards for all migrant workers, including fair wages, safe working conditions and access to complaint mechanism by:
 - (a) building a protection system for whistleblowers where their status and safety is guaranteed by the host country,
 - (b) making an integration step as a necessity for a Visa application for non-EU citizens;
3. **Requests** a world-wide program to ensure a safe, documented contract for skilled workers before the migration process, in order to abolish false advertisement and exploitation of lack of language knowledge from the employers' side:
 - (a) which will be named Human resources Opportunity Program for Equality (HOPE),
 - (b) which will be headquartered in Wales,
 - (c) the symbol of which will be a whale to represent liberty, intelligence, strength, insurance and solidarity,
 - (d) the official anthem of which will be the song "Er hat sich das nicht ausgesucht";
4. **Further requests** bilateral agreements ensuring circular migration, resulting in both the host and the home country benefiting, and immigrants returning as skilled workers;
5. **Urges** the establishment of structured labour mobility partnerships between EU Member States and Balkan countries;
6. **Calls for** enhanced social security portability agreements to promote the partial transfer of earned pensions and benefit from the host country to the home country to create continuity for migrant workers;
7. **Supports** the translation of essential labour contracts and written communications, by the employers into languages commonly spoken by migrant workers, especially in sectors employing large numbers of migrant workers, in order to reduce misunderstandings between employers and employees and to improve workers' awareness of their legal rights including through:
 - (a) the distribution of multilingual informational leaflets at workplaces and employment offices paid by the employers,
 - (b) the establishment of online platforms containing translated labour rights information, specifically:
 - (i) Offering access to educational online courses that facilitate basic language acquisition and cultural orientation,
 - (ii) cooperation with employers and civil society organizations assisting migrant communities;
8. **Calls upon** Member States to improve the collection of government independent data concerning migrant workers in order to better identify cases of exploitation, especially regarding:
 - (a) undeclared labour,
 - (b) excessive working hours,
 - (c) violation of labour contracts,
 - (d) illegal and child labour;
9. **Encourages** Member States to strengthen workplace inspections upon suspicion and creating a confidential reporting system to ensure that:

- (a) employment records are reported correctly, and undeclared labour is identified by enabling migrant workers to report violations relating to:
 - (i) labour rights,
 - (ii) minimum wage regulations,
 - (iii) working-hour regulations,
 - (iv) residence permits procedures,
 - (b) employees comply with national labour legislation,
 - (c) regular inspections take place to monitor working hours and unsafe housing conditions in a timely manner,
 - (d) workers can report violations without fear of retaliation;
10. **Emphasizes** the importance of reviewing existing administrative procedures and expanding their capabilities, affecting migrant workers in order to identify unnecessary bureaucratic obstacles, particularly in relation to registration requirement and communication between relevant authorities, while ensuring that existing labour protections remain fully in force, improving training and removing restrictions on unannounced inspections;
11. **Suggests** the allocation of European funding and cooperation for the establishment of a pan-European taskforce against migrant exploitation and human trafficking, operating in cooperation with national law-enforcement agencies, with the objective of:
- (a) identify, investigate, and dismantle human trafficking and migrant-smuggling networks,
 - (b) coordinate joint intelligence operations between Member States, Europol, and Interpol,
 - (c) protecting migrant workers from labour exploitation and other violations of labour rights;
 - (d) monitoring illegal employers and workplaces more effectively,
 - (e) creating safe and accessible systems for reporting abuse,
 - (f) recommends the development of secure digital working logs for all seasonal and posted workers to make contracts incorruptible and employment status clear with instant registration in social security systems;
12. **Recommends** promoting equal treatment of migrant workers by:
- (a) taking action against racism and discrimination in workplaces and society,
 - (b) supporting equal pay and equal working conditions,
 - (c) raising awareness of the economic and social contributions migrant workers make;
13. **Further invites** Member States to improve healthcare and social support for migrant workers by:
- (a) giving access to emergency healthcare services,
 - (b) providing important information in multiple languages,
 - (c) supporting mental health services for victims of exploitation and abuse;
14. **Encourages** the establishment of multilingual information platforms accessible pre- and post-departure, providing accessible information on:
- (a) labour rights,
 - (b) minimum wage regulations,
 - (c) working-hour limitations,
 - (d) residence permit procedures;
15. **Encourages** the implementation of specific protection and counselling measures for migrant workers, who face a disproportionately high risk of exploitation, violence and sexual assault;

16. **Calls upon** member states to collect and share best results regarding the protection of migrant workers creates a monitoring framework to assess the implementation and to make these resources accessible through a general and centralized European platform;
17. **Requests** greater financial, technical, and administrative support for Member States facing high migration pressures, including faster and simpler access to existing migration-related funding mechanisms;
18. **Requests** Member States to address cases of illegal immigration in accordance with national and international law, by:
 - (a) providing individuals with due process and access to legal review of their immigration status,
 - (b) prioritizing voluntary return programs where appropriate,
 - (c) initiating removal or deportation procedures for individuals who do not qualify for asylum, residency, or other legal grounds to remain after all appeals have been exhausted,
 - (d) imposing penalties on employers and criminal networks that facilitate illegal immigration, human trafficking, or labour exploitation;
19. **Encourages** the sovereign right of every Member State to regulate its own labour, migration and integration policies in accordance with national law and constitutional frameworks, while remaining within the principles, objectives and safeguards established by this resolution and by European and international law;
20. **Urges** host countries to take primary responsibility for the protection of migrant workers in their country;
21. **Decides** to actively prioritize and address this issue;
22. **Requests** to receive annual updates on the progress made regarding this matter.

Vote result	Adopted
	<i>In favour:</i> 24
	<i>Against:</i> 16
	<i>Abstentions:</i> 2
Date of vote	19 June 2026
Final editor	Laura Petra Blümel