



European Council

Distr.: General
19 June 2026

Original: English

Resolution 2026/0002

Resolution adopted by the European Council on 19 June 2026

Protecting and Advancing the Rights of Migrant Workers in Europe

The European Council,

Recognising that migrant workers are an indispensable element of Europe's economies,

Referring to Article 45 THE TREATY ON THE FUNCTIONING OF THE EUROPEAN UNION (TFEU), DIRECTIVE (EU) 2024/1233 and the DIRECTIVE (EU) 2021/1883, which promote the rights of migrant workers within the EU,

Deeply concerned about the numerous violations of European Union (EU) guidelines by Member States,

Recalling that the safety of all people, including migrant workers, relies on maintaining public order and refusing any ideology or practice that endangers the rights and freedoms of others,

Bearing in mind that the protection of migrant workers and the orderly, secure regulation of labour migration by Member States are complementary rather than opposing objectives,

Recalling the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the principle that all registered workers are entitled to dignity, equality and favourable working conditions,

Reaffirming the fight against the exploitation and coercion of migrant workers in inhumane or illegal conditions,

Recognising the need for greater solidarity and sharing of responsibility among Member States in addressing challenges related to migration,

1. **Urges** Member States to put in place arrangements that safeguard migrant workers who:

(a) act as whistleblowers by:

- (i) putting in legal safeguards for them,
- (ii) helping them find fresh employment using funds of the EU,
- (iii) issuing temporary residence permits to them, which are valid for at least for 6 months,

(b) are subject to gender-based discrimination or sexual violence by:

- (i) preventing isolation and focusing especially on gender-based exploitation and assault,
- (ii) prioritizing the creation of environments within which victims are encouraged to come forward;

2. **Calls upon** European states to strengthen cross-border enforcement of labour and migration standards in accordance with existing EU regulations and via voluntary cooperative framework that respects the sovereign

- jurisdiction of non-EU and non-EU EFTA countries to protect EU/EEA citizens and third country nationals alike by:
- (a) treating migrant workers according to law and labour standards,
 - (b) ensuring a humane amount of living space for workers,
 - (c) improving cross-border cooperation between Member States,
 - (d) ensuring faster identification and prosecution of exploitation cases, relating to migrant workers,
 - (e) increasing transparency in employment contracts for migrant workers,
 - (f) working together during crises and emergencies, thereby protecting the movement and employment of essential migrant workers,
 - (g) providing working access to:
 - (i) necessities such as clean water, electricity, heating and sanitation facilities,
 - (ii) regular surveys, inspections and controls of workplaces and the respective working conditions;
3. **Strongly urges** all member states to enforce tougher penalties on employers and criminal networks who exploit migrant workers, including:
- (a) substantial fines for wage theft and illegal contract enforcement,
 - (b) temporarily or permanently revoking business licences for repeat offenders,
 - (c) criminal prosecution for severe cases of labor exploitation and forced labor,
 - (d) imposing penalties on culprits;
4. **Seeks** to establish a European Migrant Worker Reporting Office (EMWRO), acting as the central coordinating body to which migrant workers, employers, trade unions and Non-Governmental-Organisations (NGOs) can report labor-right violations, if necessary funded by EU-funds, which is tasked with:
- (a) receiving and registering reports of violations, including:
 - (i) contracts not provided in a language the worker understands,
 - (ii) withheld or only partially paid wages,
 - (iii) indicators of forced labour,
 - (b) referring each report to the competent national authority of the Member State for investigation and enforcement,
 - (c) operating a confidential, multi-language reporting channel accessible to workers without fear of losing their residency status,
 - (d) compiling anonymized EU-wide data on cross-border exploitation in order to identify recurring networks and patterns,
 - (e) always respecting the competence and sovereignty of Member States over the enforcement and regulation of labour migration,
 - (f) the development of a secure digital working log for all seasonal and posted workers to make contracts, employment and or migration status clear with instant registration in the respective social security system;
5. **Encourages** Member States to adopt a security-first approach to migration management in order to protect legal migrant workers, preserve public confidence in migration systems, and strengthen the integrity of European borders through:
- (a) increasing investments funded by EU-funds in border infrastructure, surveillance technology, and personnel at external borders,
 - (b) strengthening enforcement of existing immigration laws and border regulations,
 - (c) enhancing screening and verification procedures for individuals entering Member States,

- (d) improving the distribution of information regarding individuals who violate immigration laws or engage in cross-border criminal activities,
 - (e) prioritizing legal and documented migration pathways over irregular migration routes,
 - (f) financially supporting frontline states and creating legal employment pathways for migrant workers and promoting their voluntary access to employment in regions experiencing labour shortages;
6. **Encourages** Member States to provide accessible language courses for migrant workers in order to facilitate workplace integration and increase awareness of both rights and responsibilities within the host country, including:
- (a) flexible schedules compatible with working hours,
 - (b) cooperation with local educational institutions and employers,
 - (c) financial support through existing national and European funding mechanisms where appropriate;
7. **Proposes** that member states of the European Council conduct proportionate checks of non-EU-citizens in accordance with privacy rights, with the aim of preventing the entry of individuals who participate in discriminatory practices, by:
- (a) requiring credential verification for clear and credible evidence of affiliation with designated terrorist organizations or incitement of discrimination or violence,
 - (b) not accessing privately held information unless there is a court order and credible evidence of affiliation with terrorist organizations, patterns of violence, or radicalism,
 - (c) legally researching family and social ties, while requiring disclosure of any past criminal convictions or actions related to terrorism, hate crimes, or trafficking,
 - (d) declaring intentions regarding the length of stay;
8. **Requests** the swift departure of migrant workers whose work permits or residency status have expired or are not in compliance with national law, by:
- (a) issuing clear notifications at least 60 days before permit expiry, including renewal procedures and consequences of overstaying,
 - (b) requiring regular reporting to immigration authorities,
 - (c) initiating deportation procedures for individuals who do not qualify for asylum, residency, or other legal grounds to remain after all appeals have been exhausted;
9. **Urges** member states to provide more opportunities for migrants and address labour shortages by:
- (a) expanding seasonal and talent work visas,
 - (b) prioritizing migrants who fill specific job gaps, particularly in high-demand sectors,
 - (c) prioritizing immigration pathways aligned with national labour market demands and required career sectors,
 - (d) allowing migrant workers more flexibility to switch permits and visas;
10. **Requests** that employment contracts offered to migrant workers be provided in a language the worker understands, alongside a clear summary of their core labour rights;
11. **Endorses** the creation of public awareness campaigns aimed at informing migrant workers about:
- (a) available support services,
 - (b) reporting mechanisms for abuse and exploitation;
12. **Supports** circular migration frameworks that allow migrant workers to gain professional experience abroad and contribute to their countries of origin upon return, including:

- (a) reintegration support mechanisms for returning,
 - (b) skills transfer and EU-wide recognition initiatives,
 - (c) cooperation between governments and employers,
 - (d) supporting programs that encourage voluntary return of skilled workers to their country of origin through training, investment incentives and reintegration assistance;
13. **Calls upon** Member States to establish strict regulatory oversight over digital recruitment applications and third-party subcontracting agencies to eliminate:
- (a) fraudulent job postings,
 - (b) hidden placement fees,
 - (c) deceptive housing advertisements targeted at vulnerable third-country nationals;
14. **Affirms** that the implementation of the objectives within this resolution shall rely on a balanced financial framework designed to minimize additional strains on central Union, national, or municipal budgets, by:
- (a) urging Member States to utilize allocations from existing central European frameworks, such as the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) and the Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund (AMIF), to co-finance necessary administrative infrastructure, integration courses, and digital reporting system,
 - (b) requiring employers to absorb all baseline operational, translational, and compliance costs associated with mandatory multilingual employment contract provisions, workplace standards, and digital worker logs,
 - (c) mandating that revenues generated from financial penalties, asset forfeitures, and substantial fines levied against non-compliant employers be directed to support the operating costs of the European Migrant Worker Reporting Office (EMWRO) and local victim support networks;
15. **Decides** to stay actively seized on the matter.

Vote result	Adopted
	<i>In favour:</i> 22
	<i>Against:</i> 15
	<i>Abstentions:</i> 0
Date of vote	19 June 2026
Final editor	Laura Petra Blümel