

General Secretariat for Gender Equality, Greek Ministry of Interior

**Gender implications of current bilateral
temporary labour agreements and need for
gender-mainstreaming in migration issues
based on Greek experience**

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*Presentation to the Seminar on
Gender-Sensitive Labour Migration Policies*

Brdo, 16-17 February 2009

Introduction: Migration as a dynamic and complex phenomenon - Feminization of migration

- Challenges and opportunities for origin and destination countries
- Multidimensional response in the contexts of: A) border security, B) sustainable development , C) non-discrimination and human rights
- Women, nowadays, emerge as a crucial factor

A. Labour mobility and Bilateral temporary labour agreements

- Temporary labour migration
- Management of this migratory trend
- Bilateral temporary labour agreements as a flexible tool

Basic challenge:

- Maximize opportunities and minimize risks - by enhancing human (female and male) capital development, for the benefit of :
 - origin countries
 - destination countries
 - migrants

The Greek Government has already signed **bilateral agreements** (with Bulgaria and Albania) **for seasonal workers**

- Establishment of legal channels for migration
- Enhancement of intergovernmental cooperation in economic, social and cultural fields

BLAs must take into account the **differences** in:

- Socio-cultural roles
- Needs
- Constraints and
- Vulnerabilities especially of women,
who often suffer multiple
discrimination

BLAs shouldn't be gender blind :

They should meet the special needs of male and female immigrants:

- **Equal access** for women and men to foreign labour market
- **Protection** and empowerment of the male and female migrants
- **Certainty** of return

Adopting a gender perspective

and recognizing migrant women's role is a
step towards respecting their fundamental
rights **as human beings**

B. EU level: European Pact on Immigration and Asylum

- Basic commitment to create a **comprehensive partnerships with the countries of origin**
- Opportunities for legal immigration which are adapted to the labour market

Gender mainstreaming and EU migration

- Member states are urged to ensure, **through bilateral labour agreements** that women immigrants :
 - enjoy secure legal and labour status in the host countries
 - do not suffer discrimination, in accordance with the Community acquis

C. Greece - Migration policy and gender mainstreaming – Bilateral cooperation

- Particular geographic and strategic position
- Country of destination for labour migration and especially temporary labour migration

Special aspects of female labour migration in Greece

1. Recent incoming migration has been characterised by a high presence of women.
2. The main reasons of their movement are economic
3. Female immigrants mostly work in specific economic sectors

Greece has elaborated a **new migration policy**

- Aiming first and foremost to uphold human rights
- Tools for the implementation of this new migration policy

Special emphasis is being placed on agreements aiming at :

1. Support of the immigrants' countries of origin
2. Cross-border collaboration and frontier controls

Some examples of the Greek policy as part of bilateral partnerships

- “Education – Social exclusion – Prostitution – Migration” (in Albania, Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia)
- “Support of regional politics against women’s trafficking” (in Bosnia – Herzegovina and Serbia)

Some examples of the Greek policy as part of bilateral partnerships

- “Actions for prevention and support of victims of trafficking” (in Albania)
- “Building of Mechanisms to Effectively and Sustainably Implement Readmission Agreements (in Albania)”

Some more examples of gender sensitivity and gender mainstreaming

- Creation of shelters, medical and psychological support, legal aid and administrative assistance
- Integration into the labor market
- Raising public awareness through media campaigns

These examples from the Greek experience reveal

- The need of cooperation with third countries
- Sharing responsibilities and mutual benefits
- Equal access, equal treatment and gender mainstreaming in migration policies
- **Bottom-up involvement** : local-level empowerment of women, awareness raising, protection of migrants from labour exploitation and direct participation of vulnerable groups in finding appropriate solutions

Conclusion

- Current global economic crisis - common threats and security challenges and economic development opportunities
- Gender equality can fully utilize the potential of migrant women and offer the greatest possible development benefits from migration
- Increasing the “visibility” of the –often neglected and “invisible”- migrant women

Gender implications and need for gender-mainstreaming in migration issues

will be at the centre of discussions of the forthcoming GFMD (November 2009 in Athens)

*Thank you very much
for your attention*

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