



# Motions 2016-2020

2<sup>nd</sup> Congress of  
industriAll Europe

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## **IndustriAll European Trade Union's Motions 2016-2020**

As adopted by the 2<sup>nd</sup> industriAll Europe Congress on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2016

### **IndustriAll Europe demands that Europe rise to the challenge: a credible refugee strategy, aid & support and above all a show of solidarity**

The European continent is experiencing the worst humanitarian crisis in its history. Over recent months, several million people have been seeking refuge fleeing poverty, war and persecution or have been forcibly displaced. The vast majority have been seeking residence in neighbouring countries. Those who have tried to reach Europe have often made a dangerous and perilous journey. Too many of them have lost their lives.

This situation requires a European response based on humanity, solidarity and inclusion. European trade unions know better than anyone that our societies have been built and developed thanks to ongoing cultural and ethnic diversity.

Nevertheless, the situation is unfortunately polarising society. Even if the vast majority of people in Europe are in favour of taking in and helping the refugees, xenophobic and racist parties are using the dire situation of the refugees and the uncoordinated approach by the EU and individual countries as a way to draw public attention and to exploit this for their own benefit.

IndustriAll Europe calls upon all of its affiliated organisations, their staff and their active membership in all companies across Europe to show active solidarity with refugees and to reject all forms of prejudice, racism, xenophobia and acts of violence in the strongest possible terms.

#### **Asylum is a fundamental human right**

All European Union Member States are signatories to the Geneva Convention and must welcome asylum seekers with dignity and humanity. These last months have shown that the Dublin Regulation, which obliges every refugee to register his/her asylum claim in the first EU country entered and which has turned out to be largely impracticable, has failed and needs to be revised. With guarantees regarding family reunion, respect for personal property and - as much as possible - a refugee's wish to seek asylum in the country of his/her choice, all countries in Europe must share equal responsibility in welcoming refugees.

We need a uniform European policy, with respect of humane standards. This humanitarian obligation on the part of the EU includes above all improved registration and assistance for refugees at those points where they enter Europe, and this in solidarity among all European countries. The burden cannot be only on the countries of entry.

The very long waiting periods for registration, and for the asylum procedure, must be shortened, while standards of due legal process need to be guaranteed in asylum procedures. The statement of countries as a secure country of origin must not be used as a general rule to undermine the individual's right to claim asylum. The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights has to be upheld and respected.

Refugees can and should be an opportunity for Europe. They will be an asset to Europe's economy and society in the future. We have to combat prejudices which are nurtured by xenophobic parties. Migrants contribute more to our social systems than they receive. The EU can manage the current crisis and turn Europe into a safe and hospitable place for asylum seekers for the benefit of all.

### **Refugees in the European Union**

We take note of the European Commission's initiatives to address the refugee emergency in Europe and the Council Decision to adopt a plan to share refugees among the EU Member States. IndustriAll Europe demands the Member States to guarantee the free movement of men and women and not to undermine the Schengen Agreement. We call on the EU to put forward a fully-fledged migration policy, including the integration of refugees into the community as well as the labour market.

Local communities should be supported in their efforts to take in refugees and to provide decent living conditions. Provisions must be made to guarantee health care and proper assistance and help. Too many refugees have suffered physical and psychological harm. Integration into the community – and into the labour market – also means providing from the outset language courses and access to education.

IndustriAll Europe and its affiliates call on the established political actors and institutions of the EU and its Member States to work on improving the acceptance of refugees in society, so that the desperate situation of these human beings in need of protection, fleeing from wars and political persecution, is not exploited by populists in elections. Right-wing extremism and xenophobia must be opposed.

### **Access to the Labour Market**

Improving access to the labour market for refugees and migrants is key to facilitating integration into society. Trade unions have a special responsibility to ensure that refugees and migrants obtain fair conditions in the labour market. It is crucial that the refugees get into the labour market. However, it is equally important that we prevent the exploitation of refugees and any attempt to use the current refugee crisis in Europe to undermine working conditions and social standards and to circumvent existing collective agreements.

We must reject the division of the labour market into an "A" and a "B" labour market with consequent lower wages, worsened working conditions and reduced social security access for the weakest workers. Such an unfair situation would create a serious obstacle to the successful integration of refugees and migrants and could be abused by employers as an argument for undercutting existing minimum wages, wage floors and collective agreements in general. We cannot and will not accept any form of wage or social dumping.

Refugees and migrants must have the same working conditions as nationals. They must also have equivalent conditions for employment-related education opportunities for adults, vocational training and apprenticeships, as these can be considered a prerequisite for access to the labour market in many countries.

Social Partners can actively contribute to delivering concrete solutions for helping to integrate refugees and migrants into the labour market. Employers also bear a clear responsibility in the current situation. It is important that they make jobs, vocational training and apprenticeships available to refugees, and that they resolutely respond to any and all forms of racism and xenophobia in their companies and subsidiaries, wherever they are situated.

Directive 2013/33/EU on legal access to the labour market for asylum seekers must be rapidly and fully transposed to ensure that applicants have access to the labour market no later than 9 months from the date when the application for international protection was lodged. Beyond legal aspects, migrants and refugees must overcome many hurdles to access the labour market such as language, rejection/discrimination, recognition of diplomas, and access to training for acquiring new skills.

In addition to its domestic responsibilities, Europe still has a big responsibility in relation to those who still live in the Middle East, in countries at war and/or with disturbances, as well as in neighbouring countries that have accepted by far the largest share of refugees, thereby accepting a financial burden beyond all comparison.

Finally, industriAll Europe is deeply committed to seeking peace, in the Middle East as well as in the rest of the world. We demand that all European governments contribute to a political solution to end the conflicts, in order to pursue humanitarian and foreign economic policies based on solidarity and respect among peoples.