

Statement

„Migration in and to Europe from a Woman's Perspective“

Andante Study Days in Strasbourg, 20th to 24th April 2018

The current migration crisis is of unprecedented proportions. Myriads of people are left with no alternative other than to flee the war, poverty and destruction that has overtaken their countries. A large number of these are women, often alone with children. Our common Christian heritage of shared values prioritises the solidarity and hospitality that the current migration crisis clearly requires. Andante member organisations resolve to promote compassion, understanding and inclusion in order to challenge attitudes of fear and hatred. Andante has particular concern for the needs of all women who are affected by the current and ongoing crises.

As a result we point out some key points of the huge issue of migration:

- Andante (European Alliance of Catholic Women's Organisations) is convinced that everybody should be allowed to belong to multiple affiliations.
- In the countries of the Andante Member Organisations we will start a discussion: Who is allowed to belong to «us»? This will result in reflecting on our values about openness, hospitality and Human Rights.
- Migration is connected to the fear of the unknown: We recognize that people in the destination countries are confronted with fear. Migrants experience fear even more. But fear can be 'unlearned'. We call attention to the necessity of meeting each other at all levels of the society. As Christians we can learn from our biblical and religious history of migration.
- Andante is alarmed by a dangerous development: the society is starting to label groups of people as superfluous persons. This is threatening for many people, including migrants. As a Catholic women's organisation we motivate our Member Organisations to stress the unique value of every single human being.
- We point to the Vatican paper «Erga migrantes caritas christi» and encourage our members to read it and to act alike!
- Andante has participatory status as an International Non-Governmental Organisation at the Council of Europe and is member of the Conference of INGOs at the Council of Europe. We are convinced to use networks like the Council of Europe to achieve our goals with regard to the topic of migration.
- Andante pleads to the different countries who are members of the Council of Europe to take seriously the rights of women migrants as formulated in the Convention of Istanbul.
- Andante appeals to pay attention to the specific needs of women migrants and refugees during their asylum procedure and concerning their working conditions. One aspect to protect family life and to prevent loss of expertise is to allow migrant men and women to have a temporary leave to see their children at home and help their country.

Statement of the Coordinating Committee of Andante, Strasbourg, 24/04/2018

(Read also the Statement on migration of Andante – European Alliance of Catholic Women's Organisations – of 17th April 2016)