



Integrating women refugees: NGOs as key partners and a force for change

Tuesday 7 March 2023, 1:15 - 2:30 EST

Permanent Mission of the Czech Republic to the UN, One Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza
885 Second Avenue, 48th Floor, New York, NY 100

Registration form: <https://bit.ly/CSWrefugees>

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***The hybrid side-event is organised by the Czech Republic and Ukraine.
All CSW67 delegates are invited to attend.***

Opening remarks:

- H.E. Mr. Marian Jurečka, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, Czech Republic
- Ms. Klára Šimáčková Laurenčíková, Government Commissioner for Human Rights of the Czech Republic
- Ms. Kateryna Levchenko, Government Commissioner for Gender Equality Policy, Ukraine

Speakers:

- Ms. Blanche Tax, Deputy Director of the UNHCR New York
- Ms. Magda Faltová, Director of the Association for Integration and Migration, Czech Republic
- Representative of OECD (TBC)

Moderator:

- Ms. Martina Štěpánková, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Czech Republic

While the COVID-19 pandemic slowed down global movement including international migration, in 2022 the Russian aggression has caused one of the most massive refugee and humanitarian crisis in Europe since World War II with 5 million refugees across the OECD countries. However, there has been other refugee crises in or outside of Europe where millions of people were displaced from their homes.

Female refugees, and asylum seekers, particularly those arriving with children, face many obstacles in different areas, including **housing, training and language courses, labour market, childcare, and healthcare**. As emphasised by the Council of Europe Recommendation, it is necessary to restore stability in the refugees' lives by, among others, ensuring fair employment for women and education for girls while protecting them from exploitation, trafficking, and violence. Their integration, therefore, must be **gender-responsive and** addresses the special needs of women refugees and migrants.

In case of Ukraine refugees¹, 80 % of them are women and children while many of those are in particularly vulnerable situation. This is caused not only by the circumstances in which they were forced to leave their home country or the conditions they face on arrival, but also because of personal characteristics such as their age, gender identity, disability, ethnicity, or health status. As such they are more at risk of human rights violations and abuses than others.

¹ Including refugees registered for Temporary Protection or similar national schemes in Europe.



Since the end of the World War II and especially in the post-Cold War era, NGOs have become key players in the area of asylum and migration. Working directly in the field, NGOs firstly distribute humanitarian assistance such as water, food and shelter, secondly provide legal and psycho-social counselling to access rights guaranteed by the state and thirdly create new social spaces. On the national level, NGOs also participate in policymaking. By providing evidence base for policy decisions, NGOs reduce implementation costs, bring potential for innovation, and increase trust in government.

What have NGOs been doing to support female refugees and asylum seekers in integration in their host countries and in reaching their full potential? Which barriers have they faced in their efforts?