



A Joint European Migration Network & OECD conference

9 November 2017

Radisson Blue Royal Hotel Brussels, Belgium

# Part I: Challenges and good practices in family migration policies

Balancing migrants' right to family life, migration control and the competition for talent

## 1. Introduction

Family migration is one of the main avenues for legal migration to the EU. In 2015, 38% of all valid residence permits issued in the EU Member States were for the purposes of family reunification.<sup>1</sup> International legal instruments, such as the EU Family Reunification Directive or the European Convention of Human Rights, provide minimum standards for family reunification and family formation. However, recent work by the OECD and the European Migration Network (EMN) has shown that despite these common standards, national laws and practices differ widely between European countries.<sup>2</sup>

Family reunification poses unique challenges to European countries. Countries want to honour the right to family life as enshrined in the European Convention of Human Rights, while at the same time managing migration in such a way that new migrants are well-positioned to actively participate and integrate into the host societies. This has brought many countries to impose certain requirements on family migrants. At the same time, countries are also engaged in a global competition for talent. The possibility to bring one's family is a key factor in encouraging highly skilled workers to come to Europe. Balancing these sometimes competing goals is a challenge.

This challenge has become evident in the aftermath of the refugee crisis. Many of those beneficiaries of international protection who arrived in the EU between 2014 and 2016 are now reuniting with their family members left behind. Beyond the challenge of processing large numbers of applications, there is a larger challenge of integrating these newly reunited families into their societies.

As recent EMN and OECD work shows, countries have developed different approaches to deal with these challenges. This joint EMN-OECD conference provides the opportunity to put the spotlight on possible solutions and exchange good practices that have already yielded promising results on the national level.

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<sup>1</sup> EMN (2017), *Family Reunification of Third-Country Nationals in the EU plus Norway: National Practices*, available at [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/00\\_family\\_reunification\\_synthesis\\_report\\_final\\_en\\_print\\_ready\\_0.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/00_family_reunification_synthesis_report_final_en_print_ready_0.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> - OECD (2017), *A portrait of family migration in OECD countries, chapter 3 of OECD International Migration Outlook 2017*, available at [http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/migr\\_outlook-2017-en](http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/migr_outlook-2017-en)

- OECD (2017), *Making integration work for family migrants* (OECD forthcoming)

- EMN (2017), *Family Reunification of Third-Country Nationals in the EU plus Norway: National Practices*, available at [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/00\\_family\\_reunification\\_synthesis\\_report\\_final\\_en\\_print\\_ready\\_0.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/00_family_reunification_synthesis_report_final_en_print_ready_0.pdf)

## 2. Aims and objectives of the event

The objective of this event is to bring together experts on family migration policy from governments, international organisations, civil society and research networks to reflect upon current challenges in the area of family migration policy, discuss possible solutions and exchange good practices.

The event will cover the following three main themes:

- ★ **Family reunification and the 2014/2015 increased refugee and migrant influx** – How are increased refugee and migrant arrivals to Europe affecting the magnitude of family migration? Which measures and policy changes have countries implemented as a consequence? Which challenges are countries currently facing in processing family reunification applications of beneficiaries of international protection?
- ★ **Ensuring the integration of family migrants** – How well do family migrants integrate compared with other categories of migrants? How can countries promote the integration of family migrants? Which integration requirements do countries impose before and after the entry of family members? What is the evidence of the effect of the integration requirements?
- ★ **Family reunification as a factor in attracting talent** – To what extent can family reunification policy contribute to attracting highly-skilled workers, innovative entrepreneurs or researchers? What are good practices in this area?

## 3. Target audience

The event is targeted at experts from European institutions, MS representatives, international organisations, civil society and research networks that work on the subject of family migration or are interested in learning more about the subject.

## 4. Programme

9 November 2017	
09:00 – 9:30	Registration and coffee
<b>Part I: Challenges and good practices in family migration policies - Balancing migrants' right to family life, migration control and the competition for talent</b>	
09:30– 09:40	<b>Welcome speech</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ Laura Corrado, Head of Unit, DG Migration and Home Affairs, European Commission</li> <li>★ Jean-Christophe Dumont, Head of the International Migration Division, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)</li> </ul>
09:40 – 09:50	<b>Presentation</b> Key findings of the EMN Synthesis Report on Family Reunification of Third-Country Nationals in the EU plus Norway: National Practices (EMN Service Provider)
09:50 – 10:35	<b>Panel Discussion I: Family reunification and the 2014/2015 increased refugee and migrant influx</b> Chair: Mr Lieven Brouwers, Policy Officer, DG Migration and Home Affairs, European Commission Speakers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ Mr Jean-Christophe Dumont, Head of the International Migration Division, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)</li> <li>★ Ms Christelle Caporali-Petit, Coordinator of the French European Migration Network National Contact Point</li> <li>★ Ms Tamara Buschek-Chauvel, Policy Officer, French European Migration Network National Contact Point</li> </ul> Questions & discussion
10:35 – 11:20	<b>Panel Discussion II: Ensuring the integration of family migrants</b> Chair: Ms Maria Ilies, Policy Officer DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, European Commission Speakers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ Dr Thomas Liebig, Senior Migration Specialist (OECD)</li> <li>★ Ms Laura Seiffert, Researcher at the Strategy and Implementation Advice Department of the Dutch Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND)</li> </ul> Questions & discussion
11:20 – 11:40	<b>Coffee break</b>
11:40 – 12:20	<b>Panel Discussion III: Family reunification as a factor in attracting talent</b> Chair: Mr Lieven Brouwers, Policy Officer, DG Migration and Home Affairs, European Commission Speakers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ Mr Jonathan Chaloff, International Migration Division (OECD)</li> <li>★ Ms Killu Vantsi, Advisor at the Estonian Ministry of Interior</li> </ul> Questions & discussion
12:20 – 12:30	<b>Conclusions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ Laura Corrado, Head of Unit, DG Migration and Home Affairs, European Commission</li> </ul>

<b>12:30 – 13:30</b>	<b>Lunch break</b>
<b>14:00 – 17:00</b>	<b>Part II: Illegal Employment of Third-Country Nationals in the EU: Challenges and Solutions (see attached agenda)</b>