



**Permanent Mission of Italy
to the United Nations**



Empowering Refugee and Migrant Women in the Integration Process

a Women Political Leaders' Seminar

in cooperation with the

Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations

Conference Room 7 at the U.N. Headquarters from 13.15 to 14.30, 21 September

Conflict, autocratic regimes, extreme poverty and a combination of other complex situations drive people to leave their homes. Migration and forced displacement challenge communities and families in the countries of origin, transit and destination. Countries on the receiving end need to develop conditions and policies for successful integration with the involvement of all governmental and social actors in order to provide a response that respects the human dignity of everyone.

It is widely acknowledged that women, in all societies, are among the main agents for peace and democracy, just like they have always been key actors in handing down culture and education, promoting sustainable development and balanced social progress. A growing number of migrant and refugee women are joining protection and reception programs. Therefore, there is an increasing need for stronger gender mainstreaming in integration policies. Moreover, since women are exposed to greater risks during the journey, it is very important to increase special programmes for the protection of the women victims of trafficking and sexual violence.

Consequently, the goal of the seminar is to further empower women and to develop the untapped potential of migrant and refugee women in integration dynamics: women are already agents of change and resilience. They play an active and crucial role in integration processes, but they also need greater support in securing their own well-being and that of their families and host communities.

The debate will draw from best practices in Italy, Malta and Jordan.

In Italy – as will be shown – special focus is placed on gender-specific policies, nation-wide reception and integration programs, and best practices developed as part of SPRAR, a program offering protection to asylum seekers and refugees.

Jointly operated by cities and local authorities, SPRAR offers further development opportunities to the communities in which it operates, stimulating change and strengthening vital service networks.

In Malta, there is deep concern for and commitment to the improvement of living conditions for refugee and migrant women who, in many cases, are in transit to other EU countries. The main focus of its integration policies has been the provision of healthcare, education for all, and access to the labour market.

More than 20% of Jordan's population are migrants and refugees (European University Institute, 2016); most coming from Syria, Iraq and Palestine. There are challenges in the integration processes of displaced persons in Jordan. However, the Kingdom has attempted to provide access to education, basic services, and healthcare as part of its integration policy.



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THURSDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER

13:15 - 13:25 Opening Remarks:

- Bjarni Benediktsson, Prime Minister of Iceland
- Silvana Koch-Merin, President of Women Political Leaders Global Forum
- Linda Lanzillotta, Vice President of the Italian Senate and Member of the Executive Board of Women Political Leaders Global Forum

13:25 - 13:35 Special Address

- Sandra Uwiringiyimana, Human Rights Activist, Author and Co-founder of the Jimbere Fund

13:35 - 14:00 **Three host countries: Jordan, Italy, Malta. Common challenges, local solutions**

Chaired by Linda Lanzillotta and Silvana Koch-Merin

Introductory Keynote: Marie Louise Coleiro Preca, President of the Republic of Malta, Member of the WPL Global Advisory Board

- Wafa Bani Mustafa, Member of the Lower House of Representatives, Jordan, Chairperson of the Coalition of Women MPs to Combat Violence against Women.
- Silvia Berardi, Programma SPRAR, Italia

Q&A session

14:00 - 14:25 **An Outlook on Migration at Global and Mediterranean Level: what is in store for women**

Chaired by Linda Lanzillotta and Silvana Koch-Merin

- Filippo Grandi, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Q&A session