**''Integration of Migrants and Refugees: A Contested Issue in Domestic and EU Politics and how to address it''**

Date: Friday 9th November 2018
Location: Impact Hub Athens, Karaiskaki 28, 105 54
Time: 09:30-16:30

Migration and asylum have been a key political and social issue in European societies since decades. However, since 2015, with the arrival of refugees and asylum seekers escaping the war in Syria, migration and asylum have become an even more politicized and polarising terrain across Europe. The May 2019 European elections should offer the opportunity to invert such a trend of contentious confrontations threatening our European cohesion. Likewise, in Greece, where national elections are also approaching and where the far-right has been using the so-called ‘refugee crisis’ to increase its influence and supporters, it’s time to develop positive counter-narratives to migration and refugee issues both in the public and the political spheres.

In this view, the [Sirius](https://www.sirius-project.eu/) project, with [Diktio](http://todiktio.eu/) and [SolidarityNow](http://www.solidaritynow.org/en/), wishes to open a dialogue among different actors aiming to approach migration and asylum not only from a ‘border management and security’ perspective, but also from an integration one. And to do so from a European, rather than a national-driven, perspective. The challenges migration and asylum might raise are better addressed if dealt with a continental vision. Hence, we invite policy makers and civil society representatives to meet, share experiences and visions, and discuss how a coordinated and good practice-based integration strategy could turn migrants and refugees into valuable resources for our societies and economies rather than using them as a commodity to be sacrificed in the political arena.

**Agenda**

***09:30-10:00*** Registration and coffee/tea

***10:00-10:30*** Welcoming Remarks and Setting the Agenda

* Antigone Lyberaki, SolidarityNow
* Prof. Simone Baglioni, Sirius Coordinator, Glasgow Caledonian University, UK

***10:30-11.00*** Integration Challenges for Migrant and Refugee Women

* Deborah Carlos Valencia, Melissa Network

***11:00-12:00*** Labour Market Integration of Migrants, Refugees and Asylum Applicants. First results from the Sirius project

* Dr. Konstantinos N. Konstantakis, National Technical University of Athens
* Dr. Veronica Federico, University of Florence, Italy

***12:00-13:30*** Panel Discussion: Migrants' and Refugees’ Integration: A Contested Issue in Greek and EU Politics\*

Chair: Dr Maria Mexi, University of Geneva and Diktio

Panelists:

* Zefi Dimadama, PES Women
* Dionysia Lambiri, Municipality of Athens
* George Mavrotas, To Potami MP
* Spiros Pengas, Municipality of Thessaloniki
* Antonia Psyrra, DG Home-EU Commission

*\*The panel discussion will be followed by an input dialogue and not just Q&As*

***13:30-14:45*** Lunch break (Light lunch will be served at the venue)

***14:45-16:15*** Opening presentations and moderated breakout sessions - Labour Market Integration in Practice. Best Practices and Lessons from Europe.

* Dr Monika Gonser, Heidelberg University of Education
* Dr Ulrike M Vieten, Queen’s University, Belfast
* Federica Rosato, Solidar, Brussels

***16:15-16.30*** Concluding Remarks