Recent mass arrivals of immigrants to Europe has exposed the limits and inequality of national policies for receiving and integrating migrants and refugees. Many mandatory requirements such as language and civic knowledge, income thresholds, long waiting periods, and reduced incomes represent acute challenges for migrants and restrict family reunions.

The publication “Human rights aspects of immigrant and refugee integration policies” assesses recent integration policies in 10 Council of Europe member countries (Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, Sweden, Turkey, the Russian Federation and the United Kingdom) showing their weaknesses and good practices.

The central issue when designing and implementing effective and dignified migration policies are respect for private and family life and non-discrimination, as embodied in the European Convention on Human Rights, as well as social and economic standards that are compatible with the Revised European Social Charter.

This issue paper also underlines the importance of favouring voluntary, incentive and tailor-made approaches over compulsory and control-oriented policies.
Labour market inclusion and easy access to health services and housing are considered as crucial for attaining a dignified quality of life as well as full participation in the host societies. Moreover, States should also provide political and financial support to address regional gaps and inequalities in dealing with migration issues.

English and French versions of the publication can be ordered via docrequest@coe.int.

Directorate of Communications
Council of Europe