

Migration flows arising from instability: scope and role of the EU foreign policy

2010/2269(INI) - 16/03/2011

The Committee on Foreign Affairs adopted the own-initiative report by Fiorello PROVERA (EFD, IT) on migration flows arising from instability: scope and role of the EU foreign policy.

Members recall that migration is caused by instability and is triggered in particular by war and armed conflicts, human rights abuses, natural and man-made disasters and the lack of viable economic prospects. Flows of immigrants have a number of consequences, in particular pressures on those Member States located geographically at the EU's external borders.

It is in this context that Members welcome the Commission's recent proposals on legal migration for non-asylum seekers, and urges it to develop further instruments **to establish a common immigration policy**. Members call in particular for **a migration policy centred on development policy**. At the same time, Members call for a balanced approach that would both facilitate legal migration into the EU and ensure successful integration.

Recalling the advantages of well-managed legal migration for the development of third countries and the shortage of labour in the Member States, Members call for the following actions to be taken:

Strengthen the multilateral approach to assist third countries to combat illegal immigration: noting that migration is a longstanding worldwide phenomenon, Members consider that an active dialogue should be started between the EU, the US, Japan and China as well as with the international financial institutions. This would make for greater collective leverage and the more balanced, targeted and efficient allocation of resources, whilst ensuring fair burden-sharing. They call for the organisation of an EU-US Summit on this issue.

Redefine aid strategies with a view to bolstering the stability of third countries: Members note that there are currently around 38 fragile states worldwide in which 1 billion people are affected by instability-related problems. In this context, support for politically and economically fragile states, as a likely source of irregular migration and security- and stability-related tensions, should always include – in addition to budgetary relief and support, **strategies to establish or consolidate stability** such as direct investment and EU market-access strategies, rural development and food security strategies, job-creation policies, infrastructure development, and strategies geared to promoting good governance, social inclusion, etc. These strategies should be based on active partnership with the beneficiary countries and an undertaking from these to adopt and implement policies that will enable them to develop socially, economically and democratically so as to ensure that their citizens do not feel obliged to migrate.

Towards a comprehensive approach on the question of migration: Members note that progress has been made in implementing the Global Approach to Migration, which aims to promote comprehensive partnerships with countries of origin and transit and encourages synergies between migration and development. They emphasise the need to improve further the use of the main tools of the Global Approach to Migration (mobility partnerships, migratory missions, migration profiles, cooperation platforms), to continue to put migration policy objectives at the centre of the political dialogue with countries of origin and of transit, as well as the need to **enhance policy coherence in this respect, in particular with development policy**. In this regard, Members call for the various dialogue processes to be rationalised and for the synergies between migration and development to be strengthened.

Members call for the **establishment of a comprehensive migration policy which is linked to all development strategies and instruments** and founded on a high level of political and operational solidarity, mutual trust, transparency, partnership, shared responsibility and joint efforts based on common principles and concrete actions. This comprehensive approach should take into consideration the **European labour market's need for a labour force and each Member State's capacity to receive and integrate migrants**. They believe that a common EU policy on legal migration can be a stimulus both for the European economy and for the economies of the countries of origin.

Involving FRONTEX: Members are in favour of strengthening the role of the FRONTEX agency in order to better control migratory flows. They call on the Commission to develop a permanent monitoring system for all FRONTEX activities linked to the management of migration flows. They consider that the human rights dimension of FRONTEX operations must be reflected clearly and that there should be closer cooperation in the activities and work of FRONTEX and the European Asylum Support Office (EASO).

Respect for the human rights clause in agreements: recalling Parliament's recommendations in its [resolution of 21 September 2010](#), Members stress that the EU should not hesitate to **apply sanctions when countries fail to respect their governance and human rights obligations under trade agreements**. Members believe that a process of reflection should be started at EU level on the bases of and scope for the application of conditionality criteria to EU financial assistance. Members support the incorporation of the principle of conditionality in trade arrangements with developing countries via the Generalised System of Preferences and urge the Commission to consider sanctions whenever needed, but to examine carefully the consequences of such sanctions for the populations of the beneficiary countries before doing so.

Migratory flows and principles of asylum: the Committee considers that in their management of irregular migration flows the EU and its Member States must fully respect the rights of asylum seekers and refrain from taking any actions that would discourage potential refugees from requesting protection. It urges the Commission to establish a monitoring system to check that refugees' and asylum-seekers' rights are respected when entry (and pre-entry) controls are carried out under the Schengen Borders Code, so that possible flaws can be detected promptly.

The Libyan question: Members deplore the fact that in the current circumstances the only option available was the suspension of the agreement on EU-Libya cooperation, and takes the view that the suspension should be revoked as soon as there is a new transitional government willing to promote the democratic and human rights-based implementation of such an agreement. They stress, in this context, the need for the EU to use its influence to persuade Libya to allow the UNHCR to return to the country and believe that agreements on a cooperation agenda on migration should be reached with other countries in geographic proximity to the EU with a view to providing joint support, in accordance with international agreements, to fragile States in their neighbourhood. They urge the Council to put in place a burden-sharing action plan to **help resettle refugees from the region**, based on the solidarity clause set out in Article 80 of the TFEU, and to provide support for displaced persons.

The Neighbourhood Partnership (ENP) and the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM): Members stress the key importance of Parliament in enhancing freedom and democracy in our neighbourhood. They believe that Parliament should monitor closely the democratisation process in the southern Mediterranean, and suggest a regular ad hoc structured dialogue with the Vice-President/High Representative to assess developments in this region. They also emphasise the following points:

- genuine attention should be paid to the dialogues on human rights and democracy in the revised ENP;
- the need to step up cooperation with the countries of transit and origin of illegal migrants so as to curb illegal migration and encourage legal immigration;
- the improvement of migration-related statistics;

- the provision of specific funding for the development of a renewed, strong economic agenda in ENP countries, including an employment agenda;
- the conclusion of more mobility partnership agreements with ENP countries, in addition to the existing ones with Moldova and Georgia;
- strengthening the objectives of the UfM and the Eastern Partnership initiative in order to make them fully operational.

Restructuring of European development assistance to respond to migration-related imperatives:

Members stress that EU development aid should aim to eliminate the reasons for migration, such as poverty, climate change and hunger. This is why development aid needs to be strengthened and better coordinated with the help of other global donors in order to ensure that there is a more comprehensive and sustainable approach to managing migratory flows. They urge that development assistance be decoupled from migration-flow management and that **development aid should not be made conditional on return migration**.

In this context, they call for the European Union to consider steps to adjust the Development Cooperation Instrument, such as the European Development Fund (EDF). They reject the idea of using Official development Assistance (ODA) for policies aimed at deterring and controlling migration in ways which involve the violation of migrants' human rights. They recommend: i) the redeployment of existing financial resources to strengthen the link between migration and development; ii) the reinforcing of LRRD strategies (aimed at linking relief, rehabilitation and development) in particular after periods of conflict; iii) the clarification of the respective roles of the European External Action Service and DEVCO, and for coordination between them.

Action against the brain drain: once again, Members urge the stepping-up of efforts to reduce the negative effects of the brain drain and the exodus of professionals. Assisted return programmes and circular migration schemes should be envisaged.

Responding to the needs of the vulnerable: lastly, when preparing the new external action instruments for the post-2013 period, the Commission should seek to enhance synergies between the development pillar and the stability and security pillar, establishing even more rapid and more effective intervention mechanisms which enable the EU to take prompt action to protect minorities, including religious minorities, or other groups suffering as a result of instability. Measures should, in particular, be taken in regard to climate change, deforestation, desertification and biodiversity loss. They also stress the importance of policies in favour of victims of torture and asylum seekers.