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Parliamentary Governance of Migration and Integration

Motion for a resolution¹

tabled by Ms Minodora CLIVETI and other members of the Assembly

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

Migration is a transversal issue that is treated in many policy areas. In cases of armed conflict there can be considerable forced migration, resulting in people becoming refugees or internally displaced. Such situations call for humanitarian aid and for the processing of asylum applications for the granting of refugee status. Poor living conditions and a lack of prospects for the future force people to leave their homes to seek better opportunities elsewhere. This is the driving force for labour migration, both legal and illegal. The question is dealt with through labour policy measures, but also through border control and return policies/agreements on return. Development aid and co-development policies are important policy areas to reduce migration pressures by attacking the root causes of migration.

European countries are receiving an important number of migrants, which implies creating a policy framework for the integration of those migrants or refugees granted the right to stay in their new host country. Policies regarding housing, schooling, health services, access to the legal system, social policies, pensions and labour policies are all dealing with migrants according to the competence of each policy area. Policies will also need to address the problem of irregular migrants, their return when relevant, and their human and social rights, including the situation of children and other family members.

Most European countries have experienced a transformation from being emigration countries to becoming transit countries and then destination countries for migratory movements. Several of these countries have developed special mechanisms for keeping links between migrants from their country (of origin) as part of foreign policy. In many cases strong emphasis is given to circular migration. Participation in the political life in the country of origin through the participation in elections is a common feature. Many countries also try to attract scientists and different professionals to return to the country of origin in order to benefit from these peoples' experiences for the benefit of domestic development.

Environmental degradation and natural or man-made disasters represent new powerful push factors for migratory movements. Environmental policies as well as disaster prevention and humanitarian aid are at stake.

The European population is ageing, whereas the fertility rate has been falling far below replacement rates in most European countries. Europe's declining and ageing population will not allow our societies to sustain present economic activities, and certain activity sectors or professions are already in strong demand for foreign personnel. Europe therefore needs migrants to sustain its economy and cover the employment needs of certain sectors and professions.

1. Referred to the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population, to be taken into account in the preparation of the report on "Migration in Europe: a constant challenge": Reference No. 3407 (9th Sitting, 25 January 2008).



Many other examples could be given of the implications for different policy areas of the specific conditions that need to be taken into account for migrants and refugees.

Parliamentary governance of population, refugee, migration and integration issues therefore demands a co-ordinating structure to make sure that different policy areas are informed about each other's policies as applied to migration and integration, so that these policies can be harmonised and co-ordinated. This challenge has been taken up at the international intergovernmental level by the creation in 2006 of the Global Migration Group, bringing together all major UN organisations in an effort to better co-ordinate actions and policies regarding migrants, refugees and population issues, in particular in the context of migration and development. The similar response to the complex issues of population, migration, refugee and integration policies has been initiated in the European Commission by creating a joint working group among several Commissioners working with different aspects of this problem area.

The Parliamentary Assembly therefore recommends to parliaments in the member states to improve the treatment and governance of policies regarding migration, asylum, integration and population by creating a co-ordinating structure for these questions, either in the form of a committee or in another manner.

Signed (see overleaf)

Signed²:

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