Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire
https://pace.coe.int

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Recommendation 1253 (1994)[1]
Final version

Activities of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) in 1992 and 1993

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The principal objectives of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) are to foster the conditions for orderly migration throughout the world, to organise the resettlement or voluntary return of refugees, displaced persons and asylum-seekers, and to steer migration as a resource for social and economic development. IOM pursues these objectives in close collaboration with its fifty-two member states and forty observer states. It acts in partnership with the United Nations system, other intergovernmental bodies and non-governmental organisations.

2. Since it was set up in 1951, IOM has organised the transfer of over five million migrants and refugees, some 80% of them under humanitarian programmes, the remainder under programmes for the transfer of qualified human resources or national migrants. Almost one million people were moved by IOM in 1992 and 1993 alone, the overwhelming majority for humanitarian reasons, including refugees, internally displaced persons, returnees and individuals under special programmes, for example for the urgent medical treatment of victims of the war in the former Yugoslavia or the evacuation of third country nationals caught in the conflict in Yemen.

3. Recognising that international migration is an important factor in social and economic development, IOM has pioneered "migration for development" programmes to help developing countries meet their need for highly skilled labour. Since 1964, IOM has arranged for the transfer of over 42 000 highly qualified specialists and technicians, many returning to their own countries after acquiring their expertise abroad.

4. In seeking to establish a framework for the regulation of unbalanced, haphazard migration flows, IOM favours a comprehensive approach, convinced that international development aid should be directed to migration-producing countries, that information campaigns should be conducted in those countries to dispel illusions about opportunities elsewhere, that government migration services should be strengthened, that migration policies should correspond more closely to reality, and that greater support should be given to the return of migrants to their home countries.

5. In recent years, IOM has made a particular effort to build up its capacity to provide migration services in the countries of central and eastern Europe, in recognition of the particular migration problems and needs of these countries and of their potential for disorderly migration flows. The emphasis has been on migration management training, advice on legislative reform, research, and information campaigns designed to correct would-be migrants' unrealistic expectations.

6. Maintaining funding for these tasks is a major challenge for IOM, whose operational budget is financed by voluntary contributions from governmental sources, from migrants themselves or their sponsors, and whose administrative budget is funded by its member states on a proportional basis. Council of Europe member states which are not members of IOM or which have not applied for membership – the Czech

1. Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 10 November 1994. See Doc. 7177, report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Demography, Rapporteur: Sir John Hunt.

Republic, Estonia, Iceland, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Malta, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, and the United Kingdom – should, in consideration of their clear interest in seeing the objectives of IOM successfully met, contribute by becoming members.

7. The Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers:

i. draw the attention of the governments of the countries referred to in paragraph 6 to the desirability of all Council of Europe member states joining IOM;

ii. through the appropriate intergovernmental committees and in the framework of the follow-up to the Conference of Ministers on the Movement of Persons from Central and Eastern European Countries, strengthen Council of Europe co-operation and co-ordination with IOM, in particular in the areas of:

   a. technical assistance, research and information activities in the countries of central and eastern Europe;

   b. the legal and human rights aspects of migration, territorial asylum and the movement of refugees and stateless persons;

iii. urge the governments of member states of the Social Development Fund to strengthen co-operation between the Fund and IOM in the implementation of projects involving the resettlement of migrants and refugees;

iv. urge all Council of Europe member states to provide political and financial support to IOM in the fulfilment of its tasks.