



Resolution 1437 (2005)¹

Migration and integration: a challenge and an opportunity for Europe

Parliamentary Assembly

1. Strong, steady growth can be noted in human mobility. Europe, which is viewed as an area of stability and prosperity, will continue in coming years to be immensely attractive to migrants from less-favoured countries and to asylum seekers fleeing wars, persecution and human rights violations.
2. In a multicultural, multi-ethnic Europe, which is increasingly a refuge for asylum seekers and a destination for immigrants, governments are faced with a pressing challenge to guarantee that the fundamental values of our societies, as codified by the European Convention on Human Rights, including the respect of human rights, democracy and the rule of law, are shared by everyone living in Europe.
3. It is necessary to take up this challenge in order to be able to benefit fully from the opportunities that immigration offers Europe in terms of the supply of labour, intellectual input and cultural diversity.
4. The concept of integration aims at ensuring social cohesion through accommodation of diversity understood as a two-way process. Immigrants have to accept the laws and basic values of European societies and, on the other hand, host societies have to respect immigrants' dignity and distinct identity and to take them into account when elaborating domestic policies.
5. In accordance with its previous recommendations and resolutions, the Parliamentary Assembly reiterates the importance of implementing effective policies to ensure the full integration of foreigners residing lawfully in Council of Europe member states as part of an overall strategy covering all aspects of migration, including labour migration and illegal migration, and the efforts to combat trafficking in human beings and to combat terrorism.
6. In this connection, the Assembly refers to its [Recommendation 1625 \(2003\)](#) on policies for the integration of immigrants in Council of Europe member states and in particular reasserts the principle that immigrants should be able to participate fully in the life of the host country, on the basis of equality of rights and opportunities in return for equality of obligations. The Assembly has emphasised the importance, within the context of national integration strategies, of extending voting rights to legal immigrants, in compliance with the 1992 Convention on the Participation of Foreigners in Public Life at Local Level. The above obligations include showing respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, as laid down in the European Convention on Human Rights, for the principle of equality between women and men and, in general, for the constitution and laws of the host state.
7. Council of Europe member states must, for their part, ensure that, within their jurisdiction, immigrants are not discriminated against in terms of access to and protection of their rights, with particular attention to certain sectors, such as education and employment.
8. The Assembly draws attention to the many activities pursued by the Council of Europe's intergovernmental committees, in particular the European Committee on Migration (CDMG), to devise and promote integration policies capable of meeting the current challenges.

1. Assembly debate on 27 April 2005 (13th Sitting) (see [Doc. 10453](#), report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population, rapporteur : Mr Branger). Text adopted by the Assembly on 27 April 2005 (13th Sitting).



9. In this connection, the Assembly calls on Council of Europe member states to :

make it one of their political priorities to agree a migration strategy, entailing an overall approach encompassing all aspects of migration, including its causes and consequences and the challenges it raises. In this context, it would be appropriate to :

- a. *emphasise the importance of co-development policies, with the aim of reducing poverty in the countries of origin, while giving them responsibility for managing development instruments and resources ;*
- b. *take steps to avoid migratory movements generated by the need for protection, through activities and means of pressure aimed at preventing conflicts and promoting respect for human rights in the countries of origin ;*
- c. *recognise immigrants as persons with fundamental human rights, the respect of which must be ensured in full conformity with international and regional human rights instruments including the provisions of the United Nations International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, which member states are urged to ratify and implement ;*

ensure, in all their activities that may have implications for migration, including fighting terrorism, strict respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, as laid down in the European Convention on Human Rights and the protocols thereto ;

offer opportunities for lawful immigration, with a view to employment, to a number of would-be emigrants taking into account labour market needs in the host country and its social system's capacity to guarantee a reasonable standard of living for these workers and their families ;

make a subsequent effort to foster knowledge of the fundamental values of the Council of Europe at all levels of society, in particular among immigrants, by :

- a. *holding courses on basic rights and responsibilities for newly arrived immigrants, free of charge ;*
- b. *including this type of instruction in optional or mandatory integration schemes for immigrants in those countries where such schemes exist ;*
- c. *organising this type of instruction, where possible, in the countries of origin for would-be emigrants whose applications have been accepted ;*

promote campaigns for the distribution of reliable, clear information, not liable to be interpreted in a racist or xenophobic manner, on migration and on the culture and traditions of immigrants living within their borders ;

sign and ratify the 1992 Council of Europe Convention on the Participation of Foreigners in Public Life at Local Level ;

develop reliable instruments for measuring migratory movements at national level and co-operate in ensuring data comparability at an international level.

10. In addition, the Assembly invites the European Union to :

pursue its efforts to establish a common asylum and migration policy ;

support the new member states' efforts to cope with illegal immigration and to endow them with legal and practical means of enhancing immigrants' integration ;

help raise European public awareness of the consequences of the accession of the new member states and of their citizens' rights with regard to freedom of movement.