



**PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY
ON THE UNION FOR THE
MEDITERRANEAN**



Recommendations

Committee on Improving Quality of Life, Exchanges between Civil Societies and Culture, on:

**'Immigration and integration: building a culture of peace by means of dialogue
between new generations'**

- **Co-rapporteur Patrick Le Hyaric (European Parliament)**
- **Co-rapporteur Abdelkarim Korichi (Algerian National Council)**

The Committee on Improving Quality of Life, Exchanges between Civil Societies and Culture,

- having regard to the final statement of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean ministerial conference held in Marseille on 3–4 November 2008, in which ministers stated that 'the issue of migration should be an integral part of the regional partnership', and emphasised that 'promoting orderly-managed legal migration in the interest of all parties concerned, fighting illegal migration and fostering links between migration and development are issues of common interest',
- having regard to the Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament of 4 December 2006 on Strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) (COM(2006)726 final), in which the Commission stated that 'mobility of persons is of the utmost importance also for all ENP partners',
- having regard to the conclusions adopted at the first Euro-Mediterranean ministerial conference on Migration held in the Algarve on 18 and 19 November 2007,
- having regard to the European Parliament resolution of 10 May 2007 on Reforms in the Arab world: what strategy should the European Union adopt? (P6_TA(2007)0179), in which it 'calls on the Commission, the Council and the Member States to encourage exchanges of students, teachers, academics and researchers between the EU and Arab countries and to facilitate those exchanges through an adapted and more flexible visa regime',
- having regard to The Stockholm Programme – An open and secure Europe serving and protecting the citizens (OJ 2010/C 115/01) as adopted by the European Council on 10 and 11 December 2009,
- having regard to the European Parliament resolution of 25 November 2009 entitled Multi-annual programme 2010-2014 regarding the area of freedom, security and justice (Stockholm programme) (P7_TA(2009)0090), in which it 'considers that any comprehensive approach to immigration must take account of the "push factors" that lead people to leave their countries in the first place',
- having regard to the 11th meeting of the Africa-EU Joint Task Force held on 20–21 October 2010 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, concerning the partnership on migration, mobility and employment,
- having regard to the statement approved by the representatives of the Member States at the European ministerial conference on integration on 3 and 4 November 2008, in which the ministers highlighted the fact that 'acts of racism and xenophobia should also be effectively fought against',
- having regard to the opinion of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (Jobs for Immigrants, Vol. 2), which states that mentoring is 'a highly

cost-effective way of helping young people of immigrant background into employment, as well as building links between them and the business community',

- having regard to the previous recommendations by the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly's Committee on Improving Quality of Life, Exchanges between Civil Societies and Culture, in particular the recommendation adopted in Amman on 14 March 2010,
- A. whereas the Mediterranean is a shared sea and the Mediterranean basin is an open geographical area where travel and trade have created a shared history and culture shaped by long-standing relations and constant migration between all the regions in the area,
- B. whereas this shared history has created a melting pot of people and cultures, giving rise to a set of values, philosophies and beliefs in which cultural and religious dialogue are vital to mutual understanding,
- C. whereas every integration process depends on dialogue between cultures and civilisations, and any break in this dialogue results in stigmatisation, isolation and exclusion for migrants and their descendants,
- D. whereas the migratory flows have had a significant impact on the wealth and diversity of European culture, and successful integration of migrants is of mutual interest for migrants and for host countries,
- E. whereas slower population growth in the European Union will create a labour shortage of some 56 million people between now and 2050, while the labour force in countries on the southern shore of the Mediterranean will grow by 115 million people,
- F. whereas the unprecedented shift in demographic growth trends in the Mediterranean basin to the benefit of Middle Eastern and North African countries represents a genuine social challenge for these countries,
- G. whereas the countries on the southern shore of the Mediterranean are simultaneously faced with the task of managing migration flows out of their countries and with transit migration from sub-Saharan Africa,
- H. whereas Europe's labour needs could play a stabilising role in the countries of the South provided that this does not lead to a skills drain or capital flight, and whereas economic development that is no longer based on oppressive relationships but on a strong partnership is the key to tackling future challenges,
- I. whereas migration issues transcend regional boundaries and require global, integrated, coordinated and balanced analysis, and whereas convening a summit of Heads of Government of the countries of the Mediterranean area and of the EU would offer an opportunity to deal with migration issues at an appropriate level,
- J. whereas any comprehensive approach to immigration must take into account the factors that lead to forced migration and cause people to leave their countries in the first place, such as wars, foreign occupation, discrimination, climate change and lack of prospects,

- K. whereas every person has the right to leave their country,
- L. whereas a restrictive policy on residence permits is hindering the free movement of people throughout the Mediterranean region as well as legal emigration within the Euro-Mediterranean area,
- M. whereas restrictive migration management policies on managing migration and the criminalisation of migrants are serving to encourage illegal immigration and the exploitation of migrants,
- N. whereas unequal treatment and exploitation of migrants are putting pressure on local workers, are exacerbating xenophobia, extremism, populism and racism – fuelled by ignorance and fear of the other – and are at odds with the values of tolerance common to all countries in the Mediterranean area,
- O. whereas according the same rights to migrant workers as to local workers recognises the contribution of migrants to the EU economy (labour, taxes, social contributions) and helps to reduce unfair competition, exploitation and social exclusion amongst workers from third countries,

Border control and migration control

1. States its commitment to the concept of the Mediterranean as an open political, economic, cultural and social area, in keeping with its long history;
2. Recalls that, in accordance with Article 19 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, which is an integral and legally binding part of European law, 'no one may be removed, expelled or extradited to a State where there is a serious risk that he or she would be subjected to the death penalty, torture or other inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment', and that 'collective expulsions are prohibited'; insists that all migration legislation must comply with this inalienable principle;
3. Condemns the criminalisation of migrants by means of legislation, and stresses that the effect of such policies is to force migrants to travel illegally and by increasingly dangerous routes;
4. Is concerned at Frontex's lack of transparency, reiterates that this agency must comply with the 'non-refoulement' principle, and therefore calls for a supervisory framework for Frontex that would guarantee protection for migrants and ensure that they know their rights;
5. Is concerned that the fundamental rights of migrants who are returned to transit countries or countries of origin that have signed readmission agreements with the European Union or Member States are not being fully respected;
6. Questions, therefore, the advisability of subcontracting migration control in transit countries and migrants' countries of origin in the absence of any real guarantee that these countries will respect migrants' fundamental rights;

7. Is concerned at the exploitation of development aid or partnership agreements to encourage transit countries or countries of origin to step up their cooperation with European authorities or with Member States with regard to migration control and readmission;
8. Calls for the implementation of a more flexible visa policy, particularly for students and researchers, in compliance with the directives on family reunification, and for the establishment of uniform criteria to provide a means of access for economic migrants;

North-South and South-South university exchanges

9. Believes that greater mobility for students from both sides of the Mediterranean would greatly foster mutual understanding and cultural dialogue between the North and South, but also between the countries on the southern shore of the Mediterranean, in the style of a Euro-Mediterranean Erasmus scheme;
10. Calls on the Commission to put forward proposals to establish an equivalency system for Euromed university qualifications with a view to ultimately setting up a Euro-Mediterranean Erasmus scheme, and calls for additional funding to be allocated to exchange programmes such as Erasmus Mundus in order to assist students from the Mediterranean area until such time as a genuine Euro-Mediterranean framework of university exchanges is established;

Protection of migrants

11. Calls for migrants to be guaranteed the right to adequate protection against exploitation, even when they are not legally resident in the country concerned; emphasises that in this regard a positive first step would be to ratify the UN Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and invites Member States to sign and ratify this convention as soon as possible;
12. Calls for the process of laying down common criteria for a European Asylum System to be guided by principles consistent with the rights and dignity of those seeking protection;
13. Considers that a European policy on reception arrangements for refugees could be an effective means of protecting refugees and of relieving the pressure on transit countries on both sides of the Mediterranean and preventing asylum seekers from turning to illegal migration;

Employment and residence conditions

14. Emphasises the importance of completely equal treatment for local and migrant workers: equal employment conditions (wages, working hours, demands of the job, occupational health, redundancy, union representation, working conditions), equal social protection and equal access to public services and public sector jobs, in accordance with Article 15 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union;
15. Stresses that any differences in treatment, especially in the workplace, can create imbalances that can have a negative effect on the job market, on working conditions for migrants and on the perception of immigration amongst local workers;

16. Calls on the EU Member States to make a concerted effort to combat all types of discrimination suffered by migrants, especially concerning access to employment, public services, accommodation, healthcare, banking services, and so on;
17. Believes that being employed should be a significant asset in acquiring a residence permit, as it acts as a powerful impetus for integration and helps to combat undeclared work, exploitation and the exclusion of migrants;
18. Recalls that the right to respect for private and family life as laid down in Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights applies to everyone, including migrants; supports family reunification policies in accordance with the Family Reunification Directive, which help migrant workers and their families to thrive;

Perception of the 'other', Integration

19. Encourages a two-way policy which does not make immigrants solely responsible for their own integration, but divides this responsibility equally between immigrants and their host countries;
20. Calls on the EU Member States to introduce a free and effective system to help migrants learn the language, familiarise themselves with the host country's institutions and participate in civic life, and emphasises that recognising the right of long-term residents to vote – in local elections at least – is an important first step towards involving migrants in the daily life of the host country;
21. Calls on the EU Member States and the countries of the Mediterranean area to ensure that the International Convention on the Rights of the Child is enforced, regardless of whether children come from inside or outside the EU;
22. Calls on the EU Member States to fulfil their obligation to provide schooling for all children without exception and to strive to prevent children from dropping out of school;
23. Invites the countries of the Mediterranean area and of the European Union to remedy their ignorance about the other side of the Mediterranean by incorporating the history of the Mediterranean area and of migration into school curricula, by encouraging the making of documentaries about European and Mediterranean countries and by making cultural exchange visas easier to acquire;
24. Suggests that the European Union take an active role in promoting dialogue between cultures and civilisations in order to bring people closer and encourage integration, particularly by developing European programmes on these subjects and providing greater access to European funding for civil society groups working on projects that promote the integration of migrants, and suggests that a European fund be created for this purpose;
25. Calls on the EU Member States to make a concerted effort to incorporate social integration strategies into urban policies;

26. Emphasises the importance of the geographical integration of vulnerable groups into the urban fabric, local public services and social diversity housing programmes, and recalls, in that connection, the importance of allowing Member States to define their own public service models in accordance with Protocol 26 to the Treaty, on services of general interest;

Combating racism, xenophobia and discrimination

27. Strongly condemns any form of discrimination or stigmatisation on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social situation, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status, as set out in Article 14 of the European Convention on the Protection of Human Rights;

28. Condemns the political exploitation of fear of the other, and the acceptance as normal of any populist discourse that stigmatises certain categories or groups of people according to their social or geographical origin, their membership of a religious community or their association with such a community;

29. Calls for the establishment of a European institution to combat discrimination and exclusion, to which any Community citizen could refer a problem and which would have power of scrutiny over businesses in particular; suggests that Member States establish their own such institutions;

30. Calls for decisive action to combat violence against migrant women, who suffer twofold discrimination on the grounds of sex and background;