

FACTSHEET

Directorate General III "Social Cohesion"

Migration Division

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BACKGROUND

The Council of Europe seeks to strengthen European co-operation in the field of migration, placing particular emphasis on the human rights of migrants and respect for their dignity. The activities undertaken by the Council of Europe have led to a series of practical measures adapted to the needs of a multi-ethnic society, improving mutual understanding, promoting equal opportunities and migrants' social integration and contributing to the fight against discrimination and racism.

Future activities are based on the implementation of the Kyiv Action Plan.

The Kyiv Action Plan

At the 8th Council of Europe Conference of ministers responsible for migration affairs on "*Economic migration, social cohesion and development : towards an integrated approach*" [4-5 September 2008, Kyiv (Ukraine)] the Ministers agreed on a Plan of Action that reflects the key issues within the core competency of the Council of Europe and is based on the following 4 priorities:

- Reinforce social cohesion and the integration of migrants,
- Enhance the contribution of migrants to their receiving and origin societies,
- Continue to develop measures to promote and protect the human rights of especially vulnerable migrants, and
- Devise an integrated approach to economic migration, development and social cohesion.

More information on the Conference is available on the *Migration website*: http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/migration/Ministerial_Conferences/Kyiv_minconf_en.asp.

LEGAL INSTRUMENTS

The European Social Charter (revised) (CETS Nos. 35 and 163), and in particular Articles 18 and 19, the European Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers (CETS No. 93) and the European Convention on Social Security (CETS No. 78) are the Council of Europe's key instruments for the protection of migrant workers and their families, setting out rights and obligations covering:

- Equal treatment
- Employment
- Working conditions
- Social Security
- Family reunification
- Co-operation between government agencies in the countries of origin and destination.

For the full list of the legal instruments in the field of migration, please refer to: *Collection of Treaties - Migration; Summaries and texts of Treaties (2002)*.

STEERING COMMITTEE

The European Committee on Migration (CDMG) is the main intergovernmental body (meeting twice a year) responsible for migration activities in the Council of Europe. The Committee is responsible for developing European co-operation in the field of migration, the situation and social integration of people of migrant origin and refugees, and community relations.

The Committee's action in the migration field covers three main areas:

- migration management
- community relations
- the legal status of migrants

For 2009-2012, the Committee proposes to deal with the following two programmes:

- Empowering migrants and strengthening social cohesion;
- Protecting the human rights and dignity of vulnerable migrants.

Migration management

Managing migration is part of the Action Plan adopted by the 3rd Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe (Warsaw, 16 and 17 May 2005).

The Council of Europe's Migration Management Strategy advocates an integrated approach based on four principles: orderliness, protection, integration and co-operation. One of the key issues is the establishment of a regular dialogue and partnership between countries of origin, transit and destination on ways of ensuring orderly migration, social cohesion and the rights of the individual (Report "Towards a Migration Management Strategy").

An important part of this Strategy is the successful integration of immigrant populations, with particular attention paid to full respect of migrants' human rights and diversity. These are the essential preconditions for a win-win situation from which both migrants and host countries can derive mutual benefit.

A supplementary report entitled "Towards a Migration Management Strategy: Challenges for Countries of Origin" provides details on how to achieve a more concerted dialogue between countries of destination and countries of origin (whether member states or countries outside Europe) and, in particular, how to ensure that better account is taken of the needs and interests of the latter in the management of migration.

Community relations

Through its work on community relations, the CDMG promotes an integration process based on the following principles:

- Promoting diversity in a multicultural and ethnically diverse society and upholding individual human rights
- Pursuing a holistic approach, placing an emphasis on the interaction between migrants and host societies, directing policies at society as a whole
- Promoting equal opportunities and equal access to rights and services.

A framework for integration policies produced by the CDMG covers legislative measures, employment, housing, health and other public services, religion, culture and language, education, the media, government functions, and evaluation and monitoring.

In 2007, the CDMG has contributed to the Council of Europe's White paper on Intercultural dialogue with a report on the place of intercultural dialogue in the integration of migrants and community relations policies. Its contribution highlighted the need for intercultural dialogue to take place at all stages of the integration process.

Legal status of migrants

The European Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers has been ratified by the following countries: Albania, France, Italy, Moldova, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and Ukraine. The Convention has been signed, but not yet ratified by Belgium, Germany, Greece and Luxembourg. Albania and Ukraine ratified the Convention in 2007.

ONGOING PROGRAMMES

Policies on irregular migrants – second series of reports

A first series of reports on national policies with regard to irregular migrants covered Armenia, Germany, Greece, Italy and the Russian Federation. These reports are published and will soon be available on the *Migration website*.

The CDMG has commissioned a second series of reports. These reports will cover France, Portugal, Poland, Spain and United Kingdom. It is foreseen that CDMG approves them at its meeting in June 2009.

Life projects for unaccompanied migrant minors

Following the adoption of the recommendation on life projects for unaccompanied migrant minors, CDMG has elaborated a three years programme aiming to assist member states in implementing life projects. For budgetary reasons, requests for voluntary contributions has been issued.

RECOMMENDATIONS RECENTLY ADOPTED

Integration of children of migrants and of immigrant background

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted on 20 February 2008 Recommendation Rec(2008)4 on strengthening the integration of children of migrants and of immigrant background. This recommendation aims to introduce into policy and practice of member states measures improving the integration of newly-arrived children of migrants into the educational system, provide children of migrants with adequate language skills at a preschool level, prepare children of migrants and of immigrant background approaching school-leaving age for a successful transition from school to the labour market, and overcome the difficulties faced by these children living in segregated areas and disadvantaged areas.

A handbook for service providers on the practical implementation of the provisions included in this recommendation is being prepared. This manual will offer advice on effective use of the measures contained in the recommendation and provide a selection of good practices in relevant fields from various member states.

Access of migrants to employment

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted on 10 July 2008 its Recommendation Rec(2008)10 on improving access of migrants and persons of immigrant background to employment. It calls upon the member states to implement measures aimed at eliminating discrimination and unfair treatment of migrants and persons of immigrant background in such areas as recruitment, entry and reentry to the labour market and career development. The recommendation emphasizes that a concerted action of the national and local authorities, employers, trade unions and migrants themselves is crucial to improve the integration of migrants and persons of immigrant background in the labour market.

MINISTERIAL CONFERENCES

The Council of Europe regularly organises Conferences of European Ministers responsible for Migration Affairs. Their aim is to examine the main problems and challenges for member states in the field of migration and to facilitate direct contacts between the different ministries. To date there have been 8 ministerial conferences (see above the Kiyv action plan).

CHALLENGES AND PRIORITIES IN MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION IN EUROPE

A mini-seminar was held during 53rd meeting of the European Committee on Migration (14-16 May 2007). It allowed representatives of southern Europe to present the migration issues in the region.

Two meetings on challenges and priorities in the field of migration in Eastern Europe were held in Budapest in May and December 2007. These meetings provided an opportunity for experts from such countries as Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Russian Federation and Ukraine to discuss migration issues of common interests and

to identify the areas in which they need to improve their co-operation.

COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation Rec(2008)4** on strengthening the integration of children of migrants and of immigrant background
- **Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)10** on co-development and migrants working for development in their countries of origin
- **Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)9** on life projects for unaccompanied migrant minors
- **Recommendation Rec (2006) 9** on the admission, rights and obligations of migrant students and co-operation with countries of origin
- **Recommendation Rec (2004) 2** on access of non-nationals to employment in the public sector
- **Recommendation Rec (2002) 4** on the legal status of persons admitted for family reunification
- **Recommendation Rec (2000) 15** on the security of residence of long-term migrants
- **Recommendation N° R (92) 12** on community relations
- **Recommendation N° R (88) 14** on migrants' housing
- **Recommendation N° R (84) 9** on second-generation migrants
- **Recommendation N° R (84) 7** on maintenance of migrants' cultural links with their countries of origin and leisure facilities
- **Recommendation N° R (80) 14** on the vocational re-integration of migrant workers who return to their countries of origin
- **Further information can be seen on the** [Documentation](http://www.coe.int/migration) page of the Migration website: <http://www.coe.int/migration>

PUBLICATIONS

- Documents prepared for the 8th Council of Europe Conference of ministers responsible for migration affairs on '*Economic migration, social cohesion and development : towards an integrated approach*', 4-5 September 2008, Kyiv, Ukraine:
 - o Final Declaration (CDMG(2008)43rev)
 - o Issue paper (CDMG(2008)39fin)
 - o Thematic report (CDMG (2008) 45)
 - o Implementation Helsinki Action Plan (CDMG(2008)24 final)
 - o Implementation Helsinki Undertakings (CDMG(2008)31 final)
- Migrants and co-development - Recommendation Rec(2007)10 and explanatory memorandum (2008)
- Life projects for unaccompanied migrant minors - Recommendation Rec(2007)9 and explanatory memorandum (2008)
- Policies on irregular migrants, Volume II - Republic of Armenia, Greece, Russian Federation (2008),
- Policies on irregular migrants, Volume I – Germany, Italy (2008)
- The Euro-Mediterranean migration system (2008), Stéphane de Tapia,
- Reconciling migrants' well-being and the public interest – Welfare state, firms and citizenship in transition (Trends in social cohesion No. 19) (2008)
- Asylum and the European Convention on Human Rights (2007)
- The position of aliens in relation to the European Convention on Human Rights (2007)

- "Towards a Migration Management Strategy: Challenges for Countries of Origin", Strasbourg 2006
- Regional conference on "Migration of unaccompanied minors: acting in the best interests of the child", 27-28 October 2005, Torremolinos, Málaga, Spain, 2006
- Irregular migrants: access to minimum social rights, Ryszard Cholewinski, 2006
- Report 2005 - Current Trends in International Migration in Europe, Professor John SALT, 2005
- New patterns of irregular migration in Europe, Stéphane de Tapia, 2004
- The legal status of migrants admitted for employment - A comparative study of law and practice in selected European states, Ryszard Cholewinski, 2005
- Preventing Illegal Immigration: Juggling Economic Imperatives, Political Risks and Individual Rights, Claude-Valentin Marie, 2004
- Proceedings of the 7th Conference of European Ministers responsible for Migration Affairs on "Migrants in our societies: Policy choices for the 21st Century", Helsinki (Finland), 16 – 17 September 2002
- Collection of Treaties - Migration; Summaries and texts of treaties, 2002
- Towards a migration management strategy, 2002
- Diversity and cohesion: new challenges for the integration of immigrants and minorities, 2000
- Framework of integration policies, 2000
- The legal status of persons admitted for family reunion: A comparative Study of Law and Practice in some European States, Steve Peers, Robin Barzilay, Kees Groenendijk and Elspeth Guild, 2000
- The European Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers (1977): an analysis of its scope and benefits, Elspeth Guild, 1999
- Security of residence of long-term migrants : a comparative study of law and practice in European countries, Kees Groenendijk, Elspeth Guild and Halil Dogan, 1998
- Repatriation of persons following the political changes in central and eastern Europe, 1997
- Political and social participation of immigrants through consultative bodies, 1999
- Measurement and indicators of integration, 1998
- Community and ethnic relations in Europe, 1991
- Religion and the integration of immigrants, 1999
- Initiatives by employers to promote employment and integration of immigrants, 1998
- Tackling racist and xenophobic violence in Europe: case studies, 1997
- Tackling racist and xenophobic violence in Europe: review and practical guidance, 1996
- The role of management and trade unions in promoting equal opportunities in employment, 1996
- Area-based projects in districts of high immigrant concentration, 1996
- Temporary migration for employment and training purposes, 1996
- Tackling racism and xenophobia: practical action at the local level, 1995
- Immigrant women and integration, 1995
- Vocational training projects, 1994
- Police training concerning migrants and ethnic relations, 1994

WEBSITES

More detailed information about the activities listed above and publications is available on the Migration website: <http://www.coe.int/migration>.

For information on migration activities carried out by other Council of Europe bodies, please visit the websites of:

- Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)
- Commissioner for Human Rights
- Congress of Local and Regional Authorities
- European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR)

Council of Europe Publishing: <http://book.coe.int>

CONTACTS

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