

INTRODUCTION

The Council of Europe seeks to promote the human rights and dignity of migrants through co-operation in the field of migration. Its activities have led to a series of practical measures adapted to the needs of Europe's multi-ethnic societies: improved mutual understanding, strengthened equal opportunities, deepened social integration of migrants and heightened action to combat discrimination and racism.

The principal intergovernmental body is the European Committee on Migration (CDMG). Other organs and bodies of the Council of Europe also pursue activities in the migration field: notably the Parliamentary Assembly (Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population), Congress, the Commissioner for Human Rights, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), the Council of Europe Development Bank, and other steering committees responsible to the Committee of Ministers with particular responsibility for questions such as legal affairs, health, culture, language and education.

This factsheet concerns, in the main, the activities of the European Committee on Migration.

The Kiev Action Plan

The framework for most of these activities is the action plan adopted by the Ministers responsible for migration affairs in their final declaration at the close of their 8th Council of Europe conference (Kiev, 4-5 September 2008). The Kiev Action plan sets out 4 key areas for intergovernmental work of the Council of Europe in the field of migration over the next few years, namely:

- Reinforcing social cohesion and the integration of migrants,
- Enhancing the contribution of migrants to their receiving and origin societies,
- Continuing to develop measures to promote and protect the human rights of especially vulnerable migrants, and
- Devising an integrated approach to economic migration, development and social cohesion.

LEGAL INSTRUMENTS

The Revised European Social Charter (CETS No 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 principal Council of Europe conventions 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 these and other Council of Europe legal instruments in the field of migration, see also: *Collection of Treaties - Migration*; Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg 2002.

EUROPEAN COMMITTEE ON MIGRATION (CDMG)

The European Committee on Migration (CDMG) is responsible for developing European co-operation in the field of migration, on the situation and social integration of people of migrant origin and refugees, and on community relations. The 3 strands of its work are:

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

For 2009-2010, and in implementation of the Kiev Action plan, the committee's activities are organised within the following two projects:

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

For 2011 and henceforth, the work of CDMG is currently being reviewed within the framework of the overall activities of the Council of Europe on migration questions with a view to redefining its role in this area.

Migration management

The Council of Europe's Migration Management Strategy was endorsed at the 7th Council of Europe Conference of European Ministers responsible for Migration (Helsinki, 2002). It advocates an integrated management strategy 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.

The concept of an integrated approach was further developed at the 8th ministerial conference (Kiev, 2008), where the ministers agreed to pursue an integrated approach to economic migration, development and social cohesion at national and international level. This they agreed to do by (i) co-ordinating observation and research at local, national and international level, (ii) co-ordinating policy action at local, national and international level, (iii) developing multi-sectorial partnerships with and between states and involving civil society, (iv) promoting synergy and concomitance in the action undertaken, and (v) properly and fully assessing policy need and evaluating its impact on development and social cohesion.

Key texts

- Towards a Migration Management Strategy (2000)
- Towards a Migration Management Strategy: Challenges for Countries of Origin (2006)
- Economic migration, social cohesion and development: towards an integrated approach (2008)

- Recommendation on co-development and migrants working for development in their countries of origin (CM/Rec(2007)10).

Community relations

Through its work on community relations, 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.

Key texts

- Diversity and cohesion: new challenges for the integration of immigrants and minorities (2000),
- Framework of integration policies (2000),
- Recommendation on strengthening the integration of children of migrants and of immigrant background (CM/Rec(2008)4),
- Recommendation on improving access of migrants and persons of immigrant background to employment CM/Rec(2008)10).

Legal status of migrants

The European Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers has been ratified by : 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.

Key texts

- European Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers,
- Recommendation on the admission, rights and obligations of migrant students and co-operation with countries of origin (Rec (2006) 9).
- 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.

ONGOING ACTIVITIES - EXAMPLES

Elderly migrants – preventing their vulnerability

An Ad hoc Advisory Group has been set up to prepare draft recommendation on reducing the risk of vulnerability of elderly migrants and improving their welfare. It aims to advice member states by proposing guidelines on elderly migrants' friendly policies that correspond to specific needs of these vulnerable elderly migrants.

Validating migrants' skills

A group of experts has been established to prepare a draft recommendation on improving national systems and procedures for identifying and validating migrants' skills and experience including those of employers and vocational training bodies. The group carried out its work in the course of 2009-2010 and agreed the text of the draft recommendation in June 2010. The text of the recommendation is now submitted to the European Committee on Migration for approval with a view to presenting it to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe for adoption at the end of 2010.

Life projects for unaccompanied migrant minors

The two years programme of implementation of life projects for unaccompanied migrant minors at national level has been realised with voluntary contributions from Andorra, Belgium, France and Italy. It allowed to organise a series of awareness-raising and training workshops. A training manual is expected to be published by end of September. The results of the programme will be presented during Colloquy organised with France Terre d'Asile on '*the Unaccompanied children : what protection at the European level?*', to be held in Strasbourg on 20 October 2010.

IDPS in Georgia – training on community relations

This training programme aimed at promoting the development of coherent communities of IDPs in Georgia was undertaken in the second half of 2009 - first half of 2010 (financed by the Council of Europe Development Bank). The programme, on the one hand, meant to raise awareness of senior officials from the Georgian government of the importance of building strong communities as well as to provide practical advice on how government can support community development in IDP settlements. On the other hand, it offered guidance to de-facto IDP community leaders on how employment and self-employment opportunities can be generated through concerted community action and community mobilisation. In addition to organising training sessions, the programme provided personalised support and advice to the participants on how they can practically apply newly-acquired knowledge skills. The programme was completed in June 2010.

Council of Europe Action Plan for Ukraine

The work has been undertaken on assisting the Ukrainian government to develop national policies on integration of migrants and reintegration of Ukrainians who return to the country. In the course of the series of roundtables organised by the Council of Europe jointly with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy of Ukraine in 2009-2010, proposals for the National Strategy and Action Plan on Integration of Migrants were developed. These proposals are expected to be finalised and submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine for adoption before the end of 2010.

Policies on irregular migrants

CDMG has conducted a review of national policies in further five member states with regard to irregular migrants and authorised publication of a synthesis report and national reports (Available reports in 2nd series: France, Poland, Portugal, Spain and United Kingdom). It is expected that publication will be available at the beginning of October 2010.

RECENT CONFERENCES

Conference on human rights and migration

Realising a human rights based approach to the protection of migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers

Conference, organised jointly by the Portuguese Parliament, the Portuguese Interior Ministry and the Council of Europe bodies dealing with migration, with the participation of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights took place in Lisbon from 31 May to 1 June 2010. It focused on the interception of migrants at sea, how they are detained and treated in receiving countries, the dangers they can face such as trafficking and racism, as well as what happens when they are expelled or forced to return. It allowed to examine how rights-based approach might be applied to the protection of migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers.

Conference on Interaction between migrants and their host societies: Learning from policy and practice

Conference, organized jointly with the city of Barcelona, on 16 – 17 October 2009 was key integral part of a wider process of critical reflection on current integration policy and practice in Europe. It focused on the interaction between migrants and host societies and on the policies, practices and techniques that can encourage and facilitate this interaction. The Conference allowed participants (particularly those from the local level) to exchange of innovative practices as well as to provide opportunities for critical analysis of existing integration policy and practices.

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. The last conference took place in Kiev on 4-5 September 2008.

COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendation Rec(2008)10 on improving access of migrants and persons of immigrant background to **employment**

- 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

For the full texts of these recommendations, consult Documentation on <http://www.coe.int/migration>

PUBLICATIONS

- *Life Projects: a handbook for front-line professionals*, Council of Europe Publishing, 2010
- *Policies on irregular migrants, 2nd series : France, Poland, Portugal, Spain, United Kingdom*, publication October 2010
- *Economic migration, social cohesion and development : towards an integrated approach*, P Taran, I Ivakhnyuk, M Ramos, A Tanner, Council of Europe Publishing, 2009
- *Access to justice for migrants and asylum-seekers in Europe*, J McBride, Council of Europe Publishing, 2009
- *Policies on irregular migrants, Volume I: Italy and Germany, Volume II: Republic of Armenia, Greece, Russian Federation*, Council of Europe Publishing, 2008
- *The Euro-Mediterranean migration system*, S de Tapia, Council of Europe Publishing, 2008
- *Life projects for unaccompanied migrant minors - Recommendation Rec(2007)9 and explanatory memorandum*, Council of Europe Publishing, 2008

- *Migrants and co-development - Recommendation Rec(2007)10 and explanatory memorandum*, Council of Europe Publishing, 2008
- *Reconciling migrants' well-being and the public interest: welfare state, firms and citizenship in transition*, Council of Europe Publishing, 2008
- *Asylum and the European Convention on Human Rights*, N Mole, Council of Europe Publishing, 2007
- *The position of aliens in relation to the European Convention on Human Rights*, H Lambert, Council of Europe Publishing, 2007
- *Irregular migrants: access to minimum social rights*, R Cholewinski, Council of Europe Publishing, 2006
- *Achieving social cohesion in a multicultural Europe – concepts, situations and developments*, Council of Europe Publishing, 2006
- *Current Trends in International Migration in Europe*, J Salt, Council of Europe Publishing, 2005
- *The legal status of migrants admitted for employment – a comparative study of law and practice in selected European states*, R Cholewinski, Council of Europe Publishing, 2005.
- *Forced Return – 20 guidelines adopted by the Committee of Ministers*, Council of Europe Publishing, 2005
- *Preventing illegal immigration: juggling economic imperatives, political risks and individual rights*, C-V Marie, Council of Europe Publishing, 2004
- *New patterns of irregular migration in Europe*, S de Tapia, Council of Europe Publishing, 2004
- *International labour migration*, J Salt, J Clarke, P Wanner, Council of Europe Publishing, 2004.

- European Committee of Social Rights: <http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/socialcharter>
- Council of Europe Development Bank: <http://www.coebank.org>
- Council of Europe Publishing: <http://book.coe.int>

CONTACTS

Migration Division Migration and Roma Department Directorate General for Social Cohesion

Head of Division
Mr Simon Tonelli
Tel: +33 (0) 3 88 41 21 62
Fax: +33 (0)3 88 41 27 31
e-mail: Simon.Tonelli@coe.int

WEBSITES

More detailed information about Council of Europe activities in the field of migration, consult the following websites:

- Council of Europe: www.coe.int
- Thematic page on migration: <http://www.coe.int/t/dc/files/themes/migration>
- European Committee on Migration: <http://www.coe.int/migration>
- Parliamentary Assembly Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population: <http://assembly.coe.int>
- Commissioner for Human Rights: <http://www.coe.int/t/commissioner>
- European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI): http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/default_en.asp