

MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Policy recommendations to European policy-makers

A series of high-profile cases of desperate migrants risking their lives to reach Europe has catapulted the topic of migration and development to the top of the European agenda. The economic crisis in Europe and recent tensions in countries such as Italy related to immigrants have also contributed to an increased reactive approach to immigration.

In terms of the policy of the European Union (EU), since the publication of the European Commission's first communication (policy paper) on migration and development in 2002, other EU policy initiatives in the field of either development policy or migration policy (e.g. Stockholm Programme) have included concrete measures relating to reinforcing the linkages between migration and development. In addition, migration is one of the five policy areas that are under the European Commission's close scrutiny with regard to policy coherence for development. A new communication fully dedicated to migration and development is expected from the Commission in 2011.

In the EU, the official discourse emphasizes the positive role of migration for development and the role of diasporas in the development of countries of origin. But, in the capitals of Europe, the political priority, at present, remains to secure Europe's external borders.

While migrants leave their countries for many reasons, an important reason is a lack of opportunities to make a decent life at home. Therefore, simply adopting a repressive approach to migration towards Europe is doomed to fail; instead there must be a broader policy that includes measures to improve the standard of living in developing countries.

The challenge is for the debate on migration and development to be based on facts and on considerations of human rights, rather than security concerns or a repressive approach. The focus should be on identifying positive synergies rather than seeing development policies as a tool of migration control.

Caritas Europa as part of the global Caritas Internationalis Confederation, present in over 160 countries, has long standing experience in both development and migration fields of work.

Caritas promotes the principle of integral human development, respect for human rights and safety along the migration "journey". Acknowledging that development and migration work are two policy areas with distinct as well as interconnected aims and objectives, Caritas Europa encourages cooperation between policies and projects in the two areas.

Caritas proposes the following recommendations for policy improvements to the European policy-makers:

A Human-centred and Rights-based approach

1. Human beings have a basic right to develop their potential and should be treated accordingly.
1. The right to stay in one's country of origin or to migrate is a fundamental and unalienable right that must be respected by all.
2. Development and migration policies should be human-rights based and include a systematic human rights impact assessment. Migrants are not simply man power, but foremost human beings. Only their safety and stability allows them to become development actors.

Development and relief for the benefit of migrants

Improved aid and coherent policies

3. For migration to become an option, development aid should primarily focus on fighting the root causes of poverty and forced migration, including insecurity, injustice, bad governance, human rights violations and unfair economic policies.
4. Governments have to adhere to their commitments relating to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Official Development Aid (ODA), including dedicating 0.7% of their Gross National Income (GNI) to aid by 2015. Donors and aid recipient governments must improve the effectiveness of aid, especially through strengthening democratic ownership, greater civil society participation, and accountability of governments for aid disbursement and use.
5. Aid must be used exclusively to fight poverty and have a clear development objective. No ODA should be used for migration flow management and border control. Donors' conditionalities for their ODA relating to the capacity and/or willingness of developing countries – receiving ODA- to collaborate in migration control must be removed.
6. Strong coherence of all policies that can potentially affect the development of developing countries must be guaranteed. In addition to enhancing the development aspects of migration policies, policy-makers should address the multi-dimensional policy linkages between migration, development trade, agriculture and climate change.
7. In order to avoid negative impact on small farmers and entrepreneurs in developing countries and their forced migration, EU and international trade and agriculture policies must take into account developing countries' interests and not only ease exchanges and globalisation.
8. Systematic and thorough assessment of the impact of external policies on developing countries, especially on the poor and vulnerable groups, should be carried out, including their impact on forced migration and on the labour market in countries of origin.

Humanitarian aid, conflict prevention & peace building

9. Relief and development programmes in refugee-receiving countries should include support to refugees as well as receiving communities to improve the development prospects of the wider community and prevent instability.
10. In compliance with the humanitarian principles, donors should deliver humanitarian aid to refugees on the basis of real human needs, irrespective of any geopolitical considerations.

11. It is critical to promote projects dedicated to reinforcing solidarity links and inter-communities dialogue bringing together the migrants/refugees and the local population of a given area.
12. The inclusion of voluntary return and reintegration should be an important element of peace and development strategies. This should enable countries to attract nationals who left the country and whose skills and qualifications would considerably contribute to the country's further development.

Decent jobs and social security

13. Development policies and programmes in developing countries should include actions to enhance decent employment opportunities and income generating projects in order to avoid a negative impact of migration and the risk of brain drain.
14. Given the large proportion of young people in developing countries who may feel desperate and tempted by irregular and unsafe migration, youth should be a privileged target of employment policies and projects.

Civil society participation in policy dialogue and democratic control

The active involvement of civil society organisations (CSOs) in policy dialogue and democratic control of governmental institutions is essential for the peaceful and sustainable development of democratic societies. Therefore:

15. Donors and governments should create an enabling environment for civil society, including migrants' and diaspora organisations to be involved in the process of designing, implementing monitoring and evaluating public policies affecting poor people's life, including migration, development and trade. Their voices, in particular those of migrants, must be heard.
16. It is essential that funding is available to further build the capacity of civil society, including diaspora organisations, to monitor government activities through governance and transparency mechanisms in countries of origin and destination.

Migration as a safe option

Legal Migration Channels and Protection Structures

Migration should be an option and should take place in safety and with full respect of fundamental rights, through the creation of legal channels for migration, flexible mobility schemes for international workers and protection structures.

17. Fair and just agreements regulating international workers' mobility between countries of origin and countries of destination in order to ensure safe movement and respect of international workers' rights.
18. Access to international protection and legal channels must be safeguarded for persons seeking asylum.
19. The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of Migrant Workers and their Families should be ratified by European States.

20. Appropriate and sustainable counselling and protection structures, such as mobility centres, should be created for migrants and prospective migrants in countries of origin, transit and destination. These structures will provide information and counselling, including exploring alternatives to migration.
21. Special attention should be given to the protection of vulnerable groups and the persons and children left behind after the migration of others. It is critical to provide counselling for traumatised migrants and victims of abuse.
22. The right to family reunification must be guaranteed (including in circular migration schemes), order to avoid disruption of families and detrimental consequences for children.

Halting Trafficking in Human Beings

23. Anti-trafficking legislation must be strengthened and existing measures properly enforced. Particular attention should be given to assisting and protecting victims of trafficking.
24. Development projects should address the root causes of trafficking in human beings, which are often the lack of perspectives for women and youngsters and the negative perception of the role of women and girls in society.

Migration as an asset for development

Caritas calls for a paradigm shift of the perception of migration: widening the focus from one of problem-orientation to one which recognises the scope of opportunities for individuals and their communities. Migrants must be recognised as citizens, agents of change and members of global communities.

Labour migration

25. The EU should adopt a flexible and common immigration policy facilitating the mobility of both highly skilled and low skilled workers.
26. Real mobility requires strengthening the legal protection of all migrants - skilled and low skilled migrants -, notably through establishing flexible residency permit and multi-entry visas.

Genuine circular migration

27. Circular migration should be embedded in mobility schemes that provide options for different types of migration: seasonal, temporary, but also the possibility of becoming a permanent resident in the receiving society. Circular migration will only be effective if accompanied by measures which ensure the option to return to the country of origin, while retaining the residence permit in the receiving country.
28. In order to promote international mobility, Caritas advocates for the portability of social rights. Migrant workers should be given the choice of either maintaining their social rights (pension, health insurance etc) in their country of employment or to transfer them to their country of origin.
29. Ethical principles, rules and procedures for international recruitment of staff (from developing countries), such as the WHO Global Code of Practice for Ethical Recruitment

should be widely adopted by European States as well as the corporate sector in order to reduce the risk of brain drain.

30. For a “brain gain” rather than a “brain waste” of migrants, measures should be adopted to recognise foreign qualifications, and migrants’ access to jobs on the appropriate level of their qualifications.

Integration of migrants

31. European Governments should allocate more financial resources to integration policies and social inclusion of migrants in a “welcoming society”. rather than security-based measures. These allow migrants to become active development actors in society, and reduce discrimination and xenophobia.
32. Support should be available to migrants for acquiring new qualifications and new skills, in order to ensure their personal development and social integration.
33. Specific integration strategies targeting the returnees should be developed in countries of origin, and address the specific needs of the local context: the objective could be to optimize the use of the returnees’ skills, or to avoid social tensions and renewed conflicts with the rest of the population.

Productive remittances

34. In order to represent a regular and reliable support for families in the countries of origin, legal remittance transfers should be made safer, more transparent and affordable.
35. While respecting the private nature of remittances, the productive use of remittances by migrants for the development of their home communities should be encouraged. Governments and donors should use institutional funding and aid to leverage remittances in order to invest in long-term economic, employment and income generating projects, together with the participation of migrants and diasporas’ associations.