



Union of European Federalists
Union Europaischer Federalisten
Union des Federalistes Europeens

RESOLUTION OF THE UEF FEDERAL COMMITTEE TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF A HUMANITARIAN BASED APPROACH ON EU MIGRATION POLICY IN LINE WITH INTERNATIONAL AND EU STANDARDS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Adopted by UEF Federal Committee, Brussels on 18 April 2015.

Bearing in mind that

- the EU has now more than 15 years' experience in EU common migration policy and that has developed and implemented during this period three specific programs aimed at the establishment of a coherent framework on migration policy.
- in 2013 the EU succeeded in adopting a new Common European Asylum System. Despite this progress, additional concrete actions were necessary for responding to the tragic events taking place off the coast of Lampedusa where 366 migrants lost their lives. In this context in October 2013, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on migration flows in the Mediterranean, and shortly after this, the Council set up "Task force Mediterranean".
- for 2014 the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated that the number of Refugees, asylum-seekers and internally displaced people worldwide exceeded 50 million people and spoke "of the worst humanitarian crisis of our time" with Syrians having become the largest refugee population.
- for Europe in particular, the situation has not improved as the number of deaths at sea is estimated by the UNHCR to be more than 3000, the people that have crossed the EU external border irregularly is more than 230,000 and the total number of asylum applications has increased by more than 30% compared to the same period in 2013.
- according to recent estimates, more than 90% of all asylum seekers enter Europe in an irregular manner as there are very limited possibilities for people in need of protection to enter and stay legally in an EU Member State; therefore the assessment of their asylum application is conducted after arrival in the first country of entry (Dublin Regulation rules).
- the large majority of those people heading for Sicily or for a Greek island do not intend to seek asylum in Italy or Greece but they move on towards northern Europe.
- statistical data of 2014 confirm that Germany and Sweden received nearly two-thirds of the Syrian protection seekers in Europe.
- the absence of legal ways to enter the EU leads people in need of protection to resort to smuggling networks to reach the EU, crossing the external border under risky conditions; as a consequence of this, resorting to smugglers exposes asylum seekers and migrants to risks for their lives and physical integrity.
- in addition, the EU Member States are required to close down their diplomatic and consular representations in war-torn countries for security and political reasons, so for the nationals of these countries is very difficult to apply for a visa in the country of origin.
- the current EU law on visa does not provide for separate humanitarian visa although Member States Consular offices have the possibility to issue a short stay visa with limited territorial validity on humanitarian grounds, a concept which remains undefined in the EU law.

- the Council Conclusions of October 2014 on "Taking action to better manage migration flows" stressed the need to act with no delay and additional concrete actions have been proposed, notably with a view to preventing hazardous journeys by sea;
- in November 2014 in its statement at the European Parliament plenary debate on Migration Commissioner Avramopoulos announced the European Commission's commitment to exploring new avenues in particular the possibility of developing a common approach to issuing humanitarian visas to allow those in need to come to Europe and apply extraterritorially for protection.
- the establishment of common rules for protected entry procedures will increase the internal security in the EU, as the collection of biometric data and searches in existing Entry Data Bases will help identify possible security risks; in addition, the demand of human smuggling will be reduced as will the risk for persons to become victims of human trafficking.
- the European Commission has announced its intention to present a new comprehensive European agenda on migration end of May 2015, exploring, in particular, legal ways for entry for labour migration and for people seeking protection. This can give also the possibility to increase solidarity among EU member states and extent pilot experience on relocation.
- the need to update the comprehensive Resolution adopted by UEF in 2012 which recalled the main challenges in the area of EU Migration policy and set clear policy priorities for the future,

The Federal Committee of the Union of European Federalists, meeting in Brussels on 17-18 April 2015, commits itself to taking all necessary actions at its level

- to promote, at EU level, a comprehensive humanitarian approach to migration policy in line with the principles and rights set out in the EU Charter of Fundamental rights and in particular, the right to asylum and the respect of the non-refoulement principle.
- to ensure that persons fleeing armed conflict or persecution and who are in need of international protection should have effective access to asylum procedures in the EU Member States and consider legal ways for assessing asylum applications made outside EU territory.
- to support concrete actions aimed at ensuring migrant children's rights, in particular for undocumented and unaccompanied minors.
- to encourage the development of alternative measures to migrants' detention and clear prohibition rules for the detention of children for immigration reasons.
- to support development in the EU of common rules for emergency resettlement for the most vulnerable groups of persons requesting international protection.
- to support the establishment by each EU Member State of resettlement programmes according to their capacity ensuring that sufficient solidarity funds are made available to that purpose.
- to develop EU relocation Rules defining a quota system based on selected criteria (such as the country population, or GDP) for each EU Member State and targeting in particular groups of refugees at heightened risk.
- to reinforce the migration dimension under the EU Human Rights Dialogues with third countries for the period 2015-2020.
- to strengthen the internal and external coordination and coherence among EU bodies and institutions on Migration Policy, setting up a permanent and structured forum for dialogue on this issue for the coming years.