

RECOMMENDATION 109/2009*

Migration in the BSEC Member States – Social and Cultural Aspects

1. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation notes the increase of international human mobility as a result of globalisation and internationalisation of labour markets and demographic trends and acknowledges that migration is a key aspect of contemporary social, economic and cultural life.

2. The Assembly stresses that the multiple effects of migration concern the Black Sea region in particular, since it is an area both of sending and receiving migrants – as a final destination or transit area. Particular attention has been devoted to a variety of social and development problems linked to migration. In this respect, the Assembly recalls its Recommendations 21/1997 on “Rights and social protection of refugees and displaced persons”; 35/1999 on “The legal framework for combating trafficking in people”; and 51/2001 on “The legal framework of the protection of migrant workers in the Black Sea countries and the relations between immigrant communities and the host country”.

3. Being aware of the challenges created by international migration, the Assembly also recognizes the positive contribution of international migration to social and economic development and cultural richness of countries of origin and destination. In this regard, it underlines the need for a comprehensive approach to the prevention of illegal migration and underlines that measures in this field must be coupled with appropriate measures to enhance human mobility.

4. The Assembly places utmost importance on the individual and collective efforts for the smooth integration of immigrants in host societies. Immigrant and native population should be involved in a mutual process of adaptation that accommodates cultural diversity and

* The Assembly debate on 13 June 2009 (see Doc. GA33/CC32/REP/09 – Report on “Migration in the BSEC Member States – Social and Cultural Aspects”, discussed by the Cultural, Educational and Social Affairs Committee at its Thirty-Second Meeting in Batumi on 7-8 April 2009; Rapporteur: Mr. Alexander Bednov - Russia).

fosters social cohesion on a basis of non-discrimination. This process should be supported by national authorities, political discourse and the media.

5. The Assembly stresses the importance of regional and international cooperation in managing migration effectively. In this respect, it appreciates the activities carried out in the field of migration within the framework of the BSEC through its Working Group on Cooperation in Combating Crime, in particular in its Organized Forms and welcomes the completion of the first joint project with the International Organization for Migration titled “Black Sea Consultative Process on Migration Management” that was launched in 2007.

6. The Assembly also encourages interaction with other international actors in the field of migration management and acknowledges the opportunities created within the Black Sea Synergy initiative of the European Union.

7. Therefore, the Parliamentary Assembly recommends that the Parliaments and Governments of the BSEC Member States:

i. *enhance* the capacity to prevent and to deal with illegal migration by improving border management and by informing potential migrants on the risks related to illegal migration as well as on available channels for legal migration;

ii. *provide* opportunities for legal migration by further liberalizing migration policies;

iii. *consider* regularising undocumented migrants;

iv. *develop* specific initiatives aimed at protecting migrants and refugees against exploitation and mistreatment, racism and xenophobia, including awareness raising among migrants on their basic rights;

v. *take measures* to fight discrimination and exclusion at work and *remove* obstacles to migrants’ rights for joining associations and trade unions in order to protect their social, economic and political rights;

vi. *guarantee* rights to residents equal to those of nationals in the field of social security and health;

vii. *take measures* encouraging respect of diverse cultures and religions as an essential factor for social stability and peace;

viii. *develop* policies to encourage the active participation of migrants in the social, cultural, economic and political life of the host country;

ix. *promote* intercultural activities and other events aimed at improving knowledge of the culture of immigrants’ communities and provide adequate funding for them;

x. *create* mechanisms for better evaluating competences and making better use of human capital of migrants;

xi. *provide* equal education and career opportunities for migrant children, avoiding their seclusion in specific low-skill and low-wage branches of the economy;

- xii. *avoid* the segregation of migrant children in special schools;
- xiii. *promote* training and professional development of teachers on how to deal with diversity and motivate children in vulnerable situations;
- xiv. *place emphasis* on intercultural education with a view to building mutual respect along with focusing on the identity and values of the host country;
- xv. *involve* the voluntary sector, community organisations and immigrants in the steering and monitoring of immigrant integration;
- xvi. *create* conditions for highly qualified specialists working abroad for return to their home countries and *elaborate* mechanisms for their reintegration into the domestic labour market;
- xvii. *improve* the reach of job-mediation services with the aim of diminishing the incentive for the unemployed to seek job opportunities abroad and thereby reduce the phenomenon of brain drain;
- xviii. *enhance* productive investment of remittances in the countries of origin by increasing opportunities for remittance recipients to start entrepreneurial activities, including entrepreneurial training and financial services to ensure access to micro-credit, soft loans and grants, insurance and cost effective transfer of remittances;
- xix. *encourage* cooperation between law enforcement agencies and NGOs in identifying and protecting victims of human trafficking and reintegrating them;
- xx. *improve* the reception conditions for asylum seekers and refugees and ensure that reception and detention centres have properly trained staff as well as sufficient number of interpreters and cultural mediators to support their work;
- xxi. *intensify* regional dialogue and cooperation among countries of origin, transit and destination through the support to regional networking activities and policy discussions on migration;
- xxii. *increase* coordination in the compilation and regional exchange of data on migration according to the relevant IOM recommendations for the Black Sea region;
- xxiii. *enhance* dialogue and cooperation on migration within BSEC, possibly through the expansion of the Working Group on Combating Crime, in particular in its Organized Forms;
- 8. The Parliamentary Assembly** invites the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs to consider its Recommendation.