

2nd Ministerial Conference of the Prague Process Action Plan 2012-2016

Introduction

We, the Ministers responsible for migration and migration-related matters from Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kosovo (UNSCR 1244/1999), Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Malta, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, the Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, Uzbekistan as well as the European Commissioner responsible for migration (hereafter: “the Parties”);

Gathered in Poznan at the invitation of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union, on 4 November 2011, within the framework of the Second Ministerial Conference of the Prague Process – “Building Migration Partnerships in Action”;

Reaffirming the principles and commitments stated in and emphasising the importance of the Joint Declaration adopted at the first Ministerial Conference on “Building Migration Partnerships” which launched the Prague Process, held in Prague on 27 and 28 April 2009 during the Czech Presidency of

the Council of the European Union, which remains the overall framework and basis for our cooperation;

Recognising the strategic role of the EU Global Approach to Migration, the Eastern Partnership, the European Neighbourhood Policy, the Stabilisation and Association Process, the Budapest Process, the Black Sea Synergy, the European Union Strategy for Central Asia as well as the relevant strategies, the legal bases established and the affirmative measures taken within the frameworks of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Eurasian Economic Community, the Collective Security Treaty Organisation and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation;

Taking into account the long-lasting, deep and successful cooperation among the Parties in numerous forms and recognising in particular the value of knowledge and experience gained through the implementation of the activities of the Building Migration Partnerships project, such as the Extended Migration Profiles and the Eastern Migratory Route i-Map;

Convinced that there is a need to further improve the cooperation established by the Joint Declaration,

Agree to further strengthen our cooperation and to this end, adopt the following Action Plan .

Timeframe

Today, at the Poznan Conference, we take stock of progress made to date and embark on a second phase of practical implementation of the political agenda. Dedicated to achieving concrete results, both in the short and in the long term, we agree on the period between 2012 and 2016 as the timeframe for

this Action Plan. Such a timeframe will guarantee proper preparation of actions, ensure the allocation of adequate financial resources, provide for the best dissemination of results and allow for their evaluation.

Priorities

The *Joint Declaration* adopted by participants at the Prague Conference identified five main topics for cooperation in the area of migration. The first two years of implementation have shown the need and interest among partners to deepen cooperation on asylum issues. As a result, a separate section will be devoted to this topic. The areas where cooperation should be further strengthened are the following:

- I. preventing and fighting illegal migration,
- II. promoting readmission, voluntary return and sustainable reintegration,
- III. addressing legal migration and mobility with a special emphasis on labour migration,
- IV. promoting integration of legally residing migrants in their host societies,
- V. making migration and mobility positive forces for development,
- VI. strengthening capacities in the area of asylum and international protection.

In order to fulfil the objectives of the Prague Joint Declaration it is agreed to focus on a number of specific topics for future activities in the field of migration. Given the different geographical, migratory and socio-economic situations of the Parties, it is clear that each Party will be interested in different activities and therefore that participation in the implementation of the different actions should be on a voluntary basis.

Resource allocation – financing

All Parties endeavour to provide adequate financial resources for the implementation of the Action Plan, on a voluntary basis. Therefore, the activities set out in the Action Plan will be financed through the following sources:

- European Union funds,
- national funds of the Parties,
- funds from other international institutions and organisations.

Implementation of the Action Plan

The Parties agree that the implementation of the Action Plan requires an effective support and coordination mechanism. Therefore the Parties decide to establish a network of national contact points to facilitate daily cooperation at expert level. Expert meetings should be held if required for the implementation of the activities envisaged in this Action Plan. Senior Officials' Meetings will be organised at least once a year to prepare the ground for Ministerial Conferences, monitor the implementation of ongoing actions and evaluate the impact of completed actions, and to prepare decisions or recommendations for decisions on future policy directions. Ministerial Conferences will be organised to evaluate the results achieved and to decide on future policy orientations.

The Parties decide to establish a group consisting of core partner States and the European Commission in order to assist in coordinating activities and in preparing for the Senior Officials' Meetings. The composition of the core group reflects the consensus of the Parties reached at the Senior Officials' Meeting, taking geographical balance into account.

Evaluation

The Parties commit themselves to monitor and evaluate activities and the implementation of the Action Plan on an annual basis at the Senior Officials' Meetings. A mid-term and final review of the implementation of the Action Plan will take place at the Ministerial Conferences.

Specific actions to be implemented in the framework of Prague Process Action Plan 2012-2016

I. Preventing and fighting illegal migration

1. To support awareness-raising campaigns in countries of origin on the risks of illegal migration, including smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings.
2. To promote cooperation between migration-related agencies and state authorities, including by signing working arrangements, with a particular focus on:
 - a) the exchange of relevant analytical methods focused on illegal migration channels, and of best practices on combating organised crime networks involved in the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings,
 - b) the promotion and development of Integrated Border Management through the development of a comprehensive training strategy on border management, including on mechanisms to ensure access to international protection for those in need, the setting up of an inventory of existing border security technologies and the identification of technological needs,
 - c) the exchange of best practices on establishing the identity and/or nationality of irregular migrants,
 - d) the exchange of best practices on implementation of international standards regarding security of travel documents, visas and other relevant documents including on the use of biometrics.
3. To promote the exchange of best practices in identification and in providing adequate protection and assistance for vulnerable groups, in

particular unaccompanied minors and victims of trafficking in human beings, including through the strengthening of partnerships between government and non-government organisations.

II. Promoting readmission, voluntary return and sustainable reintegration

1. To promote cooperation in the area of readmission with a view to establishing an area of functioning readmission agreements through:
 - a) assisting the Parties by providing technical support for the preparation and negotiation of readmission agreements between themselves as well as between the Parties and countries of origin and/or transit,
 - b) the exchange of experiences and best practices on practical and operational implementation of such agreements.
2. To strengthen practical cooperation in the area of voluntary return through supporting the establishment of related programmes in particular in countries that do not have any such programmes.
3. To support sustainable reintegration through building up appropriate infrastructure that facilitates the access of returnees to information on employment offers in their countries of origin, e.g. by dedicated websites, databases of job vacancies and vocational training courses, and CV databases.
4. To share best practices related to return, readmission and reintegration of vulnerable persons such as victims of trafficking in human beings and unaccompanied minors.

III. Addressing legal migration and mobility with a special emphasis on labour migration

1. To strengthen the capacities of employment services and authorities to manage labour migration in order to better respond to national labour market needs, and to better inform potential migrants on the possibilities of legal migration.
2. To share experiences and best practices in organising labour migration.
3. To share experiences and best practices on social protection schemes and to encourage negotiations and the conclusion of agreements on social security.
4. To create support programmes aimed at the reintegration of migrants into labour markets in their countries of origin, taking into account proper use of their skills and competences acquired abroad.
5. To strengthen cooperation on assessment of migrants' skills and competences between countries of origin and destination in order to avoid "brain waste", including through reinforcing the comparability of professional profiles.
6. To promote an exchange of students and researchers between higher education institutes of the Parties.

IV. Promoting integration of legally residing migrants in their host societies

1. To exchange information and experiences on integration policies and the instruments of the receiving countries, in order to provide recommendations on ways of involving central and local governments, civil society and diaspora communities in the integration process, among others.
2. To strengthen capacity and to share best practices and experiences in integration practices among authorities responsible for the integration of migrants.

V. Making migration and mobility positive forces for development

1. To bring together representatives of diaspora communities and governments of countries of origin and destination for round-table debates on sharing best practices and to discuss the role of diasporas in development and investment in countries of origin.
2. To carry out a comprehensive study of the relevant policies and legislation (on migration, taxes, the recognition of diplomas etc.) of countries of origin and destination in order to identify successful practices and focus on the possibilities of facilitating circular migration.
3. To examine the possibility of developing a framework for disseminating information on channels for remittances and their cost, especially with the aim of facilitating investment in countries of origin.

4. To exchange information about the social consequences of migration for migrants' families and to identify best practices to address the issue.

VI. Strengthening capacities in the area of asylum and international protection

1. In collaboration with UNHCR, to assist the Parties in developing and strengthening their asylum systems, including national asylum legislation, to ensure compliance with international standards.
2. To support asylum authorities of the Parties in:
 - a) strengthening reception capacities for people in need of international protection,
 - b) strengthening their capacities in gathering and analysing information on asylum seekers' countries of origin in the context of the overall strengthening of asylum systems.
3. To promote the development of training programmes for law enforcement bodies and the judiciary on international protection standards and on the principle of non-refoulement.
