



HIGH LEVEL PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE

Policy Coherence for Development and Migration

Thursday, 12 February 2009
11.00 - 12.30 and 14.00 - 17.30

European Parliament
Brussels
Room 1A002

Background Note

Objective: to organise a high level parliamentary conference in Brussels in February 2009 in order to exchange views and experiences regarding the impact of EU and OECD member states' migration policies – and other non-development policies – on development in migrants' countries of origin. This is the subject of policy debates known as Policy Coherence for Development (PCD). The event would result in raised awareness and more informed discussion on Migration and could lead to the creation of a parliamentary Task Force on Policy Coherence for Development and Migration, which could follow up Migration and PCD issues and exchange information on best practices.

Rationale: How do migration-related policy decisions taken in EU and OECD member states affect economic and social progress in migrants' countries of origin? This is the fundamental question posed by the debate on Policy Coherence for Development in the area of migration. The aim of the proposed conference is to raise the awareness of parliamentarians of issues related to this discussion. The conference will be based on presentations of available data on migration trends of the various regions of origin underlining the specificities of the PCD issues. It will provide a political space for exchange of views and experiences on topics related to migration policies and their development dimension in migrants' countries of origin. Debates among parliamentarians will be introduced by High Level keynote speakers and experts. The conference will highlight experiences in OECD and EU countries with varied dimensions of international migration, including debates surrounding highly-skilled and low-skilled migration flows, differences in policy perspectives between migrants' countries of origin, transit and destination, migration from the East; integration and circulation etc. The

conference will feature interventions from non-EU OECD countries and ACP countries, drawing upon experiences of Mexico, the United States, Canada and Asian/Pacific countries. Given that the conference will coincide with the EP's EU-ACP Week, particular attention will be paid to perspectives on international migration, including the question of regional migration. By promoting open debates and the sharing of creative solutions, the conference will raise awareness of the desirability of a multidimensional perspective on migration policy, and of greater coherence between migration and development policies, which too often are dealt with in isolation by national authorities. The cultural dimension of migration will be considered and the intercultural dialogue between participants from different countries and continents will provide an additional dimension to the debates.

Migration is high on the global political agenda as shown by the follow-up conferences to the UN High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development (Brussels 2007 and Manila 2008). Migration is of great relevance to the Policy Coherence debate: the EU, proposed a specific framework for Policy Coherence for Development in the April 2005 Commission Communication on "Policy Coherence for Development – Accelerating progress towards attaining the MDGs". As a result, in May 2005 the Council agreed to EU PCD commitments in 12 areas: trade, environment, climate change, security, agriculture, fisheries, social dimension of globalisation, migration, research and innovation, information society, transport and energy. This emphasis on PCD was confirmed by the European Consensus on Development and Policy Coherence is now considered as an important contribution to development in addition to aid.

PCD is high on the political agenda of many countries. With respect to migration, these include countries of origin, transit, destination and return – and increasingly, many countries are all four at once. The proposed conference will inform and encourage decision makers in promoting development-friendly legislation related to migration.

The sponsoring organisations are well-placed to facilitate this dialogue on migration and development. The OECD has a long experience of work in both PCD issues and international migration, and it has a close collaboration with the Economic Community Of West African States on the implementation of a West African Common approach on Migration. The EC, meanwhile, has prepared a Staff Working Paper on Migration and Policy Coherence as part of the April 2008 Package Communication and will be preparing the 2nd PCD report for September 2009. The Africa EU Partnership on Migration, Mobility and Employment, established in 2007 reflects a commitment to address migration and mobility issues in the framework of labour market disparities in the EU and Africa context. The Conference will provide a rich source of information and sharing of experiences as well as provide a forum for the concerted efforts of OECD and the EU to promote policy coherence for development.

For further information:

www.oecd.org/development/policycoherence

www.oecd.org/migration

www.oecd.org/dev

www.oecd.org/swac

www.ec.europa.eu/development

www.europarl.europa.eu