



**European
Movement
International**

Migration and the Refugee Crisis A European Response

A concrete and determined European response to the present migration crisis must be global – focusing on the roots of the crisis – and at the same time truly European, with a common European approach on Migration and Asylum which includes the following:

A European-wide agenda

A true Common European Immigration and Asylum Policy is necessary to provide a European response to a European problem. European migration policy should be built on a common agenda and not on unilateral action contrary to European values.

Interlinkage between European migration policy and related policies is essential. Ongoing revisions of related policies offer the opportunity for a real interlinkage, including the post-2015 Development Agenda now under dis-

ussion, the ongoing review of the European Neighbourhood Policy, the annual Enlargement strategy and the EU global strategy on Foreign and Security Policy foreseen for June 2016. These policies should share elements from the European Agenda on Migration and vice versa.

Solidarity

Solidarity is key: efforts in the area of migration policy have to be made by all Member States – including those with opt-outs – in order to alleviate the pressure on the main countries of arrival. This means that national leaders have to take responsibility and refrain from nationalistic and anti-migration rhetoric and action, thereby blocking unanimous decision making, forcing the EU to resort to QMV and undermining European solidarity.

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The Dublin regulation should be replaced by a permanent and binding mechanism that ensures the fair sharing of responsibility to host asylum seekers and refugees, according to the economic and social capacities of EU Member States and EEA states as well as the preferences of asylum seekers and refugees. Coercive transfers should be avoided. Such a system could offer a structural solution for the fluctuating influx of migrants.

Existing funds such as the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund should be mobilised and extra money should be made available by the EU and its Member States to deal with the height of the refugee crisis, to support cities and regions that function as main entry points or host large numbers of refugees, neighbouring countries such as the Western Balkans that see many pass through their lands, and organisations and countries taking care of the refugees close to their countries of origin.

Dignity and respect

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This includes access to legal asylum procedures for all, respecting the rule of law, and including set decision deadlines, personal interviews and better information. Detention of asylum seekers should only be a measure of the last resort and avoided as much as possible. In addition to a common list of safe countries of origin, work in the direction of common standards for the evaluation of asylum applications would be welcomed.

Social inclusion policies are important for the successful integration of those arriving in Europe. With timely measures and the appropriate funding Europe should help the national and local authorities alleviate the settlement of the refugees and asylum seekers. Efforts should be made to ensure that refugees are not discriminated against when it comes to the provision of social protections. European standards for the integration of refugees and asylum seekers should be developed so that they live harmoniously in the host societies for the period of asylum.

An open Europe

Whereas the current number of refugees arriving in Europe is extremely high, the open nature of Europe should

be preserved. The European Union should not become a 'Fortress Europe' with a migration policy relying on fences and border patrol, and internally, Schengen cannot be compromised. Free movement is a fundamental right for EU citizens. A 'Fortress Europe' runs contrary to the founding values of the Europe Union. Safe access to the EU should be ensured for those that seek asylum. In that light, applying for refugee status at the country of origin and options such as humanitarian visa should be explored.

“Migration is not a threat, but a challenge which also offers opportunities for a continent characterised by demographic decline and with labour markets in need of skilled workers.”

“The Dublin system needs to be reformed into a mechanism that ensures the fair sharing of responsibility so that an unequal pressure on certain states will be removed.”

Legal migration

Migration is not a threat, but a challenge which also offers opportunities for a continent characterized by demographic decline and with labour markets in need of skilled workers. Legal migration is an essential part of the European Agenda on Migration.

The EU should foster and promote channels of legal immigration by extending the Blue Card regulation to non-academic fields such as entrepreneurs and lower-skilled migrants, and tone down the strict requirements (such as the salary threshold and the link between the qualification and job offer) to ensure a wider application. The Blue Card should be applied in a transparent and similar fashion by all Member States, limiting room for interpretation on grounds for



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“Instead of becoming a weak inward-looking fortress delineated by distressed dinghies, makeshift jungles and barbed wire, Europe must seize the moment and channel the resilience, inventiveness and hope of its newest arrivals towards combatting its demographic decline and shortage of skilled labour.”

Petros Fassoulas, Secretary General, European Movement International

refusal, and take precedence over the variety of national schemes.

Third country nationals working in the EU should receive equal treatment as EU citizens with regard to pay, working conditions, social rights, and with regard to freedom of movement within the EU.

The European Movement International is convinced that the above points are imperative to formulate a determined response to the migration crisis. While respecting the democratic process in order to ensure wide backing for a European policy on migration and keeping in mind international conventions

on refugee law, national leaders and European institutions should take their responsibility for the lives and wellbeing of refugees and asylum seekers arriving in Europe.



The European Movement

seeks to provide a platform to encourage and facilitate the active participation of citizens and stakeholders in the development of European solutions to our common challenges. We offer thought leadership on the issues that affect Europe and we give the opportunity to representatives from European associations, political parties, enterprises, trade unions, NGOs and other stakeholders, through our 39 National Councils and 34 International Associations, to work together, towards improving the way that Europe works.

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