

ACP-EU JOINT PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

Committee on Social Affairs and the Environment

8.3.2007

DRAFT REPORT

on migration of skilled workers and its effect on national development

Co- rapporteurs: Ms Sharon Hay Webster (Jamaica) and Ms Luisa Morgantini

PART A: DRAFT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

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PROCEDURAL PAGE

At its meeting of 18 June 2006, the Bureau of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly authorised its Committee on Social Affairs and the Environment to draw up a report, pursuant to Rule 2(8) of its Rules of Procedure, on migration of skilled workers and its effect on national development.

At its meeting of 17 June 2006, the Committee on Social Affairs and the Environment appointed Ms Sharon Hay Webster (Jamaica) and Ms Luisa Morgantini as co-rapporteurs.

The Committee on Social Affairs and the Environment considered the draft report at its meetings of ...

At the latter meeting, it adopted the accompanying draft motion for a resolution ...

The following were present for the vote: ...

The resolution was tabled for adoption on ...

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

on migration of skilled workers and its effect on national development

The Joint Parliamentary Assembly,

- meeting in Wiesbaden (Germany) from 25 to 28 June 2007,
- having regard to Articles 177, 178, 179, 180, 181 and 181a of the Treaty establishing the European Community,
- having regard to the Partnership Agreement between the members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States of the one part, and the European Community and its Member States, of the other part, signed in Cotonou on 23 June 2000 (the 'Cotonou Agreement')¹, and amended in Luxembourg on 25 June 2005², and in particular Article 13 thereof on migration,
- having regard to the communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions entitled 'Migration and Development: some concrete orientations' (COM(2005)0390),
- having regard to the communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament entitled 'EU strategy for action on the crisis in human resources for health in developing countries' (COM(2005)0642),
- having regard to the communication from the Commission to the Council entitled 'Contribution to the EU Position for the United Nations' High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development' (COM(2006)0409),
- having regard to the communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament - The global approach to migration one year on: towards a comprehensive European migration policy' (COM(2006)0735),
- having regard to the European Commission's Policy Plan on Legal Migration (COM(2005)0669),
- having regard to the Joint Africa-EU declaration on migration and development, adopted at the EU-Africa Ministerial Conference held in Tripoli on 22-23 November 2006,
- having regard to the outcome of the EU-Africa Ministerial Conference on Migration and Development held in Rabat on 10-11 July 2006,
- having regard to United Nations General Assembly resolution A/RES/61/208 on 'International migration and development',

¹ OJ L 317, 15.12.2000, p. 3.

² OJ L 287, 28.10.2005, p. 4.

- having regard to the conclusions of the European Councils of December 2005, March 2006 and December 2006,
 - having regard to the outcome of the United Nations General Assembly High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development held in New-York on 14-15 September 2006,
 - having regard to the report of the United Nations Secretary-General entitled 'International Migration and Development' (A/60/871),
 - having regard to the report of the Global Commission on International Migration of October 2005, entitled 'Migration in an interconnected world: New directions for action'¹,
 - having regard to the report of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development of June 2006, entitled 'effects of migration on sending countries: what do we know',
 - having regard to the report of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development of 2002, entitled 'International mobility of the highly skilled',
 - having regard to the report of the World Bank entitled 'Global Economic Prospects 2006: Economic Implications of Remittances and Migration'²,
 - having regard to the report of the United Nations Development Programme of 2001, entitled 'Human Development Report 2001',
 - having regard to the European parliament resolution of 6 July 2006 on development and migration (P6_TA(2006)0319),
- A. whereas the right of individuals to move abroad is an inalienable human right,
- B. whereas international migration has become a priority issue on the international agenda, recently addressed by policy-makers at global, European and Euro-African levels, and there is an increasing recognition that migration and development are closely interlinked and that they influence each other,
- C. whereas there is a growing consensus in policy circles that a better management of migrations may generate very important gains, perhaps more important than the removal of world trade barriers,
- D. whereas Europe, both at community and at member-state level, has not yet adopted an integrated migration policy, with migration, development, trade and security policies being run by various non-connected departments,
- E. whereas there is no international consensus on the actual impact of the migration of the (highly) skilled for the countries of origin and the brain debate is still marked by a

¹ www.gci.org

² <http://www.worldbank.org/globaloutlook>

considerable amount of confusion and frustration, especially due to the lack of reliable statistical data and the lack of impact assessment studies on the potential policy recommendations to address the brain drain phenomenon,

- F. whereas the issue of the brain drain has not been sufficiently addressed in the framework of the EU-ACP dialogue,
- G. whereas in most ACP countries above 10% of the tertiary educated adult population have emigrated to the European Union, and sub-Saharan Africa is the region most severely hit by the migration of skilled workers, with almost the entire region witnessing a rate of tertiary educated population living in OECD countries above 20%¹, and some small countries reaching a dramatic rate of 80%²,
- H. whereas, while the main centres of migration are Asia and Latin America, Europe's highly skilled migrants come mostly from Africa (13,5% of the highly skilled EU residents born in non-OECD countries but living in the EU)³,
- I. whereas the United Nations Development Programme stated that the brain drain represent a loss of billions of dollars for developing countries⁴, given the importance of knowledge as a decisive factor of growth in a globalized world,
- J. whereas in sub-Saharan Africa, the brain drain can lead to labour shortages in vital areas, with particular reference to health and education, with devastating consequences on the supply and quality of such essential services,
- K. whereas many European countries have adopted legislation to facilitate the arrival of skilled workers, in particular by putting in place selective admission policies for migrants under the term 'chosen migration', setting themselves in a competition course with North America to attract the most able citizen from developing countries, which has exacerbated the haemorrhaging of skills from many southern countries, drastically in the case of sub-Saharan African countries,
- L. whereas, while Europe and ACP countries have committed themselves to work towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, including goal n° 2 (achieving universal primary education), goal n° 4 (reducing child mortality), 5 (improving maternal health) and 6 (combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases) meeting those objectives could be threatened by the large-scaled exodus of professors, doctors and nurses from sub-Saharan Africa to OECD countries,
- M. whereas skilled migration from developing countries to Europe is fuelled by economical factors (poverty, underdevelopment, low wages, poor education system, ageing and declining population in OECD countries leading to labour shortage), political factors (violence, conflicts, political repression, especially against intellectuals, aggravated by their exile) and - prominently for African countries - by geographical proximity, common

¹ OECD (2006) 'effects of migration on sending countries: what do we know'

² Report of the United Nations Secretary-General entitled 'International Migration and Development' (A/60/871)

³ OECD (2006) 'effects of migration on sending countries: what do we know'

⁴ UNDP (2001) 'Human Development Report 2001'

language and colonial ties,

- N. whereas skilled migration can have positive consequences for the individual migrant, such as better economic perspectives and higher salaries,
 - O. whereas a difficult integration of migrants in receiving countries, discriminations and brain waste (referred to as the phenomenon where a migrant is hired below his/her skill level) can put a damper on these career upgrades,
 - P. whereas remittances are the second most important source of external finance for developing countries and up to 20% of their value is consumed by handling charges,
 - Q. whereas the effectiveness of voluntary codes of conduct on ethical recruitment has been put into question by experts and practitioners, even more when limited to the public sector,
 - R. whereas circular migration (allowing two-way movement between countries of origin and destination) offers major opportunities for the development of host countries and countries of origin, and should therefore be encouraged and facilitated,
 - S. whereas return migration has higher chances to address brain drain and to enhance development when it is based on voluntary return of migrants to their countries of origin, especially if adequately supported,
 - T. whereas return migrants are, paradoxically, more vulnerable to unemployment in their countries of origin than the people not having migrated before,
 - U. whereas there are evidences that gathering migrants within national or transnational associations of migrants, such as diasporas, and channelling the activities of those diasporas towards development, phenomenon known as 'co-development', can have very positive outcomes for both receiving and sending countries,
1. Calls on the EU Member States and ACP countries to double their efforts to meet their commitment towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, and in particular halving extreme poverty in the world by 2015;
 2. Stresses the fact that the potential benefits of well-managed international migration can be greater than those generated by freer international trade;
 3. Urges the EU and ACP countries to address migration challenges, including brain drain, in a spirit of true partnership for development, on the basis of the EU-ACP partnership agreement and in particular Article 13, and develop specific migration policies and regimes towards developing countries where the migration of skilled workers happens on a wide scale, with particular respect to sub-Saharan African countries, with a view to mitigate the economic and social adverse effects of skilled workers migration;
 4. Expresses concern at the current EU migration policy focused on security priorities rather than on development priorities;

5. Stresses the need for integrated migration policies at international, regional (including EU and ACP levels) and national levels by ensuring mainstreaming of migration concerns in poverty reduction strategies and coherence between all policies that can influence migration, such as agriculture, fisheries, trade, development, security and justice and home affairs;
6. Urges the Commission and EU Member States to address jointly migration and development policies and to explore synergies between them, in order to enhance the effectiveness of both policies alike;
7. Calls on the Council of the European Union to take appropriate measures to ensure that EU member-states improve the coordination between their various ministries that address migration-related policies;
8. Believes that a common migration policy at EU level requires extending codecision with Parliament and qualified majority voting in Council, and calls on the Council to act accordingly;

Codes of conduct

9. Welcomes the April 2006 EU Council conclusions aimed at addressing labour shortages in the health sector in developing countries;
10. Calls on the Commission and EU Member States to develop and implement, as stated in April 2006 conclusions, an EU Code of Conduct for ethical recruitment of health workers, and commends those EU Member States which have already done so like the UK;
11. Stresses that a voluntary code of conduct on ethical recruitment, even more if limited to public sector, is by no means not enough to address the consequences of massive skilled migration;

Investing in education

12. Calls on the European Union and ACP countries to significantly increase investments in training and education in developing countries, targeting sectors suffering from labour shortages, especially health and education, through the creation of regional or national centres of excellence;
13. Believes that EU Member States and developing countries should adopt pro-active skills replenishment initiatives by investing significant resources in education; reiterates its support for the '20/20' objective: 20% of public aid from the North and 20% of the national budgets of the South allocated to basic social services (health and education);
14. Calls on developing countries to invest the benefits of oil boom in long-term strategies and programmes in education and training;
15. Encourages ACP countries to create better economical, political and social conditions that will stimulate skilled workers to stay in the countries of origin;

Brain waste

16. Stresses the negative effects of brain waste for all actors involved, since host countries cannot benefit from the migrant's skills, countries of origin are confronted to a loss of investment and the migrant works below his/her skill level;
17. Urges the Commission, the EU Member States and ACP countries to take decisive measures to squash brain waste, such as international or bilateral mutual recognition of diplomas and skills and explicit efforts to fight discriminations at the recruitment stage;
18. Calls on the Commission to lay down proposals as regards the establishment of a European system of equivalences for foreign diplomas;

Remittances

19. Recalls the fact that remittances are and should remain private funds, that no compulsory use of remittances can be imposed into individuals and that remittances can in no way substitute ODA;
20. Calls EU and ACP governments to design and implement policies in order to maximise the positive impact of remittances by obtaining larger, faster, cheaper and better channelled remittances flows;
21. In particular, calls on the Commission, EU Member States and ACP countries to implement policies aiming at:
 - improving and enlarging access to financial institutions for migrants and for their families ("*banking the unbanked*")¹,
 - supporting and actively encouraging financial institutions to explore strategies aimed at lowering the cost of sending remittances, in particular developing the use of new technologies,
 - stimulating transfer of remittances through tax exemptions, both in the country of origin and destination,
 - encouraging the channelling of remittances to development projects (mainly focused on education and health) by complementing remittances with national and local governmental contributions (*matching funds*)²,
 - creating innovative financial products for migrants, such as tax exempt 'savings for development' accounts in receiving countries where migrant can save funds to be later remitted,
 - channelling remittances towards productive investment, by facilitating access to credit for micro-companies and SMEs and by improving the financial education of migrants and of their families,

¹ As the House of Commons' International Development Committee of the United Kingdom puts it.

² Such policies have been successfully experienced with the Mexican "dos por uno" programme and with the Italian "juntos por los Andes" initiative for the Andeans.

- making remittances transfers swifter and safer, in order to encourage migrants to use formal transfer systems, and ensuring the transparency of financial transactions through ‘informal channels’, particularly the hawala networks,
22. Warns, however, against the risk of over-regulating financial flows that could impede or make difficult the flow of remittances and calls on the EU Member States and the European Parliament to take this concerns into consideration when examining the Commission proposal for a directive in payments service COM(2005)0603;

Circular migration

23. Calls on the EU Members States and ACP countries to encourage circular migration by agreeing on tangible measures aimed at increasing flexibility of entry and readmission requirements and processes in both countries of destination and origin and longer and more flexible contracts and re-entry option for circular migrants;
24. Calls on the EU Members States and ACP countries to encourage circular migration by setting up ‘dual post’ systems for public sector personnel in southern countries (teachers, researchers and doctors); calls once again on the Commission to conduct a study on experiences in the Member States with regard to ‘dual posts’;
25. Believes that the directive on highly skilled workers now under preparation by the Commission should pay due attention to the status of skilled migrants in order to incentive their circular migration and / or temporary return;
26. Calls on EU Member States and ACP countries to undertake necessary actions to ensure pension portability and the portability of health benefits by migrants returning to their countries of origin or, alternatively, the possibility to come back for healthcare in the country where services were provided;
27. Calls on EU Member States and ACP countries to examine dual citizenship agreements in order to encourage circular migration and temporary return;
28. Calls on the EU to offer potential returnees the possibility to opt to come back to the EU during a certain period following their initial return;
29. Calls on the EU to design specific initiatives or even a specific budget line aimed at supporting voluntary return of migrants, in the framework of the thematic programme of cooperation with third countries in the areas of migration and asylum, with the following components:
- involving return migrants in development programmes where they can successfully use their acquired skills and ensure a proper reintegration in the community,
 - offering potential returnees professional and financial incentives, as well as adequate infrastructures to develop their profession,
 - improving access to loans and management training of return migrants in order to incentive the creation of small business;

Diasporas and co-development

30. Recognises the importance of diasporas and associations of migrants in strengthening relations between the EU and countries of origin, particularly in the field of migration; calls for closer cooperation between institutions in developing countries and the Member States, including in the carrying out of co-development projects;
31. Takes the view that co-development, which consists in recognising and supporting the role of diasporas in serving the development of their countries of origin, should be fully recognised at European level;
32. Calls on host countries and countries of origin to support, logistically and financially, the initiatives of diasporas and associations of migrants aimed at migrants' integration, collective transfer of remittances and investment projects in their countries of origin;
33. Recognizes and encourages the strong involvement of diasporas to enhance trade and economic cooperation between host countries and countries of origin, notably by removing information barriers;
34. Encourages diasporas to engage in, and facilitate, skill and knowledge transfers, in particular by fostering the link between skilled workers living in OECD countries and those remained in countries of origin, through the creation of transnational networks of scientists and researchers and of digital universities and the enhancement of e-learning, and welcomes the programmes managed by the International Organization for Migrations (MIDA) and by the United Nations Development Programme (TOKTEN) in this area;
35. Recognises the substantial contribution of NGOs in better managing migration flows and especially in enhancing the contribution of migrants to the development of their own countries and calls for an adequate support to NGOs active in the field of migration;
36. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the ACP-EU Council, the European Commission, the African Union and the governments of the EU Member States and of ACP countries.