



CENTRE FOR EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL POLICY ACTION

A Proposal for a European Agency for Resettlement and Migration Management (EARMM)

Observations and Suggestions for EU Policy Makers

The deadlocks in the European migration policy

The uncontrolled influx of migrants crossing the Mediterranean to reach the European shores and the unfolding tragedies taking place at an alarming pace are, more often than not, the results of ill-functioning migration and asylum policies of the European Union. **Smugglers, traffickers and militant armed groups** in the Southern Mediterranean **are increasingly profiting at zero risk from the inconsistencies and deadlocks of the European migration policy.** The cycle of migration crises will not stop unless there is political will from EU Member States to rise to the challenge of establishing common resettlement and migration policies and practices, as proposed by a number of EU MS, with facilities in EU and non-European countries outside the Schengen area.

The game-changer

Whereas civil strife, wars and failing states in a growing number of countries like Syria, Iraq,

Yemen, Libya, Somalia, Eritrea, Ethiopia and others will require decisive, immediate and long-term action by the European foreign and security services, the migratory flows from these countries will grow and become less and less manageable under the current state of play. At the same time, failing migration and integration as well as foreign and security action of the EU MS, may increase the risks of terrorist attacks, nourished by home-grown jihadists and a flow of infiltrated foreign fighters. More competences and funds allocated to law enforcement authorities and to the EU security agencies may bring temporary results, but not sustainable solutions.

The game-changer would be a **comprehensive migration and integration policy**, focusing on asylum, labour migration, irregular migration, fighting smuggling, trafficking and growing radicalization. The public opinion in the EU MS has by and large realized that a fresh approach towards migration tackling at the same time humanitarian, security, human rights and

economic concerns is long overdue. Our political leaders in Europe are still hesitating and hiding behind quick fix solutions. It is time for the European leadership to rise to the challenge to put an end to a patchwork of 28 hugely varying national systems and lay the foundations of a long overdue common migration policy.

Third country processing

It is evident that **the planning of resettlement, admission, screening and placement of migrants and refugees** in the EU MS must be undertaken in a coordinated and consistent way **in countries of origin or transit, prior to their entering into the EU territory**. For decades, traditional immigration countries, especially overseas, have been running a well-established system to ensure the orderly and coordinated resettlement, screening and placement of migrants and refugees prior to their arrival.

The need for a European Agency for Resettlement and Migration Management (EARMM)

The EU governments and institutions, in their current stands, are hardly able to deal with the global and trans-national challenges of migration and security. There is an urgent need to improve the European institutions' support to EU MS bodies and authorities dealing with migration management, resettlement, placement, integration and security issues on national, regional and international levels. The debate on the future institutional architecture addressing migration should also include a thorough debate on **the viability of a European Agency for Resettlement and Migration Management (EARMM)** as a first operational step towards a common European migration policy. The Agency,

operating mainly in countries of origin and transit of migrants, would streamline orderly resettlement, admission and placement of migrants, acting as an operational and coordination facility of the EU MS and European institutions.

EARMM: the missing link in the EU migration architecture

The Agency would operate in countries of origin and transit of migrants, however in close cooperation with home and justice affairs and the network of existing EU Agencies on one hand (EASO, FRONTEX, FRA, EUROJUST and EUROPOL), and in line with the European foreign, security and humanitarian policy framework on the other hand. The Agency shall be given a **mandate for the fair and objective screening and resettlement of those qualified for admission to the EU** on the basis of laws and well established procedures in force in the EU MS and in line with international legislation and standards. The Agency could become a reliable partner not only to the EU MS and their institutions but also for countries of origin and transit as well as for the international community (multi-lateral agencies of the UN and regional bodies). The work of the Agency should be firmly anchored on the respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms, reflecting the core values of the European Union.

EARMM's objectives

The Agency should:

- i. facilitate **bridging the gap between EU agencies** and EU MS with regard to search-and-rescue operations, the fight against smugglers and traffickers and preventing irregular migration flows, as well as promoting burden-sharing and cooperation among EU MS;

- ii. **support labor migration programmes for EU MS through cultural and economic integration programmes;**
- iii. help the EU external services play a mediating role in **addressing conflicts and instability as key push factors**, in close cooperation with UN led efforts;
- iv. work closely with the European External Action Service in **promoting cooperation with countries of origin** and neighborhood countries to prevent irregular migration and smuggling, bridging internal security and the external action objectives;
- v. **counteracting loss of public trust in the EU institutions by concrete operational results**, thus showing Europe's will to deal coherently with the highly contentious issue of migration and security.

EARMM's tasks

The Agency should:

- i. have operational capacity in selected and strategically important third countries with high concentration of potential migrants, so as to **cope with resettlement, while ensuring the orderly departure and entry of migrants into the EU MS**. The Agency would process migrants claims and plan resettlement:
 - a. towards EU countries (in cooperation with EU MS migration services and EU agencies such as EASO, FRONTEX and others);
 - b. towards non-EU countries willing to admit migrants under the international standards for treatment of refugees and migrants (in cooperation with the External Action Service of the EU and UN bodies);
 - c. in situ countries/potential host states when there is neither ground

for resettlement in EU countries nor the possibility of voluntary return to the countries of origin (with the support of and in cooperation with the European Development Aid, ECHO and EU MS development aid).

The staff of the Agency could be recruited or seconded from a pool of experts from EU MS migration services, EU Agencies (EASO, FRONTEX, EUROPOL, FRA, EUROJUST, ECDC), and EU MS diplomatic and consular services, on long or short term.

- ii. act as a **clearing house and resource center** for national migration services and other relevant bodies in the EU MS to **facilitate the transposition and implementation of EU migration laws and standards;**
- iii. work with national migration services, development agencies and civil society to **offer pre-departure orientation and integration programmes;**
- iv. **create synergies between a multitude of national, EU and UN funded programmes and projects** often duplicating good efforts in the field of development and humanitarian aid. Thus the work of the EARMM would considerably cut overspending by EC, EU institutions, UN bodies and EU national administrations by reducing duplications and uncoordinated operations;
- v. **create synergies between EU MS and countries of origin and transit of migration**, willing to combat smuggling and trafficking in human beings, as well as radicalism and terrorism, while providing a safe haven for migrants and refugees with

- the support of EU development cooperation programmes;
- vi. **facilitate multi-lateral cooperation between EU institutions and regional and UN bodies**, paving the way for new agreements to foster security and minimize risks of irregular and large scale disorderly migration to Europe.

For citizens and democracy

Opinion polls show that EU citizens demand action towards an orderly migration management and resettlement in Europe. Thus the establishing of an Agency with the objectives described above at its core would constitute an opportunity to win the trust of EU citizens in European institutions.

Above all, the EARMM would strengthen orderly migration and resettlement to Europe and other destination countries, and reduce the potential for criminal activities carried out by human smugglers, traffickers and militant groups who make fortunes from human misery and taking advantage of the EU's inaction.