Belgium

and

Policy coherence

on Migration

I. Policy coherence and coordination in general

    1. on all European policies

    2. in multilateral organizations

II. Specific policy coherence efforts on Migration

I. Policy coordination in general

Belgian positions are formally coordinated by FPS Foreign Affairs by virtue of a governmental decision in following areas:

1. on all European policies
➢ including those related to Migration, for instance:

- Green Book on Economic Migration

- Communication on Migration and Development

- External Strategy on Migration

- Safe Countries of Origin

- EU cooperation with Libya

- Priorities for Africa and the Mediterranean,

- Regional Protection Programs, etc.

2. in multilateral organizations

Migration is also one of the major subjects presently discussed:

- Global Commission on International Migration (GCCIM)

- Preparation of High Level Dialogue (New-York, 15-16 September 2006)

- Preparation of Commission Population and Development / ECOSOC ...

3. Method:

• Regular meetings are held in preparation of certain events, where Belgian positions are defined and political differences sorted out. Some subjects are particularly difficult i.e.

   • on economic migration

   • on migration and development

   • list of safe countries

   • regional protection programs

• Belgian intervention and positions are agreed in writing, for Ministers/delegation during these meetings

4. Whole of government - federal and regional - involved in this coordination, at political and administrative levels

- Prime Minister

- Vice-Prime Ministers - also Ministers of Finances, Budget, Interior and Justice

- Ministers of:
  - Labour
  - Employment
  - Social Integration
  - Development
  - European Affairs
  - Health
  - Ad hoc invitees

- Regions and Communities

II.	Specific Policy coherence efforts on Migration and Asylum:

Why ?

Which coherence?

How ?

Findings

II.   Specific Policy coherence efforts on Migration and Asylum

1. Why more coherence ?

- rising awareness that security and short term approach is insufficient and politically counterproductive

  => need for more horizontal approach

- realisation among some members of government that more open policies towards economic migration are necessary

  => reaction against negativism and politisation of issue
  => rationalisation of debate to counter risk of criminalisation of migration

- International agenda : Global commission on international Migration, high level Dialogue on Migration and Development…

Helpful factor: the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Development and Interior belong to the same political party and have a common view on migration

2. Which Policy coherence?

EXTERNAL DIMENSION, in particular:

❑ Migration and External Relations

❑ Migration and Development

INTERNAL DIMENSION, in particular:

❑ Return policy

3. How?

A number of catalysts:

- A more creative use of existing structures, such as the office of the Ambassador for immigration and Asylum Policy in the Federal Service Foreign Affairs

- The creation of a budget line for migration in the Directorate General for Development

- The organisation of a multisectorial conference on Migration and Development

1. **A more creative use of existing structures can** contribute to coherence **: the Office of the Ambassador for Immigration and Asylum Policy: created in 1990, incorporated in 2003 in the "Globalisation" Directorate**

  - is the focal point for integration of migration in bilateral relations with countries of origin:
    - prepares discussions at high level with source countries (King, Prime Minister, Ministers of Foreign Affairs)
    - discusses at Ambassadorial level (in particular: problems of illegal migration)
    - looks for projects in third countries through the budget line "Preventive Diplomacy" (migration related projects qualify for this budget line)
  - has horizontal tasks across different policy areas:
    - bilateral
    - European
    - international
    - legal and illegal migration, asylum
    - human trafficking and smuggling

- this creates linkages and coherence between:

  - the different policy areas

  - through informal and formal channels, between the different Ministries involved

- through pro-active approach and advocacy:

  - creating awareness with development officers about linkages between Migration and Development

    i.e. pre-meetings with these officers at occasion of decisions on new 3 year development program with Morocco, to see how Migration - in and out of the country - can become a consideration for the aid program (hitherto this consideration was totally absent, notwithstanding the fact that Morocco represents the largest Diaspora in Belgium)

- drawing attention on root causes of Migration and on development opportunities of migration and development potential of migrants has created awareness in the Directorate General for Development for better integration of Migration in Development Policy

- advocacy for greater overall policy coherence: in particular of trade and agriculture policies on basis of concrete examples:

  - *the Kayes region in Mali is a cotton growing region and suffers from great outflows of migrants, result of lack of economic perspectives, demonstrates the links between cotton subsidies of Western world and migration*

- involvement of Belgian Embassies:

  - through annual report on Migration and Asylum (requested from all Embassies in countries of origin as well as others)

    - this year, special emphasis on Migration and Development: Ambassadors are requested to convey observations and suggestions on linkages between these policy-areas and suggestions on how to achieve greater policy coherence between both

  - briefings and mission statements for Ambassadors before their departure

    - Asylum and Migration included as point of attention

4. Findings:

As far as external relations are concerned:

- need for greater integration of migration is recent phenomenon but

- migration has been mainstreamed in foreign policy in particular:

  - in the bilateral relations

  - in the strategic approaches towards certain continents and countries (Asia, Great Lakes area) through contribution to strategic policy notes

  - through projects

- migration is now recognized as an important issue of global governance

- migration has become a permanent agenda point of high level discussions other than Ministers of Interior (King evokes it during his travels, Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs….)

As far as Development aid is concerned:

- dialogue and top down pressure are important factors to raise awareness and interest

- " fears" for instrumentalisation of development aid in fight against illegal migration has still some adherents

- development people overlook migration pressure as indicator for development needs

- some projects where implemented with the Diaspora (ie in Grand Lakes area: permitting circular migration – MIDA, OIM and NGOs)

- after some discussions: migration starts to be integrated as tool for development (link with PRSPs and MDGs)

- OIM has become a privileged partner for development aid

- development aid is now paying attention to areas of origin of migrants

- shift from hitherto concern which was concentrated on brain drain

=> **But:** Development aid agencies lack tools /experience /focus /legal frameworks

=> **A**d hoc solutions necessary, i.e.:

- in Mali: professional training will focus more on areas where emigration is coming from

- in Morocco: other forms of cooperation to be explored

⇒ mobilization of other development related services with the objective to address in Morocco a double challenge resulting from migration:

• diminish migration pressure on young Moroccans

• support Morocco as transit country for sub-saharians

➤ Case in point:

• Belgian Investment Company for Developing countries offering risk capital, loans and other investment promotion instruments intervene (as public-private partnership)

• CDE (Centre pour le Développement de l'Entreprise): an ACP/EU institution, aiming at developing the private sector

• IOM-projects: more attention will be paid to aspects such as good governance, capacity building in the migration related areas

- recognition of development impact of migration and structural causes of migration: new focus of existing development cooperation

  - engaging the Moroccan Diaspora, i.e. through fostering their temporary return (MIDMA) and supporting them with their investment in their country

  - supporting entrepreneurs in migration-stricken areas through micro-credits, creation of business support services etc

  - identifying on which sectors and areas to focus professional training in Mali, including through triangular operations involving Morocco

  - improving performance of local industries:

    - in Mali and
    - in Morocco

2. Creation of a budget line for Migration in Federal Public Service for Development through

➢ transfer of budgetary means for external actions from the Interior to the Development Ministry

=> projects jointly decided by Interior, Foreign Affairs, Development

Findings:

- although objectives of Interior differ from Development, common ground can be found

- often small scale projects: ill adapted to policy objectives of development aid which favours concentrated and long term actions

- target countries not always on Interior's priority list for development aid

- increased understanding on both sides has led to identification of longer term projects (ex.: capacity building in RDC)

3. Organisation of a Conference on Migration and Development

- joint organisation of an International Conference on Migration and Development in March 2006 by:
  - o Foreign Affairs
  - o Development
  - o Interior
  - o IOM
  - o World Bank

- creation of:
  - o a new focal point for Migration in Development Ministry **+**
  - o a network Migration and Development

- => preparation of a joint Note on Migration and Development for the Council of Ministers (by Foreign Affairs, Development and Interior)

- => a steering committee (Foreign Affairs, Development, Interior, IOM and World Bank) for preparation and follow-up of conference: with identification of further activities, projects, policy orientations and preparation of High Level Dialogue

4. Internal dimension of policy coherence:

Recently greater efforts for coherence on illegal migration and trafficking: all stems from realisation that "police-approach" alone does not give satisfactory results, nor from efficiency or from human point of view

- Cooperation between SPF Employment, SPF Social Affairs and magistrates on combating black labour market and trafficking

- Cooperation between Unemployment services, Labour inspection and Social inspection

- Creation of a Centre of Information and Analysis on Trafficking and Smuggling of Human Beings by Minister of Justice, involving Foreign Affairs, Interior, Police, Social Integration (details on next slide)

- Decision for joint policy on return and deportation between Interior and Social Integration:

  ➢ notwithstanding different objectives and political orientation, Ministers are jointly putting in place system and policy of promoting voluntary return, inclusive a re-integration policy

1. **the Cell of Interdepartmental Coordination on trafficking**, with judicial authorities and Federal Administration (Prime Minister, Vice-Prime-Ministers, Ministers of Justice, Interior, Foreign Affairs, Employment, Social Affairs, Social Integration, Cooperation for Development, College of Public Prosecutors, Federal Parquet, Police, State Security, Immigration Department) + Centre for Equal Opportunities and Child Focus.

   The Cell meets 2 or 3 times a year under the presidency of the Justice Minister's representative, the Centre for Equal Opportunities being in charge of the secretariat;

2. the Bureau which is the technical organ of the Interdepartmental Cell, submits propositions to the Cell, enforces its decisions and coordinates the Cell's meetings. The Bureau holds monthly meetings;

3. the Centre of Information and Analysis on Trafficking and Smuggling of Human Beings (CIATTEH-IAMM) is a computer center (website) connecting all the partners. Due to the Law on protection of privacy, only anonymous data can be fed into the website.

5. Conclusions

- Policy coherence is still very much work in progress, many decisions are still not fully implemented

- There are a number of areas where more coherence seems a necessity but which are still too sensitive from a political point of view, such as:

  o employment and migration (to address shortages in the employment market)

  o public assistance and migration (to avoid that illegal migrants remain a burden on public assistance systems)

- Policy coherence does not come on its own:

  - it needs a pro-active approach

  - it needs a constant effort, advocacy and sensibilisation

  - it needs a minimum of structures, as a starting point the nomination of a focal point in the different Ministries involved

  - it needs not be time consuming

  - it needs political will and support to be viable