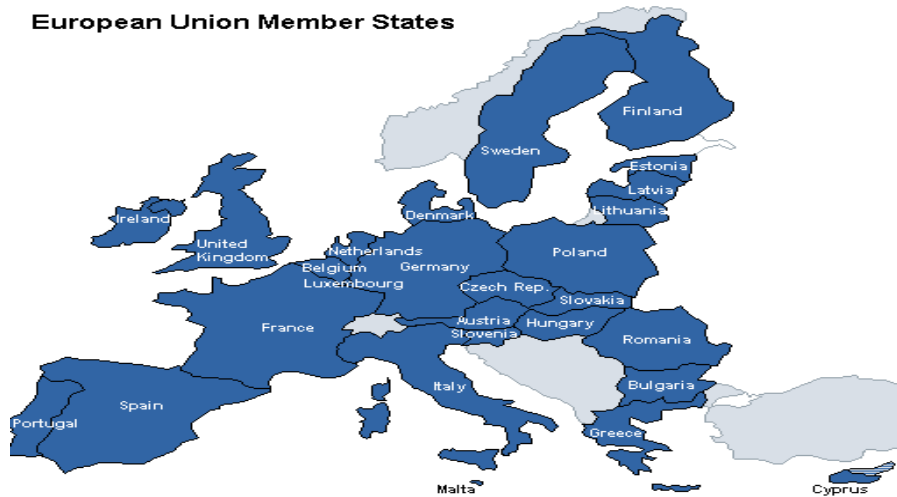

A Common Immigration Policy for the EU



Initial groundwork



The European Union has progressed to unprecedented levels of freedom of movement and with the inclusion of many poorer countries along the years (Ireland and UK, Portugal, Spain and Greece, the former Soviet bloc in the East) general prosperity on the continent has increased.

Challenges being faced by the EU

An impact assessment carried out by the European Commission services has identified a number of them (SEC(2008)2026):

- **Decreasing and ageing EU population**
 - **Labour and skill shortages**
 - **Insufficient integration of legal migrants**
 - **The pressure of constant illegal immigration**
 - **Insufficient partnerships with third countries**
 - **Insufficient adaptation of border management and visa policy (particularly in a globalised world)**
 - **Lack of cooperation between Member States on migration governance**
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Decreasing and ageing population

According to Eurostat:

population increase in EU-27 “is now mostly due to migration” (81/2008).

The EU-27 population is projected to become older – median age in 2008 = 40.4yrs; in 2060 = 47.9 yrs (72/2008).

Labour and skill shortages in some sectors

Current vacant jobs in Europe amount to around 3 million.



Some Member States face shortages in specific sectors. For example, vacancies for engineers in Germany increased by 30% in 2007 reaching around 23,000.

Constant illegal immigration



Estimates on how many illegal immigrants are in the EU vary, and statistical data is hard to evaluate, since most figures available are pre-2004. However, inflow migration estimates have been said to number hundreds of thousands annually.

A Common Immigration Policy Action is
to be based on...

Prosperity

Solidarity

Security

But how will they be realised?

The European Commission is calling on Member States:

- 1) to have clear, transparent and fair rules that promote legal immigration and strive for a common visa policy that ensures a level-playing field;**
 - 2) To work towards and invest in more efficient structures that would match the available skills with current needs, and provide real alternatives to illegal employment;**
 - 3) Improve integration on various fronts and continue to develop the humanitarian tradition of hosting refugees and persons in need of protection;**
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The European Commission is calling on
Member States:

4) Strengthen political and operational solidarity (including pooling technical means), mutual trust and transparency amongst others, set up mechanisms to monitor the impact of national measures, develop interoperable systems and work towards allowing the EU to speak with a common voice;

The European Commission is calling on
Member States:

5) Make better use of and adapt the current financial instruments available, taking into account the external borders of certain Member States and the challenges that they face;



The European Commission considers the need to have...

6) Closer working partnerships with third countries, including providing real possibilities for circular migration and social security coordination;



The European Commission is calling on Member States:

- 7) To establish a visa policy that allows a 4-tier approach to checks carried out at each stage when immigrants are traveling to the EU, create uniform European Schengen visas, make the issuance of visa possible through Common Consular centres and explore prior electronic authorisations;**



The 4-tier approach

Checks on immigrants would be conducted:

- **at consulates,**
 - **on arrival,**
 - **inside the territory,**
 - **on departure.**
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The European Commission is stating that...

8) While maintaining the integrity of the Schengen area, the management of the external borders must be strengthened by reinforcing Frontex, the various different systems in operation must be integrated and new technologies adopted, the European Border Surveillance System must be developed further...

The European Commission is stating that...

8) ... cooperation with third countries at a European level on border management must be pursued, the build-up of MS border control capacity and new burden-sharing mechanisms must be supported, and a one-stop-shop for land borders that would integrate an individual Member State's authorities to conduct only one check on travellers are to be developed.

The European Commission calls for...



9) Combating illegal and undeclared employment, also by involving workers' and employers' representatives in this regard...

The European Commission calls for...

9) ... the increased use of biometrics to fight illegal immigration and strengthening the existing legal framework that combats the facilitation of illegal entry and stay.

It also indicates that action would also be taken to protect and support victims of human trafficking.

Member States are also called to...

10) Make return policies effective and sustainable by, among others, avoiding indiscriminate large-scale regularisations, ensure full mutual recognition of return decisions, strengthen practical cooperation between Member States and take steps to ensure that all third countries comply with the obligation to accept readmission of their own nationals.

Some new developments since, or around the time, the CIP was presented:

- **5 June: Mobility partnership with Cape Verde**
 - **17 June: European Commission adopts Policy Plan on Asylum**
 - **6 October: EU Centre for Migration Information and Management opened in Mali.**
 - **8 October: European Commission adopts a Communication on the Global Approach to Migration**
 - **15-16 October: European Council adopted the European Pact on Immigration and Asylum**
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The Global Approach

Essentially this involves the external dimension of the EU's migration policy. It seeks to integrate migration in its partnership with third countries and address all migration and asylum issues comprehensively.

The Global Approach – legal and economic migration and mobility

- **Proposal to implement and evaluate mobility partnerships**
 - **Develop national capacities and migration information and management centres**
 - **Inform migrants about admission conditions, obligations and rights and prepare them for integration**
 - **Develop labour-matching tools**
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The Global Approach – legal and economic migration and mobility

- **Exchange best practices on the integration of migrants**
 - **Provide incentives for circular migration, including exploring ‘dual posts’ and twinnings, granting legal immigrants priority access to legal residence and examine portability of acquired social rights such as pensions to 3rd countries**
 - **Develop common visa application centres**
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Global approach – fighting irregular migration

- **Assistance to key 3rd countries on migration and border management**
 - **Support local organisations to sensitise potential migrants to stay and find opportunities in their home country**
 - **Intensify readmission agreements between the Community and main countries of origin and transit**
 - **Encourage third countries to ratify and implement international instruments on smuggling and human trafficking**
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Global approach – fighting irregular migration

- **Strengthen cooperation with international organisations such as the UN**
 - **Encourage attention on human trafficking in dialogues with partner countries and regional organisations**
 - **Prioritise the implementation of the Ouagadougou Action Plan (between EU and African states on combating human trafficking) adopted in 2006**
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Global approach – migration and development

- **Create a favourable environment for FDI in migrant source countries, including productive use of migrants' remittances**
 - **Encourage MS to regulate so that remittances are sent more transparently and have adequate consumer protection**
 - **Establish a remittances institute in Africa and work on remittances in the Western Balkans**
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Global approach – migration and development

- **Promote and support initiatives by migrant groups and diaspora organisations to get involved in EU policy initiatives with and about their countries and regions of origin**
 - **Promote access to quality education for all and develop formal labour markets and decent working conditions in low and middle-income countries**
 - **Apply the European Consensus on Development to address the root causes of migration**
 - **Explore the relationship between climate change and migration**
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Thank you for your attention



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee
