EASTERN PARTNERSHIP
Panel on Migration and Asylum

CONCEPT NOTE
Panel Meeting on Migration Strategies

Minsk, Republic of Belarus
7-8 December 2016

The United Nations included migration in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Migration was included for the first time in the global development framework, recognizing well-managed migration's integral role in and immense contribution to sustainable development. Target 10.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals, one of the key targets related to migration, provides for facilitation of "orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through implementation of *planned and well-managed migration policies*"[1]. Presence of the national migration strategy and subsequent action plans and budgetary allocations, as well as its interconnectedness with other sectoral policies, contributes to implementation of migration policy in a planned and well-managed way.

Migration strategy in general serves as a foundation of the migration framework of a given country and can influence national labour markets. It reflects a country-specific approach (based on its unique migration profile) and forms strategic framework to manage inward and outward migration by addressing the most relevant migration issues[2]. The presence of a designated migration strategy signals a country's shift from a reactive migration policy framework to a more proactive, comprehensive and long-term framework[3].

---

[1] https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg10.
[2] https://www.giz.de/fachexpertise/downloads/giz2012-en-analysis-migration-strategies.pdf, p. 2.
[3] https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/migration_governance_index_2016.pdf, p. 61.

Migration strategies are not only adopted at national level but also at regional level. Thus, the Council of Europe's Migration Management Strategy[4] was endorsed at the 7th Council of Europe Conference of European ministers responsible for migration affairs held in Helsinki in 2002. One of the key issues is the establishment of a regular dialogue and partnership between countries of origin, transit and destination on ways of ensuring orderly migration, social cohesion and the rights of the individual. The overall approach develops a management strategy based on four principles: orderliness, protection, integration and co-operation.

The European Union, its Member States and the other global actors faced with the 2015 migration crisis realized that the migration processes, their trends and possible consequences are, and should be, managed in an even more proactive manner – using the strategic management methods such as offered by the Global Approach for Migration and Mobility (GAMM)[5]. In the context of the migration crisis, the European Commission adopted a European Agenda on Migration[6]. The Agenda sets out a European response to the current migration crisis and builds upon the existing GAMM instruments, combining internal and external policies, making best use of EU agencies and tools, and involving all actors: EU countries and institutions, international organizations, civil society, local authorities and national partners outside the EU.

The migration crisis further prompted some individual states to develop or update their migration strategy documents and policies and prepare contingency plans. It should be noted that until the migration crisis the focus of such policies was primarily on fighting irregular migration, return, readmission and border management, but now the attention is shifting to other strategic interests – security, cross-border cooperation, public health, scientific research, migration and development and others.

Key components of the updated and newly created national and cross-border migration policy strategies include border security, economic and social

---

[4]
http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/migration/archives/Ministerial_Conferences/Towards_Migration_Management_Strategy_en.pdf
[5] http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52011DC0743&from=EN
[6] http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/communication_on_the_european_agenda_on_migration_en.pdf

elements, fight against irregular migration, asylum system and effective visa policy by setting short-term and long-term goals of such documents.

Each state has its own experience in the preparation, adoption and implementation of these strategies. In some of them difficulties arise during the preparation of the draft document, while in the others there is a lack of political will or lack of attention to the implementation of the policy.

Hence this Panel meeting aims to provide not only an overview of the international aspects and recent trends in drafting, adoption and implementation of such strategies but also offers an opportunity to share national practices, experiences and lessons learnt by both the EU MS and the EaP countries.

The meetings will be divided into three thematic sessions:

Session I: **Role of a strategic document in the sphere of migration.** The following aspects will be covered within this session: why it is important to have a migration strategy, preconditions and rationale for adoption or updating of both national and regional strategies; requirements to the quality of the document.

Session II: Drafting and adoption of the migration strategies. During this session the participants will look into the following issues: needs assessment, preliminary research; type of a document (its legal status, structure and extent of details, implementation and monitoring mechanisms); drafting team; thematic priorities and extent of coherence and interconnectedness; duration of the strategy; obstacles including absence of political will.

Session III: Implementation of the migration strategies. This session will provide an opportunity to share experience regarding action plans for the strategy's implementation; its evaluation, reporting, revision; obstacles and success stories including legislative and administrative changes introduced as the result of the adoption of migration strategies.