

EU immigration policy

The package of measures proposed by the European Commission aiming towards better regulated immigration flows from the southern Mediterranean region as well as the proposal to amend EU Regulation on visas consists of the new incentives of EU bodies for a fair, credible and effective EU immigration policy. According to the annual report on immigration and asylum of 2010, the main developments at the EU and national levels in the field of immigration are highlighted and the measures taken to assist certain Member States in managing their external frontiers have been stated. The Republic of Cyprus is one of them.

The report contains political recommendations with regard to the strengthening of border control, the prevention of irregular immigration, the facilitation of legal immigration, the integration of third country nationals in the social and financial system of the Member States, as well as the development of a common European Asylum System in order to harmonise the positions of the external policy of the Union.

It is clear that the vast majority of immigrants arriving in the southern, firstly, at least, EU Member States (Cyprus, Greece, Malta, Italy, Spain), is the fact that the EU would benefit from some targeted labour immigration in order to help address the expected labour shortages in many sectors and to redress the projected decline in Europe's demographic problem of the working age population in the forthcoming years. Nevertheless, migration should be properly managed through the setting up of effective partnerships with known EU countries in order to regulate migration flows towards the European Union.

The series of initiatives proposed by the European Commission as a response to the emergency situation of the migration management can be summarised as the following:

- strategic approach in relation to third countries on issues related to migration in order to facilitate the movement of persons through legal migration possibilities and at the same time measures to prevent irregular migration should be taken;
- strengthen border control and Schengen governance for irregular immigration in order to ensure that each Member State effectively controls the EU's external borders in line with the rules of international and EU law;
- finalisation of the common European Asylum System according to the EU's international obligations by 2012; and
- better legal migration into the Union in order to facilitate the EU's demographic gaps and fill the expected labour and skills shortages, as a counteraction to the working age population.

The communication on migration is the first initiative, which was adopted on 4 May 2011 and, which has been discussed at the Justice and Home Affairs Council on 9 June 2011.

New measures will be taken under the new programming period 2014-2020, which will give the potential to Member States to establish new policies through specific immigration projects.

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