

## Forum for 21st century

### on Visa Policy issues

#### Position of European Union for the purpose of the conference held by the Forum for 21st Century

The European Union would like to thank the Forum for 21st Century for initiating the discussion and organizing the conference on current global matters. At the same time we express our full support towards solving the challenges occurring in the new global scenario. After an in-depth analysis of the draft proposed by the Forum for 21st century let us annotate it and include our suggestions as well.

#### In section Notes

The EU is aware that the analysis of the challenges of the coming decades underlines the urgency of the debate on a common migration policy. Regarding the future, three key areas that will affect a major need for global migration can be identified: the labor demand, the uneven global demographic trends and climate change.

The future labor need in the EU is difficult to predict. At least we can expect that the potential labor force in these countries will continue to decrease and that will result in a corresponding need for immigration. The society is aging dramatically and the population is shrinking. Increased migration to Europe cannot stop this demographic trend, but may reduce the resulting social problems, such as the financing of social security systems, as well as a possible decline in innovation and economic strength.

In many less-industrialized regions, can be observed contrasting demographic trends: The population will be here increasing sharply in the coming years and simultaneously it is possible that climate change will lead to a reduction of agricultural land, which will in some regions of the world increase the pressure for emigration.

#### In section Proposals

According to the Lisbon Treaty, one of the fundamental objectives of the European Union is to grant the citizens an area of freedom, security and justice. With the common market, the Economic and Monetary Union, the EU has created freedoms for its citizens that should not apply exclusively for them. This requires a common immigration and asylum policy, which regulates legal and illegal immigration into the European space uniformly and at the same time protecting the external borders.

EU agrees that growing migration has become a serious problem, not only for many European countries and the whole EU. Overall, the EU is not yet well prepared for the challenges ahead. The current strategies are inadequate in almost all areas of immigration, asylum and integration policy: There is a lack not only instruments but also conceptual considerations, for example which regions of the World should the future immigrants come from, should be the immigration controlled and how to deal with increasing ethnic and cultural diversity.

At the time we can observe the trend of pooling migration policy, which takes place especially in the areas of border control and asylum policy. These areas primarily restrict the immigration. Discussions on a joint European management of legal migration and a common integration policy, are proceeding very slowly and there still dominate national procedures or at least intergovernmental cooperation. A crucial reason for this

is the different interests of the individual member states. There are, despite of the convergence of long-term trends, still some considerable differences in the number of immigrants, the share of the immigrant population in the regions of origin and in the immigrant groups. But even within the EU, the picture is different. Countries such as Spain and Italy record for many years on a strong positive net migration, whereas the new EU member states are recording a significant out-migration and a de facto population loss. According to our view EU needs a strong and coherent migration policy. We need to manage our external borders effectively and safeguard the free movement within the EU.