



8th COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR MIGRATION AFFAIRS

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**Economic migration, social cohesion
and development: towards an integrated approach**



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Original Text in Ukrainian

*Mr Chairman,
Dear participants of the Conference,
Ladies and Gentlemen*

I welcome everyone at the 8th Ministerial Conference on Migration Affairs. I am honoured to attend this important event.

Europe is traditionally perceived as a territory with a high level of democracy, welfare and social security, increasing ethnic conflicts, food crisis and the demographic situation - this is an incomplete list of factors that shape migration flows on the European continent. We can predict that in the XXI century migration will take a particular place in the development of foreign and domestic policies of our countries.

This puts acutely, as never before, the issue of a common policy on management of migration processes. It is necessary both at the international and national level to develop a set of legal norms in order to regulate migration policy and its practical implementation. A balanced implementation of migration policy has to be in compliance with the fundamental principles of rule of law and respect of human rights, the well being of population, development and mutual understanding between peoples.

In the area of economic migration management, in addition to the settlement of the economic problems at the national level, coordination and development of the international approaches which should be flexible enough in order to develop effective solutions to the new challenges in migration are also important.

Over the past ten years with the active participation of the Council of Europe considerable efforts were taken on the European continent to implement proactive immigration policy, particularly to secure the equal opportunities for immigrants, to ensure their professional growth, access to social services, socio-cultural integration and participation in the public life. I am confident that the work in this direction will be continued and will provide an opportunity to consolidate the positive trends in this field.

Urgency and severity of the issues addressed by the Conference relates to the discussions of the Parliamentary Assembly on migration as a component of development of democracy in Europe.

In this context, Ukraine supports the provisions of Recommendation 1839 (2008), in which the Assembly calls the Committee of Ministers “to provide the necessary resources and make full use – in co-operation with other partners – of the Forum for the Future of Democracy as a tool for the further development of democracy in Europe, and to devote one of its future sessions to the challenge which migration poses to democratic systems”.

For Ukraine as a state aiming at joining the European Union, the achievement of the European standards in the field of migration legislation and management is one of the main priorities.

In this regard, the Government of Ukraine pays a considerable attention to the formation and implementation of public policy in the sphere of labour migration, since labour migration is one of the components of the state policy in the employment of population and, above all, is implemented through the development of modern mobile internal labour market.

We consider labour migration of Ukrainian citizens as an economic problem, and therefore the main tool of state regulation of foreign labour migration of Ukrainians remains the creation of attractive labour market. It should be noted that formation of market relations in the country occurred due to the economic recession. Its working capacity did not find a sufficient demand in the domestic labour market. As a result, according to expert estimates, there are 3 million citizens working abroad.

Recently, the Government of Ukraine took a number of measures aimed at ensuring the sustained trends towards improvement in the labour market. Its activities in this direction are aimed at promoting employment for the effective new jobs creation at the enterprises of all forms of property, preparing labour force professional skills and the level of qualification in order to meet the needs of the labour market, business development as well as at improving the quality of the labour force, professional training through life and enhancing motivation of legal employment and social support for unemployed.

It should be noted that the important mechanism of state regulation of labour migration is the conclusion of bilateral international and intergovernmental agreements on employment. Those agreements regulate the issues of recognition of professional education, seniority, social insurance, social and labour relations, rights and obligations of Ukrainian citizens who are employed on the territory of the other state.

At present, Ukraine is a party to eleven bilateral agreements in the sphere of employment. Therefore, the actual task of the government in this context is the development of a mobile mechanism of implementation and expansion of such cooperation with other countries.

I want to emphasize that the use of the regulation on labour migration like the accession to multilateral and bilateral international agreements should be carefully considered from the point of view of the economic and social security as well as real benefits of these agreements for migrant workers.

As a result of these measures we managed to stabilise employment, reduce unemployment and the volume of workers dismissal from enterprises, increase employment of unemployed citizens.

In order to enhance coordination in Ukraine between the central authorities responsible for the migration management the Government has created the Interdepartmental Commission on Migration the task of which is to prepare proposals to improve the efficiency of determining areas of public policy in the sphere of migration, implementation of activities related to public migration management, the analysis of migration processes, implementation of international treaties and to address issues of information exchange between state agencies, local NGOs and international organisations on migration processes and procedures.

Ukraine takes steps towards forming a single central executive authority which will be dealing with issues of implementation of state migration policy.

Government is also concerned about the issue of illegal migration and the mechanisms foreseen to counterfeit it. Recently, the number of illegal migrants is increased trying to get into our country in order to firstly, in order to use our territory as a transit on the way to the economically developed countries in Western Europe, secondly, to settle legally in Ukraine for the uncertain period of time while abusing refugee status procedure. Among those arriving to Ukraine by violating the established order there are persons who committed crimes and other offences. Cases of creating illegal migrant ethnic criminal groups take place. In some regions it

is observed a concentration of representatives of individual national groups (Chinese, Vietnamese, Caucasus countries and others) involved in business, land lease, various kinds of criminal offences including drugs distribution. In practice most of migrants are not engaged in production, but seeking to take the leading role in those areas. Moreover, a lot of these persons are infected with dangerous diseases such as tuberculosis, HIV / AIDS, malaria and so on.

On the scale and organization of this dangerous phenomenon indicates that only this year, authorities of Internal Affairs has stopped 12 channels of illegal migration, exposed and brought to justice the 32 organisers and 36 accomplices of illegal stay of foreigners on the territory of our country.

In this regard, one of the priorities of the law enforcement bodies of Ukraine is to strengthen the fight against illegal migration, to ensure the timely identification of persons who are illegally on the Ukrainian territory, their proper maintenance and readmission from the state in accordance with the regulations and to improve the system of countermeasures to take in order to oppose illegal migrants attempts to enter Ukraine.

As an example, from 2001 to 2008 the bodies of Internal Affairs arrested only more than 133100 illegal migrants. Therefore, a priority activity in the field of combating illegal migration is the conclusion of bilateral agreements on readmission, especially with countries of origin of illegal migrants and countries of transit.

Taking into account complex migration situation and the expected increase of illegal migrants after the practical entry into force of the Agreement between Ukraine and the EU on readmission of persons (from January 1st, 2010), we have taken measures to improve the situation concerning illegal migrants. Well, only this year we have opened 2 points of temporary detention of foreigners and persons without citizenship staying illegally in Ukraine, and we plan that at least 5 such points will be opened. This shows that the Government of Ukraine is respecting its obligations.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The participants of the Conference have a great responsibility because its results will fixed major priorities of the migration policies of European states for the next 5-8 years, namely:

- Ways to improve dialogue and cooperation between countries suppliers of economic migrants, recipients and transit countries;
- Measures for the effective maintenance of economic migration in the social cohesion of society;
- Possible ways of using economic migration as a factor conducive to further economic development of countries involved in these processes.

To our point of view the following important issues will be also addressed during the Conference as follows:

- Improving information exchange and monitoring of economic migration processes;
- Providing assistance to the victims of criminal schemes of economic migration;
- Promoting fair and equal access of migrants to labour market of countries of residence,

their role in political, economic and social life in these states;

- Bringing the policies in the field of migration in line with the basic tasks for their further development;

- Terms of reintegration and return of economic migrants to their countries of origin.

I am deeply convinced that dialogue to be held within the framework of this event will be constructive and will develop more effective mechanisms for the common migration policy.

Thank you.