



Inter-parliamentary Conference on Asylum and immigration 8-9 September 2019

Draft as of 26 June 2019

Towards a common European policy on asylum procedure, border control and immigration - from discussions to solutions

Twenty years ago, in 1999, the Tampere Agenda was approved by the Member States during the Finnish presidency of the Council of the European Union. The goal of the Agenda was to create a common immigration, border control and asylum policy. The common policy has to be based on joint liability, mutual trust and the sharing of responsibility. Illegal immigration is an issue that needs to be considered comprehensively when developing a common European immigration, border control and asylum policy. The causes underlying this problem include different standards of living, the search for a better life and serious humanitarian problems and crises in third world countries. Illegal employment is also an attractive factor for illegal immigration.

The same questions are still relevant in 2019, although some progress has been made. It is also not likely that these problems and challenges would disappear in the next decades. At the same time, it appears that the opinions within and between the Member States are increasingly divided and polarised. This ongoing development could put the future of the Union at risk.

The Helsinki Inter-Parliamentary Conference is an opportunity to discuss even the most difficult issues related to immigration, border control and asylum policy openly, constructively and in a non-binding way. In the morning of 9 September 2019, the upcoming decades until 2050 are under scrutiny. Looking at the issue over a longer time period allows us to see the measures that need to be taken in the short term to keep immigration under control and to prevent problems related to it. The second part of the meeting focuses more on today and on the near future. The afternoon is devoted to discussing what needs to be done here and now to survive the polarisation and challenges of the future. Discussions and speeches do have value, but in Finland real actions and results are more important.

Sunday, 8 September 2019

15.00 -18.45 Arrival of delegations and registration at the hotels

18.45 Departure from the hotels by bus or on foot

19.15-20.15 Visit to the Finnish Border Guard vessel Turva

Address: Pier at Katajanokanlaituri 4 B

Police convoy from Katajanokanlaituri to Restaurant Katajanokan

Casino

- 20.30 Dinner hosted by Ms Riikka Purra, Chair of the Administration Committee
Evening programme by The Helsinki Police Symphonic Band
Venue: Restaurant Katajanokan Casino
Address: Laivastokatu 1
- 22.45 Return to the hotels by bus

Monday, 9 September 2019

- 8.00 Departure from the hotels to The Parliament Annex building
Pikkuparlamentti,
Address: Arkadiankatu 3
- 8.30-8.45 Opening of the Conference: Mr Juho Eerola Deputy Speaker of the Finnish Parliament
- 8.45-9.00 Welcome address by the Chair of the Administration Committee Ms Riikka Purra
- 9.00 – 11.00** **SESSION I - The Comprehensive EU Approach on Migration and Asylum - the Way Forward**

The population of Africa continues to increase rapidly. It is estimated that by 2050, the population will double and reach 2.5 billion. The increase in the working-age population in Africa will account for over half of the number globally. In addition to the effects of population growth, the diverse continent will have to face challenges related to climate change, poverty, different conflicts and the lack of democracy.

The objective is to have a comprehensive approach to controlling migration in the long term, all the way until 2050. This requires getting to the root of the problem in Africa and in the Middle East and strengthening the role of redeployment as an important tool in solving it. It is important to focus on preventative measures in regions of origin and transit to decrease illegal immigration at the outer borders of the European Union.

It is also important to estimate what the content and the role of common asylum and immigration policy will be in the next decades. For the future of Europe, another significant question is how the citizens and Member States will see this whole complex of issues and what kind of an effect these factors will have within and between the Member States.

Immigration and asylum policy from the point of view of the coming decades

Migration flow pressures and how to affect them

What's the role of the common asylum policy for the EU and for its future?

Chair: Ms Riikka Purra Chair of the Administration Committee

(9.00 – 9.45) Presentations by:

Ms Paraskevi Michou, Director General, Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs, European Commission

Mr Ola Henrikson, Regional Director of IOM's Regional Office for the EU, Norway and Switzerland.

Mr Ilkka Salmi, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of the Interior

(9.45 – 11.00) Exchange of views

11.00 – 11.30 Family photo (at the staircase of Restaurant Pikkuparlamenti)
Coffee break

11.30 – 13.45

SESSION II –EU Approach on Migration and Asylum - from Policy to Practice

As of yet, there is no truly common asylum procedure in the European Union. As a result of the events of 2015, the Commission has suggested the creation of a Common European Asylum System (CEAS). Some of the central goals of today and the near future include creating a common and binding asylum policy and implementing it consistently, developing a return policy and carrying it out effectively. It is essential to have clear regulations on how to choose the country in charge of handling the asylum applications and to implement an effective and durable mechanism to support the country under migratory pressure. Other important issues include granting international protection to those in actual need and returning rejected asylum-seekers to their countries of origin.

From Tampere to Helsinki in 20 years – has the EU attained a common asylum system? (Theory and practice)

The current state of working for CEAS. How to achieve results?

Divided opinions in the political fields of the EU member countries

Chair: Riikka Purra, Chair of the Administration Committee

(11.30 – 12.15)

Presentations by:

Ms Nina Gregori, Executive Director, EASO

Mr Ilkka Laitinen, Lieutenant General, Chief of the Finnish Border Guard

Ms Jaana Vuorio, Director General, Finnish Immigration Service

(12.15 - 13.45)

Exchange of views

13.45 - 14.00

Closing remarks by Ms. Riikka Purra, Chair of the Administration Committee

14.00 - 15.00

Lunch at Restaurant PikkuParlamentti

15.00

Departure of Delegations