EU asylum policy – the external dimension

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Stephen Ryan,
Deputy Head of Unit - Asylum,
DG HOME, European Commission

A comprehensive approach to migration

EAM (May 2015) advocates comprehensive approach to migration

Sets out strategic approach, with elements of an external policy

Overall philosophy of COM approach: moving from chaos to managed migration

Refugees and asylum seekers – an EU challenge

- *EU 2015 + preceding years*: EU 28 received 1,255,600 asylum applications in 2015 – more than double the number in 2014, and number has been steadily rising since 2008 (c. 230.000), Number of SY arriving more than doubled since 2014, of AFG almost quadrupled since 2014, of IQ = x7 since 2014

- *Where from?*: 3 nationalities = 53% of total applicants: SY = 29% of applicants, AFG = 14%, IQ = 10%

- *An uneven distribution*: With 441,800 asylum claims (= 35% of EU total), Germany was largest recipient, followed by Hungary (174,400 = 14% of EU total), Sweden (156,500 = 12% of EU total), Austria (85,500 = 7% of EU total), Italy (83,200), France (70,600)

- *Resulting backlog*: 922,800 pending applications at end 2015

Refugees and asylum seekers – a global challenge

- *UNHCR estimates*: c.60 million individuals forcibly displaced worldwide as a result of persecution, conflict, generalized violence, human rights violations – highest levels of displacement in the post-World War II era. Some 19.5 million = refugees (c.14.5 = UNHCR mandate). Global figure includes 38.2 million IDPs and close to 1.8 million asylum-seekers

- *Top ten refugee-hosting States*: Turkey hosts largest number of registered refugees worldwide (c.1.9 million), followed by Pakistan (c.1.6 million), Lebanon (c.1.2 million), Iran (c.1 million), Ethiopia, Jordan (c.650,000), Kenya (c.550,000), followed by Uganda, Chad, Sudan.

- *Top ten refugee-hosting States per 1000 pop*: Lebanon, Jordan, Nauru, Chad, Turkey, South Sudan, Mauritania, Djibouti, Sweden, Malta …

Refugees-IDPs from the Syrian crisis

Greatest humanitarian tragedy since WWII unfolding in EU's neighbourhood ..

4.6 m. registered refugees displaced since 2011 awaiting registration

c.6.5 m.+ IDPs within SY

Lebanon: 1,05 m. refugees = c.23% of pop.

Jordan = 650.000 refugees = c.9.5% of pop.

Turkey: over 3 m. refugees = c.3.7% of pop.

Why an external dimension to EU asylum policy?

Three main objectives:

Humanitarian motive: to ensure the EU plays its part as responsible member of international community to assist in supporting refugee protection globally

Solidarity motive: to support third countries hosting the greatest number of refugees worldwide

Migration management motive: to help better manage migration flows to the EU, in our social, economic, security interests

.. but all 3 are inter-linked, as 2015 has demonstrated ..

Migration management to the EU in the 21st century

EU 2015 refugee 'crisis'= symptom of a global refugee/migration phenomenon:

- *mixed motives for migration: forced displacement and economic drivers*
- *increased ease of travel + social media*
- *growth of 'facilitation'*
- *Europe's geography*
- *effective border management dependent on cooperation ..*

Durable solutions

UNHCR's 'durable solutions' still provide best reference point for measures needed to tackle the forced migration/refugee challenge:

voluntary repatriation

Integration (normally in region of first refuge)

resettlement

.. EU's external asylum policy objectives consistent with these 'solutions'

Achieving the EU external asylum policy objectives

Achieving the objectives:

- *Advocacy of adherence by third countries with international standards & engagement in international initiatives*
- *Leveraging EU position in trade/FP/mobility dialogues/enlargement*
- *Humanitarian aid and capacity-building in third countries*
- *Resettlement – durable solutions to protracted refugee situations & solidarity with host countries (+ advocacy of alternative legal avenues to access protection in the EU)*
- *Bilateral migration management arrangements*
- *New multilateral migration management arrangements?*

Support, advocacy and leverage

'Soft' advocacy in international fora, neighbourhood policy, migration/VF dialogues – support/encouragement to host countries, partner countries, international organisations

Enlargement: asylum-related benchmarks for opening + closing of 'Chapter 24' [Candidates: Serbia, Albania, TK, Montenegro, FYROM; potential candidates ('EU perspective'): BiH, KV] = approximation with EU acquis

Visa liberalisation process: asylum-related benchmarks (e.g. WB, Moldova = visa requirement lifted; UKR, Georgia = COM proposal to lift visa requirement; Russia: process suspended, etc.)

Facilitating voluntary repatriation + integration in regions of origin

Conflict resolution initiatives

Encouragement to return, where possible, but c.50% of world's refugees in 'protracted' situations

Advantages of voluntary repatriation + 'local' integration over resettlement

Humanitarian / development aid to refugee-hosting countries: facilitating integration in regions-of-origin

Humanitarian / development aid

COM Communication of 26/4: strategic vision on how EU external action can support refugees, IDPs + their host communities – fostering self-reliance, harnessing potential (emphasis on education, access to economic opportunity + social protection) = development-led approach

Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (launched at Valetta Summit Nov 2015) – initial allocation = 1.8bn EUR

Humanitarian aid to refugees = Eur1.064bn. in 2015 (72% of total EU humanitarian aid budget 2015 = for refugees/displacement), on top of 854m. in 2014

Aid to Syria + neighbouring States

c. Eur 6bn. in aid since beginning of crisis (humanitarian, development, stabilisation) – both in SY + neighbouring States, esp. TK, JOR, LEB

EU London Feb. 2015 pledge = Eur 2.4bn.

Syria Trust Fund, for resilience needs of neighbouring Stets = Eur 427m.

Facility for refugees in TK = Eur 3bn. for 2016-17 + further Eur 3bn. for until end 2018

RDPPs

Regional Development and Protection Programmes (RDPPs) = specific tool for refugee-related capacity building in regions of origin:

> *North Africa (2015-;Eur 14+17,5m.), Middle East (2014-;Eur 41m.), Horn of Africa (2015-;Eur 120m.+)*

> *Actions financed include variety of protection + development-oriented actions, w. particular focus on asylum system capacity building*

Resettlement - a developing EU dimension

Advantages of resettlement: focus on vulnerability – managed process as opposed to spontaneous arrivals – planned integration

EU versus rest of industrialised world

pre-2012: voluntary process involving only some Member States

2012 (ERF + later AMIF): funding incentives and linkage with agreed EU priorities – focus on inclusiveness – new role for EASO

Resettlement – a new EU framework?

COM Recommendation June 2015

July 2015 Resettlement Conclusions – 22,504 to be resettled over 2 years: to date, 6,231 resettled to 16 MSs

December 2015 VHAS proposal (linkage w. EU-TK migration management)

1-1 EU-TK (development of SOPs): 280 SY so far

A new EU framework?

Bilateral arrangements: the EU-TK Statement of 18 March

JAP agreed November 2015: TK to manage irregular flows in return for certain concessions

COM VHAS proposal December 2015

EU-TK Statement, 18/3:

- **All new arrivals from 20/3, including asylum seekers to be returned to TK, after claims found inadmissible or unfounded**

- **1-1 resettlement for every Syrian returned**

Future for global management of refugees/displaced

Migration/displacement's potential to increasingly undermine global stability ..

1951 Refugee Convention – underlying spirit of solidarity needs to be respected

Bilateral arrangements to play an increasingly important role for EU and rest of the world?

Need / prospects for a new multilateral compact to ensure a fair, sustainable repartition of responsibilities worldwide?

Thank you for listening!

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