

PROPOSAL FOR A RESOLUTION [4.1.]: SUPPORTING THE STRENGTHENING OF THE GOVERNANCE OF THE SCHENGEN AREA AND PROPOSING A NEW EU VISA POLICY AND THE INTRODUCTION OF A EUROPEAN REFUGEE STATUS DOCUMENT FOR PEOPLE SEEKING FOR PROTECTION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

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- 1 Bearing in mind that:
- 2 In 2015 the European Union faced an unprecedented challenge with more than a million people seeking
- 3 protection in the territory of its Member States. Responding to the severity of the refugee and migration crisis,
- 4 the European Union reacted starting to develop a comprehensive and holistic approach on Border
- 5 Management, Migration and Asylum, putting forward concrete actions and legislative proposals aimed at
- 6 responding to the emergencies faced by the EU Member States.
- 7 Due to the persistence and the deepening of the humanitarian crisis and the risk of proliferation of nationalist
- 8 and anti-European behaviours by certain EU Member States' Governments, efforts and initiatives have been
- 9 intensified since the beginning of 2016 to support both financially and operationally the most affected EU
- 10 Member State, Greece, and to conclude an Agreement with the key neighbouring country, Turkey.
- 11 Despite the criticisms about the moral nature of the EU-Turkey Statement of 18 March, the effectiveness of
- 12 the measures proposed, the high cost or even the political impact of the commitment taken on visa policy, it
- 13 has to be recognised that by concluding this Agreement, the 28 EU Member States succeeded in agreeing to a
- 14 common strategy to replace irregular and dangerous transit across the Aegean Sea with safe and legal entry
- 15 channels of resettlement even if this is still limited and non-mandatory until now.
- 16 At the operational level, the EU succeeded (after long discussions) in overcoming the current legislative
- 17 limitations and supported the Greek authorities, the international organisations and NGOs operating in Greece
- 18 in managing the refugee and humanitarian crisis and in stopping the secondary movements of refugees and
- 19 migrants through the Western Balkan route towards the northern European countries. In fact, the EU
- 20 significantly increased emergency assistance to Greece under the current Asylum and Security Fund in
- 21 €267million (out of a total of €464 million) and adopted a new Emergency Assistance Instrument which will
- 22 immediately provide direct financial support of additional €83 million, improving the living conditions for
- 23 refugees in Greece.
- 24 In a difficult period of economic stagnation for a large number of EU Member States, it is crucial to recall the
- 25 efforts and initiatives taken by the European Union as well as the overall financial assistance provided in order
- 26 to appropriately tackle the magnitude, multi-dimensional drivers and impact of the current refugee and
- 27 humanitarian crisis.
- 28 However, despite these initiatives and the measures taken at the EU level for ensuring coherent management
- 29 of the Schengen area during this emergency situation, several Member States have decided to restore
- 30 temporary internal border controls; a measure which has a tremendous impact on the functioning of the whole
- 31 Schengen area.
- 32 They based their decision on the exceptional temporary safeguard clauses of the Schengen Border Code and
- 33 have used the current rules for extending internal border controls to the maximum possible duration.
- 34 This massive use of safeguard clauses (currently four Schengen states have reintroduced internal border
- 35 controls), which in some cases was accompanied by fences or other permanent installations justified by
- 36 national public order considerations and aimed at avoiding granting protection to refugees and migrants,
- 37 created an unprecedented amount of damage to one of the main achievements of the European Union, the
- 38 establishment of an area without borders for EU citizens and third-country nationals regularly residing in the
- 39 EU.

40 Without any doubt, this extended use of nationally motivated decisions puts the overall functioning of the
41 Schengen area at risk and contributes to the increased feeling of insecurity among EU citizens. This extremely
42 complex political environment has prevented the transmission of a positive message on progress made in
43 recent times in strengthening border management: by establishing of a European Coast and Border Guard or
44 smart border package and more recently by the proposed revision of the Dublin mechanism, the creation of a
45 true European Asylum Agency, the visa liberalisation for Georgia, Ukraine, Turkey and Kosovo and the
46 improvement of the suspension mechanism. **Despite that fact that all these measures are going in the right
47 direction, they are still fragmentary and extremely limited to respond to the current challenges and do not
48 succeed in providing the comprehensive and well balanced global strategy that the European Union urgently
49 needs to develop for the future.**

50 In this context and having in mind the previous Resolutions adopted by UEF in April and November 2015,
51 **the Congress of the Union of European Federalists, meeting in Strasbourg on 11-12 June 2016 commits itself
52 to taking all necessary actions at its level**

53 to recall that saving lives and preventing human tragedies has always been and will always be the main priority
54 of the EU action in managing the refugee crisis;

55 to support the organisation of an Annual Colloquium on Schengen Governance promoting dialogue and
56 cooperation among stakeholders for the development of a responsible and safe EU policy on Border
57 management, Migration and Asylum;

58 to underline the need for strong and reliable border management at the EU external border, stressing the need
59 that all actions and initiatives taken on border management, asylum and migration should promote European
60 values and respect of human rights and reinforce solidarity among EU Member States;

61 to remember the necessity for taking concrete measures ensuring feasible interconnected and interoperable
62 information systems at the EU external border, in line with the provisions of the EU Charter of Fundamental
63 Rights;

64 to urge for the modernisation of the EU Visa Policy, proposing a completely new structure, reflecting the
65 importance of people mobility as an instrument of EU external policy and the experience of ten-year visa
66 liberalisation dialogues;

67 to support the development of common rules for emergency situations at the EU external border and the
68 creation of an effective and permanent crisis emergency mechanism for the massive influx of refugees and
69 migrants defining clear criteria for its activation at the EU level;

70 to support the quick adoption by the EP and the Council of the Commission Proposal establishing a European
71 Coast and Border Guard;

72 to reiterate the necessity of improving the security dimension within the overall management of the external
73 border by using biometrics, and call for a quick adoption of the Commission proposal concerning an entry and
74 exit system for the EU external border ensuring the interoperability with other systems (smart borders
75 package);

76 regarding asylum in particular,

77 to call for an overall assessment of the measures taken in 2015 and present a global strategy for the future
78 Common EU asylum system;

79 to urge for the introduction of an EU Asylum Identity Document to be issued by EU Member States to all third-
80 country nationals seeking protection within the Schengen area. The security elements of this document shall
81 be agreed in common and recognised by all EU Member States;

- 82 to support the establishment of a mandatory resettlement mechanism and the adoption of common rules for
83 issuing humanitarian visas, strengthening legal ways to entry for people in need of international protection and
84 reducing the loss of lives of migrants at sea and the abuses of smuggling networks;
- 85 to develop a comprehensive legal migration policy based on precise identified needs at the EU level and to set
86 up an ambitious integration policy which would contribute to promoting European values (including gender
87 issues), fighting against radicalisation, racism and xenophobia;
- 88 to reconsider the external dimension of the EU Migration Policy, reflecting the new priorities of 2030
89 Sustainable Development Agenda Goals, exploring ways for more systematic cooperation focused on concrete
90 priority actions and developing a comprehensive and multi-disciplinary governance strategy.