

The European Migration Policy Centre: a new platform linking policy-making and research

One of the European Union's top political priorities is to devise and implement an effective and forward-looking European Migration Policy that benefits the EU Member States, their citizens and migrants alike. Europe's migration strategy covers policy areas such as Europe's labour market needs, demographic changes, the integration of immigrants into increasingly multi-cultural and multi-ethnic societies and the fight against illegal migration, while at the same time ensuring a secure environment for the free movement of its citizens. In order to underpin policies that address these complex challenges, the EU should create a special platform where research focuses on the evolving needs of policy-making in the area of migration management. It is from this perspective that Vice-President Frattini supports the establishment of a European Migration Policy Centre (EMPC), the opening of which is envisaged for as early as the autumn of 2008.

One of the European Union's top political priorities is to devise and implement an effective and forward-looking European Migration Policy that benefits the EU Member States, their citizens and migrants alike. Europe's migration strategy covers policy areas such as Europe's labour market needs, demographic changes, the integration of immigrants into increasingly multi-cultural and multi-ethnic societies and the fight against illegal migration, while at the same time ensuring a secure environment for the free movement of its citizens. In order to underpin policies that addresses these complex challenges, the EU should create a special platform where research focuses on the evolving needs of policy-making in the area of migration management. It is from this perspective that Vice-President Frattini supports the establishment of a European Migration Policy Centre (EMPC), the opening of which is envisaged for as early as the autumn of 2008.

Franco Frattini, Vice-President of the European Commission and the Commissioner responsible for Justice, Freedom and Security, has thrown his support behind this initiative: "Although well-managed migration can be beneficial to the EU, it also poses major challenges. More than ever, policy-makers need to adapt their strategies to a rapidly shifting environment. It is urgent and vital that research on migration issues should focus more on the ever-changing challenges posed by globalisation. The main goal of the new European Migration Policy Centre will be to translate research findings into realistic policy recommendations and thus help guide Europe's policy options in the future. Europe needs to have research on its side."

The main objectives of the Centre are to develop specific tools to ensure that research serves policy-making and actions and provide policy-makers and other stakeholders with methodologies that address migration governance needs. The centre will also support the production and efficient use of databases on the main dimensions of migration: demographic, economic, social, legal and political, including the collection of good and bad practices. It is expected to construct a large pool of scholars and influential thinkers to advance European and global thinking on migration issues and therewith provide a forum for confronting and discussing ideas and opinions among participants with diverging interests, while maintaining its independence with high-quality scientific standards.

The European University Institute (EUI) in Florence is to set up the new Centre, given that it already conducts highly specialised research in the area of European and international migration policies. The European University Institute will anchor the management of the EMPC, from a base in the Robert Schuman Centre. The Centre will be governed by a Director supported by a scientific committee.

Efforts will be geared towards opening the new Centre as early as the autumn of 2008. The financial support will come from the European University Institute, external funding from private and public sources, and contributions will be made by sponsoring institutions and foundations. The European Commission is reviewing the possibilities for EU funding.

To find out more about Vice President Frattini's work please see his website http://www.ec.europa.eu/commission_barroso/frattini/index_en.htm