



Report on the Ceipa Round table

“European Elections 2019: Is the migration challenge the ultimate threat to the European Unity and Solidarity?”

22 May 2019

On 22 May 2019 and in cooperation with the Regional implementation Initiative on Preventing & Combating all Forms of Human Trafficking in Vienna, CEIPA convened a roundtable discussion on the current migration debate in Europe. The event brought together over 30 participants from EU institutions, EU Member states, civil society organisations and academia. Discussions revolved around the latest development of migration policies at EU and international level.

The event was chaired by **Mr. Peter von Bethlenfalvy, CEIPA Executive Director**

The following is a summary from the event:

Mr. Guy Bultynck, President of CLB-ACP whose organisation was hosting the event made a few introductory remarks. According to the World Bank the level of extreme poverty in the world is at a historically low level, even though in Sub-Saharan Africa the number of people below the poverty threshold continues to rise (27 of 28 poorest world countries are located in Sub-Saharan Africa where the poverty rate amounts to 41% in contrast to 13% in the rest of the continent). Moreover democracy, human rights, peace and security as well as economic growth and investment have been barely progressing in that region, with levels varying from country to country. **President Bultynck** continued by listing the main culprits for this rather bleak development:

- Failure in the implementation of agreements concluded between the EU and these countries (Lomé 1975, Cotonou 2000) which resulted in reinforcing the position of those in power and serving the political propaganda (while raising the question of the prospect of the post-Cotonou negotiations and the implementation of the Exterior Investment Plan (EIP))
- Failure of NGO undertakings that only cultivated and strengthened dependence over relief

- Failure of the international organisations through the imposition of their visions without taking African realities into account (the case in point is the UN Millennium Development Goals which after 15 years did little to end extreme poverty and child mortality)

These failures should ring alarm bells for EU policy makers prompting them to take positive action and prevent further deterioration. The newly elected EU Parliament and the future EU Commission should therefore reconsider options and solutions for cooperation with Africa by supporting the African communities which survived long lasting civil strife and epidemics. In contrast to the EU's performance, the successful influence of an enlarged presence of China, India and Turkey, based on equal partnership with African countries, provides a healthy economic perspective and the emergence of the middle class. This approach sets the preconditions for stability, development, cooperation and prevention of irregular migration, long advocated by EU institutions, governments and NGO's. If Europe fails to change its approach towards African economic partnership and investment, it could lose its foothold in that continent. The migration challenge will be the ultimate threat to European unity and solidarity unless we understand the economic power of migration.

Afterwards, **Ambassador Denise De Hauwere, President of CEIPA**, welcomed the panelists and participants. She reviewed and highlighted some of CEIPA's more recent activities and future priorities. Furthermore, she underlined the importance of continued debates on a European level dealing with issues such as migration, climate and environment, human rights, foreign and security policy, etc. She expressed the hope that this debate, with highly respected and distinguished panelists, will shed more light to solutions for orderly migration in Europe.

Mrs. Helga Konrad, former Austrian Federal Minister, OSCE Special Representative and current Head of the Regional Implementation Initiative on Preventing and Combating all Forms of Human Trafficking, described how the EU has become a scapegoat for unsolved sensitive political issues at the national level: multiculturalism, integration, migration, climate protection, etc. Right populist political parties exploit the narratives of fear and insecurity among the population in Europe, by way of spreading fear that the country might be overrun by criminal migrants, in particular those coming from Islamic countries and in particular from Africa. The rightist and populist parties across Europe tend to refer to the migrant and refugee movements as "big population replacements". Paradoxically, the same parties vocal against migrants are active in advocating the cutting of national budgets for development and cooperation aiming at curtailing and preventing irregular migration, smuggling and trafficking of people to Europe. At the same time such parties, as experience shows, are spreading fake news aimed at highlighting a supposedly intrinsic link between migrants, criminals and terrorists and are undertaking further efforts to reducing the social benefits, thus preventing a successful integration of migrants legally residing in Europe.

Mrs. Konrad pointed out that the turning point for the debate over international migration occurred following the terrorist attack in the United States on 9/11. Since then, western democracies have become more and more preoccupied with the question of internal security being jeopardised by migration. In the absence of a common European migration policy and proper efforts by traditional political parties to address the overall question of migration in a sensible way, the public opinion grew

bitter over migration issues and “diminishing security” in Europe. It is of great importance, in times of spreading fake news over the criminalisation of migrants, to improve measures of integration and prevent a split in our societies leading to marginalisation and discrimination. As a former prominent German politician noted: “If five hundred million Europeans are unable to help five million refugees, the EU is facing moral bankruptcy”.

International cooperation, development aid, which undoubtedly has to be re-discussed and properly prioritised, should be an integral part of European migration policy. It is needless to say that the EU external frontiers have to be well protected, but protecting frontiers with military and police force is not the solution for the complex problem of migration in our globalized world. Europe is compelled to find a reasonable balance between the need for a foreign work force necessary to boost economic growth on one side and prevent further illegal migration, trafficking and smuggling of persons to Europe. Migration policy has to strike a balance between development aid, human rights, protection, civil liberties, security, foreign and military policy. Europe has to find a way to deal with both: preventing and combating illegal migration, smuggling and trafficking in human beings, on the one hand, and promoting orderly labour migration, on the other hand, so much needed for our economies. Governments in Europe as well as the press and media have the duty to the citizens to inform them correctly about different aspects of migration and rules and circumstances leading to admission and integration of migrants into their host society. A hostile environment has been created in Europe by way of intentionally misleading the public opinion through fake news linking the term migrant with terrorists, criminals, illegal foreigners and smugglers; this of course is highly detrimental for the integration of refugees and legally admitted foreign workers. Austria in particular has been for centuries a good example of a “melting pot”; this tradition is being now replaced by an increasingly hostile environment created by populists and rightist parties. Europe is, thus, compelled, more than ever, to make migration policy work successfully in the future.

Mr. Gilles Merritt, former FT journalist, Secretary General of Friends of Europe, Chairman of the think-tank Security and Defence Agenda, started by stating that we are losing public opinion to the populists who have turned migration into a dangerous populist issue. He then continued by framing his intervention around three pillars:

1. myths;

2. myopia;

3. our own muddled messages.

Instead of debunking the major myths, we are allowing them to dominate the political discourse. We must confront these myths because they are dangerously wrongheaded and misleading. Migration is not a lost cause, it is a money spinner boosting the economy with 65-70 billion Euros a year. The German Institute for Economic Research (Deutsches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung, or DIW) released research finding EU immigration had boosted Germany’s GDP growth by an average of 0.2% every year between 2011 and 2016. With the European population rapidly ageing and social benefits on the rise, there are only 3,5 gainfully employed and income generating persons per one pensioner. This will decrease to a ratio 2 to 1 over the period of the next 20 years while we will experience a decline of 33 million income generating persons in Europe. Subsequently, if we don't establish a sound immigration system, the

social costs in Europe will increase beyond any control. It is a myth that Europe is swamped with newcomer migrants making our livelihoods insecure. As a matter of fact, Europe, with 33,5 people per square kilometre, is far less crowded than China. Yet another myth is that people who come to Europe depress wages. In reality, migrants help the natives to advance into higher paying jobs. As to the terrorist activities of migrants, the Europol statistics show that less than 1% of them might have a link with terrorists' activities. Those who turn to terrorism are in fact more likely to be from the second or third generation of migrants who have been neglected in terms of education, housing and social integration.

Our task is to debunk these myths and persuade the citizens of the benefits of migration. The political class has failed to look far enough ahead and anticipate political and social problems linked to the ageing European population and low birth rates. We need to define what we want people to think about. At the same time, we need to separate the effects of austerity from other structural problems while fostering a multicultural, multi ethnic society and promoting positive discrimination.

In conclusion Mr. Merritt invited anybody with good ideas to help build his new web site, "Migration Myth Busting".

Note by the editor: *As a result of his growing interest for the migration issues, Mr. Merritt has written a book entitled "More Migrants, Please" and is working on an interactive website aimed at "migration myth busting".*

Professor Marc Bossuyt, Member of the Permanent Court of arbitration in The Hague, former judge and President of the Belgian Constitutional Court and former Belgian Commissioner for Refugees and Migration

As a former Belgian Commissioner for Refugees and Migration, Professor Bossuyt started his intervention by explaining that the UN Compact of Marrakesh split the Belgian governing coalition and precipitated the fall of the government. The Compact is not a legal text or a treaty which should be signed by the governments. It is an initiative undertaken by the countries of destination, transit and origin of migrants, to promote safe, orderly and regular migration.

Note by the editor: *The Belgian government has been one of the initiators of the UN debate in 2006, leading to the current UN Migration Pact*

As a unique global undertaking, favouring dialogue between countries of origin and transit of migrants, the Compact offers the opportunity for European countries, which are mainly countries of destination, to solve problems relating to migration. Professor Bossuyt stressed several new important aspects that merit attention: Objective 4 of the Compact aims to ensure that all migrants have a proof of legal identity, Objective 9 strengthens responses to smuggling, Objective 10 stresses the importance of combating trafficking in human beings, Objective 21 promotes cooperation to facilitate return and readmission. Another important and rather new objective underlines the obligation of states to readmit their own nationals. Professor Bossuyt expressed regret that the EU didn't take an autonomous standing

- the objective of a common EU external action policy - but was represented by individual member states acting in their own right. The vote on this issue showed that the EU was divided. Hungary, the Czech Republic and Poland voted against the Compact, and five other Member States - Austria, Bulgaria, Italy, Latvia and Romania chose to abstain from the vote. Slovakia was not participating. If more effort had been put in finding a common position it would have strengthened the EU and increased its influence in the world.

Professor Bossuyt also pointed out the evolving character of the notion of “refugee”. The 1951 Geneva Refugee Convention defines a refugee as a person who is persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion. Over the years the notion of international protection was considerably enlarged, mainly by the notion of subsidiary protection which extends the reasons for asylum to persons who would face a real risk of suffering harm if they are returned to their home countries. Recent developments further expand the reasons for international protection to persons facing forced marriage, sexual violence or persecution, female genital mutilation, domestic abuse and other issues, which confront the states with new challenges that are difficult to cope with. Professor Bossuyt expressed disagreement with the Belgian public opinion’s widely held belief that the crisis has ended since the states took a different position compared to 2015. Last month's figures actually point to more than 2000 arrivals each month which is overloading the system designed for providing accommodation to maximum 5000 migrants. This creates new backlogs and political problems as a consequence.

Mr. Jacopo Barigazzi, Reporter Politico (covering Migration, Brexit and Foreign Affairs)

started his presentation by reminding those assembled of the extent to which migration could be a poisonous and sensitive issue with far-reaching political consequences. By way of illustration he mentioned the ascendance of Victor Orban's popularity, which climbed from its initial 20% after he toughened his border policies. There are a few moments that triggered a shift on migration, one of which was the tweet of EU Council President D. Tusk before the Strategic Council meeting, where he denounced the lack of consensus on mandatory allocation, which killed the idea before it was put forward to the European Council. Responding to a question on the European External Action Service, Mr. Barigazzi pointed out the absence of a European foreign policy. In a somewhat awkward position between the Council and the Commission, the effectiveness of the EEAS is hampered by a lack of coordination between it and the respective Commission services such as DG Development. As a result of a constantly hardening narrative, the migration file has been removed from the context of integration to reside instead under the security or defence portfolio. Using public opinion as a basis for media reporting has become increasingly difficult because of the combination of algorithms (social media) on one hand and the mounting anger on the other. In this atmosphere of increasingly fragmented public opinion, people tend to search for the confirmation of what they already think. Decision makers at a policy level still get their news from fact checked and credible sources, but most of the population relies on information from social networks and social media which is unchecked and can be untrue, so misinformation is easily propagated. This creates an open and liberalized market of anger, and it is still unclear how this will be channelled into the democratic system. Even if the European elections results lead to a coalition of the EPP, socialists, greens and the liberals, this anger is unlikely to disappear. Whereas far right parties easily find consensus on migration, left parties are split between those

advocating open borders and others who stand closer to the centre or far right. Migration has proved to be the only pan European crisis, standing in contrast to Brexit and Greek financial crises which were a regional crisis and the crisis of the Eurozone respectively. In the face of the emotionally charged migration debate we need to have more academic research and provide a good non-partisan date of the impact of migration on wages and economy.

David Reizenzein, Head of Frontex Liaison Office in Brussels, European Border and Coastal Guard Agency (FRONTEX)

Responding to the Chairman's question about the role and place of Frontex in the European Union Mr. Reizenzein underlined the fact that the Agency has been tasked with implementing policies. He then continued by using a parable of a football match with more than 22 players playing a role in the European Migration policy (Member States, EU institutions, EU Agencies, international organizations, NGO's etc. representing political groups, regional and social interests). They play with a number of balls given that migration policy encompasses irregular migration policy, legal migration, integration, trafficking, smuggling etc. At the same time the European institutions decide about the rules which are constantly changing. As a result, the game is played while the rules are changing through negotiations between EU legislators on the side-lines. In addition, there are also referees on the pitch such as the Commission or European Courts distributing yellow or red cards to the players (e.g. infringement procedures). Journalists are commenting the game. Finally, there are 400 million European public opinion coaches with their own positions on European migration policy.

Frontex is only one of the JHA Agencies on the playing field. When discussing illegal border crossings, Mr. Reizenzein presented the evolution of border crossing figures over the past 10 years beginning in 2009 with 105,000 illegal border crossings, 2010 – 104,000 border crossings. When in 2011 these figures jumped to 141,000 it was perceived as a major crisis. In 2012 the numbers dropped to 72,000 border crossings, 2013- 107,000 and 2014 – 282,000. As a consequence of the crises in Syria and Iraq, the number has reached the peak of 1,8 million border crossings in 2015. It then started dropping again in 2016 with 511,000 border crossings, 2017 - 205,000, 2018 - 150,000 and this year until May 26,000 illegal border crossings were registered, which represents a decrease of 21% compared to 2018. The lessons learnt from 2015 were that the migration movement is accelerating and therefore necessitates adequate policy responses. Relatively relaxed visa policies in countries neighbouring the EU facilitate quick access to the vicinities of the borders of the European Union. As a result, in 2015, 150,000 migrants were arriving on a weekly basis from Turkey via Greek islands to the mainland, and were able to cross the Western Balkan countries in about 2-4 days on their way to Western Europe from there. Before the crisis, the route through the Western Balkan countries took 2-4 weeks. At that time the communication between the countries on border and migration management was particularly difficult, hampering the possibility of a coherent approach. The Commission came quickly with a new policy in this regard with a new Border and Coast Guard Regulation presented in December 2015, and put it into effect by October 2016. In combination with the EU-Turkey Statement and as a result of the policy changes and new legislation, the figures went down considerably. Since the crisis relented, the EU is

now ready to reinforce external border management with additional 10,000 border guards to be gradually made available by 2027. 10 billion € should be made available under the new MFF for these additional border guards and their equipment. Mr. Reizenzein described the present approach as a courageous one, though still a bit fragmented, given the complexities and challenges, to come to a coherent border and migration management policy that would also include asylum, returns, legal migration and the like. Following the EP elections and coalitions that will ensue, the missing bits and pieces will start falling into place because of the importance of the migration issue in the overall EU setting.

Concluding on a positive note, Mr. Reizenzein expressed the hope that the new Commission and Parliament will not fall prey to the populist narrative and will continue following a considered approach resulting in a comprehensive set of rules and regulations to be jointly implemented by Member States and EU Agencies such as the European Border and Coast Guard Agency.

CEIPA Executive Director Mr. Peter von Bethlenfalvy asked about the Frontex mandate to negotiate the return policy with third countries as a part of the EU foreign policy and the position of Frontex as security agency in the overall EU architecture, especially among other JHA agencies. Mr. Reizenzein explained that Frontex's working arrangements with third countries are aimed at building a general framework for cooperation between border authorities in Third Countries and Frontex. It includes information exchange and trainings, up to possibly building return capacities. However, it is important to stress the sole competence of the EU Commission on behalf of the Council when it comes to negotiating EU return and readmission agreements. Insisting on the operational character of Frontex, he also pointed out their capacities to projection for years to come based on their risk analyses and foresight capacities. Barring unexpected large-scale crises, the current projection anticipates the likelihood of a stable migration pressure. Key JHA Agencies working in the field of migration are ESAO (European Support Asylum Office), Europol (European Police Office) and Frontex which is the eyes and the ears of the borders and operational agency countering irregular migration and unlawful border crossings. In addition, there is CEPOL (the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training), eu-LISA (the European Union Agency operating on current and future IT systems) as well as Eurojust.

Mr. Alfred Kellermann, visiting professor at The Hague University and Senior Policy Advisor, mentioned several points from a paper that he presented at the recent Paris conference on migration. Understanding migration and asylum hinges on an understanding of the law: European law, national laws, and international law. He stressed the importance of the European law in the context of the 2015 crisis which saw thousands of people crossing the Mediterranean on their way to Europe. Most of them came from Muslim countries and Africa. Responding to the crisis, the EU has agreed on the European Agenda on Migration putting forward a new framework and partnership with Africa for migration management. Once they manage to reach the European Union, migrants are free to move without showing documents because of the Schengen rules of free movement. Refugees fleeing persecution and disasters are treated in accordance with the Geneva Conventions which impose an obligation on states to provide them with appropriate protection. The EU-Turkish deal concluded in 2016 has solved a lot of problems, despite some criticism questioning its legality. Professor Kellermann recommended that

similar deals be enacted in the future. When discussing the UN Compact on Migration he stressed its non-binding character but underlined the fact that national judges can refer to it, thus making it part of the international legal order. Migration has created a lot of controversies although it is not the one issue on which the Europeans sometimes disagree. While it is important to find consensus, it is impossible to always have a common policy. As soon as those spreading fake news on migration lose their damaging influence on public opinion we will need to concentrate on strengthening democracy and human rights, while presenting migration as a positive phenomenon. Better integration of refugees and migrants will take the wind out of the sails of the populist parties. Raising awareness on migration while protecting external borders will provide EU citizens with a sense of security. This demonstrates the importance of the European and Coastal Border Guard Agency, concluded Mr. Kellermann.

Debate

During the discussion **Mrs. Konrad** deplored the concept of "us" versus "them" when it comes to border protection. She advised against seeing migration as a threat and regretted the dominance of nation states in the absence of a true European Union. Introducing a sense of belonging to the European Union would be very beneficial in resolving the issue of migration.

Mr. Merritt wondered if Frontex had some figures on the number of Africans likely to arrive in Europe in the next 20-30 years, as within this period the African population will double to 1.3 billion. Mr. Merritt also wanted to know if there were any projections for coping with such a tide. He then asked about the Frontex figures on the number of legal migrants, deportations and returns, and rejected asylum seekers. Mr. Reizenzein said there are no figures about possible migrants coming from Africa in the next 30 years, although Frontex regularly provides risk analyses for the coming 2-3 years based on intelligence information. There are about 2.5% legal migrants arriving in the EU, even though the information needs to be verified, since Frontex does not keep the record of legal migrants nor does it gather information on the number of rejected asylum seekers. As to the figures of the number of returned people, it amounts to approximately 36-42% across the European Union.

One delegate noticed that the debate was rather Eurocentric. He also reminded the group that return and readmission aspects of the Migration Compact have already been dealt with in the Cotonou agreements. The reason why it does not work is that Europe doesn't offer anything in exchange for the obligation to readmit migrants. As long as the EU does not increase legal migration from African countries there will be no effective return policy. In this context it is worth mentioning Skill Partnership Agreements and the promotion of circular migration.

Mr. von Bethlenfalvy intervened by questioning the EU capacities and methods to tackle the root causes of migration. He reminded the participants of proposals to allocate EU funding for third countries (origin and transit) conditional upon their control of migration, adding that such a proposal was in the past impossible to hear from either the Council or EU member states or political parties in the European Parliament. Mr. von Bethlenfalvy also stated that the established political parties in the European Parliament were for years reluctant to tackle properly the issue of migration, leaving the

debate to various circles of experts without giving much attention to the urgency and importance of necessary policy decisions. He added that, although the European Commission has one Commissioner officially in charge of migration, in reality there are at least four or five commissioners whose portfolios relate to migration, not mentioning the role of the President of the European Commission, who engaged himself during the past years in a number of policy actions and initiatives as well.

Eventually, EU policy makers are facing an imminent challenge of reform of the European institutions, currently incapable to deal with the complexity of migration. Mr. von Bethlenfalvy explained that the 2015 migration crisis showed clearly, once more, that to deal with migration in a proper way, means to address the root causes as well, next to the internal security and integration of migrants. International security, diplomacy, humanitarian and development aid are an important, if not essential tool in preventing potential armed conflicts such as in Syria, leading to uncontrolled and irregular flow of migration towards Europe. Back then, five years prior to the migration crisis 2015, a few European politicians only, persistently insisted upon the need for clear cut negotiations with Russia in order to prevent a humanitarian and political disaster happening in Syria. Europe did not follow.

Responding to a question on the programs of the European political parties in the field of migration, **Mr. Barigazzi** referred to the occasional proposals aimed at introducing a Marshall plan for Africa which are often lacking arguments. Last OECD figures point to 75.5 billion in EU spending, but when one looks at the individual member states it often turns out that they do not put the money where their mouth is. Even though they say that they tackle the root causes, funds are often channeled to the national level. Insisting on the complexity and sensitivity of the migration problem he added that those who migrate are part of the middle class, which further aggravates political governance in their countries of origin. Consequently, if we really want those countries to develop we should offer better possibilities to their citizens to come to Europe to study, work and then go back in order to improve conditions in these countries. In the absence of such measures, migration can easily turn into brain drain.

The president of CEIPA, Ambassador De Hauwere, concluded the debate by stating that this event is a further testimony for the urgent need of viable solutions to deal with migration on European and international levels respectively. Migration, human rights and global warming, etc. are policy issues of intrinsic multilateral nature. National governments and institutions are able and welcome to contribute to develop such policy only if they understood that the only way towards viable solutions is a multilateral and common approach. Populism, nationalism, xenophobia as promoted by a number of current political leaders will lead to weakening of solidarity and cohesion in Europe. By taking this into consideration, CEIPA believes that a constructive migration policy should be based on solid principles such as addressing the root causes of migration, international and national security as well as orderly admission procedures and external border security.

Ambassador De Hauwere expressed her appreciation for the input by the distinguished panellists and all the participants contributing to this positive debate. CEIPA will continue its efforts to tackle complex policy issues of European Union policy in need for fresh solutions.

Final considerations and Conclusions

The participants of the CEIPA round Table have given full consideration to the future architecture of the European migration policies. It is needless to say that such considerations would postulate major EU institutional reforms and an entirely fresh approach towards embedding migration into EU foreign policy

and security, as well development policies. It was felt that the inadequate reaction of some EU member states towards the adherence to the Global UN Migration Pact of 2018 reflects highly contagious tendencies favouring nationalism and weakening of the foundations of European solidarity and cohesion.

Whereas all political parties competing for seats in the European Parliament addressed the issue of migration in response to pressures from the public, especially from the emerging populist movements, none of them has been able to come up with a clear and persuasive political concept. It seems that over decades the traditional political parties, representing over 400 million voters in Europe, were reticent to properly tackle the ticking time bomb of migration policy.

However, there are a few positive exceptions that were noted by the participants. One of the main political parties in the European Parliament has advanced a concept to deal with the issue of extra-territorial processing of asylum and immigration requests i.e. establishing a migrant processing admission mechanism in the countries of transit and origin. The strategy and planning of such an approach have not yet been elaborated in any details, probably due to the complexity of the issues involved as well as fears from adverse reactions from the voters, different political parties, legal experts and EU institutions. This approach seems to be similar to the proposal of establishing a European Agency for Migration and Resettlement, put forward by CEIPA in 2015 during an event with European policy makers in Brussels.

The participants at the CEIPA round table pointed out that such an approach would postulate a solid action plan catalysing fundamental reforms of the EU asylum and immigration package as well as necessary administrative adaptations on the level of the European institutions. In short, a comprehensive EU migration policy would first require measures to tackle the root causes of migration and the integration of migrants. Common wisdom would suggest the appointment of a single EU Commissioner mandated exclusively to deal with the asylum and migration portfolio within and outside of the European Union's boundaries.

Subsequently, administrative adaption within the European Commission and at a certain stage the creation of an EU Migration and Resettlement Agency mandated with operative tasks within and outside the territory of the European Union, would have to follow. In the same vein, the architecture and mandate of numerous EU security agencies such as FRONTEX, EUROPOL, EUROJUST, EASO, European Public Prosecutor Office, FRA, ENISA, EU-LISA, EIGE, EFCA, EMSA, BEREC, CEPOL, EDA, EUSC, EMCDDA, ESISC etc. dealing with issues closely related to migration, asylum, security and human rights would have to be aligned. By all means, a better coordination among the latter agencies when it comes to activities relating to migration may appease the vocal Eurosceptics and prevent further suspicion over duplication of work and irresponsible spending of EU taxpayer money. At the same time, participants have expressed their satisfaction over the efficiency and efforts of FRONTEX to implement its operative mandate to control the external EU borders, and expressed their hope that the Agency will receive more political and operational support by all EU member states, in particular in view of implementing its future strengthened mandate.

The participants of the CEIPA round table felt that the newly elected EU Parliament should be compelled to take greater responsibility and a firm stand towards structural reforms affecting the competencies and functioning of the EU institutions.

The speakers and participants of the CEIPA round table have expressed their hope for more efforts by the EU and Member States to set a sensible common approach to asylum and migration. Professor Marc Bossuyt, a prominent high level international legal authority, pointed out that the EU's foreign services (EEAS), despite vocal support from French President Macron and other EU leaders for a unified EU stance, did not manage to coordinate and unite all EU Member States behind the adherence to the Global UN Migration Pact of 2018.

Several speakers regretted that neither the European Commission, nor the EU external service (EEAS), nor the EU Council, nor the EU Parliament were able to develop and implement a consistent information and awareness campaign explaining to EU citizens and concerned institutions and organisations the content and positive aspects of the provisions of the Global UN Migration Pact of 2018 well in advance.

Europe is in need of a stringent asylum and immigration policy in order to prevent illegal migration and trafficking in human beings and in order to facilitate and improve the fluidity of admission procedures of economic migrants helping to boost the European economy. Improving provisions of labour migration and increasing efforts facilitating the integration of migrants into European society have been underlined as EU policy priority by a number of distinguished speakers and participants such as Guy Bultynck, Denise De Hauwere, Patsy Sörensen, Jelena von Helldorff, Giles Merritt, Marc Bossuyt, Helga Konrad, Jacopo Brigazzi, David Reizenzein and Professor Kellermann.