



European Economic and Social Committee



EU-AFRICA ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL STAKEHOLDERS' NETWORK

6-7 July 2016, Nairobi (Kenya)

RESOLUTION

The representatives of EU and African economic and social stakeholders:

1. ON THE ROLE OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC PLAYERS IN LEGAL MIGRATION POLICIES:

1.1 underline the importance of migrants as net contributors to the economic, social and cultural development of both the destination country and the country of origin;

1.2 call upon African countries and the African Union to promote and accelerate free movement of goods and people and to protect workers' rights in the African continent;

1.3 stress the importance of **involving the socio-economic partners** in the drafting, management and implementation of migration policies;

1.4 insist on the need for the **EU and African countries to cooperate on legal migration and mobility** by promoting a **common and consistent migration policy** respecting human rights and based on a spirit of solidarity, mutual understanding and cooperation with the countries of origin;

1.5 welcome the legal proposal presented by the European Commission on 7 June 2016 to reform the rules regarding highly skilled migrants coming to the EU to work (known as the **"Blue Card" system**), as it establishes a single EU-wide programme, replacing parallel national programmes, and allows for **quicker and more flexible labour market access** as well as better prospects of long-term residence status;

1.6 call for a sustained approach that also takes into account the socio-economic **development of the countries of origin**, recommending the use of policies and programmes that address potential brain drain and encourage the return of skilled workers to their countries of origin and their reintegration;

1.7 call for the promotion of unrestricted movement of young skilled workers and for further recognition and accreditation of the skills and qualifications of migrant workers, always respecting equal opportunities;

1.8 call for the establishment of **EU migration focal points** within the EU delegations in the countries of origin, with more local participation, in order to raise awareness about the realities of EU migration

(in terms of real prospects, available opportunities, and necessary procedures) and to centralise the management of **immigration** applications;

1.9 stress the importance of **integrating immigrants**, going far beyond the demographic, economic or fiscal perspectives, through appropriate pre-departure and pre-arrival integration measures, technical and vocational training systems increasing synergies with the labour market and boosting labour mobility while respecting decent work conditions, access to basic services, and active social inclusion; and recommend the **use of EU funds to support these national integration measures**;

2.ON THE ROLE OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC PLAYERS IN FIGHTING CLIMATE CHANGE:

2.1 insist that **civil society** at global, national and regional levels needs to be fully involved in and take ownership of the development, review and, above all, implementation of the Paris Agreement to ensure a swift and fair transition towards resilient, decentralised, low-carbon economies; and that for this to happen, appropriate information campaigns must be carried out to raise awareness about the available funds, their scope, and their procedural constraints;

2.2 support a fair transition to low-carbon economies that favours the development of companies, creates decent jobs, fosters workers' participation, contributes to greening skills and curricula, supports viable sustainable agriculture, considers social consequences, and is based on social and civil dialogue;

2.3 stress the need for the international community to support developing countries, notably the most vulnerable, and to help them move directly to low-carbon economies and strengthen their resilience towards, mitigation of and adaptation to climate change; to this end, **appropriate financial instruments need to be made available to them as pledged at COP21 in Paris**, including a sufficiently financed green climate fund and "loss and damage" arrangements, as well as effective technology cooperation;

2.4 highlight that this access to funding should be prioritised for micro-enterprises, cooperatives, small-scale retailers, and family businesses, with special emphasis on female and youth entrepreneurship, as these categories represent the main potential for growth and job creation in African countries;

2.5 support the principle of **common but differentiated responsibility to keep the temperature increase below 1.5 °C**, and consider that countries that contribute little to climate change at present should be supported to ensure that they can move towards a low-carbon economy with strong local production potential by means of new economic opportunities that take into account a fair distribution of wealth, involve local people, and do not impoverish them further;

2.6 highlight that one category particularly affected by climate change is that of **smallholder family farmers**, and reiterate that family farming can contribute to mitigating climate change and is the

backbone of African agriculture when it comes to ensuring food security and safety and preventing malnutrition, as well as providing employment in rural areas and socio-environmental protection;

2.7 note that climate-smart and sustainable agriculture, implemented by small farmers, can contribute to rationalising the real cost of food;

2.8 call for policies that support local and regional supply chains in the agricultural sector, document and disseminate good practices and innovations at local level, prevent unfair competition, and can react effectively to global volatility shocks;

2.9 recognise that family farming is confronted with serious challenges (including not only climate change and seasonal variability, but also stagnation of productivity and profitability, soil degradation, access to grains and seeds, land grabbing, and extreme poverty) that need to be addressed, including within the framework of SDG implementation and of economic partnership agreements;

2.10 call for strong political support for family farmers and farmers' organisations at both local and international level, as well as the necessary financial and social support, always in consultation with them;

2.11 recall that the 2030 climate framework and COP21 in Paris call for the use of agricultural models to improve resilience and sustainability, and therefore support the promotion of agro-ecological farming rather than resource-intensive and non-sustainable modes of exploitation;

2.12 stress the urgency for vulnerable states and all countries involved in COP21 to draw up inclusive policies that aim to change models of production, processing and consumption, while taking into account the needs of smallholder farmers.
