



Topic Preparation Kit

The 3rd Rustavi Regional Session

Rustavi, Georgia

3-5 November

1. Overviews

The overviews are written by the Committee chairpersons to serve as background material. They aim to identify the key issues at stake while synthesizing the topic area. The objective is naturally to keep these overviews as balanced as possible, yet they may not receive unanimous consent. It should be noted that the EYP strongly encourages independent thinking so feel free to disagree!

2. Keywords

The non-exhaustive list of keywords intends to facilitate searching for information, may it be documents, news items or articles, at different types of search engines, news websites and encyclopedias.

3. Research Links

As regards the suggestions for research links, the list is by no means exhaustive. Rather than citing individual links, we have preferred indicating links to websites where several relevant documents and articles can be found. As where has been possible, links to websites in French language have been listed. Please note that the EYP is not responsible for the contents on various websites; the texts reflect the opinions of their authors only. We wish you successful preparation and interesting reading!

Mariam Chubabria

President of the Session

Mariam Tirkia Akaki Kukhaleishvili

Vice Presidents of the Session

Committee Topics

AFET I (THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS)

Unceasing crisis in Syria brings devastation not only to the country but to the entire region:

What actions should international community take in order to mitigate the tension in Syria? What can be the role of the EU in the process of peacemaking?

AFET II (THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS)

Taking into consideration that the member states of The Eastern Partnership have different expectations of the project:

How should the European Union respond effectively to democratic development challenges arising within the region?

DROI (THE COMMITTEE ON HUMANRIGHTS)

Video footages depicting sexual and psychological abuses on inmates in one of the notorious prisons of Georgia revealed systemic violations of human rights in the country:

How EU can collaborate with the new government of Georgia in order to avoid human rights abuse not only in prisons but other parts of society? What should be the EU policy to ensure human rights development in Georgia?

LIBE (THE COMMITTEE ON CIVIL LIBERTIES, JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS I)

Considering ongoing economic crisis fueling Catalan separatist movement in Spain:

How should Madrid respond to the Catalan demands? What regulations should the EU propose in order to support peaceful coexistence of its member states with their respective separatist regions?

LIBE (THE COMMITTEE ON CIVIL LIBERTIES, JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS II)

Many of the illegal immigrants in the EU flow through Greece, which is overwhelmed by the flood of incomers:

How should the EU develop a comprehensive migration policy that responds to Europe's needs and that fights illegal immigration without turning Europe into a fortress?

II. ACADEMIC PREPARATION

Sharing experience from EYP network is **inseparable** part of EYP-Georgia. As we strive to advance our academic and organizational level we have utilized Amsterdam IS approach for delegates' better academic preparation.

We believe that a big part of making this happen is the academic aspect of the session and we hope you believe that, too. Therefore, we have a few things to do for you before the session starts. We hope that this will help you prepare for your topic and the discussions and debates you will be having in the 3 days you will be in Rustavi with us. In the following, we have outlined what we will ask of you: to compile a "fact sheet" and write a "position paper". In case you have any questions, feel free to contact us at m.tchubabria@eyp.org.ge!

Yours,

The Board of "The 3rd Rustavi Regional Session"

a. Fact Sheets

We ask you to compile a fact sheet, which is a list of at least 10 facts and their respective sources that are relevant for your committee topic. We hope this will help you research as well as to increase your understanding of the topic. You can take the topic overview written by your chair as a starting point. Attached to the same email as the preparation kit, you will find a file named 'FACTSHEET_COMM_FIRSTNAME_LASTNAME.xls'. We would like to ask you to enter your facts and sources in this template. When you are done, please change the title and fill in your committee abbreviation as well as your first and last name. Remember that we ask you to find 10 facts, but feel free to enter as many as you would like!

When complete, please send your .xls file to your chairpersons. We ask you to do this before **Friday November 1st 12:00**, as this will give us enough time to process all of them! Please remember to enter in your first and last name, as well as your committee abbreviation and the words 'fact sheet' in the email subject!

b. Position Papers

Furthermore, we ask you to write a short essay on your topic. In your position paper, feel free to take a stance in the debate that is going on your topic, but please make sure you do not simply copy your chair's topic overview! Attached, you will find a file called 'POSITION_PAPER_[COMM]_[FIRSTNAME]_[LASTNAME].doc', where you can fill in your text.

When you are done with your position paper, please rename the document and send it as a .doc file to your chairperson again stating your first and last name, as well as your committee abbreviation and the words 'position paper' in the email subject! The deadline for your position paper is **Friday November 1st 20:00!**

Mails of your chairpersons:

AFET I>>>Data Makashvili and Nanuka Gurgenidze: davit.makashvili@gmail.com and nano_gurgenidze@yahoo.com

AFET II>>>Mariam Tirkia and George Gvenetadze: maritirkia@gmail.com and gvetoo@hotmail.com

DROI>>>Akaki Kukhaleishvili and Sophie Samkharadze: a.kukhaleishvili@yahoo.com and sophie.samkharadze@yahoo.com

LIBE I>>>Mariam Tchubabria and Erekle Antadze: m.tchubabria@eyp.org.ge and erekle.antadze@gmail.com

LIBE>>>Erekle Chanchibadze and Veriko Devidze: erekle707@hotmail.com and veriko.devidze94@gmail.com

AFET I (THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS) 6

AFET II (THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS) 9

DROI (THE COMMITTEE ON HUMANRIGHTS) 12

LIBE I (THE COMMITTEE ON CIVIL LIBERTIES, JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS I) 15

LIBE II (THE COMMITTEE ON CIVIL LIBERTIES, JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS II) 18

AFET I (THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS)

Overview

Unceasing crisis in Syria brings devastation and instability not only to the country but to the entire region:

What actions should international community take in order to mitigate the tension in Syria?

What can be the role of the EU in the process of peacemaking?

The wave of Arab unrest that started with the Tunisian revolution of January 2011 reached Syria in mid-March. Protest in Syria initially started by local unrests which were responses to abuse of power in Syrian regime. Isolated protest escalated into a nationwide conflict. Protestors were demanding president Bashar Al-Assad's resignation from the post and the end to five decade rule of Ba'ath party. Al-Assad response towards these protests was radical: according to the United Nations more than 35,000 people have been killed during Syrian so far.

Assad's response towards Syrian protest has been condemned by many in international system including the League of Arab States (LAS), the UN, and the EU. On 12th of November, the Arab League voted to suspend Syria from the organization if Al-Assad's government would not stop violence against protestors by 16th of November, and invited Syria's opposition parties to join talks in the League's headquarters in Cairo. The EU has also imposed an arms embargo on Syria and has frozen assets of a number of individuals and entities deemed to be supporting the regime. Unfortunately this and other sanctions have been ineffective until now.

In late 2011 and early 2012 Syria has let LAS observers into country. But their presence did not reduce the violence. The Arab League (same as LAS) has also called on Syrian President Bashar al-Assad to delegate power to his vice president and to have elections under a "transitional national unity government" to end 10 months of bloody uprising. This has been rejected by Syria.

In early April, Kofi Annan, the United Nations special representative, reported that the Assad government had agreed to a six-point peace strategy, which lays out a framework for a cease-fire that does not involve president leaving power. Afterwards the cease-fire deadline, fighting was said to have dropped off evidently, although Syrian troops had not dragged back to their barracks as promised.

On the 4th of February the most massive killings throughout the Syria war had taken place in the city of Homs taking more than 200 lives took place. The same day UN Security Council was voting for a resolution to back up Arab league plan to resolve crisis in Syria. But it was vetoed by Russia stating that "it was not their place to intervene in other countries domestic affairs".

Meanwhile the crisis in Syria effects economic and national security to neighboring countries as Turkey. The situation escalated into different level after a bomb landed on the Turkish side of a boarder killing 5 civilians. Syria has admitted that its shelling killed Turkish civilians and apologizes for their actions stating that it was an accident and bomb was not meant for Turkish civilians. Syria apologized for their actions and promised that such action would not be repeated again.

On October 9th Turkish parliamentarian Muharrem Ince from the Republican People's Party came forward saying "This is how to incite a third world war". Even though both sides have confronted and admitted they did not want to have a war the fire does not seem to stop even after a four day Islamic holiday of Eid al-Adha's ceasefire. This incident has proved once again that the Syrian offspring is not something that could be ignored and that quick and affective measures should be taken.

The primary discussion of this topic lies in determining which of the possible situations will pave Syria's way for a more democratic system and which direction this way will take. Should the EU and international community continue to impose sanctions without taking any direct actions? Or should they turn to military intervention and in this case how will it be more affective?

BY Nanuka Gurgenidze and Data Makashvili

Key words: civil war in Syria, Syrian offspring, Arab Spring, UN security council (UNSC), League of Arab States (LAS), Bashar al-Assad, Responsibility to protect (R2P), military intervention, High representative of the union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, boarder war.

Introductory materials

European Union and Syria:

Popular Protest in North Africa and the Middle East (VII): The Syrian Regime's Slow-motion Suicide

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/128379.pdf<http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/middle-east-north-africa/egypt-syria-lebanon/syria/109-popular-protest-in-north-africa-and-the-middle-east-vii-the-syrian-regimes-slow-motion-suicide.aspx>

Official sources:

http://eeas.europa.eu/syria/index_en.htm

http://www.eu-un.europa.eu/articles/en/article_11783_en.htm

News article, papers and other material

Kofi Annan's six-point plan for Syria:

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/128379.pdf

<http://middleeast.about.com/od/syria/a/What-Is-Kofi-Annans-Peace-Plan-For-Syria.htm>

Veto on Syria sparks Arab and Western fury

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2012/02/201224162422121856.html/>

Bashar al-Assad:

http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/people/a/bashar_al_assad/index.html

Turkey and Syria:

<http://edition.cnn.com/2012/10/04/opinion/opinion-gerges-syria-turkey-war/index.html>

Syria Fighting Rages on Third Day of UN-Brokered Truce

<http://www.businessweek.com/news/2012-10-28/syria-fighting-rages-on-third-day-of-un-brokered-truce>

Turkey-Syria border conflict escalates

<http://www.france24.com/en/20121008-syria-turkey-cross-fire-conflict-escalates-shelling-hatay-shara-assad-gul-ahmet>

AFET II (THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS)

Overview

The Eastern Partnership (EaP) was launched as a common endeavor of the EU and its Eastern European Partners to bring economic, social and regional development to its partner countries.

Taking into consideration that partner countries have different expectations of the EaP, how should the latter respond effectively to democratic development challenges arising from the region?

The EU's 2003 security strategy defines stability, prosperity and democracy in the immediate neighborhood as a key European interest. The European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) was launched in 2003 to meet these objectives by offering the EU's 16 immediate geographical neighbors—from Morocco across to Syria in the Mediterranean to Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan in the east— a degree of economic integration, financial assistance and political dialogue in exchange for reforms and democratization.

The Eastern Partnership (EaP) was launched in response to criticism that the ENP failed to distinguish between these countries that merely happened to be “ neighbors of Europe”, like Jordan or Morocco and “European neighbors” like Ukraine that might one day seek to join the European Union. The EaP was initiated as a joint Swedish-Polish proposal which seeks to complement the ENP by deepening bilateral relations between the EU and the six “eastern neighborhood” states— Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan. The EaP has five so-called “flagship initiatives”, covering border management, small and medium businesses, promotion of regional electricity markets and energy efficiency, the southern energy corridor, and cooperation on natural and man-made disasters. The main goal of the Eastern Partnership is to create the necessary conditions to accelerate political association and further economic integration between the EU and interested partner countries.

The multilateral track is the EaP's main uniqueness. Unlike in many other region of the world, the EU did not previously support any regional groupings in the former Soviet space due to the sensitive issue of Russia's participation or exclusion as well as disputes between some of the Eastern European countries. Nor did the ENP emphasise the regional dimension. The EaP introduced a relatively simple operation structure for the multilateral dimension which is considered as one of its main strengths. Since most EU aid goes to the national governments, it has not given sufficient support to the foundations for democracy such as independent media, civil society or local communities in the Eastern Neighborhood. The lion's share of EU's aid is

budget support. Views from the region indicate that the EU should do much more to empower non-state agents of change vis-à-vis the governments and make them equal partners at both national and regional levels, rather than just creating the institutions.

Promotion of regional cooperation has been promising so far. But the reality is quite the opposite: rather than a unified region, there is just a group of countries with different interests and internal conflicts. There is a long way to go before the area becomes a region in a meaningful sense, with effective regional relations, cross border cooperation, economic cooperation, mobility and so on.

The EaP is viewed differently by the member countries. The EU leverage on these countries also differs. The partner countries have different expectations of the EaP. This makes the latter's regional approach to the Eastern neighbors a difficult matter for the EU. Some partners are closer to the EU in terms of democratic development and aspirations and can transform through EU positive conditionality. Other states in the neighborhood insist on the application of a joint ownership principle, meaning that they prefer an equal partnership rather than the EU imposing conditions of democracy and good governance on them.

BY Mariam Tirkia and George Gvenetadze

Key words: European Neighborhood Policy (ENP), Eastern Partnership (EaP), Flagship initiatives, regional cooperation, multilateral dimension, democracy, EU leverage.

Introductory materials

Eastern Partnership : the Opening Report

http://pdc.ceu.hu/archive/00003766/01/Report_EP_2009_eng.pdf

Strategic objectives of Eastern Partnership

http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/country/enpi_eastern_rsp_en.pdf

Official sources

Eastern Partnership Review

http://www.eceap.eu/ul/Review_No7.pdf

Is the EU's Eastern Partnership promoting Europeanisation?-Analysis

<http://www.eurasiareview.com/29092011-is-the-eus-eastern-partnership-promoting-europeanisation-analysis/>

“Eastern Partnership” : Analysis of the initiative and corresponding Russian behavior

<http://eurodialogue.org/eastern-partnership/18>

News article, papers and other material

Joint declaration of Eastern Partnership Summit

https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/124843.pdf

The EU's Eastern Partnership : One year backwards

<http://www.fride.org/publication/764/the-eu'-s-eastern-partnership:-one-year-backwards>

The EU plus Six- the Eastern Partnership

http://fes.ge/de/images/Fes_Files/2010-GEO/gromadzki.pdf

DROI (THE COMMITTEE ON HUMANRIGHTS)

Overview

Video footages depicted sexual and psychological abuses on inmates in one of the notorious prisons of Georgia revealed systemic violations of human rights in the country:

How EU can collaborate with the new government of Georgia in order to avoid human rights abuse not only in prisons but other parts of society? What should be the EU policy to enrich the Human rights development in Georgia?

Shocking videos, confirming long-standing allegations about inmates' abuse, came out in the midst of heated pre-election rallies, preceding the October 1, 2012 parliamentary elections. Even though the facts of human rights violation were being recorded from earlier times in Georgia, we have seen no measures taken by former government of authorities to tackle the problem.

Former public Defender, Giorgi Tugushi, who had been reporting about abuse of inmates in the prison number 8 in his Annual Reports, said that "syndrome of impunity of those behind mistreatment of prisoners led to the current situation". He has "referred number of such cases to the Georgian chief prosecutor's office, but in most of the cases investigation was either suspended or dragged out."

Once the videos were shown publicly the protests took off in several Georgian cities including Tbilisi, Batumi, Poti, Gori etc. It was evaluated as a horrible human rights abuse by international society, including the EU. The European Union expressed deep concerns over a video showing inmates at a prison in Georgia being abused and tortured by prison guards, and urged the former Soviet Republic to ensure that such incidents do not happen. EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton said in a statement that she was "appalled by the shocking footage of abuses committed against inmates in Gldani prison," and stressed that all countries are "obliged to comply with the unconditional prohibition of any form of torture and ill-treatment."

The new government has been recently chosen by elections on October 1, 2012. Georgian people are looking forward to taking steps toward advancing the human rights issues in the country and new government has an essential role to play here. As integration in EU still remains the core foreign policy strategy for Georgia it is obvious that new government has to fulfill European regulations in order to be accepted in the Union.

As we all know, Human rights, democracy and the rule of law are core values of the European Union. Embedded in its Founding Treaty, they were reinforced when the EU adopted the Charter of Fundamental Rights in 2000, and strengthened further when the Charter became legally

binding with the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009. Countries like Georgia seeking to join the EU must respect those values shared by international community. Moreover, all trade and cooperation agreements with third world countries contain a clause stipulating that human rights are an essential element in relations between the parties.

Hence, the task of new government is to formulate an action plan to strengthen Human rights in Georgia. Also, the role of non-governmental organizations that work on human rights and democracy issues in Georgia is extremely important.

BY Akaki Kukhaleishvili and Sophie Samkharadze

Key words: Human rights abuse in Georgian prison, Human Rights in Georgia, EU policy on Human Rights and rule of law

Introductory materials

Georgia: Investigate Sexual Abuse in Prison

[Http://www.hrw.org/news/2012/09/19/georgia-investigate-sexual-abuse-prison](http://www.hrw.org/news/2012/09/19/georgia-investigate-sexual-abuse-prison)

Official links

Georgia: UN condemns prisoner abuses exposed in television footage

[Http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?Newsid=42949&Cr=Georgia&Cr1=#.UI5Idm_mili](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?Newsid=42949&Cr=Georgia&Cr1=#.UI5Idm_mili)

The EU Strategic Framework on Human Rights and Democracy

[Http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/georgia/documents/news/20120625_01_en.pdf](http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/georgia/documents/news/20120625_01_en.pdf)

Human rights based approaches in EU development policies

[Http://www.ihrnetwork.org/eu-development-policies_215.htm](http://www.ihrnetwork.org/eu-development-policies_215.htm)

EU and Georgia Dialogue on Human Rights

[Http://eeas.europa.eu/human_rights/dialogues/docs/20120626_eu_georgia_hr_dialogue_press_release_en.pdf](http://eeas.europa.eu/human_rights/dialogues/docs/20120626_eu_georgia_hr_dialogue_press_release_en.pdf)

News article, papers and other material

Int'l Reactions to Georgia Prison Abuse

[Http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?Id=25234](http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?Id=25234)

ADDITIONAL READNG

Report to the Georgian government on the visit to Georgia carried out by the European committee for the prevention of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

[Http://www.cpt.coe.int/documents/geo/2010-27-inf-eng.pdf](http://www.cpt.coe.int/documents/geo/2010-27-inf-eng.pdf)

Undue Punishment

[Http://www.hrw.org/reports/2006/09/13/undue-punishment](http://www.hrw.org/reports/2006/09/13/undue-punishment)

Human Rights watch – Georgia _ worlds report 2012

<http://www.hrw.org/world-report-2012/world-report-2012-georgia>

Principles of Europe a n prison l aw a and policy

[Http://fds.oup.com/www.oup.co.uk/pdf/0-19-922843-4.pdf](http://fds.oup.com/www.oup.co.uk/pdf/0-19-922843-4.pdf)

Prison Reform in Serbia as an example

[Http://www.coe.org.rs/eng/tdoc_sr/coe_office_in_belgrade/projects_sr/?Conid=143](http://www.coe.org.rs/eng/tdoc_sr/coe_office_in_belgrade/projects_sr/?Conid=143)

LIBE I (THE COMMITTEE ON CIVIL LIBERTIES, JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS I)

Overview

Considering ongoing economic crisis fueling Catalan separatist movement in Spain:

How should official Madrid respond to the Catalan demands? What regulations should the EU propose in order to support peaceful coexistence of its member states with their respective separatist regions?

Separatism in Spain is not a new issue at all – its roots go back to the first half of the 20th century. Namely, it started in the regions called Catalonia and Basque Autonomous Community between two world wars when the universe was preoccupied by the term self-determination of nations.

Chain of certain events has resulted in these regions to become increasingly active over the past few years. Artus Mas - the current President of Catalonia called for an early parliamentary election on 25th of November 2012, after the Spanish Prime Minister, Mariano Rajoy, refused to talk over a new financial model for Catalonia. In case Artus's party CiU, which claims to transform Catalonia into an independent state, wins majority sits the central government will have to face dramatic changes. As the referendum for independence is illegal according to the constitution this election is referred to be as a de facto referendum.

Following this event, on September 11, on the Catalan National Day, more than a million protesters flooded the streets of Barcelona (capital of Catalonia) demanding greater fiscal autonomy or independence, though the request has fallen on deaf ears in Madrid.

A catalyst of the problem is the ongoing economic crisis in the Europe. It disclosed the differences between the economics of Catalonia compared to that of the other regions of Spain. The Catalan economy has been one of the major powerhouses of Spain, accounting for 19% of the total Spanish GDP. Catalonia's economic prospects are bright and its anticipated GDP growth is above the EU average. Taken separately, GDP per capita for a citizen in Catalonia would be €30,700, but according to current Spanish constitution, the whole income of the region is transferred to central government from which it is distributed evenly among regions, as a result, the GDP per capita for residents of Catalonia is lowered by €1724. This problem is way more serious for the Basque Autonomous Community, which has the biggest GDP and GDP Per Capita in Spain.

However, country's political parties are divided on this issue: the People's Party supports more centralized Spain, with an unitary market, and usually doesn't support movements which lead to

a greater autonomy of the regions. On the other hand, the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party supports a federal state, with greater autonomy of the regions, but is also contrary to the total independence of one of them.

At the same time in the north part of the EU on October 15, 2012, an agreement was signed in the United Kingdom, by David Cameron and Alex Salmond to provide a legal framework for the referendum to be held on Scottish independence in 2014, with the guarantee of Scotland maintaining its membership of the European Union and Euro as its official currency. Regardless of the readiness of UK to accept the independence of Scotland the government does not lose its last chance to keep the union together and launches a commission to draw up a new devolution package. This fact further encourages the separatist movement of Catalonia in peaceful changes despite the fact that four MEPs notified Brussels about military intervention inside Catalonia.

As Open Democracy journalist, Ana Stanic writes the useful lesson for the Spanish government can be found from the Balkans nearest past as well it. In her opinion the government “must resist the temptation to use the economic crisis to centralize” and that “the time of centralised, top-down rule and the rule of political parties has passed. The countries in the EU which are bold enough to embrace this paradigm shift will be the ones who come out of the present crisis stronger.”

The future development of the scenario is very much dependent on the winner of 2012 Noble Prize for Peace- European Union as it has both authority and obligation to find a common ground for negotiations and compromise, which will satisfy and soothe both sides, while preserving the unity of European Union as a whole. As Ana Stanic says “The EU cannot aspire to evolve into a federation itself without ensuring that the will of the people throughout its lands is allowed to be heard and is respected.”

By M.Chubabria and Erekle Antadze

Key words: Separatism, independence, referendum, nationalism, fiscal autonomy,

Introductory material

[Would Scottish Independence Matter to Basques?](#)

<http://www.e-ir.info/2012/07/12/would-scottish-independence-matter-to-basques/>

Catalunya and Spain: more than time for dialogue

<http://www.opend4emocracy.net/ana-stanic/catalunya-and-spain-more-than-time-for-dialogue>

Official Sources

Separatism movements inside European Union : SHAFQA Exclusive

<http://shafagna.com/english/shafaq/item/8316-separatism-movements-inside-european-union-shafagna-exclusive.html>

News article, papers and other material

Catalan Euro MPs ask the EU to intervene if there is “a clear risk” of a military threat against Catalonia

<http://www.catalannewsagency.com/news/politics/catalan-euro-mps-ask-eu-intervene-if-there-%E2%80%9C-clear-risk%E2%80%9D-military-threat-against-catal>

Scotland ponders whether independence and separation are the same thing

<http://www.economist.com/news/britain/21564852-scotland-ponders-whether-independence-and-separation-are-same-thing>

Call for Early Elections in Catalonia

<http://europeangreens.eu/news/early-elections-catalonia>

Artur Mas calls early elections for November 25

http://www.typicallyspanish.com/news/publish/article_35813.shtml

Cataluña: an election for independence?

<http://www.surinenglish.com/20121001/news/spain/cataluna-election-independence-201210011158.html>

Catalonia warns EU that million-strong march cannot be ignored

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/sep/13/catalonia-million-march>

LIBE II (THE COMMITTEE ON CIVIL LIBERTIES, JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS II)

Overview

Many illegal immigrants in the EU flow through Greece, which is overwhelmed by the flood of incomers:

How should the EU develop a comprehensive migration policy which responds to Europe's needs and fights illegal immigration without turning Europe into a fortress?

After the horrors and genocides of World War II, Europeans showed commitment to open their doors for needy immigrants. Different governments have taken different positions on the issue. The more prosperous European states have pushed for tougher laws or restrictions on the notion of free movement within member states, while the remaining states see immigration as way of developing their economy in terms of influx of labor force.

EU citizenship brings with it a number of important rights, namely to move and reside freely within the EU. Membership conditionality and difficulties of entering the Union have encouraged illegal immigration. Currently this matter raises many political, economic and social issues and has become a source of major debate in the Member States.

According to BBC report over 80% of the illegal immigrants entering the European Union now pass through Greece. The country has become a place of destination and transit for unauthorized immigrants, mostly from post-Soviet countries, Asia, Africa, Middle East.

The geography of Greece, which became particularly important after the formation of Shengen Area, has also contributed to the country's transition towards a "warehouse" of illegal immigration to Europe. Located at the southeastern "gate" of the European Union with extensive coastlines and easily crossable borders, Greece has become a common transit country for those seeking entry into the EU.

Illegal immigration to Greece has increased rapidly over the past several years. Tough immigration policies in Spain and Italy and agreements with their neighboring African countries to combat illegal immigration have changed the direction of African immigration flows toward Greece. At the same time, flows from Asia and the Middle East — mainly Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Bangladesh — to Greece appear to have increased as well.

In 2010, 90 percent of all apprehensions for unauthorized entry into the European Union took place in Greece, compared to 75 percent in 2009 and 50 percent in 2008. In 2010, 132,524

persons were arrested for "illegal entry or stay" in Greece. Nearly half of those arrested (52,469) were immediately deported, the majority of them being Albanians. Those not deported either applied for asylum or were issued a decision to self deport within one month — which effectively means unauthorized stay in the country.

The main points of entry for illegal immigration to Greece include the Greek-Albanian land border, the Greek-Turkish land border, and sea borders between Greece and Turkey. In the past three years, there has been a notable shift in illegal immigration flows from sea borders to the Greek-Turkish land border.

Since 2010, the land border with Turkey has been undergoing a humanitarian crisis related to the region's overcrowded detention centers, appalling hygiene and living conditions for asylum seekers, and human-rights violations perpetrated by Greek authorities. That was a main reason why the longtime European Union rule stipulating that an asylum must originate in the first country the immigrant entered was changed in January 2011, when the European Court of Human Rights ruled that sending asylum seekers back to Greece could infringe on their fundamental rights because the Greek system had become so saturated and living conditions were so poor. Moreover, EU refuses to further fund Greek border protection and concedes they are handicapped by an inflexible, long-term budget. EU officials state that Spain and Italy combined receive more funding because they are better at handling asylum requests.

Illegal immigration flows have already adapted in response to such efforts, however. Since the deployment of specialized Frontex (the European Union's agency for the management of external borders) teams in the region in October 2010 and the announcement of the construction of a fence in the northern part of the border, flows have increased 222 percent to the south at the Evros River crossing.

Different factors such as recent economic decline, highly porous borders, growing xenophobia, and ineffective legal and institutional framework for the regularization and integration of immigrants, have created a fragile environment in Greece for the management of immigration.

BY Erekle Chanchibadze and Veriko Devidze

Keywords: Illegal immigration, Greece Border protection, FRONTEX, Greece-Turkey border, EU boarder protection policy

Introductory materials:

Illegal Immigration Emerges as New Crisis for Greece—And EU :

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10000872396390444506004577617383132000476.html>

Official sources

Policy priorities in the fight against illegal immigration:

http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/justice_freedom_security/free_movement_of_persons_asylum_immigration/l14525_en.htm

News article, papers and other material

Greece: Illegal Immigration in the Midst of Crisis:

<http://www.migrationinformation.org/Profiles/display.cfm?ID=884>

Would-be immigrants to Europe can go almost anywhere—for a price:

<http://www.economist.com/node/21549012>

For Illegal Immigrants, Greek Border Offers a Back Door to Europe:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/15/world/europe/illegal-immigrants-slip-into-europe-by-way-of-greek-border.html>

Illegal immigration is a European problem, which Greece is trying to solve on its own:

http://www.grreporter.info/en/illegal_immigration_european_problem_which_greece_trying_resolve_its_own/6543

European criticism against Greece on illegal immigration and prisons:

http://www.grreporter.info/en/european_criticisms_against_greece_illegal_immigration_and_prisons/4227