Press release

Migration and development: security and economic interests prevail in EU’s policies

(Brussels, 20/01/2016) Security and economic interests continue prevailing in the EU’s policy and institutional approach to migration and development, says CONCORD in their new policy paper “Coherence for migration and security – and what about development?”. This paper addresses EU migration policies and Policy Coherence for Development, and the extent to which EU policies, have effectively contributed to bring about sustainable development in developing countries.

CONCORD deeply regrets that the development goals, amongst which poverty eradication and the respect of human rights, are undermined by the emphasis on border controls and security concerns, both in terms of political priorities and financial and technical assistance.

“The EU and its members have signed up to the SDGs, acknowledging the positive contribution to migrants and migration to sustainable development. Its policies however shift towards reducing migration, preventing migrants from coming to Europe and encouraging their return.” says Bob Van Dillen, Chair of the CONCORD Migration and Development Task Force.

CONCORD is convinced that migration can work for development and benefit the migrants, the EU destination countries and the countries of origin. Therefore, CONCORD identified key recommendations to enhance the development perspective, translated into the integration of policy objectives that put humans, their rights and their legitimate aspiration for a decent life at the centre, while tackling the systemic issues as well as preventing forced migration and displacement in its external migration policies.

“Migrants are key development actors. Development potentials can evolve and be of benefit for both their residence and origin countries only when Human Rights are at the heart of migration policies” says Johannes Trimmel, CONCORD President. “CONCORD will keep advocating for rights-based migration and development policies to de-mystify misconceptions and avoid incoherence.”

The current policies are pushing people towards irregular migration channels by, on one hand, building walls, following restrictive visa schemes, hardly offering opportunities for labour migration, and on the other hand, contributing towards the conditions forcing people to move. The implementation of the newly adopted Sustainable Development Goals is an opportunity to reemphasize the need for rights-based EU external migration policies and to promote coherence with longer-term development objectives.

ENDS

Download the report

Link to the press release

Link to the launch event invitation
Notes for editors:

1. CONCORD is the European confederation of Relief and Development NGOs, made up of 28 national associations, 20 international networks and 3 associate members that represent over 2,600 NGOs, supported by millions of citizens across Europe.

2. Since 2009, CONCORD produces a biannual Spotlight Report on Policy Coherence for Development to raise the awareness of EU political leaders and citizens on the need to apply changes to some European domestic and external policies in order to eradicate global poverty. The Spotlight policy paper on Migration and Development is the last of a series of thematic policy papers, which together constitute the PCD Spotlight report of 2015. For more information, please consult CONCORD website: http://www.concordeurope.org/publications/item/421-spotlight-on-policy-coherence-for-development-2015

3. According to the UN, there are about 232 million international migrants, among them are 35 million children and youth under the age of 20, seeking economic opportunities elsewhere, or escaping from persecution, war and violence. Out of this 232 million, 33.9 million migrants live in the EU, of which 14.3 million has citizenship of another EU member state: http://www.unfpa.org/migration

4. CONCORD position towards the Valletta Summit on migration: http://www.concordeurope.org/coherent-policies/migration

5. On same day, CONCORD, FORIM and ICMC are releasing a joint publication “10 myths of migration and development”, to respond to common prejudices and propose alternative analyses.

Media Contacts:
Helene Debaisieux, CONCORD Communications Coordinator:
Helene.Debaisieux@concordeurope.org, Tel +32 2 7438793

Blandine Bouniol, CONCORD Policy and Advocacy Coordinator:
Blandine.Bouniol@concordeurope.org Tel +32 2 7438761