



The Kingdom of Sweden

Position Paper

Concerning the Proposal for a Regulation on the European Union Agency for Asylum and repealing Regulation (EU) No 439/ 2010

Introduction

Over the last two years Sweden has welcomed a high number of refugees. In 2014 Sweden registered about 81 325 asylum seekers. In proportion to only 10 Mio inhabitants this was the highest admission rate in the European Union. In 2015 more than 163 000 asylum seekers arrived in our country. Sometimes even more than 10 000 people per week.

Because of this flow of refugees Sweden faced a enorm crisis last autumn. The Swedish Government had to reconsider the liberal migration policy because the country cannot handle the mass of refugees anymore. First the Swedish administration has to adapt to the new challenges.

Therefore, Sweden closed the borders and restricted the possibility of being granted a residence permit in Sweden. These decisions were necessary to focus on the people who have arrived the last years and to bring structure and certainty in the critical situation of the country.

Sweden's position regarding a common European Asylum System

Since January 1995 when the Kingdom of Sweden joined the European Union, Sweden always stood up for an increasing integration and the establishment of a strong and powerful union. Only by cooperation we are able to develop and cope challenges! This is why Sweden also aims for a common European solution in the current migration crisis.

This crisis has shown that the European hitherto cooperation concerning asylum and migration is archaic and overstrained.

Because of this lacking cooperation on European level in addition to the lacking helpfulness of some European countries, Sweden and other countries were forced to close their borders and to push the problem to other countries of the EU especially the south Europeans. This is no sustainable solution! Sweden wants a European agreement and coordination! All EU Member States have to bear their responsibility to maintain the EU's external border and live up to the asylum rules. That's why the European Union has to establish a permanent and obligatory redistribution mechanism in the event of disasters. A voluntary system is not enough and not able to solve the crisis, like the current situation shows us. No country should shirk responsibility!

Furthermore, the European Union has to continue to combat the people smugglers and prioritise the saving of lives. For example by establishing more legal routes. The European Union has to ensure the efficient and humane return of refugees and agree on a returnee programme. This can only be done with the help of a common agreement on a system of safe countries of origin. At least the European Union's asylum and border agencies must be strengthened, to assist member states in critical situations and complete the asylum and reception system of Member States.

Sweden's position to the new mandate of the EASO

The Swedish Commissioner for Home Affairs, Cecilia Malmström visited the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) in September 2014 to discuss EASO's achievements and the progress made by EASO in enhancing the implementation of

the Common European Asylum System. She gave positive feedback and confirmed the Swedish Government in the support of the CEAS.

Sweden is sympathetic to the current Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Union Agency for Asylum and repealing Regulation No 439/ 2010 published 4th May 2016.

Especially the regulations which aim for a more uniform legal and operational basis like Chapter 3, Article 12 which provides the setting of operational standards, guidelines and best practice corresponds Sweden's aim of an increasing cooperation and unification in the field of asylum.

Also the Swedish perception of a uniform determination of safe countries of origin and safe third countries by the Agency is fulfilled by Chapter 3, Article 11.

Furthermore, Sweden register with delight that Member States are hindered from shirking responsibility through an obligatory monitoring by the Agency (cf. Chapter 5, Article 14, Passage 1). But still the proposal is lacking consequences and sanctions when a country achieves a negative monitoring and doesn't take actions to improve. That's why Sweden claims obligatory actions after a negative monitoring. When a country does not fulfil this obligation there should be sanctions to ensure the efficiency of our asylum system. Otherwise the effort of monitoring would be useless and a waste of time and money at the expense of people who are seeking help.

Finally, Sweden requests to extend the deployment of the experts from the Member States in the asylum support teams to a minimum of 60 days (cf. Chapter 6, Article 17, Passage 7) to secure an effective work.

Conclusion

All in all, we demand a continuing development to an European Agency for Asylum which provides an permanent and obligatory redistribution mechanism. The given proposal is a step in the right direction but requests further arrangements to secure an efficient and justice European solution.

For the Kingdom of Sweden, Paulina Kraenzlein and Nora Schuches