



PLATFORM FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ON UNDOCUMENTED MIGRANTS

PICUM Newsletter February 2006

Finalized on 3 February 2006

This newsletter focuses on news items and policy developments concerning the basic social rights of undocumented migrants in Europe. It is currently available in Word format and on the PICUM website (www.picum.org) in the following languages: English, German, Dutch, Spanish, French, Italian and Portuguese. You are invited to distribute this newsletter widely.

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1. Death at the Border

- 368 undocumented migrants died while trying to reach Spain in 2005, observed the Asociación Pro Derechos Humanos de Andalucía (APDHA) in its annual report. Nonetheless, this figure does not account for deaths in trucks or in the desert, which would bring the total number to more than 700. The APDHA said that the majority of the 368 undocumented migrants died while crossing by sea to the Canary Islands (226). This figure contrasts with the official governmental statistics, which indicate a 70% decrease in the number of undocumented migrants arriving in Fuerteventura, but the APDHA explained that since it is becoming increasingly difficult to make the crossing by sea, many immigrants most likely die even before being intercepted at sea by Spanish coast guards. 98 of the total deaths occurred in the crossing to Andalusia – the highest number of deaths since 1997,

according to APDHA. Sub-Saharan Africans were the majority of the victims (267), followed by North Africans (85) and for the first time last year, Western Saharans (16). (Source: Agencia EFE, 20.1.2006) To read APDHA's annual report: www.apdha.org

- Three Moroccan undocumented migrants drowned in the Mediterranean Sea and five were missing on 23 January when the dinghy they were traveling capsized in the region of Al-Hoceima in the north of Morocco. A total of 54 undocumented migrants were on board and were headed for Spain. <http://listes.rezo.net/archives/migreurop/2006-01/msg00102.html>
- At least 30 Sub-Saharan undocumented migrants died when the boat they were travelling on to the Canary Islands sunk off the coast of Mauritania on 12 December 2005. A total of 44 people were on board. The bodies of four undocumented migrants were found and twenty-six were missing. The fourteen survivors were rescued by coast guards, who were patrolling the area for illegal fishing boats when they came across the shipwreck. <http://listes.rezo.net/archives/migreurop/2005-12/msg00044.html>
- A Cameroonian undocumented migrant who had been wounded by gunshot during the storming of the Spanish-Moroccan border in Melilla in the fall of 2005 (see PICUM Newsletter Oct.-Nov. 2005) died in a hospital in Nador in the beginning of January 2006. In addition to the undocumented migrants who were killed by gunshot during the events in both Ceuta and Melilla, many were wounded and were brought to the hospital in Nador with different degrees of wounds and injuries. <http://listes.rezo.net/archives/migreurop/2006-01/msg00052.html>
- Four groups in the Spanish Parliament (Esquerra Republicana, Izquierda Verde (IU-ICV), BNG and la Chunta Aragonesista) submitted a proposal to the Spanish Congress to create an independent parliamentary committee to clarify the deaths of "at least fourteen people" during the crisis in which 100 people attacked the fences separating Spain from Morocco in October 2005. The initiative by the political groups echoes the denunciations made by more than 700 NGOs in Andalusia in November, who also demanded a parliamentary investigation. The NGOs, headed by the Asociación Pro Derechos Humanos de Andalucía and Andalucía Acoge, demand the Spanish government to investigate the "irregular actions" committed by Spanish border guards and their possible involvement in the deaths. <http://www.apdha.org/documentos/peticion%20comis%20diputados.doc>
- On 3 December 2000, a Moroccan undocumented migrant was killed by gunshot by a member of the Spanish Security Forces on Tarifa beach (Cádiz) immediately after disembarking from a *patera*. In 2004, a county court qualified this event as a simple offense. Two organizations - Asociación Pro Derechos Humanos de Andalucía and ATIME - appealed against the court's decision before a higher court (Audiencia Provincial de Cádiz), which has just ruled that the county court must treat the death as manslaughter during the court proceedings. In line with the reasoning used by the appellants, it has been admitted that the security agent may have abused of his gun during the incident (Source: Asociación Pro Derechos Humanos de Andalucía www.apdha.org).
- When ten Nigerian undocumented migrants were discovered on a ship on a lock on the Escaut River in Flanders, Belgium, they told authorities that two of their group had disappeared. The group included twelve undocumented migrants who had set out from Lagos on a ship that first stopped in Livorno, Italy, and was headed to Antwerp, Belgium. The journey lasted more than 10 days, in which the undocumented migrants had nearly nothing to eat or drink. When they came to the Escaut River in Belgium, two of the migrants tried to drink water from the Escaut River, fell overboard and drowned.

http://www.rtf.be/rtbf_2000/bin/view_something.cgi?type=article&id=0183598_article&menu=default&pub=RTBF.PORTAIL%2FPORTAIL.FR.la_taille.SP.SOCI

2. News from EU Member States + Switzerland + U.S.A.

General

- What happens to asylum seekers who are sent home? As part of a BBC World Service investigation, journalist Jenny Cuffe followed the footsteps of failed asylum seekers sent back from Europe to the Democratic Republic of Congo. What she found raised questions over how European governments are treating those they deport. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4483364.stm>
- Russia regularized 7,500 undocumented migrants from the former Soviet republics during the last trimester of 2005, indicated Viatcheslav Postavnine, Vice-Director of the Russian Department of Migration, on 26 January. The regularization scheme was carried out in ten Russian regions and particularly emphasized Moscow, which relies heavily on undocumented workers. It is the first step of a plan to legalize some of the millions of undocumented workers employed by Russian businesses. Mr. Postavnine stated that Russia has approximately 10 million undocumented migrants, of which 80% are from the Commonwealth of Independent States. <http://www.lemonde.fr/web/article/0,1-0@2-3214,36-734996@51-730510,0.html>
- The European Network Preventing Violence Against Children & Young People is an open meeting point of organisations and professionals promoting children's rights and preventing violence against children and young people. The Network currently consists of 290 members from 35 countries. Since 2001 members have been exchanging information, participating in debates and conferences and accessing international funds to promote the aims of the network and their local objectives. The network would like to expand its membership (which is free of charge), especially to organizations in new EU Member States. More info: <http://www.omega-graz.at/homeEN.html>

France

- French Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy gave a speech on 12 January to introduce a new law on "managed migration," to be possibly adopted by the Parliament in spring. A 2003 law already changed entry and residence conditions of foreigners in France, but this new law would give priority to highly qualified workers, students, and professors, who would receive a three-year renewable residence permit. Another measure to be introduced is the end of automatic renewal of 10-year residence permits to be replaced by case-by-base studies. In December, French migrants' organisations Cimade, Comede, FASTI, GISTI and the Collectif des sans-papiers, together with Act Up Paris, the Ligue des droits de l'homme (LDH) and the Mouvement contre le racisme et pour l'amitié entre les peuples (Mrap) denounced in the strongest possible terms this "governmental plan for 'throw-away' immigration" which "leads to a radical denial of fundamental human rights". Source: Nadia Benjelloun, Le Matin, 23.01.2006
- In the department of Seine-et-Marne, 43 undocumented migrants, including women and children, conducted a hunger strike from 18 December to mid-January to protest their situation. They were all arrested in mid-January, extremely weak after a 38-day hunger strike. Some of have now been released. Sources: Coordination nationale des sans papiers coorndatsanspap@wanadoo.fr and www.gisti.org

- On 24 December, French authorities deported three unaccompanied minors to Mali, to be handed over to the Minors' Protection Unit. One of the three children, an 8-year old Malian boy, was trying to join his mother in France, following the death of his grandmother who had previously taken care of him in Mali. His mother is employed and a legal resident of France, but lives in a 17-square meter apartment, which does not meet the minimal conditions of a 25-square meter residence for family reunification. Two other children, a 10 year-old Congolese girl and a 10 year-old Rwandese girl, were also deported after spending several days in the transit zone of the Roissy airport in Paris.
http://www.walf.sn/societe/suite.php?rub=4&id_art=25132
- According to a circular from the Ministry of the Interior, prefects have been asked to "improve the rotation rate in reception centres for asylum seekers" by reducing the average duration of their stay in these centres from 19 to 10 months and by making arrangements for their deportation when they have been refused asylum. This new directive gives prefects the possibility to reduce financial support for reception centers that they would consider as "abnormally occupied." AFP 03.01.06
- Despite the publication on 31 October 2005 of a circular from the Ministry of the Interior suspending the deportation of parents of school children until the end of the scholar year, approximately 50 undocumented migrants, mostly fathers of school age children, have been placed in detention. Most were released after the intervention of NGOs Cimade and RESF but at least four are still under arrest and three were deported: the father of an Armenian girl in school in Dole (Jura), the father of a 7 year-old Congolese girl, and the father of a Turkish boy in school in EREA near Rennes. Moreover, associations, parents of pupils and teachers continue to demand the regularization of young undocumented migrants and parents of minors attending school in France.
www.educationsansfrontieres.org
- During a police round-up of migrants in Calais 2003, Jean-Claude Lenoir and Charles Frammezelle, two volunteers of the humanitarian organization C'SUR Collectif, protested against the deplorable violence of the police, and were put on trial for contempt of police officers. In the fall of 2005, a court decision was issued and the activists received a total of €8.000,00 in fines and suspended sentences for contempt of police officers. The association SALAM Calais has launched an appeal for solidarity with the activists and is asking for contributions to help them to pay their fines. Contact: salam.calais@club.fr

Spain

- Spain is accelerating measures to deport unaccompanied Moroccan children. On 2 December 2005, Madrid and Rabat agreed to immediately build two reception centres for Moroccan children repatriated from Spain. These two reception centres will be financed entirely by Spain and will be followed by the construction of other two centres in the next two years. (Migration News Sheet, January 2006).
- According to the Catalan Data Institute (Institut Català de les Dones), one third of women subject to gender violence in Catalonia are immigrants. The Catalan Association of Separated and Divorced Women affirmed that only women with legal residence permits denounce aggressions, and that "there is a rather big group of undocumented women living in hell who do not report aggressions to the police." (El Periódico de Cataluña, 23.1.06)
- The number of boats intercepted with immigrants trying to reach the Spanish coasts decreased by 23% in 2005, announced the Spanish Office of Immigration and Emigration on 6 January 2006. In

addition, the number of arrested immigrants from these boats decreased by 25%. The Spanish Secretary of Immigration highlighted the positive outcome of strengthening human and material resources as well as the re-launching of negotiations between Spain and Morocco. In addition, it stressed that the Spanish Government will continue with its line of action in the fight against illegal migration. (Source: Europa Press (9.12.2005) and Terra (05.01.06))

- Following the new arrival of Sub-Saharanans last December, Rabat and Madrid have decided to strengthen control of their borders. Morocco envisages the allocation of human and material resources close to the border with Algeria. These measures will include the use of new technologies, such as surveillance cameras of this area. In addition, the Spanish Government has started construction to raise the height of metallic fences aiming to avoid the entry of undocumented Sub-Saharan migrants and has even revealed plans to build up a third metallic fence. Spain will receive € 800 million from the European Union during 2007-2013 to support the fight against illegal migration. (Source: Libération (Casablanca) 06.01.05).

Italy

- The Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, Alvaro Gil-Robles, presented his report on the respect for human rights in Italy to the Committee of Ministers on 14 December 2005. The report follows official visits to Italy from 10-17 June 2005. The report identifies a number of shortcomings in Italy regarding the treatment of arriving foreigners, asylum and expulsion procedures, prison conditions, the administration of justice and the rights of persons with mental disabilities. The report also discusses the situation of unaccompanied minors in Italy and their placement in reception centers in various places throughout the country. The report concludes with recommendations to the Italian authorities.
http://www.coe.int/T/E/Commissioner%5FH.R/Communication%5FUnit/CommDH%282005%299_E.doc (English)
http://www.coe.int/T/F/Commissaire_D.H/Unit%E9_de_Communication/CommDH%282005%299_I_T.doc (Italian)
- Morocco is on the point of signing a joint memorandum with Italy on the repatriation of unaccompanied Moroccan minors who are currently living in Italy. This information was released by Nouzha Chekrouni, the minister responsible for Moroccans living abroad, in response to a question raised in Parliament. Ms. Chekrouni said that the Moroccan government will take all necessary measures to end the clandestine immigration of children as this phenomenon has negative repercussions on Morocco's image. <http://fr.allafrica.com/stories/200601130364.html>
- The Public Prosecutor of Crotone is currently investigating crimes of violence, kidnapping and rape of undocumented migrants in the Crotone detention center in the region of Calabria. Staff of the center have been tried for these crimes in recent years but some cases were closed because the victims were deported. Journalist Fabrizio Gatti (who wrote about his undercover experiences in the Lampedusa detention center - see PICUM November 2005 newsletter) interviewed a staff member working with the public prosecutor who wished to remain anonymous, who said that "judges can never prove such allegations (against staff of the detention center), because once an undocumented migrant files a complaint, they are immediately sent back to their countries of origin, because the immigration law allows it. If a judge really wishes to investigate such a crime, they have to question witnesses and victims in their countries of origin, using international commissions of inquiry that they are never able to obtain." (Source: Courrier international - n° 793 - 12 janv. 2006 http://www.courrierinternational.com/article.asp?obj_id=58955&provenance=zop.archives)

Greece

- According to surveys released by TNS ICAP and the European Monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC), Greeks seem to be the most negative among other Europeans vis-a-vis migrants. 65% see migrants as a threat for the country. The data, presented to the European Parliament, highlights gaps in the education system and the negative role the media plays. (*Logos, Press Time, Kerdos, Nafteboriki, Apogevmatini, Elkeftherotypia, 19-20 November*) nanou@unhcr.org
- The Ministry of Interior announced that the new deadline for the ongoing regularisation of undocumented migrants in Greece is 28 February 2006. The decision was announced after considering the low number of applications already submitted for legalisation. In a document addressed to the Ministries of the Interior and Public Order, the Greek Ombudsman underlined that the high cost and the existing institutional framework would allow only a tiny fraction (50,000) of migrants to apply for regularisation. (*Avgi, Apogevmatini, Chora, Vradini, Elefteros Typos, Elefterotypia, Kathimerini, Ethnos, Avriani 28 December, Athens News 30 December*) (*Kerdos, Avgi, 21 January*) nanou@unhcr.org

Portugal

- In *The Changing Profile of Rough Sleepers: Immigrants from Eastern Europe Sleeping Rough in Lisbon*, Camila Rodrigues of the Jesuit Refugee Service Portugal (JRS), discusses the challenges faced by JRS in providing services to immigrants who are often undocumented and do not gain access to housing shelters in Lisbon. This article appeared in a special report by FEANTSA on social emergency and crisis intervention in large European cities. http://www.feantsa.org/files/Month%20Publications/EN/EN_winter_2005_social_emergency.pdf

UK

- The UK Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Nationality, Tony McNulty, announced that 54,000 asylum claimants and failed asylum seekers have been offered £3,000 each to leave the UK and withdraw their asylum claims or appeal in the next six months. The Home Office (IND) has requested that a pilot scheme be undertaken by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) to evaluate the effects that increased reintegration assistance may have on providing an incentive for failed asylum seekers, and those who wish to withdraw any outstanding asylum applications or appeals, to return to their country of origin. The pilot program began on 1 January will run for a period of six months. Source: <http://www.ncadc.org.uk/>
- Following a visit by the Children's Commissioner Al Aynsley-Green to Yarl's Wood Immigration removal centre, recommendations were issued to better take into account children's needs in this centre. Many of the children that the Commissioner interviewed had no idea why they were there, how long they were likely to remain there and what was required of them. They had never heard of the countries they were to be deported to, and some children were not aware that their parents were 'foreign nationals'. The report emphasises that detention should only be used after other measures such as electronic monitoring, reporting requirements, supervised accommodation, community supervision, incentivised compliance and voluntary return have been considered tried. <http://www.ncadc.org.uk/>

Ireland

- On 19 January, the Labour Party proposed a range of new measures to protect employment standards against a 'race to the bottom' fuelled by the use of migrant workers. Party leader Pat Rabbitte said that unless such measures were adopted, it might become necessary to introduce employment permits for workers coming from the new EU Member States. The party calls for reform of the existing work permit system so it does not bind workers to particular employers.
<http://www.rte.ie/business/2006/0119/labour.html>

Belgium

- The Union to Defend Undocumented Migrants (UDEP - Union de Défense des sans Papiers) is calling for a national demonstration on 25 February in Brussels for the regularization of undocumented migrants in Belgium. Contact: comite_25_fevrier_2006@yahoo.fr or tel. 32/473/62.87.33
- The NGO CNCD is circulating a petition against the criminalization of assistance to undocumented migrants, following a statement made by a Belgian minister on 7 January in the newspaper Gazet van Antwerpen, in which the minister threatened to sanction those who provide assistance to undocumented migrants. To sign the petition: http://www.cncd.be/pages/actu_petition.cfm

Germany

- The Green Party will launch a legislative initiative in the beginning of 2006 aimed at amending a provision in the Aliens Act (par.87), which obliges people in public offices to inform the authorities when they encounter a foreigner not legally authorized to live in Germany. Consequently, irregular migrants, even those suffering from serious illness, do not dare to go and see a doctor and their children generally avoid going to school. (Migration News Sheet, January 2006)
- A delegation of the Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) carried out a visit to Germany from 20 November to 2 December 2005. It was the CPT's fifth visit to this country. In the course of the visit, the CPT's delegation followed up a number of issues examined during previous visits, in particular, the fundamental safeguards against ill-treatment offered to persons deprived of their liberty by the police and the situation of immigration detainees. <http://www.cpt.coe.int/documents/deu/2005-12-09-fra.htm>
- Caritas Germany will hold an expert panel on legalisation from 13-15 February in Freiburg, Germany. The aim is to share the experiences of several European countries concerning recent legalization programs of undocumented migrants and to analyze them with a view to the German situation. Contact: Karin.vorhoff@caritas.de

Sweden

- Professor Paul Hunt, UN Special Rapporteur on the right to the highest attainable standard of health, visited Sweden between 10-18 January 2006. On 18 January he conveyed to the government his preliminary reflections on his visit. Concerning asylum seekers and undocumented individuals, Mr. Hunt stated that he is not satisfied that Swedish law and practice regarding the health services available to both target groups is consistent with international human rights law. "An undocumented person should not be denied their human right to medical care without discrimination, and as well as human rights and humanitarian reasons, there are also compelling

public health grounds for treating all asylum seekers and undocumented people on the same basis as Swedish citizens.” Mr. Hunt stressed that he hoped that the Swedish government would bring itself into conformity with its international human rights obligations.

<http://www.humanrights.se/upload/files/2/Nyheter/Sweden%20press%20conference%20revised%20remarks%2019%20Janaury%202006.pdf>

Latvia

- *Latvia Looks West, But Legacy of Soviets Remains*, is an article written by Timothy Heleniak, University of Maryland, in the February 2006 edition of the Migration Information Source. The article underlines that although this former Soviet republic joined the European Union in 2004, its main concern is its large ethnic Russian population.
<http://www.migrationinformation.org/Profiles/display.cfm?ID=375>

Switzerland

- The asylum bill was adopted on 16 December. Once it comes into force, asylum-seekers with no proper identification papers will, in principle, no longer be entitled to have the merits of their claims examined, unless they are able to provide proper identification within 48 hours, or if they have valid reasons to justify the absence of identity documents. Moreover, all rejected asylum-seekers will be deprived of social welfare assistance but will be able to apply for emergency assistance for destitute persons which is guaranteed by the Swiss constitution. (Migration News Sheet, January 2006)
- On 22 December 2005, the Green Party launched a procedure to challenge two new laws on foreigners and asylum seekers that received final parliamentary approval on 16 December 2005. The new Aliens Act basically excludes third country nationals from the Swiss labour market unless they are highly skilled workers, and gives priority to nationals of the European economic Area (EEA- the EU, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein). (Migration News Sheet, January 2006)

USA

- A trial that could set a precedent for volunteers who offer humanitarian aid to undocumented migrants has been postponed until after a federal judge in Tucson, Arizona, decides whether or not to dismiss the charges. The case involves two volunteers who were arrested in July 2005 by U.S. Border Patrol agents. The volunteers with the humanitarian aid group No More Deaths, say they found the undocumented migrants in the desert with severe symptoms of dehydration. The volunteers called a nurse and a doctor who, after listening to the results of a field examination, advised them to take the migrants to Tucson to get medical help. As a result, the volunteers were charged with two felonies: “transportation in furtherance of an illegal presence in the United States” and “conspiracy to transport in furtherance of an illegal presence in the United States.” If convicted, they could face up to 15 years in prison. http://www.ocnus.net/artman/publish/printer_22482.shtml
- Some organizers and advocates in the U.S. have been considering using the criminal provisions of many state laws that provide penalties for employers who do not pay workers – including undocumented workers. The National Employment Law Project (NELP) released a fact sheet for organizers in December 2005 that explains how criminal penalties can be used to ensure that workers are paid and provides some suggestions for groups thinking about this type of campaign. <http://www.nelp.org/docUploads/using%20theft%20of%20services%20laws%20september%202005%2Epdf>

- Dozens of lawyers around the U.S. joined forces on 19 January to protest the Department of Homeland Security's decision to continue deporting undocumented migrants to Haiti. The lawyers filed motions (applications for court orders) in dozens of cases, asking immigration judges to stop the deportations because their clients' lives may be threatened. The State Department has warned Americans against traveling to Haiti, citing the lack of an effective police force and the presence of armed gangs engaged in kidnappings and violent crime. The lawyers said they were acting because homeland security officials had not given Haitians temporary protected status, which temporarily prevents the deportation of immigrants who cannot return to their native countries because of armed conflict, natural disasters or other extraordinary conditions. Immigrants from three Central American countries (El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua) have temporary protected status but the lawyers involved in the protest said the situation in Haiti is far worse than in those three countries.
www.nytimes.com/2006/01/20/politics/20immig.html
- The House of Representatives passed a Republican-sponsored bill on 17 December 2005 that would make unauthorized presence in the country a felony rather than a civil crime and would require employers to verify all employees' eligibility to work in the United States by using an electronic database. The bill is considered unlikely to pass in the Senate because it does not provide for the type of temporary worker program proposed by Senators from both parties. A combination of business groups, including the US Chamber of Commerce, as well as religious organizations, labor unions, and NGOs all opposed the bill. Critics expressed concern at its treatment of businesses and unauthorized immigrants.
<http://www.migrationinformation.org/USfocus/display.cfm?id=367>

3. European Policy Developments

- On 21 December, the European Commission adopted a "Policy Plan on Legal Migration", focusing on economic migration and giving an overview of European initiatives to be taken in 2006-2009. This plan has been developed in order to comply with the Hague Programme, the EU multi-annual work programme in the field of Justice, Freedom and Security. The Policy Plan addresses four areas for action within the EU common legal migration policy and aims at regulating the entry and stay of migrant workers. Among other positions, the European Commission supports the idea of less restrictive regulations for four categories of workers: highly educated workers, seasonal workers, academics and scientific researchers, and office and information technology workers relocated within the same company.
<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/05/1664&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>
- At an informal Council meeting in Vienna on 13 January, EU Justice and Home Affairs Ministers and the European Commission sketched out the key initiatives they will be taking on asylum and migration policy. These include a common list of non-EU countries deemed 'safe' for the purpose of asylum and the creation of 'expert teams' to relieve EU Member States faced with severe migratory fluxes. Organising joint charter flights for expelling undocumented migrants from the EU has also been bumped up the priority list. The Austrian Interior Minister said the target countries will be those with which the EU has readmission agreements (administrative arrangements for taking back undocumented migrants). Source: JK@redbarnet.dk
- Austria's Interior Minister, Liese Prokop and Minister of Justice, Karin Gastinger, presented Austria's Presidency programme in the field of Justice and Home Affairs to the European Parliament's Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) on 24 January. Commenting on the informal Justice and Home Affairs Council meeting in January (see above), Ms

Prokop said that EU ministers agreed to work on the establishment of a common documentation system on countries of origin information and showed "their EU solidarity by contributing to the creation of rapid intervention teams". Agreement was also reached on the need for the EU to cooperate with neighbouring countries in order to avoid tragedies like those that occurred in Ceuta and Melilla, and on the setting up of "protection arrangements" in neighbouring areas suggested by the Commission. Source: www.ecre.org (Ecran weekly update)

- As a follow-up to the Council's plan to combat illegal immigration (adopted in 2002), the Commission adopted a decision laying down detailed rules for the creation of a secure web-based Information and Coordination Network for Member States' Migration Management Services. The purpose of this Decision is to ensure an effective development of this network – known as ICONET – in practice, in particular the rapid exchange of relevant information required by the Member States' Migration Management Services in their fight against illegal immigration.
<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/06/57&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>
- The Finnish presidency of the EU, in collaboration with FEANTSA, the European Federation of National Organisations working with the Homeless, will hold a European conference in Helsinki on 18-19 September 2006 on the theme of justiciability of housing rights (different international legal instruments on the basis of which legal action in the area of housing rights may be undertaken). The conference aims to make progress in the reflection on justiciable housing rights, on the basis of Member States' experiences, but also on the use of international instruments such as the revised Social Charter of the Council of Europe and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Finnish Presidency also plans to present an interim report on The Hague Programme and to define policy guidelines for the future of freedom, security and justice in Europe.
<http://www.feantsa.org/code/en/pg.asp?Page=539>
- The IOM (International Organization for Migration) and the Belgian government, currently chair of the OSCE, organized a two-day Pan-European conference in Brussels on 24-25 January under the auspices of the Austrian EU Presidency. The conference, the first of two to take place in 2006 and part of a two-year dialogue, aimed at shaping coherent and transparent migration-related policies aimed at improving security, migrant rights and promoting greater economic development and prosperity within the region. The next related conference will take place on 4-5 May 2006 in Vienna and will lead to the adoption of a declaration expected to give new operational impetus to the EU external strategy on migration and security issues. Source: IOM Press Briefing Notes, 20 January 2006 (Contact: tkeating@iom.int)
- Médecins du Monde (MdM) has issued comments on the European Directive on common standards and procedures for returning illegally staying third-country nationals published on 1 September 2005. MdM advocates for a stop to the deportation of seriously ill foreigners who cannot get access to effective health care in their countries of origin. Consequently, MDM requests the introduction of an amendment to article 6 on the 'Return decision' of the directive saying that 'for any person suffering from a serious illness, Member States grant an autonomous residence permit or another authorization conferring the right to stay and real access to health care, unless it can be proved that he/she can receive appropriate treatment and medical care in his/her country of origin.'
<http://www.medecinsdumonde.org/>

4. Upcoming Events

- "Migration, Education and Social Change" ("Migration, Bildung und sozialer Wandel") is the theme of a conference to be held on 6-7 July 2006 in Trier, Germany. The conference is organized by the Institute for Regional- and Migration research (IRM) and working languages will be German and English. www.irm-trier.de and Tagung2006@irm-trier.de.
- The third annual Summer Institute on International Migration, Ethnic Diversity and Cities 2006 will be held from 11-29 June 2006 at the International School for Humanities and Social Sciences, Universiteit van Amsterdam. The three-week programme seeks to explore the topical features of international migration and the incorporation of immigrants in the cities and states of destination. The Institute is open to advanced undergraduate, graduate and post-graduate students as well as professionals working in a field related to the topic of the Summer Institute. <http://www.ishss.uva.nl/SIM/index.html>
- The Progress Lawyers Network will hold a colloquium on "Migration policy, regularization and respect for fundamental rights" in Brussels on 10 March 2006. The colloquium will analyze the immigration policy of the past ten years in Belgium and the European Union, and will also examine how the European Union is subcontracting its border control to Morocco. <http://www.progresslaw.net/colloquium/2006-Migratie/ENG/programme06.htm>
- The "Katholische Forum Leben in der Illegalität" will hold its second annual conference on undocumented migrants on 1-3 March 2006 in Berlin, in cooperation with the "Rat für Migration" and the "Katholische Akademie in Berlin". The lectures and results of the first conference in 2005 will be published in February. <http://www.forum-illegalitaet.de/Initiativen/initiativen.html>
- "Borders and Boundaries in the European Union: Crossing and resisting strategies," is the theme of a conference that will be held in Prague on 8-9 June 2006, organized by the Centre français de recherche en sciences sociales (CEFRES). Contact: Pauli Bauer: paul@cefres.cz or Mathilde Darley: mathilde@cefres.cz or <http://www.cefres.cz>

5. Publications

Principles for an Immigration Policy to Strengthen and Expand the American Middle Class: A Primer for Policymakers and Advocates, by Amy M. Traub, The Drum Major Institute for Public Policy. This report analyzes immigration policy as it affects the middle class, underlining that immigrants make contributions to our economy as workers, entrepreneurs, taxpayers and consumers, and that their rights must be strengthened in the workplace. The report upholds arguments for the protection of undocumented workers. http://www.drummajorinstitute.org/pdfs/Immigration_final2.pdf

Jeunes scolarisés sans papiers : Régularisation, mode d'emploi is the second edition of a French guide directed at professionals working in the educational system, parents of students or activists from NGOs or trade unions who discover that a pupil or a minor is undocumented and threatened with deportation. The Education Without Borders Network (le Réseau éducation sans frontières - RESF) has released the second edition of the guide, which includes contact information of new members of the RESF network and updates on legislation. <http://www.educationsansfrontieres.org/statik/publications/guide-resf-v2.pdf>

The local health authority of Bremen, Germany, published a 46-page brochure *entitled Krankheit als Abschiebehindernis im Spannungsfeld von Politik, Verwaltung, Fachlichkeit und Ethik* (Sickness as a reason against deportation within the contradictory context of politics, administration, professionalism

and ethics). The brochure deals with the appraisal of asylum applications according to the Aliens' Law and the Residence Law and describes reasons why rejected asylum seekers cannot be deported for medical reasons within a historical, political and legal context.

<http://www.proasyl.de/de/archiv/newsletter-ausgaben/nl-2005/newsletter-nr-107/index.html#1763>

Médécins Sans Frontières Sweden has released a survey entitled *Experiences of Gömda in Sweden: Exclusion from Health Care for Immigrants Living Without Legal Status*. Gömda, meaning "hidden," is a general term used to describe immigrants living without legal status in Sweden. 82% of the respondents of the survey reported facing physical barriers to accessing health care in Sweden - as a result of high costs for medical consultations and medication or being refused care due to lack of valid documents - and indirect barriers - stemming from fear of approaching services and being dissuaded from seeking care despite having health needs. The majority of respondents reported deterioration both in their physical health (65%) and mental health (64%) since living in Sweden without legal status.

<http://www.lakareutangranser.se/files/ReportGomdaSwedenEn.pdf>

The vast majority of undocumented migrants from Mexico were gainfully employed before they left for the United States, according to the *Survey of Mexican Migrants, Part Three: The Economic Transition to America*, a report released by the Pew Hispanic Center in December 2005. The report suggests that failure to find work at home does not seem to be the primary reason that the estimated 6.3 million undocumented migrants from Mexico have come to the U.S. Policies aimed at reducing migration pressures by improving economic conditions in Mexico may also need to address factors such as wages, job quality, long-term prospects and perceptions of opportunity.

<http://pewhispanic.org/reports/report.php?ReportID=58>

The first nationwide study on day laborers, entitled *On the Corner: Day Labor in the United States*, has found that such workers are a phenomenon throughout the United States, with 117,600 people gathering at more than 500 hiring sites to look for work on a typical day. The survey found that three-fourths of day laborers were undocumented migrants and that more than half said employers had cheated them on wages in the previous two months. The professors who conducted the study said the most surprising finding was the pervasiveness of wage violations and dangerous conditions that day laborers faced.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/01/22/national/22labor.html?th&emc=th> (press review)

<http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/issr/csup/newsroom/announcements/item.php?id=12> (link to report)

A report by the European Monitoring Centre on Racism (EUMC), entitled *Migrants, minorities and housing*, shows that across the original fifteen EU Member States, migrants and minorities face similar disadvantages and discrimination, such as the denial of access to accommodation on the grounds of the applicant's skin colour; imposing restrictive conditions limiting access to public housing; or even violent physical attacks aimed at deterring minorities from certain neighbourhoods. The report also documents acts of resistance by public authorities to address such discrimination.

http://www.eumc.eu.int/eumc/index.php?fuseaction=content.dsp_cat_content&catid=43c54ec8e9d01

6. Miscellaneous

- PICUM NEWS:
 - PICUM will hold a one and a half-day event in Brussels on 23-24 March 2006 on the protection of undocumented migrant workers, with the dual aim of presenting its final recommendations to European policy makers and exchanging good practices amongst professionals with concrete experience in this area. The event includes workshops (co-

hosted by the European Trade Union Confederation - ETUC) and a high level conference (co-hosted by European Policy Center - EPC). www.picum.org

- The PICUM General Assembly will be held in Brussels on March 24-25, following the event on the protection of undocumented migrant workers. PICUM members will receive more information about the general assembly from the PICUM secretariat.
- After serving as coordinator of PICUM for five years, from its beginning as an organization in 2000, Ms. Nele Verbruggen left the organization in December 2005 and has been replaced by a new director, Ms. Hélisène Habart. PICUM wishes much success to Nele in her work and welcomes Hélisène!
- For more than one year, film director Andreas Voigt followed several undocumented migrants in refugee camps, administrative detention centers, and in their daily lives in search of a means to live. The result is the documentary entitled "Invisibles, illégaux en Europe: Les stratégies de survie d'immigrés illégaux en Europe" (Invisible, illegal in Europe: survival strategies of undocumented migrants in Europe), aired on Arte TV station on 12 December 2005. Production: A Jour Film, Barbara Hetz, Filmproduktion, Arte, NDR.
- « Sans droits, sans travail, sans logement, sans papiers : des précaires en mouvement » (People without rights, work, housing, and documents: precarious people moving) was the theme of a conference held on 19-20 January 2006 and organized by l'Association Française de Science Politique. Contact: Magali BOUMAZA, Institut d'Etudes Politiques, boumazamaqali@yahoo.fr.
- MigMap – Governing Migration: A Virtual Cartography of European Migration Policies is now online at <http://www.transitmigration.org/migmap>. MigMap conveys a picture of how and where the production of knowledge is currently taking place in the area of migration – and of who is participating in and has access to it. The four maps “Key Players”, “Discourses”, “Europeanisation” and “Places + Practices” provide access to a broad range of information on players, debates, processes and events that together comprise Europe’s present day migration policies.
- Call for nominations for the third annual *Raymond Georis Prize for Innovative Philanthropy in Europe*, established by The Network of European Foundations’ Mercator Fund. The prize rewards exceptional and innovative European philanthropy. Candidates must be proposed by a nominator in order to be considered for the Prize, thus offering the opportunity to attribute recognition to a project, foundation, organisation or individual’s contribution to European philanthropy. Deadline for applications: 14 April 2006. Contact: francis@mercatorfund.net
- The Migreurop network formally became an organization according to French law in November 2005 and now has its own website: www.migreurop.org

To subscribe to the PICUM newsletter, please send an email to administration@picum.org with “Subscribe-English” in the subject heading. To unsubscribe, please put “Unsubscribe-English” in the subject heading.