



parlamento
europeo
giovani



EUROPEAN YOUTH PARLIAMENT
PARLEMENT EUROPÉEN DES JEUNES
ITALIA ITALY

ACADEMIC PREPARATION KIT



OVERVIEWS



COMMITTEE ON ORGANISED CRIME, CORRUPTION AND MONEY LAUNDERING

With human trafficking being the most common form of modern slavery and the fastest growing criminal activity in the world: how can Member States work together to address the problem in the countries of origin as well as within the European Union?

by Alessandro Delle Cese (IT), Rosa Douw (NL)

"In giving freedom to the slave, we assure freedom to the free - honorable alike in what we give, and what we preserve. We shall nobly save, or meanly lose, the last best hope of earth. Other means may succeed; this could not fail."

- Abraham Lincoln 1862.

1. TOPIC OVERVIEW

Human Trafficking is the recruitment, possible transportation and exploitation of persons. It is a very pressing global issue, defined by the European Commission as follows: "Trafficking in human beings is the slavery of our times. It is a serious crime and a gross violation of human rights. It occurs all over the world and affects almost every country as an origin, transit or destination country - or sometimes a combination of all."

Human trafficking is an umbrella term that covers multiple forms of exploitation, including forced labour, organ harvesting, domestic servitude and sexual exploitation. It is estimated that about 4.5 million people worldwide fall victim to sexual exploitation and about 14.2 million people are forced to work against their will. It is assessed that in fact, the number of people trafficked for forced labour is far greater than that of sexual exploitation. It is also widely accepted that this form of trafficking is far more invisible and difficult to track than the area of human trafficking surrounding sexual exploitation. It should also be noted that men, women, and children are all victims of trafficking.

Human trafficking is among the most common organised crimes in the world. Studies of Amnesty International estimate that over four million people are trafficked or smuggled across borders every year, these numbers do not even include human trafficking within countries, which would add another estimated four to twenty-seven million people. Estimates are very uncertain especially when it comes to trafficking within countries, but the magnitude of the situation is very clear. It not only affects individuals and their basic human rights it is also a question of national security to both the countries of origin as the countries victims are transported to, the former very often being countries outside of the EU and the latter consisting largely but not entirely of EU Member States.

What's more, it is a very serious threat to European and global security as human trafficking is often a part of an even bigger scheme of international organised crime. Therefore it is not only a problem of the EU but rather a pan-European and global issue. Often those smuggled into the EU are migrants who are seeking a better life. They largely come from countries including Turkey, areas of the Middle East, Russia, Belarus and the Ukraine. These migrants often fall into unsafe hands as a result and are smuggled across borders by groups and gangs in inhumane conditions and are left to seek asylum once they reach the EU.

The problems faced in the implementation national, regional and worldwide initiatives to tackle human trafficking are mainly due to an absence of reliable global data, and the difficulty in collecting data due to the lack of compliance with some countries to acknowledge that it affects them, as well as the fact that many trafficked persons are invisible to the greater society. This makes it more difficult for governments and international organisations to fight trafficking effectively. In tackling this problem effectively data available will have to be improved and cooperation among nations. Other difficulties very often faced are the legal systems of countries in the EU. Very often the victims of human trafficking are prosecuted for irregular immigration rather than targeting the source of the problem with the traffickers.

There are various programmes and initiatives on national, European and international levels in place to tackle the issue and attempt to solve the problems outlined. At EU level one of the most

important programmes at the moment is the Directive 2011/36/EU, which is aimed at preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting victims. The Directive adopts an integrated approach that focuses on human rights and on the victims and is gender-specific. To ensure this directive will be put into practice there has been implemented a new European Strategy: "The EU strategy towards the eradication of trafficking in human beings (2012-2016)" providing a set of concrete measures. The Stockholm programme is another EU initiative which provides various measures including the implementation of an EU anti-trafficking coordinator, Ms Myria Vassiliadou, and the aim to create a more coherent strategy throughout the EU.

On the international scale, one of the key initiatives is 'The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime' (UNODC). It is considered that this has made significant progress since its foundation. In 2007, another international programme was introduced. The UNODC launched the United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN.GIFT) which aim is to eradicate human trafficking from its source and to protect its victims.

Despite the attention human trafficking has been given in recent years and the many efforts made against it, it remains one of the fastest growing organised crimes worldwide. What have we been doing wrong? What can we learn from past initiatives in order to make newer ones more effective, and how can we utilise those already in place? What is the best way to cooperate with countries of origin, often outside the EU? How can Member States work together to address the problem in the countries of origin as well as within the EU?

2. KEYWORDS

Greenhouse effect, Hydrogen Economy, Roadmap 2050, fossil fuels, Nuclear Power, energy saving, renewable energies, GEEREF, Renewable Energy's intermittency, Europe 2020, Energy Community Treaty, ITER, nuclear fusion, biomass, biofuels, SET-plan, tidal power, wind power, solar power, energy market, smart grids, Euratom.

3. USEFUL LINKS

OFFICIAL SOURCES

- Official website of the European Commission “together against trafficking in human beings”
<http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/index.action?breadCrumbReset=true>
- UNODC website page for Human Trafficking:
<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/what-is-human-trafficking.html>
- Action Plan Stockholm Programme:
http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/human_rights/fundamental_rights_within_european_union/jl0036_en.htm
- Figures/fact sheet on forced labour:
http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---declaration/documents/publication/wcms_181921.pdf

VIDEOS

- A movie was made by the UNODC to explain the phenomenon of Human Trafficking:
http://www.unodc.org/unodc/multimedia.html?vf=/documents/video/2009/Affected_for_Life_Short.flv
- Testimonies from victims of human trafficking:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=-021GVUiKgU

ARTICLES

- Article from the *European Strategist* focussing on human trafficking in the Balkans:
<http://www.europeanstrategist.eu/2012/03/trafficking-of-women-in-the-balkans-a-modern-day-slavery/>
- Article in *The Guardian* on failure of tackling human trafficking in the UK::
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/law/2013/mar/09/shameful-failure-slavery-trafficking-uk>
- Extra information about human trafficking:
http://www.humantrafficking.org/combating_trafficking/prosecution/

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, PUBLIC HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Vivisection vs. scientific research? Over-intensive farming vs. additional global food supplies? Cruelty to animals vs. cultural traditions? Is it time for the Member States to reconsider the legal status of other animal species and agree on common policies aimed at protecting them? How can the right balance between animal rights and social, cultural and scientific activities be attained on a European level?

by Lavinia Menicucci (IT), Gregor Rawert (DE)

1. TOPIC OVERVIEW

Each year, 12 million animals are used for scientific purposes. ¹At present, the European Union (EU) is unable to ban the use of animals in safety tests and biomedical research due to legal difficulties and pressure from interest groups. However, to protect laboratory animals and enable research to advance further, the EU is taking measures aimed at limiting animal testing and imposing minimum standards in the care these animals are given.

Animal testing is currently the biggest issue in animal rights. Animals are used in research for a variety of purposes to test the safety and compatibility of cosmetics and medicine. However, animal testing remains a highly controversial issue. Those in favour of animal testing argue that it allows researchers to develop medications and medical treatments thus helping to cure many diseases that up until now remain incurable. Many now successful medical treatments were tested on animals before. For instance, in the 1920s, experiments in dogs allowed Frederick Banting to determine the functions of the pancreas in producing insulin. Prior to this discovery, a diagnosis of diabetes was more or less a death sentence. Antibiotic treatments for leprosy were developed in armadillos.

A major point of criticism in animal testing is the inherent risk of severely endangering the physical health of the animals. It is argued that no direct benefit from the death of animal due to testing can be taken by mankind. People against animal testing claim that animals and humans

¹ http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/environment/nature_and_biodiversity/sa0027_en.html

present considerable physical differences. It is not possible to predict whether a human will react identically to a drug based on the results of experiments conducted on animals. Only 5 - 25% of the substances harmful to humans also have adverse effects on the experimental animals. Furthermore, since most human diseases do not occur in animals, their symptoms are simulated. The artificially induced symptoms have nothing in common with the human disorders they are supposed to simulate.

Each year at least 115 million animals die in the laboratories. In the opinion of anti-animal testing groups, putting an end to animal experiments does not mean the end of medical research. On the contrary, they reckon that switching to studies on humans combined with special computer programs, for instance would lead to real medical progress. Animal testing sceptics point out that clinging to animal experiments does not have scientific reasons, but rather is based largely on tradition. Animal experiments, they advocate, serve the pharmaceutical industry as a mere means of hedging their liability.

But animal testing is by no means the only area under question in the field of animal rights. According to PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals), 85% of the fur skins used all over the world comes from animal farms which often times do not meet the standards set out for them by national legislation which vary from country to country but generally include caging, and slaughter method. It is difficult for the EU to take action in this case since the laws are at national level. Are there ways to make this a European issue and deal with it as a Union? Moreover, to satisfy the demand of leather worldwide, one billion cows are slaughtered every year - and that only makes up about two-third of the demand. The rest comes from horses, pigs, goats or sheep.

Despite these points of criticism, there is also at least one successful project to be noted. In the province of Catalonia, Spain, a citizen's platform successfully put an end to the traditional bullfights.²

² <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-15050706>

With the Protocol on protection and welfare of animals attached to the 1997 Treaty of Amsterdam the EU has recognised animals as sentient beings deserving protection. To ensure that this protection is entailed, minimum requirements were set out with regards to farming, transport and slaughter. Based on the Community Action Plan for Animal Welfare 2006-2010, the EU – amongst others goals – aims at continuing to promote high standards in the field of animal testing, the introduction of animal welfare indicators and the support of alternatives to animal testing.

The Action Plan further suggests the implementation of a European Centre or Laboratory collecting and evaluating research results. It also reckons that protection should be extended to animals currently not sufficiently covered by EU legislation. The overall aim of the action plan lies in introducing standardised indicators of animal welfare. Under the framework of the Action Plan, the EU will in future continue to promote animal rights.

Another positive development is that the European Commission plans to further improve the information on animal welfare available to consumers by identifying animal-friendly produced goods to encourage an animal friendly production process. In addition to that, the EU wants to stress the importance of the guiding principles of humane use of animals in scientific research, often referred to as the three R's: They include Replacing the use of animals with alternative techniques, or avoid the use of animals altogether; Reducing the number of animals used to a minimum, to obtain information from fewer animals or more information from the same number of animals; and lastly Refining the way experiments are carried out, to make sure animals suffer as little as possible. This includes better housing and improvements to procedures which minimise pain and suffering and/or improve animal welfare.

Furthermore, signatory states to the European Convention for the Protection of Animals kept for Farming Purposes agree to avoid any unnecessary suffering or injury caused by housing, feed or given care. Signatory states declared that they agree to comply with these rules and inspection of the latter. Animal cruelty can largely be drawn back to over-farming animals, especially when economic interests and subsidies in these fields are involved. A trend shows that to make farming cost-efficient, living conditions of the farming animals are often neglected.

The European Convention on the protection of animals at the time of slaughter was introduced to put means of keeping stress and suffering in the process of slaughter to a minimum. It includes regulations as for the methods of slaughter and the transport to the slaughterhouses. Animals suffer from overly long transport routes, often several hundred kilometres with poor air conditioning or medical care.

What the ENVI committee needs to ask itself is: Where do you stand on the current state of animal protection? What needs to be improved? Where in this field should the focus be set?

2. KEYWORDS

Animal-Testing, Safety Requirements in Animal Testing, Factory Farming, Cosmetic Tests, Pet Animal Protection.

3. USEFUL LINKS

EUROPEAN UNION

- Institute for Health and Consumer Protection:
<http://ihcp.jrc.ec.europa.eu/>
- Joint Research Centre:
http://ihcp.jrc.ec.europa.eu/our_activities/alt-animal-testing

ORGANISATIONS

- PETA:
<http://www.peta.org/tv/default.aspx>
- Eurogroup for Animals:
<http://eurogroupforanimals.org/>

- Name and shame of animal rights:
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/content/20120628STO47902/html/Name-and-shame-member-states-dragging-their-feet-over-animal-welfare>

OTHER

- Eurotalk:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hJ_dPVzBH1c
- Touring Animaltesting:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SGy1QHPyvtM>
- Animal Testing in Europe: Shall it stay or shall it go?
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rn1I5yPzOyw>
- <http://aerzte-gegen-tierversuche.de/en/component/content/article/55-resources/244-why-animal-experiments-are-not-necessary>

COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRY, TECHNIQUE, RESEARCH AND ENERGY

With the world population estimated to reach 9 billion by 2050, and fossil resources dwindling consequently increasing global energy demand, Europe needs to review its management and use of renewable resources. What measures can the EU take towards the development of a new, post-petroleum society as a basis for the future?

by Fredrik Hultman (SE), Francesca Puricelli (IT)

1. TOPIC OVERVIEW

With the world's oil supply expected to run out in 40 years, according to the Institution of Mechanical Engineers, it is now crucial that Europe works towards securing sustainable energy for the future. The European Commission claims we have reason to be alarmed, as more than 50% of the EU's energy comes from outside the Union, and this figure is increasing all the time. This problem is not simply an environmental issue, but also both political and economic. Because we depend on countries outside of the Union for energy supplies, we place our future in their hands. These countries have power and influence over the EU in that they can decide the prices we pay for their resources. In addition, if we were to find ourselves in dispute with any of the countries we are depending on, they could wield power over us through the withdrawal of supplies.

As a result, the European Union must tackle the issues facing its energy supply with policies that allow us to be politically and economically independent. However, these policies should also take into account the necessity of a climate-sustainable economy, the impact irresponsible energy policies can have on citizens' health, and the potential of renewable energies and research into different energy supplies.

The EU has already initiated a number of policies regarding this issue to establish a common strategy to achieve a low energy-consuming, sustainable economy. One key strategy is Europe 2020, a communication by Commission on 3 March 2010). In order to meet these targets and to guarantee a secure and stable energy supply, and avoid the risks of an energy crisis, the support of alternative energy resources needs to be looked into. This would hope to include both already existing sources of energy and also those that are yet to be discovered. Enhancing the efficiency of energy systems in order to avoid waste is also very important to this topic.

A well-structured intra-EU energy market would ensure free and clear competition amongst providers making the market accessible for smaller suppliers and creating a low-cost offer for the citizens (See also 'smart grids' and video 2). Having said that however, it remains of utmost importance to cooperate with non-EU countries to maintain a stable external energy supply in order to avoid energy crises.

In 2006, the European Commission released "The Energy Community Treaty" in an attempt to tackle the lack of regulation of both the European internal and external energy market. So far, the policies have been implemented, but have not been as successful as was hoped. Therefore the question needs to be addressed as to whether this treaty the most effective way to regulate the energy market?

Apart from improving the legislation and actions surrounding more 'traditional' sources of energy, renewable sources such as wind power, solar power, tidal power and hydro-electric power are potentially excellent alternatives to fossil fuel energy and to nuclear power. Nevertheless, according to Eurostat, in 2008 in Europe the share of the renewable energy in gross final energy consumption was 10.3%, still far from the 20%-target of 2020. Before achieving this target there are still several obstacles to overcome, among which the most important is the fact that renewable resources are largely unreliable, preventing their widespread adoption as energy sources (See video 4, in particular the first section).

Many environmental scientists are trying to tackle this issue by researching different directions including that of storage. Another problem associated with renewable energy is the high initial set-up cost which takes years pay off (see video 2). Despite technical complications, it is often argued that a wider use of renewable sources would help overcome the greenhouse effect and reduce European dependence on imports of energy.

Nuclear power provides about the 15% of all energy consumed in the EU. Whilst this is a source of energy with low carbon levels and stable costs, the issues around waste storage and power plant security are far from being solved. In 2009, the EU did take a step in the right direction in tackling this issue through the call for the creation of national safety criteria for European power plants in the "Safety of nuclear installation" directive. Moreover some studies claim that, at current consumption rates, uranium supplies could run out in 50 to 100 years, so in fact Nuclear Energy is a non-renewable energy source. Does this mean we should really be focusing our research into it? Do the pros outweigh the cons or vice versa when it comes to nuclear power? (See video 3).

Finally, the role of research must be looked into, especially performance improvement of already existing devices and on developing a new generation of low-carbon technologies. As mentioned, another area that requires further development is energy storage – aiming to both develop a proper storage system (Super-batteries – see video 4) and develop technologies which store green energy through the production of hydrogen (see Hydrogen Economy).

Limiting the unnecessary use of energy and adapting technology and appliances of higher rate of energy efficiency are two great ways of reducing energy consumption. The “Global Energy Efficiency and Renewable Fund” (GEEREF) is a body which supports projects investing in renewable energy and energy efficiency. How can we build upon the work of this body to ensure we are saving energy effectively?

As petroleum supplies diminish what can the EU do to replace the void and continue to provide citizens with energy? What roles with nuclear energy and renewables play, if any? How can the EU work both internally and with external partners in achieving these goals, and how can we aim to lower energy demand and use if at all?

2. KEYWORDS

Greenhouse effect, Hydrogen Economy, Roadmap 2050, fossil fuels, Nuclear Power, energy saving, renewable energies, GEEREF, Renewable Energy's intermittency, Europe 2020, Energy Community Treaty, ITER, nuclear fusion, biomass, biofuels, SET-plan, tidal power, wind power, solar power, energy market, smart grids, Euratom.

3. USEFUL LINKS

OFFICIAL SOURCES

- Europa. All about what the EU is doing and has been doing to cope with the energy issue:
http://europa.eu/pol/ener/index_en.htm
- European Commission:
http://ec.europa.eu/energy/index_en.htm
- IEA:
<http://www.iea.org/subjectqueries/index.asp>

- IEA. Overviews of the main technologies to produce, transport and use energy:
<http://www.iea.org/techno/essentials.htm>
- Eurostat. Data from the European Commission:
http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/energy/data/main_tables
- A survey by the International Energy Agency (IEA), 2010:
http://www.iea.org/textbase/nppdf/free/2010/key_stats_2010.pdf
- The Roadmap 2050 website (really interesting!):
<http://www.roadmap2050.eu/project/roadmap-2050>

MEDIA SOURCES

- An interesting overview of the problem by one of the most energy-wise influent people in the world:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fc01HalhoNc>
- The German approach to integrating renewable sources into the energy market:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3H3lRTQSJxY>
- Interesting Nuclear Power debate:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UK8ccWSZkic>
- One of the most promising field of research (in the first part there is a really, really interesting introduction to the problem of renewable resources):
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sddb0Khx0yA>

COMMITTEE ON CIVIL LIBERTIES, JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

The recent discussion on same sex marriage in France and UK puts the issue of LGBT rights in a diverse Europe in the limelight: How can the EU best ensure their civil rights in light of different social and cultural backgrounds? How should European governments tackle growing discrepancies in attitudes and policies towards anti-discrimination, same sex marriage and adoption?

by Ilir Kola (AL), Simone Passeri (IT)

1. TOPIC OVERVIEW

On Tuesday 12th of February 2013, France's lower house of parliament has approved a bill to legalise gay marriage and allow same-sex couples to adopt children. At the same time, in the United Kingdom the government proposed legalisation of marriage between same-sex partners. However, especially in France, the path towards the approval of this bill has not been smooth. During the debate in the National Assembly, protesting supporters and opponents filled Paris: indeed, the bill has encountered intense opposition from the Catholic Church, as well as from many French Muslims, who see it as an attack on the traditional family and an attempt to remove from children the fundamental right to have a father and a mother.

This is just one recent example of how sexual orientation and gender identity remain justifications for serious human rights violations across many countries including some EU Member States. These people constitute a vulnerable group and continue to fall victim of different kind of discrimination. According to the Treaty on European Union the EU is: "founded on the value of respect for human dignity, equality and respect for human rights. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity, and equality between women and men prevail."

The EU has always been committed to the active promotion of human rights. In 2000 the is Union proclaimed the Charter on Fundamental Rights in which Article 21 states that discrimination based on sexual orientation shall be prohibited. The charter became law-binding after the Lisbon Treaty was passed in 2009. All EU Member States have included in their legislations different laws that

ban some or all kinds of discrimination toward LGBT people¹. Recent years have seen much improvement in this regard when compared to previous years, but this group still faces widespread prejudice and does not share legal equality with heterosexuals, in particular regarding marriage and adoption.

The issue of same-sex marriage and marriage rights is a large focus in this topic. In the above-mentioned Charter of Fundamental Rights, Article 9 sustains that “The right to marry and the right to found a family shall be guaranteed in accordance with the national laws governing the exercise of these rights”². This leaves this decision entirely to the Member States, leading to a very diverse legislative situation across the EU, which in turn makes it difficult for the EU to take action on the issue. Individual Member States have their own rules about separation, divorce, maintenance of spouses and children, custody and guardianship and other family law matters.

The role of the EU is mainly concerned with ensuring that decisions made in one State can be implemented in another. It also has a role in trying to establish which country has jurisdiction to hear a particular case. On September 2001 the first step at international level was taken: the Commission on European Family Law (CEFL) was established, whose main objective is to launch pioneering, theoretical, and practical exercise in relation to the harmonization of family law in Europe. Currently, Within the EU, six Member States³ allow same-sex marriage, whilst another fourteen Member States recognise various forms of civil unions⁴ and registered partnerships. However, although some of these legal pacts offer similar rights to a marriage⁵, others give limited rights or none at all. This committee needs to look at the current situations in all Member States in order to gauge what functions best and respects the rights’ of those involved.

¹ For example, in 1989 Denmark introduced the « registered union ». It’s a kind of partnership that had all legal and fiscal rights and obligations of a opposite-sex marriage, with two exceptions: laws making explicit reference to the sexes of a married couple did not apply to registered partnerships, and regulations by international treaties did not apply unless all signatories agree.

Furhermore, after year 2000 countries like France, Germany and Greece allow homosexuals to serve in the army.

² http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/pdf/text_en.pdf

³ The Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, Sweden, Denmark and Portugal

⁴ Civil union is generally defined as a government-sanctioned relationship providing rights, benefits and responsibilities similar to civil marriage.

⁵ Marriage is defined as a social union between people created by a legal contract generating kinship.

The issue is not so black and white as law however, with culture also playing a large role in the topic. The definition of marriage varies among different cultures, for example. In some States, such as Italy, it is still defined as a social union between a man and a woman, whereas the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) recognises every man and woman the right to marry and have a family⁶. The lack of clarity around the term leads to discrepancies in beliefs, in turn making it difficult to make decisions at international level. Some of the first efforts in the clarification of this controversy was in the : the Report on the situation of Human Rights in the EU, adopted in 2009, calls for mutual recognition of existing legislation between Member States and the application of the principle of equality on the ground of same-sex couples.

Aside from the issue of marriage definition and marital rights, comes the issue of child⁷, another issue that up until now is almost entirely dealt with at national level. Currently, there are only seven EU countries⁸ that permit gay and lesbian couples to adopt children. Furthermore, in Bulgaria a single gay person is allowed to adopt, while the Austrian legislation permits the adoption of a biological step-child.

One focal point of this issue is whether growing up with heterosexual or gay parents effects children's' behaviour. While some argue that effects are not significant in emotional problems or effects of children, sceptics remain and maintain their belief that since most of Europeans reject such adoptions, it is most likely that children adopted by same-sex couples would face stigmatisation in their social environment. Given the lack of studies in the field, this issue still remains unsolved and requires further research.

The topic is clearly of utmost importance to the EU at this time, with the debate still being discussed in the European Parliament. An EU Report⁹ is due to be voted on in November 2013

⁶ Article 16 <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/ABCannexesen.pdf>

The UDHR does, however, categorise transgender people as man or woman; it also does not mention the sexual orientation as non-acceptable limit to marriage

⁷ Adoption is a legal institution where a person assumes parenting for another.

⁸ Germany, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, the Netherlands, the UK and Sweden

⁹ http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/planned_ia/docs/2013_just_001_mutual_recognition_effects_civil_status_doc_en.pdf

with the objective of guaranteeing the continuity of the civil status situation to European citizens exercising their right to free movement. This report proposes three possible policy options to ensure that couples are not forced to flee their own particular Member State in order to be received better by more 'homosexually respecting' countries.

The key challenge for all stakeholders is then the conciliation of LGBT rights with a European mosaic of different cultures, religions and traditions. In a world where there no longer exists a 'regular' family, what steps should the EU take? Should there be any changes in the current legislation? What more can be done to ensure that all kinds of discrimination will be combatted whilst guaranteeing freedom of thought to every individual?

2. KEYWORDS

LGBT, Adoption, Same-sex marriage, Equal rights, Anti-discrimination, Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, Gender-neutral marriage, civil union, same-sex adoption, LGBT discrimination, EU report November 2013 to ensure the right to free movement.

3. USEFUL LINKS

- ILGA-Europe, the European Region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association's report on "The European Union and LGBT rights":
http://www.ilga-europe.org/home/guide_europe/eu/lgbt_rights
- "Redefining marriage": Aljazeera examines the global trend towards same-sex marriage and its implications on traditional family structures (with video):
<http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/insidestory/2013/01/20131289372428587.html>
- FRA, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights' "Same-sex Couples, Free Movements of EU citizens, Migration and Asylum" report:
http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/1225-Factsheet-homophobia-couples-migration_EN.pdf

- Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union:
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:083:0389:0403:en:PDF>
- Strategy for the effective implementation of the Charter:
http://ec.europa.eu/justice/news/intro/doc/com_2010_573_en.pdf
- Protecting and promoting the rights of LGBT people:
http://eeas.europa.eu/human_rights/lgbt/index_en.htm
- Toolkit to promote and protect the enjoyment of all human rights by LGBT people:
http://eeas.europa.eu/human_rights/lgbt/docs/toolkit_en.pdf
- Intergroup on LGBT rights:
<http://www.lgbt-ep.eu/>
- The Guardian's article on France's MPS approval of the gay marriage bill:
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/feb/12/french-gay-marriage-bill>
- BBC's article on the gay marriage bill in the UK:
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-18407568>

COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

“No house should ever be on a hill or on anything. It should be of the hill, belonging to it. Hill and house should live together, each the happier for the other.” When F. L. Wright pronounced these words the Lyon-Turin high-speed train connection was a far-fetched dream. What measures should be taken on a European level to ensure that future infrastructure development fosters social and economic progress in a sustainable way, while minimising the impact on the ecosystems, public health and national heritage?

by Maria Vittoria Bachi (IT), Maximilian Richter (SE)

1. TOPIC OVERVIEW

Infrastructure is not only a pillar of any economy, but also something that enables people to move around and communicate, and therefore of utmost importance nowadays given the nature of the society we live in. While some claim “bigger faster progress at any cost must be stopped, we cannot continue to destroy in the name of progress”; others call for sustainable progress, which can foster the social growth of Europe but maintaining the fundamental characteristics of the landscape and the environment? This committee will need to study what sustainable progress is, and how much progress is necessary for the further development of Europe.

Prima facie, this topic may seem somewhat banal, but it should be seen in the light of infrastructure projects sparking considerable controversy among communities and dividing their desires as a result. On one hand it is argued that the importance of creating infrastructures which are further accessible to European citizens is critical. The rationale behind this is in making sure traveling becomes less expensive and an easier undertaking, in turn facilitating movement. This may also bring to a more cohesive social picture to the EU and would have great benefits on the tourism sector as well as the transportation of goods through Europe and consequently the European market.

Yet on the other hand, while economic and social progresses motivate further development of infrastructure, concerns of sustainability are causes for some caution: as in the case of the Lyon-

Turin high-speed railway, which has been protested not only for economic reasons, but also due to the perceived risk of unearthing uranium and asbestos, exposing locals to dangerous dust. In this case protesters argue that the environmental and public health hazards that are too significant and likely to begin and carry out such projects. The main problem regarding public health is that technology used to improve infrastructure could cause respiratory diseases.

When it comes to the economics of the issue, the cost of the construction of the HSR (high-speed rail) has been estimated to be different from country to country, due to obvious dissimilarities between their geographies and soil types. In this way it is argued that such progress would only benefit a certain number of Member States while others may be left behind. Evidently the fulcrum of the issue lies in the sustainability of the infrastructures under discussion at any one time.

The relevance of this example to the EU stems from the project being partially funded within the framework of the trans-European Transport Network (TEN - T) project, which is part of EU's ambitions to integrate the single market in terms of facilitating the freedoms of movement established in the treaties. The European Union is supporting the TEN-T implementation by several financial instruments including the TEN-T programme, the Cohesion Fund, the European Regional Development Fund and European Investment Bank's loans and credit guarantees. Each of these funds plays an important role in the upkeep of services and infrastructure. Through these programmes, investments will continue to be made by the EU into regional infrastructure, to implement social and territorial cohesion of the European Union Member States, which have to grow simultaneously.

The topic can also be seen as a part the larger picture of EU environmental targets. Such as the project named Europe2020 which is a strategy proposed by the European Commission in 2010 for advancement of the economy of the European Union, with particular regard with eco-friendly measures.

Thus, the inherent conflict of the topic is highlighted as one between (perhaps mostly local and regional) concerns for public health, pollution and environment which are usually of local or national competence and not of that at European level, national heritage and (perhaps more central and international) concerns for the improvement of infrastructure according to EU policy. This might even be seen, then, in the context of the larger controversy regarding what degree of influence the EU should have on local decision making.

EU competence in this area is mixed, with the areas of environment and public health falling under shared competences, where Member States have legislative freedom insofar as no relevant EU legislation is in effect, and the area of culture falling under supportive competence, where EU policy is only advisory and is not legally binding. Does this situation need to change in order to make way for progress; both legislative and in regional transport?

Given the perhaps immeasurable value of protecting environment, public health and national heritage, how should the EU further develop regional infrastructure? The main challenge becomes to find the means to simultaneously develop infrastructures and still maintain their sustainability. A worldwide discussion about this issue is already existing, and essays have been written, a common path would be useful to foster a general and balanced progress in the field of infrastructures keeping in mind the fundamental social (mobility, connectivity), economic and environmental aspects.

2. KEYWORDS

Sustainable development, green mobility, Trans-European Networks – Transport (TEN-T), high-speed train connection, European Landscape Convention, environmental impact assessment, dams, steel plants, eolic power plants, base transceiver stations, European emission standards.

3. USEFUL LINKS

- Principles for Sustainable and Inclusive Infrastructure Development:
http://www.urbaninfrastructureindia.org/pdf/0c-user%20guide_web.pdf
- Bloomberg Businessweek – Italians rail against a high-speed train project:
<http://www.businessweek.com/articles/2012-04-12/italians-rail-against-a-high-speed-train-project#p1>
- No TAV Committees:
http://www.notav-valsangone.eu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=229&Itemid=70
- Trans-European Transport Network Executive Agency:
http://tentea.ec.europa.eu/en/ten-t_projects/ten-t_projects_by_country/multi_country/2007-eu-06010-p.htm
- Transport infrastructures - TEN-T:
http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/index_en.htm
- Europe 2020:
http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm

COMMITTEE ON SECURITY AND DEFENCE

French weapons in Georgia, Italian F35 helicopters and German communication technology in Libya: Global military conflicts evoke a booming international trade of arms in which the EU has become the world's biggest supplier. Which priorities should the EU and its Member States set in order to discourage arms trade whilst still maintaining commercial relations with the Middle East and other regions of conflict?

by Elena Tripaldi (IT), Megan Wennekers (NL)

1. TOPIC OVERVIEW

The EU was born from a war-stricken Europe, and since then has been considered an example of a Union that works peacefully within its borders and promotes peace and harmony internationally, and prides itself on such values through its common Foreign and Security Policy. At the same time, the EU remains one of the world's largest players in global arms trade and gains massive income from the export of arms. In 2010, global arms and military services sales reached \$411.1 billion. According to "Der Spiegel", the global weapons trade, especially when it comes to arm sales towards Saudi Arabia and middle-eastern countries, is booming and has increased by 24% over the last five years. With Germany and France holding the third and fourth position among the world's largest arms exporters respectively, it's clear that the EU is a huge player in this field. . Thus, there is a contradiction between the exorbitant arms trade the member-states are doing and the human rights values of the EU.

Since the Arab Spring the EU's position has been underlined as unclear as healthy relationships were maintained with such countries in times of peace and yet when the revolts began it became clear the EU was also providing the public with weapons. All of this leads to ambiguity around the EU's position which must be clarified. Despite numerous international attempts to curb this trend and clarify trading agreements, the weaponry market continues to boom and support illegal purposes and terrorist groups.

One of the main issues to deal with in this topic is the fact that at the moment no legally binding international legislation exists in the field to control arms trade. At the moment there are on-going discussions about the proposed Arms Trade Treaty by the UN that would regulate the international trade in conventional weapons. It is hoped that a final draft will be decided upon in the coming months. Despite these efforts many negotiations are still in place. In 2010-2011, there were at least three international meetings called for by a specially-established Group of Governmental Experts.

The European Council during the 62nd United Nations General Assembly in 2012 stated that it was committed to fighting against threats to national sovereignty and the challenges that present themselves from arms trafficking and trading. Such problems may include the misallocation of funds away from education and health services towards arms, as well as citizens having unmonitored access to weapons in areas of unstable governments. As well as that it is often argued that the supply of arms to unstable states may add to human rights' violations in such states.

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, in 2010, reports showed that Member States combined sold weapons worth €8.3 billion to the Middle East and North Africa who are the closest commercial partners in this area. The issue of arm trade was put in focus during the Arab Spring when the EU allegedly sold arms either to the unstable and autocratic regimes, or to the rebel groups in question. As a result, the question of the EU's position in the on-going Syrian conflict is under debate. Again the issue comes down to the fact that while traditionally EU Member States took individual positions, they are now aiming for a harmonised approach. Catherine Ashton is in favour of arming Syrian rebels while France and the United Kingdom are against such interference. The problem remains that certain Member States see more sense in tackling this issue at national level. How should be EU change its current policy to make this area of legislation a shared competence, if at all? Should we face all areas of conflict as with Libya, with many differing positions in the war?

One recent development in the hope of having a common policy in this area is the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports and the EU Common position on Arms Exports of 2008, aimed at defining the common rules that govern the control of exports of military technology and equipment. This code of conduct declares an export should not be made if it might be used for internal repression, but EU members are only to "exercise special caution and vigilance" where violations of human rights have been declared by the EU, the Council of Europe or the United Nations. Moreover, members only required to "take into account" an importing state's attitude toward terrorism or commitment to non-proliferation.

The failure of turning such a Code of Conduct into a legally binding instrument led in 2008 to the establishment of the European Union Common Position. This introduction was a significant improvement in arms trade estate transparency between Member States and is an instrument to be discussed and kept in mind in this topic.

One final important point in this topic is to underline the EU's dependence on the Middle East when it comes to energy sources such as oil. As a matter of fact, EU Member States import as much as 45% of their needs in petrol from Middle East countries according to Eurostat, whose statistics on EU oil imports still see Saudi Arabia, Lybia and Iran in their top chart. This underlines the complexity of the topic and adds a third dimension to the already existing issues of human rights and the income the EU receives for such exports. It is however interesting to note that on the Commission's official website the main trade with Middle Eastern countries is that of energy and not of arms.

Is there a chance that illicit arms trading from Europe to the Middle East exists and if so what steps should the EU take to discover and eradicate it? How can the EU balance its need for energy supply from the Middle East with the fact that certain exports are used in human rights violations? What role does the EU have to play in the abolition of these violations? And how can the EU defend its values of peace and harmony while part-taking in such arms trades?

2. KEYWORDS

Arm trafficking, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, Arms Trade Treaty, arms embargo, European defence procurement, European Defence Agency, import-export regulation, State/Non-State actors, armed rebel groups, private military companies, paramilitary organisations, terrorist groups, EU Code of Conduct 1998, EU weapons trade

3. USEFUL LINKS

ARTICLES OF INTRODUCTORY CHARACTER

- A wide-covering and well-structured introduction to international weaponry trade dynamics:
<http://www.globalissues.org/article/75/world-military-spending>
- German Newspaper Der Spiegel's report on EU Member States' recent booming arms trade:
<http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/eu-makes-controversial-weapons-sales-to-saudi-arabia-a-822288.html>
- The EU Observer on EU arms trade booming despite crisis:
<http://euobserver.com/defence/115380>
- The Guardian's constantly hot topics in Arm Trade chart. Extremely useful to get a picture of what are the Member States' interests and moves in weapon sales worldwide, with special care to the Arab Spring related issues: should the ban on Syrian Rebels army exchange be lifted?
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/arms-trade>

OFFICIAL SOURCES

- Official Arms Trade Treaty Mapping Database: gives essential information on the treaty approval negotiations and on State's arm trade policies in general:
<http://armstreaty.org>
- United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research Official Website:
<http://unidir.org/html/en/home.html>
- EU Arms Export Control Measures' History in a nutshell:
http://eeas.europa.eu/non-proliferation-and-disarmament/arms-export-control/index_en.htm#a

Committee on Security and Defence

Overview

Lignano 2013

- Official Europa Summary of the aims and goals of the Arms Trade Treaty:
http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/foreign_and_security_policy/cfsp_and_esdp_implementation/ps0012_en.htm
- A report from the European Commission website on current trades with Syria:
<http://ec.europa.eu/trade/creating-opportunities/bilateral-relations/countries/syria/>
- A report from the European Commission website on current trades with Libya:
<http://ec.europa.eu/trade/creating-opportunities/bilateral-relations/countries/libya/>
- Brief presentation of the 1998 European Union Code of Conduct on Arms Exports:
<http://www.eubusiness.com/topics/trade/european-code-of-conduct-on-arms-exports>
- Brief caption of what has followed the replacement of the 2008 Code of Conduct with the Common Position:
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/016_09_EN_low.pdf
- 14th Annual Report (2012) on Member States' Exports of Military Equipment and Technologies:
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2012:386:0001:0431:EN:PDF>

RELEVANT NEWSPAPERS

- Europe Deals Arms While Defending Rights:
http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/06/world/europe/06iht-letter06.html?_r=0
- Der Spiegel's brief insight on how did the Arab Spring turn tables to yesterday's arm trade balances:
<http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/democracy-or-dollars-weapons-sales-to-the-arab-world-under-scrutiny-a-754224.html>
- What's behind Germany's booming arm trading export?
<http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/a-new-arms-race-exports-booming-for-german-weapons-manufacturers-a-773626.html>
- Is arming the Syrian Rebels a consistent chance to be considered by Member States?
<http://www.europeanvoice.com/article/2013/january/eu-nervous-about-ending-syrian-arms-embargo/76321.aspx>
- Not only Syria: EU on his way to an "Affaire Mali" as well?
<http://euobserver.com/defence/119132>



- Mali, Lybia and Syria-related issues push Member States to encourage a common strategy for army supplying and trade:
<http://euobserver.com/defence/118226>
- Could current Arm trade policies coexist with the European Union values and goals, especially now that those have been awarded the Noble Prize for Peace, or is it just hypocrisy covering the states' dirty business?
<http://thearrowsoftruth.com/the-hypocrisy-of-the-arms-trade/>

ACADEMIC SOURCES

- FIRST (Facts on International Relations and Security Trends) presentation page: the project aims at providing good pointers for worldwide researchers on arm trade:
<http://www.sipri.org/databases/first>
- Up-to-date database of worldwide military expenditure by country given respectively in national currency, dollars and on percentage ratio to Gross Domestic Product:
<http://www.sipri.org/databases/milex>
- A brief case study on the EU Code of Conduct: what is its exact import on EU policies and governance?
<http://www.odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/3677.pdf>
- What is the EBA (Everything But Arms)? A quick insight on what are the current EU trade restrictions as far as weapons are concerned:
<http://ec.europa.eu/trade/wider-agenda/development/generalised-system-of-preferences/everything-but-arms/>
- A radical information source: the Campaign Against Arms Trade fights to end international arms trade. Surely an interesting reference for all the cons of current arm trade custom and usage. The "Research" section provides useful data especially on UK arm trade policy and sell estate:
<http://www.caat.org.uk>
- Official Website of the European Network Against Arms Trade:
<http://www.enaat.org/>