

The following notes are not full transcriptions of proceedings but summaries of the discussions held at the UK launch event. Readers should note that speakers have not had the opportunity to check or comment on this record of proceedings.

## Session 1: UK Policymakers Comments and Discussion

Chair: Sarah Spencer, Associate Director, ESRC Centre on Migration, Policy & Society, University of Oxford

Panellists: Georgina Simpson, Team Leader for Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) and Global Migration, Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Tony Venables, Chief Economist, Department for International Development

Emma Haddad, Assistant Director, International Delivery, Immigration and Nationality Directorate, Home Office

### Georgina Simpson,

Team Leader for Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) and Global Migration, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)

#### Key Discussion Points:

- **FCO response to GCIM report**
- **FCO support for the need for increased international and regional cooperation on issues related to migration**
- **FCO efforts to minimise the negative impacts of migration**

Georgina Simpson began the session by noting that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) welcomes the Global Commission on International Migration Report as representative of the views of the Foreign Office, DFID and the Home Office on issues relating to migration, and commends its clear and coherent structure.

She pointed out that the FCO recognises the need for improved international and regional cooperation in issues relating to migration, and is beginning to implement this through various methods such as: increasingly integrated immigration controls overseas through, issuing of UK visas abroad and so on. International cooperation being improved through involvement in more effective dialogue and regional cooperation. She pointed out that the FCO will be taking part in the High Level dialogue in New York in 2006, and is facilitating in the negotiation of the EU position in this dialogue.

Simpson told delegates that the FCO aims to minimise the negative impacts of migration through ensuring that people migrate out of choice, rather than coercion. This involves focusing on migration in a wider context and recognising its links with development.

Reduction of poverty in source countries should ensure that fewer people feel pressured into migration as a route out of poverty. The FCO believes that this needs to be addressed in an internationally coordinated and coherent manner, bilaterally with involvement regionally in the UK and internationally within the EU. The UK should strike a balance between attracting migrants that the economy needs and deterring those who would abuse the system, especially the asylum system. Immigration can be maximised through effective management, which involves; the introduction of a Managed Migration System, working with a 5 year strategy, consolidating the systems of the Home Office, DFID and the FCO, and working closely with other authorities, such as embassies and High Commissions.

The FCO acknowledges that it has moral and legal obligations towards migrants, especially towards refugees. Simpson stated that such obligations include the need to provide more information on migrants' rights, and the provision of proper protection of migrants. The FCO is working with partners to try and ensure these rights are upheld. The protection of migrants is also closely linked with the ability of migrants to integrate into the host society; thus the introduction of citizenship ceremonies is promoted as a way in which migrants can feel more integrated into UK society.

In her concluding remarks Simpston pointed out that irregular entry into the UK undermines the national laws on migration, and leads to exploitation as well as putting legal migrants at risk. An effective returns policy must therefore be enforced, through the conviction and/or deportation of irregular migrants, traffickers and smugglers. This will not only uphold the national law, but also will boost public confidence in the migration policies of the country.

**Tony Venables,**

Chief Economist, Department for International Development (DFID)

**Key Discussion Points:**

- **Remittances as a channel for development**
- **DFID efforts to decrease brain drain in developing countries**
- **DFID support for GATS (Mode 4)**

Tony Venables began his speech by noting that DFID commends the Global Commission on International Migration Report for its consultative and participatory process of research, and congratulates the Commission on writing a clear, lucid and short overview. He thanked the Commission for the input the paper has added to the debate on international migration.

Like the Commission, DFID recognises the important role that remittances play in acting as a channel for development and are actively promoting safe and viable methods to transfer remittance money. Global remittance flows are considerably larger than official development aid and anti-cyclical, generally increasing during an economic crisis.

Venables informed the delegates that DFID is working with other countries to try and facilitate the flow of remittances through the use of new technologies, by providing new information for migrants about remittances (see new website initiative: <http://www.sendmoneyhome.org>), by reducing entry barriers for money transfers, and by creating a regulatory environment surrounding remittance flows.

On the issue of brain drain, Venables stated that DFID recognises the need for limits. In the long term, plans to train and retain should be implemented in order to increase the supply of skilled workers. This is recognised as the responsibility of the wealthier and the poorer nations. Reducing push factors in the country of origin through improving pay and working conditions should also reduce brain drain. Venables relayed that in the short term, DFID is supporting and promoting fast-track training programmes, for example in Malawi where they aim to double the number of health care workers in six years.

DFID recognises and is supportive of the GATS (Mode 4) negotiations towards freedom of movement for people providing services. However, discussions have proved unpromising, especially in regard to the movement of less-skilled labour forces, and are therefore unlikely to be implemented, at least in the short term.

Temporary migration is seen as beneficial, but difficult to implement. DFID recognises the importance of consultation and cooperation at the regional level, as well as at the international level. Venables discussed the EU Strategy for Africa as an example of a collaborative approach that requires international cooperation. To conclude he noted that in its year of EU presidency, the UK has highlighted the importance of dialogue on temporary migration, and DFID is working to strengthen joint action on this matter.

**Emma Haddad,**

Assistant Director, International Delivery, Immigration and Nationality Directorate,  
Home Office

**Key Discussion Points:**

- **Strengthening border security**
- **Stronger EU engagement in managing migration internationally**
- **Strengthening dialogue between the EU and Africa**
- **Home Office position in relation to GCIM**

Emma Haddad informed the delegates that the Home Office welcomes the report of the Global Commission on International Migration as a comprehensive contribution to the national, regional and international debate on migration.

She noted that increased international cooperation is needed in dealing with issues relating to international migration. This includes cooperation on maintaining border security and border control, and dealing with organised immigration crime, and acting

strongly to avoid illegal migration. The Home Office recognises the Commission's statement that border control alone does not manage migration, and that there is a need for dialogue and working in partnership.

During the UK's year of presidency of the EU, Haddad reported that it has actively promoted the strengthening of the EU's engagement with managing migration internationally. She discussed mandates such as the HLWG for Asylum and Migration, and the introduction of pilot Regional Protection Programmes (RPPs) as examples of the UK promoting international dialogue, integration and cooperation within the EU concerning international migration issues. She noted that the EU is also concerned with promoting migration and development, and recommends action in four areas:

1. remittance transfers and increasing their development impact;
2. helping diaspora groups interested in contributing to the development of their countries of origin;
3. promoting circular and temporary migration; and
4. alleviating the adverse impacts of brain drain.

Haddad highlighted the strengthening of dialogue between the EU and Africa through the meeting of the Justice and Home Affairs Council in October. Enhanced EU cooperation efforts with countries in Africa was highlighted as a means of tackling the problem of illegal migration from Africa, and addressing development needs in source countries was emphasised as a solution to reducing migratory pressures. In their year of presidency, the Home Office ensured that issues of migration featured strongly on the agenda of EU-Africa Ministerial Troika in November, where a holistic approach on human rights, social cohesion, economic integration and development was included in the migration debate. The European Council are currently drafting a Strategy for Africa which will provide a framework for action by the EU until 2015 to accelerate the progress towards the Millennium Development Goals.

In her concluding remarks Haddad noted that the GCIM report stresses the need to address migration issues in an integrated and interconnected manner. She noted that the Home Office is actively working with other EU member states and third countries in response to this need. The report mentions the need to recognise and reinforce the role that migrants play in promoting development and poverty reduction in their countries of origin, and work is being done at EU level to reflect this. The UK government is working towards a more comprehensive, cooperative and integrated approach towards migration policies at regional, national and international levels.

### Questions from the audience

A key area of concern raised by the audience to the panel of UK policymakers was the points based entry system into the UK and its preference for EEA nationals being unrealistic but also discriminatory towards other groups of low skilled migrants.

In response, Georgina Simpson pointed out that the system was being introduced in order to promote a better managed system to meet the UK's needs, and to provide an effective way for migrants to see whether they can come to the UK. Another Home Office representative from the audience stated that the points system was being introduced to maximise the benefits of migration for Britain, and emphasised the introduction of the Tier 3 recruitment process as a means of employing migrants to fill low-skilled labour shortages. Tony Venables emphasised that while in the long run EEA nationals will fill most labour shortages, this recruitment method will not result in all of the UK's labour needs being met, and there will be a need to recruit from further afield.