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In the post Stockholm context, the European area of freedom, security and justice is still a key element of the EU's response to the global long-term challenges and a contribution to strengthening and developing the European model of social market economy into the 21st century, as stated in the communication of the Commission "*Delivering an area of freedom, security and justice for Europe's citizens Action Plan Implementing the Stockholm Programme*" - COM(2010) 171 final.

From the perspective of the General Directorate of Immigration and Integration Policies of the Italian Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, in the coming years the future challenges and priorities of the European Union in this area are the following:

1) Legal migration: employment as the key to successful integration

Labour migration can significantly contribute to increase competitiveness and economic growth. Migrants' employment is a key factor to promote a successful integration of third country nationals in the European Union. Many EU Member States are nowadays experiencing growing trends of unemployment among third country nationals legally residing on their territories. We firmly believe that active measures aimed at promoting access to employment for migrants and refugees should be underlined in the post Stockholm context as a key objective. For this purpose, stronger synergies between immigration policies and other policy domains, such as employment and labour policies, should be pursued.

The Union must ensure fair treatment of third country nationals who reside legally on the territory of its Member States, monitoring the implementation of the directive 2011/98/UE on the single permit in the Member States. Integration policies and labour policies should be strictly connected. The European Union could contribute to more effective integration policies in the Member States by providing incentives and support for the action of Member States, also from the perspective of financial resources. In particular, the use of the Migration and Asylum Fund should be implemented in coordination with other European Union funds, such as the European Social Fund, in order to allow the implementation of complementary actions, aimed at promoting both integration and employment of migrants. These considerations confirm the need for a comprehensive approach to migration issues.

2) The integration of international protection holders.

The launching of a second phase of the Common European Asylum System has seen the adoption of a set of relevant measures in June 2013, that have to be implemented by the Member States. The correct transposition of these acts in the Member States' legal systems will need to be thoroughly monitored in the coming years. A further step in the protection of seekers/holders of international protection is their integration in the host society. Member States should promote effective integration policies targeting this specific vulnerable group of migrants, with a particular reference to employment and access to basic services. The European Union should support the action of Member State in this area, with the aim to ensure the beginning of a new life, far from persecution and violence.

3) The protection of unaccompanied minors arriving in the Member States from third countries

Unaccompanied minors represent a particularly vulnerable group which requires special attention and targeted responses, especially in the case of minors at risk. This should be recognized as a specific challenge for Member States and the European Union also in the post Stockholm context.

Particular attention should be paid to the exchange of information and best practices among the relevant stakeholders on minors' protection, age assessment, identification and family tracing. A specific effort should be devoted to the fight against trafficking in human beings and minors' smuggling. A comprehensive response at Union level should combine prevention, protection and assisted return measures while taking into account the best interest of the child. In this framework the strengthening of the cooperation with countries of origin plays a crucial role. To strength cooperation with countries of origin and third countries is crucial especially in the framework of family tracing. On this regard, it should also be reinforced the cooperation among Member States, both to trace family members within the European Union and outside its borders.

A comprehensive approach at Union level should also be dedicated to the collection of data: to have a global picture of the phenomenon, indeed, would facilitate the implementation of efficient policies and the coordination among Member State.

Finally, when the repatriation of the minor is impossible or it does not meet the best interest of the child, the efforts of Member States, with the support of the European Union, should be addressed to the integration of these minors in Europe, ensuring education, vocational training and employment on the territory and acquisition and maintenance of a legal status, including after the achievement of legal age.