



The Cross-Border Cooperation/ Söderköping Process*

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Söderköping Process - Overview

- ❑ The Söderköping Process was launched in May 2001 as an initiative to respond to the challenges of EU enlargement eastwards and to promote better cooperation on asylum and migration related issues among countries situated along the EU eastern border.
- ❑ The Process encompasses Belarus, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Slovak Republic and Ukraine and is jointly implemented by UNHCR, IOM and the Swedish Migration Board (SMB).
- ❑ May 2003 until June 2009 the Process was funded within the framework of TACIS and AENEAS programmes of the European Commission (EC).



Söderköping Process - Objectives

The strategic objective of the Söderköping Process is to facilitate cross-border cooperation between EU Member States and Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine on asylum, migration and border management issues by:

- ❑ sharing of experience of EU Member States in transforming border and migration management and asylum systems;
- ❑ assisting Ministries of Interior, Border Guard Services, Migration Services, and NGOs to develop and strengthen their capacity as well as coordination mechanisms on border and migration management and refugee protection;
- ❑ developing an effective information sharing mechanism between governments and enhancing accessibility to latest international and EU policy developments for seven EU Member States and Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine;
- ❑ equal focus on migration and asylum issues in all of the Process' activities.



Söderköping Process - Governing Structure

Steering Committee

- ❑ consisting of EC, UNHCR, IOM, SMB
- ❑ formulates future strategies, approves yearly work plan
- ❑ supervises the Secretariat's activities

Advisory Board

- ❑ governments of Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine and EC, UNHCR IOM, SMB
- ❑ involved in formulation of thematic focus of Process activities
- ❑ provides input to yearly workplan

Senior Level Review Meetings

- ❑ annual review meetings hosted by Swedish government
- ❑ steering and evaluating mechanism for participating governments
- ❑ attended at vice-ministerial level



Söderköping Process - Governing Structure (2)

National Coordinators

- ☐ working level network of experts/focal points from all participating countries
- ☐ „interface“ between project partners and governments
- ☐ receive from Secretariat and further disseminate within their governments information on key developments in migration and asylum issues in participating countries and EU
- ☐ share updates on developments in migration and asylum policy, legislation and statistics in their countries
- ☐ provide inputs to work plan and research activities
- ☐ participate in training activities and thematic meetings



Söderköping Process - Secretariat

- ❑ established in May 2003 as a service and co-ordination centre on behalf of countries and organizations participating in the Söderköping Process
- ❑ based in Kyiv within premises of UNHCR Regional Representation for Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus
- ❑ staffed by UNHCR (Head, External Relations Officer and Admin and Finance Officer) and IOM (Programme Officer, Networking and Research Officer)
- ❑ provides a forum for discussion, expert services, advice on asylum and migration management issues, facilitates experience and information sharing
- ❑ maintains Söderköping Process website, coordinates research, organizes thematic meetings, disseminates weekly news update and publishes quarterly newsletter
- ❑ liaison with participating governments through National Coordinators



Söderköping Process – main activities

I. Thematic Meetings (workshops)

- ☐ Migrant/refugee Reception Centre management
- ☐ Labour migration & remittances
- ☐ Prevention of asylum systems' mis-use
- ☐ Migration trends analysis
- ☐ NGO networking
- ☐ Judicial practice in irregular migration
- ☐ Durable solutions / integration of refugees
- ☐ Readmission / return

II. Networking on Thematic Issues (trainings, study visits, research)

III. Söderköping Process web portal www.soderkoping.org.ua



Söderköping Process - Webportal www.soderkoping.org.ua

- ❑ 9 000 unique visitors / month
- ❑ only source of all EU policy documents on migration and asylum in English and Russian (still a lingua franca in the region)
- ❑ up-to date overview of main migration news and policy developments in participating countries and EU
- ❑ database of migration and asylum statistics as well as migration and asylum legislation of participating countries in English and Russian
- ❑ Söderköping Process research publications



Söderköping Process – Strategy for the Future

- ❑ transform the Söderköping Process to a **Government led initiative**;
- ❑ **continue to support** MoIs, Border Guard Services, Migration Services and NGOs to strengthen capacity, information sharing and coordination mechanisms on border and migration management and refugee protection;
- ❑ introduce a one year **rotating chairmanship**;
- ❑ further **enhance involvement** of network of National Coordinators;
- ❑ **governments to take an active role** in hosting, organising and funding meetings and activities.



Söderköping Process – Implementation of the Strategy for the Future

- ❑ agreement on the strategy in Febr. 2009 - **full commitment confirmed**;
- ❑ **funding secured** for the transformation of the Process 2009-2010;
- ❑ Secretariat and web-site **maintained**;
- ❑ **second half of 2009** – transformation to be implemented;
- ❑ **national coordinators “key persons”** to make transformation efficient and succesful.



Söderköping Process – Implementation of the Strategy for the Future

- ❑ **high-level meeting** to launch the new format by **Dec 2009** (part of the Swedish EU Presidency);
- ❑ **chairmanship to lead** the Söderköping Process (objectives and role of Secretariat revisited);
- ❑ **shared responsibility** – fore-runner countries for certain topics/themes – ensuring a more dynamic co-operation;
- ❑ the Söderköping Process format – in line with the **Eastern Partnership**;
- ❑ openness to discuss widening the scope of **participating States** in the Process.



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