The CPMR Inter-Mediterranean Commission's position
on migration policy and the challenges of managing the mobility
of people in the Mediterranean

APPROVED BY THE INTERMEDITERRANEAN COMMISSION POLITICAL BUREAU
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Preliminary considerations

1. In the Euro-Mediterranean region, demographic trends, economic inequalities between countries and conflicts and political instability and insecurity in the Middle East and sub-Saharan Africa are creating high levels of human mobility between the two shores of the Mediterranean. In terms of demographic trends, it can be presumed that mobility will increase given the growth trends in these populations:

[1]	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
North Africa	226,636	243,908	260,002	274,750	288,214	300,494
West Asia	256,369	280,106	303,227	325,594	347,102	367,488
Southern Europe	157,461	158,606	159,519	160,329	161,123	161,697

2. This mobility is in particular from the south and east to Europe, although several countries in the southern and eastern Mediterranean area will gradually become immigration destinations and not just a source of emigration. This is clearly the current situation in Tunisia and Morocco. In turn, several African and Middle Eastern countries are a transit point for Asian migration seeking to reach Europe.

3. Human mobility between countries in the Euro-Mediterranean region is both regular and legal and also irregular. To the extent that movements are illegal or forced by fleeing conflict or persecution, massive human tragedies occurred notwithstanding the efforts by countries in the region, including in particular EU Member States, to prevent them. The overriding priority of migrant smuggling networks organising these voyages is clearly monetary gain, even if at the expense of risk of loss of human life. Europe needs to recognise its share of historic responsibility in the origins of some present-day wars like in Libya or Syria. This acknowledgement should help to provide a more realistic and coherent approach to defining and managing migration policy. Without peace in Libya and Syria and a truly policy for peace in the Middle East, the issues concerning migrations in the Mediterranean will not be solved.

4. Human mobility not only takes place in an irregular, problematic or tragic way. In the Euro-Mediterranean region hundreds of thousands of migratory movements occur under conditions of legality. All human mobility should be considered a right and an opportunity, not only for individuals and families but also for the destination countries. Therefore it should be emphasised first of all that legal and orderly migration in compliance with the laws of the countries of origin and destination can only have positive effects. Such positive effects have been amply highlighted by the EU, UN, OECD and IOM.

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[1] Population projections. Source: Wittgenstein Centre for Demography and Global Human Capital (2014) with the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis research team. Mean scenario. The projections take into account the educational level assumption for each population. Units: population in thousands. Available at: www.wittgensteincentre.org/dataexplorer

5. Undoubtedly most of the problems of human mobility concern both immigrants and asylum seekers, and hence when talking about "migration policy" we are of necessity referring to both types of situations without losing sight of the fact that they have different legal and institutional settings.

6. In particular since 1999 the EU has been developing its own policy on asylum and migration through regulations, international agreements and soft law. Two of the most important principles are the "Global approach to migration", which consists of the political, human rights and development problems of the countries and regions of origin and transit, and the "Management of migration flows" in all its stages in close cooperation once again with the countries of origin and transit.[2]

7. Thus the joint responsibility of the countries of the Euro-Mediterranean region is fully enshrined in European migration policy. This joint responsibility has been translated into reality in the Mobility Agreements with Morocco (2013) and Tunisia (2014)[3] and, indeed, in all aspects that affect human mobility as a result of the European Neighbourhood Policy.[4] Likewise, joint responsibility has been the basis of the various dialogue processes at the global, regional and sub-regional levels.[5] [6]

8. The CPMR's primary goals include its contribution to the balanced and polycentric development of Europe. It is essential and urgent to ensure that the migration dimension is properly addressed in all its Geographical Commissions as human dignity and social cohesion are crucial components in ensuring truly sustainable growth.[7] The Final Declaration of the Barcelona General Assembly of the CPMR Inter-Mediterranean Commission in June 2013 stressed the importance of European Union Immigration and Asylum policy and the need to bear this policy in mind in the objectives of the Inter-Mediterranean Commission. In addition, the Final Declaration of the Venice General Assembly of June 2014 further stressed the importance of this policy and the need to consider various aspects of the regional dimension of migration policy.

Given the above background, in the framework of the CPMR the Inter-Mediterranean Commission proposes to organise its actions with respect to migration policy and the challenges in managing the mobility of people in the Mediterranean based on the following principles and recommendations:

Principles of migration policy and recommendations

9. *Rights: need to take into account the existing regulation and harmonisation*

All public migratory policy for states in the Euro-Mediterranean region should be based on human dignity. Given the foreseeable differences between the legal systems of each state, a sub-regional dialogue may be necessary to analyse and indicate the different levels of rights, obligations and guarantees and explore ways of harmonisation. The dialogue could be inspired in International regulations: the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

10. *Participation: the basis for democratic governance[8]*

The greatest importance should be attached to the principle of the participation of foreigners and stateless persons in countries of origin, transit and destination. This principle can be enshrined in various ways before entailing the right to vote: fostering associations, promoting unionisation, enabling access to public sector jobs. One of the greatest expressions of participation is providing the right to vote and stand in elections. Destination countries should also promote the participation of foreigners in electoral processes organised by their home countries abroad, usually through embassies and consulates. The vote of non-nationals will bolster democracy throughout the Mediterranean area. It will probably be best to start this process in local elections but regional and state elections should also be worked towards. The real possibility of foreigners and stateless persons acquiring citizenship and the other means for participation are means concordant with the commitments in the "Charter for Democratic Governance in the Mediterranean", adopted in October 2013 by the representatives of the local and regional governments of the Political Council of the Mediterranean Commission of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG).

11. *Genuine bilateralism: proactive management of shared interests and a paradigm shift*

It is important to achieve tangible results and report these results in relation to existing multilateral and bilateral instruments: *Bilateral Agreements on Social Security*, *Partnerships in the European Neighbourhood Policy*, *Mobility Partnerships* and others. The European Commission warns that "several regional dialogues suffer

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[2] Presidency Conclusions of the Tampere European Council (1999)-Sections A.I and A.IV
[3] With the prospect of also signing mobility agreements with Egypt, Libya, Algeria and Lebanon.
[4] With Egypt, Algeria, Israel, Morocco, Jordan, Libya, Tunisia, Palestine, Syria.
[5] At the sub-regional level: Rabat Process, First Euro-Mediterranean ministerial meeting on immigration (Portugal), Dialogue 5 + 5.
[6] Arlem-Ecoter: Draft report on the role of local and regional authorities in managing migration in the Mediterranean. COR-2014-01464-00-00-TCD-TRA (FR/EN/PT) 1/13
[7] In its three dimensions (social, economic, environmental).
[8] With the exception of point 10 on "Participation", the Region of Veneto approve the present document.

from a lack of engagement from MS."[9] It is well-known that one of the major difficulties in ensuring that countries of origin of immigrants meet their commitments in migration agreements is their perception or realisation that Europe is primarily interested in controlling or, sometimes, capturing the most qualified human resources in the countries of origin and by contrast are not so interested in increasing the number of work, studies and other visas. If EU member states are not more generous in offering work visas, migration partnerships will achieve little. The interests of the countries of the southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean must be proactively managed by the European authorities. Proactive efforts are required to achieve increasingly positive results. Information of this kind should be widely and regularly disseminated. Real mobility should be increased in compliance with the law. There needs to be a paradigm shift, a move as highlighted by recent recommendations in European projects[10] from thinking about "migration" to thinking more about "mobility" and its potential positive consequences for the sustainable and balanced development of Europe and the Mediterranean.

12. *Integration: extend the exchange of good practices and dissemination to the entire Euromed area*

European countries are consolidating a comprehensive set of good practices in the field of the social integration of immigrants and refugees in numerous areas: health, education, language training, labour market, security, participation, housing, religious care, fighting discrimination, racism and xenophobia, voluntary return and so on. For years the European Commission has been consistently promoting knowledge and comparability in a constructive sense of rights, services, programmes and projects seen as good practices.[11] Also significant is "*Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy in the European Union*"[12] and the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund.[13] Southern and eastern Mediterranean regions also put in place social integration programmes, and to the extent that they also gradually become immigration destinations and countries of refuge it is important to extend the scope of dissemination, comparability and joint financing to the entire Euro-Mediterranean area. Our position on the Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy in the EU is the same as it is with respect to rights: a possible joint declaration should be included in the sub-regional dialogue.

13. *Recognition of the role of regions' responsibility in migration management*

The regions have important responsibilities in reception, integration and, in some countries, management and control of migration flows in cooperation with Member States. The responsibilities of the regions are growing in lockstep with the increase in the pressure of migrants and asylum seekers. Many regions have extensive historical experience in managing all kinds of issues for their respective populations which makes them particularly suited to addressing contemporary migration management. This factor has been amply highlighted by the Committee of the Regions.[14] Often states tend towards over-centralisation and do not use to the full the institutional capacity of the regions or the potential solidarity of their respective populations. Furthermore, mixing up the most suitable functions of each level of government can lead to major inefficiencies. In addition, there is a growing need for greater and more effective intervention by the European Union in emergency situations related to irregular mobility and fleeing conflict or persecution. Clear legal recognition of the responsibilities of the regions in migration management is required: regulatory powers, coordination between different levels of government, financial resources, solidarity in humanitarian crises etc. Regarding funding, the European Union should target EU structural and investment funds more towards supporting migration policies, given that these funds can make a decisive contribution to human mobility within a legal framework.

14. *Proper, transparent and non-profit use of funds for the management of migration flows*

The Inter-Mediterranean Commission strongly recommends a transparent, proper and non-profit use of the funds allocated for the management of migration flows. To ensure this, avoiding malfeasances episodes, the competent authorities at all levels of government should pay attention to the operation systems used by companies and Non Governmental Organizations who are often appointed by territorial administrations for the management of services like shelter, reception or social integration.

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[9] COM(2014) 96 final - 21 February.

10 ESPON ITAN – Integrated Territorial Analysis Neighbourhood Project

[11] For example: *Handbooks on Integration for Policy-Makers and Practitioners; European Website on Integration, Migrant Integration Policy Index.*

[12] Justice and Home Affairs Council, 19 November 2004.

[13] Regulation (EU) No 516/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014.

[14] For example: Opinion *Migration flows in Europe*; (CoR 2000/C 57/10); Opinion *Local and regional authorities at the forefront of integration policies* (CDR 212/2008 fin); Opinion *The Stockholm Programme: challenges and opportunities in view of a new multi-annual programme on the EU area of freedom, security and justice* (CoR 201/2009); *White Paper of the Committee of the Regions on Multilevel Governance* (CoR 89/2009); Opinion *Delivering an area of freedom, security and justice for Europe's citizens Action Plan Implementing the Stockholm Programme* (CoR 170/2010 fin).

15. Synergies between the CPMR Geographical Commissions: towards a new Task Force for the management of the mobility of people

There is increasing recognition of the need to establish an effective, plural and integrated multilevel governance model for the management of human mobility based on a specific strategy for legal migration, combating irregularities, crime and trafficking in human beings, respect for the right of asylum, economic cooperation and the positive relationship between flows of people and development. The regions should be more involved in identifying and implementing possible solutions and therefore should not be mere executors of state-led guidelines but rather should have the chance to influence them and be involved in their actions. In this context and in consideration of the importance of migration dynamics in coastal and peripheral regions belonging to the CPMR, its Inter-Mediterranean Commission suggests the possibility of setting up a specific Task Force dedicated to exchanging the political vision and good practices of its Geographical Commissions and to devising joint actions in two main areas: the response to humanitarian emergencies concerning illegal or forced migration and issues related to the integration of migrants and socioeconomic development in the territories of origin and destination. This Task Force could also monitor and encourage partnerships with relevant organisations, networks, forums and events within its scope of action.