THE EXTERNAL DIMENSION OF EU MIGRATION POLICY

Working together: the regional strategy

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The role of the regions in the EU external dimension of migration policy - Key messages

- **Regions can be instrumental and should be recognised as partners to develop the external dimension of EU migration policy.** Their knowledge and experience both in migration and international cooperation can prove to be very relevant to the external dimension of the EU migration policy goals, and those of the SDGs and the two Global Compacts on migration and asylum.

- **The EU programmes and financial instruments in the post 2020 programming period should open more room for the regions** to reinforce their potential engagement within the external dimension of EU migration policy.

- **A regional strategy on migration, mobility and development could focus on:**
  - Exchange of information and relevant experience on migration and development nexus, and to promote a better understanding of migration flows and migrants’ contribution to development in the host countries and in countries of origin.
  - Promoting a better coordination across levels of governments in the migration-development nexus.
  - Using Decentralized Development Cooperation frameworks to improve local and regional policies in partner and donor countries, and ultimately contribute to SDGs.
  - Linking development strategies to voluntary and active return.
  - Involving diasporas in the development of the country of origin to maximize the benefits of migration for the development of the country (and region) of origin.
  - Using resettlement programmes as a good opportunity to help some of the most vulnerable refugees living in developing countries to start a new life in a context of protection and new opportunities and reducing pressure on public services in countries with a large number of displaced people.
  - Exchange practices and relevant experiences in supporting refugees’ self-reliance and ending the ‘refugee camps approach’ in the neighbour countries from the areas from which they fled (including investments and job creation initiatives).
  - Promoting regional networks beyond the EU scenario to address migration challenges.
1. Introduction

Regions are a relevant actor on migration governance. They are also growing actors in the international scenario. Regions have become central agents in the linkage between migration and the external dimension of migration policies, as the need for a **territorial approach** to migration is rising.

Traditionally, asylum and migration policies have been regarded as domestic matters. The external dimension should be understood as the need for a more comprehensive approach to migration and asylum, which means linking these topics to other considerations such as human rights, development, etc. including not only stakeholders from regions of destination, but also from regions of origin and transit to tackle migration dialogue and cooperation. Relations with countries of origin and transit of migration flows have been part of building the European Migration and Asylum Policy since its inception in 1999, and the European Commission has recently strengthened this external dimension. Meanwhile, as shown in the CPMR survey on migration, European regions have been mainly focused on the internal dimension of migration policies. However, the external dimension is not alien to the regions, which have accumulated a great deal of experience in migration and development in the framework of their international cooperation action. After the CPMR Issue Paper on “Migration and Asylum in EU Regions: towards a multilevel governance approach”, this Issue Paper focuses on the international dimension of the EU Migration Agenda and its further development, paying attention to the role that regional authorities could play. This Issue Paper will clearly assess the link between the regions' cooperation policies and migration, as well as their role in EU programmes and policies focused on the external dimension of migration.

To do so, **Chapter 2** briefly presents the changes in the international migration management scenario since 2016. For the first time, the Sustainable Development Goals have included a mention of migration; and the United Nations have launched two Global Compacts on Migration and Refugees.

On the other hand, **Chapter 3** focuses on the EU to analyse the external dimension of the EU policy, especially its political and financial instruments. The paper examines the main components of the EU political and operational approach, paying special attention to the role of regions. The chapter also analyses the current financial instruments to go further and work on the proposals for the next Multiannual Financial Framework.

**Chapter 4** emphasises what regions are currently doing in the international arena regarding migration. Regions are not new actors in these fields, and the chapter aims to present experiences in migration, asylum, cooperation and humanitarian assistance linked to human mobility. Identifying and highlighting actions that have been carried out so far is crucial to explore new opportunities.

Finally, **Chapter 5** aims to assess how multilevel governance can be advisable, and why. Fostering a regional strategy on migration, mobility and development to be encompassed within the EU external dimension of migration policies, should be done with the experience and voice of the regions. Accordingly, a narrative for/from regions and a position on the future EU financial instrument to allow regions’ contribution should be developed, emphasising the role of EU regions to promote dialogue among themselves, and also to foster dialogue and cooperate with non-EU regions in dealing with migration and asylum questions.

2. Migration in the International Agenda

In spite of the existence of different legal and political frameworks, instruments for global governance on migration are not yet sufficiently developed. Crucial steps have been made since 2015, but still, there is room for other actors, such as local and regional authorities, to play a key role in migration governance and to

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1. This term should not be confused with outsourcing or externalization of migration policies, that are different concepts. See Lavenex, S., & UçArer, E. M. (2004).
explore opportunities for creating a more responsible and predictable system for responding to large movements of refugees and migrants.

In recent years, migration has become a key topic on the international agenda. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (United Nations 2015) incorporates migration into the global-development policies’ mainstream. Consequently, in December 2016, the Summit on Large Movements of Migrants and Refugees held in New York adopted a Declaration, subsequently endorsed by the UN General Assembly, which recognizes the relevance of people’s mobility in today’s world, and gives migration, displacement and asylum a prominent place on the international agenda. Following the New York Declaration, a process of intergovernmental consultations and negotiations has been launched, culminating in the adoption of a global compact for migration at the Marrakech intergovernmental conference in December 2018.

### 2.1. Migration in the Sustainable Development Goals

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development\(^2\) was adopted by world leaders in September 2015, and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) came into force in January 2016. The SDGs were built on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)\(^3\) and aim to go further to end all forms of poverty. The 2030 Agenda is “a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity”. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals include 169 targets that try to integrate and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. The SDGs include the eradication of poverty, environmental protection and the fight against climate change, gender equality, and education, among others. Transversally, the SDGs include migration as a factor to consider. The Agenda’s aim of “leaving no one behind” implies ensuring everyone’s equitable access to different areas regardless of migratory status. One of the major breakthroughs in the new development agenda is that migration has been incorporated into mainstream global-development policy.

Migration is included in the SDGs in a transversal way, but it could be interesting to note some specific mentions in the following points:

- **In SDG 1 on End poverty in all its forms everywhere:**
  - (1.5) By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters.

- **In SDG 3 on Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages**
  - (3.8) Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all.

- **In SDG 4 on Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all**
  - (4.B) By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries.

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- In SDG 5 on Gender Equality
  - (5.2) To eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.
- In SDG 8 on Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
  - (8.7) Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms.
  - (8.8) Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment.
- In SDG 10 on Reduce inequality within and among countries
  - (10.7) Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.
  - (10.C) By 2030, reduce to less than 3 per cent the transaction costs of migrant remittances and eliminate remittance corridors with costs higher than 5 per cent.
- In SDG 11 on Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
  - (11.B) By 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels.
- In SDG 13 on Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
  - (13.1) Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries (also 13.2 and 13.3).
- In SDG 16 on Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
  - (16.2) End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children
- In SDG 17 on Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development
  - (17.18) By 2020, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing States, to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts (also 17.16 and 17.17).

Source: United Nations
Most of the initiatives regarding migration in the SDGs are aligned with the New York Declaration for Migrants and Refugees, including the need to protect human rights of all refugees and migrants (regardless their legal situation), particularly women and girls; to guarantee a quick access to the education system for underaged refugees and migrants, and the protection of the public system ensuring the superior interest of minors.

2.2. Migration and development, the Global Compacts on refugees and migrants

In September 2016, the Summit on Large Movements of Migrants and Refugees held in New York adopted a Declaration, subsequently endorsed by the UN General Assembly, which recognizes the relevance of people mobility in today’s world, and gives migration, displacement and asylum a prominent place on international agenda. The Declaration calls to the adoption of two Global Compacts on Migration and Refugees.

It was the first time the General Assembly had called for a high-level summit on large movements of refugees and migrants. It is thus assumed that the historical phenomenon of migration, accompanied by the history of humanity, could be better managed when there is a focus on the needs and interests of the communities of origin, the host communities, and the migrants themselves. In this context (one in which the flows will reach higher densities, have different origins and destinations), it is crucial to understand the need of a global vision of this phenomenon, accompanied by a management that is linked to the reality of the territories. The New York Declaration expresses the political will of world leaders to protect the rights of refugees and migrants, to save lives and address vulnerabilities, to improve governance of and share responsibility for large movements on a global scale, and to focus on displacement, refugee and migration links with development. In short, it can be said that 2016 is the year of the incorporation of displacement, refugee, migration and development in the international agenda.

Main Objectives of the Global Compact for Migration

- Address all aspects of migration including developmental, humanitarian and human rights related;
- Set up a framework for comprehensive international cooperation on migrants and human mobility enhancing different stages (commitments, implementation of actions and a follow-up for Member States);
- Mitigate the drivers and structural factors that trigger migration in the countries of origin;
- Address and reduce vulnerabilities in migration;
- Promote full inclusion and social cohesion of migrants and create the conditions for them and diasporas to fully contribute to sustainable development in all countries.


In the Declaration, there is an emphasis on the need to fight against racism and xenophobia and to strengthen the positive contribution of migrants in the economic and social development of the host countries. It concludes with the necessity to bolster global governance on migration, incorporating the International Organization for Migration in the system of the United Nations. The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and

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4 The New York Summit worked on the experience of the High-Level Dialogues on Migration and Development (2006 and 2013), the annual Global Forum on Migration and Development, led by States with the participation of civil society, and the work done in recent years by organizations and agencies of the United Nations System, UNHCR, IOM, international and regional organizations, regional and local authorities, academia (Global Migration Group) and different social and political actors.
Regular Migration⁵ was adopted by 164 countries in December 2018, and it becomes the first ever UN intergovernmental negotiated agreement on a common approach to international migration in all its dimensions. The global compact is non-legally binding.

Similarly, the Global Compact on Refugees⁶ adopted at the UN General Assembly in late 2018 comprises two integral and complementary parts: (1) the unmodified text of a Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) approved as Annex 1 to the New York Declaration and (2) a Programme of Action that sets out specific measures and actions that can be taken by UN Member States and other relevant stakeholders to operationalize the CRRF and the principles of the New York Declaration. The Global Compact on Refugees is an agreement that is not legally binding but that captures, by consensus, political commitment both to principles and to concrete action by Member States.

Main objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees

- Ease pressures on host countries;
- Enhance refugee self-reliance;
- Expand access to third country solutions;
- Support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity;
- Address all the above-mentioned objectives through a principle of responsibility sharing.


2.3. International governance of migration: the role of the regions

Recent decades have seen an increasing involvement of regional governments in the international arena (Keating 1999). Globalization of the economy, mobility of capital and communications and transportation have allowed regions to explore different roles in the international scenario. And human mobility has also become a topic in this process. The CPMR’s Issue Paper on “Migration and Asylum in EU Regions: Towards a multilevel governance approach”⁷ includes a general panorama on the competences on asylum, immigration and integration policies in the EU member states. As it is stated, border control, admission policies, nationality, asylum, and general integration frameworks are usually the sole responsibility of the central state government, while regions (and cities) are usually responsible, through formal competences or via practice, for integration policies in fields such as employment, education, housing, health, social services, etc. Nevertheless, regions also play a key role in the international arena.

Regions’ contribution to a more inclusive and sustainable growth for human development is crucial. For instance, cities and regions have a key role in achieving the SDGs: according to the OCDE⁸, 65% of the 169 targets underlying the 17 SDGs will not be reached without proper engagement of and coordination with local and regional governments. Similarly, the Committee of Regions remarks the central role of local and regional authorities in developing most of the SDGs and the EU commitments with the 2030 Agenda, by pointing out that they “...are fully-fledged policy-makers, tasked with identifying the most appropriate levels and methods

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⁸ See http://www.oecd.org/cfe/territorial-approach-sdgs.htm
of government for linking the overarching EU and UN objectives with those of local communities. In fact, the EU identified sub-national authorities as key actors for achieving democratization, human rights, good governance, and inclusive and sustainable growth.

How regions could strengthen their role in the external dimension of the EU Migration and Asylum policies is becoming a challenge in the coming years. There are four main areas of work that should be explored and further developed (see chapters 3 and 4):

- Welcoming and reception policies (see Issue Paper CPMR 2018);
- The role of decentralised cooperation;
- Contributing to humanitarian assistance in migration and asylum;
- Participating in international and regional networks.

3. The External Dimension of EU Migration Policy

In 1999, and for the first time, the European Council set a multi-annual programme on Justice and Home Affairs (JHA), and particularly on the field of immigration and asylum. The Tampere Agenda, together with the Treaty of Amsterdam, could be considered the basis of a common immigration policy and the starting point of the external dimension of this policy. In the Conclusions of the Tampere Council, the European Union acknowledged the importance of managing migration inflows in a global manner by establishing relations with the countries of origin or transit and jointly carrying out cooperation projects and activities with them. As the Tampere’s Presidency Conclusions stated “The European Union needs a comprehensive approach to migration addressing political, human rights and development issues in countries and regions of origin and transit. This requires combating poverty, improving living conditions and job opportunities, preventing conflicts and consolidating democratic states and ensuring respect for human rights, in particular rights of minorities, women and children. (...) Partnership with third countries concerned will also be a key element for the success of such a policy, with a view to promoting co-development.”

Since then, the external dimension of immigration policies has been present in all the conclusions of JHA Councils. In 2002, at the European Council meeting in Seville, the Spanish presidency of the Council started a dialogue to link migration management and EU development aid, stating that failing in the first would involve a drastic reduction in the second. Finally, the proposal changed with modifications proposed by the governments of France, Luxembourg and Sweden, stating that as long as the EU asked countries of origin (or transit) to readmit their citizens, to improve their border controls and to fight against irregular migration, deeper cooperation and collaboration with these third countries would be promoted. This ‘positive conditionality’ has become part of the strategic balance of the EU external dimension of migration and asylum policies.

3.1. The institutional framework and the 2015 EU Migration Agenda

Presented in 2015, the European Agenda on Migration was drawn up to tackle the pressing challenges of that time as well as to develop new tools to better manage migration in the medium and long term. The European Agenda on Migration includes a mixture of internal and external policies based on four areas: reducing the incentives for irregular migration; improving border management; saving lives and securing external borders; and a common asylum policy and a new policy on legal migration.

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3.1.1. Fighting ‘root causes of migration’

From the European Council of Tampere, the idea that an increase in development in the countries of origin will reduce economic migration to Europe has prevailed. This perspective was extended progressively to the conviction that the EU had a key role in preventing and mitigating conflicts and other structural drivers (poverty, climate change, demography, etc.) that could reduce the push factors of forced migration. Thus, the European Parliament has established that tackling root causes of migrations can be done “through reinforced EU support to third countries for capacity building and by advancing their political, social and economic situation” 13.

The European Agenda on Migration focuses on addressing the root causes of irregular and forced displacement, within the objective of Reducing incentives for irregular migration. The strengthening of EU Delegations is one of the measures established, in order to deepen the knowledge of the country and develop an active EU external policy. Partnership with countries of origin and transit is also fundamental. To date, there are already a number of “Migration and Mobility Dialogues”, focused on many issues related to the common interest between the origin and arrival countries of migration, open at different levels: continental (like the EU-Africa Partnership on Migration, Mobility and Employment), bilateral, with specific third countries and dialogues with countries of origin or transit of migration situated along the main migratory routes (Rabat process, Khartoum Process, Prague Process and Budapest Process).

Finally, development cooperation and humanitarian aid play an important role in fighting the so-called root causes of migration like poverty, inequality, food insecurity, etc., and the European Commission has emphasized the need to mainstream migration in development cooperation policies especially in regions from which most of the migrants reaching Europe originate.

3.1.2. Managing mobility in agreement with third countries: building on the ‘legal migration’ agenda

The European Agenda on Migration states that the existence of an effective framework for legal migration through the asylum and visa systems can help to reduce irregular migration, enhance the security of European borders and make migration safer. In addition, it acknowledges the challenges the European Union is facing related to its ageing population and the attraction of the workers that its economy needs.

Regarding the objective of the European Agenda on Migration “A new policy on legal migration”, the EC is promoting new ideas. On one hand, the EC is elaborating a study to assess the “added value of sponsorship schemes” to enhance possible legal channels for admission to the European Union 14. Also, the EC is supporting the Member States to develop new legal migration modalities through some financial instruments, including pilot projects that foster circular growth and development in the countries of origin and destination.

Another aspect of the policy on legal migration is to facilitate remittance 15 transfers making them cheaper, faster and safer in order to “ensure that countries of origin benefit from migration”. Remittance transfers can be considered an important link between migration and development. The global figures for sending remittances far exceed Official Development Assistance. Remittances are used mainly to meet basic needs such as food, clothing or shelter and once covered, to pay for education, health or housing property. A smaller percentage goes to savings and productive investment. Furthermore, the revision of the Blue Card Directive

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15 Economic remittances are the money that migrants send back to their families or communities usually residing in countries of origin.
based on a proposal of the European Commission in 2016 had the purpose of attracting more highly qualified immigrants, but an agreement between the European Institutions has not yet been reached. Finally, the modernization of the EU visa policy is envisaged through “simpler, faster and more secure procedures”\(^\text{16}\) that aim to make it easier for legitimate travellers to get a visa, while enhancing security standards.

### 3.1.3. Return and reintegration

For the European Commission, an “effective and human” return policy which prioritizes voluntary return of irregular migrants is a fundamental part of a comprehensive migration policy, in order to enhance the credibility of international protection and legal migration procedures. In 2010, the Return Directive, which provides rules for the return, detention and removal of migrants who are staying in an irregular way in a country, entered into force. Cooperation between EU states is necessary for the effectiveness of this policy, for example in the organisation of joint flights for removals, the mutual recognition of decisions on expulsions, etc. In addition, cooperation with third countries in identifying and readmitting migrants is crucial. To date, 17 “readmission agreements”\(^\text{17}\) have been signed with non-EU countries and others are currently under negotiation.

Regarding the European Agenda on Migration, within the objective of Preventing irregular migration, some measures have already been developed, such as the creation of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency based on Frontex but with a wider mandate. This Agency oversees monitoring the EU’s external borders and search and rescue operations and plays a role in returning migrants. The adoption of the Union Action Plan against Migrant Smuggling which envisages a close cooperation with third countries, and the EU Action Plan on Return are other measures that have been taken.

In the context of Reducing incentives for irregular migration, the EU aims to tackle challenges along the main migratory routes (Eastern Mediterranean, Western Balkans, Central Mediterranean and Western Mediterranean) and establishes the need for positive and negative incentives to strengthen the cooperation on readmission with third countries. In March 2018, the EC proposed to introduce a new mechanism to toughen up the conditions for processing visas for the countries that “do not cooperate sufficiently on readmission”\(^\text{18}\). Regarding the return and reintegration measures, the Commission’s Progress report on the Implementation of the European Agenda on Migration of May 2018, acknowledges that the structural migratory pressure “remains strong” and that the EU needs to strengthen its response, in particular, regarding the rate of returns, which has decreased from 45.8% in 2016 to 36.6% in 2017\(^\text{19}\). The European Parliament has stressed that any dialogue about this subject should systematically address the issue of the safe return and reintegration of migrants

### 3.1.4. Displacement and asylum in neighbour countries

In 2017 there were 68.5 million forcibly displaced people in the world (25.4 million refugees, 40 Internally Displaced People (IDPs) and 3.1 asylum seekers). Most of them were living in developing countries, mainly neighbour countries, where very often they face poverty and hardship. 52% of them were children\(^\text{20}\). In the

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\(^{16}\) European Commission. (2018). EU Visa Policy: Commission puts forward proposals to make it stronger, more efficient and more secure-Press release.

\(^{17}\) Hong Kong, Macao, Sri Lanka, Albania, Russia, Ukraine, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Moldova, Pakistan, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Turkey, Cape Verde.


context of an increasing trend of forced displacement, the enhancement of durable solutions for refugees (voluntary return to the country of origin, local integration or resettlement), is key. Forced displacement can’t be considered as a temporary phenomenon, and according to the European Commission lasts on average 25 years for refugees and more than 10 years for 90% of IDPs: the on-going wars and conflicts, some restrictive host country policies and limited resettlement opportunities are some of the elements that cause this situation.\textsuperscript{21}

Thus, in 2014, while there were 2.9 million new refugees, only 126 800 former refugees could return to their countries of origin and only 105 200 were permanently resettled. Taking this into consideration, in 2016, the European Commission adopted a new development-led approach with the document: \textit{Lives in Dignity: from aid-dependence to self-reliance. Forced displacement and development} \textsuperscript{22} which focuses the efforts in strengthening the resilience of the displaced people and the communities and promoting social inclusion with a focus on education, access to labour market and services and developing social protection programmes. The purpose of this strategy is strengthening public services to counter the impact that a large number of a displaced population could have on their provision.

Regarding the European Agenda on Migration, with respect to the \textit{strengthening of the asylum policy}, the European Commission proposed in 2016 to establish a permanent resettlement framework. This Union Resettlement Framework will establish common rules on the admission of third-country nationals, procedures for the resettlement process, types of status granted, decision-making procedures and the financial support for the Member States’ resettlement efforts.\textsuperscript{23} The European Parliament has already written a draft report on the Union Resettlement Framework where it states that the EU has to take on “at least 20% of the annual global resettlement needs as defined by UNHCR” and recalls that resettlement should be a humanitarian programme independent from other foreign policy objectives. At this moment, negotiations are taking place in the European Institutions.

### 3.2. EU instruments: from the GAMM to the Mobility Partnerships

**The Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM),** last updated by the Council in 2012, is the “overarching framework of EU external migration policy”\textsuperscript{24}. The GAMM establishes separately the migration aspects for long stay entry (border control, expulsions and readmissions), and the mobility dimension for short-term entry (visitors, tourists, students, researchers, business people or visiting family members). The GAMM stresses the necessity of coherence in policies, particularly with foreign and development cooperation policies. The GAMM is based in four pillars: 1. To better organize legal migration; 2. To prevent and combat irregular migration and eradicate trafficking of human beings; 3. To promote international protection and enhance the external dimension of asylum; and 4. To maximize the development impact of migration and mobility.

The so-called ‘Migration and Mobility Dialogues’, mainly conducted by Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs, are the main drivers of the GAMM. Through this approach, third countries are offered cooperation on legal migration (namely, obtaining visa facilitation agreements), in return for their cooperation on preventing irregular migration with the negotiation of readmission agreements. These readmission agreements are the key elements of the European external migration policy and consist of procedures in which non-EU nationals who are in an irregular situation in an EU country are readmitted to the country of origin or transit.


\textsuperscript{20} Ibídem


Mobility Partnerships are signed as political declarations based on the willingness of the EU and the third country to cooperate in the above mentioned four pillars through the implementation of some proposed projects. Mobility Partnerships (MP) have been signed to date by nine countries. Another two countries are under the Common Agendas on Migration and Mobility (CAMM) which include dialogues on migration but not negotiations on readmission or visa facilitation. Thus, the GAMM contains an inherent element of conditionality, the “more for more approach”, that presumably awards more benefits for the country when it cooperates more.

In 2016, building on the European Agenda on Migration, a new migration Partnership Framework was endorsed by the European Council to deepen cooperation with key countries of origin and transit, in the understanding that the only way to manage migration was to act globally. This framework is materialised in the agreement of compacts with key countries, “a coherent and tailored engagement where the Union and its Member States act in a coordinated manner”. The Partnership Framework establishes some short–term objectives (saving lives in the Mediterranean Sea, increasing the rate of return and enabling migrants and refugees to stay close to home) and a long-term objective, tackling the root causes of migration by advancing the political, social and economic situation in the countries of origin. To achieve these objectives, the Partnership Framework is to be supported by different policy elements within EU competence (neighbourhood policy, development aid, trade, mobility, energy, security, digital policy, etc.). Coherence between migration and development policy is emphasized. An essential point of these compacts is to make returns and readmission work, and to contemplate both positive and negative incentives regarding development and trade policies to non-UE countries.

Hence, in its Communication on June 2016, the European Commission put migration management at the centre of the relationships with third countries, remarking that “the overall relationship” will be guided in particular “by the ability and willingness of the country to cooperate on migration management”. At this moment, compacts have been agreed with two countries: Jordan and Lebanon; and negotiations are developing with some other priority countries: Ethiopia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal.

In the long term, Africa remains the priority region, and the Valletta Action Plan, established in November 2015 at an international summit with key African countries of origin and transit, remains a priority. This Action Plan focuses on five domains: 1. Addressing the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement; 2. Promoting and organizing legal migration channels; 3. Enhancing protection of migrants and asylum seekers; 4. Tackling the exploitation and trafficking of migrants and 5. Improving cooperation on return, readmission and reintegration.

With the purpose of contributing to the long-term objective of tackling the root causes of migration, an External Investment Plan has been launched backed by the European Fund for Sustainable Development, with an understanding that private investors must take on a much greater role.

In April 2017, the European Parliament (EP) adopted a resolution on the role of EU External Action in addressing refugee and migrant movements. Regarding the Partnership Framework, the EP stressed that agreements with third countries need to be guided by long-term objectives, by establishing durable partnerships and the respect for human rights. In addition, it considers that the PF must not become the only pillar of EU action on migration and needs to be complemented by policies focusing on the development of local economies among others. Likewise, the European Parliament warns against the consideration of the number of returns as its main goal. Finally, the EP stresses the need to strengthen legal migration channels.

25 Moldova, Cape Verde, Georgia, Armenia, Morocco, Azerbaijan, Jordan, Tunisia and Belarus
26 Ethiopia and Nigeria
and underlines that EU cooperation must be addressed to eradicate poverty and not to promote the readmission of irregular migrants or to stop flows to Europe.

3.3. The external dimension of migration: European Financial Instruments

The funding instruments for migration-related projects in third countries are large and dissimilar. They are established under various EU policy fields: development cooperation, home affairs, neighbourhood, enlargement, and common foreign and security policy. The result is that the diversity of the objectives pursued is wide-ranged. According to the Centre for European Policy Studies\(^2^9\) (CESP), “security and irregular migration” have the highest priority and a “strong geographical focus on countries located in the southern Mediterranean and sub-Saharan Africa” exists. A great number of actors are involved in their management and implementation, from the European Parliament and the different directorates of the European Commission to third countries, international organizations, NGO’s and private parties, as detailed below.

This section analyses the different EU funds that finance cooperation with third countries in the areas of migration, asylum and borders.

3.3.1. 2018-2020 Migration Funds (MFF 2014-2020)

The current Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) covers the period 2014-2020. Since May 2018, the negotiations for the new Financial Framework (2021-2027) have been taking place. The budget related to the external dimension of migration in the current MFF can be found under two items: Security and Citizenship and Global Europe.

**Security and Citizenship:** It includes two Funds related to Home Affairs policy: The Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) (€3.13 billion) and the Internal Security Fund (ISF) (€3.8 billion). Their Regulation\(^3^0\) states that the actions developed in third countries should be coherent with the Union’s external policy, focus on non-development-oriented measures and serve the interests of the Union’s internal policies. The external dimension of these funds is developed through *Union Actions* in different fields and is managed by the Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs (DG HOME). Nevertheless, the European External Action Service (EEAS) is responsible for ensuring the coordination of this instrument with “other relevant Union policies, strategies and instruments”.

For the AMIF, projects on return and readmission, protection programmes for refugees and asylum seekers, combating trafficking along migration routes, and campaigns in non-EU countries on legal migration channels, are some of the actions financed. In the case of the ISF, external actions focus on border surveillance and the fight against smuggling made through joint operations, information exchanges between Member States, Europol and third countries, as well as the promotion of networks, training, studies, workshops and conferences, etc. There is also a programme managed by the ICMPD by means of a Delegation Agreement, the *Mobility Partnership Facility* (MPF) that draws funding from the AMIF and the ISF to operationalize the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility and support the preparation and implementation of current and future Mobility Partnerships (MPs) and Common Agendas for Migration and Mobility (CAMMs). It finances political dialogues in migration and processes (eg. The Prague Process with the Western Balkans, Central Asia, Russia and Turkey), pilot projects in the area of legal migration, dialogue on visa issues and capacity-building in border surveillance.


\(^3^0\) Regulation (EU) No 514/2014 laying down general provisions on the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and on the instrument for financial support for police cooperation, preventing and combating crime, and crisis management and Regulation (EU) No 515/2014 of 16 April 2014 Establishing, as Part of the Internal Security Fund, the Instrument for Financial Support for External Borders and Visa and
**Global Europe**: seven funding instruments come under this heading, connected to different European policies: international cooperation and development, neighbourhood, enlargement, foreign policy and humanitarian aid.

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<th>Managed by</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>DG International Cooperation and Development (DEVCO)</td>
<td>Development Cooperation Instrument (€19.6 billion)</td>
<td>The <strong>Geographic Programme</strong>, bilateral or regional development cooperation addressed to Latin America, Middle East and some regions in Asia. Migration and asylum are identified as areas of cooperation.</td>
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<td>The <strong>Global Public Goods and Challenges Programme</strong>, with no geographic limitations, has also migration and asylum as one of its priorities. Promoting effective migration governance, enhancing positive impact of migration and mobility on development and improving the understanding of migration and development nexus are the main areas of execution of the projects. It also supports the implementation of the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility and the Mobility Partnerships.</td>
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<td>The <strong>Pan-Africa Programme</strong> focuses on trans-regional, continental, or global projects in or with Africa. “Migration, mobility and employment” is a priority area. This programme finances, for example, the Euro-African Dialogue on Migration and Development (Rabat Process), implemented by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (€1.3 billion)</td>
<td>The aim of EIDHR is supporting projects in the area of human rights, fundamental freedoms and democracy in non-EU countries, with no geographic limitations. Projects financed by the EIDHR are mostly carried out by the local civil society and are focused on migrants’ rights (defenders of migrants’ rights, fight against trafficking in human beings, etc.).</td>
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<td>DG European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement DG Negotiations (NEAR)</td>
<td>European Neighbourhood Instrument (£15.4 billion)</td>
<td>ENI has legal migration and mobility as one of its priorities. There are programmes for bilateral cooperation, tailor-made to each neighbourhood partner country and neighbourhood-wide, to enhance regional cooperation. There is also cross-border cooperation aimed at reducing differences in living standards and addressing common challenges across these borders. The ENI finances the implementation of MPs and CAMMs and some migration-related projects mainly based on prevention and detection of irregular migration, but also on asylum and international protection, migrants’ rights and the fight against trafficking of human beings. It finances also the EU contribution to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>EuroMed Migration IV (2016-2019)</td>
<td>A programme implemented by ICMPD to support Member States and ENI Southern Partner Countries to enhance the dialogue on migration matters. The <strong>Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme</strong> supports euro-Mediterranean networks and consortia and promotes social inclusion and the fight against poverty between regions of the participant countries (Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Palestine, Portugal, Spain and Tunisia).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (£11.7 billion)</td>
<td>IPA II targets reforms linked to the enlargement strategy, such as democracy and governance. As in the case of the ENI, there are bilateral programmes, neighbourhood-wide programmes and cross-border cooperation between IPA II beneficiaries. This funding instrument has financed capacity-building projects in the field of return and readmission, migration management, border surveillance and the building up of a functioning asylum system and refugee protection.</td>
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<td>The Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (£2.3 billion)</td>
<td>IcSP is the main instrument supporting security initiatives and peace-building activities in partner countries (situations of crisis, conflict and threats to peace, conflict prevention, etc.) It is an emergency-driven instrument, and consequently, mostly non-programmable. It is managed by the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI) depending on the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Police. Nevertheless, almost 30% of the funds are programmable and managed by the DG DEVCO. It can provide short-term assistance or long-term support. It has no geographic limitations and it is complementary to other funds. It finances assistance to migrants and host populations through integration projects, protection for asylum seekers, refugees and internally displaced people, strengthening the resilience of vulnerable migrants or repatriation assistance from migrants in Libya. Also it has financed rescue operations</td>
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<td><strong>Partnership Instrument</strong> (£0.9 billion)</td>
<td>PI aims to advance and promote EU interests by supporting the external dimension of internal policies like migration and to address major global challenges. It has no geographic limitations and is complementary to other funds. It focuses on “cooperation measures with countries with which the Union has a strategic interest in promoting links”, which in practice means developing and emerging countries of economic and trade interest to the EU. It is structured through Multi-annual indicative programmes (MIPs). It has financed dialogues on migration and mobility.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DG European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)</strong> (£7.1 billion)</td>
<td>DG ECHO commits funding for humanitarian aid in third countries directly from the EU budget with no geographical limitation. One of the objectives is to address the consequences of population movements. In 2017, a substantial part of its annual budget was allocated for forcibly displaced people and their host communities, mainly in Turkey, Syria, Somalia and Lebanon.</td>
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<td><strong>Others (outside the EU Budget)</strong></td>
<td>These funds are drawn directly from member state contributions and, frequently, from other resources included in the MFF. The <strong>European Development Fund</strong> (£30.5 billion): bigger than the DCI, its budget is drawn directly from member state contributions. It is managed by the DG DEVC0. A European Development Fund Committee constituted of representatives of the Governments of the Member States and chaired by a Commission representative has been set up. Its geographic priority is the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) partner countries of the EU and the Overseas Countries and Territories (OTC’s) of member States. It comprises Geographic (including national and regional) and Thematic Multiannual Indicative Programmes. Projects financed include migration and border management, creating job opportunities to reduce migration, migrant and refugee rights, diasporas involvement in regions of origin, support to return and reintegration, protection of refugees and stateless people and the link between migration and development.</td>
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<td><strong>The European Fund for Sustainable Development (EFSD)</strong></td>
<td>The EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian Crisis (Madad Fund): Its aim is to provide coherent, comprehensive and joint aid response to the needs arising from the Syrian crisis across the region. Two boards are in charge of the management of the Fund: a Trust Fund Board, for the overall strategy, and an Operational Board, in charge of allocating the funds to individual actions. The Trust Fund Board is composed of representatives of the donors and the Commission. Projects financed aim to strengthen the resilience of Syrian refugees, IDP’s and host communities, as well as to give assistance in education and training and social support for Syrian refugees among others. Up to May 2018, the resources allocated have been €1.4 billion, from different funding sources: European Neighbourhood Fund (ENI), Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA II), Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI), member states and other donors.</td>
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<td><strong>The Refugee Facility for Turkey</strong></td>
<td>The Refugee Facility for Turkey aims to manage the challenges created by the presence of refugees in this country. For the management of the Fund there is a Facility Steering Committee, chaired by the European Commission and composed of EU Member State representatives, that provides strategic guidance. Turkey has an advisory status. Projects are selected following the procedure of the financing instrument mobilized and are developed in areas such as return, coverage of basic needs, education and social support for Syrian refugees in Turkey, etc. Up to December 2017, the European Union had allocated €3 billion from different funding sources: the IPA II, Humanitarian Aid, IcSP, Madad Fund, etc. The Facility has financed two types of actions: humanitarian assistance (€1.4 billion) and non-humanitarian assistance (€1.6 billion). By the end of 2018, the EU needs to mobilise additional resources.</td>
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<td><strong>The European Fund for Sustainable Development (EFSD)</strong></td>
<td>This Fund is one of the pillars of the Union’s External Investment Plan (EIP) which aims at mobilising investments from public and private sources in developing third countries to tackle the root causes of migration while helping to achieve the 2030 Agenda Sustainable Development Goals. The other pillars are providing technical assistance and improving the investment climate in partner countries. The geographic scope of the EFSD is the European neighbourhood and Africa. Until 2020, €3.1 billion will be mobilized, partly financed through the European Development Fund (EDF), the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) and the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI). This sum is expected to trigger total investments of up to €31 billion and the potential to increase to €62 billion if Member States and other partners match the EU contribution.</td>
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<td><strong>The EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa</strong></td>
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3.3.2. The EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa

The EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa was launched by European and African partners at the Valletta Summit on Migration in November 2015. The European Commission, 25 EU Member States, Norway and Switzerland signed the Constitutive Agreement that establishes it.

It focuses on countries of origin and transit of migrants and aims to contribute to their stabilisation (i.e. addressing the root causes of instability, forced displacement and others) and to improve migration management. The Trust Fund covers the gaps, both in geographic and in thematic terms, not covered by other means or by other development partners (including EU Member States). There are two governing bodies: the Strategic Board (sets the global strategy) and the Operational Committee (adopts the actions to be implemented on the ground). Both bodies are chaired by the European Commission and are composed of representatives of the European External Action Service (EEAS), EU and non-EU donors (as full members), and representatives of the concerned African partner countries and regional organizations (as observers), who are invited to actively participate at both levels.

The EU Emergency Trust Fund supports projects related to the integration of migrants, migration management, support of the Khartoum process, the fight against irregular migration, the reduction of the incentives for migration, the voluntary return from Libya, the responses to the impact of migratory flows, etc. The resources allocated, up to May 2018, have been €3.37 billion from various funding sources: over €2.98 billion from the EDF and other EU financial instruments (the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI), the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) etc.) and €399.8 million from EU Member States and other donors (Switzerland and Norway).

3.3.3. Migration in the 2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework

Initially scheduled by 31 December 2017, the Commission's proposals for a new multiannual financial framework (MFF) for the 2021-2027 period were finally published on 2 May 2018. With the United Kingdom’s withdrawal, the EU is losing a major net contributor of revenue. New priorities such as security and defence, migration, and support for refugees have also increased pressure on the expenditure side of the EU’s long-term financial plan.

The European Commission has proposed an MFF for 2021-2027 amounting €1 134 583 million in commitments, and €1 104 805 million in payments (2018 prices). This amount is an increase on the 2014-2020 MFF, but in terms of comparison, there are differences to be noted. First, the United Kingdom’s expected withdrawal from the EU, so the next MFF will be for a Union of 27 countries. Secondly, the new MFF includes the European Development Fund for the first time. The MFF headline for the new period is “A Modern Budget for a Union that Protects, Empowers and Defends”.

Topics such as digital economy, migration, border management and defence have become EU priorities, and the EU budget has changed accordingly: increases are most visible in the areas of research and innovation, support for investment, migration and border management, and security and defence. Cuts have mainly fallen on cohesion policy and the EU’s Common Agricultural Policy. Instruments outside the MFF have generally been boosted and the rules adapted to afford the EU more flexibility within its seven-year financial plan.

- **Regional policy and cohesion**: “It supports the economic, social and territorial cohesion of our Union. Although Europe’s economy is bouncing back, disparities remain between and within the Member States”.  

- Migration and border management: “The role of the EU budget is pivotal in supporting a future-proof EU migration and asylum policy, in developing more efficient search and rescue capacities to save lives at sea, ensuring an effective and humane return policy for migrants who do not have the right to stay and in providing a coordinated response to crises no single Member State can deal with alone. The effective protection of our external borders is a prerequisite for ensuring more-effective migration management and a high level of internal security while safeguarding the principle of free movement of persons”. The new Asylum and Migration Fund (AMF) regulation allows the Member States to implement projects with a third country or in the territory of that country, following prior consultation of the Commission.\(^{33}\)

- The Neighbourhood and the World: “As a Union promoting peace, stability and exporting its values and rules, it is faced with many challenges as well as opportunities in an increasingly complex and connected world. Prosperity and peace in the EU’s neighbourhood has a positive impact on the EU’s own prosperity”.

Currently, some budget considerations remain uncertain (by October 2018). A new financial instrument, the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) would integrate different instruments\(^{34}\) from the previous MFF to sustain all the EU external action, and it would be managed by DEVCO. The NDICI includes, as a cross-cutting priority, a horizontal spending target of 10% to tackle the root causes of illegal migration, while creating conditions for legal migration and well-managed mobility. As it is stated by the European Commission, NDICI will develop short- and long-term actions in internal and external aspects of migration in line with the European Agenda on Migration. The investment framework for external action, including its activities to blend public and private financial resources, will help mobilise funding along the lines of the development-migration nexus.

To this day, the external dimension of migration policies is included in the proposal for the new NDICI (under European Commission’s DG DEVCO) and in the new AMF funds (under DG HOME), and specificities and coordination measures between both funds are under discussion. The European Commission seems to have put thus more attention on the necessary complementarity between different funds (e.g. AMF, NDICI but also with Cohesion Policy and ESF+). In any case, the challenge for regional authorities is to have the opportunity to participate by promoting migrants’ inclusion and social cohesion (e.g. in the new proposal for the “Asylum and Migration Fund” regulation there is an increased recognition of the role of the regions in this domain, by the means of a higher co-financing rate for actions dealing with integration\(^{35}\) and by collaborating with regions of origin and transit.

In September 2017, a new External Investment Plan (EIP) was adopted to help boost investment in partner countries in Africa and the European Neighbourhood. The EIP supports partner countries by mobilising finance (through the European Fund for Sustainable Development); by providing technical assistance to help prepare investment projects; and by developing a favourable investment climate and business environment. The EIP

\(^{34}\) EDF (currently outside the budget), ENI, DCI, EIDHR, IcSP, PI and Guarantee Funds for External Actions. This broad instrument will be complemented by the IPA, Humanitarian aid, CFSP, OCTs and EINS.

\(^{35}\) The draft regulation also says that the AMF shall “support the exchange of information, best practices and cooperation between different departments of administration and levels of governance” and states a principle of complementarity between the support of the AMF and national, regional and local interventions.
includes two regional investment platforms (for Africa and the European Neighbourhood) and it aims to contribute to the UN's sustainable development goals (SDGs) while tackling some of the root causes of migration and to mobilise and leverage sustainable public and private investments to improve economic and social development with a particular focus on decent job creation. The potential role of the regions to participate in the implementation of this instrument is still not clear but can constitute an opportunity.

4. Regions’ contribution to the external dimension of migration policy

4.1. Regional competences and regional action: fostering the external dimension on migration and asylum

With the adoption of the SDGs by the UN, regions and cities have been placed at the forefront of the policies central to this agenda and people’s well-being. To accomplish the SDGs, regions (and cities) around the world should cooperate and help their peer regions. This need is very relevant with regard to migration and asylum policies. Experience across the EU has shown how regional and local knowledge can be key to understanding how to achieve lasting development. However, programmes and actions need to be carefully tailored to the region concerned, based on needs and aspirations at regional level.

In the future of EU Migration and Asylum policies, European regions can deepen their role, and this will be an increasing challenge in the coming years. This opens a window of opportunity for the regions in **four main areas of work** to be explored and further implemented: welcoming, reception and inclusion policies; decentralised cooperation; humanitarian assistance and participation in international and regional networks.

- **Regions’ role in welcoming, reception and inclusion policies: sharing knowledge and lessons learnt**
  
  In the Issue Paper on “Migration and Asylum in EU Regions: Towards a multilevel governance approach” it has been pointed out that welcoming and reception policies, as well as the inclusion of diversity as an axis in the promotion of public services for all citizens, are the main areas where the regions’ role could be pivotal. With these competences already implemented by many regions locally, the opportunity to **transfer and exchange knowledge and experience to and with third-country** regions would be an important asset.

- **Decentralised cooperation: A way forward**
  
  This form of cooperation is increasingly recognised as a key tool to complement traditional assistance and achieve global commitments beyond a top-down implementation model. Decentralised cooperation is not so much a new instrument as a different political approach to cooperation, highlighting in many cases the importance of non-financial support. Decentralised cooperation increasingly provides peer-to-peer learning and knowledge exchange opportunities, giving this type of cooperation and added-value to build on.
In the EU, over the last years, more prominence has been given to decentralised cooperation\textsuperscript{36}, to reinforce capacities and in-service delivery in partner authorities. Already in the Agenda for Change\textsuperscript{37}, the European Commission identified Local Authorities as key actors for achieving democratization, human rights, good governance, and inclusive and sustainable growth.

In the decentralised cooperation actions and policies, the following elements can be identified:

- Leading actors are regional or local authorities;
- Have an overarching objective: sustainable local development;
- The nature of activities carried out are mostly exchanges and support actions;
- Reduces the number of “intermediaries”, locating the responsibility for programme identification and implementation to the lowest possible level and transferring the financial responsibilities to the regional or local actors; and enables new actors to assume new roles.

Regions could further use decentralised cooperation to increase their relevance and influence, implementing and promoting a territorial approach to migration and asylum policies. Decentralized cooperation could differentiate (in a logic of complementarity) from the action of NGOs, central governments and multilateral donors by establishing more long-term actions. The strong relationship between two communities can be formalised in cooperation agreements designed to establish a lasting partnership between the two decentralised authorities and their communities based on a territorial partnership philosophy\textsuperscript{38}.

Combining the territorial and the long-term approach allows the regions to develop distinctive actions in the field of migration. This kind of cooperation could focus on the following areas:

- Strengthening institutions tackling with migration and asylum matters at regional level;
- Promoting social and economic development in regions of origin and transit;
- Helping participation in regional development programmes between regions of origin, transit and destination;
- Exchange and sharing of know-how and training.

• Contributing to humanitarian assistance in migration and asylum questions

Many European regions have experience in developing humanitarian actions, both within their territories and in third countries, developing specialised policies and or contributing with experience and know-how to tackle issues such as emergency response, disaster risk reduction and conflict management. All this knowledge and experience should be transferable when addressing humanitarian assistance in migration and asylum issues.

Furthermore, EU regions could help non-EU regions in assisting migrants and refugees via co-funding, expertise or technical assistance, for instance. The external dimension of the EU’s migration policy focuses extensively on cooperation with third countries on enhancing the protection of migrants and asylum seekers and returning those with no right to international protection. Partnerships and cooperation with regions of origin and transit could be further explored to facilitate the protection, care and information of migrants, refugees and returnees. Special attention should be paid to these non-EU transit regions in which the contextual inflow of refugees has strained public services and where specific programmes are needed.

Finally, supporting actions for voluntary return and reintegration could be also understood as a contribution to the integration of returned migrants in regions of origin.


\textsuperscript{38} See CPMR paper on “Decentralised cooperation to achieve the 2030 Agenda: Towards a new generation of multi-stakeholder partnerships”, the CPMR Training Manual “Provision of Public Services in the Mediterranean” and the CPMR “Manual for the Training on Integrated Territorial Development”.

Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions

Email: Secretariat@crpm.org; Website: www.crpm.org
• Participating in networks: promoting dialogue and knowledge-sharing on migration and asylum matters

Most of the European regions have very limited legal competences when dealing with migration and asylum specifically. Hence there is a need to explore alternative ways to include their voice in the debate and actions in this field that has nevertheless a significative impact on their activity, citizens and territories. It should be noted that EU Regional Policy emphasizes the importance of interregional cooperation to tackle challenges in the EU regions: “A feature of EU Regional Policy since the beginning has been the encouragement of cross-border, transnational and interregional co-operation (sic) has yielded considerable benefits (...) the ability to bring together regions from a number of countries facing joint problems (...) encourages a practical, constructive approach around a shared vision”.

To be able to transfer this knowledge and experience, it is importance to increase the participation of EU regions in international or regional networks in the field of migration and asylum, based on a long-term vision. This transfer could be done both in generic or specialized networks. Regions could also extend and invite other organisations and institutions (grass-roots too) to this knowledge transfer in different regions, bridging collaboration between potential partners.

4.2. Most relevant regional practices on migration, decentralised cooperation and humanitarian assistance

This chapter of the document includes relevant practices from the CPMR regions that participated in the organisation’s internal survey on “The external dimension of migration management in the CPMR Regions”. The information included in this document about the practices is not exhaustive and is principally meant to provide some examples and practices led by regions.

Welcoming, reception and inclusion policies

• Basque Country

The Basque Country has several projects related to migration including AHOLKU-SAREA which is a network of legal assistance in matters of foreigners; ERABEREAN, a network for equal treatment and non-discrimination of people; and lastly the project of AUZOLANA which is a Pilot programme running until December 2019 in cooperation with the national government, with the objective to increase the reception capacity of the Basque Country quantitatively and qualitatively to help fulfill the relocation commitments (asylum seekers from Greece and Italy) and resettlement (asylum seekers from outside the EU, mainly from Turkey and Lebanon) the Spanish Government has assumed with the European Union. In addition to this, during the first semester of 2019, the Basque Government, together with the Spanish Government and the UNHCR, in partnership with civil society organizations and local communities, will implement a pilot project on Community Sponsorship for the Reception and Integration of Refugee Persons.

• Calabria

The Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SPRAR) was created by Law no. 189/2002 and is made up of the network of local institutions that implement reception projects for forced migrants by accessing, within the available resources, the National Fund for Asylum Policies and Services, managed by the Ministry of the Interior (and provided under the Government finance law). The territory of Acquaformosa has received unaccompanied foreign minors of different nationalities since a centre was opened for them in 2016. It currently hosts 11 UNMINS of different nationalities (from Egypt, Gambia, Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Tunisia, Mali). Furthermore, the SPRAR Project’s Unaccompanied Foreign Minors “Bijen ng bote me te mire” aims to provide

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40 See CPMR Issue Paper on “Migration and Asylum in EU Regions: Towards a multilevel governance approach”
these minors with an individual support programme to facilitate their socio-economic integration and independence when they leave the facility. Like many small urban centres, Acquaformosa has been experiencing the phenomenon of depopulation. It therefore identifies new families from migrant backgrounds as an important element to contribute to the revitalization of the territory, thanks to the repopulation of historical centres and the resumption of productive activities, as well as the effective possibility of keeping the school premises of the elementary school open which otherwise would have been closed for lack of pupils.

- **Catalonia**

Catalonia is implementing a cooperation programme to welcome refugee students to enrol in Catalan universities with a student visa. The project is developed in partnership with the Spanish government and most of the Catalan universities. Moreover, the region leads the initiative of the AER Task force on Migration, which has as a main objective to create a space to share experiences and reflexions between regions with policies based on interculturalism. In addition, Catalonia also carries out a project for Anti-racism offices & anti-rumour agents to involve targeted communities, social partners and other non-governmental actors in the design and implementation of training, measures and other public programmes providing a sustained and coordinated approach to prevent and combat racism and intolerance.

- **Gotland**

The region of Gotland has developed the Workplace Integration Project (Integration på Arbetsplatsen–IPA) in close cooperation with the Employment Service and with the support of the European Social Fund for the period 2016-2019. The project gives people with difficulties accessing the labour market an increased opportunity to secure their own livelihood, receive an inclusive treatment and develop the Swedish language through alternance between internship and language education. Gotland also emphasises migrant health and was the first region in the country to implement voluntary medical examinations and vaccinations for asylum seekers, resulting in 95% of all asylum seekers having a medical examination compared to 35% at national level. Furthermore, the region is also involved in a project on Community readiness for increased numbers of migrants run by the Swedish Migration Agency, to strengthen Sweden's overall ability to handle strong increases in migrants by 2021 through increased cooperation between stakeholders.

- **Occitanie**

Since 2015, the Region of Occitanie has been supporting Syrian refugees studying French in its local universities and provides financial support to universities offering French languages courses to all refugees and asylum seekers. In 2017, the Region of Occitanie adopted a regional support system for the reception and integration of refugees and asylum seekers. With an annual budget of 1 million euros, the regional support system finances any project carried out by cities, reception structures or public institutions that complements or furthers State requirements for the reception of asylum seekers and refugees. Over two years, the regional support system has financed 51 projects throughout its territory, ranging from French courses to access to psychological care and health for refugees and asylum seekers. In 2019, the Region has adopted a second regional support system for projects specifically designed for the professional integration of refugees and asylum seekers.

- **L’Oriental**

The IDMAJE (*Inclusion sociale par l’insertion professionnelle des migrants et réfugiés les plus vulnérables*) project is an initiative funded by the European Union to support the Entraide National (a federation body of social assistance in Morocco) to improve the economic integration and the empowerment of regularized migrants in Morocco. Migrants in a situation of great vulnerability and without professional skills or knowledge, who are regular or in the process of regularization, including refugees, are thus accompanied in their process of professional integration. The project promotes the cooperation with different public and private entities in charge of training and employment, and there are two initiatives in Oujda and Nador in L’Oriental region.

- **Toscana**
The Global Health Center is multidisciplinary facility of the Tuscany Region whose objective is to highlight the connections established between globalization and health in terms of equality, human rights, sustainability, diplomacy, and international collaborations. The Center coordinates actors in the Tuscany Region’s international health cooperation network and promotes international activities in regional local health services. One of the Center’s Thematic Priorities is migrant health, and its activities are directed toward information and communication serving the immigrant population and the training of health workers.

- **Skåne**

Region Skåne is investing in further development of a mentoring method with focus on foreign-born women with academic background. A previous pilot was conducted in 2015 with very good results – over 83 percent of immigrant women participants in the pilot got jobs in line with their education and professional experience. In addition to this result, both mentors and immigrant women experienced a better understanding of integration and mutual integration. Mentorship proved to be a well-functioning method for faster and more efficient integration of foreign-born women into the labour market. Together with municipalities, representatives from the business community, civil society, national actors and academia and another region in the country, Region Skåne wants to contribute to a more equal and inclusive growth.

- **The role of decentralised cooperation**

- **Andalusia**

MED ATADAMUN is a project on welcoming, advising and raising awareness with sub-Saharan immigrants in Morocco. The Andalusian government also provides support for the strengthening of juvenile centres in the region of Tangier-Tetouan-Alhucemas to combat school failure. La Junta de Andalucía has developed programmes that are not directly linked to migration, but that could be potentially linked in the field of agriculture (Integrated Project to improve productivity, conservation and commercialization in rural areas in Saint Louis Region (Senegal), economic development (local development programme in Morocco, Senegal and Mauritania / Strengthening governmental policies of Mali to increase socio economic level and to reduce poverty), etc.

- **Murcia**

Regarding projects that could potentially have a link to migration of asylum, Murcia in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science of Paraguay, UNESCO, Mensajeros de la Paz Association, associations of Paraguayan and Ecuadorian immigrants in the Region of Murcia and the regional government, has implemented a project to promote formal and non-formal education of indigenous people in Paraguay through educational materials in their native languages.

- **Occitanie**

Irrishel (2007) is a project lead by Occitanie Coopération and supported by the Region of Occitanie through its annual call for co-development projects. Irrishel started in Méckhé, Senegal aiming to equip four villages with irrigation systems composed of a solar pumping platform connected to a micro-irrigation network and a water point for human consumption. Both humanitarian and educational, the project’s main objectives are to increase the food security of rural populations, to sensitize the local population to the techniques of micro-irrigation and solar energy, to optimize water management, to limit the use of phytosanitary chemicals and to improve the working conditions of women in crop farming among others. Deeply rooted in the local communities, the project has prompted young villagers who had gone trying to make a living in Dakar to come back and work as farmers. Occitanie’s annual call for co-development projects supports NGOs based in the Region which design and implement projects in developing countries. Selected projects respond to needs expressed by the population and / or local authorities as part of the public policies for the local development of the country or territory and are consistent regional public policies with regard to sustainable development and sustainable farming.
• **L'Oriental**  
The MIDEO (*Migration et Développement Economique dans la region de l'Oriental*) project in L'Oriental (Morocco) is focused on tackling the causes of migration, for example the shortage of jobs, and to promote the benefits of migration, such as improvement of the business and investment climate, which also benefits migrants working as entrepreneurs. MIDEO aims to stimulate a favourable business environment in order to harness the potentials of migration for the economic development of the region of Oriental. In cooperation with economic partners in the region, the Moroccan Diaspora in Europe and other partner institutions, structures are established through which the Diaspora can contribute with their know-how and potential to the economic development of Oriental. This project is funded by GIZ, the German Development Agency.

♫ Contributing to humanitarian assistance in migration and asylum

• **Andalusia**  
In cooperation with UNHCR, Andalusia supported a programme of Protection and Assistance for the Syrian refugee population in neighbouring countries in 2017. Latin America being one of the regions that are crucial for Andalusia, they have developed projects to strengthen health care and protection of migrants and displaced persons forced by violence, reinforcing the responses of civil society in Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras.

• **Azores**  
Since 2008 they have participated in an Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (ARVoRe VI in Portuguese) in partnership with OIM Portugal office and the Regional Directorate of the Communities, financed by AMIF and the Portuguese Immigration and Borders Service (SEF).

• **Basque Country**  
The Basque Government is involved in different humanitarian projects to support refugees, such as one related to food security and access to water for the Sahrawi refugee population in Tindouf; one providing the Palestine refugee population in Syria and Lebanon with economic resources that allow them to acquire basic necessities in an effective and dignified flexible way via UNRWA or one improving the living conditions of the Syrian Urban Refugees in Istanbul through the promotion of resilience, participation, integration and support for a peaceful coexistence in collaboration with different NGOs. It also provides comprehensive humanitarian assistance to people in situations of forced migration in Colombia and Ecuador in collaboration with different entities, and is involved in a project to help guarantee the fundamental rights of people at risk of displacement and displaced persons with international protection needs in the Northern Triangle of Central America, so that they can recover and reconstruct their life project, with special attention to the identification of gender violence and its accompaniment.

• **Murcia**  
In the field of cooperation and humanitarian assistance, Murcia has developed a programme in cooperation with the CEPAIM Foundation to support the creation of income-generating activities in the country of origin (Senegal) to stimulate voluntary return. The project aims at accompanying the Senegalese diaspora in Murcia through training courses in entrepreneurship, account management, marketing, etc.

• **Skåne**  
From 2019-2022 Skåne will participate in the programme “Forced displacement of refugees and host-community solidarity (FOCUS)” to provide effective, evidence-based solutions for integration of refugees into host communities, contributing to increased tolerance, peaceful coexistence and reducing radicalization. The project consortium consists of eight partners, including end-users, research institutions and private sector enterprises, from seven different European countries and Jordan in the Middle East. It is coordinated by the IFRC Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support hosted by the Danish Red Cross.
Participating in international and regional networks

- Andalusia

The Regional Government (Junta de Andalucía) is part of the network ANMAR (Federation of Local Communities of Northern Morocco and Andalusia) that aims to strengthen cooperation between Andalusian local governments and their partners in Morocco to foster territorial development, governance and local inclusion in the border areas. ANMAR was set up in September 2014 and is composed of more than 60 Local Communities of Northern Morocco and Andalusia. The Federation is the crystallization of a decentralized cooperation programme, known as the ANMAR Programme, which began in 2006. The ANMAR Programme functions as a network of active local entities and works in activating collaborations, projects, programmes, meeting spaces and coordination; and exchanges of experiences and know-how, with the aim of improving the quality of life in the territories and giving voice to local entities.

- Azores

Azores has developed and leads an International Network for Social Inclusion that brings together 24 governmental and non-governmental organizations based in the USA, Canada, Bermuda and the Autonomous Region of the Azores aiming to support the social integration of emigrants and returned citizens in a situation of need and social exclusion in the Azores, improving social inclusion of Azorean communities in their respective host countries and paying particular attention to the cases of deportation of Azoreans from the host countries (specially the USA) where they had permanent legal residency status. In this line, Azores has also developed a programme to obtain more information about citizens of Azorean origin in deportation process from the USA and Canada, prior to their arrival in the Region, allowing to adapt reception and integration plans. They have also developed a financial support system to finance activities carried out in the areas of emigration and relations with the emigrated and returned Azorean communities, study visits of educational establishments in emigrated communities abroad, and immigration.

- Catalonia

The Catalan Government in addition to its activity in the CPMR Task Force on migration management during the last 4 years, is now leading a recently new Task Force on Migration set up in the framework of the Assembly of European Regions that aims to promote specifically an intercultural approach to public policies which can be complementary to the work developed by the CPMR. Based on the experiences already taking place, the Catalan government proposes to reflect on what has worked well and the challenges encountered by regional governments in managing migration, and to discuss in particular how regions can successfully harness the benefits of diversity.

- Murcia

Formally, the Autonomous region of Murcia is a member of the Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly (ARLEM), an assembly of local and regional representatives from the European Union and its Mediterranean partners that has worked on migration management issues in relation with the role of local and regional authorities, producing specific reports, recommendations and exchanges of best practices. It has also partnered with Idas y Vueltas Association in Montevideo (Uruguay) and Pichincha (Ecuador) to exchange ideas and experiences in the field of reception and integration of migrants and refugees, promoting interculturalism.

- L’Oriental

The Agency of Oriental deals with requests from local communities to support decentralised cooperation projects. In the Oriental, several decentralised projects are implemented in multiple areas. The Agency is promoting a regional twinning project with Champagne-Ardenne Region. The twinning collaboration includes

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42 As well as other CPMR Intermediterranean Commission Regions (e.g. Sicily, Region of Valencia, Western Greece, Corsica, Andalusia, Crete)
support to facilitate labour integration of young people; promotion of women’s activities; partnership in the agricultural sector; assistance in local development, spatial planning and tourism; promoting economic development and human development (training, health and culture) and institutional cooperation.

More generally, fostering cooperation in the external dimension of migration and asylum policies has been identified as a priority for several CPMR regions, from and beyond the EU-based members. Exploring opportunities to cement this aim of cooperation and collaboration is part of the CPMR Task Force’s goals. In fact, the CPMR already acts as a forum for cooperation between EU and non-EU regions on migration issues, since its membership includes Regions from both the Union and its neighbourhood. A number of CPMR members are already cooperating or have expressed readiness to cooperate at decentralised level with other regional and local authorities within Europe as well as from other continents. Different forms of cooperation are envisaged in this context:

- Solidarity agreements with other regions, notably with regard to welcoming refugees in a region to region process.
- Participation in international cooperation frameworks/networks with third countries
- International development or humanitarian programmes/projects/actions in themes linked to development, management of diversity and interculturality, diasporas, formal and informal competence of refugees/asylum seekers, and including technical assistance activities, exchanges of knowledge and experiences, etc.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Regions’ needs and strengths on migration management have been already shown in previous CPMR work and throughout past surveys as well as in the opinions and reports of the Committee of the Regions and the Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly (ARLEM). Regions are key actors in migration and refugee policies, particularly as concerns welcoming, inclusion and integration policies. Irrespective of different legal competence frameworks, they do also play an increasing role in international cooperation and international relations. As mentioned, the Global Compact on Migration considers that migration is a “multidimensional reality that cannot be addressed by one government policy sector alone” and which needs a “whole-of-government approach” to develop and implement effective migration policies and practices, and to ensure horizontal and vertical policy coherence across all sectors and levels of government.

It also assesses that migration needs a “whole-of-society approach” and a “multi-stakeholder partnerships” to address migration in all its dimensions by including migrants, diasporas, local communities, civil society, academia, the private sector, parliamentarians, trade unions, National Human Rights Institutions, the media and other relevant stakeholders in migration governance (Global Compact 2018).

As mentioned above, the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) explicitly recognize the potential of migration to promote development. The way in which international cooperation will shape migration and development practice remain a subject of debate. On the one side, development policymakers’ approach is focused on promoting the development potential of migration both in countries of origin and destination. Governments and the European Commission are increasingly focused on how development can have an impact in reducing some of the push factors of migration.

5.1. Multilevel Governance Scenario: the role of the regions in the EU external dimension of migration policy

Regions can be instrumental and should be recognised as partners to develop the external dimension of the European Union’s migration policy. Their knowledge and experience both in migration and international cooperation is very relevant to the external dimension of EU migration policy goals, and those of the SDGs and the two Global Compacts on migration and asylum.
Member regions have been dealing with and currently work on development strategies both in their own region and in the countries of origin, and have been collaborating with migrants for those objectives. Some of them have been engaged in active return programmes for migrants. Many are involved in humanitarian projects with refugees living in regions close to the area they fled from.

Regions should work for an increasing acknowledgement of their role in migration and asylum policies and action, including implementation of relevant EU legislation and programmes. As the CPMR’s Issue Paper on “Migration and Asylum in EU Regions: Towards a multilevel governance approach” states, the Committee of Regions has frequently pointed out that the global approach to migration requires multi-level governance, ensuring that regions (and local authorities) should be involved, and recognising their key role in promoting and implementing social, employment, reception and integration policies, but also in managing irregular migration and in establishing dialogue and cooperation with their counterparts in countries of origin and transit. The regional and local powers should be part of EU discussions on migration, as they have an important role in migration policy. Indeed, regions face (along with local authorities) the basic needs of their de facto population and facilitate their incorporation into societies. Promoting decentralised cooperation with a territorial approach can be crucial to achieve these objectives, also thanks to its capacity to mobilise and support regional and local actors. Furthermore, EU regions could play a key role in thinking differently the migration-development nexus and in strengthening cooperation with regions of origin and transit. Dialogue and cooperation on migration and asylum questions should include EU regions and non-EU regions: strengthening links beyond the EU borders (Nordic, Mediterranean or Eastern ones) could facilitate a better management of migration and integration, helping regions of origin, transit and destination, and migrants themselves.

5.2. EU financial instruments 2021-2027

In the document “A road map for Macro-regional and sea basin strategies in the Mediterranean”, the Intermediterranean Commission of the CPMR states that “the territorial and maritime governance of the Mediterranean needs to be improved in order to provide effective responses to common challenges”. It also acknowledges the complexity of actors that play a role in this area, such as countries (EU members, pre-accession and candidate countries and countries included in the southern neighbourhood policy), multilateral institutions, regional institutions, and economic and civil society players.

According to the European Commission, some of the challenges in the Western Mediterranean range from “high youth unemployment in several countries”, due to a prolonged economic and financial crisis, to environmental problems (a growing coastal urbanization, overexploitation of fish stocks, marine pollution, etc.) and the increase of migration flows since 2015. Also, the EC refers to the current “demographic trends and climate change” as factors to take into consideration in the Mediterranean Region. Regarding the labour market, the need to match skills and demands in the EU is well established. Specifically, in the western Mediterranean region, high rates of youth unemployment coexist with the lack of necessary skills and profiles in maritime businesses, which is known as the “employment paradox”.

In the Communication of the EC on the delivery of the European Agenda on Migration of 2017, the EC acknowledges the need to strengthen legal migration channels, with a particular focus on labour migration, and announces the coordination and financing of pilot projects on this issue. The projects should take into consideration the needs of migrants, the host societies as well as the countries of origin. In this context, one of the proposed actions by the EC is “to promote more effective circular migration”. The Mobility Partnership Facility II, implemented by ICMPD, is financing this typology of projects that are organized in three phases:

43 European Commission. Initiative for the sustainable development of the blue economy. COM (2017) 183 final
44 European Commission. Communication on the Delivery of the European Agenda on Migration, COM (2017) 558 final
pre-departure phase, mobility phase in the EU Member State and reintegration in the country of origin. This call is addressed to public bodies; complementary to this, the AMIF call for proposals for Union Actions extends this priority to non-public bodies and actors⁴⁶.

On the other hand, the cross-border cooperation within the European Neighbourhood Instrument⁴⁷ has the objective of “advancing cross-border integration” and aims to operate for the benefit of both sides of the EU’s external borders. The Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme has established some priorities, such as “business and SME⁴⁸ development; support to education, research, technological development and innovation, and the promotion of social inclusion and fight against poverty”. In a different vein, the ICMPD is launching a call under the MC2CM project to fund actions that promote multilevel governance between local and regional actors of the two Mediterranean shores⁴⁹.

If well managed, migration can become an effective way of promoting development in the countries of origin. For the public entities which are developing decentralized cooperation for development programmes, mainstreaming migration into cooperation is key. In this context, the Joint Migration and Development Initiative (JMDI) implemented by UNDP and five agencies (IOM, ILO, UNHCR, UNFPA AND UN Women), gives support to M&D actors⁵⁰ through a Website that promotes interactions among them and which has e-learning tools, documents, etc.

The European Commission programmes and financial instruments in the post 2020 programming period should open more room for the EU regions to reinforce their potential engagement within the external dimension of EU migration policy, and to facilitate cooperation and dialogue with non-EU regions

5.3. Building a regional strategy on migration, mobility and development

The European Commission should include the regions as relevant stakeholders for the external dimension of the EU Migration Agenda, in line with the two Global Compacts and the SDGs. They should be recognised as international actors with a long experience both in migration policies and in development.

Regions should develop their own vision on how to work on migration and development, both fostering the development potential of migrants and working with development policy tools to reduce some push factors of migration. Regions’ strategies could focus on the following actions:

- To share information and relevant experience on the migration and development nexus, and to promote a better understanding of migration flows and migrants’ contribution to development both in countries of origin and destination. Exchange of practices and knowledge transfer to local and regional administrations on migration and social inclusion policies (both at EU level and international scenarios). Improvements on reporting, monitoring and evaluating should be made to ameliorate practices, experiences and actions. These processes should include information on the impact of migration-development actions and activities on goals and outcomes, as well as on sustainable development at large and citizen well-being.

⁴⁹ Further information at Call for participation: Building knowledge on urban migration: innovative tools and practices to face data challenges Amman, 19/20 March and Call for targeted city actions in the Mediterranean region: https://www.uclg.org/en/media/news/mc2cm-project-launches-call-targeted-city-actions-mediterranean-region
⁵⁰ Joint Migration and Development Initiative (JMDI). See http://www.migration4development.org/en/content/about-jmdi
To promote better coordination across levels of governments in the migration-development nexus. National and sub-national governments, as well as global networks and national associations of local and regional governments, have an important role to play to facilitate the coordination and exchange of information, knowledge and experience. Improving cooperation also means better evaluation and results-oriented actions and increasing transparency.

To use Decentralized Development Cooperation frameworks to improve local and regional policies in partner and donor countries, and ultimately contribute to SDGs. Regions (and cities) are more than mere implementers of national policies and could play a key role in promoting sustainable development and policy coherence on a larger scale. The 2030 Agenda provides an interesting framework to mainstream sustainable development goals into local and regional policymaking. It is necessary to promote a more dynamic Decentralized Cooperation, with innovative practices and new actors to be included. Strengthening linkages with migration policies could be done via policy dialogue, knowledge sharing and practitioner experience, along with common projects and actions among others.

Linking development strategies to voluntary and active return. Reintegration of people in the country of origin after a return (voluntary or forced) can be an opportunity to stimulate the positive effects of migration on development. The policy of returning irregular migrants who are not allowed to stay in the EU is prevailing; nevertheless, the reintegration of migrants in the country of origin presents some challenges that need to be faced, especially with vulnerable people. Supporting the reintegration of migrants that have been returned can be done by fostering the creation and development of the social and solidarity economy (through non-profit associations, social enterprises and micro-enterprises, etc.) in the country of origin which can support the social inclusion of returnees and help them to use the new skills acquired in the EU. The evaluation of these experiences can give some important insights into the best practices to be replicated.

The involvement of diasporas in the development of the country of origin is a significant way to maximize the benefits of migration for the development of the country (and region) of origin. Some regional public institutions are already working in this field, financing projects addressed to diasporas. This can be done, for example, by promoting a call addressed to migrants’ organizations to develop projects that incorporate their skills into some development projects in their country of origin. The AMIF Union Actions call has as one of its priorities the engagement of diaspora communities of Senegal, Gambia, Ghana, and Nigeria on awareness-raising towards their country of origin communities on the risks of irregular migration. Supporting already created migration-related networks or creating new ones are important ways of developing the dialogues between the European regions and their partners and to ensure the co-ownership of projects. In that sense, mapping the regions’ migrant organisations and working along with their transnational networks can help in this objective. Regions can be instrumental in recognising and promoting new international links and associated development opportunities.

Resettlement programmes are a good opportunity to help some of the most vulnerable refugees living in developing countries to start a new life in a context of protection and new opportunities and reduce pressure on public services in countries with a large number of displaced people.

Exchange practices and relevant experiences in supporting refugees’ self-reliance and ending the ‘refugee camps approach’ in the neighbour countries from the areas from which they fled. That can include investments and job creation initiatives.

Promoting regional networks beyond the EU scenario to address migration challenges. Regional dialogue to raise shared concerns and challenges and to improve knowledge transfer and identification of practices and initiatives could be useful to reinforce the role of regions regarding migration and asylum policies. Regional networks which include regions of origin, transit and
destination could be an important framework to identify risks and provide solutions. It could be useful to achieve common positions on specific topics and to transmit them to national (and EU) authorities. Furthermore, the CPMR could keep promoting a political dialogue amongst the European Commission and the EU Member States to answer the needs and reinforce the role of regions in migration and asylum policies, including their external dimension, joining efforts with other relevant networks and institutions in a multilevel governance perspective.

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This report was commissioned by the CPMR to INSTRATEGIES

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Acknowledgements: Annika Annerby Jansson, Vice-President Region Skåne, Chair of the Task Force and former Rapporteur to the CPMR Political Bureau; Claire Street, CPMR Secretariat; and all the regions that contributed to the CPMR Survey that was used as one of the main sources of information.

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The Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) brings together some 160 Regions from 25 States from the European Union and beyond.

Representing about 200 million people, the CPMR campaigns in favour of a more balanced development of the European territory.

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Ref: CRPMNTP190001 A2