



Expert meeting

“Strengthening resilience of local communities to the presence of migrants”

CONCEPT NOTE

Vienna, 4 July 2017

Hofburg Congress Centre, Neuer Saal

Background

The presence of migrants in all countries of the world, besides “traditional” destinations in the “Global North-West”, is a sign of the times. It shows the recognized potential of migration for economic development considering that each year migrants’ remittances mount to \$583 billion, two to three times the annual amount of global Official Development Assistance (ODA). But it also hints to the emerging concerns regarding social cohesion in increasingly diverse societies.

Cities and local governments have a critical role to play in dealing with migration-related matters. It is at local level that the presence of migrants can lead to social tensions, that access to services can be put under pressure, that availability of decent work for locals and newcomers can represent an opportunity for all or a further divide.

The *New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants* (A/71/L.1*) – that launched in September 2016 a negotiation process for the adoption of the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in 2018 - acknowledges the importance to strengthen the host communities’ resilience (art. 84)¹, underlining the need to “*create the conditions for growth, employment and education*” that would allow the newcomers to become “*drivers of development*” in the receiving societies.

Although the concept of resilience is not new, it usually has been associated with the capacity to prevent and recover from hazardous events and shocks. However, besides the political attention that the recent conflict-driven large movements of persons catalysed, migration is a long-term phenomenon, a fundamental factor of economic globalization that assumes the progressive overcoming of barriers to the movements of goods, financial assets and services. Consequently, human mobility makes today and future societies structurally diverse, implying the coexistence of national citizens and foreigners as an essential feature. Unfolding the concept of resilience in the field of migration governance is therefore linked to the capacity to support a constant transformative action to allow societies to adapt in the face of continual change. In this context, enhancing resilience means to foster enabling environments that allow all individuals – nationals

¹ Article no. 84: Welcoming the positive steps taken by individual States, we encourage host Governments to consider opening their labour markets to refugees. We will work to strengthen host countries’ and communities’ resilience, assisting them, for example, with employment creation and income generation schemes. In this regard, we recognize the potential of young people and will work to create the conditions for growth, employment and education that will allow them to be the drivers of development.

and migrants - to be and act as resources and not burdens, to be and operate as active players and not destitute people.

Building on the OSCE *Security Days* event on 30-31 March 2017 - *Creating inclusive, safe and sustainable cities: Local approaches to global challenges* - this Expert meeting intends to analyse the concept of resilience in the field of migration governance and identify critical factors that can support local communities and governments in harnessing the positive potential of diverse societies for socio-economic growth and development.

The Expert meeting

As part of its mandate to support the OSCE participating States in enhancing the effectiveness of migration policies², the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA) has identified “*Supporting effective engagement of local authorities in addressing migration management, integration and related concerns by facilitating ‘G-local’ (Global-local) co-operation*” as one of its programmatic priorities.³

The expert consultation on *Strengthening the resilience of local communities to the presence of migrants* intends to offer inputs and sources of reflection for focussed discussion with the aim to identify a possible roadmap of future steps.

Overall, the consultation will benefit from “Discussion papers” that will analyse the following aspects of the concept of resilience:

1. The economic perspective: In this Discussion paper, the United Nations’ Development Programme (UNDP) will analyse those factors that can harness the presence of migrants and help the effective labour inclusion of newcomers, avoiding social dumping practices, thus benefitting all citizens, including long-term migrants;
2. The local governance perspective: In this Discussion paper the UNDP will explore how local governance models can influence resilience through urban and housing planning, as well as municipal service delivery planning, participation of newcomers and autochthones in the local community life, and if and how innovation and new technologies can help local administrators in their efforts;
3. The social fabric perspective: In this Discussion paper, the Central European Initiative (CEI), particularly active in the field of local governance of migration in the Western Balkans, will explore social groups’ dynamics and point out how to build and foster common values in diverse societies and which factors are critical to drive a “social pact” in such context.

The Expert meeting will gather relevant international and regional organizations – the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations’ Development Programme (UNDP), the Central European Initiative (CEI), the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) – together with think tanks,

² The migration-related mandate of the OSCE/OCEEA is shaped by the following commitments: MC Decision No. 2/05 on *Migration*; MC Statement No. 6/06 on *Migration*; MC Decision No. 5/09 on *Migration Management*; The PC Decision No. 557/Rev.1, *OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings*, Section IV, “*Prevention of trafficking in human beings*”, paragraphs 3, 7, and 12; MC Decision No. 3/16, *OSCE’s role in the governance of large movements of migrants and refugees*, recognizes that “*the benefits and opportunities of safe, orderly and regular migration are substantial and often underestimated...*”; MC Decision No. 4/16, *Strengthening Good Governance and Promoting Connectivity*, invites participating States “*to strive for better application of international labour and social standards...*” and to “*increase efforts aimed at overcoming challenges such as labour exploitation and poorly regulated and inspected worksites*”.

³ *Key findings on expert meeting: Enhancing the OSCE long-term approach to migration governance*
<http://www.osce.org/secretariat/255316>

national and international specialists in the field of migration governance, including OSCE Executive Structures and Institutions, academia and research entities, as well as civil society representatives.

The participants will engage in a peer-review process of the Discussion papers through an interactive discussion. The key findings of the Expert meeting will be collected in a report that will be published soon after the event.

The working language will be English and Russian.

The expert meeting will be preceded by a vernissage on Monday 3 July at 7 p.m.: “Il signor Sindaco e la città futura” (Mister Mayor and the City of the Future), hosted by the Italian Cultural Institute, Ungargasse 43, Vienna.