

**THE HAGUE PROCESS ON REFUGEES AND MIGRATION
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Introducción

Since the first High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development was held by the UN's General Assembly in 2006, progress has been made away from the security and border control centred policies of the past, and towards strengthening international cooperation to leverage the positive contributions of migrants and migration to society.

The Global Forum on Migration and Development, GFMD, and the Regional Forums and Consultation Processes have worked with that objective in mind, fostering constructive dialogue and best practice exchange. Good programmes and policy experiences linking migration and development have been introduced in many countries, yet these developments are uneven across the world and they are still fragile. The financial and economic crisis has led to the introduction of restrictive measures, and to racist and xenophobic reactions against migrants.

I welcome the second High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development to be held in 2013 as well as the evaluation of the GFMD, and trust that a review of the current situation and a reflection about the way forward, building on the progress made up to now, will contribute to the objectives set forth in 2006.

Informal global hearings such as the one promoted by the Hague Process are very valuable for stimulating the debate.

Ibero-America's case study

Iberoamerica is an interesting and rich case study in migration and development which offers a myriad of experiences from which important lessons can be drawn.

Not only is it a region that within itself it includes origin, transit and destination countries, but, even more importantly, during the lifespan of one generation, the region is in the process of having witnessed two full migration cycles, and potentially a third budding one.

Although migration has been historically present in the region, millions of Europeans living in impoverished economic conditions with limited opportunities migrated to the new countries of America between the mid 1800's and mid 1900's attracted by high employment demand and the prospects of a better life. Between 1936 and 1945, a second migration wave originated from Spain motivated by political and religious reasons, followed by a third, less intense one that involved industrial workers.

Starting from the mid 1900's and resulting from the European recovery after the II World War, the existing ties with the old metropolis and the appearance of new political, economic and commercial relations fuelled by the US and Europe, migration flows reversed their direction from Latin American countries to Europe, including in later phases to Spain and Portugal.

Today we are at a crossroads. Changes in migration flows are starting to be felt, as a consequence of the 2008 worldwide crisis and the current severe European aftershock, especially felt although not exclusively on the European side of Iberoamerica, Spain and Portugal; They are also changing as a result of the economic growth recorded in some Latin American countries, such as Brazil, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Colombia, Peru and Panama. In this new context, we are witnessing return migration, intensifying south-south flows, and an emerging qualified migration from Europe and elsewhere from the developed world.

Long term perspective

This review provides perspective about the evolution of migration and its management over time. Overall, significant improvements have been introduced. Although policies are often based on migration flows management, improvements have been introduced in relation to the protection of the human rights and social protection of migrants, and as result of the efforts made in strengthening the link between migration and development. Furthermore cooperation among governments has been reinforced with the establishment of Regional Consultation Processes and the Ibero-American Forum on Migration and Development. Yet difficult situations persist, marked by irregular migration and its consequences, human trafficking and smuggling, unprotected minors, sexual and violent abuses especially affecting women, and last but not least, the high unemployment suffered by migrants as a result of the economic crisis.

Applying a long term vision when managing migration is crucial not only for safeguarding the human rights of migrants, but also for allowing the migration-development binomial to fully express itself, yet with the clear understanding that migration is no replacement for development.

Public policy should address all phases of the migration cycle, while at the same time factoring in the dynamic nature of the migration phenomenon. It should include components to maximise the benefit of migration throughout the various phases of the cycle by building on successful experiences showcased in the region and/or elsewhere, while safeguarding the human rights of migrants.

In order to avoid the introduction of abrupt policy or legislative changes as a response to changing conditions, it could incorporate self-regulating mechanisms, however ensuring that the human rights of migrants are respected and protected.

On the other hand, migrants should not be considered as a homogenous group; rather, the different needs and situations of mixed flows should be considered and ideally, catered for.

In today's Ibero-America, it is important to realise how countries have in the past, and are currently, changing roles as origin, transit and destination countries. Within our community, this allows for exchanging and building on experiences, helping to avoid mistakes made in the past, and, on the contrary, making the most of successful experiences, yet adapting them to local and new realities. Best practice in the areas of integration, liaison programmes with the Diasporas, return migration, remittances, voting access, and co-development are available in given countries and have the potential of being replicated elsewhere in the Region.

This creates an excellent opportunity for cooperation in the form of technical assistance between and among countries from our Community, and to strengthen constructive dialogue and understanding.

On the other hand, regional cooperation and partnership based on shared responsibility and accountability are especially needed in order to tackle those most sensitive areas related with migration management: irregular migration and its ill effects, human trafficking and migrant smuggling, human rights abuse, and xenophobia and racism.

Participation of governments in regional consultation processes is proving to be effective in dealing with common regional migration issues and is fostering constructive cooperation and partnerships.

On the other hand, all stakeholders have the responsibility to provide more clear and objective information to the population in order to feed a less bias public opinion. The negative myths most often based on subjective assessments about immigrants must be dispelled by promoting and publicising reliable, objective, and scientific based research results. Greater efforts from academia must be made for improved and effective PR, which should use the full capacity

offered by ITC and social networks. Public-private partnerships could play an important role in this area, as there is also ample room for active involvement from migrants themselves and their social network.

Emerging economies, knowledge based economy, return and qualified migration

Changes in the reality of migration operate against a backdrop in constant transformation, which affects not only the direction but also the nature of migration flows.

Globalization and related developments in transportation, communication, technology, social participation, as well as demographic trends, are important factors all contributing to shape the course of migration. Against this background, new patterns of human and talent mobility are developing increasingly in accordance with the 21st century and globalization, generating the opportunity for creative exchange mechanisms.

The global crisis of 2008 taught us that continued growth will be increasingly dependant on a knowledge and competitiveness-based economy. Also as a result of the crisis we are witnessing the development of a new world order, fuelled by the robust growth of Asia Pacific's emerging economies.

Latin America showed resilience to the international crisis owing it to its solid macroeconomic policies, to a strong banking sector and to high commodities demand from Asia. The challenge ahead is to leverage this economic growth into a sustainable growth able to transform societies that evolve into a growing emerging middle class holding better jobs and creating more value, hence progressively moving towards becoming developed nations.

In order to achieve this, Latin America and particularly countries such as Brazil, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Mexico, Colombia, Peru and Panamá have the opportunity to leverage their current growth towards meeting the significant challenges that lie ahead in the areas of fiscal consolidation, access to banking,

investment in infrastructure, education, and innovation. Now more than ever, these countries have the means and they are ready to commit to and progress towards sustainable development, yet the human capital available at national level is not sufficient to meet the requirements.

Knowledge transfer from returning migrants and young qualified migrant professionals as well as solid entrepreneurship can play an important role in this endeavour, in a context of new transnational mobility characterised by the pursuit of exchange, new challenges, and exposure to new realities. Balanced agreements among the relevant and concerned Ibero-American countries should establish the conditions for such exchanges.

Moving from formal agreements to concrete action

In 2006, the Montevideo Summit of Heads of State and Government approved the Montevideo Undertaking on Migration and Development, which paved the way for all future Ibero-American action in the area of international migration. This agreement set forth political and programmatic guidelines, and established the Ibero-American Forum on Migration and Development, FIBEMYD. The first such meeting was convened in 2008 in Ecuador, and the second one in 2010 in El Salvador.

On the latter occasion, the FIBEMYD acknowledged the fact that progress had been made on the international migration and development scene, at the level of formal agreements, however, practical and action-oriented outcomes resulting from such agreements were believed to lag behind.

The main purpose of the meeting was to analyse the impact of the economic crisis on migration and development, and identify appropriate policy and programmatic responses, with the specific objective to reach agreements on action. It produced concrete recommendations aimed at capitalising the benefits of migration and leveraging them into development, for the benefit of migrants, their families, and origin and destination countries.

Ibero-America has a flagship instrument - the Multilateral Convention on Social Security, which ensures the portability of pension benefits accumulated by migrant workers throughout their working life in Ibero-American countries. The Convention became effective the 1st of May 2011, and, so far, it is operational in seven countries. This instrument safeguards the human rights and social protection of migrants and motivates migrants to pursue formal work and pay into the social security system, wherever they may be in Ibero-America. It also takes into account and builds on the various phases of the migration cycle, and finally, it fosters the dynamic of mobility in accordance with our times. Based on the same principle, Ibero-America has initiated a dialogue process that pursues the ambitious objective of working towards progressively extending the social protection in health to migrants in Ibero-America.

Against a backdrop of globalization and increased transnational mobility, Ibero-America has also started to work on the recognition and certification of working knowledge and skills acquired by migrants throughout their migrant experience. Advancing in this field would contribute to progressively build the human capital base of migrants and would enhance the position of migrants working in fields different from their original occupation or education invested in prior to their migrant journey. It would also increase the jobs prospects of those returning home or migrating to new destinations, and hence, foster the capitalization of migrants' social remittances.

On the financial remittances side, in the region like elsewhere, considerable progress has been made in reducing transfer costs. Efforts are now underway for leveraging remittances resources for the benefit of migrants and their families by promoting their access to savings, insurance and other financial instruments. There is good practice available in the region, ready to be transferred into public policy. SEGIB hopes to be instrumental in this endeavour and, this year, it is organising a workshop with governments and the private sector to assess the benefits and requirements for achieving this.

In order to achieve balanced and effective migration management, policy should be comprehensive and supported by effective and transparent legislation as

well as adequate resources from states budgets, allowing to fund programmes designed to .implement what policy is set to do. A long term view and full cycle perspective would provide the time required to generate the desired return for migrants and their families, for sending and receiving countries and for society in general.

Questions

How to ascertain that public policy incorporates a long term perspective of migration and development

What long term elements should be incorporated into migration policy and related legislation?

How to reinforce the evidence and visibility of the contribution of migration to migrants, their families and origin and destination countries?

What role can social networks play in this matter?

What is needed in order to move beyond agreement into action? What is lacking? How to move from best practice to policy making?

What specific actions can contribute towards favouring constructive mobility?

Is there a need for a worldwide handbook on migration and development good practice? Whose responsibility would that be?