

SUMMARY REPORT FOR THE GFMD

Migration and Development Seminar Series Workshop on Migration Profiles: Lessons Learned

Batumi, Georgia, 12-13 July 2011

Hosted and Organized by: Ministry of Justice, Georgia; and the Swiss GFMD Chair represented by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

In Collaboration with: International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)

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Rapporteur: Mr. Radim Zak, Programme Manager

Participants: Representatives of state authorities of three continents, international organizations, GFMD task force; list of participants attached

Total number of participants: 42 persons; 17 states including the Polish EU Presidency, EU Delegation in Tbilisi, 4 international organisations

1. Introduction/Summary

The international workshop on “Migration Profiles: Lessons learned”, is one of the thematic workshops carried out within the framework of The Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) 2011, chaired by the Swiss Government. GFMD 5 provides space for a series of smaller, focused and action-oriented meetings around the world, in support of the Chair’s flagship theme ‘*Taking action on Migration and Development – Coherence, Capacity and Cooperation*’. Cluster III of the GFMD Thematic Work Programme, focuses on processes and tools, which can promote an evidence-based approach to policy-making.

The Migration Profile concept, which was first proposed by the European Commission in 2005, has evolved in recent years into a process and tool to promote policy coherence on migration and development, and an evidence-based approach to policy-making, involving a broad range of stakeholders. Governments are increasingly recognizing Migration Profiles as a key tool for migration and development policies, as recommended at the 2010 GFMD Puerto Vallarta and earlier discussions, inter alia in the context of the GFMD Working Group (WG) June 2010 seminar held with governments and other actors in Vienna. Further, the GFMD WG on Policy Coherence, Data and Research has also been consistently supporting the conceptual development and implementation of migration profiles.

Migration Profiles provide a framework for aggregating in a structured and systematic manner existing data and information from international, national and regional sources. To date, more than 70 migration profiles have been prepared, but there is a lack of a common understanding of what a migration profile exercise entails, and how preparing a migration profile can contribute to capacity-building and greater policy coherence.

This workshop partly built upon discussions and results of the workshop Migration Profiles: Developing evidence-based Migration and Development policies held on 30 June 2011 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The overall objective of the Batumi thematic meeting was to exchange experience among states, which have in various initiatives (such as the Building Migration Partnerships/Prague Process) already developed their Migration Profiles or are working on it or are considering elaboration of this national migration policy tool and its format. Experience on the Extended Migration Profiles which includes apart from migration data, statistics and analyses also information on socio-demographic, economic and other aspects, was also presented.

This report provides an overview of topics discussed during the meeting and, based on the results of the discussions and experience shared by the participants, the conclusions reached as well as topics for further discussions in similar events foreseen to be carried out within the GFMD framework still in 2011 in Nigeria and Moldova or in future GFMD meetings.

2. Key issues and outcomes of the Workshop

The first meeting day was divided into three sessions, first two of which were chaired by the Deputy Minister of Justice of Georgia Mr. Giorgi Vashadze and the third one by the Deputy Minister of Labour, Social Protection and Family of Moldova Mr. Sergiu Sainciuc.

During the welcome session Mr. Vashadze, Mr. Sainciuc, Mr. Shabarinath Nair of the GFMD Task Force and Mr. Bogumil Rybak from the Polish Ministry of Interior and Administration, representing the Polish EU Presidency, welcomed participants of the meeting and shared their opening views on migration profiles in general, specifically pointing out the need for such policy tools, for data gathering and their presentation in a systematic way and for further readiness to invest into elaboration of such regular reports.

Poland, holding in the second half of 2011 the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, outlined the main priorities of the Presidency. In this regard the co-operation within Eastern Partnership, within the Global Approach to Migration towards Eastern and South-Eastern Neighbourhood of the European Union as well as within the Prague Process is high on the agenda of the High-Level Working Group for Asylum and Migration at the Council of the European Union. Based on the Polish experience with regard to the elaboration of the Extended Migration Profile on Poland within the framework of the Building Migration Partnerships initiative, Mr. Rybak underlined the usefulness of such a tool, mentioning at the same time the challenges related to having a good and up-to-date migration profile and difficulties related to its translation into policy formulations.

Mr Nair, representing GFMD, introduced the purpose and objectives of the meeting and put it into the context of the ongoing GFMD Chairmanship of Switzerland and the agenda set for 2011. Mr. Nair also presented results of the New York Workshop on Migration Profiles held on 30 June 2011, underlining that a *migration profile is a process, rather than a product*, in which the key role is played by *standardisation, objectiveness and accuracy*. This presentation opened the second session, which focused on experience of states and organisations on elaboration of migration profiles in their variations depending on different approaches.

Ms. Ketevan Khutishvili, Programme Manager at the European Union Delegation in Tbilisi, presented the history and developments of the concept of the Migration Profile and lately the Extended Migration Profile prepared by the European Commission. This history dates back to 2005 when the migration profile concept was introduced and in 2010, transformed into the extended migration profile, which in addition to migration data provides also with economic, demographic and socio-economic overview of the situation in each respective country. Ms. Khutishvili shared her experience with regard to the elaboration of the migration profile on Georgia, which is currently at the draft stage, and its meaning for the work of the State Migration Commission.

Similar to Georgia, also Kyrgyzstan has been developing its profile within the framework of the Building Migration Partnerships initiative and Mr. Mairambek Beishenov, Head of the Migration Policy Management Department of the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Migration, shared the experience of Kyrgyzstan in this work and informed that the final version of the document is to be expected soon. Mr. Beishenov also provided with brief information on the migration situation in the country and the challenges this presents.

In a following presentation, participants listened to Mr. George Gabrielashvili, Deputy Head of the Civil Registry Agency of the Ministry of Justice and to Ms. Nino Meshki from the Ministry of IDPs from the occupied territories, Refugees and Accommodation. While Mr. Gabrielashvili focused on the current development of migration management in Georgia and the work of the State Commission on Migration, Ms. Meshki informed that the Extended Migration Profile on Georgia was currently finalized and that after approval of the State Migration Commission it will be made available publicly.

The meeting continued with the presentation on Development of Migration Profiles common template and migration data management by the Global Migration Group (GMG) delivered by Mr. Bela Hovy, from the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The presentation was divided into three main parts presenting the GMG, the international standards for international migration statistics and five steps towards better migration data. According to Mr. Hovy, **building national capacities to**

improve migration data collection and analysis was key in the process of development of migration profiles.

Mr. Radim Zak, the Building Migration Partnerships (BMP) Coordinator at ICMPD presented the BMP Knowledge Base consisting of 16 Extended Migration Profiles and the BMP i-Map elaborated in 2009-2011. Mr. Zak brought participants' attention to the BMP Joint Declaration, which was endorsed on ministerial level by 50 states from EU, the Schengen area, Eastern and South-Eastern Neighbourhood, Central Asia as well as Russia and Turkey in Prague in April 2009, and informed about the upcoming Second Prague Process Ministerial Conference, which will be held in Poland on 3-4 November 2011. Migration Profiles and data gathering and sharing will remain on the agenda of the Prague Process also in years 2012-2016.

The third session of the first working day started with a detailed presentation on the development of the Migration Profile on Moldova delivered by Ms. Diana Hincu from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration. The presentation outlined both best practices as well as challenges that need to be overcome in the work Moldova decided to use the extended format of the migration profile upon EU's proposal, focusing also on socio-economic issues, but at the same time adopted a specific focus on diaspora mapping and needs of children and elderly left behind. In this regard exchange of data with destination countries was the big challenge. In terms of data collection Ms. Hincu stressed that the **balance between international comparability of data and country focus** should be retained and believed that more access by the general public and **transparency** were crucial. Ms. Hincu expressed readiness of Moldova to share its experience with all interested states.

Ms. Bela Hejna, on behalf of the Czech Ministry of the Interior, presented the Czech experience with coordinated data gathering and **close interaction of migration authorities in the Analytic Centre for Border Protection and Migration**. In reaction to the presentation, several states expressed their immediate interest in more information on the structure and methodology of work of **this inter-agency body**.

In his presentation, Mr. Faruk Arslanagic, Expert Advisor of the Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina, raised the important issue of **motivation for national authorities** in elaborating such a tool. In the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the profile was required by the European Union for visa facilitation in 2009 and since this exercise and the product proved to be useful, the authorities continue updating the document annually in 2010 and 2011 and using it for policy formulation. The recent version of the profile was shared with participants and is also available at the web site of the represented ministry. At this stage the issue of **political endorsement** and the motivation of national authorities to engage in such a process were emphasized by the Belarusian participant.

The two presentations by Moldova and Bosnia-Herzegovina demonstrated clearly two different options in the elaboration of a migration profile. The Moldovan approach was very comprehensive but difficult in updating as this was a very resourceful and heavy process. The Bosnian profile presentation was much lighter and had a more statistical approach, but was easier to update. The discussion on those migration profiles also showed that one **needs to go beyond statistics to measure the impact of migration and its social and economic consequences, for instance through surveys**. It should nevertheless be stated that it is **up to state authorities of each respective countries to decide upon own priorities and interest** in information to be incorporated to a migration profile.

Last three presentations of the day focused on the so-called Silk Routes Region, starting with the presentation of Mrs. Sedef Dearing on behalf of the Budapest Process Secretariat on the planned extended migration profiles on Silk Routes countries including the next two presenting states: Afghanistan and Pakistan. Following to this, Mr. Naqibullah Hafizi from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan, and Mr. Waseem Khan, the Chief of Staff of the Federal Investigation Agency of Pakistan, presented the migration situation in their countries. Both speakers expressed their support to the Budapest Process geographical extension to the Silk Routes Region and their readiness to continue co-operating on development of their migration profiles. In the following discussion, **the mainstreaming of migration into development policy was underlined as well as mainstreaming of development into migration policy**. The UN representative suggested that poverty being one of the main causes of migration in the Silk Routes Region, "migration and development profiles" could be developed by the ICMPD for the said region.

The second meeting day was chaired by Mr. Radim Zak, ICMPD Programme Manager, and was divided into one presentation by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and two *tour-de-tables*.

The presentation of Mr. Rudolf Anich from IOM Geneva focused on experience and lessons learned in development of Migration Profiles in various geographical regions, providing with brief information on the work done by IOM and other actors and outlining ten key challenges faced in general by all actors involved in one way or other in the elaboration of a migration profile. These ten key challenges will be addressed in a guide, which is currently under preparation. At the same time, they could be considered as areas for continued discussions and actions:

- *Promote common understanding*
- *Facilitate systematic sharing*
- *Extend geographical coverage*
- *Extend scope of issues*
- *Improve quality/analysis*
- *Improve data through capacity building*
- *Promote mainstreaming of migration*
- *Enhance monitoring and evaluation*
- *Strengthen government ownership*
- *Encourage sustainability*

Mr. Anich also stressed that very often migration profiles are rather descriptive. If they are intended *as a policy tool, a more analytical approach would be needed*. In addition, *internal migration, environmentally induced migration and migrants' rights would be aspects that could be included in the scope of a migration profile*.

The first *tour-de-table* gave an opportunity to the countries that did not speak on the first day to deliver short statements on their experience with regard to the development of a migration profile, its relation to the formulation of national migration strategy, challenges faced in data collection and lessons learned as regards institutional cooperation at national level. These statements were delivered by representatives of Albania, Belarus, Lebanon, Nigeria, Senegal, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine, and served as a basis for the next *tour-de-table*.

In the second *tour-de-table*, all participating states and organisations were invited to answer the following six questions, which had arisen from discussions held on both meeting days:

- How to ensure the political endorsement necessary for work on a migration profile?
- What should be the relation between a migration profile and the national migration policy?
- What actors should be invited to the elaboration of a national migration profile?
- How to ensure coordination?
- What kind of information should be in the migration profile?
- Any other comments or recommendations.

The answers to the six questions contributed to the formulation of the conclusions of this meeting and at the same time recommendations for the next meetings on this topic. The conclusions are provided in the next section.

3. Conclusion

The **Batumi workshop** provided decision-makers, specialists and analysts from different countries with an **opportunity to exchange** their views on the migration profiles as a national policy tool, to discuss implications at the national level and among the relevant state migration authorities and migration related actors, and **to suggest improvements**. In particular countries which have already conducted a Migration Profile exercise **shared their experiences** with those countries interested in preparing one and provided their views on the format and scope of the process, implications of the work at national level for the authorities involved and the need for updating the information on a regular basis.

Presentations, statements and discussions made during the workshop resulted in the following conclusions or rather recommendations by the participating states and organisations, which could be elaborated further upon in the upcoming GFMD activities but also in other relevant forums:

- Migration Profiles are an important tool for definition of national migration policy and for regional, international and global political dialogues.
- Migration Profile development requires a political decision at national level, continuous political support and recognition of the process by relevant migration authorities. The political decision may require legal or structural changes at national level, including identification of and decision on the main coordinating body, which shall ensure the state ownership of the final migration profile and its regular systematic updates.
- Currently there is no common understanding of the concept of a migration profile and no standardised template exists. It could be beneficial for all actors to jointly develop a standardised template with agreed definitions. This could also lead to better awareness of MPs for all stakeholders.
- In doing so, states should seek and reach a common understanding of the benefits of such a tool for both national policy development and international dialogue. Ideally, the template should be a comprehensive one and should include among others a development component.
- Agreement on data gathering methods and on data categories should also be discussed, though the migration profiles should firstly correspond with national needs and priorities for definition of own policy. There should also be a balance between international comparability of data and country focus.
- Governments that have MPs would share with others their experiences with those countries that do not have a MP. This could also lead to more regional exchange and training on Migration Profiles.
- The Migration Profile process should be supported by continued capacity building with corresponding responses on the human resources and technical/IT sides.
- The migration profile concept represents a potential for allocation of funds by main donors to identified areas. For some donors, migration profiles represent a pre-condition for such assistance.
- Migration Profile should be seen as a process rather than just a product. Involvement of all partners in the learning and improving process can be seen as beneficial for reaching a common understanding. Exchange of lessons learned, both best practices and challenges, is a good way towards this goal.
- Existing regional processes and international organisations can play an important role in supporting states in the process of development of migration profiles and in corresponding capacity building. Though the migration profiles are state-owned, ways of international coordination as well as possibilities of how to make profiles available in one place (a common platform) could be sought.
- Development of migration profile concept should not replace existing approaches at national level such as surveys or short-term analytical reports. These should rather be seen as complementary to this longer-term process. In any case, specialized surveys are needed to measure the impact of migration on development.
- Migration Profile is not a stand-alone tool. When elaborated, benchmarks should be recorded for monitoring and evaluation of the process and for its improvement. In addition to that, a strategy needs to be drafted based on the profile, followed by an action plan, which would implement the steps necessary for addressing the identified issues of concern.
- Migration Profiles could also act as a tool for both mainstreaming of migration into development policy as well as mainstreaming of development into migration policy.