ICMPD
International Centre for
Migration Policy Development

REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

REGIONAL MIGRATION DIALOGUES AND THE GLOBAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

A Study on Five Regional Migration Dialogues Bringing Together Countries in Africa, Asia and Europe

REGIONAL MIGRATION DIALOGUES AND THE GLOBAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

A Study on Five Regional Migration Dialogues Bringing Together Countries in Africa, Asia and Europe

Prepared by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development, Vienna - Austria

Commissioned and funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey

International Centre for Migration Policy Development • April 2016

Acknowledgements

The authors gratefully acknowledge the invaluable information provided by the experts and representatives of the secretariats and participating states of the five Regional Migration Dialogues studied, namely the Budapest Process, Euromed Migration III, the MTM Dialogue, the Prague Process and the Rabat Process. The authors are also indebted to ICMPD colleagues who work in these dialogues settings who openly shared their experiences. Furthermore, the valuable inputs and guidance of Malin Frankenhaeuser, Lukas Gehrke and Martijn Pluim is acknowledged with gratitude.

Finally, the authors would also like to thank the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey for the financial support and opportunity to undertake this study.

International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)
Gonzagagasse 1
A-1010 Vienna
Austria
www.icmpd.org

International Centre for Migration Policy Development
Vienna/Austria, 2016

Authors: Bernhard Perchinig, Marion Noack
Coordinators: Cecilia Lundstroem Carniel, Barbara Cuzuioc-Weiss

This publication has been produced with the assistance of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of ICMPD and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the Donor.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

List of Acronyms

APC	Intergovernmental Asia-Pacific Consultations on Refugees, Displaced Persons and Migrants
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DEVCO	EU General Directorate for Development Cooperation
EU	European Union
EuroMed	Euro-Mediterranean Partnership
GAMM	Global Approach on Migration and Mobility
GFMD	Global Forum on Migration and Development
ICMPD	International Centre for Migration Policy Development
IGC	Intergovernmental Consultations on Asylum, Refugee and Migration Policies in Europe, North America and Australia
IOM	International Organization for Migration
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
RCP	Regional Consultative Process
RMD	Regional Migration Dialogue
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Foreword

Situated at the crossroads between Europe and Asia, the Republic of Turkey has always played an important role in the area of migration. Traditionally a transit and source country for migration, the country became an attractive destination country in recent years due to its economic growth and social development.

Turkey's commitment to development issues and its experience in the area of migration and development led to its Chairmanship of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) in 2014-2015. Turkey is a strong supporter of the GFMD and considers it a valuable platform to discuss migration and development in a comprehensive and inclusive manner and to advance the overall understanding and cooperation in this field.

Since 2006, Turkey is chairing the Budapest Process, a long-standing regional dialogue on migration covering Europe and parts of Asia. As its Chair, Turkey plays a central role in coordinating the migration dialogue between governments from over 50 countries and numerous international organisations. Within this forum, migration and development has a self-evident place in discussions, especially since the adoption of the 2013 Istanbul Ministerial Declaration "A Silk Routes Partnership for Migration" which includes migration and development as one of its six priority areas for cooperation.

When assuming the GFMD Chairmanship in 2014, as Chair of both a regional and a global cooperation framework Turkey gained the unique opportunity, to analyse the impact or potential impact of regional as well as global consultations on migration and development. It also gave Turkey the possibility to evaluate how regional discussions on migration and development could be better linked with the global migration and development debate. Both the regional and global debates assume that migration cannot be dealt with by one country alone. Migration and development are global phenomena that need joint responses and therefore regional and global discussion fora are important frameworks to cater for these needs.

Against the background of the GFMD Chairmanship, the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) in 2015 commissioned the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) to analyse the role of the migration and development debate within selected regional migration dialogues and the linkages between them and the global debate on migration and development. The resulting study "Regional Migration Dialogues and the Global Migration and Development Agenda" was presented at the GFMD side-event "the Role of Regional Migration Dialogues and the Global Migration & Development Agenda" in October 2015.

When discussing migration and development within migration dialogues, it is vital to include a variety of actors from the development policy field. In this regard, the study acknowledges that a more common language and understanding of the migration and development nexus policy areas needs to be developed. To achieve this, regular interaction between the participating ministries in charge of migration and ministries in charge of nexus sector policies and development is important. In addition, diaspora organisations are understood as an important channel to consult civil society – when preparing and implementing related meetings and conferences cooperation and coordination with civil society is important. The study also emphasises that exchanges between the regional and global levels in the field of migration and development should be further strengthened.

Additional discussions are needed on how to ensure that regional and global debates on the various aspects of migration and development are linked and enrich each other's discussions. For this, however, sustainable information sharing mechanisms between the regional migration dialogues need to be developed and maintained and the results of migration dialogues need to be better publicly communicated. Last but not least, the thematic discussions held in the framework of regional migration dialogues need to be better linked with migration policy development in the participating countries.

1 Introduction

This study analyses the role of the migration and development debate within selected regional migration dialogues and the linkages between them and the global debate on migration and development. The study focuses on dialogues involving EU Member States and non – EU countries, and is based on interviews with stakeholders and participants from two clusters of selected migration dialogues: For reasons of reading convenience the term "Dialogues to the South" will be used for Euromed Migration III, the MTM Dialogue and the Rabat Process, as these dialogues involve countries in the Southern Neighbourhood of the EU in addition to other countries in regions often referred to as "The Global South"[1]. The Budapest and the Prague Process will be referred to as "Dialogues to the East", as these dialogues mainly involve countries in the Eastern Neighbourhood of the EU. In addition, the Budapest Process has historically been developed in the context of EU - accession of Eastern European countries. The empirical part of the study is based on 21 semi-structured interviews with experts and representatives of the secretariats and participating states, who were interviewed by telephone in June and August 2015. The study does not intend to be a stock-taking or mapping exercise of the issues discussed in the dialogues, but aims at discussing the major and most pressing issues in order to better understand the role the migration-development nexus plays in the dialogues.

Interviews focused on three aspects: the history of the debate on migration and development in the selected regional dialogues, the main issues of debate and the most important projects in this field, and the linkages between the regional dialogues and the debates at the international level, particularly the Global Forum on Migration and Development. Furthermore, interview partners were asked for suggestions to improve the linkage between the regional and the international networks on migration and development. Interviews were conducted under the condition of confidentiality, thus the interview partners are quoted in an anonymised way.

The report is organised in the following way: the **first part** discusses the existing literature on migration dialogues and analyses their development and function in migration policy making. In a second step, some main characteristics of policy making in the field of development cooperation is discussed. The **second part** is based on the interviews and describes the history of the debate on migration and development in the selected dialogues, highlighting the main issues and challenges of the debate. The **final section** summarises the results and develops suggestions for improving the cooperation in the field of migration and development within the regional dialogues, and between the regional dialogues and the international fora on migration and development.

1.1 Regional Migration Dialogues: Definitions

Since the 1980s, a number of regular inter-governmental meetings in given regions have sprung up. In the literature, the terms "Regional Migration Dialogue" (RMD) or "Regional Consultative Process" (RCP) have been coined for these types of inter-governmental activities.[2] According to

1 The division of the world into a "Global North" and "Global South" is a heuristic tool to grasp the differences between the rich and economically well developed and the poorer developing countries, which, since the fall of the Berlin Wall, has started to replace the previous notions of "First World", "Second World" and "Third World" (IOM 2013, 41). International Organisations use the term slightly differently; its usage here refers to the understanding of UN DESA, which understands the "Global South" to be constituted by Africa; the Americas (excluding Northern America); the Caribbean; Asia (excluding Japan); and Oceania (excluding Australia and New Zealand) (IOM 2013, 44).

2 Both terms are used interchangeably in this paper.

Frankenhaeuser et al., this format can be best understood as an "inter-governmental process or mechanism that deals with the issue of migration through an ongoing exchange of ideas and communication linked to a regional or geo-political rationale".[3]

Based on a study from Randal Hansen,[4] the International Organization for Migration (IOM) mentions six major characteristics of RCPs[5]:

- They are repeated regional meetings dedicated to discussing (a) specific migration issue(s). They are processes, not one-off events;
- They are informal, meaning that participants are not put in a negotiating position to defend national interests or positions;
- They are non-binding, meaning that states do not negotiate binding rules and are not obligated to implement any changes following meetings;
- They are purposefully created to deal with migration issues only;
- RCPs bring together countries from a 'region', depending on the scope of the migration issue to be addressed. The term 'regional' is mostly used geographically, but sometimes also figuratively, to describe the common location of like-minded states on the 'migration map';
- Most RCPs are not officially associated with formal regional institutions. However, they are often embedded in their regional context and interact with regional bodies, associations and integration processes in complex ways.

According to Köhler,[6] regional migration dialogues have developed in reaction to a lack of international governance of migration and the reluctance of states to establish new international legal instruments for international migration developed in the UN framework. Shying away from formal mechanisms of cooperation, which would have transferred their sovereignty to regulate migration at least partially to international organisations, states have preferred to establish informal and consultative bilateral or multilateral consultation mechanisms for exchange and coordination in the field of migration. Functioning as "state-owned consultative processes made up from the same region or sub-region or like-minded countries from different regions",[7] regional migration dialogues today form the most important venue for international migration policy making.

Already ten years ago, Thouez and Channac[8] pointed to the growing tendency to seek international cooperation in the field of migration. According to their analysis, regional cooperation in the field of migration policy making grew rapidly in the 1990s, as governments had become aware that solutions in the field of migration could only be found in cooperation with other states. In this context, regional migration dialogues were the main catalysts and enablers for consultations,

3 Frankenhaeuser, M. (Ed.), Hofmann, M., Noack, M. and B. Perchinig, 2015, op. cit., 17.
4 Hansen, R., *An Assessment of Principal Regional Consultative Processes on Migration*, Geneva, IOM, 2010.
5 Harns, C., *Regional Inter-State Consultation Mechanisms on Migration: Approaches, Recent Activities and Implications for Global Governance of Migration*, MRS No. 45, 2013, p. 11, p. 16.
6 Köhler, J., 'What government networks do in the field of migration: an analysis of selected Regional Consultative Processes' in Kunz, R., Lavenex, S. and M. Panizzon (Eds.), *Multilayered Migration Governance. The Promise of Partnership*, London/New York, Routledge, 2011, pp. 67-95, p. 67.
7 Ibid.
8 Thouez, C. and F. Channac, 'Shaping International Migration Policy: The Role of Regional Consultative Processes', *West European Politics*, 29, 2, 2006, pp. 370-387, p. 371.

information sharing and the development of a multilevel governance of migration including origin, destination and transit countries of a region and/or a migration system.[9]

1.2 A short history of regional migration dialogues

The history of regional migration dialogues reaches back to the Intergovernmental Consultations on Asylum, Refugee and Migration Policies in Europe, North America and Australia (IGC), which was founded in 1984 against the backdrop of a rising number of asylum applications in Western Europe, and growing anti-immigration sentiment in many Western European countries, which put migration on the political agenda. On the invitation of Sweden, the governments of Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the UK and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) convened in Stockholm to discuss intensified cooperation in the field of asylum and border controls. In the following years, the IGC was established as a regular forum for exchange of ideas and cooperation.

The massive geopolitical changes in Europe after the fall of the iron curtain and the democratic reforms in Eastern Europe strengthened the demand for coordination in the field of asylum and migration between the Western and the Central and Eastern European countries. In particular, Austria and Germany were eager to set up a framework to address the changing environment. In January 1991, the Austrian government together with the Council of Europe hosted inter-governmental meetings between Central European and Western countries. Bringing together representatives of 35 countries, this so-called "Vienna Group" later merged with the "Berlin Process", which also was founded in 1991, by the German government, with the intent to reduce migration pressures. At a meeting in October 1991, the governments decided to hold a ministerial conference in Budapest in 1993 aimed at the development of measures against uncontrolled migration, out of which the Budapest Process developed.[10]

In the 1990s, the first non-European regional migration dialogues, the Puebla Process and the Intergovernmental Asia-Pacific Consultations on Refugees, Displaced Persons and Migrants (APC) were founded. In the 2000s, dialogues expanded worldwide, and served as "role models" for consultation processes involving international organisations, or supranational structures like the European Union. Thus Harns[11] differentiates between a) Global Interstate Consultation Mechanisms (e.g. Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), High-level Dialogue on Migration and Development), b) Regional Consultative Processes on Migration (e.g. Bali Process, Budapest Process, Prague Process, Rabat Process) and c) Inter-regional Forums on Migration (e.g. ACP-EU Dialogue on Migration). Despite their different institutional settings, most of them share the main characteristics of the traditional definition of a Regional Consultative Process, in particular informality of consultations and a non-binding decision line.[12]

Thematically, dialogues usually cover a wide range of migration-related issues, such as asylum, irregular migration, labour migration, migrant smuggling, migration and development, protection of migrants' rights, or trafficking in human beings.[13]Agendas are set by the participating states and

9 Ibid., p. 373.
10 Ibid., p. 374 ff.
11 Harns, 2013, op. cit., p. 22.
12 Ibid., p. 20.
13 Many official documents of the dialogues use the terms "legal" and "illegal". Generally within the academic context the less normative terms "irregular", "regular" and "non-authorized" or the more critical "illegalized" are applied, whereas "legal" and "illegal" are broadly understood as more politically motivated, media-shaped and associated with crime, while being in a country without the required papers is, in most countries, not a criminal offence but an administrative infringement. Furthermore, scientific works argue that the dichotomous categorisation of "legal" and "illegal" does not fit the complex legal status of migrants, which is changing during the migration process.

thus signal those thematic areas that are both salient and which states are comfortable addressing. What the dialogues have in common is that they are "working to increase understanding of contemporary migration dynamics, identify shared and complementary interests, and build confidence in the ability of states to work together and with other stakeholders more effectively to manage migration".[14] To this end, participating states formulate recommendations which are non-binding, but might lead to ministerial declarations. So dialogue processes can combine the advantages of formal and informal processes and adapt their procedures to the topics on the table. The interwovenness of formal and informal aspects is also highlighted by the study of Frankenhaesuer et al.: "The informal setting is meant to provide for a debate on mutual but also divergent interests among all participants on an equal footing, without obliging them to agree on legally binding commitments. This approach is intended to allow for more open discussions and more far-reaching solutions than formal frameworks can cater for. However, informality does not mean the absence of procedures that steer the way the dialogue operates. All dialogues have formal modalities on various aspects, such as membership, meeting cycles, chairmanship and the role of their secretariat or support unit. Describing dialogues only as a series of meetings by states dedicated to discussing migration would therefore be simplistic. Dialogues are established and continue to function because they fill a need identified and perceived by the participating states to enhance cooperation on migration."[15]

1.3 Defining migration and development

"Migration and development" broadly refers to the area of research and policy-making which is concerned with inter-linkages between human mobility across international borders and "development" in the sense of a multidimensional process of change and reorganisation of the economy and society in a country with the aim to improve the quality of life of its inhabitants. The topic itself is not new but the recent upsurge of interest results from a particular understanding of migration and development, namely the notion, that that migration could play a positive role in development processes mainly in countries of origin.[16] This notion stands in contrast to the understanding of the link in the late 20th century: Previously, migration was perceived as result of a lack of development, while now it is perceived as driving or contributing to development and not as a consequence, but as part of the solution of lack of development. Migration, if adequately managed - so the underlying assumption -can contribute to development, and thus should be fostered. This shift of perspective is not new: Within the research community, migration and development has been debated for several decades and since the end of the 19th century analysts started systematically linking migration with development. Since then the debate has alternated like a 'pendulum' between phases of optimism, pessimism and neglect.[17]

Despite the long lasting academic debate it is impossible to single out a migration and development concept as such, given the absence of a globally accepted definition of either of these two terms.[18] Since it began to gain international attention at the end of the 20th century, the policy

14 IOM, *International Migration Management through Inter-State Consultation Mechanisms*, 2005, p.3.
15 Frankenhaueser M. et al., op.cit, p.19
16 Skeldon, R, 'International migration as a tool in development policy: a passing phase?'. *Population and Development Review*, 2008, 34 (1): 1-18; Frankenhaeuser, M. (Ed.), Hofmann, M., Noack, M. and B. Perchinig, Mapping Migration & Development in Six Regional Migration Dialogues, Vienna, ICMPD, 2015, 16; ECDPM and ICMPD, *Migration and Development Policies and Practices. A mapping study of eleven European countries and the European Commission*, Maastricht and Vienna, ICMPD, 2013, http://www.icmpd.org/fileadmin/ICMPD-Website/ICMPD_General/Publications/Migration_and_Development_June_2013.pdf (accessed 22 February 2016), p. 21.
17 De Haas, H., 'The Migration and Development Pendulum: A Critical View on Research and Policy.' *International Migration, 2012*, 50 (3): 8-25.
18 Papademetriou and Martin quoted in Nyberg-Sorensen, N., Van Hear, N., Engberg-Pederson, P., 'The Migration-Development Nexus: Evidence and Policy Options', 2002, *International Migration*, Vol. 40 (5), p. 3-43.

field of migration and development is constantly evolving. In this context, development, which was mainly framed in terms of economic growth in the 1970s and 1980s, today is predominantly understood as "human development" defined as the expansion of people's freedoms to live their lives as they choose, also known as the 'capabilities approach' (reference to A. Sen and M. Nussbaum?). In 2009, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)'s Human Development Report, recognised migration as one of the actions that individuals can choose in order to realise their life plans; i.e. the ability to move is now seen as a dimension of freedom, which is part of development. Going one step further, human mobility is defined as the "ability of individuals, families or groups of people to choose their place of residence" and relates hence to conditions that affect whether individuals, families or communities decide to stay or to move.[19]

Today, the interlinkage between migration and development is both perceived as an expression of development and a driver of development both in countries of destination and countries of origin. This multidimensional reality is recognised in the new global framework for sustainable development, the Agenda 2030, where migration and migrants now feature among targets to address inequalities, promote decent work for all, achieve gender equality, and promote peace, justice and accountable institutions. Enhancing effective partnerships that mobilise and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources is one of the means to support the implementation of this new agenda in all countries, in particular developing countries.

Traditionally, the thematic focus of the migration and development nexus has particularly been on economic aspects, e.g. remittances, skilled workers and brain drain, circular migration, or diasporas funding for development projects. Some of the emerging topics in the migration and development nexus have progressively been taken on board as can be seen for instance in the evolution of thematic priorities selected for the successive GFMDs, including for instance gender and family implications, global care chains, migrant domestic work or the issue of South-South migration. Protection and empowerment issues have also taken increasing importance in GFMD meetings.[20]

Despite the paradigm shift in the international debate of migration and development, these recent concepts still co-exist with older approaches, e.g. the "root causes paradigm" which reduces migration to a consequence of poverty and under-development. The - unfounded - belief that migration can be stemmed through development often remains a key motivation for engaging in the migration and development area for many destination countries [21]

Beyond the thematic foci addressed, migration and development discussions also brought changes in the overall approach to migration issues. With migration bringing about developmental benefits, a new space for inter-state cooperation as well as for dialogue and consultation with a broad range of non-state actors opened and migration issues became an object of dialogue and partnership beyond the "usual suspects", the ministries in charge of migration. Furthermore, the concept of policy coherence was brought to the fore emphasising the need to reinforce consistency between migration, development and other inter-related policies. Closely related, the need for capacity-building was underlined in order to strengthen the capacity of states and other stakeholders to enable them to design and implement mutually-reinforcing migration and development strategies.[22]

19 *UNDP, Overcoming barriers: Human mobility and development, 2009, New York, UNDP,* http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/269/hdr_2009_en_complete.pdf (accessed 22 February 2016), pp. 14-15.
20 ECDPM and ICMPD, 2013, op. cit., pp. 24 - 25
21 Ibid., p.28
22 Ibid., p. 25

2 Placing regional migration dialogues in a theoretical framework[23]

Despite its growing importance in the national and international political arena, international migration is still not regulated by a multinational legal framework. Only in the area of asylum it has a UN-based treaty framework, the 1951 Geneva Convention, with the UNHCR as the implementing structure, been set up and implemented in the post-WW II period[24]. This multilateral refugee regime has not been echoed by the development of a similarly binding multilateral labour migration regime and moves in this direction until now have not been successful yet. In this respect, the history of the 1990 UN Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Their Families, the most comprehensive international instrument in the field of labour migration, is striking: it took more than ten years to secure the necessary ratifications to enter into force, and until today no major high-income[25] migrant "receiving" state has ratified it.[26] So, to date, most internationally binding regulations in the field of migration, for example, the international passport regime, stem from the interwar period.

The lack of internationally binding regulations in the field of migration can be explained by the logics of state sovereignty on the one hand and the political economy of migration on the other. After all, the most commonly accepted definition of a state mentions three constitutive elements of "stateness"[27]: a territory clearly delineated by internationally agreed borders, a settled population, and the exercise of state power in the territory. The right to decide about the resident population and migration control thus is a major element of state sovereignty, which states have guarded jealously until today. On the other hand, also the political economy of migration is not prone to multilateralism: the costs and benefits of migration accrue to the migrant and the origin and the destination state, and unlike climate change or global disarmament, migration governance is not an international public good in need of multilateral regulation, but can be regulated bilaterally by the origin and the destination state.[28]

Migration governance thus cannot easily be described as a "public good", but is more akin to a "club good", which loses its exclusive value by overcrowding, with states therefore being inclined to reduce the number of club members. Particularly for target countries of migration, exclusive bilateral, regional or inter-regional agreements are more tempting than all inclusive, binding multilateral regulations embedded in an international institutional framework, as an international framework will impose higher costs on the "club" than a more limited agreement, and will reduce the room of manoeuvre for each member. Furthermore, the relationship between origin and destination states is characterised by a fundamental power asymmetry, whereby destination states are the rule-makers and have the power to open or close their borders, while origin states generally have to accept these decisions. In essence destination states favour unilateralism, while multilateralism is in the interest of the origin states. This power asymmetry presents a major obstacle to the development of a binding multilateral framework, currently still outweighing the possible gains of multilateralism.[29]

23 This chapter is based on Frankenhaeuser et al., 2015, pp. 20-29.
24 In the European Union, the implementation of the Geneva Convention is further regulated by a series of directives, the so called "sylum-acquis".
25 According to World Bank classification for 2016, high-income economies are those with a GNI per capita of $12,736 or more. http://data.worldbank.org/about/country-and-lending-groups (accessed 11 February 2016).
26 Köhler, 2011, op.cit., p. 67
27 Jellinek, G., *Allgemeine Staatslehre*, Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1959.
28 Betts, A., 'The global governance of migration and the role of trans-regionalism' in Kunz, R., Lavenex, S. and M. Panizzon (Eds.), *Multilayered Migration Governance. The Promise of Partnership*, London/New York, Routledge, 2011, pp. 23-46, p.24.
29 Ibid.

2.1 Layers of migration governance

Despite the lack of formal and internationally binding regulations, several layers of international migration governance have developed in the international arena. Further to the thin layer of multilateralism in refugee policies and passport regulations, a number of international conventions enacted to regulate other policy areas – e.g. the WTO agreement, human rights law, or maritime law – touch on migration issues. This "embedded governance" of migration has involved in the migration field a large set of international actors not primarily concerned with migration.[30] More importantly, the growth of embedded migration governance has also involved different state actors in the field: Whereas labour migration policies had been more or less the exclusive arena of ministries of the interior or ministries of labour in the 1980s and 1990s and other governmental departments like foreign affairs had been active mainly with regard to technical implementation in the field of visa and consular services, today a tendency towards a "whole of government" approach including, i.a. ministries responsible for development, or trade or justice can be observed. Thus the inter-administrative variety of actors has increased.

However, the most important developments have taken place in the field of cross-regional migration governance. Here two aspects have to be discerned: On the one hand, economic and political regional integration frameworks like the European Union or ECOWAS entail provisions on free movement as an element of the development of a common market. In practice, full freedom of movement has only been realised within the European Union, where it had been limited to economically active persons until 1992, but has been extended to all citizens of a Member State with the introduction of Union Citizenship according to the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992. Although also among the ECOWAS Member States free movement is envisaged as a political target and entry and visa requirements have been abolished, border checks still exist, and national laws regarding labour migration have not been harmonised yet.[31]

Furthermore, since the 1990s, a growing number of informal partnership agreements, migration dialogues and cooperation agreements have been concluded, which formally and informally link and connect different regions of origin and destination. These agreements do not intend to forge an area of freedom of movement, but form a new type of networked migration governance allowing more efficient cooperation than the traditional multilateral setting.[32] They are state-owned and thus endorsed by governments, assemble countries from the same region or sub-region or like-minded countries from a certain region, which might also have experience of cooperation in other fields, and thus allow mutual exchange and learning more easily than formal legal settings.

At the EU - level, the "Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM)"[33] defines how the EU conducts its policy dialogues and cooperation with non-EU countries, based on clearly defined priorities and embedded in the EU's overall external action, including development cooperation. Priority is given to dialogues with the EU neighbourhood, the Southern Mediterranean and the Eastern Partnership countries, while highlighting the importance of the Budapest Process, the Prague Process and the Rabat Process. Bilateral and regional policy dialogues and action plans are seen as important elements in the implementation of the GAMM by the European Commission. In this context migration dialogues with relevant non-EU countries have been

30 Ibid., p. 25.

31 Agyei, J. Clottey,E., *Operationalizing the ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of People among the Member States: Issues of Convergence and Prospects for Sub-Regional Integration*, 2008, http://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/events/ghana-african-migrations-workshop/papers/clottey.pdf (accessed 11 February 2016); Devillard, A., Bacchi, A. and Noack, M., A Survey on Migration Policies in West Africa, ICMPD and IOM, 2015.

32 Köhler, 2011, op. cit., p. 67 ff.

33 The Global Approach to Migration and Mobility, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, COM 2011 (743) final

mentioned as particularly important Acording to the European Commission, their "aim should be (to) systematically move towards **strong, close partnerships** that build on mutual trust and shared interests, paving the way for further regional integration."[34]

2.2 The role of regional migration dialogues

Meanwhile, regional migration dialogues are widely recognised as important drivers of migration policy development. According to Köhler "a UN survey of international cooperation in 2004 concluded, that in absence of an international regime for international migration, regional consultative processes of an informal nature have become a key component of migration management".[35] Köhler defines these as a specific form of government network and presents three central arguments on why they lead to policy convergence or harmonisation[36]:

1. First, if linked to a regional economic community, dialogues can lead to a liberalisation of inter-regional and a restriction of extra-regional migration implementing "regulated openness" directing migration flows to the "regional fortress with the weakest defence";

2. Second, because they are not subject to public scrutiny, dialogues or RCPs become privileged venues for law-enforcement agencies and government departments eager to develop practical and flexible solutions privileging restrictive security approaches to migration outside the frame of binding international legal obligations;

3. Third, rather than leading to regionally divergent approaches, the multitude of regional processes contributes to global policy governance by policy learning and policy transfer. Common structures and functions of dialogues or RCP are informality, openness and efficiency, which allow more easily for an exchange of practices than formal settings and thus in turn can result in policy harmonisation also between the regional fora – "what is exported is not a particular policy or set of actions" but an idea of "how multilateral cooperation should work", providing the basis for process of convergence.

2.3 Theorising about migration dialogues as tools of policy making

2.3.1 Dialogues as venues for the development of common understanding

A main aspect of policy learning in regional and international networks concerns the development of common approaches and understandings of institutional actors through informal exchange and communications. In this way, they are a breeding ground for the development of epistemic communities – groups of professionals sharing basic conceptions and frames of understanding, which eases their cooperation.

The concept of "epistemic communities" was introduced by John G. Ruggie in a special issue of *International Organization* in 1975.[37] He pointed to the fact that institutional processes, like e.g. the setting up of an organisational structure, or the development of cooperation networks between institutions, not only reflect the organisation structure in which they are acted out, "but

34 Ibid., p.8
35 Ibid., p. 67.
36 Ibid., p. 69.
37 Ruggie, J. G., 'International responses to technology: concepts and trends', *International Organization*, 29, 3, 1975, pp. 557-583.

also the *episteme* (emphasis added) through which political relationships are visualized".[38] Here Ruggie referred to usage of the term "episteme", by Michel Foucault, who in his book "The order of Things" defined an "episteme" as "the strategic apparatus which permits of separating out from among all the statements which are possible those that will be acceptable within, I won't say a scientific theory, but a field of scientificity, and which it is possible to say are true or false."[39]. Based on this understanding, Ruggie defined "epistemic communities" as "a dominant way of looking at social reality, a set of shared symbols and references, mutual expectations and a mutual predictability of intention".[40] A more precise conceptualisation was later given by Peter Haas, who defined the concept as follows[41]:

"An epistemic community is a network of professionals from a variety of disciplines and backgrounds. They have (1) a shared set of normative and principled beliefs, which provide a value-based rationale for the social action of community members; (2) shared causal beliefs, which are derived from their analysis of practices leading or contributing to a central set of problems in their domain and which then serve as the basis for elucidating the multiple linkages between possible policy actions and desired outcomes; (3) shared notions of validity – that is, intersubjective, internally defined criteria for weighing and validating knowledge in the domain of their expertise; and (4) a common policy enterprise – that is, a set of common practices associated with a set of problems to which their professional competence is directed, presumably out of the conviction that human welfare will be enhanced as a consequence."

Epistemic communities thus can be understood as "a network of professionals with recognised expertise and competence in a particular domain and an authoritative claim to policy relevant knowledge within that domain or issue-area"[42], who can influence policy decisions by cross-referencing to their acceptance among their peers who are recognised as experts in a field. Epistemic communities are shaped by a continuous process of communication and exchange between and across institutions of different domains, e.g. administration, academia, or policy making.

The decisive role of "epistemic communities" in regional integration has been highlighted in European Union studies, where the continuous cooperation and repeated meeting of civil servants from the Member States in professional settings together with civil servants from the European institutions has been highlighted as the main facilitator of integration,[43] in particular with regard to EU migration policy making.[44] The development of regional migration dialogues thus should help to forge a community of likeminded professionals in the member states and thus foster cooperation.

2.3.2 Reflexive policy learning in dialogues

In this context, several authors have pointed to the fact that the building of "epistemic communities" is not based on incentive-based learning - in essence, the adaptation of means/strategies to reach basically unaltered and unquestioned goals. Rather, it is based on more deeply rooted reflexive learning. That is, changed behaviour as a result of challenged and scrutinised assumptions,

38 Ibid., p. 569.
39 Foucault, M., *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, London, Pantheon Books, 1970. p. 197.
40 Ruggie, 1975, op. cit., p. 570.
41 Haas, P. M., 'Introduction: Epistemic Communities and International Policy Coordination', International Organization, 46, 1, 1992, pp. 1-35, p. 28.
42 Ibid., p.3
43 Lewis, J., 'Is the "Hard Bargaining" Image of the Council Misleading?', Journal of Common Market Studies, 36, 4, 1998, pp. 479-504. 495ff.
44 Guiraudon, V., 'European Integration and Migration Policy: Vertical Policy-making as Venue Shopping', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 38, 2, pp. 251-271, p. 260 ff.

values and objectives,[45] which cannot be sufficiently explained through incentives and interests of egoistic actors.[46]

Reflexive learning is linked to the possibility of exchange of thoughts and reasoning in a trustful atmosphere allowing for free deliberation between equals. It is based on the notion of communicative action, as devised by Habermas,[47] which refers to a type of interaction basically aimed at reaching consensus. Distinguishing between three validity claims – the factual truth of a statement, the normative acceptability of a statement and the conformity of the speaker's intention with the content of his statement – Habermas describes "communicative action" as counterfactually based on the assumption of an "ideal speech situation", where participants try to convince each other assessing their statements with regard to the three types of validity claims.[48] Where communicative rationality prevails, actors "argue", discussing their principal beliefs and redefining their priorities in a process of validation aimed at reaching mutual understanding, which in turn will foster the development of shared principles and frames forging "epistemic communities", whereas traditional "bargaining" does not touch on the redefinition of issues, but focuses on implementation of pre-defined targets.[49] When returning to their institutional position, members of the "epistemic communities" act as "change agents" imputing new aspects and paradigms into their organisation, which leads to a gradual change in framing the issue within the institution and thus a thrust for policy convergence.

From a constructivist understanding of international relations, shared culture and ideas determine international policy making, and institutions reflect these ideas. This paradigm provides an explanation for the development of regional cooperation; reacting to deficiencies of policies at the nation-state level to respond to changes, administrative units start to cooperate across borders to find ad hoc solutions, thus individuals and groups "become functionally linked as they discover that they share common interests and needs that transcend existing frontiers".[50] Functional linkages and identities between the actors overlap and create "transnational perceptions of mutual interest", reinforcing the shared views developed in cooperation. Thus new actors in the global system emerge as a result of the deficiency of the territorially delimitated state to respond to changes and the agency of groups and individuals within administrations. In this paradigm, dialogues can be understood as examples for these new actors furthering international governance in an area with legal predominance of states.

2.3.3 Types of networks

According to international relations theorists, three different types of networks can be discerned.[51] The first type concerns networks of executive officials that develop within international organisations, the second type describes networks of officials developed within the framework of agreements and the third type of networks occurs between national regulators developing more spontaneously outside of any formal agreement. Keohane and Nye differentiate between networks only loosely controlled by governments and networks under governmental control.[52]

45 Nye, J., S.: Nuclear Learning and U.S. – Soviet Security Regimes, In: International Organization 41/3, 1987,pp.371 – 402, p.379, cited in Checkel, J.T., 'Why Comply? Social Learning in European Identity Change', *International Organization*, 55, 3, 2001, pp. 533-558.
46 Checkel, 2001, op. cit., p. 225.
47 Habermas, J., *Theorie des Kommunikativen Handelns*, Frankfurt (Main), Suhrkamp Verlag, 1981.
48 Ibid., p. 149.
49 Niemann, A., *Explaining Decisions in the European Union*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, p. 6 ff.
50 Mansbach, R. and Y. Ferguson, *A World of Politics. Essays in Global Politics*, Abingdon/New York, Routledge, 2008, p. 93.
51 Slaughter, A-M., *A New World Order*, Princeton, New Jersey, 2004, p. 45.
52 Keohane, R. and J. Nye, 'Transgovernmental Relations and International Organisations', *World Politics*, 27, 1, 1974, pp. 39-62, p. 43.

Köhler argues that different types of networks demand different types of coordination methods: "Government networks may involve high-level officials directly accountable to the national political process – the ministerial level – and/or the lower level of national regulators."[53] The involvement of one or the other or both may be required for making certain coordination methods work. Furthermore, Köhler differentiates between network types and network methods, clustering networks according to tasks, methods and outcome (see Table 1 below)[54]:

Table 1: Types of networks, objectives, methods and outcomes

Objective	Regulation	Compliance with int'l agreements	Cooperative enforcement	Enhancing cooperation
Network methods	Recommendations Best practices Action plans Review/evaluation	Review/evaluation Training workshops Technical assistance	Institutional expert exchange Electronic information exchange Information networks	Information gateways Observatories Seminars or workshops Applied research
Outcome	Convergence of perception = Policy convergence	Improved technical = and human capacity Greater compliance	Improved communication and = trust Enhanced enforcement	Understanding and trust = Enhanced cooperation

According to Köhler, dialogues are a privileged venue for the meeting of the executive branches of governments facing a cross-border challenge and thus in need for cooperation with their counterparts.[55] They allow for dealing with policy interdependence without touching on issues of sovereignty, which international agreements do, and allow for smooth adaptation to changing circumstances. Thus they are particularly attractive in the field of migration, where the evolution of migration streams is highly unpredictable. As they allow the participants to opt in and out rather flexibly, they do not incur major financial, legal or political costs. Relying on the "soft power" of persuasion and discourse, legal sanctions are not an option, thus non-hierarchical methods of coordination are necessary, which in turn can foster reflexive learning leading to policy convergence.

2.4 The role of development in migration dialogues

2.4.1 Recognising development in migration dialogues

According to the study of Harns,[56] which covered 25 regional and inter-regional consultative processes and fora on migration, with examples from most regions of the world, the migration and development policy area has gained growing importance in many of these processes and fora. Several processes have forged institutional links with development bodies, and the priorities of the regional economic and development authorities are seriously taken into account by most regional migration dialogues. Furthermore, the regional dialogues have forged links to the global dialogues,

53 Köhler, 2011, op. cit., p. 73.
54 Ibid., p. 72.
55 Ibid., p. 73.
56 Harns, 2013, op. cit.

whose focus on migration and development strengthens the relevance of the issue in the RCPs.[57] According to Harns, the increased cooperation and coordination between regional dialogues and international fora has been leading to an increased global coherence in migration governance, and an increased understanding of the linkage of migration with regional (economic) development.[58]

Both Harns[59] and Frankenhaeuser et al.[60] give an overview of a broad variety of concrete migration- and development-related activities in regional migration dialogues. The relevance of the issue differs between dialogues. As Frankenhaeuser et al. mention, *"the migration routes rationale, in simplistic terms from developing countries of origin to developed countries of destination, has probably influenced the way migration and development has been understood".*[61] The in-depth analysis of six regional migration dialogues shows that the understanding of the term "development" is limited to development in countries of origin, and that the notion of human development, which has shaped the development debate in the last 15 years, has not been adequately reflected. In addition, also the link between migration and development is predominantly economically framed – so, for example, diaspora involvement is mainly discussed under the perspective of investment, entrepreneurship and economic development in the countries of origin, not taking into account factors such as social remittances.

2.4.2 Multi-stakeholder involvement in development policy making

Other than migration policy making, which relates to a core element of state sovereignty and is dominated by ministries of the interior and state administrations, the field of development policy making usually falls under the competence of ministries of foreign affairs, and has a long tradition of involvement of and cooperation with non-governmental organisations, aid organisations and churches. Whereas international organisations in the field of migration policy making have been set up outside the UN framework, and only have limited influence in migration policy making, the UN and its sub-organisations are major actors in the field of development. During the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit which took place in New York from 25-27 September 2015 the post-2015 agenda, now known as Agenda 2030, was adopted. The sustainable development goals (SDGs) follow the millennium development goals (MDGs), which were agreed by governments in 2001, and were developed in a large consultative process. At EU level, the Agenda for Change[62] is the basis for the EU's development policy. Migration is officially acknowledged making a case for interlinkages between migration, mobility and employment. At national level, the institutional framework of development policy making can be characterised by a dominance of the foreign policy dimension, as opposed to the dominantly domestic affairs oriented migration policy making.

The last 15 years have seen significant changes in the contexts affecting the relationship between civil society and policy makers in the field of development. Policy makers now widely acknowledge that civil society is a crucial actor in international development cooperation, with this fact being acknowledged by both civil society itself and government representatives. Also, in developed countries civil society is strongly involved in development policy, participating both in policy design and execution.[63] As challenging political contexts continue to constrain the work of

57 Ibid., p. 87 f.
58 Ibid., p. 90.
59 Ibid.
60 Frankenhaeuser et al., 2015, op.cit.
61 Ibid., p. 86 f.
62 Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Increasing the impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for Change, SEC, 2011, 1172 final.
63 Court, J., Mendizabal, E., Osborne, D. and J. Young, *Policy Engagement. How Civil Society Can be More Effective*, London, Overseas Development Institute, 2006, p. 43f.

NGOs, they have become aware that policy engagement can often have a greater impact than contestation. Moreover, policy advocacy by NGOs can spur more widespread benefits than their service delivery effort alone.

In this way, NGOs, which twenty to thirty years ago were mainly involved as service providers in the field of development cooperation, have developed a much broader range of activities. Furthermore, civil society has developed a broad range of organisations, ranging from classical advocacy NGOs to social entrepreneurs and cooperatives. Studies on civil society meanwhile speak about "civil society ecosystems", usually comprising different types of organisations[64]:

- NGOs, non-profit organisations and civil society organisations (CSOs) that have an organised structure or activity, and are typically registered entities and groups;
- Online groups and activities including social media communities that can be "organised" but do not necessarily have physical, legal or financial structures;
- Social movements of collective action and/or identity, which can be online or physical;
- Religious leaders, faith communities, and faith-based organisations;
- Labour unions and labour organisations representing workers;
- Social entrepreneurs employing innovative and/or market-oriented approaches for social and environmental outcomes;
- Grassroots associations and activities at local level;
- Cooperatives owned and democratically controlled by their members.

NGOs fulfil a wide range of functions, usually in cooperation with other political actors and governments. The World Economic Forum has given the following list of civil society roles, which gives an impression of the wide spectrum of civil society engagement[65]:

- Watchdog: holding institutions to account, promoting transparency and accountability;
- Advocate: raising awareness of societal issues and challenges and advocating for change;
- Service provider: delivering services to meet societal needs such as education, health, food and security; implementing disaster management, preparedness and emergency response;
- Expert: bringing unique knowledge and experience to shape policy and strategy, and identifying and building solutions;
- Capacity builder: providing education, training and other capacity building;
- Incubator: developing solutions that may require a long gestation or payback period;
- Representative: giving power to the voice of the marginalised or under-represented;
- Citizenship champion: encouraging citizen engagement and supporting the rights of citizens;

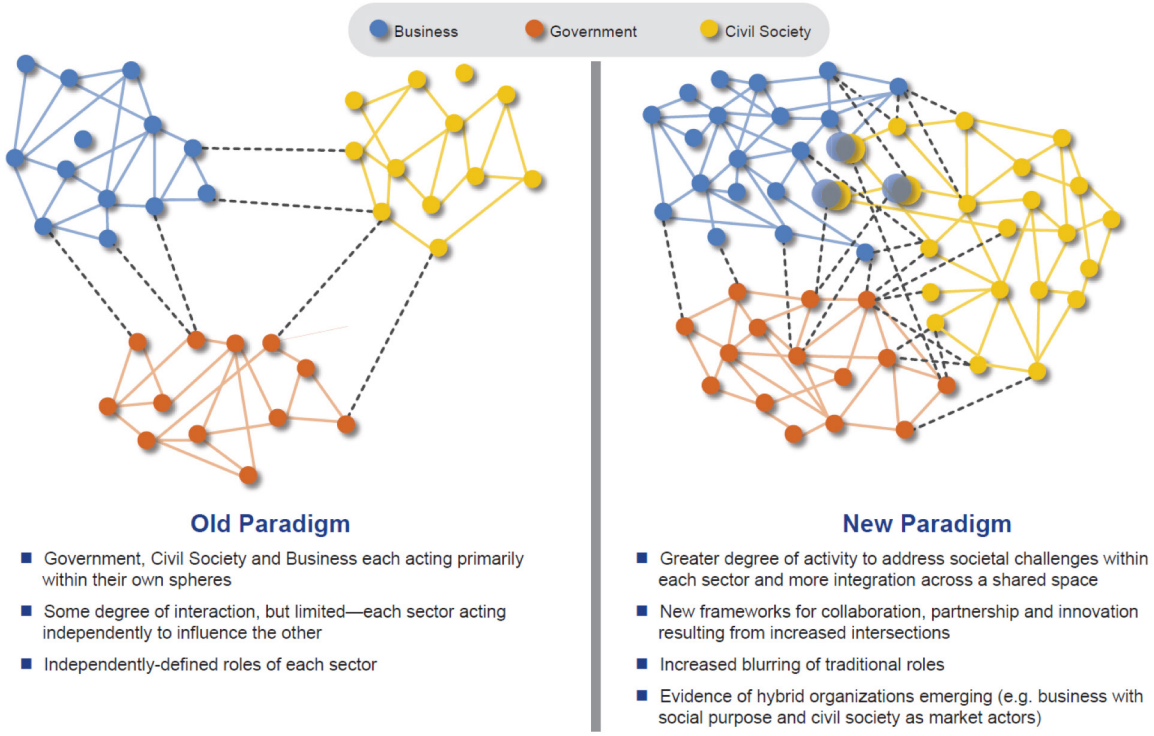
64 World Economic Forum, *The Future Role of Civil Society*, Cologne, WEF, 2013, p. 8.
65 Ibid., p. 9.

- Solidarity supporter: promoting fundamental and universal values;
- Definer of standards: creating norms that shape market and state activity.

Among these, both the role as a watchdog holding institutions accountable and promoting transparency and accountability and as an advocate raising awareness of societal issues and campaigning for the rights of vulnerable groups often bring them into a critical position vis-à-vis governments. Thus civil society involvement will need an understanding of the role of NGOs, in particular the importance of transparency and public accessibility of their work, which might come into conflict with a traditional understanding of governance focused on state institutions.

The traditional understanding of governance follows a departmentalised concept strictly separating government, business and civil society. In recent years, the number of initiatives aimed at better inclusion of civil society actors into governance of development has been rising. They aim at a gradual dissolution of the traditionally compartmentalised divisions between stakeholder groups and its replacement by a matrix of representatives with overlapping roles and responsibilities, as illustrated in the figure below[66]:

Figure 1: "Changing paradigms for sector roles"



Although still existing, the strict separation between civil society, the state and the private sector divide has been gradually reduced in EU development policy making in recent years. According to a study from 2013,[67] civil society actors have gained influence in EU development policy making, particularly with regard to the role of NGOs from the "South" as partners in project implementation and capacity building. This positive view of civil society involvement has also been recognised by the setting up of a multi-stakeholder group including NGOs and development actors in the

66 Taken from World Economic Forum, 2013, op. cit., p.10.
67 Uhlin, A. and S. Kalm, *Civil Society and the Governance of Development. Opposing Global Institutions*, Houndsmills/ Basingstoke, Palgrave-MacMillan, 2015, p. 83 f.

European Commission in 2012. Thus, in the area of development policy making, one could witness a growing understanding of the relevance of multi-stakeholder involvement, which also included a growth in transparency and public accessibility. Development policy making today is much more open to civil society involvement than other policy areas, which has to be taken into account when discussing the role of development actors in regional migration dialogues.

2.5 Key messages

Based on those theoretical considerations, the role of migration dialogues for policy making can be summarised as follows:

I. Dialogues arose from the growing need of inter-state cooperation on migration and the lack of a multilateral framework regulating migration. The latter results from the fact that migration governance is not seen as a public good (migration takes place and affects the origin and destination states) but a so-called club good.

II. Defining migration governance as a club good helps to understand the fundamental power asymmetry between origin and destination states as a major obstacle to the development of binding multilateral frameworks.

III. The literature postulates two conflicting views on the role of inter-governmental migration dialogues: they lead to regional policy convergence and harmonisation in the long term and therefore potentially to diverging approaches between different regions, or they lead to global policy governance by policy transfer and exchanges also across regions.

IV. Communication in inter-governmental migration dialogues forms “epistemic communities”, meaning the development of shared normative and causal beliefs and common approaches which lay the foundation for policy learning.

V. “Epistemic communities” are formed by processes of reflexive learning which are linked to exchanges and deliberations in a trustful atmosphere. Dialogues allow the participants to opt in and out rather flexibly; thus, non-hierarchical methods of coordination are necessary, which in turn promote reflexive learning leading to policy convergence.

VI. Actors participating in dialogues – and members of the epistemic community – whose assumptions and beliefs have been challenged return to their institutions and have the potential to act as change agents.

VII. Migration dialogues are based on government networks which require involving both high-level officials and technical staff in order to achieve the set objectives, be it policy convergence, greater compliance with international agreements, enhanced enforcement or enhanced cooperation.

3 A historical background of migration dialogues and development[68]

3.1 The dialogues to the East

At the beginning, regional migration dialogues involving Western European and Eastern European countries did not consider development issues at all. One of the first large dialogues, the **Budapest Process**, which was founded in 1993 on German initiative as a reaction to the democratic reforms in Eastern Europe and the breakdown of the Soviet Union, focused on the cooperation of the then EU countries with Central and Eastern European countries (which at that time had not yet joined the European Union) with regard to migration management. Its main aim was to set up a platform for exchange of information on migration issues between the EU and the Eastern European countries. In practice, the development of coordinated measures against irregular migration from the Eastern countries to the EU was the most prominent issue discussed in the process until the EU enlargement in 2004. Therefore, police and judicial cooperation in this field figured prominently on the agenda, which gave the process a strong security-oriented outlook. As one expert stated, *"even if they dealt with asylum, it was linked to abuse of the asylum system, looking at country of origin information, return, or readmission, but not at the needs of the refugees."*

The Eastern enlargement of the European Union brought most of the Eastern participating states of the Budapest Process under the EU umbrella or closer to the EU by way of an association agreement. As the new Member States of the European Union were gradually included in the free movement regime of the EU, the Budapest Process lost its relevance as a platform for dialogue with the EU-countries for them. At the same time, the growing importance of the Eastern and South-Eastern European countries and the countries of South-East Asia as source countries of migration to the European Union, but also to Russia, became more visible.

Against this background, roughly a decade after the establishment of the Budapest Process a re-orientation process started towards the Eastern Partnership countries, Russia, and Central Asia. Then, in 2010, the Budapest Process directed its focus further eastwards on a comprehensive migration dialogue with the "Silk Routes" countries – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Iran, Iraq and Pakistan. Turkey was a key player in the last re-orientation process: on the one hand negotiating EU accession, and on the other hand emerging as a major transit and immigration country, receiving immigrants mainly from South Asia, Turkey had a keen interest in focusing on the migration routes leading to the EU via its territory. This convinced EU partners, as whilst in some EU member states there existed established migration systems with these new focus countries, and others were only starting to receive a growing number of labour migrants and refugees from this area.

According to several interview partners, this re-orientation was the main reason for a gradual shift of focus to the linkages between migration and development. According to an experienced member of the Budapest Process, the EU countries participating in the Silk Routes Partnership were still mainly interested in irregular migration, particularly readmission, and thus saw development as a tool to support the conclusion of readmission agreements with the Silk Routes countries, whereas their counterparts were mainly interested in opening up new legal migration

68 The chapters 3 to 7 are based on 21 semi-structured interviews with experts and representatives of the secretariats and participating states, whom were interviewed by telephone in June and August 2015.

channels to Europe. Nevertheless, both parties have learned to understand the legitimacy of reach others' interests and started to develop a broader mutual understanding:

> *"For Europe, the main goal is to try to have a managed migration flow from this region, means reducing illegal migration and maintaining the legal migration channels, and for the Silk Routes region it is to really try and benefit from this cooperation, to have more capacity and more help from the EU, and they actually try to ensure that there is a good cooperation with this region because they are sending states and are trying to send as many workers as possible. But the idea is of course that this happens in a legal way. So both sides have their intentions, but they have learned to understand each other and to better cooperate."*

These different interests needed a new framing for a constructive debate, and here both the Silk Routes countries and the European Commission pushed for a broader and more holistic framework going beyond migration management, including development as a main aspect. According to a long-term participant, the first meetings with Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan were used mainly to clarify the interests of these states and to develop some common ground. This common ground was found in the link between migration and development, and an understanding of migration as a potential element of development. The Istanbul Ministerial Declaration on "A Silk Routes Partnership for Migration" includes migration and development as one out of the six thematic priorities of the dialogue.[69] Without the inclusion of development into the dialogue, the Silk Routes countries would not have been ready to participate, another long-term observer noted:

> *"The strong role of DEVCO [the EU General Directorate for Development Cooperation] was decisive. They insisted very much on a broader approach, not only illegal migration, not only return. That is why the other topics, including development, had to be in there as well. And that was the only reason why we could convince the other countries to participate. And if we would not have had so much emphasis on these topics then we would never have gotten Pakistan on board, or Bangladesh or Iran now."*

In 2009, the **Prague Process** was set up as a platform for the exchange of views between mainly EU countries, Eastern Partnership countries, Central Asia and Russia. As many member countries had already been involved into the Budapest Process and thus had witnessed the gradual shift from a focus on irregular migration to a more holistic view including the development dimension, the Prague Process could already start with a broader outlook.

The priorities of the Prague Process were developed in several meetings of the participating states and defined by the "Building Migration Partnerships" declaration endorsed in April 2009 and the Prague Process Action Plan for 2012-2016 endorsed in Poznan in November 2011.

The Prague Process Action Plan defined six thematic areas and 22 priorities. Both the declaration and the Action Plan include the issue of migration and development as a priority field, although a review of priorities among Prague Process participating states ranks migration and development as one of the least prominent themes to address. Thus, migration and development was on the table from the beginning and was also included in one of the four pilot projects implemented

69 Budapest Process, Istanbul Ministerial Declaration on A Silk Routes Partnership for Migration, 5th Ministerial Conference, Istanbul, 2013, https://www.budapestprocess.org/component/attachments/download/96 (accessed 14 April 2015).

as of 2012 (the others being on legal migration, illegal migration[70] and asylum and international protection). As the priority fields were decided in a consultation process with the member states, they reflected their most pressing needs.

Within the field of migration and development, four concrete areas were addressed, among them a study on regulations and the effects of circular migration. The study was given priority, as this issue covered both legal migration and development, and met the needs of many Eastern Partnership and Central Asian countries, which wanted to discuss the links between these two aspects. In this context, also the role of the diaspora in making mobility beneficial for both origin and destination countries was touched upon. The circular migration study resulted in the publication of the "Prague Process Handbook on Managing Labour and Circular Migration", which entailed concrete guidelines for its implementation. The Handbook was appreciated by the member states and influenced legislation in this field for example in Belarus and Moldova.

According to interview partners involved in the Prague Process, the process is still strongly focused on migration management, in particular measures against illegal migration, but there is a growing understanding of the linkages between migration and development.

The understanding of migration and development issues in the Prague Process are likely to be shaped by its distinctive setting: the process brings together two big European migration systems, migration to the European Union, and migration towards Russia. Whereas the EU Member States perceive themselves to be dominantly on the receiving end and thus focus on the issue of illegal migration, the Western Balkan, Eastern Partnership and Central Asian countries have a stronger interest in migration and development, as they predominantly view migration from the perspective of origin states. *"We receive more interest in migration and development from the side of the non-EU countries"*, a long-term observer of the process noted, who also pointed to the fact that for the non-EU countries the issue of brain drain and brain circulation has become a part of the migration debate. The dominance of migration issues with a security framing in the beginning of the Prague Process is likely to have been influenced by the dominance of ministries of the interior, which only gradually have opened up to other actors:

"At the beginning ministries of the interior wanted to discuss among themselves, but at some point we learnt that also expertise from outside would be beneficial, since we don´t discuss any secrets. We are getting more and more open towards others."

3.2 The dialogues to the South

In the migration dialogues to the South (in the case of this study, Euromed Migration III, the MTM Dialogue, and the Rabat Process) development issues have been on the forefront since the beginning. Although in some of these processes, such as the Rabat Process or the MTM Dialogue, the issue of irregular migration (between Morocco and Spain) was also a driving force for their establishment, development issues had from the beginning been firmly put on the agenda by the African partner states.

70 The documents of the Prague Process use the term "illegal migration". Generally within the academic context the less normative terms "irregular", "regular" and "non-authorised" are applied, whereas the term "illegal migration" is broadly understood as more politically motivated and media-shaped, associating irregular migration with crime, while being in a country without the required papers is, in most countries, not a criminal offence, but an administrative infringement. Furthermore, scientific works argue that the dichotomous categorisation of "legal" and "illegal" does not fit the complex legal status of migrants, which is changing during the migration process.

Also here the perspectives have changed over the years: in the beginning, the "root causes approach" was the main frame for understanding the linkage between migration and development. Migration was mainly perceived as a negative phenomenon to be reduced by development co-operation. Although the "root causes approach" is still an important frame, over the last ten years the analysis has become more differentiated and the potential impact of migration on development has increasingly come to the forefront, as a growing number of "Southern" member states realised the importance of this aspect. This change of perspective has led to a more holistic view of migration and has provided a common frame to discuss legal migration, irregular migration and labour migration from an overarching perspective, which understands well-managed migration as a major factor fostering development.

According to an interview partner involved in several migration dialogues to the South, good migration governance is now seen as the key to both development and security, whereas before security issues dominated the debates and the economic and social impacts of migration on the countries of origin and destination had been neglected.

According to several interview partners, the growing interest of international organisations in remittances also fostered the debate on migration and development in the regional dialogues. For the EU Member States, the EU's Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM) was functional in triggering a gradual change of perspective. Whereas they formerly had understood development primarily as a tool to reduce migration, some participants in the dialogues now started to see migration as an element of development. Another supporting factor has surely been the broadening of participants and the inclusion of ministries of foreign affairs and ministries of labour in the dialogues, which before in most dialogues had been confined to ministries of interior.

According to another interview partner involved in several dialogues, changing migration realities also led to a shift in priorities: Many Southern partner states, which used to see themselves primarily as "origin countries", became gradually also countries of transit and destination, in particular for labour migrants from neighbouring countries or from Sub-Saharan African countries in the case of the Maghreb countries. Thus labour migration issues have become more prominent, and dialogues allotted more time and energy to South-South migration. These developments lead to a better understanding of the position of EU countries: *"There are much more areas of consent than dissent because they more and more see themselves as countries of destination. Therefore, they start to better understand the perception of European countries when it comes to migration."* an interview partner commented.

Furthermore, many EU partner states are progressively interested to learn about effective diaspora engagement strategies. Whereas some of the Eastern European EU Member States, like e.g. Ireland, Lithuania, Poland, Romania or Slovenia, had a long tradition of diaspora policies, a number of Western European countries, particularly the most engaged in cooperation with African partner countries, have put large emphasis on managing immigration where their own diasporas were not really considered. In contrast, for many countries in the global South diaspora relations have been central for their understanding of the linkages between migration and development: *"However, nowadays we interestingly see more and more European countries getting interested in the engagement of their diaspora"*, an interview partner added, referring to the development of a two-way learning process within a Southern dialogue frame.

Ten years ago, EU Member States predominantly perceived themselves as "destination countries", and Southern partner countries as "origin countries", and thus were mainly interested in managing immigration from those "sending countries", he added. Over this timeframe, there

was a gradual re-orientation, mainly driven by the Southern participating states of the dialogues, towards an understanding of migration as a powerful force for economic and social change which could be gainful for both Northern and Southern countries: *"This means that the whole perception, which traditionally has been immigration-focused on the one hand and emigration-focused on the other hand, and the perspective of a sending versus a receiving country, becomes more complex and potentially constructive. We see less of your interests versus ours, and more of our common interests."*

4 Migration and development in the dialogues

4.1 Main issues discussed

Although the dialogues covered by this study are characterised by different priorities, migration and development issues are a topic of discussion in all of them. In this context, diaspora involvement, policies to enhance legal migration opportunities, recognition of professional and vocational training, and return and reintegration have been mentioned most often as important issues.

According to several interview partners, the issue of diaspora engagement received growing attention among representatives of African and Asian participating states, and recently also among some EU countries. According to an interview partner, several African countries have already developed strategies for diaspora engagement, which could serve as good practices for other countries. Involving the diaspora is on the agenda for many countries, an interview partner stated, but would need careful planning and strategic decision on which organisation to cooperate with. *It is important to promote cooperation and dialogue with migrant associations and communities but you know it's not easy, the participation of the diaspora community is important but when you have to make a choice it's not easy. (…) This is all very important but it has to be discussed how to organise it."*

New approaches to diaspora engagement have been developed within the Euromed Migration III , which recently focused in a meeting on the involvement of so-called diaspora "champions" and their contribution to development both in countries of origin and destination. According to an interview-partner, this approach overcomes the traditional divide between "developed" and "developing" countries and makes all types of contributions by migrants to the economy and society in both countries of origin and destination visible. Furthermore, it contributes to a change of the public perception of migration and migrants and focuses on migrants' competencies. As another interview partner familiar with the Euromed Migration framework stated, this idea was an offspring of the debates in the dialogues, where it became clear that migrants' contributions to the origin and destination societies were hardly reflected in the publicly available data sets on migration and should be highlighted. This focus helped to bridge the different views on migration among the partner states:

> *"One thing that was interesting in the last Euromed III was the involvement of the diaspora in migration in the different fields, not only the "normal" labour migration but also the successful diaspora, and how they could help the development in the countries of origin and destination. So, it has come a long way in everything, first it was just the profile of the migration that we tried to draw, then it was the common sense about how to develop the legal migration, then how to fight illegal migration, which is useful as well, then the new sense about how to connect migration and development, that is one of the main topics now. (…) Euromed has been trying to do a new approach to migration that helps a lot because the countries involved have very different approaches to migration, and this helps to bridge the gaps."*

Nevertheless, there were also critical voices stating that in the moment there is a trend to see diaspora mobilisation and involvement as a panacea to all development issues. According to these statements, diaspora engagement was an important element in an overall understanding of development, but would still have a limited role when compared to direct investments or trade policies.

Enhancing the possibilities for legal migration was mentioned as another main issue of debate by several interview partners. Here, the different perspectives of EU and non-EU countries are clearly visible, as one long time participant in the Budapest Process stated: non-EU member states are interested in opening channels for legal migration to Europe, whereas often European countries are mainly interested in the return of irregular migrants. In this respect, the European Commission's "Global Approach on Migration and Mobility" was perceived as an important tool to bridge the different interests of the participating countries, as it helped to develop a common understanding and narrative, which led to the balanced view laid down in the Istanbul Ministerial Declaration[71]. A long-term observer of the Budapest Process noted:

> *"Not so many EU countries are actively participating in the Budapest Process, although many of them participate in some meetings in many cases they remain a little bit silent or absent. If one looks at what these EU Member States say when they attend a meeting, it seems they are just focusing on irregular migration and readmission. And this is a sharp, a very sharp, difference with what is said by the representatives of Silk Routes countries when they attend the meetings. Because these are the countries which rather speak about the need to expand legal migration channels. So there is a big difference in the narrative and the approach. I think that the role of the European Commission in the process is also to bridge the gap. To help both sides to speak, to find a common language, by offering the Global Approach on Migration and Mobility as a platform. We have translated this comprehensive and balanced approach into the Istanbul Ministerial Declaration, which indeed is very balanced and comprehensive. (…) I think we are trying to build a common ground, but this is to be done in everyday life, meeting by meeting."*

Also other interview partners confirmed that legal migration is an issue of growing importance in their respective dialogues. As a participant of the Rabat Process observed, also in this dialogue the discussion started with the debate on irregular migration, particularly between Spain and Morocco, but it soon became clear that a simple security-driven view could neither help to understand the dynamics of irregular migration, nor contribute to sustainable solutions. However, if linked to sustainable development, it would become clear that well-managed migration could be a positive element for the economies of both origin and destination countries and the migrants. In this respect, the experience of Southern countries may gradually be given more room, and so a more balanced debate characterised the dialogues. A similar development towards a more balanced partnership between countries of origin, transit and destination was also reported from the Euromed Migration framework, which is attempting to develop a new narrative on migration. These views may not already be shared by all participating countries, but there is a strong drive towards change:

> *"I think one of the most important things in the Euromed Migration framework is the development of partnership as far as possible with the countries of origin and transit as well. And also to develop new concepts of migration, study new ways of profitable migration to pursue development. That could be circular migration, it could be other kinds of migration, but we have to develop efforts to study new ways that migration could be a way to support development in both countries. (…) Because we have to show migration in a positive way. That's what we have to work on, because migration will never stop, that's for sure. And we have to make the most of it for all of us and also show it to the public opinion. Because nowadays migration is only misery and poverty and it's not all of that. We have a lot of success in migration. I think my*

71 Budapest Process, 2013, op. cit.

country has a different view of migration because we are still a country of immigration and emigration. So we do see migration in both aspects, as a two-way process and a positive process."

According to another interview partner, the growing relevance of development issues within the migration dialogues has also influenced the thinking about irregular migration. So, for example, both the partners from the EU and the "Silk Routes countries"[72] realise the negative impacts of irregular migration on the development potential of mobility and recognise that irregular migration is also not in the interest of the "origin" countries. Countries that previously focused their interest on border management, would now develop a more nuanced understanding of irregular migration

"Border management issues are still very much in the focus. Migration and development, there you have a certain hesitation because of some counterparts from EU member states, which are not really committed to it. The others are quite interested in opening doors to diasporas and creating better relationships there. But what I do find interesting is the fact that there is a general recognition that irregular migration doesn't bring anything to anyone, also in the countries of origin, but that is sometimes not realised in the EU Member States, that actually also, for example, Pakistan has no interest in irregular migration and actually can be interested in cooperating on matters of irregular migration because they see it doesn't bring Pakistan anything, nor the migrant or the family left behind. And there I see a lot of potential for improved cooperation but at the same time we also have to look at the other side of the coin to see which kind of more openness, even if it is temporary, we can create."

Opening legal migration channels would have to be supported by pre-departure measures, another interview partner stated. From this perspective, also a different understanding of irregular migration could emerge: the decision to migrate irregularly sometimes also hinges on a lack of information on legal channels, so better information on legal migration possibilities and the risks and consequences of irregular migration would be central. Pre-departure measures thus would be of utmost importance, but they would also have to include transit countries:

"We speak a lot of irregular migration and of course we have to fight the trafficking of human beings and smuggling, of course we have to fight these kinds of crimes. But we also have to develop the information about the right legal channels of immigration. I work a lot in the field, and what I see is that people lack the right information about legal channels, they really do. Sometimes they pay a lot to the illegal networks and they would have had the chance to migrate legally if they had known. So the pre-departure is a very important topic. But pre-departure also has to act in the transit countries. Because sometimes it's too late for the pre-departure but you still have time to act in the transit countries because people have already seen that something is wrong and you can help them to stop. So I think a new form of pre-departure, you can call it whatever you want but a kind of transit post-pre-departure something like that should be envisaged in order to better protect the migrants."

Among the debates to enhance the possibilities for legal migration, the discussion of circular migration gained prominence particularly within the Prague Process. The quote below illustrates

72 The Istanbul Ministerial Declaration on establishing A Silk Routes Partnership for Migration is the outcome of the 5th Ministerial Conference of the Budapest Process where it was agreed to "promote further dialogue and mutual cooperation in managing migration flows taking place along the Silk Routes as the Budapest Process priority". Since then Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan are participating states of the Budapest Process while Bangladesh, China and Iran have observer status.

well the process of negotiating a common understanding and developing a common vocabulary and framing, which is typical for the work of a migration dialogue that tries to find points of view and solutions that all participants agree to and share ownership of:

> *"So far we have covered circular migration. That was a bit of a difficult topic at the beginning but in the end we all agreed and the guidelines were endorsed. It was a bit of an experiment because at the beginning we struggled to find out what exactly is meant by circular migration and I think there were two strands of discussion: whether we talk about limited schemes or more general mobility measures. We tried to tackle both perspectives and the states were interested in schemes because that is what they can imagine more concretely, but also enhanced mobility plays a role, for example in Sweden, where they do allow circularity to some extent and also in the CIS region they have free mobility and mostly circularity with people. (…) First of all we agreed on what it is. And now I hear more and more that people read it and consider these recommendations when setting their national migration strategies, as all states have endorsed the guidelines."*

Another important aspect mentioned with regard to support for regular migration was skills development. There is a growing interest in exchanging good practices on vocational training and aligning training programmes with professional standards in destination countries. Several regional migration dialogues are currently discussing this issue, and cooperation projects in this field would be of great interest. Skills recognition and transferability is directly linked to skills development. Whereas in academic studies, like medicine and IT, mechanisms to recognise qualifications from abroad are in the making or have already been set up, the recognition of vocational and trade qualifications is more often limited to the country where the qualification is obtained. This lack of transferability seriously hampers successful matching of labour supply and demand, and contributes to the de-qualification of migrant workers abroad, another interview partner added, and suggested developing common skills definitions and criteria for countries linked by a migration system.

Although migration management always includes the aspect of readmission and sustainable return, this issue has been reported as one of the most conflict-laden areas in many dialogues. Sometimes origin states expect a form of migration agreements as a result of regional migration dialogues, whereas destination countries mainly focus their interest on return policies. In these cases it is the task of the moderators to bridge the gap and balance the interests:

> *"In several cases, it is obvious that the country is interested mostly in labour migration because the population is high and it is an important element that more people are being sent legally to the EU. But they have to take note that there are EU regulations. If they breach the EU regulation it will be readmission and it can cause a lot of problems for both sides. (….) Sometimes it can be problematic, it's easy to end up in these discussions where one side only wants to talk about labour and we only want to talk about returning or something like this. You can notice the difference in interest and some countries try to say of course we don't want to talk about return, it's too sensitive. And other countries might say I don't travel to this meeting because labour migration is not our priority. A good moderator then says, "Well, you need to show some interest if you want to them to talk about your topic." Then you need a respected moderator preventing both from falling into blaming mode. But meanwhile most of the migration people have come to the point that you cannot talk about one thing alone, you need to take a broader perspective. You have to work on their issues as well. (…)"*

4.2 Activities developed in the dialogues

The dialogues analysed in this study have developed a large variety of activities that incorporate aspects of migration and development. They can be largely grouped under the following headings:

- Capacity building and training on migration management issues;
- Pilot projects in priority areas;
- Research, studies and handbooks;
- Migration profiles.

Capacity building is a complementing activity found in all the migration dialogues studied, but the relevance of capacity building measures varies. Countries with an emerging migration management system see capacity building as a particularly important gain from the dialogue format, as an interview partner stated:

> *"I think capacity building will remain an important topic. So capacity building at all levels will stay on the agenda, from high level to expert level, and also fostering cooperation between these countries, not only between the EU and the Silk Routes countries, but also between countries of the regions."*

The main task of capacity building and training measures in dialogue settings is to support the participating states to "take the situation in their own hands"; so these activities complement dialogue, as they contribute to (institutional) development, the interview partner added.

Whereas according to the interview-partners in the starting phase of the dialogues capacity building often followed the traditional "a non-EU country learns from an EU country" model, whereby EU countries were informing non-EU countries on how to best organise and manage certain aspects of migration, meanwhile a more balanced approach has evolved: a growing number of study visits between non-EU countries have been organised for example between African or Caucasus and Southern Asian countries. As mentioned above, EU Member States also became interested in diaspora policies of the countries in the "South" and even consider strengthening relations with their own diasporas. One dialogue even led the government of an EU country to develop a training programme on diaspora networking for their embassies and consulates based on experiences with diaspora outreach in African countries.

The development of migration profiles can be found in most regional migration dialogues. Migration profiles include relevant data on legal and institutional structures in the field of migration and migration policies, as well as data on migration corridors and migrant groups for specific countries. By collecting and analysing data relevant for migration management and integration, the process of developing migration profiles does not only aim to provide data and information to facilitate policy planning, but also to involve all relevant authorities in the debate.[73] As they have to define their data needs, the process widely contributes to the development of a common understanding of migration management and is an incentive to reflect on the roles of the respective institutions in migration management.

73 See also the "Preliminary results of the GMFD PfP Informal Inquiry on Migration Profiles and Extended Migration Profiles", prepared by ICMPD, IOM and the GFMD Platform for Partnership, 2014, p. 2, https://www.gfmd.org/files/documents/Background_paper_MP-survey_GFMD-PfP.pdf (accessed 12 February 2016).

Training courses on different aspects of migration are organised within the framework of most of dialogues. They have been acknowledged as a major element of concretising priorities discussed in the dialogues by most interview partners. They stressed that meanwhile a wide range of topics, ranging from migration statistics to development aspects of migration have been covered - tailor-made to the needs of the countries. Nevertheless in some dialogues the impression of a teacher-student relationship still exists, an interview-partner mentioned. Furthermore, varying attitudes about learning from the experiences of EU Member States among the participating states have been noticed. Those interested in sending more migrants to EU countries or gaining better access to development assistance tend to show a stronger interest in, for example, migration policy making by EU Member States than those not focused on migration to EU countries. Similarly, states that are not significant recipients of development assistance from the EU seem to view migration policies of EU countries more critical. But as mentioned above, in recent years the regional emphasis in some dialogues has shifted and more emphasis is laid on knowledge exchange between non-EU countries.

Research activities are often limited by the lack of available resources, several interview partners commented. For the dialogues it is essential to have research findings translated into concrete recommendations, like handbooks or guidelines, an interview partner familiar with the Prague Process commented. This process concentrated strongly on evidence-based guidelines for different policy-areas:

> *"Over the previous year and a half we had four pilot projects, one was about circular migration, the second one was about labour migration issues, the third one was purely on illegal migration and smuggling and the fourth one was on asylum seekers and refugees' status. We were involved in these four pilot projects. And together with other members of the Prague Process we developed special guidelines in these pilot projects which are quite relevant to look at and see about the concrete topic. (…) I personally would like to see in such a type of document even more practical examples and more good examples in these particular topics."*

5 Involvement of actors in the field of development

5.1 Involvement of state actors from the development field

The degree of regular participation of institutional stakeholders from the development policy field differs widely from dialogue to dialogue. Particularly representatives of the dialogues to the East stated that there is a strong institutional dominance of ministries of interior and/or ministries of migration, whereas ministries of foreign affairs or state institutions responsible for various development sectors only participate sporadically. A stronger participation of ministries and development agencies was reported by the dialogues to the South, although also here the intensity and regularity of their involvement varied. Practical issues also influence the degree and continuity of their participation: often only one state representative can be funded and there may not be other funds available to travel. In these cases, participation of more than one state representative is limited despite the understanding that actors from other fields should be included.

The infrequent participation of representatives of development institutions is, at least partly, the result of ministries of interior serving as focal points in many dialogues. According to an interview partner, the participation of development actors mainly depends on the invitation strategy of the focal point. They may prefer to limit participation of those actors to sessions devoted to development issues. Nevertheless, cooperation with other government stakeholders is increasing. Such increase could positively impact on the quality of the debate:

> *"We have countries that participate, and all government institutions can participate in all meetings, but the ministries of the interior are the focal points. It is up to them to communicate the invitation to other government stakeholders that deal with the topic. Some countries understand that this is the ideal way of how this should work. But gradually we see an increase in inter-institutional cooperation and information sharing and we sometimes receive new institutions."*

This view was supported by another interview partner, who pointed out the preference of the core actors to include development actors only on an ad hoc basis:

> *"Principally, just empirically, you don't see many development agencies represented in a migration dialogue. That is on the one hand linked to formalities of the organisation of such dialogues where they are still in the hands, driven by the core stakeholders. (…) You still see more often a ministry of interior in a migration dialogue in a migration and development meeting than you see a development agency in an irregular migration debate. Because these are the traditional participants in a dialogue. But you do of course see development agencies coming in for a specific input or presentation or participation in a given meeting."*

The inclusion of other actors would positively impact on the substance and liveliness of the discussion, the interview partner added, as they would introduce new perspectives.

A slightly different view was presented by countries that already have developed a "whole of government approach" and involve development agencies in their migration policy development. According to an interview partner, their development agency is involved in all fields of migration policy making; accordingly, this interview partner presented a more positive view regarding regularly involving development policy actors:

"If we proceed from [our country's] case, as you know, [inter-agency cooperation] is pretty effective and it works. But it depends on the other countries as well; they might not have this kind of [coordinating] agency. Involvement of international organisations and NGOs and academia as well is pretty much important and we acknowledge this and that's why we gave them consultative status. We are convinced that involvement of these organisations in the dialogue process will be beneficial for the general process. But I'm saying not only on migration and development but in any other topic discussed in the framework of the process we can ensure their involvement for discussion."

Several interview partners pointed to frictions arising from the different cultures" in the field of migration management and development. Just as migration dialogues have needed time to develop trust among the ministries of interior of different countries, one should not expect that actors in the field of migration management and actors in the field of development share a common vocabulary and understanding. Often, "migration people" do not have sufficient knowledge of the debates in the field of development and other sector policies, and vice versa, so there is a similar need to develop a common vocabulary and perspective as exists between delegations of different participating states. In order to overcome these gaps and develop a shared framework of understanding, more time and energy should be put into the development of a common understanding of issues on all sides. In this respect it would be helpful if also development policy fora would be opened up to include actors from the migration field, one senior civil servant suggested.

In order to develop concrete projects, dialogues should consider reaching out beyond the migration and development field, another interview partner stated. In many cases the discussions on migration and development stay on a rather abstract level and are not transformed into concrete projects and capacity building activities that engage experts in specialised policy areas. This would be needed more than development experts, and they should be involved accordingly:

"The whole migration debate needs to focus on completely different actors. We need ministries of education, tourism and agriculture, not only interior and development. If you, for example, want to invest remittances in agricultural improvement (…), you need someone who knows about [this] stuff and not someone who knows about development. Broaden the actors and identify and select key actors and don't go on autopilot!"

5.2 How open should dialogues be?

In the field of migration management state institutions are the main actors, and, except in the area of integration and diaspora involvement, NGOs usually do not partner in the policy making process. The field of development policies, however, has a long tradition of cooperation with NGOs, who often not only implement projects and programmes, but are also involved in a continuous dialogue with state agencies on policy goals.

Cooperation in the field of migration and development thus entails the challenge of bringing together two policy areas with different institutional settings and cultures of communication. This cultural divide is not easily bridged in the dialogue. According to an interview partner familiar with the dialogues to the East, members of the dialogues would be open to hearing the position of non-governmental development organisations, but do not want to include them into the dialogues, as they prefer to share their views with their peers, who follow similar lines of thought:

"There is a high interest in hearing their perspective and it's very welcome, but the member states don´t want in any way to lay down that NGO participation should be a part of it. "When we find it necessary, when we find it needed, but we won't have it institutionalised in any way" is the feeling. They do not want to change the nature of the cooperation they have, which is still a setting of trust. You know who is sitting at the table, you know who is coming to these meetings, and have some sort of predictability, you feel comfortable, you know that everybody is following the same lines in this setting. I think that they are afraid that once you start opening the door maybe the whole setting will change. Maybe there would be very interesting discussions but very different in a way. I think they want to keep it as a state cooperation framework but when they have meetings where they find it relevant other stakeholders would definitely be invited to come."

Informality and trust between the participants of the dialogue, which are representatives of a government migration administration and thus bound to clear regulations regarding confidentiality, might well come into conflict with the wish to better include non-governmental actors, who often position themselves critically vis-à-vis governments and see transparent communication of their activities as a decisive element of their work, another interview partner added. According to a senior official, the success or failure of a dialogue hinges on the level of openness which derives from a sense of mutual trust. NGOs often would advocate for migrants' rights, which could bring them into conflict with the representatives of the ministries of the interior attending these meetings. These frictions could lead to silencing the government participants and preventing an open dialogue:

"De facto the mood in such a meeting would change immediately if you would have someone sitting there who would just immediately react if a country would say something more or less outrageous or something, if we would, for example, talk about return. The ministries would know they will be attacked and be silent, knowing that they are on the receiving end. So they would not actively participate anymore, it would kill the open dialogue. It's not necessarily confidentiality, it's comfort, you have to be comfortable that you are talking to peers, that you are talking to people who are representing governments who understand also that when I speak on behalf of country X and I say this is the position, everyone understands that this is not my personal opinion, it is a government position."

The involvement of NGOs would be particularly sensitive in cases where countries in conflict participate in the dialogue framework, another senior official stated. NGO involvement would need serious preparation, and one would have to consider the different traditions of the member states with regard to civil society involvement. It is necessary to understand that state-NGO cooperation in dialogues has barely started and will need more time to develop:

"I mean we are in a different situation, there are countries which are also conflict countries and they are represented by senior people of their ministries, authorities. It is absolutely inconsiderably for some of these countries to have an NGO sitting at the same table and taking the floor. I mean even the NGO would be embarrassed and would refrain from opening their mouth in some cases. It is certainly not something to be dealt with in that manner. It would be a little bit naive and silly to pretend to have a dialogue format with NGOs in these cases. We are just starting and need to be a little bit more patient."

In particular, to trust NGOs to not transparently share the issues discussed with the public would be a problem for the dialogue formats, another interview partner added – "going public" could damage open dialogue established between states. Due to their self-understanding, NGOs would have difficulties in participating in a dialogue format based on confidentiality:

> *"Sometimes members of civil society might have difficulties in understanding the difficulties of certain types of meetings. For example, once there was a civil society representative who asked me "Would you mind if I tweet?" In an inter-governmental discussion this is not possible. It's difficult to understand for civil society organisations what an inter-government dialogue is. It's about data protection, confidentiality and the role they have. Confidentiality is one of the main added values of dialogues. We use Chatham House Rules. We would never put in the report who raised exactly what."*

Other interview partners did not agree with this sceptical view. According to a senior staff member of an international organisation, NGOs have professionalised, and there is growing consensus on the need of their involvement in migration dialogues, although there are different views on how formal their involvement should be, as NGO involvement would also raise the question of how confidentiality can be safeguarded under existing regulations on public access to information:

> *"This is an issue; I wouldn't say there is consensus about it. Here much more thinking could be done in terms of impact, what kind of impact, and whether that would disturb the traditional exchanges in dialogues. Sometimes perhaps, but I think there is a level of professionalism and acceptance of basic rules that are so common in such meetings. You see professional NGOs where you can't distinguish their behaviour in the room and in the nuanced statements that they give. You wouldn't always know they now represent a civil society that is usually more connected to activism and makes more surprising actions in meetings sometimes to make their points clear. More and more they don't distinguish in their way of appearance anymore. So here more and more it becomes a substance debate which is welcomed. I think there is a growing consensus and understanding that a discourse, a discussion, needs to have all stakeholders on board. (…) But the level of acceptance is still not generally accepted. In all these dialogues we have talked about that civil society should have a regular formal role. So, in steering groups, for example, we are far away from having consensus on having civil society as a member of steering group for instance, or even as an observer. You have issues of confidentiality when you have countries with a very liberal or very extensive legislation on public access to information and suddenly you can be forced through journalists to give out your discussion notes and in this way the question of Chatham House Rules and transparency rules can be problematic."*

In practice, most dialogues have reacted to this challenge by opening up parts of their meetings to NGO participation. Most often they are only invited to report on certain projects or to share their views on certain issues, and neither participate in the political debates nor have a seat on the governing boards of the dialogues. This way, the states "owning" the dialogues are securing their ownership while still opening up spots for civil society inclusion.

5.3 Diaspora involvement

The involvement of diaspora organisations and ministries and/or state secretariats for the diaspora in the dialogues was also discussed with interview partners. In this respect, there was broad agreement that African and Asian member states give diaspora involvement much greater importance than member states from Europe, which is reflected by the lack of specific diaspora institutions in many European governments.

This difference often leads to an institutional imbalance in the dialogues. In most European countries, ministries of foreign affairs are responsible for development (cooperation) issues, and thus participate in the dialogues, where they discuss diaspora and development issues. Their "Southern" counterparts are often ministries or state secretariats for the diaspora, so they lack an appropriate institutional partner from the "North" with an in-depth understanding of diaspora engagement.

Furthermore, the understanding of the role of the diaspora differs widely within and between different regions, as diaspora involvement in development, for some, still is a new approach that needs to be anchored in development policy making. These different views influence priorities set for concrete activities in the dialogues, one expert mentioned:

> *"The views are really different between actors, between the European members and also the African countries. The way migration and development issues are seen in [in country X] is different from, for example, [country Y], because there is a strong diaspora, so it is mainly diaspora issues, mobilising diaspora for development, their remittances, but also their skills and their solidarity, the use for the country of origin. So it's mainly that which is dear to their heart. And I see that in the other states (…) they have less diaspora on their soil and so they are more into capacity building and how to mainstream migration into development cooperation, into state policies, how to maximise the benefits of migration. I see that in the mind of the European Commission it's a bit the same. They are more into capacity building; they let more the member states deal with their diaspora."*

This view was shared by another interview partner, who also pinpointed the fact that the economic crisis has changed the understanding of development, which now is not only seen as an issue of the "South", but is also understood as a task for an EU country itself – which could generate a new thinking about its own diaspora:

> *"In reality Southern countries are more balanced in their approach to migration governance, although for many emigration opportunities remains a key priority. In some European countries with sophisticated migration management systems, we rapidly realise that the focus is dramatically put on managing immigration rather than governing migration as a whole. But possibly through the influence of the economic crisis, European countries are starting to realise the value and potential of their diaspora. One illustration: over two years ago the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of an EU country changed its name and became the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development. Everyone thought it was about development through the lens of development cooperation offered to developing countries, but it is actually also about the international development of this country. As a result, we see growing efforts from this country to develop a policy on involving the diaspora."*

The involvement of diaspora organisations themselves would be extremely challenging, an interview partner added; there is a massive lack of knowledge (among governments) on existing diaspora organisations, their level of competency and their activities, and most organisations would not be able to cover the costs, which would increase funding needs. In many countries diaspora organisations are weak or non-existent, and in others, diaspora organisations may only have been founded recently and do not have a proven track record of development activities. There is also the question of whether an organisation really represents the views of a diaspora or only one strand of the socio-political spectrum. So the choice of organisations would have to be based on background research and sound judgement:

> *"You have diaspora organisations and you have to see who are their members and what are their objectives. And for some countries you will have strong actors and real diaspora organisations which look from the outside that they want to work on development. You have to see what are their objectives, and how much they represent the diaspora, how many members of the diaspora; I think there was research done by saying 95% of the [persons] abroad had no link at all to any kind of diaspora organisation. They just live abroad, work abroad, doing their thing and sending money home and you can also not reach them via diaspora organisations."*

Although diaspora engagement is high on the migration and development agendas in all dialogues, there is also widespread agreement on practical difficulties and challenges of the concept: diaspora organisations have not developed equally in all destination countries, their outreach may vary and there is not sufficient information available on their history and activities. Nevertheless, there was common agreement on enhancing the participation of diaspora organisations as partners in development-related debates, but not as regular members of a dialogue. Compared to opinions expressed on the involvement of institutional actors and NGOs from the field of development, diaspora involvement was viewed more positively and seen as necessary to improve the work of the dialogues by several interview partners.

5.4 Differing communication cultures: a limitation to multi-stakeholder cooperation?

Regional migration dialogues have been functioning as platforms of exchange and cooperation in the migration field since the 1980s. In the beginning, their main aim was to bring together origin and destination countries to allow exchange of information on migration flows and to ease cooperation between governments and administrations, mainly with regard to border management and migration control. According to the interviews, the dialogues have since transcended this initial and limited task and became arenas both for the discussion of common concepts and strategies for holistic migration governance and for the development of concrete activities for their implementation.

Offering an informal setting for regular meetings of political and administrative actors in the field, the dialogues are major venues for establishing trust between the actors. Trust building is supported by the continuity of participation of civil servants from the participating states and the confidentiality of consultations: many dialogues follow Chatham House Rules, which allow participants to communicate the content of a debate to others, but do not allow making the dialogue partners and their statement public. Trust building is also supported by restricting certain sessions or topics touching on sensitive areas to officials from the ministries concerned in order to secure confidentiality.

As a long-term participant in several dialogues explained, this wish for a protected space for discussion and exchange is not only motivated by the interest of the participating states in confidentiality with regard to their policy development activities but is also a consequence of the different interests of origin and destination states in this field. It would be extremely unlikely to find common views between origin and destination states from the outset, as even within a single participating state the views of different ministries often differ. Regional migration dialogues thus not only serve as arenas for trustful and open discussions among civil servants and politicians from different countries, but for some also as the only venue where representatives of different ministries of one state can meet and be able to discuss their views on migration and development. Only in a trustful atmosphere can dissent be addressed openly, and participants are ready to accept criticism (from their peers):

> *"In principle, all these topics are not straightforward, and this is when dialogues are useful, they are useful when you are not on the same page. (…) You will always find dissent on these topics and on what you have to do first, where you start. I think that's why you need dialogues. You will always have a level of dissent; the question is more whether you have created the right framework and base to constructively discuss this. The environment that can be created through a dialogue is also a way to measure the success of a dialogue. The trust that you have to be able to discuss and have an open argument. (…) For that, dialogues are so important because otherwise this dissent would never appear in an open way, you would never understand where a country is at. In bilateral settings perhaps you would hear it too but I think in the multilateral settings it's easier to speak out when you have a problem with something and it's also easier to receive criticism."*

The development of trust needs certain conditions, another interview partner added, the most important being sustainable cooperation structures managed by a reliable secretariat, and a certain continuity of both managerial staff and participants. Migration dialogues are more akin to a marathon run than to a sprint, success needs time and continuity. Continuity of meetings and cooperation can lead to the development of a common understanding and terminology, and a "team spirit" which allows the bridging of gaps between countries.

Many interview partners also described the informal setting of the dialogues as a major element in fostering an open dialogue, which allows for brainstorming, developing ideas and exploring new ways of thinking: participants can be sure about the "like-mindedness" of their partners, and trust that their statements will not be brought to the public. Furthermore, the informality helps the ministries involved to share their views without having to align their positions with other ministries, such as foreign affairs, which they would have to do in a more formal setting. Since dialogue meetings strive to produce joint recommendations, there is nevertheless also a certain degree of pressure to come to a consensus, an experienced participant noted:

> *"And then of course, the informality of all these dialogues helps. Because the problem of formality is that with the states when an international relation is formal it means that the ministry of foreign affairs has to clear it at higher levels and then it takes time and decisions are delayed so sometimes the window for cooperation is already closed. So the informality allows ministries other than the foreign offices to get involved. (….) The informal regional migration dialogues help a lot for the individual states that participate there to get inspired and to talk more frankly because nothing is binding, nothing is forcing. The beauty of the consultative processes is the formality in the informality and the informality in the formality. Because it's informal, everybody is open, but there is a formal arrangement that is done. There is a secretariat, sort of*

a loose secretariat, but there is a way the meeting is organised, there is an agenda, so these are all formal. But the debate at dialogues is informal. The reports are loose and the outcomes are more like recommendations 'why don't we think about that'. And then, despite this informality, the dialogue comes up with a formal response to a problem."

Confidentiality, informality and continuity of participants were also mentioned by other interview partners as the core elements fostering the development of a "culture of like-mindedness", which helps to overcome different positions and develop a common framework of understanding. Furthermore, in many dialogues senior public officials participate, who are familiar with the intra-government cooperation and know what strings they have to pull in order to reach a consensus. Their position also gives them authority to negotiate with their partners and helps them to gain acceptance in their own institutional environment, several interview-partners commented. Thus dialogues might be more successful in "preparing the ground" for policies than more formal negotiation formats.

A "culture of like-mindedness" can also be an impediment to opening the dialogues up to other actors, in particular to NGOs and representatives of development institutions, other interview partners observed. Group dynamics in settings of like-mindedness may also lead to a dynamics of closure against stakeholders holding different views, which can be exacerbated if they also exhibit different styles of communications and self-representation.

Confidentiality regulations might come into conflict with legislation on public access to information in several countries, another participant mentioned: involvement of NGOs would mean public information on meeting dates and schedules. The legal regulations on public access to information of the Scandinavian countries, which include the right to access meeting notes of civil servants for journalists and members of parliament, is an example that certainly challenges the current confidentiality of regional migration dialogue meetings. This tension between the communication culture of NGOs and democratic accountability rules in many EU countries on the one hand and the (necessary) functional closeness of regional dialogues on the other, seems to be a major challenge for multi-stakeholder cooperation in this field, an interview partner concluded, and would have to be carefully managed.

6 The link between different layers of migration and development agendas

6.1 The global development debate and regional migration dialogues

The global debate on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was followed with great interest in some dialogues, whereas in others only a weak link was noticeable in the work of the dialogue[74]. Thus, expectations on whether discussions in the dialogues and the SDGs should be stronger linked differ. In general, there was a tendency of interview partners from the dialogues involving Sub-Saharan African countries and the MENA region showing a stronger interest in this debate than interview partners from other dialogues, as an interview partner involved in the Prague Process described:

> *"In general I don't have details but the Sustainable Development Goals are much more an issue for regions like Africa or Asia[75] for example. And in the Prague Process countries, this is not really an issue. They contribute and there is still work to be done, but there is not so much admission to these countries. So it would be great to bring the SDG debate more into the Prague Process, but I'm not really sure how relevant this would be."*

According to some interview partners, the SDG debate raised the level of interest in development issues among policy makers involved in the regional dialogues. Given that the linkages between migration and development are still not sufficiently addressed in many dialogues, the current global debate on SDGs was seen as helpful to raise attention on development issues within the dialogues, as a senior official from an international organisation commented:

> *"What has also helped to create a certain momentum pushing these things forward is this whole Sustainable Development Goals discussion. I'm not completely into what is concretely under each goal but that the population movement and the impact etc. is now there, that is clear. What I'm not convinced of, what I don't think is sufficiently addressed, is the clear linkage that various policy areas have with migration and the other way around. But for me, the Sustainable Development Goals as such have an impact on migration debates. Whereas we can have a long discussion on the root causes debate, there are some factors which have an impact on reasons why people move, why some people move. Here the SDG debate has been influential and the different dialogues taking place in different regions have made more people aware of this linkage."*

Welcoming the global discussions on migration and development, other interview partners saw room for improvement with regard to the implementation of concrete activities of the dialogues.

> *"You can bring those goals forward in a regional process and then trickle down to the national level. Unfortunately, you don't see any of these issues other than in the intro of the ministerial declaration the global framework is mentioned and so on, but from my perspective GFMD outcomes and so on are never brought forward in the concrete work of the process, which is a shame. Because here the countries are discussing on*

74 The interviews took place in spring and summer 2015, i.e. shortly before the adoption of the SDGs in September 2015 when they were high on the international agenda.

75 Meaning South, Southeastern Asia, Middle East and Pacific; the Prague Process includes Central Asia and the Russian Federation.

both the political and technical level. So politically they agree on certain priorities, but then these priorities are increasingly translated into concrete actions. (….) And I could completely imagine that if development goals and so on were brought forward in such a context, you could also put them down at a regional level and then further down at the national level for implementation, for financial support and so on and so forth."

According to another, regional migration dialogues could use their networks more to foster the relevance of migration in the SDG debate if they could agree on a common understanding: presenting a recommendation as the outcome of "the 50 states of the Prague Process" would have much more impact at the international level than if presented by a single state.

Analysing the comments of all interview partners the impression prevails that the SDG debate had not yet been deeply reflected in regional migration dialogues nor have concrete and practical experiences of participating states contributed significantly in the global debate. A stronger formal institutional link between the two arenas could be made.

More concretely, regional migration dialogues could contribute to monitor developments towards achieving the migration-related targets of the SDGs, in particular goal 10.7 "to facilitate orderly, safe, and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies". As put forward in the UN Secretary General Synthesis report on the SDGs, monitoring should take place at the national, regional and global levels. The regional component should "[…] be undertaken by existing mechanisms in a participatory, multi-stakeholder process, to consider national reports, identify regional trends, obstacles, commonalities, best practices and lessons learned and to generate solutions and mutual support and solutions […].[76]

Nevertheless, such a discussion has not yet taken place in the dialogue meetings, as highlighted by two interview partners:

"For the implementation, I'm not sure it would be the appropriate dialogue format. I don't see how we can do that. Maybe we should ask that question [...]. It depends on the next presidency [of the respective dialogue]. They could put that forward into the discussions."

"First of all if you think the discussion of the SDGs is limited to a specific group of actors which are not necessarily all the stakeholders in migration, [so] one is the dissemination of how migration is included in those goals and then starting to discuss how can operationalisation work and look like. I think the concretisation work should and could be done in regional migration dialogues. Also […] monitoring implementation, evaluation of achieving goals."

6.2 Institutional linkages between different regional migration dialogues

Every second year, there is a global meeting of regional migration dialogues organised by IOM and a hosting state. Acknowledging the importance of these meetings, several interview partners nevertheless highlighted that there is no organisational structure linking *all* regional migration dialogues, which could cater for an exchange of views and lessons learned between them. They would welcome a coordination mechanism that would organise a regular exchange of views between the chairs of the regional dialogues and/or the respective secretariats:

76 UN Secretary-General, *The Road to Dignity by 2030: Ending Poverty, Transforming All Lives and Protecting the Planet. Synthesis Report of the Secretary-General On the Post-2015 Agenda*, 2014, para 149 (b).

"The Budapest Process has the Silk Routes dimension, the Prague Process is more oriented towards Eastern Europe and Russia, the Euromed looks at the MENA region, etc. The topics discussed in the different processes are the same, or more or less the same, with specific regional outlooks. That´s why it would be nice to have some coordinating mechanism between these different fora, to better understand where there are common views, and where views differ."

In this respect, several coordination mechanisms were suggested. One interview partner suggested an annual consultative meeting of the secretariats and support units; targeting secretariats and support units only could be complementary to the Global RCP meeting convened by IOM biannually. The outcome could be a document on the views of the processes:

"It's pretty easy. Each and every process has a secretariat, so I think there could be a kind of consultative meetings of the secretariats and they can just work on and put this information in one document. (…) They can just merge all the issues and filter all directions, identify which are common and then establish kind of a forum which would be held once a year while presenting this kind of merged activities."

Other suggestions included the establishment of a documentation centre for the dialogues, which would collect all reports and publications and also act as a facilitator for meetings and workshops. Common workshops on specific issues would not only help to understand different regional perceptions, but would also be instrumental in gaining weight at the international level.

6.3 Institutional linkages between regional migration dialogues and the global debate on migration and development

Since the beginning, attempts have been made in the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) to better link regional discussions on migration (and development) with global fora and discussion. The assessment exercise of the GFMD in 2011 and 2012 resulted in a number of recommendations that touch upon the linkages between the regional and global level: *"The Forum may also explore closer cooperation with regional consultative processes, fora and dialogues in order to share experiences and enrich each other's discussions on migration and development."* and *"the specific role of regional entities, fora and processes to foster and implement migration and development policies should […] be appropriately acknowledged in the GFMD process."*[77] Also the 2014-2015 GFMD Final Concept Note highlights that the Turkish Chair *"[…] will revive GFMD past initiatives to engage regional migration dialogues more actively on those issues where their agendas overlap with that of the GFMD".*[78]

The link between regional migration dialogues and the global debate on migration and development was perceived differently by the interview partners, showing two different strands of thought. One group of interview partners argued that the debates at the global level could act as catalysts in the regional debates, and that the international debate should take the views of regional dialogues into account, and thus demanded stronger and more sustainable links between the two arenas. For another group, migration dialogues are mainly anchored in regional migration systems and should focus on regional particularities, and thus do not need a better link to international fora.

77 GFMD, *Consolidated Assessment Paper – Phase 2 of the GFMD Assessment Process. Paper presented by the Mauritian Chair and the Assessment Team, and endorsed at the Special Session on the Future of the Forum held at the GFMD Summit Meeting in Port Louis on 22 November 2012*, 2012.

78 GFMD, *Strengthening Partnerships: Human Mobility for Sustainable Development. GFMD 2014-2015. Republic of Turkey, Chair in Office. Final Concept Note February 2015*, 2015.

Several interview partners put forward the point that experiences made in the dialogues should be shared with the GFMD. In particular, the process of creating consensus and developing outcome documents is viewed as a good practice:

> *"[…] [T]hese experiences should be shared. You know the way we create consensus and we create strategies and a plan of action in a region between countries. This experience of creating that consensus […], but also the way it is implemented in bilateral agreements afterwards or in concrete projects would be interesting to share. You know this specific regional added value of the regional processes."*

> *"This Ministerial Declaration […]. The way it was developed, something we should have spread broader. It should really go to show as a good example on the global level of how it can be done. How it was developed, how it was formulated, how it came out. With a very strong commitment from the countries, nothing is binding but they were still putting a pretty strong commitment into it. […] In a way really trying to balance the interests, to bring in the topics, there was a conscious aim to really make it a broad and commonly owned thing. It was jointly developed by all the partners to really have all the topics of interest of the partner countries on the table. And at the same time it was done with a clear objective and clear commitments from the countries, we shall work concretely to implement those things that we have set out to do. And we shall follow up on it. I think it's a pretty far-reaching document in that sense."*

Several interview partners suggested implementing a framework of cooperation, for example a working group comprising the regional dialogue secretariats/chairs/leading states depending on the respective dialogue set-up, which could identify common views on topics currently discussed in global fora, like the GFMD, in order to link the regional and global dimension and feed the results of dialogue deliberations into the global debate:

> *"When the chairs of the GFMD identify a theme they want to address it in the next GFMD, what would be important to have is a working group composed of secretariats of dialogues and ask them based on the priorities of the GFMD presidency what could the dialogues do and try to incorporate that in the dialogue's work plan to produce a regional analysis of the priorities."*

Another suggestion to better link the regional dialogues with the GFMD was the idea to set up a "regional dialogue day" at certain meetings, akin to the "Civil Society Days", which would help share the works and results of regional dialogues related to the respective GFMD themes.

Other interview partners voiced scepticism regarding a formal link between regional dialogues and global migration and development fora and did not see an added value in a more formal cooperation. They focused on two main arguments: regional dialogues have been particularly successful in developing policy recommendations and implementing concrete activities in the regional context, whereas global fora concentrate on general recommendations lacking this specific context. While maintaining separate organisational structures, several interview partners suggested that both could benefit from more exchanges of outcome documents, reports, studies, etc., an indication that the GFMD website and in particular the Platform for Partnerships is neither well known, nor being actively used.

Another argument concerned the informality and technical character of the dialogues, which allows a more "*open and realistic debate*" than the more formal interactions in, for example, the

UN. Having a direct exchange of views would be valuable, but the dialogue secretariats should not get a formal role, as this might create tensions between them, a senior diplomat stated:

> *"In the GFMD, the various migration dialogues participate. Sometimes as dialogues, sometimes as civil servants also representing dialogues. (…) So there is a certain cross over and that can be strengthened. But would there be a need to also invite secretariats? I don't think so. The dialogues are the states, facilitated by the secretariats, and sometimes secretariats have a more active role than in other cases, this depends on the dialogue. But it is the states which are discussing, so ideally they should have a common sense with regard to participation but it's on different levels a state discussion and where you see there is a dialogue with international organisations, those international organisations with a stake in this will try to influence and steer the debate, this might create tensions for the states."*

Another senior civil servant said that the formal inclusion of regional dialogues into a global forum like the GFMD could bring politically sensitive regional issues into a global forum, which again might hamper dialogue at the global level. Instead of a formal inclusion, specific experiences of dialogues should be discussed in thematic sessions:

> *"If you are bringing the regional consultative processes into the GFMD, suddenly you bring the political issues within the processes as a discussion within the GFMD. The GFMD is about sharing experiences, but in this case you are taking away the sharing of experiences and suddenly governments feel they need to say "our RCP is doing well" because they're suddenly put on the political stand of the RCP. No, that's what we should try to avoid. What we should try to do is constantly, in every roundtable, we should have a specific linkage to the regional level discussions. My question to them would be, could you bring in the regional perspective at the GFMD level? And that's what we should be trying to do. Rather than having a specific regional discussion which will bring in the political element, leave that out. Talk about the substantive issues. Talk about the operational issues which will be more acceptable in a GFMD type of format."*

Despite these different perceptions, most interview partners welcomed an improved exchange of views between the regional dialogues and the GFMD in particular. Most agreed that these exchanges should not be too formal in order not to harm the openness of discussions in either dialogue. In order to improve the exchange of views, common roundtables and workshops should be organised, one senior civil servant suggested.

7 Summary and recommendations

As the study has shown, regional migration dialogues have successfully established themselves as major venues for exchange of views between governments of countries connected by migration flows. They not only provide the possibility for exchange of information and discussion of concepts and strategies, but serve as arenas for the development of common understanding and common concepts in the field of migration policies.

Furthermore, they have developed a variety of concrete actions and activities, ranging from data collection and stock taking, capacity building and training sessions to the development of concrete migration management mechanisms. The interview partners highlighted that continuity of participants, with mutual trust in discussions and the informality of the regional dialogue setting being important factors for their successes.

The nexus between migration and development has been given increased attention in most regional migration dialogues, in particular in the “Dialogues to the South”. According to the interviews, the relevance of the issue is recognised in all dialogues, but not with the same level of importance. Whereas some dialogues have prioritised the issue and started concrete activities in the field, in other migration and development has mainly been discussed at the policy level, with little priority given to concrete actions in comparison to other migration topics.

The inclusion of actors from the field of development policy also differs considerably, but rather between participating states than between dialogues. This is linked to funding available for travel as well as the institutional culture of whole-of-government-approaches to migration governance in each country. In many dialogues ministries of foreign affairs or representatives of development or other public sector ministries are invited on an ad hoc basis only. Most dialogues see the participation of diaspora organisations as an important channel to consult civil society, but in practice participation still varies. NGOs from the field of development are seen with some reservation, but nevertheless most dialogues wish for their participation on a case-to-case basis.

Informality, mutual trust in discussions, equal footing between states and continuity of participation are seen as important conditions for the functioning of regional migration dialogues. The trust building dimension of regional migration dialogues, combined with sensitive topics that have not yet been dealt with, seems to maintain closed-door sessions and prevent opening (parts of) of the process to actors from other fields, in particular actors from the development field and NGOs. According to many interview partners, this continuous balancing act is a main feature of a successful migration dialogue management.

The impact of the global migration and development debate on discussions in regional migration dialogues seems to have been strengthened in recent years. Nevertheless, no regular procedure for an exchange of policy deliberations between these two levels of state cooperation has been established. Although the views of the interview partners on the modalities of such a procedure vary, there is agreement on the need to further develop mechanisms of exchange and sharing of experiences.

- Considering the results of this study, there is need to develop a common language and understanding of the migration and development nexus policy areas in migration dialogues. In order to be successful, the main aspects concern regular involvement of development policy actors and the introduction of trust building measures and sense-making between

the different actors. Thus, a framework of regular exchange between the participating ministries in charge of migration and the ministries in charge of nexus sector policies and development should be established, which includes promoting migration and development inter-ministerial cooperation at national level and regular participation of development policy actors at all levels of the dialogue, also the steering group level - if existing in the respective dialogue setting - as observers or participants.

- The participation of NGOs is currently limited to ad-hoc consultations, usually at technical level. While it gives important inputs to the understanding of development, these exchanges do not allow for the same comprehensiveness and plurality that nowadays characterises many development policy debates. This situation could be improved by a more targeted cooperation with NGOs in the preparation and implementation of meetings and conferences, taking account of the different cultures of communication in the field of migration and the field of development.

- The participation of diaspora organisations in dialogues is considered important for migration and development discussions in dialogues and should not be limited to thematic discussions on diaspora engagement only. However, doubts about their representativeness, the weak organisational structure of many diaspora organisations, as well as lack of knowledge about their relevance for the migrant community may sometimes hamper their participation. This situation could be improved by further strengthening links between governments and diasporas, including mapping of their activities; and building stronger and more effective diaspora departments or ministries.

- Mutual trust in discussions and informality is a precondition for a regional migration dialogue to function as an arena for exchange of views among officials working in different policy fields. This functional need of certain confidentiality might conflict with the culture of transparency and accessibility among NGOs. This gap could be narrowed by regularly informing civil society on the activities of the regional dialogues and by giving them space to share their views at the meetings of the dialogues.

- The cooperation between regional migration dialogues and global fora for migration and development is currently based on how each state coordinates participation “at home”. This way of representation is considered insufficient by several interview partners, who suggested developing a regular consultation procedure, or at least a form of “regional dialogue day” at the GFMD to promote an exchange between the regional and global levels.

References

Agyei, J. Clotltey,E., *Operationalizing the ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of People among the Member States: Issues of Convergence and Prospects for Sub-Regional Integration*, 2008, http://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/events/ghana-african-migrations-workshop/papers/clottey.pdf (accessed 11 February 2016).

Betts, A., 'The global governance of migration and the role of trans-regionalism' in Kunz, R., Lavenex, S. and M. Panizzon (Eds.), *Multilayered Migration Governance. The Promise of Partnership*. London/New York, Routledge, 2011, pp. 23-46.

Budapest Process, Istanbul Ministerial Declaration on A Silk Routes Partnership for Migration, 5th Ministerial Conference, Istanbul, 2013, https://www.budapestprocess.org/component/attachments/download/96 (accessed 14 April 2015).

Checkel, J. T., 'Why Comply? Social Learning in European Identity Change', *International Organization*, 55, 3, 2001, pp. 533-88.

Court, J., Mendizabal, E., Osborne, D. and J. Young, *Policy Engagement. How Civil Society Can be More Effective*, London, Overseas Development Institute, 2006.

Devillard, A., Bacchi, A. and Noack, M., *A Survey on Migration Policies in West Africa*, ICMPD and IOM, 2015.

De Haas, H., 'The Migration and Development Pendulum: A Critical View on Research and Policy.' *International Migration, 2012*, 50 (3): 8-25.

ECDPM and ICMPD, *Migration and Development Policies and Practices. A mapping study of eleven European countries and the European Commission*, Maastricht and Vienna, 2013, http://www.icmpd.org/fileadmin/ICMPD-Website/ICMPD_General/Publications/Migration_and_Development_June_2013.pdf (accessed 22 February 2016).

European Commission, *The Global Approach to Migration and Mobility, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions*, COM 2011 (743) final.

European Commission, Increasing the impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for Change, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, SEC, 2011 (1172) final.

Foucault, M., *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, London, Pantheon Books, 1970.

Frankenhaeuser, M. (Ed.), Hofmann, M., Noack, M. and B. Perchinig, *Mapping Migration & Development in Six Regional Migration Dialogues*, Vienna, ICMPD, 2015.

Global Forum on Migration and Development, *Consolidated Assessment Paper – Phase 2 of the GFMD Assessment Process (2012). Paper presented by the Mauritian Chair and the Assessment Team, and endorsed at the Special Session on the Future of the Forum held at the GFMD Summit Meeting in Port Louis on 22 November 2012*, 2012.

Global Forum on Migration and Development, *Strengthening Partnerships: Human Mobility for Sustainable Development. GFMD 2014-2015 Republic of Turkey, Chair in Office. Final Concept Note February 2015*, 2015.

Guiraudon, V., 'European Integration and Migration Policy: Vertical Policy-making as Venue Shopping', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 38, 2, 2000, pp. 251-271.

Haas, P. M., 'Introduction: Epistemic Communities and International Policy Coordination', *International Organization*, 46, 1, 1992, pp. 1-35.

Habermas, J., *Theorie des Kommunikativen Handelns*, Frankfurt (Main), Suhrkamp Verlag, 1981.

Hansen, R., *An Assessment of Principal Regional Consultative Processes on Migration*, Geneva, IOM, 2010.

Harns, C., *Regional Inter-State Consultation Mechanisms on Migration: Approaches, Recent Activities and Implications for Global Governance of Migration*, prepared as a resource for the Fourth Global Meeting of RCP Chairs and Secretariats Lima, Peru, May 2013, MRS No. 45, publications.iom.int/bookstore/free/MRS45_EN_10May2013.pdf, 2013, (accessed 12 April 2015).

International Organization for Migration, *International Migration Management through Inter-State Consultation Mechanisms. Focus on Regional Consultative Processes on Migration, IOM's International Dialogue on Migration and the Berne Initiative*, prepared for United Nations Expert Group Meeting on International Migration and Development (6 to 8 July 2005), http://www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/site/myjahiasite/shared/shared/mainsite/microsites/rcps/expert_paper_rcp.pdf, 2005, (accessed 12 April 2015).

Jellinek, G., *Allgemeine Staatslehre*, Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1959.

Keohane, R. and J. Nye, Joseph, 'Transgovernmental Relations and International Organisations', *World Politics*, 27, 1, 1974, pp. 39-62.

Köhler, J., 'What government networks do in the field of migration: an analysis of selected Regional Consultative Processes' in Kunz, R., Lavenex, S. and M. Panizzon (Eds.), *Multilayered Migration Governance. The Promise of Partnership*, London/New York, Routledge, 2011, pp. 67-95.

Lewis, J., 'Is the "Hard Bargaining" Image of the Council Misleading?', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 36, 4, 1998, pp. 479-504.

Mansbach, R. and Y. Ferguson, *A World of Politics. Essays in Global Politics*, Abingdon/New York, Routledge, 2008.

Niemann, A., *Explaining Decisions in the European Union*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Papademetriou and Martin quoted in Nyberg-Sorensen, N., Van Hear, N., Engberg-Pederson, P., 'The Migration-Development Nexus: Evidence and Policy Options', 2002, *International Migration*, Vol. 40 (5), p. 3-43.

Ruggie, J. G., 'International responses to technology: concepts and trends', *International Organization*, 29, 3, 1975, pp. 557-583.

Slaughter, A-M., *A New World Order*, Princeton, New Jersey, 2004.

Skeldon, R, 'International migration as a tool in development policy: a passing phase?'. *Population and Development Review*, 2008.

Thouez, C. and F. Channac, 'Shaping International Migration Policy: The Role of Regional Consultative Processes', *West European Politics*, 29, 2, 2006, pp. 370-387.

Uhlin, A. and S. Kalm, *Civil Society and the Governance of Development. Opposing Global Institutions*, Houndsmills/Basingstoke, Palgrave-MacMillan, 2015.

United Nations Secretary-General, *The Road to Dignity by 2030: Ending Poverty, Transforming All Lives and Protecting the Planet, Synthesis Report of the Secretary-General On the Post-2015 Agenda*, http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/reports/SG_Synthesis_Report_Road_to_Dignity_by_2030.pdf, 2014, (accessed 17 September 2015).

World Economic Forum, *The Future Role of Civil Society*, Cologne, WEF, 2013.

Annex

Interview guidelines

1. The Dialogue Process – Personal perception

a) Since when have you been involved in the respective dialogue process, in how many meetings have you participated?

b) What are the main goals of the process?

c) How do you aim to fulfil them?

d) According to your perception, what have been the main issues at stake in the last 2-3 years?

e) If you consider the next 2-3 years, what will be the most important topics?

f) What types of migration flows are mainly discussed in the dialogue process (labour migration, asylum, family migration, mixed flows)?

g) Do the member states of the dialogue process share migration experiences or are their experiences different? (Mainly origin countries, mainly destination countries, countries of transit, mainly labour migration, asylum…?)

h) What have been the main areas of consent/dissent of the dialogue process in recent years?

i) If you consider the last 2-3 years of the process, how important have been development issues? Has their level of importance changed?

j) If you consider the next 2-3 years, how important, do you think, will development issues be compared to today?

k) The relevance of the migration-development nexus has risen in recent years. Is there a common view on the migration-development nexus among the member states of the dialogue process?

l) Has this rise in relevance been reflected in the work of the dialogue process and how?

m) Are there specific areas of consent/dissent among institutions and/or member states regarding migration and development?

n) What do you expect from a stronger linkage between migration and development in the work of the dialogue process?

o) Are there arguments against a stronger inclusion of the issue into the process?

2. The Dialogue Process – Involvement of Stakeholders from the Development Field

a) Are ministries, agencies and institutions active in the field of development members of the process? From all member states?

   a. If not: Is it planned to invite agencies and institutions from the development field in the future?

b) Have there been meetings where agencies and institutions from the field of development have participated on an ad hoc basis? How often? What organisations?

c) What have been the main topics of these meetings?

d) Have any forms of regular cooperation or exchange between actors from the migration and from the development field – e.g. exchange of data, invitation to and participation at conferences, common projects regarding migration and development – followed the meetings?

e) Do you think that organisations and institutions from the field of development are sufficiently represented in the process?

f) What actors would have to be included into the dialogue process to strengthen the role of development?

g) Do you think that organisations and institutions from the field of development should regularly take part in the process or should cooperation be limited to ad hoc invitations?

h) In the field of development, projects and programmes are often implemented by NGOs. Do you think that NGOs should regularly participate in the Dialogue Process if development issues are discussed?

i) Are there any limitations to the inclusion of institutions from the field of development (confidentiality, data protection, etc.)?

j) Are there any limitations to the inclusion of NGOs (confidentiality, data protection, etc.)?

k) Where do you see the potential and limits for migrant and diaspora organisations' involvement?

3. The Global Migration & Development Agenda

a) Currently, the discussions regarding Sustainable Development Goals are ongoing and migration will be included in some sub targets. Which role could "your" dialogue have in driving this debate forward?

b) What topics coming up in "your" dialogue should be dealt foremost in the discussions at global level?

c) What would be needed to involve the regional Dialogue Process better in the Global M&D debate (e.g. at the UN High-level dialogue or the GFMD)?

d) What do you expect from the discussions on Migration & Development on the global level for the Migration Dialogue?

e) What would be indicators for success in the process of linking the M&D debates at regional level to the global M&D debates?

f) Do you want to add anything?

REGIONAL MIGRATION DIALOGUES AND THE GLOBAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

A Study on Five Regional Migration Dialogues Bringing Together Countries in Africa, Asia and Europe

International Centre for Migration Policy Development, 2016