

## **MEDITERRANEAN PARLIAMENTARY FORUM ON MIGRATION**

Share considerations on context and imperative for getting it right on migration, development and human rights.

This is all about the place of parliaments and legislation in governance under the rule of law. It is about ensuring that your countries' economies remain viable and your societies remain cohesion

I will telegraph five key messages

1. All migration is labour migration/migration with employment outcomes
2. All migration is about human beings –social entities-- and your constituents
4. All migration is about development, more precisely today, about saving and sustaining development.
4. We ain't seen nothin yet
5. A fifth: in face of politicians and government executives getting it wrong, parliamentarians have a key leadership role to play to ensure that migration is about rights, justice and social protection –which it has to be in order to ensure sustainable development, human welfare, social cohesion and the rule of law in your countries and societies.

Maybe a mouthful, but I elaborate with knowledge and evidence.

So what are we talking about.

A few notions of reality to well ground this forum.

Global migration –in numbers-- 250M (244 in 2015) resident at least a year in a country other than of birth or citizenship. While large on face of it, it remains just over 3 % of global population. It has grown, but it has remained about 3 % of world population for last half century.

That figure does not count millions more in short term, temporary, seasonal migration –where living and working in another country, although not for a year or more.

Most adults in that population economically active –never mind why migrated or under what regime : immigrants, students, family reunification, intra-company transfers, refugees, asylum-seekers.

ILO figures, most recent, show 150m out of 232 M in 2013 were econ active, meaning employed, self-employed or otherwise engaged in economic activity.

Figures show that economic activity rate for migrant men is similar to host country men. For women, rate is higher than for native-born women. Please note that women comprise nearly 49 % of all migrants.

In this region, migrants make up increasing important –and vital-- proportions of work forces – the working people who make your countries run, from top to bottom.

As OECD notes, 1 in 5 persons in EU is migrant or immediate migrant origin, foreign born or with one or both parents foreign born. Proportions in work force higher.

Proportions in cities much higher. Vienna, 50 % Rotterdam 50 % Brussels 50 % foreign born. London 37 % foreign origin, nearly 25 % outside Europe.

Work force: use Switzerland as example – not right on Mediterranean but its port is on Med and its merchant marine plies this sea. 19 % foreign born. But 30 % of workforce is, 40 % in Cantons –Federal States of Geneva and Vaud, better known by its capital Lausanne.

Reiterate, all migration about employment outcomes. Immigration countries long recognized : even refugee admissions selection priorities significantly skills based. Immigration selection systems based on assessments –often long term-- of evolving labour market dynamics and skills needs. Similarly, student and academic admissions often tied to national interest – understanding that ultimately many foreign students ultimately stay on to employ knowledge and skills in host country. One country's brain drain is usually another's gain.

On other side, Maghreb countries became significant immigration countries more than a decade ago. Almost every country worldwide is immigration country.

For esample, Nigeria represented here : 2 million foreign born, a big number although not yet

so large vis a vis total population.

Migration is about development, sustaining development. London wouldn't make it to breakfast. Switzerland would shut down.

**What's at stake in this discussion ?** Future of Europe, future of Mediterranean region.

Survival of countries - economies and social welfare.

It is 's equally about production and productivity, of businesses and economies.

European and Mediterranean countries need now more than ever, skills and labour not present or available among 'native' work forces/working age populations. Despite structural and youth unemployment. Manifested by fact that nearly five million people a year currently enter EU member countries for purposes of residence. Every year. That's four times the entire population of Estonia. 2015, 4.8 million. Immigration arrivals have been over 3 million annually for more than a decade. About half arriving from other EU member countries, half third country nationals.

That reality of the real numbers makes the entry of some 1 million persons in irregular situations –most refugees-- only a minor portion of overall arrivals in 2015. And that number remains disputed due to some overcounts of refugees who were registered more than once or lodged asylum applications in more than one country. In any case, the reality certainly shows that describing migration as an unprecedented crisis is overstated at best, and at worst a deliberately manipulated rhetorical prop to push regime change.

It should be noted that net immigration is significantly less—lots of people emigrate from EU countries, as Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the other countries of Central and Eastern Europe well know.

Nonetheless, literally millions of people arrive every year in European countries because they are needed, indeed demanded, in services, in low-tech as well as in high-tech sectors, in agriculture, food production and processing, in construction, in health care, in manufacturing and more.

To be precise, nearly 5 million a year, 4.8 million in 2015. Media fake news: 1 M arrived in

2015. Yes, one m in irregular situations. But close to 4 M in regular migration. About half among EU member states, half from third countries. Net immigration is less, millions of Europeans **emigrate** every year too.

That happens for not one but four main reasons.

One, the most evident, is population aging and –for some countries-- population decline, and for all EU member countries, work force decline. Estonia and the Baltic States have seen 10 to 15% decline in populations since 2000, and more than that in their work force numbers.

But numerical work force decline is only one of several reasons.

Second is massive scale and often rapid technological change, rendering skills of existing work forces obsolete and demanding new skills simply non-existent or not trained locally.

Thirdly is vast changes in the organization of work. Common names of the game include *offshoring*, *internationalization of supply chains*, *just in time* production, and others. These changes mean that what work with what skills and labour is done ever differently in different places. Over time, these are radical changes in what work is done where with what skills. In larger terms, changes in the organization of work combined with technological changes have shifted entire economies from industrial production utilizing large numbers of skilled and high-skilled workers to service economies, in which lower skilled and low paid jobs predominate despite coexistence with a large number of high skilled high tech jobs.

Fourthly is the growing gaps between training and education support and output and current labour market needs. Worldwide as in Europe, education and training systems are not producing the numbers and types of skills commensurate with evolving employer demands.

In sum, the situation and the multiple conundrums of maintaining viable, productive and indeed available work forces far more complex than simple numbers and demographics.

The high paradox resulting is that workforce decline co-exists with rising unemployment.

Why? Because migrants arriving are usually not taking the jobs of nationals rendered unemployed by large scale changes in technology and organization of work. Jobs of many of

those now unemployed are history, and the skills of many unemployed are obsolete.

Furthermore, far too little resources have been put in any country to retraining skilled workers for new and different –skills in demand today.

But as well, many production and skilled service job functions that have not disappeared, been automated, digitalized or off-shored have been downgraded and transformed into simpler tasks. The sequel jobs are offered at reduced rates of pay, with few benefits, little protection and often no job security.

It is calculated that half of all jobs in the UK are precarious, part time, short term, informal or otherwise 'non-standard' employment. That means permanent insecurity, low pay and little or no social protection for a large portion of the entire working age population. Maybe therein is a factor in the Brexit vote, as the deterioration of conditions of many people corresponded to the period of EU integration and globalization--- as well as to increasingly visible immigration.

However, to emphasize the urgency of the migration question, I come back to delve further into the demography-migration-viable economies challenge.

First of all because there are no easy alternatives to immigration to address any of these factors.

While technological change has vastly altered the world of work, it has not yet significantly reduced the overall needs for skills and labour in countries. Industrial employment has faded, but employment in services has increased. Automation and digitalisation continue to replace – or complement--human skills and labour. But automation, at least in the next decade or more, will not resolve workforce decline, and may not even significantly compensate. Automation requires huge capital investments, which have not been amply available in Europe since the recession beginning in 2007 requiring allocation of huge amounts of capital to bail out failed banks, and indeed several virtually failed states across the region.

More off-shoring offers rather limited prospects, particularly for a whole range of sectors across economies for which it is not an option: agriculture and food production, construction, health care –notably for increasing aging populations, schooling and education, hotel and restaurant, public administration, and others.

European countries and most Europeans themselves don't want to offshore all of the vital and still labor-intensive areas of economy as food production, healthcare or education - for structural and strategic as well as practical reasons. Considerations include questions of economic security and national defense, also preservation of national values and resources; of maintaining traditional jobs/ occupation/ professions in the country - and preserving traditions and culture. Never mind that most SMEs simply cannot move their operations abroad. Maintaining these sectors is also about maintaining employment/ keeping jobs for people whose jobs otherwise would disappear. The consequences of which lead to increase in unemployment and eventually protests, social unrest and fuel the rise of extremist political parties.

What's happening now: declining population and dramatically shrinking workforces in many countries. Russia lost 11 million people since 2000, Germany will lose 6 M in next 13 years, Italy - 3M in next 15 years.

Every EU country well below population replacement. Population doesn't go down immediately - as people are living longer - but labor force decreases, and it also becomes a social security challenge, including the pension system.

But check out reality. Every country but two on all sides of Mediterranean at or below ZPG fertility

Tunisia reached ZPG a decade ago.

Morocco now there. Turkey, Lebanon, Israel,

Egypt and Algeria are now the exceptions.

Meanwhile, same is true in countries around the neighboring seas (Adriatic and Black seas: Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Ukraine, never mind Red sea region : Iran, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE

Question for parliamentarians here: Do you know where your countries work force will come from in next 10 years? Will your country have a viable work force in 10 years ?

McKinsey Global institute research has shown significant skills shortages... ( data!)

Panic button time?

Businesses in Europe and others are saying that 1/3 of all jobs on offer can't be and aren't filled by persons with requisite skills or level of skills that employers need. I heard the same from NECA - Nigerian Employers Consultative Association, and from the CEO of the Kyrgyz employers federation..

Migration, do we have a choice?

Leadership:

Do we have a choice?

Elections and rhetoric say yes. For example, votes in Switzerland and in UK/ Brexit.

But what is reality?

The first response of Businesses to the votes was to move business operations elsewhere, where they have access to skills and labour when and where they need.

Federal executive council: cannot implement withdrawal from the EU free movement regime.

Will accommodate. Didn't say so but opted to exercise leadership to prevent collective national suicide.

There are simply not enough people to fill the needs, in Maghreb countries and others, not enough skilled people for jobs of advancing economic development.

### Approaches, what to do

Utilitarian management won't sustain functional and cohesive societies

Structural inequality won't either.

Least of all, control-based approaches, illegalization of migrants and criminalization of

migration not only won't work, they are a formula for economic and social suicide.

Dwell a moment on migrants in irregular situations and irregular migration. First of all, for the record, most who end up in unauthorized situations in most countries migrated legally, entered destination countries with visas, or didn't need visas. Irregular migration not necessarily a helpful generalization.

Secondly, the majority of migration today takes place within RECs with free circulation regimes, more than free circulation, rights to cross borders, enter, remain and establish employment or business in any country in REC. Whether EU (+EFTA), ECOWAS, EAC, COMESA. For the record, most countries represented here are part of at least one free movement regime.

Illegalization, indeed criminalization of migrants –who move pulled or pushed by systemic factors-- has extremely troubling implications both for human rights and labour markets.

Migrants in irregular situations have long been, a structure feature of labour and labour market control.

The illegalization ensues supply of cheap, docile and easily removable workers –in multiple layers of skills. Undocumented workers play major role in some industrialized –and other-- countries. They provide food at low cost that large portions of poor people can still afford. They keep otherwise unviable enterprises and entire sectors in operation. Sectors that if lost would be economic and national security disasters for some countries. They support SMEs that cannot relocate abroad. They keep pressure on wages and conditions of work. While not necessarily lowering, their presence in labour markets is deliberately used to impede upward pressures on wages and benefit expectations..

Much more to say and never enough time to say it.

Challenge to participants here

No quick fixes or easy solutions/ approaches

Biz leadership. Yes, but not alone, separate or independently.

State and society and political actors

In fact political leadership imperative

### Draw conclusions

The challenge is maintaining societies in Europe and around the Mediterrean that can remain functional, productive and cohesive.

Paradox: need working people with skills and labour unavailable in national populations demographics, but also post industrial period large numbers of skilled people whose skills are obsolete and for whom retraining and labour market reintegration never happened.

What we have is an existential crisis and threat to survival of Europe as we've known it. No less. It's also a crisis about values.

Folks, this is about the battle for the future of this entire

Mediterranean region, particularly for Europe, control of the future. It's about a contention over values for countries and regions able to face the future or sinking into formulas of failure of the past.

Those winning the battle today for the future –or perhaps better said, winning the battle for the future failure of Europe, are fighting and winning on values.

And doing so with largely successful portrayal of migration and what it represents as threats to traditional national moral values, to safety and security, to jobs for our own, and to care for our own.

To survive, all nations in this Mediterranean region need migration. Skills, labour power, etc. The immigration available is TCNs, people of color, different religions, different cultural and social identities. To function, modern nations and peoples need to include and integrate.

Equally to assure social cohesion. That means equality of treatment. No more, no less, literally and figuratively.

Response has to be more than management, and more than smarter and humane.

It has to be built on foundation of laws and principles embodied in legislation –national legislation-- that are about rights, social protection, justice, decent work, inclusion and equality of all. Cities worldwider know this –I've seen policies and actions of cities from Beirut to Berlin to Barcelona to Rabat that state this and put it into practice this. Golda will say a bit more in next panel session.

You have key responsibility. You are representatives of your peoples, you are the national lawmakers, you have the responsibility and the authority to reset the agenda and put it into law.

Agenda clear, indeed thanks to Portugal Parliamentary Vice President Lacão.

Add two to his three overarching points for parliamentary action :

- 1) Ratify Standards to put migration governance under rule of law, according to common international norms on governance, human rights and
- 2) Fairness, equality of treatment, non-discrimination
- 3) Social cohesion and inclusive societies --integration
- 4) Decent Work
- 5) Change the public discourse : its more than public awareness, its about what you as parliamentarians, representative leaders say. And do.

Commend you not only to parlar here. Need to identify and commit to actions to take and mandate your parliaments to act, and IPU and PAM to support you in that.