

**SIXTH COORDINATION MEETING ON
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION**

Population Division
Department of Economic and Social Affairs
United Nations Secretariat
New York, 26-27 November 2007

**THE MAIN ACTIVITIES OF IMEPO ON
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION***

The Hellenic Migration Policy Institute (IMEPO)

*The views expressed in the paper do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the United Nations Secretariat.

The Hellenic Migration Policy Institute - IMEPO

The Hellenic Migration Policy Institute (IMEPO) is a legal entity charged with the task of advising the Greek Government on issues related to the Greek migration policy. It was founded in 2002 and is supervised by the Minister of Interior Affairs.

The aim of IMEPO is to study the phenomenon of international migration, identify the mechanisms affecting its evolution and acquire the necessary know-how so that Greece can meet the challenges of a migrant-receiving country on the basis of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. To this effect IMEPO conducts research and surveys, and it participates in international programs aiming at developing and implementing innovative actions on migration issues. In addition, it organizes international and national conferences promoting the exchange of views and experience in the field of migration. Finally, IMEPO has developed a network of cooperation with international organizations, institutes and governmental bodies of EU countries, the USA and Canada.

What follows is a synopsis of the main activities of IMEPO that took place between the years 2004 – 2007, namely surveys, programs and conferences that addressed key aspects of international migration and development nexus:

1. SURVEYS

- **"Migrants in Greece: acculturation and psychosocial adaptation"**: This survey was assigned by IMEPO to the University of Athens within the framework of the World Bank's Circular Migration Pilot Project. The aim of the survey was to study the social and educational background and the past and present professional experience of migrants living in Greece, to investigate their strategies in order to deal with the challenges of intercultural contact, to record their social relations - both with Greeks and fellow countrymen - and their views on the level and quality of their integration in Greece. The survey began in the spring 2006 and was concluded in September 2007. The sample consisted of 601 individual migrants selected according to the following criteria: a) they had to be born in a country other than Greece. Therefore, second and third generation migrants born in Greece by foreign parents couldn't participate. Individuals with the status of refugee were also excluded from the sample. b) The participants should be over the age of 18. The results of the survey were announced in a national conference organized by IMEPO in November 2006 in Athens, while it is also accessible to the academic community for further analysis.
- **"Migrants in Greece: remuneration, remittances, entrepreneurship"**: Also within the framework of the World Bank's Circular Migration Pilot Project, IMEPO assigned to Prof. Th. Lianos (Athens University of Economics and Business) the conduction of this survey. It began in the spring of 2006 and was concluded in June 2007. Among others, the survey examined the financial situation of migrants, including their employment, the business activities of migrants, their remittances and the factors influencing them. In particular, with regard to the latter, apart from the factors argued in several theories, such as the theory of altruism, the theory of informal family contracts etc., two new factors are introduced that have never before been used in the international bibliography: the employment stability

and the relative financial position of the migrant's family in the country of origin. On top of that, the salary levels are analyzed on the basis of Jacob Mincer's theory on human capital and remuneration of work. Furthermore, an econometric module examines the possibility that a dual migrant labor market exists: one market with stable and well-paid jobs and at the same time another one with temporary and badly-paid jobs. For this survey a sample of 601 migrant individuals was used as described above. It is unlikely that the sample contains a representative percentage of illegal migrants, since this group of migrants usually avoids public places.

- **"The psychosocial profile of migrants in Greece"**

This survey was assigned by IMEPO to the Panteion University of Social Sciences and Run Communications SA. The study aimed at defining the psychosocial profile of migrants and understanding the way migrants themselves on the one hand and indigenous population on the other conceive the concept of "integration". For the collection of data, migrants' focus groups have been interviewed that were selected among the five largest groups of migrants in Greece. At the same time, a sample of 250 Greek students has been interviewed on the basis of closed questions. The study was completed in March 2007. The results of the survey were announced in a national conference organized by IMEPO in November 2006 in Athens, while it is also accessible to the academic community for further analysis.

2. EUROPEAN PROJECTS/ PROGRAMS

As mentioned above, IMEPO also participates in European projects that aim to integrate migrants in the labour market, to combat trafficking and to assist the return of migrants to their countries of origin. Specifically IMEPO participates in the following programs:

- **"A.S.P.I.D.D.A.: Combating exploitation – Creating Perspective":**

IMEPO participates as a partner in this project carried out by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) within the framework of the Community Initiative EQUAL.

The specific objectives sought in this project include the combat of racism, xenophobia and discrimination in the labour market against victims of trafficking, the protection of their fundamental rights and the creation of all necessary conditions for their smooth integration in society and the labour market. Additionally, the project focuses on sensitizing and informing society, in order to change attitudes and create a climate of solidarity towards trafficking victims. The implementation of the actions is still in progress.

- **Programme for Financial and Technical Assistance to Third Countries in the field of Migration and Asylum (AENEAS): "Building on Mechanisms to effectively and sustainably implement Readmission Agreements between Albania, the EC and third countries":**

Most of the actions foreseen in this two-year program take place in Albania and aim at supporting the competent Albanian agencies for the successful implementation of the “Readmission Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of Albania”. The entities participating in this program are the Greek Ministry of Interior Affairs, IMEPO, the Government of Albania and IOM – Mission in Tirana. For the implementation of the programme the following actions are undertaken: a) Capacity building and training of the agencies dealing with return and readmission to Albania, b) Information exchange among the agencies involved in the implementation of the readmission agreements, and c) Creation of mechanisms for the return of migrants to Albania.

- **International Development Cooperation Programs 2005 – Hellenic Aid/Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs: "ITHAKI"**

The program is carried out by IMEPO in cooperation with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) – Mission in Moldova. It aims at effectively combating trafficking in and smuggling of Moldovan women and girls for sexual exploitation. Within the framework of the program the following actions are to be undertaken: a) sensitizing the society and supporting potential trafficking victims through specialised printed material, b) supporting long term reintegration of trafficking victims in Moldova through the development of small enterprises, c) promoting the vocational training of ex-victims of trafficking and d) examining the phenomenon of trafficking in Moldova and describing the profile of potential victims of trafficking.

- **INTI 2006 - "ONE-STOP-SHOP":**

For this project a cooperation among the following entities has been established: Alto Comissariado para a Imigração e as Minorias Étnicas - ACIME (Portugal), Dirección General de Integración de los Inmigrantes (Spain), IMEPO (Greece), Immigrant Council of Ireland, Direzione Generale dell’ Immigrazione (Italy), Netzwerk Migration in Europe (Germany), IOM – Mission in Portugal and the Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies (Netherlands).

The project aims at confronting the challenges of host societies in their interaction with migrant communities and to propose concrete measures. Upon completion of the project, the following outcomes are expected: a) assessment of the application of the One-Stop-Shop (OSS) as a model to migrants’ integration in Member States and the involvement of socio-cultural mediators from civil society institutions, b) definition of a local network of institutions according to the OSS model in each country/partner involved in the project, c) writing and dissemination of a Handbook on how to implement the “One-Stop-Shop” model for the integration of immigrants in Member States, and d) stimulation of the application of the OSS model (recognizing the needed adaptations to each context) in several Member States at national, regional and local levels.

3. CONFERENCES / MEETINGS

In order to disseminate the results of the studies already conducted as well as to promote the international dialogue on migration management and the challenge of integrating migrants in host societies, IMEPO organizes international conferences in cooperation with foreign research institutes also active in the field of migration such as the Migration Policy Institute (MPI –Washington DC), the IOM, the OECD and the German Bertelsmann Stiftung.

- **Annual International Conferences:** IMEPO and MPI co-organize in Greece annual conferences that attract high-level experts from all over the world and governmental representatives from various countries.
 - **"Migration Management: The Greek, European and International Contexts"**: It was the first joint conference of IMEPO and MPI that took place in 2004. The basic thematic sessions of the conference were: a) Relations with third countries, b) Immigrant integration, and c) Racism and xenophobia.
 - **"Capturing the Benefits of Migration in South-eastern Europe"** (2005): In the panels taken place the following subjects were addressed: a) How cities, regions and NGOs contribute to integration, b) Circular migration as a development tool for sending and receiving countries, c) Circular migration: towards an integrated regional market in south-eastern Europe, d) What we know about the economic benefits of migration, and e) The role employers and unions play in integrating immigrants.
 - **"The Global Hellenic Migration Retreat"** (2006): The main axes of the conference were: a) The history and current state of immigration in Greece, b) The challenges of integration in Greece and around the world, c) European and global perspectives on immigration.
 - **"The Migration Policy Puzzle: How to Share Responsibilities for Managing Immigration and Integration"** (2007): The basic thematic sessions of the conference were: a) Levels of governance: The role of supranational, national, regional organizations in making migration policy, b) Immigration metropolis: How cities address the challenge of integration, and c) The role of civil society in integrating immigrants.
- **"Transatlantic Task Force on Immigration and Integration"**: Apart from the annual conferences, IMEPO has cooperated with MPI and the Bertelsmann Stiftung for the organization of the first meeting of the "Transatlantic Task Force on Immigration and Integration" in Greece in June 2007. The subject of this meeting was "Circular Migration" and among the participants were the former European Commissioner for Justice and Home Affairs Mr. Vittorino and Ms. Ana Palacio Vallelersundi, Senior Vice President and Group General Counsel of the World Bank.
- **"Migration and Development: A Euro-Mediterranean Perspective"**: Another important conference organized by IMEPO in cooperation with the Development Centre of the OECD in April 2007 in Rhodes aimed to analyze the results of the OECD project "Gaining from Migration" that had the objectives of better understanding the new mobility system, identifying policies to improve mobility

management, enabling integration of migrants and expanding options for engaging sending countries.

- **Scientific Conference on "Migration in Greece: Experiences - Policies - Perspectives"** IMEPO organizes numerous national conferences on various migration topics. As an example, we mention the above conference, which attracted hundreds of academics and experts active in the field of migration. The objective of this conference was to present and discuss about migration flows towards Greece, migrants in Greece, the impact of migrants' presence, as well as the factors and policies that affect flows of migrants and their integration into Greek economy and society.