

## MIGRATION POLICY AND RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

### *International Organization for Migration*

Research and Forum activities have been a part of International Organization for Migration (IOM)'s work for many years. In June 2001, a Migration Research and Policy Programme (MPRP) was set up in response to IOM Member States' requests for the Organization to take a stronger leadership role in the intellectual debate and provision of policy guidance on migration issues, and to promote co-operation and co-ordination of efforts in the field of international migration. MPRP contributes to the better understanding of migration issues and strengthening of the capacity of governments in their efforts to manage migration in a more comprehensive and effective manner.

#### A. MIGRATION AND POLICY RESEARCH MANDATE

1. To contribute to a better global understanding of migration issues and to enhance the longer-term global capacity for collection, analysis, use and sharing of migration information and experiences.
2. To strengthen the capacity of governments to manage global migration more effectively and co-operatively and develop relevant approaches in the form of migration policies, legislation and procedures.
3. To identify and share "effective practices" in migration management drawing from the experiences of IOM and others and to ensure that IOM is a reliable resource for governments in their development of coherent policies on migration issues.

#### B. PRIORITY AREAS OF ACTIVITY

Given the scope of MPRP's mandate, and the complexity of the policy issues surrounding international migration, six priority areas provide focus for MPRP's activities:

##### *1. IOM Council International Dialogue on Migration*

As part of MPRP's mandate to contribute to a better understanding of international migration, MPRP paved the way to reinforce the IOM Council as a global forum for dialogue on international migration. In IOM's Constitution, Article 1(e) sets as one of the primary purposes and functions of the Organization to "provide a forum to States as well as international and other organisations for the exchange of views and experiences, and the promotion of co-operation and co-ordination of efforts on international migration issues, including studies on such issues in order to develop practical solutions".

Now, with 101 Member States and some 1 observer

Through its exploration of the theme *Partnerships in Managing Migration*, IOM's December 2002 Council helped foster a greater understanding of global international migration issues in a presentation on migration trends and migration policy trends; a plenary discussion of elements of a managed migration system; and three workshops for policy-makers: (a) integration, (b) comprehensive and solutions-oriented approaches to irregular migration, and (c) diaspora support to migration and development. As preparation for the Council dialogue, MPRP held a June roundtable discussion on "Managing Migration at the Regional Level", focusing on the development of strategies for effective regional consultation.

The International Dialogue on Migration was launched at the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Council in November 2001 with a focus on *Migration Challenges for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. In preparation, MPRP promoted an active exchange of views among IOM's membership through several informal Steering Group meetings. At the Council sessions, presentations from experts on demographic trends affecting migration, trade and migration, cultural and ethnic diversity and integration as well as keynote addresses by Ministers from different regions of the world stimulated the policy dialogue.

*Red book series*: To support its objective of enhancing the understanding of migration, MPRP introduced the "red book series", which captures the results of the dialogue at each relevant Council session, and takes the analysis a step further. Additional issues in this series are produced to facilitate the Council's dialogue. It is anticipated that at least one issue in this series will be produced annually to correspond to the Council's International Dialogue on Migration, and other thematic volumes will be produced periodically.

2.

**Asian Labour Migration Ministerial Consultations:** In coordination with the IOM's Labour Migration Services area, MPRP contributed to planning and facilitating the first Asian Labour Ministerial Consultation for countries of origin, held in Colombo, Sri Lanka, in April 2003.

**Bali Conference:** Together with other IOM colleagues, MPRP is advising the chairs of the two working groups growing out of the Bali Conference in February 2003 on their follow-up activities.

#### 4. *The Berne Initiative*

Unlike the international refugee protection regime, there is no comprehensive framework regulating international migration to promote movements in a co-operative, orderly way, combining efficiency, equity and respect for the interests of all countries. With this in mind, the Swiss Federal Office for Refugees launched, in 2001, the Berne Initiative as the first broad-based initiative to open up a dialogue between countries of origin, transit and destination on the full range of migration issues with the objective of identifying common understandings and enhancing migration management at the global level. The Berne Initiative seeks to engage the active participation of States from every region of the world, representing a wide-range of migration perspectives, through a broad-based consultative process. This process is exploring the development of an international framework of common understandings and effective practices on migration.

The Berne Initiative follows a similar orientation to IOM's International Dialogue on Migration. The Swiss Federal Office for Refugees nominated the Migration Policy and Research Programme to act as Secretariat for the Berne Initiative. In 2002, MPRP developed and co-ordinated an expert study on international legal norms on migration. In addition, MPRP created a thematic compilation of the *Significant International Statements on Migration*. Moreover, it contributed to raising global consciousness about the Berne Initiative through regional consultations and worked with States to identify areas of migration which might benefit from the formulation of international guiding principles.

In September 2002, MPRP represented IOM in the Knowledge Network Meeting on International Migration of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalisation organised by ILO.

#### *7. Enhanced IOM-NGO Consultation*

MPRP has revitalized and institutionalized IOM's consultations with the non-governmental community by organizing regular consultations with the umbrella NGO groups represented in Geneva and encouraging NGO participation in the Council's International Dialogue on Migration. In connection with this, MPRP prepared for the Council in 2002 a background document on *IOM's Partnership with NGO's in Managing Migration*, which presents IOM's policy approach to NGOs and a current picture of the range of IOM's cooperation with NGOs throughout the world. MPRP is now in the process of broadening and deepening these consultations, for example, through expanded consultations with field-

- Upon the request of the Spanish Government, the Division conducted an in-depth study comparing the treatment of migrants from Maghreb and Mashreq countries residing in Europe and the Gulf States. A report was submitted in July 2002.
- A study and an expert workshop on the subject of the “Return and Re-integration of Irregular Migrants” was prepared for the European Commission. A final report based on fieldwork carried out in Albania, Romania and Russia, was submitted to the EC in April 2003.
- A joint research project on current migration policy challenges in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe was conducted together with ICMPD on behalf of the government of Switzerland. In 2002 IOM/ICMPD published a book entitled “New Challenges for Migration Policy in Central and Eastern Europe”, Asser Press, the Hague.
- At the request of the Korea Labour Institute, a think tank of the Government of the Republic of Korea, the Division conducted a comparative study on labour migration management in selected North American and European countries. The study is expected to directly contribute to the Government’s development of foreign labour policy and the preparation of comprehensive new labour migration legislation. A draft report was submitted in September 2003.

The Division will organize in 2004 international expert meetings on the subjects of human trafficking (Rome) and government approaches to migration research (Geneva). New studies planned for 2004 include a “Global Research Report on Human Trafficking”, and publication comparing the ways in which governments manage migration research and its contribution to policy-making.

The Research and Publications Division ensures that research findings are widely disseminated in the form of books and working papers, and via the Internet, through the *Migration Research Series*, quarterly journal *International Migration* and the quarterly bulletin *Trafficking in Migrants*. Since year 2001 more than a dozen papers have been published in the *Migration Research Series*, on topics such as the *Migration-Development search fgs TDnc*