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Analysing Migration Policy Frames of Lebanese Civil Society Organizations

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Abstract

This paper is part of a series of working papers of the MEDRESET project to investigate existing EU policies in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries and determine how they align with the social, demographic, political and economic changes the region has witnessed in the past two decades. Based on information gathered through extensive fieldwork in Lebanon, this paper analyses how Lebanese civil society actors represent the Mediterranean space, how they frame migration in general and how they frame specific migration-related policy issues and the factors and actors affecting them. The paper further investigates how Lebanese stakeholders evaluate existing policy responses, focusing in particular on EU policies and cooperation initiatives in this field. Finally, the paper outlines possible policy implications, future developments and desirable improvements with regard to EU–Lebanon cooperation in the field of migration.

Introduction

Migration and mobility represent an ever more vital but highly contentious field of governance in Euro-Mediterranean relations.[2] Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in this policy area has long been characterized by fundamental divergences of views, interests and approaches, not only between the two shores of the Mediterranean, or between (predominantly) sending, transit and receiving countries, but also among institutional and civil society actors on each side of the Mediterranean.

In the framework of the MEDRESET project, Work Package 7 (WP7) aims to develop a more sophisticated knowledge and awareness about the diverse frames, perceptions and priorities of a variety of stakeholders with regard to migration-related issues in the Mediterranean space, focusing in particular on local stakeholders in four southern and eastern Mediterranean (SEM) countries – Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia and Turkey – and among them on those actors who are generally excluded from Euro-Mediterranean dialogue and decision-making (e.g., civil society and grassroots organizations). Primary consideration is thus given to the perspective of non-institutional actors, without neglecting the perspective of institutional stakeholders, because the former is probably constructed in relation (or even in opposition) to the latter.

Focusing on bottom-up framing processes involving civil society actors in SEM countries, WP7 aims to examine overlaps and differences in the understanding and evaluation of EU migration cooperation policies in the Mediterranean, investigating whether the perspectives and priorities of stakeholders in Europe and in SEM countries are conflicting, competing or converging with current EU policies. This country report focuses on the case study of Lebanon and analyses the policy frames of Lebanese stakeholders relating to the issue of migration and mobility, as well as to the EU policies in this field.

As described in detail in the MEDRESET Methodology and Concept Paper No. 6, which sets out the theoretical and methodological framework for WP7 research (Roman et al. 2017), our analysis builds upon literature on policy frames, and in particular on those scholars who have analysed the role of "policy frames" (Bleich 2002, Scholten 2011) or "policy narratives" (Boswell 2011, Carling and Hernández-Carretero 2011) in decision-making processes in the field of migration. These scholars have stressed that both migration-related policy issues and their possible solutions are defined and framed by different stakeholders, mainly drawing upon their ideas, perceptions, beliefs, normative appreciations and knowledge claims.

Drawing upon Boswell et al. (2011:4-5), we conceive the structure of policy frames as consisting of three essential components: 1) the definition of the policy problem, which typically involves claims about the scale and nature of the issue; 2) the causes of the problem, including claims on the extent to which such causes can be controlled through policy interventions; these "causal stories" often imply attributing responsibility (or blame) to specific factors or actors; and 3) the solutions to the problem, including claims about how policy interventions have affected, or are likely to affect, the issue.

The above categorization largely overlaps with the three-dimensional multi-actor, multi-layer and multi-sector analytical framework of the MEDRESET project: 1) stakeholders; 2) policy instruments; and 3) policy issues (Huber and Paciello 2016:11-12). In fact, policy issues concern the definition of the problem and its causes, namely the identification and definition of the key challenges that the Mediterranean region faces in the area of migration, and their causes. The identification of stakeholders coincides with the identification of the actors and factors affecting (or involved in) a given policy issue. Finally, solutions to the problem largely correspond to policy instruments, i.e., the methods and initiatives through which migration policies are and/ or should be implemented. This conceptual scheme is reflected in the structure of Section 3 of this report.

The analysis of Lebanese stakeholders' migration policy frames is largely based on information gathered through recursive multi-stakeholder consultations (RMSCs). As described in our Methodology and Concept Paper, this is an innovative methodology, consisting of a first round of face-to-face in-depth unstructured interviews with individual stakeholders in the four target SEM countries, followed by a second round of semi-structured interviews with a selected number of previously interviewed stakeholders, who are confronted with and invited to react to the main outcomes of the first interview round (Roman et al. 2017:23). Details on these two rounds of interviews are provided under Section 2 of this report, together with a description of the fieldwork carried out in Lebanon.

Section 1 provides an overview of Lebanon's migration profile, whereas the country's legal, policy and institutional framework in the area of migration (focusing in particular on post-2011 developments and EU cooperation policies), as well as the main stakeholders involved in migration policy-making, are included in the Annex. Section 3 analyses, firstly, how Lebanese stakeholders represent the Mediterranean space in general and how they frame migration within a broader policy context. Secondly, this section considers how they frame specific migration-related policy issues and the factors and actors affecting such issues; finally, it describes how stakeholders evaluate existing policy responses, focusing in particular on European policies. The final Section of the report elaborates on possible policy implications, future developments and desirable improvements with regard to EU–Lebanon cooperation in the field of migration.

1. Background Information on Lebanon's Migration Profile

1.1 Migration profile

Outward migration remains significant in Lebanon, a country with a long history of emigration. In fact, Lebanon's net migration rate in 2017 was -20.3 (migrants per 1,000 persons, including economic migrants, refugees, and other types of migrants), indicating that outward migration exceeded inward migration during that year (CIA 2018).

1.1.1 Inward migration

Lebanon, a country with an estimated population of 6 million,[3] has seen the value of its international migrant stock increase from 820,655 in 2010 (equivalent to 18.9 per cent of its total population) to 1,939,212 in 2017 (equivalent to 31.9 per cent of its total population) (UNDESA 2017), the majority of which (1,209,286 migrants) originated from the Syrian Arab Republic as a result of the Syrian crisis – a substantial increase from 2010 when the number of migrants from Syria was under 21,000 (UNDESA 2017).

Indeed, Syrian refugees are geographically heavily concentrated in the Bekaa, North Lebanon and Mount Lebanon governorates. Among the 1.2 million Syrian refugees, only 1 million have registered with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in 2017 (UNDESA 2017, UNHCR et al. 2017). Within that population, access to standard education for Syrian children is difficult; over 30 per cent of Syrian children aged between 6 and 14 are not registered in schools, particularly in the Bekaa area where 41 per cent of Syrian children are not enrolled in school (UNHCR et al. 2017:96). Additionally, the rate of school dropouts is highest among Syrian children aged between 15 and 18, as families are prone to rely on them for income (UN and Government of Lebanon 2018:51). Looking at older age groups, refugees are characterized by a low educational level where 19 to 25 per cent have attained secondary education and close to 14 per cent have higher education. For this reason, Syrian refugees typically take on low productivity jobs that require simple traditional skills. This generates competition between Syrian refugees and nationals in the informal sectors, where Syrian refugees work for low

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3   World Bank Data: *Lebanon*, https://data.worldbank.org/country/lebanon.

incomes and for longer hours, leading employers to favour them over low skilled nationals (Hamdan and Bou Khater 2015).

The mass migration of Syrian refugees into Lebanon has altered the country's migration profile. Before the Syrian crisis of 2011, both Iraqi and Palestinian refugees were in need of most help. As of September 2008, UNHCR reported around 10,700 registered Iraqi refugees. More recently, the number has decreased to only 6,000; however, these numbers do not encompass those who entered the country illegally (Ruwad 2008, European Commission 2018).

Additionally, the Syrian crisis brought in a flow of Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS) adding some 34,000 persons to the existing population of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon (PRL) of about 277,985 (UN and Government of Lebanon 2018:8). Moreover, there are about 3,000 to 5,000 non-ID Palestinians in Lebanon, meaning they are not registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA) or with the Government of Lebanon (GoL), thus putting them at risk of detention at any time. The PRS are dispersed around Lebanon and have problems accessing services due to difficulty of obtaining legal documents. Consequently, half of them live in the 12 identified refugee camps of Lebanon while the rest live outside these camps (UNHCR 2016). The PRL have established an employment network where they work in the private sector, UNRWA, Palestinian political organizations and NGOs with 85.5 per cent, 4.6 per cent, 3.8 per cent and 3.5 per cent respectively. However, there is still a high level of work in the informal sector since most sectors occupied by PRL, such as agriculture, construction and commerce, are informal in nature. Around 60 per cent of PRL live in the recognized 12 camps around major cities in Lebanon while the rest live outside the camps but are heavily clustered in Saida 31.9 per cent, Tripoli 23.8 per cent and Tyre 18.5 per cent (Ajluni and Kawar 2015:32).

Another population to consider for the immigrant arrivals in Lebanon is the migrant domestic workers. There are currently around 250,000 migrant domestic workers registered in Lebanon. In response to a growing business, several agencies have formed to meet the demand by bringing migrant workers into Lebanon and facilitating the movement across the border (ILO 2016). Domestic work in Lebanon before the 1970s was usually carried out by Lebanese and Syrian women, where the employing families mostly belonged to the upper class. During the 1970s, Lebanese women began to engage further in the labour market, opening a supply gap in the domestic work market. About 99 per cent of domestic workers today are women who work as live-in domestic workers; their country of origin is mostly Ethiopia followed by the Philippines, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Madagascar. Benin, Cameroon, Ghana, Pakistan, Senegal and Togo also contribute to the inflow of domestic workers but to a lesser extent (Nasri and Tannous 2014:35). In 2012, the Lebanese Ministry of Labour renewed 32,194 work permits and granted about 28,460 new working permits to Ethiopians (Nasri and Tannous 2014:21).

1.1.2 Outward migration

Regarding the outflow of human capital, emigration is a characteristic of Lebanon's labour. Having begun in the 19th century, mainly to Europe, North America and South America, the outflow increased during the 20th century. In the period between 1960 and 2012, the estimated total emigration was around 850,355 while more particularly 200,000–400,000 emigrated in the period from 1991 to 2009 (Ajluni and Kawar 2015:17-8). In 2003, the total estimated number of Lebanese emigrants was 684,000, 82 per cent of whom had the following countries as

destinations: the United States, Australia, Canada, Germany, Saudi Arabia, France, Sweden, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the United Kingdom and Denmark (Ajluni and Kawar 2015:18). The majority of Lebanese migrants are men, with a sex ratio of 1.26. Emigration to the Gulf countries represents 14 per cent of the total emigration, and is characterized by single males, whereas families are more inclined to emigrate to non-Arab developed countries, inferred from a sex ratio of men to women of "1.16 in more developed countries and 1.64 in less developed countries (including Arab countries)" (Ajluni and Kawar 2015:18). The profile of Lebanese migrants reflects a high level of education and skills, leading to a lack of skilled labour in Lebanon (Ajluni and Kawar 2015:19). Conspicuously, Lebanese migration before the 1980s consisted of unskilled to semi-skilled labourers who left for the US, Australia, Canada and Latin America mainly due to the need for simple labour in these countries, leading to permanent settlement, while the migration after 1980s consisted mostly of skilled labour (Tabar 2011:6). This in part was due to the increasing level of women's education, adding a population of educated women joining the educated male emigrants in seeking better paying jobs outside the country. Migrants aged 35 and above contributed 37.6 per cent to educated emigrants, while those aged 20–34 contributed about 47.2 per cent, adding another characteristic to Lebanese emigrants: youth. Lebanese emigrants, who are usually high skilled, are employed in a variety of fields including technicians 29.2 per cent, legislators and managers 15.7 per cent and clerks 10.3 per cent (MPC 2013:2).

Over 822,000 Lebanese expatriates are estimated to be living abroad in 2017, of whom 27 per cent reside in Europe (especially Germany, France and Sweden). The largest Lebanese community has been established in the Arab states, especially Saudi Arabia and the UAE (UNDESA 2017).

Moreover, consistent with figures reported above, the majority of Lebanese expats are males (59 per cent). Men make up a sizeable share of expats in the UAE (70 per cent) and in Saudi Arabia (68 per cent). In Europe, Sweden and France have a fairly balanced gender ratio.

2. FIELDWORK IN LEBANON

As per the guidelines set by the MEDRESET project, the fieldwork consisted of identifying and interviewing 20 to 30 main stakeholders in the migration field to ensure a sufficiently diverse sample. Stakeholders interviewed in the first round include international governmental organizations (IGOs), local and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), research centres and community organizations (see Table 1). In the second round of interviews, governmental stakeholders and some additional IGOs involved in migration and asylum policy-making were included (see Table 2). Due to the unresponsiveness of many stakeholders, 16 interviews were conducted in the first round and 6 interviews were conducted in the second round, despite the extensive efforts exerted in follow-up (see Table 3). The organizations sampled represent key stakeholders in the migration domain in the country. In the first round 12 out of 18 interviewed persons were female, while in the second round female interviewees were 3 out of 6. As a first step, stakeholders were contacted through email, followed by a phone call if a response was not received. When requested, the project flyer and an endorsement letter from the project investigator were sent to stakeholders. Subsequently, stakeholders were contacted by phone repeatedly to schedule an interview.

During the fieldwork stage, two main challenges came up. First, the point of contact, usually assistants, often failed to get our message through to the designated persons, which impeded our efforts in getting hold of them. Second, many stakeholders claimed to be too busy to schedule an interview. Despite the limited number of interviews conducted, our sample comprises key players in the sector with diverse backgrounds and experiences with the EU, including actors who have been excluded by EU interventions and Euro-Mediterranean dialogue. The latter did not generally have any experience working with the EU or any knowledge about EU policies implemented in Lebanon, thus interviews conducted with them focused on the challenges faced and recommendations to improve the sector.

Table 1 | Stakeholders Interviewed, First Round

Type of stakeholder	Name
IGOs	1. International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)
	2. International Labour Organization (ILO)
	3. United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA)
European Union	4. Delegation of the European Union to Lebanon
Research centres	5. Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC), NDU
	6. Centre for Lebanese Studies (CLS)
International NGOs/not-for-profit organizations (NPOs)	7. International Relief and Development (IRD)
	8. Oxfam
	9. International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP)
Local NGOs/NPOs	10. Palestinian Human Rights Organization (PHRO)
	11. Insan Association
	12. The Legal Agenda
	13. KAFA (enough) Violence & Exploitation
	14. Caritas Lebanon Migrant Center (CLMC)
	15. Anti-Racism Movement (ARM) Migrant Community Center (MCC)
Community organization	16. Center for Civic Engagement and Community Service (CCECS)

Table 2 | Stakeholders Interviewed, Second Round

Type of stakeholder	Name
Governmental organizations/Public institutions	1. Ministry of Interior (MoI) – Interior Security Forces (ISF) Police
	2. Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA)
IGOs	3. International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)
	4. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
	5. International Organization for Migration (IOM)
International NGOs/NPOs	6. International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP)

Table 3 | Summary of Stakeholders Contacted and Interviewed

Type of stakeholder	Contacted	Interviewed
Governmental organizations/Public institutions	5	3
IGOs	8	6
Research centres	4	2
International NGOs	19	4
Local NGOs	21	6
Community organizations	3	1
Total	**60**	**22***

Note: * Two stakeholders were interviewed twice, as foreseen by the methodology adopted in this research project.

3. A Qualitative Analysis of Stakeholders' Frames in the Area of Migration and Mobility

3.1 Framing Migration Within a Broader Policy Context

The opinions of interviewed stakeholders in Lebanon showed a clear divide concerning the migration question. On one hand the Lebanese government and international organizations (IOs) tend to contextualize the migration issue more within a security and legal context, highlighting how security is a key concern for human flows both across and within the country, while on the other hand civil society organizations (CSOs) contextualize migration more in the lens of human security needs, looking at the marginalization of the refugees and migrants and their deprivation of basic human rights.

Key stakeholders in Lebanon in the migration field conveyed the importance of migration in the Mediterranean and have situated migration-related issues among the highest policy priorities. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) affirmed the significant share of Lebanese nationals migrating for social and economic reasons and indicated the importance of remittances to the Lebanese economy, amounting to approximately 14.1 per cent of GDP by the end of 2016 (Credit Libanais 2017). The Ministry of Interior considers illegal migration as the main priority in the area, followed by human trafficking, whereas international organizations such as the UNHCR and the IOM have addressed the issue of forced migration given the large-scale migration instigated by the Syrian crisis. Prior to the Syrian crisis, the issue of forced migration was not given the highest priority as it encompassed people fleeing Iraq, Afghanistan, Sudan and so on but in substantially smaller numbers.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Interior, ICMPD and IRAP seem to agree that security-related issues are linked to migration issues, claiming that a lack of border control brings about an increase in illegal migration, thereby compromising the security and stability of the country. The EU Delegation in Lebanon has supported these claims, adding that combating illegal migration will be particularly difficult given the existence of a mixed population of Syrians – which include refugees, displaced individuals, and economic migrants – coupled with lack of

data/figures (especially after UNHCR was asked to stop registering refugees in May 2015 by the GoL – registration is still suspended).

Moreover, international organizations such as IOM and UNHCR agree that refugees are being wrongly associated with terrorists and/or criminals; the UNHCR respondent claims that refugees and asylum-seekers are assessed prior to being registered to comply with safeguard clauses set within the international refugee protection framework and that biometric information is collected to ensure fraud protection and control. From UNHCR's perspective, the existence of legal frameworks and procedures would ensure mechanisms are in place to identify terrorists thereby fostering a sense of security in the country. Nonetheless, IOM claims that security concerns are somewhat justified as there are no programmes put in place to deal with migrants who are left behind – who do not meet the criteria/requirements set by the government and UNHCR (especially migrants who are excluded due to having relatives involved with any political party).

Respondents in several local and international organizations expressed their low expectations regarding the future migration profile in Lebanon. The IRD representative believes the situation will remain unchanged with further possibility of the international community losing interest in the Syrian refugees crisis, which would be detrimental to Lebanon. Insan shares this opinion as well and is not optimistic that the situation of the domestic migrant workers will change either but believes the upcoming Global Compact[4] on migration might prompt the Lebanese authorities to improve their performance. The ILO added that the Global Compact, to be adopted by the end of 2018, is intended to be a global instrument regulating all countries' outlined action plans to ensure safe migration in an organized manner. Nevertheless, given the nature of Lebanon's governance, it is too soon to say if the Compact will be operationalized by the GoL at all. Moreover, other policies have been adopted by the global community to ensure fair conditions for migrants, such as the inclusion of migration in the 2030 SDGs; however, their impact on Lebanon depends entirely on the decision of the Ministry of Labour and other ministries. The CCECS representative added that this state of affairs will be maintained as long as there is a flow of relief funding; once it is stopped, Lebanon will be facing a crisis.

The respondents described the current migration profile in Lebanon as particularly distressing for certain groups. The first such group is the Palestinian refugees who are suffering from marginalizing laws; these laws result in the emergence of a new wave of immigration instigated by Palestinian youth – who consequently face exploitation by some travel agencies specializing in securing a route for Palestinian youth outside of Lebanon. This service which, as reported by a PHRO representative, is exceedingly expensive, has led some Palestinians to resort to extreme economic measures such as selling their houses. The UNRWA representative added that after the Syrian crisis, the PRL were joined by the PRS in seeking illegal migration out of Lebanon by sea, driven by the unfair economic conditions. This pattern is observed among the entire PRS cohort, who are experiencing extremely poor economic conditions, in addition to

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4   In 2000, the UN launched a global platform called Global Compact (UNGC) for the development and implementation of corporate policies in the fields of labour, human rights and environment. UNGC works in accordance with its ten principles plus the recent 17 sustainable developmental goals (SDGs) including climate action, no poverty, decent work and economic growth, etc. In 2015, Lebanon joined the global network and launched Global Compact Network Lebanon (GCNL) which works closely with UNGC to spread sustainable practices among the local businesses and NGOs.

younger PRL generations – since older generations are better off due to remittances received from their children abroad, thus facilitating their life in Lebanon.

Second, the Syrian refugees were targeted in the Lebanese election campaign, which employed an increased anti-refugee rhetoric demanding their return, as reported by Oxfam. Since border control has intensified, Syrian refugees have not been able to move to Europe and they experience a lack of mobility even within Lebanon, whereas the potential for their return to the relatively safe de-escalation areas in Syria is still under study. In this view, the CCECS representative explained that their projects can be readjusted in case of return to Syria. The Legal Agenda representative remarked that the rights given to the Syrian refugees now were never granted to refugees before. For instance, Syrian refugees who are denied access at the border are not necessarily deported; this signals an increase in the Lebanese authorities' degree of tolerance. The national policies are claimed to be heavily influenced by international funding provided by the EU and other countries whose true motive is to keep Syrian refugees in the host countries. However, the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan which brought a degree of coordination between ministries and stakeholders involved was commended.

A third group that is described as suffering particular hardships is the migrant workers, whose vulnerability materialized during the 2006 war, when they could not escape due to their lack of money and the inability of their countries to rescue them, as described by the ICMPD representative. This vulnerability, according to the Kafa representative, is apparent in (i) the low salary received by migrant workers, (ii) lack of labour mobility when they reach Lebanon, and (iii) the restrictive *Kafala* system that governs them. On a brighter note, there is an increasing awareness of human rights as the Caritas organization is approached more often by migrant workers asking for legal support. Additionally, the Caritas representative commended the current civil society which has more NGOs working with migrant workers. Meanwhile, a crucial step was taken by Caritas in forming a migration and human trafficking task force with the following ministries and entities: Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Social Affairs, Lebanese Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Economy and Trade, General Security, ISF and Ministry of Health.

3.2 FRAMING MIGRATION-RELATED POLICY ISSUES AND THEIR CAUSES

Policy issues reported by the interviewed organizations can be grouped into several categories. The first category comprises *governance issues* which materialize in different ways: Firstly, there exist *arbitrary policies* such as the current Lebanese legislation which grants Syrian refugees' children born in Lebanon the right to attain a birth certificate within the first year of life, however, after the first-year elapses, DNA tests among other costly legal procedures are required, reported the IRD representative. This is impractical given the Syrian refugees parents' constant fear of being detained or deported back to Syria in the case of missing legal registration, not to mention the inability of some to pay the 20,000 Lebanese pounds birth certificate fees. Fortunately, the situation has been improving due to the awareness campaigns conducted by international organizations. Moreover, the Oxfam representative criticized the ambiguous governmental structure dealing with the refugees as the ministries' tasks are unorganized and undefined leading to confusion among the international NGOs (INGOs) in terms of aid coordination. Furthermore, the government's recent decisions in the education sector, as reported by the CLS representative, restrict NGOs' contributions to formal education in the private sector whereby only public schools are allowed to provide education

for refugees.

Secondly, there are *policy implementation problems*. As argued by the LERC representative, the policies issued by the GoL are either poorly implemented or ambiguous, allowing for exploitation of vulnerable groups such as refugees and migrant workers, while the policies' lack of clarity creates animosity between the nationals and the aforementioned groups, leading in some cases to discrimination. Similarly, the ILO representatives reported a problem with law implementation, as migrant workers face difficulty in demanding their rights through the Ministry of Labour and the judicial system, a process which is notoriously slow. They also exhibit difficulty in comprehending the authorities' regulations given the language barrier and they cannot afford to hire lawyers to help them through the legal work. Additionally, the IRAP representative proclaimed that in some cases international humanitarian law is applied incorrectly at the borders where some Syrian refugees are being refused a visa entry under humanitarian exceptions due to non-alignment with the refugee definition. Moreover, in some cases refugees are being denied an exit visa by the General Security which does not align with the government's policy objectives.

Thirdly, the *lack of policies* was highlighted. The LERC reported (i) a dearth of policies on the return of Lebanese nationals to Lebanon, as well as (ii) antiquated legal procedures and institutional corruption that hinder all possibilities of attracting diaspora investments. Another example was reported by the UNRWA representative who shed light on the lack of policies governing the autonomous internal environment of camps, where different political parties usually impose their own subjective agenda. Generally, each camp is controlled by just one political faction, but in some cases several factions exist simultaneously, leading to chaos; such is the case in Ain El Helweh.

Fourthly, the *evasion strategy adopted by the government* was reported by the Insan organization. On one hand, the GoL is trying to win over the public opinion through taking arbitrary decisions to deport migrant women and their children in order to avoid dealing with the real problem: the increasing influx of Syrian refugees. Reportedly, any attempt taken by Insan to empower the migrant workers (asking for their rights) has backfired, since the GoL targets active migrant workers for deportation to distract the public opinion with regard to the government's inability to tackle the issue of Syrian refugees. On the other hand, the GoL evades attending to the Syrian refugees and refrains from developing any protection guidelines that can guarantee the rights of refugees in Lebanon, through shifting the responsibility to the UNHCR and other NGOs, an opinion shared by Kafa. This strategy of evasion adopted by the GoL applies to migrant workers simultaneously, stated the Kafa representative, who argued that leaving the recruitment of migrant workers in the hands of private recruitment agencies is creating an opening for their abuse, and is a reflection of the non-existent system for migration governance. The Legal Agenda representative added that the policies applied by the GoL, such as denying labour protection or legal status, aim at keeping migrant workers in a vulnerable situation and at risk of deportation in order to facilitate their exploitation.

The second category consists of *deception and exploitation*, an issue faced by both the *refugees* and the organizations helping them. The LERC representative clarified that some refugees are economic migrants who come to Lebanon for work then go back to their countries. These migrants claim they are refugees with the intention of benefiting from UNHCR aid. This was further stressed by the EU representatives who faced similar situations, in addition to Syrian

refugees who arrive as refugees but attain legal work status. Both of these cases – alongside the GoL's 2015 decision demanding that UNHCR stop registering Syrian refugees – have caused the situation to become more complicated since identifying actual refugees in need as become nearly impossible. Therefore, when the UNHCR is allowed to register refugees again, it will address a mixed population of economic migrants, refugees and illegal entries who are difficult to segregate due to the lack of regulations and border control.

By contrast, the Caritas representative described an additional issue, namely the *abuse* faced by *migrant workers* who are being exploited by their fellow nationals through manipulating them into prostitution. Another issue mentioned by the Kafa respondent is the recruitment and migration system that administrates the channels of migrant workers' inflow; this system is both abusive and dehumanizing. The Kafa respondent further illustrated how the GoL uses migrant workers to compensate for the lack of labour policies regulating the demand of households for domestic workers; if this demand is addressed correctly it will create employment for Lebanese women in need, but the government would rather have cheap unregulated labour from abroad.

The fourth category consists of *NGOs' incompetency and lack of capacity*, such as lack of coordination among various NGOs as reported by the LERC representative, who also stressed two points: (i) the fact that INGOs do not cooperate with each other and (ii) the lack of internal collaboration within a given INGO, leading to repetition in the topics tackled by different organizations. The representative had been asked to work on a report with similar questions and objectives from two different NGOs simultaneously, wasting the funds of these organizations despite their attempts to improve the situation. Moreover, based on the LERC representative's experience, INGOs have unrealistic expectations of the time it can take to bring a project to completion. In this regard, the PHRO representative criticized the approach taken by other NGOs towards the Palestinian refugees' situation where none of them work on legalizing paths of Palestinian migration; instead they attempt to decrease the flow or to provide these people with bare necessities. This was attributed to political reasons and the funding focused on Syrian refugees, as the scene has shifted towards prioritizing support for Syrian refugees at the expense of funding for Palestinian refugees. Another issue mentioned by IRAP representatives is the common belief that UNHCR has limitless funds for refugees while in reality it has not been able to provide aid to all refugees and has had to make selections targeting the poorest refugees. They added that there has been a discrepancy between funds pledged and amounts received from INGOs in different projects done in Lebanon, implying a case of corruption.

The fifth category entails *direct EU-related issues* which were expressed by several interviewed organizations and highlighted by the LERC representative who attributed the EU's inefficiency in the region to having *no sustainability* in any of their projects as funds are abrupt, non-continuous, and not accompanied by assessment. Additionally, most EU projects use foreign consultants who are not well accustomed to the situation in the region, an opinion endorsed by CCECS. Moreover, in the cases where they hire Lebanese consultants, they are paid less and pressured to finish long-term projects within a short deadline, leading to false validation of preconceived ideas. Even if such consultants produce unsatisfactory work, the EU still requests them to work on future projects, thus the EU ought to be more focused and reduce the number of actors as well.

Additionally, *border control* is a problematic issue. There is concurrence among governmental organizations, IGOs and NGOs regarding this matter. The EU is accused of externalizing border controls, including limiting resettlement quotas which EU member countries can receive from countries such as Jordan and Lebanon, to limit the influx of migrants seeking asylum within their borders, which has triggered refugees to travel illegally by employing human smugglers at a very high cost and risk. Thousands of refugees including children have drowned in the Mediterranean as a result. UNHCR claims that although European countries have a common European asylum system established, they seem to have disregarded this system in 2015 once Syrians started arriving at their borders in large numbers; some countries closed their borders whereas others restricted asylum seekers' admissibility procedures – including family reunification, which presents a serious problem to refugees in Lebanon who cannot reunite with their families in Europe.

Furthermore, the IOM representative claimed that a great deal of politics is involved in the policies driving migration. Conflicting internal politics among EU countries, where some countries are more welcoming to migrants as compared to others, brought about unclear and *inconsistent migration policies* in Europe. Also, IOM emphasized that migration will remain the top humanitarian issue for the foreseeable future and thus should be prioritized by the EU. Finally, the MoI claims that the EU should focus on peace-building programmes in countries of origin of forced migration, such as Lebanon, to find durable solutions for the refugee problem.

Furthermore, there is also a *gender dimension* to EU policies, as claimed by IGOs such as ICMPD, UNHCR and IOM; male family members are usually sent to undertake the perilous journey across the Mediterranean, with the hope of having remaining family members (wife and children) unite through legal migration channels. However, as a result of the restrictions imposed by the EU with regard to family reunification, as mentioned above, women and children are left behind in Lebanon. Accordingly, women find themselves responsible of supporting their family and bearing the burden of raising a family alone in a foreign country – which increases the risk of exploitation. Furthermore, female refugees find it challenging to acquire a job in Lebanon given the restrictive labour policies in place in addition to their limited education. Consequently, integrating female migrants into society and the labour market is problematic to the host community and to the refugee herself as she is unable to support her family financially. However, in the opinion of the MoFA, problems concerning women's emigration in the case of Lebanese migrants are not significant nowadays, as women are mobile and free to work almost everywhere with the exception of Saudi Arabia, which women would simply refrain from migrating to.

The sixth category concerns *Lebanon's characteristics* as a country which contribute to the difficulty of governance. For instance, the IRD representative traced the discrepancy in decision-making to the country's demographics where every group adopts policies that maintain its respective profit. This point was expressed by the LERC representative as well, who stated that sectarianism plays a crucial factor in most decision-making on the governmental level. Lebanon's decentralized nature, as described by the CCECS representative, restricts the government's intervention in areas heavily influenced by a political party. Additionally, the natural environment of Lebanon is collapsing under the increasing flow of refugees, which will afflict both the host community and the refugees on the macro level.

3.3 Framing the Factors/Actors Affecting Migration-related Policy Issues

Given the issues mentioned in Section 3.2, two stakeholders have been emphasized as crucial actors in the various policies or lack thereof: the migrants themselves and the General Security. The PHRO representative described the situation of young Palestinian refugees who cannot withstand the unjust living conditions in Lebanon and choose to migrate to other countries. Two communities were identified in this case: the refugees who are benefitting by leaving Lebanon safely and finding ways to stay in Europe, and those negatively affected by the host countries, which do not have a profound strategy on how to integrate refugees. However, in some cases the host countries use the refugees to attract funds from wealthier countries, and thus refugees come to be a beneficiary actor vis-à-vis their host country.

The ARM representative also reported that the status quo of migrant workers in Lebanon is maintained by the government since both Lebanon and the home countries of migrant workers are benefitting from the situation. The Lebanese government benefits as the services it should provide (elder care or child care) are in fact provided by domestic workers, whereas home countries benefit from the remittances sent by workers to their families.

The second stakeholder, the General Security, was identified by that Insan representative as the actor having ultimate legal authority over migrants and refugees in Lebanon. The General Security's lack of communication with NGOs was criticized in addition to its uncooperative decision-making process, as it has been designated as the sole authority governing the migrants. This autonomous authority has affected the migrants negatively but has financially benefitted countries that have a contract with the General Security to deny migrants across borders, as implied by the Insan representative. The Caritas representative added that the aforementioned task force formed by Caritas – which was proposed to be the official authority governing migrants in Lebanon – was not given authorization yet as this cause is not part of the government's top priorities.

Furthermore, regarding the role of the EU as an actor in the migration field, the uneven distribution of EU projects in Lebanon was mentioned. Some areas have been deprived of EU projects due to the affluent image they portray, hence the EU should direct attention to the hidden poverty in Lebanon. The CLS representative made a similar remark describing the diminishing EU funds in the education sector in favour of the refugee crisis, even though education is needed for refugees as well. The EU has one fund for both public schools and NGOs that work with public schools, which is not very equitable. This problem of uneven allocation of EU projects and funds was endorsed as well by the PHRO representative who argued that a large percentage of the budget is given to European NGOs operating in Lebanon versus local NGOs which naturally have more experience in the Lebanese context. This opinion was shared by IRD, which implied that it does not receive funds from the EU because it is an American organization.

The PHRO representative further added that the EU policies taken in the region reflect an inclination to stop immigration into their countries rather than helping migrants. Their approach does not tackle the source of the migration problem; therefore, the issue will persist. Additionally, the PHRO representative stated: "We ask for humanitarian tactics and not just police tactics", a remark made by the ICMPD representative as well. On this subject, the CCECS representative

described the EU strategies as mediocre and attributed the low return on their investment to mismanagement of funds, poor strategic intervention, and poor project designs; giving the example of investing too much on theoretical research and reports instead of fieldwork, adding the following statement: "They cannot afford to not be involved in the Middle East anymore because we are in Europe now". The Kafa representative shed light on another lapse in the EU's policies which is the lack of funds for projects pertaining to domestic workers, on the grounds that there is no migration of domestic workers from Lebanon to Europe and vice versa. The EU's policies in the southern Mediterranean were well received by Legal Agenda prior to the Syrian refugees' crisis but were deemed to be less neighbourly after the crisis. According to the Legal Agenda representative, the EU followed a certain strategy whereby it either arranged legal migration routes for skilled migrants, or it employed an inhumane tactic by welcoming those arriving illegally without initially opening a legal route for them. Moreover, the EU delegation representatives attributed the EU's increasingly restrictive policies in the migration sector to the 2015 events when hundreds of refugees from Libya and Syria drowned in the Mediterranean. Since then, its main goal has been to combat illegal immigration through a common European agenda on migration. The agenda is to "save lives lost at sea" and to strengthen/develop countries of origin to stop migration to Europe.

By contrast, the Caritas representative commended the EU on its projects in the region, deeming them to be more efficient than those undertaken by American organizations. However, the representative urged the EU to reassess its priorities and to acknowledge the needs of the NGOs working on the ground since the shift of funds towards refugees has negatively affected the domestic migrant workers who are still in need of supporting projects.[5] The UNRWA representative shared a similar opinion, stating that EU funds received by UNRWA are being distributed well, according to the local needs, while also maintaining the EU's priorities. There was an overall consensus between ICMPD, IRD, UNRWA and Oxfam representatives on the positive involvement of the EU in the region through (i) conducting assessments and field research prior to starting its projects, (ii) adopting public policies that take into consideration the neighbouring countries such as the EU neighbourhood policy and (iii) allocating funds equitably.

Furthermore, when representatives were asked to assess the EU's policy comparatively, the ICMPD representative described the EU and the USA as compatible and harmonious in their projects and concerns. The Caritas representative gave a similar answer, illustrating that the EU usually funds projects on migration while the US is concerned more with trafficking projects. The UNRWA representative stated that the US was their number one donor until last year followed closely by the EU. By contrast, both Oxfam and PHRO representatives considered the EU policies more supportive when compared to other countries, while the PHRO representative specified that the EU's funds are more humane compared to politically driven American and Arab donations. Others such as the Legal Agenda representative deemed EU policies more efficient than those of Trump's government but not Obama's government. However, the CCECS representative favoured the USAID whose strategy is more consistent and efficient, and more familiar with the internal mechanisms of the Lebanese society. Additionally, the CCECS representative commended Turkey's strategy in working with the migration crisis and considered that country to be more efficient than the EU. The IRAP representatives had

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5   At least 500 migrant domestic workers are entering Lebanon per day.

a different view, stating that the focus of all countries is on receiving and assisting Syrian refugees while there are other refugees of other nationalities in dire need of assistance. This situation has not improved since the US has drastically reduced its quota for resettlement, and the EU–Turkey agreement[6] has negatively impacted on the resettlement of refugees.

Europe is lagging behind the US, New Zealand, Australia and Canada, as claimed by the IOM respondent, in terms of the number of refugees received. Canada is explicitly praised by the Ministry of Interior, IOM and IRAP for the role it is playing in migration- and asylum-related issues. It has welcomed a significantly larger number of migrants as compared to any country in Europe, and has also granted them labour visas to enable their integration into society.

3.4 Evaluating Existing Policy Responses and Possible Alternative Solutions

In light of the aforementioned issues, the stakeholders interviewed made multiple recommendations in the framework of policy-making, including involving civil society actors in the process, with the exception of the MoFA which does not acknowledge Syrians in Lebanon as refugees but as displaced individuals and thus encourages their return to Syria once it is safe to do so.

First, *reception and resettlement programmes* such as "Human Corridors", carried out by the Mediterranean Hope initiative, should be reproduced and enlarged, as claimed by IRAP, given the limited quotas set by most European countries and the restrictions set by UNHCR to be eligible for assistance. Thus, the EU would need to facilitate and raise awareness about such resettlement programmes to provide migrants with different legal pathways. Indeed, the ICMPD claims that these alternative pathways are not made public as they should be. Another obstacle the EU would need to address is the delayed response to this migration crisis, as making a difference at this point in time, in the case of Lebanon, would be very challenging. Thus, the EU should not have waited till now to consider starting a resettlement programme, it should have done so in 2012 to contain the problem and establish a more gradual and effective resettlement system.

Second, other IGOs such as UNHCR and IOM agree that *alternative sustainable pathways should be considered such as granting private sponsorships as well as work and student visas in Europe*; in other words, temporary arrangements should be granted to migrants to develop their skills and integrate into society. Moreover, the IOM states that the country of departure (including humanitarian agencies) has a crucial role in preparing migrants for resettlement because destination countries are only interested in migrants who can integrate into the labour force and accordingly who meet their education standards. However, it is challenging to raise the educational level of migrants to meet the standards in destination countries. Thus, to ensure that migrants meet the European standards of education, the IOM representative recommends that the EU invest in education, vocational training and healthcare. However, this view is not shared by the governmental institution, which believes that such programmes should not be participatory as they relate to the sovereignty of each individual country and thus

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6   In 2016, the EU and Turkey signed an agreement stating that any refugees arriving in Greece from Turkey after 20 March 2016 will be deported back to Turkey and will not be granted asylum in Europe (Nika 2017).

should be aligned with respective national priorities. According to the MoI, the participatory role should be limited to donor countries via NGOs and the UN. Also, protection is claimed to be the major issue associated with resettlement; the MoI recommends a faster documentation process in times of conflict to address this issue.

Third, IGOs and NGOs agree that *pre-departure training including cultural integration of migrant workers in the country of origin* is necessary to ensure successful resettlement of refugees. Countries in the EU with resettlement programmes are actively working with UNHCR and other organizations to facilitate this. Moreover, the ICMPD is currently working with a UN agency on a project related to this topic, where they investigate how they can identify and match refugees' skills with the labour demand in destination countries. They have encountered many obstacles in matching skills with requirements of EU countries. Indeed, the education systems and prerequisites in Europe are dissimilar and inflexible (bureaucratic) as compared to the ones in Syria. On the other hand, the MoI claims that decisions taken regarding labour migration policies should not be participatory as this is a sovereign decision. A concern shared by the MoI was that if participatory labour policies are considered, what will stop the decision-makers from allowing Syrians to work in Lebanon?

Fourth, with regard to migrant integration policies, there is concurrence among IGOs and NGOs which suggest *creating a specialized integration centre* to support the integration of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers into society, as granting them financial and housing support is not enough. This centre would offer language courses, cultural orientation including norms, laws and regulations, in addition to how to access services in the country of destination. Since Lebanon has a strict non-integration policy, a major impediment to integration efforts, the first step would be more lenience from the government to provide opportunities to refugees to become self-reliant (by engaging in vocational training, studying and working), thereby honing their capacities and transferrable skills. However, in European countries, it is assumed that refugees will be allowed to stay, so it is crucial to create an environment where migrants feel embraced by society. Therefore, this centre would enable migrants to integrate and contribute to society, hence to feel less marginalized.

Accordingly, as a second step, the EU can help by establishing this centre and providing integration services. Additionally, according to ICMPD, another obstacle the EU would need to address is the unfavourable outlook Europeans have towards refugees, which is aggravated by the propensity of migrants to reside in urban areas, increasing congestion levels and thereby causing additional tensions among refugees and host communities. Furthermore, the MoI claims that the EU should focus on eliminating the barriers for integration such as religious and cultural barriers keeping migrants from living and enrolling in specific neighbourhoods and schools respectively. Additionally, educated and wealthy migrants are more mobile and will manage to resettle on their own, thus the EU should support the education of people of concern, who are usually uneducated and underprivileged.

Fifth, in order to *encourage mobility between the two shores of the Mediterranean*, along with expanding multi-entry/job search visa and facilitating student mobility between universities in Europe and Lebanon, improving coordination between the two shores is suggested by IRAP to mitigate and protect people from travelling through illegal routes. Additionally, the ICMPD and IOM suggested setting up more seasonal and short-term assignments and establishing additional legal avenues to enter Europe in order to improve accessibility between the two

shores of the Mediterranean – this would enable people to work for a limited time in Europe, and transferring the skills gained when back in their country of origin.

Similarly, the IOM added that *labour exchange programmes* should be launched, such as Mercedes taking some employees from Lebanon to Germany and vice versa for a six-month capacity-building programme or training. Furthermore, the MoI claims that there should be *mobility of goods and services*. A smaller number of people would migrate to Europe if barriers for agricultural products originating from SEM countries were lowered as they would be generating income from their land.

On that note, in order to prevent brain drain from countries of origin, which may increase with less restrictive labour migration policies, IGOs suggest creating high quality jobs in the country of origin to attract the educated. In fact, as per the IOM, the brain drain phenomenon is believed to be occurring through regular migration channels as educated migrants are the ones being welcomed into the EU and those left behind are the least educated with a low socioeconomic status. Thus, incentivizing the educated to stay in Lebanon or Syria by offering them good employment and income-generating opportunities would prevent this phenomenon from occurring. Conversely, UNHCR has the impression that Syrians will return to Syria when possible, and that settling down and working in Europe is not a permanent situation. Thus, brain drain does not seem very likely according to UNHCR. Alternatives to resettlement, which include temporary resettlement (short term), would allow refugees to live in Europe for a limited period of time and learn a transferable skill set which will be useful upon their return to Syria. However, the challenge Syrians and other refugees face in Lebanon is the lack of opportunities available to develop their professional skills, which is detrimental to Syria's human capital. Likewise, the MoI does not believe that brain drain will occur as Europe's own graduates – skilled labour – are struggling in their quest for finding employment and therefore refugees find themselves competing against eastern Europeans – unskilled labour – for job opportunities in Europe. Conversely, the MoFA believes that brain drain has been occurring in Lebanon for some time now and that job opportunities should be created across the board to attract low- to high-skilled labour thereby encouraging the Lebanese youth to work in Lebanon.

Sixth, it was noted that the most prominent issues referenced require *direct or indirect legal intervention from the government*. For instance, the LERC representative reported the lack of coordination between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which deals with Lebanese migration, the Ministry of Interior and the General Security which handle other forms of migration. The situation in Lebanon requires *a task force linking both ministries* since all types of migration are connected. Meanwhile, IRD, IRAP and Insan representatives called for labour inclusion of refugees and migrant workers in Lebanese law.

Some of the organizations included in this research focus on the rights of refugees, such as Legal Agenda which stressed the *need for an asylum law* to be adopted by the government to protect refugees, and UNRWA which is advocating for the government to lift the prohibition on Palestinian refugees working in 36 professions, and to grant them property rights. Additionally, the PHRO representative emphasized the need for a decree issued by the Council of Ministers guaranteeing the *rights of Palestinian refugees under Lebanese labour law* to enjoy benefits such as National Social Security. The IRAP representatives emphasized the importance of the government granting *NGOs the right to have schools* because the public school system

cannot accommodate all refugees and currently NGOs only have access to public schools. Other policies were proposed by UNRWA to facilitate the refugees' departure once they have the legal documents, and to remove the sponsorship condition from the residency permit requirements. In regard to governance of the camps, UNRWA suggested having an administration in camps resembling the municipalities system where elections can take place. However, the CCECS pressed for crisis management teams which work with a decentralized approach through the governors and *cazas* (districts) since any national policy suggested would only work at a decentralized level. A paper developed by the CCECS in collaboration with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) was referenced: "Reconfiguring Relief Mechanisms". This paper describes a decentralized response plan consisting of integrating a specialized crisis management team into the administrative structure, namely Council of Mohafzat. This team would work on implementing refugee support practices and policies through the existing governmental administrative structure, thus opening the opportunity for future adoption of the crisis management team as a permanent structure (Shibli 2014).

On the other hand, several organisations called for *improving the laws governing migrant workers*, such as Caritas which demanded the ratification of the Domestic Workers Convention.[7] This would entail the creation of a law protecting domestic workers, as well as its implementation and follow-up. The ILO requested a reform of the *Kafala* system parallel to those undertaken in Bahrain and UAE where migrant workers have the *right to work with no sponsor and to leave their current employer with three months' notice*. Kafa took a step in further asking for the abolition of the *Kafala* system since it is the source of exploitation. The UNRWA representative proposed two measures to improve the conditions of migrant workers: (i) having inspection workers trained to enforce the laws of equal work and fair working conditions and (ii) enforcing strict regulations on the private recruitment industry. On a macro level, the Kafa representative shed light on the potential governmental steps that could improve the recruitment process, such as studying the needs of the market to understand the demand. Most organizations agreed on the importance of securing the passage taken by migrant workers to reach Lebanon. Kafa demanded a holistic law for domestic workers, which would include everything from their recruitment until their arrival in Lebanon. ARM and Caritas representatives stressed the pressing need to create safe channels for regulated migration and suggested signing a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Labour in Lebanon and the respective governments of the migrants' countries of origin. They called for awareness campaigns in these countries to clarify the nature of their work in Lebanon. Most of these migrants travel with false expectations, consequently investing more than they can afford in securing a route to Lebanon and thus arriving already in debt. There has been collaboration between Kafa and ILO with the help of human rights lawyers on formulating a detailed contract for migrant workers which would protect them against any form of exploitation; however, both private recruitment agencies and the relevant authorities are prone to seeking out loopholes in such contracts.

Other recommendations require the work of other non-governmental stakeholders, such as urging labour unions to be more inclusive of migrant workers as suggested by the ILO representative, or increasing the coordination between NGOs as the LERC representative

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7   ILO convention concerning decent work for domestic workers held in Geneva in 2011, and including 27 articles pertaining the rights of domestic workers. Ratified by 24 states (ILO 2011).

advised. The LERC representative in particular emphasized the *role that should be played by the international community and the EU* using their expertise in international law to pressure the GoL to implement policies regulating migration inflow and outflow. The responsibility for raising awareness about the Syrian refugees situation in Lebanon falls on the international community. This opinion was shared by the ICMPD representative who invited the international community and the EU to provide more aid and funds to the Lebanese community. The Legal Agenda representative focused on what the EU could potentially do, such as establishing more legal routes for refugees who wish to migrate to the EU. Additionally, the PHRO representative suggested that the EU countries should conduct studies about their economy and develop a strategy to integrate refugees accordingly. Most respondents from IGOs are not familiar with the ongoing discussions on a mobility partnership between the EU and Lebanon, whereas the MoI respondent has not seen any concrete action taken in that regard.

CONCLUSION

To recapitulate, multiple requests and recommendations have been made by respondents representing a diverse stakeholder sample. These recommendations have been made based on both conspicuous and more hidden issues, as follows:

Firstly, *coordination and cooperation with NGOs*, as reported by several representatives highlighting the issue of overlapping support provided by different organizations including the EU, and suggesting that the EU coordinate accordingly with international and local NGOs to assign certain places or fields to each agency. Another recommendation by the representatives is for the EU to share resources and cooperate with NGOs on conducting research in order to create an efficient platform free of information redundancy, and to establish a system accurately detailing issues where priorities are assigned to projects whilst providing a guideline for their equitable financing and implementation.

Secondly, the *EU's hiring policies*, where the most dominant issue in the EU's approach is the influence of preconceived ideas that are perpetuated through hiring more foreigners than natives. Accordingly, there is a call for the EU to include more experienced local consultants who have expertise in the country's legal framework along with a developed approach in solving migration issues. Moreover, there has been an indication that the EU has a discriminatory payment system in Lebanon whereby foreigners are paid more than local employees who are doing the same job; therefore, the EU should reassess its payment policies in the region.

Thirdly, the *EU's funding framework*, where a similar notion to the second point was expressed in regard to NGOs. The EU tends to grant larger funds to European NGOs than to local NGOs which likewise have more experience in the Lebanese migration field. Additionally, it has been mentioned that there is a questionable pattern to the EU's funds where they are claimed not to fund American organizations, and as such there is a call for the inclusion of these NGOs in EU funds and support.

Fourthly, the EU's organizational and procedural aspects, where the *distribution of EU funds* has pivoted towards Syrian refugees mainly in the past few years without accounting for other groups who are still in need of support funds, such as the Palestinian refugees. Along these lines, the EU was accused of not funding migrant worker-related projects since migrant workers'

issues do not have consequences for Europe. Indeed, most civil society organizations share the perception that EU efforts are exceedingly focused on Syrian refugees, at the expense of other categories, in particular migrant domestic workers.

Similarly, some sectors suffer from under-funding, such as education which is an indirect contributor to improving refugees' conditions. Accordingly there is a request for the EU to separate its funds for public schools and NGOs working with public schools. The major recommendation based on these allegations is for the EU to revise and redraft its funding agenda in the region.

Fifthly, the *efficiency of EU projects*; while such projects have been deemed by some representatives as equitable and well designed, others disagreed and implied that EU projects are abrupt and discontinuous. The projects undertaken by the EU typically require a duration that extends beyond the designated period in order to be efficiently implemented. As a result, there is an overall consensus on the need for the EU to redesign its projects and conduct more extensive field research to gather proper indicators for project frameworks. For optimal efficiency, improved strategic planning of projects and funding is required prior to the commencement of the project, as it is highly recommended to have sustainable projects with consistent and continuous funds. Furthermore, EU-funded development projects should be allocated more equitably across actors, as they are reproached for mainly funding European NGOs, and overlooking other international (non-European) and local NGOs.

Sixthly, the *EU's diplomatic actions*, where a common theme in the reports is criticism of the EU's approach in dealing with refugees, described as police tactics. Such criticism is accompanied by a call for a more humanitarian approach. On a tangent, one prominent issue was the EU's closed borders in the face of refugees, where long-term recommendations were made for the EU to integrate a system facilitating the acceptance of refugees into Europe through economic programmes geared towards their integration. In order to facilitate the integration of migrants, the EU could establish centres in the countries of departure that would educate migrants about the norms, values and cultural practices of the country of destination, to prepare refugees awaiting resettlement for a better integration in their final destination.

Other recommendations to the EU were also mentioned, such as: (i) assisting with reception programmes that provide refugees with legal migration pathways to curb illegal migration and foster security in host communities, (ii) modifying resettlement policies, for instance including short-term resettlement to develop refugees' human capital and (iii) involving civil society actors in policy-making. However, it must be noted that *governmental institutions in Lebanon believe that migration policies should not be participatory as they relate to the sovereignty of the country* and thus should remain in the hands of the General Security in Lebanon, which has the sole authority over migrants and is uncooperative with NGOs. Thus, the EU is faced with this obstacle which needs to be addressed in order to integrate refugees and asylum seekers in the Lebanese society.

Lastly, *addressing the issue of emigration* in Lebanon should also include a serious attempt to gather more information on this phenomenon. It remains awkward that a labour-exporting country like Lebanon does not have official accurate information on the extent and patterns of emigration. For this, one recommendation includes forming a committee which might be dubbed the "National Emigration Study Group", in partnership with public and private

institutions, charged with producing updated analytical information on migration, especially among young people. There have in fact been timid and inconclusive attempts to form a national human resources task force, affiliated with the Prime Minister's office, to conduct a strategic review of Lebanon's human resources and propose recommendations. This initiative should be pursued and widened, broadening its scope of action to assess the Lebanese brain drain and proposing initiatives to rationalize it, in tandem with evaluating the local labour market needs and the contribution of foreign workforce.

In general, more educated migrants and refugees are fleeing the country in search of better opportunities abroad, leaving the poor and uneducated behind. Thus, it is essential for the EU to help generate high quality jobs in Lebanon to attract potential migrants and refugees to stay in the country rather than pursuing careers overseas.

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Annex: List of Interviews

First Round of Interviews (September/October 2017)

Interview A006018. Interview with a female representative of a local NGO [Anti-Racism Movement (ARM) Migrant Community Center (MCC)]

Interview A006019. Interview with a female representative of a local NGO [Caritas Lebanon Migrant Center (CLMC)]

Interview A006020. Interview with a male representative of a community organization [Center for Civic Engagement and Community Service (CCECS)]

Interview A006021. Interview with a female representative of a research centre [Centre for Lebanese Studies (CLS)]

Interview A006022. Interview with two representatives (a female and a male) of the Delegation of the European Union to Lebanon]

Interview A006023. Interview with a female representative of a local NGO [Insan Association]

Interview A006024. Interview with a male representative of an IGO [International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)]

Interview A006025. Interview with a female representative of an IGO [International Labour Organisation (ILO)]

Interview A006026. Interview with two female representatives of an international NGO [International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP)]

Interview A006027. Interview with a male representative of an international NGO [International Relief and Development (IRD)]

Interview A006028. Interview with a female representative of a local NGO [KAFA (enough) Violence & Exploitation]

Interview A006029. Interview with a female representative of a research centre [Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC), NDU]

Interview A006030. Interview with a male representative of an international NGO [Oxfam]

Interview A006031. Interview with a male representative of a local NGO [Palestinian Human Rights Organization (PHRO)]

Interview A006032. Interview with a female representative of a local NGO [The Legal Agenda]

Interview A006033. Interview with a female representative of an IGO [United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugee (UNRWA)]

Second Round of Interviews (March/April 2018)

Interview A006024-2. Phone interview with a male representative of an IGO [International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)]

Interview A006026-2. Phone interview with a female representative of an international NGO [International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP)]

Interview A006053. Phone interview with a male representative of an IGO [International Organization for Migration (IOM)]

Interview A006054. Interview with a female representative of a governmental organization/ public institution [Ministry of Foreign Affairs]

Interview A006055. Phone interview with a male representative of a governmental organization/ public institution [Ministry of Interior: Interior Security Forces (ISF) – Police]

Interview A006056. Phone interview with a female representative of an IGO [United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)]

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