

Third informal interactive multi-stakeholder hearing

Preparatory process for the Global Compact for safe, orderly and regular migration and the intergovernmental conference on international migration New York, 18 December 2017

Panel I: Local perspective of the whole-of-society approach to migration

Recognising that migration is a dynamic process, involving different segments of society, Greece wishes to underline the importance of the whole-of-society approach to migration policy.

This approach is even more important when discussing the local level, where the development of partnerships, involving all relevant actors, is necessary in order for State migration policy to be effectively implemented.

It is therefore important to encourage the active participation of local actors (including local authorities, civil society, migrant communities and the private sector) in the implementation of:

- projects that aim to promote the social and economic integration of migrants legally residing in the host society, including through intercultural dialogue and social interaction;
- awareness-raising campaigns on the available legal pathways to migration and the risks associated with irregular migration; and
- initiatives promoting local development for the benefit of all, taking into account specific local labour market needs and opportunities.

In this framework, it is worth mentioning two initiatives of the Greek State, as examples of good practice:

- Firstly, the **Migrant Integration Councils**, which have been gradually established in the Municipalities of Greece since 2010 and are entrusted with a consultative role on issues pertaining to migrants' integration into local communities. Their role is to identify integration problems faced by migrants legally residing in the Municipalities and submit recommendations and proposals to the municipal councils concerning the implementation of actions promoting their integration in local societies.
- Secondly, the **Migrants and Refugees Integration Centers** which are being gradually established as parts of Community Centers operating within the Municipalities of Greece. The operation of these Centers aims to provide easily accessible, local information and counseling points to migrants legally residing within the Municipality, as well as applicants and beneficiaries of international protection. The Centers are also entrusted with the planning and implementation of integration activities, tailored to the needs of these groups.

Panel II: National-level perspective on the whole-of-society approach to facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration

Greece considers that the whole-of-society approach is crucial when discussing the national dimension of migration policy.

Indeed, although the States play the key role in promoting safe, orderly and regular migration, they cannot do it effectively without the active cooperation of other stakeholders, including civil society actors, the private sector, the academic sector and migrant communities themselves, with respect to each party's competences and expertise.

Such partnerships are important in informing State policy design, ensuring its smooth implementation and providing the feedback that is necessary for policy evaluation, in line with sovereign rights and responsibilities of States to manage and control their borders, as well as to determine whom to admit to their territories and under which conditions.

They are particularly important in promoting migrants social and economic integration in the host country, given the complexity of the integration process and the various stakeholders involved. They are equally important in implementing nation-wide awareness-raising campaigns on the available legal pathways to migration, the risks associated with irregular migration, as well as campaigns against trafficking in human beings and migrants' smuggling.

Moreover, the whole-of-society approach increases policy coherence and vice-versa. In particular, it is important to mainstream migration into development policies, in order to strengthen the nexus between migration and development. In this regard, the current exercise of implementing the UN Sustainable Development Goals, gave the opportunity to States' national administrations to further develop active partnerships with all relevant stakeholders within the country, such as for example, their cooperation with the Corporate Social Responsibility networks.

Last but not least, when discussing the national level, it is important to keep in mind that effective management of migration can only be achieved through systematic co-operation among States, that is, among countries of origin, transit and destination. Their cooperation needs to be based on a comprehensive approach, encompassing States legal obligations, migrants' obligations, their mutual commitments, as well as recognizing migration as both a challenge and a development opportunity for all countries concerned.
