



***MOBILISING MIGRANTS' SKILLS FOR DEVELOPMENT
IN THE MENA REGION***
Making the Most of Young Migrants Skills

**Conference jointly organized by UNFPA-ASRO & OECD
Tunis, 13-14 May 2013**

FINAL PROGRAMME

MOBILISING MIGRANTS' SKILLS FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE MENA REGION. Making the most of young migrants skills

**Conference jointly organised by UNFPA and the OECD
Hotel Golden Tulip Carthage
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In 2005/6, 26 million immigrants holding a university degree were living in the OECD. About 7 million migrants originating from the MENA region were in OECD countries, of which 45% were women and 26% hold a tertiary diploma. Migration within the region is also significant and more and more selective, although still dominated by low-skilled movements. Migrants' skills may not, however, be fully utilised both in destination and origin countries.

Many developing countries are struggling with unemployment, underemployment and massive underuse of young persons' skills. Matching skills development with labour market needs is a matter of particular concern in MENA countries where young graduates who have most difficulties to find employment opportunities that match their qualifications are more and more looking for jobs overseas. This may have detrimental effects on the development prospects of these countries and even more so if migration occurs among young graduates in critical sectors such as education and health.

In the meantime, in destination countries, there is a large and increasing discrepancy between formal qualifications and the jobs performed by migrants, for reasons which are not yet entirely understood. As an illustration of this brain waste phenomenon, in 2005/06, 42% of migrants from middle-income countries with a university degree were working in intermediate or low-skilled jobs, compared with 29% for native workers. This risk of underutilisation of skills also concerns migrants with technical skills. Furthermore, returning migrants' skills are only partially utilised in their home country and the full potential of migrant Diaspora in promoting skills use and development has not yet been tapped.

In 2010 about 380 000 new migrants from the MENA region settled in OECD countries, accounting for about 7% of total immigration flows. The recent geopolitical changes in the region may contribute to create new migration corridors and lead to substantial changes in migration flows from and within the region. This may point to a possible increase in emigration of highly educated youth who are currently facing much higher unemployment rates than their less educated peers.

What is the extent and impact of the international mobility of skills within the region and beyond? What policy measures need to be put in place to ensure that highly educated youth are used to their full potential and contribute to development either by staying in their country or by migrating? How to improve the matching between the supply and the demand for skills between potential (return) migrants and employers in both destination countries and origin countries and in particular in sectors such as health and education?

This conference aims at addressing these questions and identifying key strategies by public and private sectors in origin and destination countries that could enable the accumulation, enhancement, utilisation and mobilisation of skills, knowledge and competencies required by today and tomorrow's labour markets.

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

1st day

08.30-09.00 Registration of Participants

OPENING SESSION

09.00-9.30 **WELCOME ADDRESS**

Mr Houcine Jaziri (Secrétaire d'État aux Migrations et aux Tunisiens à l'Étranger)

Ms Genevieve Ah- Sue (Deputy Regional Director UNFPA Arab States Regional Office)

Mr Stefano Scarpetta (Acting Director for Employment, Labour and Social Affairs, OECD)

Mr Khalil Zaouia (Minister of Social Affairs, Tunisia)

H. E. Ali Laarayedh, Prime Minister of Tunisia (for official launching of the Conference)

SESSION 1. RECENT MIGRATION TRENDS IN AND FROM THE REGION

9.30-10.00 **Keynote lecture by Philippe Fargues** (Migration Policy Institute, European University Institute, Italy) on: how has migration within and from the region responded to recent economic and geopolitical changes? How have these changes affected the opportunities for youth and the development prospects of the region? What role for demographic factors in shaping recent and future migration trends?

10.00-10.15 *Background paper:* **Martin Baldwin Edwards** (Mediterranean Migration Observatory, Panteion University, Greece)
What are the main characteristics of current labour migration system in the MENA region? What are the implications for bilateral and multilateral agreements with destination countries in managing migration?

10.15-11.15 *General discussion*

11.15-11.45 *Coffee break*

SESSION 2. PROMOTING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND USE: IS MIGRATION A BLESSING OR A CURSE?

11.45-13.15 *Round table 1: International migration and accumulation of human capital and skills*
How to better match young people skills and labour demand in countries of origin? To which extent migrants skills are underused in destination countries and what measures could reduce the risk of unemployment and over-qualification and the duration of unemployment? What are the barriers to the international transferability of skills and how can these be lifted? What sort of skills do migrants accumulate abroad and to which extent are these transferable and valued in origin countries?

Chair: **Habib Louizi** (Directeur Général de l'Office des Tunisiens à l'Etranger, Secrétariat d'Etat auprès du ministre des affaires sociales en charge de la migration des tunisiens à l'étranger)

- **Iván Martin** (Instituto Complutense de Estudios Internacionales (ICEI), Spain)
- **Nabil Abdo** (ILO, Regional Office for the Arab States)
- **Anda David** (DIAL, France)

13.15-14.45 *Lunch break*

14.45-16.15 *Round table 2: International students*

What is the available evidence concerning international students from the region? How many are they? Where are they? What are they doing? Do they come back? How can the skills of international students be better mobilised in their countries of origin? How can recognition of foreign qualifications, including that of technical degrees, be promoted to improve the labour market opportunities of students wishing to return to their home countries? What other measures can promote return migration of students and ensure a productive utilisation of their skills?

Chair: **Abdelmajid Naamoun** (Secrétariat d'État chargé de la Communauté Algérienne à l'Étranger)

- **Sylvie Mazzella** (Maison Méditerranéenne des Sciences de l'Homme, Aix-en-Provence)
- **Samia Satti Osman Mohamed Nour** (Khartoum University, Sudan)
- **Caglar Ozden** (World Bank, United States)
- **Janina Koemen** (GIZ, Germany)

16.15-16.45 *Coffee break*

16.45-18.15 *Round table 3: brain drain vs. brain gain*

What is the available evidence regarding brain drain and brain gain for the region? How to make sure that the education system better matches employers' needs? What measures can help to make the most out of international mobility of skills, including in critical sectors such as health and education? What is the effectiveness of the ethical recruitment code and agreements?

Chair: **Gl. Abu Bakr Al Guindi** (President of the CAPMAS, Egypt)

- **Christiane Wiskow** (ILO, Switzerland)
- **Ummuhan Bardak** (European Training Foundation, Italy)
- **Hassan Boubakri** (University of Sousse, Tunisia)
- **Jaâfar Debbarh** (Direction de la Coopération, Ministère chargé des Marocains Résidant à l'Étranger, Morocco)

19.00-21.00 *Dinner*

2nd day

SESSION 3. MATCHING ECONOMIC MIGRATION WITH LABOUR MARKET NEEDS

09.30-11.00 *Round table 4: recruitment of foreign workers*

How can migrants be better matched with labour market opportunities in destination countries? What measures can be used to improve access to information on job vacancies, notably for young graduates abroad? Beyond Europe what opportunities in North America and Asia?

Chair: **Khaled Louhichi (Poplas Resaerch Center of League of Arab States, Egypt)**

- **Phil Martin** (UC Davis, United States)
- **Regina Galias** (Commission on Filipinos Overseas, Philippines)
- **Yves Brunner** (Directeur de la représentation de l'OFII à Tunis, France)

11.00-11.10 *Coffee Break*

11.10-12.30 *Round table 5: Return migration and re-integration*

How can return migration be used to fill labour needs in origin countries, especially in social sectors such as education and health? How can access to information on job vacancies for prospective returning migrants be improved? How best to support migrant entrepreneurs who would like to invest in their origin country? What policies can provide the necessary incentives for migrants wishing to return and render their return beneficial for themselves and their country?

Chair: **Heba Nassar (Vice-President of Cairo University, Egypt)**

- **Bachir Hamdouch** (Université Mohammed V, Morocco)
- **Jackline Wahba** (University of Southampton, United Kingdom)
- **George Kosseifi** (Beirut, Lebanon)

12.30-14.00 *Lunch break*

SESSION 4. IMPROVING THE AVAILABILITY AND QUALITY OF STATISTICS

14.00-15.30 *Round table 6: main data limitations and the way forward*

What are the main challenges associated with the collection of data on migration in the region? How can cooperation on data exchange between countries be promoted? In what ways can the data quality and transparency be improved? Challenges for developing a permanent monitoring system of migration flows and policies in the region.

Chair: **Hussein A. Sayed** (Professor of Statistics, Cairo University, Egypt)

- **Samir Farid** (MEDSTAT)
 - **Theodora Xenogiani** (OECD, France)
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SESSION 5. HOW CAN THE DIFFERENT ACTORS PROMOTE THE USE OF SKILLS FOR DEVELOPMENT?

15.30-16.00 Keynote speech by Jacques Ould Aoudia (Migration et Développement, France) on the role of different actors (destination countries, origin countries, local governments, home-town, diaspora associations, bilateral and regional cooperation, etc.) in promoting skill mobilisation and development

16.00-16.30 *Coffee break*

16.30-18.00 *Round table 7: policy options to foster international skills mobility: coordination and cooperation*

How can destination and origin countries, local governments, migrant associations and employers help facilitating and promoting skill mobility and use? What are the value-added and challenges associated with bilateral and multilateral agreements?

Chair: **Genevieve Ah- Sue** (UNFPA Arab States Regional Office)

- **Ibrahim Awad** (American University in Cairo, Egypt)
- **Mohamed Khachani** (University Mohamed V, Rabat, Morocco)
- **Marie Kruse** (European Commission, Tunisia)
- **Manjula Luthria** (World Bank, France)
- **Jean-Christophe Dumont** (OECD, France)

SUMMARY REPORT

18.00-18.15 Summary of the conference by **El Mouhoub Mouhoud** (Université Paris Dauphine, France)

CONCLUDING REMARKS

18.15-18.30 **Mostafa Kharoufi** (UNFPA, Egypt)
