

**NINTH COORDINATION MEETING ON
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION**

Population Division

Department of Economic and Social Affairs

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UNESCO'S ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD OF MIGRATION IN 2010-2011¹

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

¹ The views expressed in the paper do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the United Nations Secretariat.

Another domain of activity at UNESCO regards the mobility of students and the statistical work thereon by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). Mobile students are students who have crossed a national border and moved to another country with the objective to study. Three operational definitions are widely used to identify mobile students – (1) by students' country of permanent or usual residence, (2) country of prior education, or (3) country of citizenship. UIS runs annual surveys among Member-States to collect data on all levels of education, from preliminary to tertiary. Results are published in the annual Global Education Digest. In 2009, the GED focused on higher education and provides evidence surrounding the growing number of mobile students. Since 1975, the number of mobile students has grown by almost 3.5-fold, from 0.8 in 1975 to 2.8 million in 2007. The report provides in-depth statistics on sending countries, host countries, preferred destinations and types of program, most common fields of study, etc.

C. SKILLED MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

A central feature of contemporary migration flows is skilled migration. While this corresponds to the current context of economic globalisation, it also raises major concerns for sending countries in terms of brain drain. States that invest in education resent their citizens' departure to developed countries and the

D. MIGRATION AND GENDER

UNESCO is aiming to make migration of women both more visible and better understood in research and policy-making discussions. Many issues, especially how migrant women fare in terms of their human rights and empowerment, have not fully been addressed. To accompany ongoing work on migration and gender at the international level, which often focuses on economic aspects, UNESCO is taking a human rights approach by exploring migration outcomes for women. It does so by initiating a dialogue on how women themselves evolve throughout migration, ultimately gaining or losing from the experience in terms of personal security, decision-making power, access to jobs and social services, and other rights-related issues.

UNESCO brings together perspectives of gender specialists, researchers involved with migrant associations, and policy specialists from UN agencies in the *Diversities journal issue on “Female Migration Outcomes: Human Rights Perspectives”* (March 2011). In addition, UNESCO will launch a thematic programme on “Women’s Rights in Post-Conflict Situations and Prevention of Violence against Women” to support women’s role as agents of progress in post-conflict societies, and to advance the elimination of violence against women, including in the context of migration and forced displacement.

E. MIGRATION AND GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE

Climate change is one of the major concerns for the international community. Among its social and human dimensions, its impact on migration is the object of increasing attention from both policy-makers and researchers. Greater resource scarcity, desertification, risks of droughts and floods, and rising sea levels could drive millions of people to migrate. Yet, despite the interest in the links between climate change and migration, the amount of research and the policy development on the issue remain limited. There are uncertainties surrounding the mechanisms at stake, the number of persons affected and the geographical zones concerned and there is disagreement between those who stress the direct impact of the environment on population flows and those who rather insist on the social, economic and political contexts in which such flows occur. Most importantly, the impact on policy-making remains largely unexplored. UNESCO has brought together researchers from all over the world to provide a comprehensive overview of the climate change – migration nexus. This will result in a volume providing

orientations and best practices surrounding human rights, cultural issues, governance and the role of stakeholders.

F. MIGRATION AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION

In cooperation with the UN University, UNESCO has launched a world survey of regional organisations' attitudes toward migration and increased freedom of movement. The project explores the perspectives for agreements of migration governance within regional integration processes. This is largely a new idea as regional integration has long addressed predominantly the free movement of goods and services. Yet, as the example of the EU shows, migration management can gain enormously from a regional perspective. The project will lead to the publication of a *World Report on Regional Integration and Migration*. The volume will contain an overview of the issues at stake with policy recommendations, along with chapters dedicated to the situation in several regions of the world.

G. PUBLICATION ACTIVITIES

UNESCO regularly publishes high-quality books, reports or journal issues on matters relating to migration. Books include *Migration without Borders* (2007), *Democracy and Human Rights in Multicultural Societies* (2007), *Migration and Human Rights* (2009) and *t* (2010). Forthcoming books will address the relationships between global environmental change and migration, regional migration agreements, and skilled migration. In addition, UNESCO publishes an on-line journal entitled *Diversities*, in cooperation with the Max-Planck Institute for the study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity, which constitutes a platform for international, interdisciplinary and policy-related social science research in the fields of migration, multiculturalism, and minority rights.