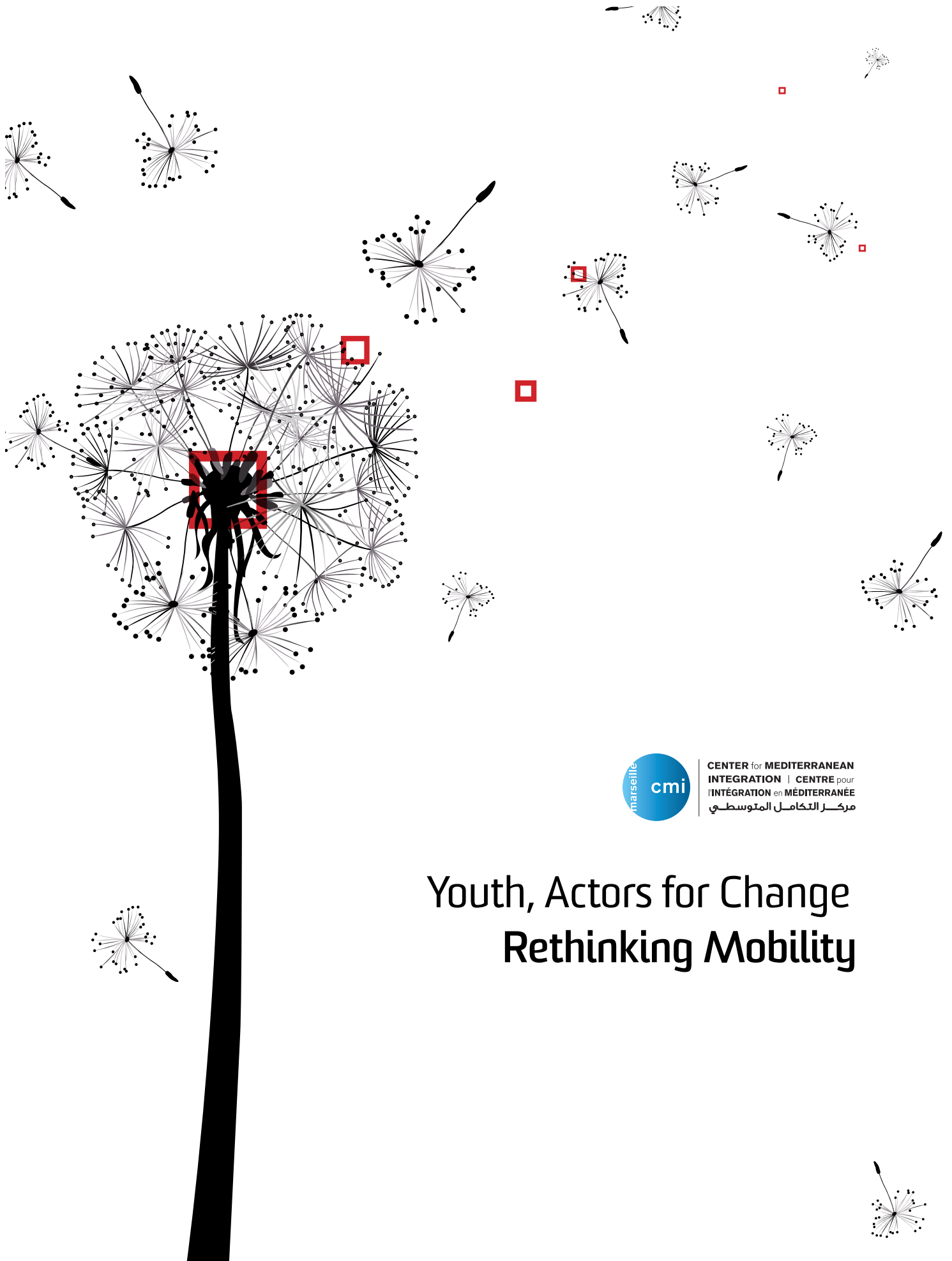




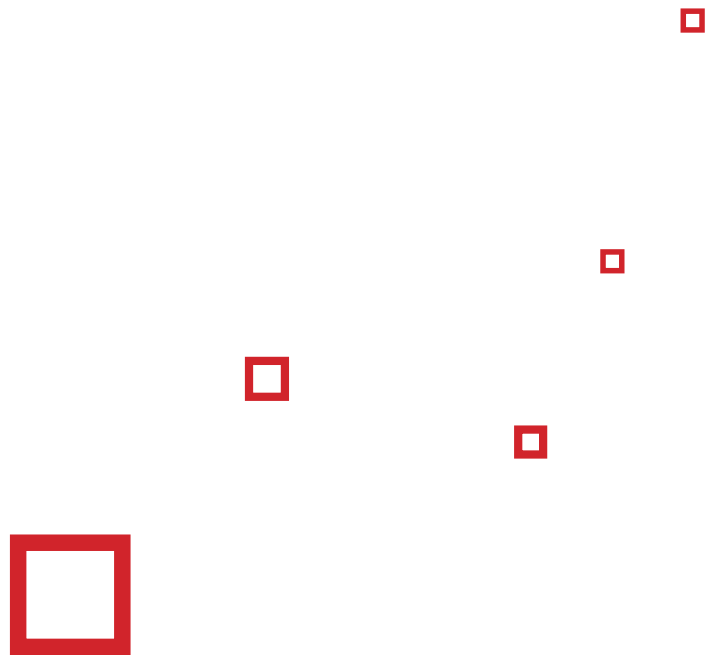
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Youth, Actors for Change Rethinking Mobility



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The Center for Mediterranean Integration (CMI) is a platform where development agencies, Governments, local authorities and civil society from around the Mediterranean convene to share knowledge, discuss public policies and identify solutions to the challenges facing the region.

Contacts:

Ms. Blanca MORENO-DODSON, Manager
Ms. Giulia MARCHESINI, Senior Partnership Specialist

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INDEX

| | |
|---|-----------|
| PREAMBLE | 06 |
| INTRODUCTION | 07 |
| The concept of mobility should be revisited | 08 |
| Young people are not only the future of our societies; they are also the present! | 09 |
| Mobility is a freedom and should be viewed as an asset of the youth | 10 |
| The solutions lie in the labor market and the education system | 10 |
| Key Recommendations | 11 |
| - Mobility | 11 |
| - Education | 11 |
| - Labor market | 12 |
| 1. WHICH MEDITERRANEAN YOUTH? | 14 |
| In the Mediterranean, the young adults bulge represents both a unique opportunity and a host of challenges | 15 |
| A shared perception of exclusion, and diverse aspirations | 16 |
| Common feelings, different contexts in the South and the North | 19 |
| The power of the youth to “take action” | 20 |
| Mobility is, to a great extent, the answer to the challenges identified | 20 |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| 2. MOBILITY AS FREEDOM | 21 |
| Relative deprivation as a driver for change | 21 |
| Mobility is far greater than migration | 23 |
| The case for a Mediterranean Charter on Freedom of Movement | 25 |
| 3. MOBILITY IN EDUCATION FOR BROADER HORIZONS | 27 |
| Preparing for mobility from an early age | 31 |
| Mediterranean module: conveying a Mediterranean perspective from adolescence | 31 |
| Internationalization of higher education | 32 |
| Enhancing quality and pertinence: regional vocational training | 34 |
| 4. LABOR MARKET CONVERGENCE FOR MEDITERRANEAN MOBILITY | 35 |
| Mobility of labor, rights and information | 36 |
| The digital revolution and the transformation of labor markets | 37 |
| Euro-Mediterranean labor market integration | 38 |
| 5. ANNEX | 42 |

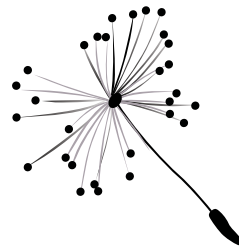
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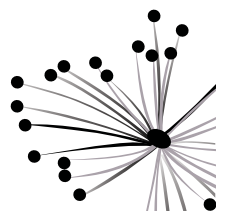
A working group of economists, psychologists, demographers and policy analysts from the two shores of the Mediterranean, firmly convinced of the urgent need to propose a more inclusive perspective on the issues affecting Mediterranean youth, has convened since 2018 under the auspices of the Center for Mediterranean Integration (CMI) to put forward ideas that focus on the opportunities that “mobility” can offer as a way of responding to the aspirations of the region’s youth, particularly in terms of participation in economic, political, and social life.



The aim of this document is to propose “a new discourse on education, employability and mobility” that should help “young people become the drivers of change in the region.”¹ This work is part of the third *Cycle Economique* organized by the CMI and is based on the commitments made by the political and civil society representatives of the 5+5 countries at the Summit of the Two Shores held on June 23–24, 2019 in Marseille. However, the final document and the discussions held in the context of the working group are aimed at influencing public policy makers in the wider Mediterranean region.



1. “Commitments for a New Ambition in the Mediterranean” signed by the 5+5 Ministers of Foreign Affairs (France, Portugal, Spain, Italy, Malta, Mauritania, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya) on June 23, 2019 in Marseille at the Summit of the Two Shores.

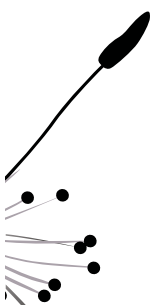


INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic highlights the negative aspects—including the profit motives—of globalization, which fails to take into account the magnitude of inequalities and the deficiencies of States. This pandemic and the crisis it has spawned prompt reflection on the current forms of globalization. In a world to be reinvented, young people, whose health the scourge has spared but whose dreams it has threatened to crush, are the torchbearers of hope for change. While the pandemic has forced nations to temporarily close their borders and turn inward, mobility needs to be reinvented. While it has once more raised the specter of mass unemployment, employment needs to be rediscovered. While it has wiped out years of wealth, value needs to be redefined.

In addition to the COVID-19 pandemic, the entire world has, for some time, been undergoing profound changes that are impacting the systems central to the functioning of societies, not only due to the effects of scientific and technological developments and globalization, but also climate change, which is exacerbating and accelerating the disruptions taking place.

- The link between **economic growth and job growth is weakening**, as seen at the global level since 2000, with this trend becoming more marked since 2008.
- The **forms and conditions of labor mobilization are changing drastically**, with the relative decline in salaried workers and the development of more flexible forms of employment that offer less protection to workers.
- The **very nature of work is shifting dramatically in terms of the skills required for its performance**. In addition to the traditional knowledge and expertise, new socio-behavioral skills are required, in keeping with a rapidly changing world. They include openness, creativity, flexibility and team spirit. Acquisition of these new “21st century” skills is absolutely essential, as many jobs set to emerge over the next 20 years do not yet exist. These new skills can create tremendous opportunities.





- Added to this is a burgeoning **trend toward regionalization**, with the geographic redistribution of value chains at the regional level, which is impacting productive systems. This trend is creating new opportunities for the Mediterranean region, which, thus far, has not derived sufficient benefit from globalization and its proximity to Europe.
- Coupled with the above are **very wide income distribution gaps**. Differences in per capita GDP among some regions of the world are sizeable, and an individual's place of birth quite often plays a decisive role in determining his or her future living conditions. Within one and the same country, these inequalities can also affect living conditions and, for example, create barriers to education or mobility.
- Furthermore, climate change is acting as an accelerator. The challenges it poses call for voluntary changes in a context where States, the private sector, civil society and scientific communities are motivated to seize and act on what, once again, are tremendous opportunities. The response in terms of innovations in the institutional, societal, economic, productive and technical spheres requires the new 21st century skills. Over time, these skills will be in even greater demand.

All the changes pointed out here are, of course, interrelated. Given their magnitude and the complexity of these interrelationships, their end result is fraught with uncertainty.

■ **Against this backdrop of uncertainty and opportunity, the concept of mobility should be revisited**

The desire for mobility is fully aligned with the new skills required by the transformation of productive systems. Openness, creativity, flexibility and team spirit cannot be separated from mobility and the desire for personal freedom. Migration is one form of mobility—the mobility of individuals within and outside a country, whether permanent or temporary. However, there are other forms of mobility such as social mobility, mobility of knowledge and cultures, and new forms of mobility facilitated by current technology, such as mobility offered by telework or by the internationalization of education. Behind these many forms of mobility is a powerful phenomenon: with access to the Internet and, more generally, with the advent of the information age,² globalization has also fostered **globalized visions³ and information**, especially among young people.

To varying degrees, these changes are viewed by society in the context of the diversity and complexity of their interrelationships. They are raising **questions regarding the capacity of institutional and political systems to respond to the challenges they create**. The rise of fear of the other,

². Manuel Castells, *The information Age*, Fayard, 1998.

³. Bertrand Badie, *New Perspectives on the International Order: No Longer Alone in This World*, La Découverte, 2018.

and the xenophobia seen in many countries, may be accompanied by the questioning of mobility. In many parts of the world, a gap is emerging between large segments of the population and the public authorities.

Everywhere, young people are playing an active role in raising these questions. Their skills are immeasurably greater than those of their parents—they are more educated, more urbanized, and more connected. While young people are better equipped in terms of their skills, the opportunities to apply these skills are largely uncertain. These anthropological changes are raising the question of political governance of societies in an altered context, the urgency of which is heightened by a rise in social inequalities, coupled with territorial and gender inequalities.

Our Mediterranean region has not been shielded from these issues, particularly since 2011. Young people in the region are playing a particularly active role in posing these questions, with a remarkable level of participation by young women. They are expressing their clear perception of a situation where their new skills and talents are not recognized or harnessed for their personal growth and for the economic, social and political development of their countries. The vast majority are shut out of the social order.⁴ In addition to this demand for recognition and participation is a demand for personal dignity, which, if not addressed, drives many young people into isolation, migration with uncertain prospects, or violent extremism.⁵

Young people pose a major challenge for all the Mediterranean Rim countries, given their vibrancy and demographic dominance. However, they also serve as a potent force for removing the obstacles to the social, political and economic development of these countries.

The aim of this document is to underscore the possibilities created by revisiting the concept of mobility, which would foster the changes needed in Mediterranean societies. We would like to offer a different perspective: viewing young people as a major asset in the bid to remove the obstacles that hinder these changes.

■ **Young people are not only the future of our societies; they are also the present!**

This new vision must be based on the actual situations faced by young people on both shores, as well as their feelings and aspirations. The major obstacles to planning for the future figure prominently among the

⁴ Douglass C. North, John J. Wallis, and Barry R. Weingast, *Violence and Social Orders: A Conceptual Framework for Interpreting Recorded Human History*, Gallimard, 2010.

⁵ Center for Mediterranean Integration (CMI), *Violent Extremism and Development*, 2017.



life experiences shared by a large number of these young people. Given that young people represent not only the future but also the present of our societies, there is an urgent need to **offer a changed perspective to young women and men in the Mediterranean** so as to restore meaning to the concepts of “citizenship,” “participation” and “work,” terms that hold the key to the great promises of our times. This approach can be considered only from a long-term perspective and calls for a **paradigm shift** in our view of the role of young people in society.

■ **Mobility is a freedom and should be viewed as an asset of the youth**

The mobility of Mediterranean youth should be revisited, with due consideration of the very notion of mobility and “dream” mobility, as well as the possibility of establishing a Mediterranean Charter that encourages movement within the region.

■ **The solutions lie in the labor market and the education system**

Two major potential areas of intervention and action have been identified. Labor markets constitute the backbone of societies and are essential for the inclusion of young people. Furthermore, the education system must not only enable young people to acquire the 21st century skills required for better integration into the labor markets, which are rapidly evolving, but also to strengthen their “capacities” as citizens and enhance their openness to the region, to others and to the world.



KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Mobility

- Draft a **Mediterranean Charter on visa-free movement** that allows the citizens of Mediterranean countries with biometric passports to enter other Mediterranean countries for a limited period, in partnership with European Union countries.
- **Strengthen assistance and support services in the areas of vocational, cultural and linguistic training** in host countries and countries of origin. This would create and strengthen regular migration channels, promote processes that are fully in line with the fundamental principles of circular mobility, help make the choice to migrate a reversible one, and facilitate departure from and return to a specific country.
- Provide the respective authorities **with the knowledge and support needed to improve national laws and bilateral agreements on migration** in a coordinated manner across the Mediterranean.

Education

- Invest in socio-cognitive skills at a very young age by setting up **quality universal preschool education systems** suited to the needs and learning styles of children between the ages of one and five, so as to best prepare them for primary, secondary, and higher education as well as future mobility. The training and mobility of preschool educators are critical to the objectives set.
- Introduce **Mediterranean modules** as early as adolescence (secondary education) to provide instruction related to the Mediterranean. These modules would be built around three components:
 - **Language learning:** In-depth courses in at least one of the main Mediterranean languages. Arabic, French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Turkish or Greek could be offered.
 - **Convergence among study programs** to provide a true Mediterranean perspective. This would entail, for example, broadening national history instruction to include a regional Mediterranean component, so as to deepen appreciation of the rich diversity of the Mediterranean region, while teaching students about the importance of the historical and cultural ties that bind the two shores of the Mediterranean.


- **Pupil and teacher exchange programs:** For pupils, a mobility program based on stays with host families in different Mediterranean countries would be offered. A similar optional program for teachers and other educators could also be established.
- Expand **the internationalization of higher education** and encourage regional institutions to accord greater priority to internationalization with the aim of reaping its benefits, particularly in the areas of enhanced competencies and employability, as well as improvements in the quality of instruction.
- **Encourage student and staff mobility** by developing regional exchange programs, encouraging and supporting students and staff in the region to study or teach abroad, and implementing strategies to make institutions more attractive to foreign students and staff.
- **Expand internationalization “at home”** so that all students can take advantage of internationalization. Activities may include the internationalization of study programs, on- and off-campus intercultural activities, greater use of foreign languages, and virtual mobility or virtual exchange.
- **Upgrade regional vocational training.** Work should be done simultaneously on the quality and reputation of this training, while introducing elements of mobility into these educational pathways. To achieve this:
 - **Vocational training center networks**, bringing together training centers from the same vocational sector, could be set up in the Mediterranean region. The centers would be required to engage in regional cooperation and to harmonize and jointly design training programs so as to enhance the quality of training as well as the value of certificates on the labor market.
 - **Cooperation among these centers should also extend to the regional labor market** by establishing close relationships with private sector enterprises, through apprenticeships, work/study programs, and internships that could take place abroad, and through the development of circular migration mechanisms.

Labor market

- Improve regional co-development by promoting coordinated regional and intergovernmental action to foster **the gradual convergence of national labor market policies** and systems of relations among social partners.

- Support the **convergence of employment and labor policies through a set of integrated institutional, sectoral and territorial initiatives**, in line with the “goal-based governance” approach recommended by the United Nations (2019), defined and shared by the States of the region.⁶
- Enhance **collaboration between State and non-State development actors** by providing information on and strengthening tripartite social dialogue in the Mediterranean region. This should include links between labor and social policies, the recognition and portability of the rights of persons outside their home countries in the health, social, cultural, and linguistic spheres, as well as pension rights.
- **Promote agreements among the Mediterranean States** to enable national employment agencies to create a regional network or even a joint agency in the Mediterranean region. This would encourage circular labor mobility and better harmonization between enterprise and mobility models, with special attention being paid to the needs of youth and migration flows.
- **Work toward potentially establishing a common platform** for employment services to pilot innovative practices aimed at better matching between employment supply and demand, in specific territories and production sectors identified by mutual agreement. This would also promote service complementarity, harmonize regulatory, information and training systems, and strengthen the practice of sharing best experiences.
- **Strengthen the role of labor market services** by creating an integrated services system, to assist with matching of employment demand and supply, and promote access to vocational training and social support and development services in order to foster occupational inclusion and mobility, especially for young people.
- **Make integrated information and data collection systems more robust** so as to facilitate an understanding of the shifts in local labor markets, taking into account the economic, social and environmental factors that have led to instability and insecurity, altered the relationship between formal and informal work, and created new opportunities and adaptation needs on the part of persons who are either employed or seeking employment.

⁶ This would highlight their contribution to the achievement of the goals set by the United Nations in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



1 WHICH MEDITERRANEAN YOUTH?

This paper is about youth. But which youth? Based on the definition adopted by the United Nations (resolution 36/28 of 1981), the term “youth” refers to young people between the ages of 15 and 24. But to talk about “youth” is to categorize – to some extent artificially – a section of a population. However, **there are varying definitions of youth** and this is reflected in the way that individual young people define themselves. For them, the concept of “youth” is not restricted to a single category. Young people prefer to define themselves in less general terms, or even in ways that highlight their individual differences relative to their peers. This shows that the process of individualization should be taken into account when referring to this age group in general, a principle that applies to youth on both shores of the Mediterranean. The age group analysis should be cross-checked with other criteria, including social background, a factor that determines living conditions and creates barriers to education or mobility, for example.



THE YOUNG ADULTS BULGE

How young are Mediterranean populations? In the South, almost half of the population is under 25. The contrast with the north is striking, as Mediterranean Europe has one of the oldest populations in the world, with less than a quarter of its inhabitants below the age of 25. The age structure of the population in Turkey and Israel lies somewhere between the two.* Nevertheless, the proportion of Mediterranean youth is less pronounced today than it was in the 1980s, when the under-25 age group accounted for a record 65 to 70 percent of the population. At that time, Arab countries had the world’s highest proportion of youth in the total population, as rapid improvements in infant and child survival occurred at a time when fertility rates were still extremely high. Then fertility rates started to decline, and fewer births were recorded from the mid-1990s onward. Today, the very



large birth cohorts of the 1980s are now young adults. As a result, Arab demography is marked by a historical peak in the 20–34 age bracket, who now account for the “young adults bulge” (see Annex, Figure 1).** The peak in the proportion of those aged 20–34 is not unique to the region, but occurred two or three decades later than in Asia and Latin America and with an even higher share of the population.

* In 2020, 47 percent of the population in Mediterranean Arab countries is between 0 and 24 years of age. The rate for the same age group is 42.5 percent in Israel and 39.9 percent in Turkey, as against 23.9 percent in southern Europe.

**While the term “youth bulge” is more widely used, it refers to a high proportion of young people between the ages of 15 and 24 or 15 and 29, and is a phenomenon that was observed some five to ten years before the “young adults bulge”.

■ In the Mediterranean, the young adults bulge represents both a unique opportunity and a host of challenges

It can become an opportunity for the region, provided that labor markets are open and benefit from the “demographic dividend.”⁷ Based on this economic concept, a higher percentage of the active relative to the inactive population—or producers relative to dependents—facilitates the transfer of wealth to children and elderly citizens, stimulating growth in the process. The declining birth rates over the last few years can help bring about this demographic transition. However, if the labor market is grappling with factors that depress job creation (as is the case for many parts of the southern Mediterranean), social and political challenges can wipe out economic opportunities and transform the demographic dividend into a demographic burden. This is when the presence of a high proportion of young adults serves to drive down wages and increase unemployment. Such a demographic scenario can also lead to discontent and rebellion, challenging the traditional social order.⁸

We can gain a better understanding of the consequences of this phenomenon by looking at the underlying causes. The explosion in the number of young adults from 2010 onward was caused by the decline

7. David Bloom, David Canning and Jaypee Sevilla, *The Demographic Dividend: A New Perspective on the Economic Consequences of Population Change*, Santa Monica, California: RAND 2003

8. The demographer Richard Cincotta (author of *The Age-Structural Theory of State Behavior*, 2017) was perhaps the only social science expert to predict the 2011 Arab uprising: “a North African state, probably Tunisia, undergoes a color revolution—a swift and non-violent transition to liberal democracy. This may bring Islamists into power—or maybe not. However, the possibilities for spreading democracy through the region and for new political dynamics to play out in an age-structurally maturing Arab state could produce both risks and opportunities for the US.” (Cincotta, 2010, an unpublished forecast for a US intelligence agency).

in the fertility rate that began three decades earlier. At the time, the spread of birth control was a consequence, among other things, of the rapid increase in the enrollment of girls and boys in school. A process described by the Nobel Prize-winning economist Gary Becker as a “trade-off between quantity and quality”⁹—having fewer, but better-educated children—was under way in Arab societies. The increase in the educational level of young people was accompanied by a spectacular rise in the age at which people got married and started a family, leading to a radical change in the situation of young adults.

Barely a generation ago, men and women in Arab countries married and had their first children in their twenties. In the context of predominantly patriarchal societies, young men would come from under their father’s authority to themselves head their own families. By contrast, in 2020, a typical 30-year-old Arab man is likely to still be single with no children. In other words, he is responsible only for himself. The family responsibilities assumed at a young age by earlier generations are no longer a factor, leading to the emergence of the individual in societies that, since time immemorial, have been firmly rooted in the tradition of the family.¹⁰

This demographic shift has led to unprecedented levels of freedom of movement in Arab societies and has created fertile ground for individuals to take risks and to make a variety of choices, ranging from emigration to revolt.¹¹ Free individuals, many of whom have completed secondary and often higher education, have lofty ambitions. Too often, however, their expectations are met with harsh realities: in economic terms, having to spend a long time looking for a job and contending with a lack of recognition or reward for their educational achievements; in political terms, operating under authoritarian regimes that deny their right to fulfillment and self-determination.

The emergence of the autonomous individual can also be held back by the resistance associated with the sheer weight of interpersonal relations in certain situations. This desire to assert one’s individuality, whether expressed within specific groups (artists, civil society activists, and so forth) or in the affirmation of a personal journey, has become a defining feature of today’s youth.

■ A shared perception of exclusion, and diverse aspirations

More broadly speaking, any discussion of youth must take account of a feature observed throughout the Mediterranean region: the emergence,

⁹ Gary S. Becker, *A Treatise on the Family*, Harvard University Press, 1993.

¹⁰ Philippe Fargues, *Génération Arabes (Arab Generations)*, Fayard, 2000

¹¹ Philippe Fargues, *Mass migration and uprisings in the Arab countries: An Analytical Framework*, International Development Policy Online Journal, (7)1. <https://poldev.revues.org/2275>, 2017.

over the last few years, of feelings of exclusion that induce young people to challenge the very core of the sociopolitical and economic systems currently in place. This feeling of exclusion is reflected quite markedly in the figures on youth unemployment.

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

In the South, the youth unemployment rate in 2017 was approximately 26 percent. Unemployment among women is even more pronounced, with a rate substantially in excess of the average (about 38 percent according to the latest available data). In the North, the unemployment rate for the 15–24 age group is structurally double the overall unemployment rate. In European countries, youth unemployment and exclusion—the widespread phenomenon known as NEET, Not in Education, Employment or Training—are most pronounced in the majority of the Mediterranean Rim countries (Greece, Italy, Spain, Portugal).

The frustration generated by this phenomenon is expressed through movements, some more radical than others, that clamor for greater social justice, or environmental protection, or both. Ultimately, the protests and revolts, in all their diversity, target either greater inclusion in the existing system for the most disadvantaged groups, or call the entire system into question (anti-consumerist, anti-growth, and anti-speciesist movements, ideological extremism of both the right and the left, religious extremism, and so forth).

The COVID-19 pandemic and the questions that it raises, particularly in relation to globalization, inequalities and the role of the State, could be seen, from the vantage point of these movements, as a **confirmation of their grievances and concerns**, which are then compounded by the uncertainties of the post-COVID world. Furthermore, the pandemic has also shown that the most vulnerable groups are paying the highest price for this crisis and that such exogenous shocks exacerbate existing inequalities. These protest actions do not exclude the fact that the **aspirations, perceptions** or social constructs that underpin the behavioral phenomena of youth are **heterogeneous** in nature. Even if their demands intersect at various levels, especially as they relate to the quest for greater social equity, equality and justice, their aspirations remain, nonetheless, diverse and multifaceted. Their demands range from issues of a strictly economic nature to the need for social recognition, self-expression and self-actualization. They also include the quest for an environment that is more conducive to unleashing creativity or even an aspiration for drastic change to the economic and production models to better protect the environment and address the urgent issue of climate change.

In the final analysis, it represents a certain vision that seems to question the idea that growth should be constantly accelerating, regardless of



the damage done to the environment or to humans. In the South, the ideas expressed following the popular uprisings (in Tunisia, Egypt, and more recently, Algeria), or the protest movements (in Morocco) by young people are all unequivocal indications of **the will to create the conditions for increased economic inclusion, greater political involvement and real individual freedom.**



Moreover, in the interconnected world in which we live, all communication media expose young people to models of well-being and to rules of law that exist in other parts of the world. They experience what the sociologist Robert Merton¹² calls “**relative deprivation**”: the feeling of being disadvantaged relative to those in other situations whom they regard as their peers. Relative deprivation is a driving force for both revolt and migration.¹³ The perception of relative deprivation can generate collective mobilization to change the political order, as well as individual aspirations to leave their country of birth.¹⁴

Regardless of whether they are from the South or the North, **the demands of youth reflect problems that are common to the entire Mediterranean region:** access to jobs and education, as well as the related issues of mobility and a heightened social conscience.

To respond adequately to young people’s aspirations and advance a vision for the future that is not out of step with the day-to-day life of that population group, **psychological, psychosocial and sociocultural dimensions must be included in the analysis, with particular emphasis on the gender perspective.** It is also important to take account of the views and perceptions that flow from feelings of exclusion and marginalization and that underlie and feed risky behaviors, such as the recourse to illegal emigration, drug abuse, suicide and adherence to extremist movements. Here again, one must draw a clear distinction between several considerations. One cannot attribute the plight of young people from the North and South to the same factors, nor are the existing constraints attributable to the same causes in each country and society. To take account of young people’s perspective, one must listen to their opinions, understand the different ways in which they express their views and perceptions, and give them the opportunity to have a say in public policy decision-making.

¹² Robert K. Merton, *Social Structure and Anomie*, *American Sociological Review*, 3: 672-682, 1938

¹³ The concept of relative deprivation has subsequently been used by analysts of political violence (Ted Gurr, *Why Men Rebel*, 1970) and experts on migration (Oded Stark and Edward Taylor, *Relative Deprivation and International Migration*, 1989).

¹⁴ On convergence in living standards in the Mediterranean, see Center for Mediterranean Integration (CMI), *A New Approach to Mediterranean Integration*, to be published in 2020.

■ Common feelings, different contexts in the South and the North

Whereas youth protests in northern and southern Mediterranean countries are often indicative of a sense of exclusion, it is nonetheless true that their living conditions are vastly different. Young people from the South and the North experience inadequate levels of social, political and economic inclusion, albeit to different degrees. The challenges they encounter in their daily lives also reflect these disparities. At the political level, there are vast differences between the political realities of conflict-torn countries (Libya, Syria), the “stable” authoritarian countries, and countries with a system of democracy or that are transitioning toward democracy. They all exhibit differences in the level of political inclusion of the youth.¹⁵

At the social level, youth protests are often directed at rigid, corporatist and patriarchal structures that inhibit social mobility. However, the pervasiveness of patriarchy varies from one national context to the next. This variation is especially evident in the extent of gender discrimination. While gender discrimination affects women on both sides of the Mediterranean, the degree of repression and the means at their disposal to find their place in society also vary from country to country. Women from the South generally suffer from higher levels of social exclusion, although there are pronounced disparities even within countries. The social exclusion of women has a serious impact on their economic integration. This accounts in part for the paradoxically increasing relationship found in the South between having a university degree and being unemployed, as women are over-represented in the large number of graduates finding it difficult to enter the labor force. More broadly speaking, the economic exclusion of youth in the South is attributable to the very limited scope for formal private sector employment¹⁶ and the saturation of job markets that are unable to absorb this highly skilled workforce. As a result, young people tend to continue their education, sometimes up to the level of a research doctorate. Furthermore, in many cases, rural youth still have no choice but to remain in rural areas that offer very limited possibilities for advancement. As a result, they are often forced to join the informal sector.

¹⁵ In respect of formal political representation, Tunisia has instituted an electoral system that provides for a minimum number of “young” candidates (under the age of 35) to be included in the political slate for certain constituencies. Morocco, for its part, has included provisions for participatory democracy, such as the *Plans Communaux de Développement* (Commune-level Development Plans) in both the provinces and the regions. The country has also put in place a number of mechanisms to mobilize women and youth and has established quotas for these groups to be represented in local administrations. The implementation of these measures is gradual and inconsistent.

¹⁶ For example, out of an active population of 12 million people in Morocco, only 2 million are considered formal wage earners. Of that number, 0.8 million people are employed by the public sector, in the broad sense of the term.





■ **The power of the youth to “take action”**

The aim should be to help youth gain the political leverage they need to take their future into their own hands. Merely listening to their views is not enough to trigger change, neither can it be seen as an end in itself. It is through empowerment that young people will be able to give voice to their aspirations, make their own choices and take action within their own contexts to influence public policy. Such policies should be responsive to their need for empowerment and will only be possible if young people are able to achieve “sovereignty” and if, at the wider level, there is a radical process of democratization in the countries of the region. The challenge is to help youth transform the spheres of policy making and ensure that through their newly conquered spaces they will be able to build their own future with maturity and determination.



■ **Mobility is, to a great extent, the answer to the challenges identified**

In their struggle to cope with feelings of exclusion, mobility can act as a driver of empowerment and a means for youth to achieve sovereignty. First, mobility can enhance the personal development of youth, help them be more flexible in their outlook, give them a greater spirit of openness to the rest of the world, and help them achieve greater self-awareness and awareness of others. Thus liberated, they will have more tools to forge their own place within society. Mobility also facilitates the acquisition of certain skills, such as intercultural awareness, or the mastery of several languages, indispensable tools in a world and within regions that are increasingly interconnected. Indeed, the notion of mobility is already central to the thinking of a certain number of young people, who express in existential terms the desire to leave and discover places hitherto unknown to them. In fact, youth are now the most mobile segment of the population. In 2010 for example, approximately 53 percent of migrants entering the EU were under 28 years of age.¹⁷

However, inherent to the question of mobility are challenges that are radically different, depending on whether one is from the northern or southern Mediterranean region. For the youth of the South, mobility between the shores is viewed as a feat, constrained as it is by very stringent, even insurmountable barriers. For those in the North, mobility is viewed as more commonplace, even recreational in nature.

¹⁷ Philippe Fargues, *International migration and education – A web of mutual causation*. Concept paper prepared for the Global Education Monitoring Report 2019, ED/GEMR/MRT/2019/T1/1, UNESCO, 2017.

2 MOBILITY AS FREEDOM



■ Relative deprivation as a driver for change

As we have seen, the sense of relative deprivation can become a driving force for emigration. The countries of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region are areas of **relatively high levels of international migration** (see Annex, Figure 2). According to UN DESA estimates for 2019, the aggregated inward and outward migrant stocks Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, the Palestinian territories, Syria and Tunisia was 8.1 and 23.4 million people, respectively, or 3.4 percent and 9.9 percent of a total population of 235 million inhabitants, whereas the number of international migrants at the global level represented 3.5 percent of the population.¹⁸ Moreover, young people account for a sizeable percentage of these migrants, since the average age of first migration for all countries and at all times is 25 years (see Annex, Figure 3).

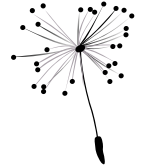
However, most people never become international migrants. Furthermore, those who end up migrating “legally” do not constitute a representative sample of the total population of their country of origin. Education is one of the most decisive factors that determine which people cross international borders to settle far away from their countries of origin. **Whether it is because higher levels of education enhance an individual’s employability in international labor markets or simply because education broadens the scope of one’s aspirations, the fact is that international migrants have a considerably higher level of education than the average person in their country of origin.** The emigration of disproportionate numbers of people with tertiary-level education is a universal phenomenon, whether from the MENA region



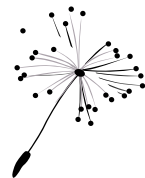
¹⁸ UN DESA estimates of migrant stocks in Arab countries are based on models and extrapolations, not on actual counts. The number of Syrian refugees and emigrants provided by UN DESA, 8.225 million, or more than a third of the total stock of migrants leaving the Arab countries of the Mediterranean, appears to be highly exaggerated. The same may be said for the figure of 3.347 million migrants entering Jordan, many of whom are Palestinian refugees who were born in Jordan, and are Jordanian citizens.



or from most other parts of the world (see Annex, Figure 4). It is also a phenomenon that is not without controversy. The migration of highly qualified individuals is viewed by politicians in migrants' countries of origin as well as by development experts as detrimental to their countries of origin. They refer to the phenomenon as a “**brain drain,**” or “**human capital flight,**” depending on whether they wish to emphasize the pull factor of the countries of destination or the freedom of choice enjoyed by the migrants. In a widely acclaimed report published almost two decades ago, Arab intellectuals expressed similar views.¹⁹ **However, the reality is rather more complex.**



On the one hand, the departure of tertiary educated nationals deprives the origin country of skills that could benefit its economy and its governance. Moreover, if education in the country of origin is financed from the public purse, the departure of graduates is equivalent (if they never return) to a transfer of wealth to the destination country, which is usually wealthier. On the other hand, other arguments favor a **more balanced vision of high-skilled migration.** First, many people with higher education qualifications are unable to find work in their country of origin and emigration offers them a means to escape economic exclusion.²⁰ Second, highly skilled migrants are able to remit and invest large sums of money in their countries of origin. They can also pass on some of the models observed and the values acquired in the destination countries, many of which may be of benefit to non-migrants in the communities of origin (ideational remittances). These migrants, through the diaspora, can also play a very significant role in creating networks, establishing businesses and promoting trade flows between both shores of the Mediterranean. Third, in cases where migrants return (temporarily or permanently) to their countries of origin, they may bring with them human and social capital, know-how, skills, and links to professional networks established during their stay abroad and thus transform the brain drain into a **brain gain.** It appears that this phenomenon has gathered momentum in recent years, with the increased mobility of students. Whether as children accompanying their migrant parents, or on their own, a large number of young migrants (possibly a majority) attend schools or universities in the countries of destination, where they acquire the last stage of their education.



How can the above observations be translated into political messages? One could consider that people owe a debt to their country of birth and citizenship and that the departure of highly skilled citizens

¹⁹ UNDP, Arab Human Development Report 2003: Building a Knowledge Society. <http://www.arab-hdr.org/Reports/2003/2003.aspx>.

²⁰ In the South Mediterranean, unemployment rates for individuals with higher education qualifications are high: 20.4 percent in Morocco (2011); 20.3 percent in Algeria (2010); 34.2 percent in Tunisia (2012); 20.1 percent in Egypt (2011); 27.2 percent in Palestine (2012); 16.0 percent in Jordan (2012); and 11.4 percent in Lebanon (2009).

is detrimental to their country of origin. If, on the other hand, priority is given to an individual's agency and freedom of movement, mobility and migration should be encouraged as positive elements that benefit the country of origin. (This does not imply that such movement is uncontrolled, as labor market forces and other regulations will ultimately determine which individuals migrate.)²¹

■ Mobility is far greater than migration

While the fact of leaving one's country to settle elsewhere is an exceptional event (most people never migrate, and those who do so leave only once or a few times in their lives), two related phenomena occur far more frequently: dreaming of migrating—without actually leaving, and traveling across borders—without migrating.

First, in comparison to “dream” migration, real migration levels are **actually quite low**. Gallup, the American analytics company, calculates—based on international surveys—a “potential net migration index” by country. This corresponds to the estimated number of adults who would like to move permanently out of a country, subtracted from the estimated number of those who want to move into it, as a proportion of the total adult population.²²

The potential net migration index reveals a very clear divide between the two shores of the Mediterranean. All the **countries of the southern shore**, with the exception of Israel, **have negative potential net migration indices**. All southern Mediterranean countries have indices of less than -10 percent, while Algeria, Egypt, Syria and Tunisia registered indices of less than -20 percent, indicating that a massive hemorrhaging of the population would result if the dreams of migration were to become a reality (see Annex, Figure 5). **Indices in the North**, however, **are positive**. The exceptions to this are Romania, Bulgaria, Greece and Italy, where recent developments have been unfavorable to migration and have proven to be a (temporary?) deterrent.

While the survey showed that 15 percent of the global adult population would be prepared to migrate to another country if given the opportunity,

21. Reviving the program: “Transfer of knowledge through expatriate nationals” (TOKTEN), developed at the end of the 1970s by the United Nations, could be a way to turn the potentially negative consequences of the migration of highly skilled persons into an advantage for the country of origin. TOKTEN was an initiative intended to offset the brain drain by tapping into the pool of talent and skills present in the diaspora. This would be done through short-term consultations, in which skilled expatriate nationals would carry out voluntary capacity-building activities in their countries of origin. TOKTEN activities have been successfully conducted in Turkey, the Palestinian Territories, Lebanon and other countries of the region. The possibilities for frequent, day-to-day contact made possible by the Internet, social media and technology could help breathe new life into the TOKTEN initiative, thus strengthening the bonds between expatriate nationals, wherever they reside, and their home country.

22. This may help explain why so many people try to cross the Mediterranean illegally.



it also revealed that only one in five adults who expressed the wish to migrate actually took steps to do so. Of the latter group, only one in three actually makes concrete preparations to do so. In fact, the number of migrants departing each year accounts for less than five percent of the total number of individuals who say they wish to migrate. **The link between desire and reality, if such a link actually exists, is therefore tenuous.**²³ This could help explain the frustration felt by the youth in the South, who dream of migrating.

Second, physical *mobility* is **far greater than migration**. In fact, the majority of people crossing international borders are simply travelers who soon return to their point of departure, and who may repeat the journey several times. Significantly less than one percent of international travelers make the journey for the purpose of migrating.²⁴ **The Mediterranean is a region of intense physical mobility, whereas migratory flows across the Mediterranean are quite modest.** In 2018, 47 million visitors traveled by air, directly from southern Mediterranean countries to the European Union (and a comparable number left the EU for the South Mediterranean) (see Annex, Table 1). This number is 276 times higher than the number of new immigrants from those countries admitted into Europe in one year (170,016 in 2017, the last year for which data were available).

The sheer magnitude of international mobility clearly shows that crossing an international border has very little to do with international migration. On the contrary, one may argue that the opening of borders facilitates the mobility of persons in both directions (entering and leaving) and curtails the need for prolonged stays abroad. However, this is not to deny the link between mobility and migration. Migration is an important subset of the totality of exchanges between economies and societies. It gives rise to various kinds of movement back and forth between countries of origin and countries of destination. The visits of nationals residing in other countries contribute to this mobility: for example, in 2018, these visits accounted for 24 percent of all arrivals by air in Algeria, 48 percent in Morocco, 19 percent in Tunisia, 30 percent in Jordan and 15 percent in Turkey.²⁵ The mobility of non-migrants, people involved in trade and business, arts and entertainment, science and research, and so forth, may be seen as a valuable by-product of past migrations, and attests to the existence of diasporas, or as a forerunner of future mobility. This kind of mobility is particularly important for talented young people.

²³ Silvia Migali and Marco Scipioni, *A global analysis of intentions to migrate*. European Commission, JRC111207, 2018.

²⁴ The exact number of persons crossing international borders each year is not known. However, the number of air travelers alone was 4.3 billion in 2018. One must add to this the significantly higher (albeit unknown) number of people who travel overland. The total annual number of new international migrants is no more than a few tens of millions.

²⁵ World Tourism Organization, *Compendium of Tourism Statistics*. UNWTO (Updated on 06.09.2019), 2019.



■ The case for a Mediterranean Charter on Freedom of Movement

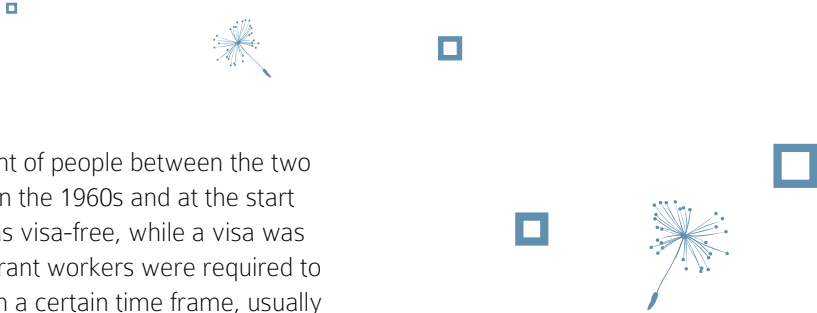
The right to freedom of movement is a fundamental human right. It lies at the heart of the other rights of all human beings, starting with the “right to life, liberty and security of person” (Article 3 of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights). It is also a central element of individual agency, since the freedom to move about is a precondition that allows individuals to be in control of their actions. Freedom of movement is enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, but there is a certain asymmetry in the way that it is inscribed.²⁶ The Declaration affirms the right to leave any country but does not recognize the right to enter another country. The ships that wander the Mediterranean because they lack State authorization to disembark hundreds of human beings in search of refuge are a grim reminder in the 21st century of the tension between the two age-old ideals of Athenian democracy and the Westphalian state. Leaving is a matter of individual freedom, but the right of entry is a sovereign decision of the State. The issue of cross-border mobility highlights the unresolved dilemma facing liberal democracies as they seek to adhere to human rights principles while balancing demands for sovereign self-determination.²⁷ This also points to the lack of a bilateral or multilateral dialogue on migration issues across the Mediterranean.

Has the time not come to take a fresh look at ways of resolving this dilemma in the Mediterranean region? Even before examining the ethical considerations, the progress made, both in terms of individual mobility and in relation to the means at the disposal of States to monitor the movement of individuals, makes it incumbent upon us to reconsider the rationale of current migration policies.

On the one hand, the determination of States to control cross-border movement is relatively new in the Mediterranean region. One of the main arguments, shared by the northern countries, is that the right to move freely within the Schengen Area requires that persons entering the area be subject to tighter controls. However, this contention is not fully borne out by the historical timeline of events. The Schengen Agreement abolishing internal border checks dates back to 1985, while the decision to impose visa requirements on nationals of the southern rim was instituted 10 years earlier.

²⁶. “Article 13: (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state. (2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.”

²⁷. Seyla Benhabib, *The Rights of Others: Aliens, Residents and Citizens*. Cambridge University Press, 2004.



It must be remembered that free movement of people between the two shores of the Mediterranean was the rule in the 1960s and at the start of the 1970s. To be more precise, entry was visa-free, while a visa was required for a long stay. Travelers and migrant workers were required to obtain a residence permit or to leave within a certain time frame, usually three months. After returning home, they could repeat the journey and go back and forth. Generally speaking, the seasonal labor migration model, dominant at the time, worked in this way. The economic crisis of the mid-1970s brought to a halt the “Glorious Thirty [Years]” (1945–75) in Europe and put an end to free movement across the Mediterranean. As mass unemployment emerged for the first time since the end of the Second World War, European countries adopted a number of policy measures, including the imposition of visas as a tool to protect national workers against competition from new migrants. The extent to which these policies were successful is beyond the scope of this paper.

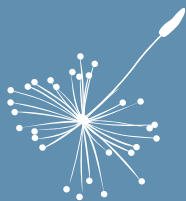
However, as noted in the preceding section, back and forth travelers outnumber migrants 100 to 1. Implementing policies to restrict back-and-forth travel for fear of allowing too many migrants to enter is quite simply irrational and detrimental to the myriad benefits associated with interconnectivity. Nor is security a better reason. Most people who cross borders are not terrorists. Furthermore, terrorists, whether “homegrown” or “foreign,” do not need regular channels of migration or asylum to travel. In addition, the developments in technology that facilitate the identification and monitoring of individuals in the territory of a State make entry visas obsolete.

In view of the foregoing, it appears that the time is right to consider the development of a Mediterranean Charter on visa-free movement for short stays. Both sides stand to benefit from visa facilitation and selective visa liberalization measures on both shores of the Mediterranean. The Charter could draw on the European Union’s experience with visa liberalization for Armenia, Georgia and Ukraine, begun in 2017. Nationals of Mediterranean countries who hold a biometric passport could be allowed visa-free entry to other Mediterranean countries, including in the Schengen Area, in partnership with northern shore EU countries, for visits of limited duration. This would help strengthen links between companies, universities and the entertainment industry, among others, without undermining the obligation that States have to their nationals to protect employment rights.

3 MOBILITY IN EDUCATION FOR BROADER HORIZONS

In the watershed moment that is the current global crisis, **it would be remiss of us not to give serious thought to education.** The education systems now in place in the majority of countries of the Mediterranean region are often predicated upon obsolete models. Models characterized, in various degrees, by an often ill-conceived relationship between older adults and young people and by a desire to maintain the status quo of a social order whose hierarchy and legitimacy are being increasingly called into question. Alarmist pronouncements of a “**crisis of authority**” and a “**loss of values**” or statements to the effect that “**young people have lost their way**” are oft-repeated phrases in the dominant social discourse, reflecting the disquiet not only of the older generation as they struggle to come to terms with the fact that the existing approach to education is outdated, but that of young people themselves as well. In the face of such negative and moralizing pronouncements, it would be wise to remember that the discussion on the “education question” should not focus exclusively on learning outcomes, increasing school cohorts, or on program content, but must also address the design and the meaning of the educational institution for young people.²⁸ In considering the education question, careful thought needs to be given to certain aspects of curriculum content and to educational methods and approaches, while, at the same time, taking a closer look at the relationship between educators and the beneficiaries of education. The mindset as it relates to the type of knowledge being transmitted also needs to be reconsidered: we must impart Mediterranean values that are shared across the region, and we must do so within the framework of an education system that makes it possible to absorb, transmit and reconstruct a body of knowledge in order to produce a new kind of scholarship that is specific to each individual.

²⁸ Christian Laval, *Les deux crises de l'éducation* (The Two Crises of Education), *Revue du Mauss*, 28(2), p. 95-115, 2006.



In preparing young people for a labor market that is itself subject to constant, radical change, it is no longer helpful to think merely in terms of acquiring finite knowledge that is set in stone and transmitted using unilateral teaching methods or conventional channels. The content, knowledge, skills and capacities required to succeed in a dynamic and ever-changing world of work²⁹ are no longer confined to the command of formal knowledge, theories and/or techniques, but include **soft skills: team spirit, openness, critical thinking**. In today's world, when it comes to selecting and hiring staff, different social aptitudes are increasingly required, both implicitly and explicitly. Candidates now need to be proficient in the areas of inter- and cross-cultural understanding, demonstrating thereby that they have the capacity of openness to others and have a solid grasp of the concept of otherness. The achievement of this form of intellectual mobility would certainly be fostered by the mobility associated with the physical circulation of individuals. In light of the foregoing, **mobility should be included as an intrinsic component of the education process and treated as one of the methods of obtaining knowledge and acquiring an aptitude for understanding others**. To be fully effective, South-North, North-South and South-South mobility should be institutionalized across education systems and should be applied both symmetrically and reciprocally. It should involve pupils and students as well as educators. The experience of this kind of mobility would certainly help dispel the delusions associated with recourse to mobility through clandestine channels taken by individuals at some point in their lives.

Indeed, the fact that we have no idea what the next 20 years has in store in terms of **new professions** means that we have to prepare young people to be extremely **flexible and adaptable** and to seize the opportunities that will come their way in the not-too-distant future. Based on Arendt's³⁰ proposition regarding the need "to teach children what the world is like," it has now become vital to give children the tools to discover, by themselves, a world that their teachers will not actually know or experience. The less teachers are able to shape tomorrow's world, the greater should be their sense of mission to empower young people to assume that mantle. Despite the uncertainties, all signs at present point to a future characterized by increasing job instability, with the gradual decline in wage earners and the emergence of highly flexible forms of work.³¹ In stark contrast to the experience of the preceding generation, where wage earning represented security and an avenue

²⁹. Rosa Hartmut, *Acceleration: A social Analysis of Time*, The Discovery, Translated from German, 2013. Ahmed Bounfour, *Digital futures, Digital transformation, From Lean Production to Acceluction*, Heidelberg: Springer, 2015., ESKA Publishing, 2016.

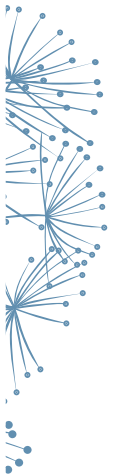
³⁰. Hannah Arendt, *The Crisis of Culture*, Folio, 1991.

³¹. World Bank, World Development Report 2019: *The Changing Nature of Work*.





for social promotion, the emphasis today on flexibility imposes new requirements: an ability to understand the meaning and implications of the changes under way in the economic development process, a readiness to participate actively in the related processes, and a capacity for **creativity and innovation**. It is no longer sufficient merely to adapt to the world of work. One must also create it. In this regard, **entrepreneurship, including emerging forms of enterprise, will be one of the main vehicles to promote inclusion**. An essential objective of the education system should therefore be to promote the development of academic and non-academic talent, conventional and informal know-how, and creativity in all its manifestations.



However, it is now apparent that the value assigned to different kinds of knowledge differs depending on the side of the teacher-student dyad on which one finds oneself. What appears, from the vantage point of teachers, to be a lack of knowledge or defective knowledge, is seen by young beneficiaries, who now have other ways of acquiring information, particularly via the Internet, as important pragmatic learning. The classic response of the teaching and educational sectors is to combat what they perceive to be the **deconstruction of existing social norms** and the disruption of a certain social order. But ultimately, encouraging creativity and critical thinking will challenge the role of teachers as repositories of unquestionable knowledge and guardians of legitimate authority. The fact that many countries in the Mediterranean region continue to uphold practices that reflect the patriarchal values of unconditional surrender to authority is one of the obstacles that prevent students from acquiring knowledge outside the formal education system.

In this way, the relationship between teacher and beneficiary of education has traditionally been perceived as an inegalitarian one by teachers. In educational situations that are considered difficult, this traditional dynamic is out of sync with the way in which young beneficiaries perceive the relationship. In some respects, this is a constraint that might affect young people who wish to design innovative projects, engage in critical thinking or express themselves using non-conventional talents. In this regard, it appears that an effective pedagogical relationship can only be achieved by grounding the social link between teacher and beneficiary of education in a new set of values based on mutual respect, rather than the parent-child model.

The issue of the teacher-beneficiary relationship goes hand in hand with the way teachers themselves relate to certain forms of knowledge that they are called upon to impart and that are foundational tools for living together in society. At the same time, there is a **pragmatic paradox between notions such as human rights, democracy and citizenship, on the one hand, and the pedagogical approach used to transmit these values, on the other**. On the southern shore, the values that underpin

pedagogical methods and the attitude of educators are quite often at variance with the very concepts that they are supposed to impart. This can play out in various ways, including the suppression of meaningful debate or the discussion of subjects deemed sacred, or the patronizing or condescending attitude of teachers.

On the northern shore, pupils and teachers are faced with a social and political reality that is antithetical to the values held by educational institutions, namely the humanist values of freedom and equality (as opposed to discrimination, growing inequality, insecurity, and so forth) or even the ecological values relating to environmental protection (in the face of resource depletion and loss of biodiversity, pollution, unbridled consumerism...). These paradoxes render the concepts taught devoid of meaning. Furthermore, by undermining the credibility of teachers as repositories of knowledge and models of ethical conduct, they call into question the traditional relationship between pupil and teacher.

This loss of meaning and the weakening of the status of teachers is compounded by the digital revolution and the emergence of the information age,³² which, by their very nature, also transform the meaning of learning and the related processes. In addition to the new channels being used by young people to acquire knowledge, especially via the Internet, we are witnessing the development of never-before-seen content that is easy to access, rapid, and used for recreation and even play, while many teachers continue to apply pedagogical methods based on rote learning.

More broadly speaking, both the North and the South are marked by **a contradiction between the democratic and egalitarian aspirations of access to higher education and the limited opportunities that such training provides as a driver of social mobility.** In the final analysis, this manifests in the form of unemployment among young graduates. This contradiction is even more glaring when one considers the tremendous efforts made to promote education by the countries of the North at the end of the 19th century and up to the 1960s, when productive systems became increasingly complex and demanded an increasingly qualified labor force. Nothing of the sort today. The demand of the productive system for a highly qualified workforce pertains only to a limited number of employees. For the mass of young people who aspire to tertiary training, the demand for their services is no longer there.

In the face of the current crisis, **mobility has a unique role to play in the education sector.** It should be applied at all levels of educational development, beginning with preschool, where critical thinking, creativity,

³² Manuel Castells, *op. cit.*

empathy and acceptance of otherness can take root, and continuing through to higher education, to ensure that these new skills will be developed and consolidated to advance the social, political and economic integration of individuals.

Mobility should be more **egalitarian and instructive**, and, in the absence, by and large, of such programs at present, **should include exchanges based on the sharing of knowledge, skills and talents**. This means that **opportunities for educational mobility should be open to nationals of both the North and the South**, as well as to students and educators alike. The objective of this program of mobility would be to promote the acquisition and development of the new skills required by the world of today as well as to update and showcase previously unrecognized knowledge and talent through exposure to another perspective.

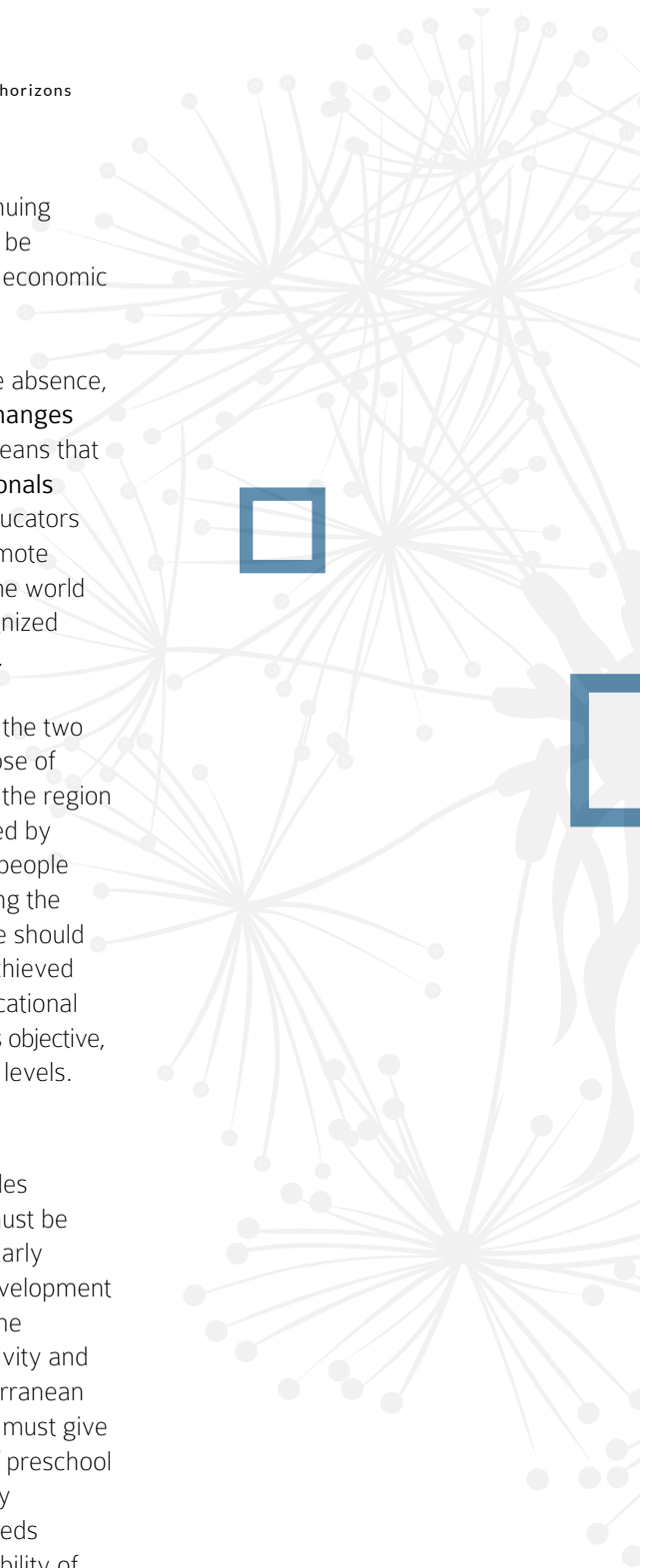
In the final analysis, this means that **physical mobility** between the two shores should be promoted and facilitated for the specific purpose of advancing education and embracing an attitude of openness to the region and to the world. This physical mobility should be complemented by **mobility of knowledge and learning**, bringing as many young people as possible into contact with the world of others and encouraging the exchange of viewpoints. Finally, the measures to be put in place should advance the objective of greater **social mobility**. This can be achieved by incorporating elements of mobility at different stages of educational development. We propose four measures for the attainment of this objective, to be applied at the preschool, secondary and higher education levels.

■ **Preparing for mobility from an early age**

In order to develop, from a very early age, the cognitive aptitudes required for communication with others, the issue of mobility must be mainstreamed as a core component of the education system. Early childhood is a key stage in the cognitive and socioemotional development process. It is vital, therefore, to use this period to begin laying the foundation for the development of skills such as flexibility, creativity and the ability to solve new problems. In our desire to equip Mediterranean youth with the tools that they need to succeed in the world, we must give careful thought to the promotion of such skills and to the role of preschool education as a whole. It is therefore essential to establish quality universal preschool education systems that are suited to the needs and learning styles of very young children. The training and mobility of preschool educators are critical to the objectives set.

■ **Mediterranean module: conveying a Mediterranean perspective from adolescence**

Adolescence is a uniquely important period in the training and development of young people. It is at this stage that they develop their own ideas of the world and try to find their place in the political,





cultural, social and economic spheres. With this in view, we propose the introduction of a number of Mediterranean modules at the secondary level that focus on aspects of physical mobility and mobility of knowledge. These modules would be built around three components.

■ **Language learning**

The Mediterranean modules will include in-depth courses in at least one of the main Mediterranean languages, namely Arabic, French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Turkish or Greek. Expanding the number of languages taught will help promote the learning of certain languages that are still not adequately recognized.

■ **Presenting the diversity of Mediterranean knowledge**

Provide a true Mediterranean perspective for young people taking these modules, by outlining the visions of the North and South on issues of common concern in certain thematic areas such as geography, history and social economics. The introduction of these modules will enhance the study programs and give students access to a second interpretation of events, while strengthening their knowledge and acceptance of others. This exercise in sharing and exchange could help shape the development of a vision that is shared by the society as a whole.

■ **Mobility of pupils and teachers**

The participation of pupils in an exchange program, based on home stays with host families in different Mediterranean countries, would be an integral part of the Mediterranean modules. This kind of mobility would give young people an opportunity to encounter others, open up to the world and develop their flexibility and creativity. A similar program should be put in place for teachers and other educators. This would further promote the Mediterranean quality of instruction and open new perspectives on teaching that are more egalitarian and more closely aligned with values of everyday life.

■ **Internationalization of higher education**

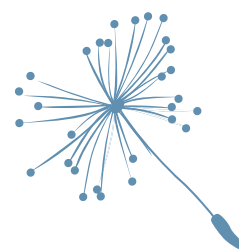
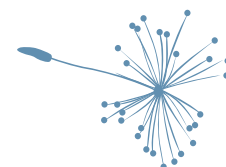
The internationalization of higher education can be used to mainstream mobility, in its broadest sense, into tertiary education. Internationalization may be defined as *“the intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of post-secondary education, in order to enhance the quality of education, and research for all students and staff, and to make a meaningful contribution to society.”*³³ It includes the mobility of students and staff, branch campuses, internationalization “at home” activities including the internationalization of study programs and virtual exchanges, academic partnerships, the internationalization of research, and so forth.

³³. From De Wit, Hans, et al. (2015) Internationalization of Higher Education. Directorate-General for Internal Policies of the European Parliament, Policy Dept. B: Structural and Cohesion Policies, Culture and Education, p. 29. Definition based on Knight, Jane (2003)

Internationalization offers many advantages to students, to educational institutions and to the countries taking part. It promotes the development of 21st century skills, especially intercultural and socioemotional competencies, and strengthens the employability of students in today's labor market. At the same time, institutions can avail themselves of internationalization to improve the quality of education. In addition, countries stand to benefit from internationalization through the sizeable contribution that foreign students can make to their economy. Furthermore, the closer ties that are formed between countries that engage in internationalization arrangements can help all stakeholders enhance their reputation and influence at the regional and global levels.

While the unique socioeconomic context of each country of the Mediterranean means that each institution must develop its own, adapted strategy, it is nonetheless essential that across the board, internationalization be mainstreamed into the region's tertiary education systems. There are major differences between the northern and southern Mediterranean in the status of internationalization. Nevertheless, regional cooperation among Mediterranean countries, including the sharing of best practices, exchange, and partnership, should be seen as a useful first step in ensuring that greater priority is assigned to internationalization in the work programs of the institutions and governments of the entire region. This could be achieved by taking the following steps:

- **Encourage student and staff mobility:** most Mediterranean countries are not among either the largest receiving or sending countries with respect to international mobility. Yet, the interpersonal relationships formed, and the experiences gained, in the context of academic mobility, are essential to the development of knowledge and the acceptance of others. Tertiary education institutions of the Mediterranean could expand the number of exchange programs, encourage and support students and staff of the region to study or teach abroad, and adopt strategies to make their institutions more attractive to foreign students and staff. Governments could help create an enabling environment by facilitating visa procedures and offering scholarships to ensure more equitable access to mobility.
- **Expand internationalization "at home":** This component includes a wide range of activities, including the internationalization of the curriculum, on- and off-campus intercultural activities, greater use of foreign languages, and virtual mobility or virtual exchanges. In the same way as physical mobility, internationalization "at home", a kind of mobility of knowledge, can also serve to strengthen students' essential 21st century skills and help prepare students for today's ever-evolving labor markets. Internationalization "at home" activities are also generally less costly and easier to implement.





In the current context of the COVID-19 pandemic, internationalization “at home” assumes even more importance for Mediterranean countries, where internationalization is taking hold in a very unequal manner. ICT-enabled activities, such as virtual exchange, can continue despite the restrictions on physical mobility; they offer Mediterranean countries an opportunity to advance on internationalization and mobility – in the broadest sense – and to ensure that mobility is assigned a central role in policies on higher education.

■ **Enhancing quality and pertinence: regional vocational training**

The introduction of mobility aspects should also be extended to vocational training. Vocational careers have not kept pace with the requirements of the labor market and their socioeconomic value is often under-appreciated. For this reason, vocational training is often not considered an attractive option for Mediterranean youth. In view of the potential job prospects, efforts must be made to improve the quality and reputation of this training. Here again, mobility could play a key role.



- Vocational training networks that bring together training centers from the same vocational sector could be established in the Mediterranean region. The centers would be required to cooperate at the regional level and to harmonize and work together on the design of training programs. This exchange and mobility of knowledge and know-how would enhance the quality of training and the value of certificates on the labor market. The establishment of these vocational training networks would facilitate the identification,³⁴ harmonization and recognition of vocational qualifications (traditional and emerging vocational careers) at the regional level.
- The centers should also cooperate in the regional labor market, by establishing close relationships with private sector enterprises through apprenticeships, work/study programs, and internships that could be undertaken abroad. By establishing close ties with the private sector, the centers would be better placed to understand the real needs of enterprises and better adapt the training programs to labor market requirements. Such an approach, which involves people-to-people exchanges in regional professional contexts, could help young people develop certain 21st century skills.

³⁴ One could draw on the experience of Germany, which has developed tools to identify the professional skills of refugees: “*My Skills*” - <https://www.myskills.de/en/>.

4 LABOR MARKET CONVERGENCE FOR MEDITERRANEAN MOBILITY

The economic and productive systems of the entire region have **obvious limitations**. At the economic level, they have not contributed to balanced or shared growth between the two shores. At the sociopolitical level, they have not managed to meet societal expectations or the aspirations of youth and have fallen short in responding to the urgent need to activate a truly sustainable development process that seeks to advance joint development as part of a broader strategic vision of an integrated community.

New technologies are driving structural changes in production processes and in the world of work—with job losses, mainly among native-born workers with intermediate level qualifications, owing to the substitution effect—as well as at the social level, as globalization and multilateralism are called into question. The search for a “new regional development model” is underway and concerns the majority of countries of the region.³⁵ As seen previously, these technological and societal transformations are driving far-reaching changes in labor mobilization trends, the repercussions of which are particularly pronounced in the areas of education and mobility. These challenges cannot be met at the national level. They must be addressed on a much broader scale.

Indeed, the obvious complementarities between the two shores of the Mediterranean, in terms of the dynamics of population change, particularly the large number of young people on the southern shore, and the labor market requirements, have not, so far, been sufficient to generate a pro-integration dynamic between the two

³⁵ This was the expression used in 2018 by the King of Morocco, when calling for the design and establishment of a new and “more socially and spatially inclusive” development model. A special commission was established at the end of 2019 for this purpose.



shores. Furthermore, over the next 30 years, the entire world, with the exception of Sub-Saharan Africa and the Indian subcontinent, will experience a shortage in the working-age population. North Africa, will, like Europe, find itself with an ageing population and an increased level of stress on the labor force. Now considered countries of transit and emigration, the countries of North Africa are also becoming countries of immigration. As a result, **many of the problems associated with the integration of migrants, especially into labor markets, are encountered in southern Mediterranean countries, as in their northern counterparts.**

We propose, therefore, to **introduce the concept of the progressive, functional and controlled convergence of the labor markets, policies, regulations and working methods in all Mediterranean countries.** This approach is consistent with the fundamental principle of the free movement of capital, goods, services and people, including youth, and is intended to serve as a target for the formulation of public policies and the mobilization of the State and non-State actors on both shores. The concept of convergence can also help drive the mobility of productive forces, open the door to new growth opportunities and establish the conditions for launching a new development model. It is predicated on the far-reaching changes being experienced by our countries as a result of the international context in which we operate (the evolution of work and new technologies, challenges to globalization, climate change) and, as outlined earlier, includes components on education and mobility.

■ Mobility of labor, rights and information

The approach that we propose prompts us to rethink the issue of the mobility of workers between the two shores of the Mediterranean. It presupposes, therefore, the **establishment and consolidation of regular migration channels** to limit the use of irregular channels that often lead to informal work in host countries.

This could be achieved by facilitating circular migration, which refers to the regular or repetitive flow of migrants, typically for the purpose of employment. This can redound to the benefit of the country of origin of the migrant (remittances, reduction of pressure on the local labor market, the “brain gain” phenomenon). It can also benefit the destination country of the migrant (need for temporary, seasonal or cyclical labor) and the migrants themselves (new learning and income-generating opportunities). Circular migration can be organized and facilitated through **cooperation agreements and programs between countries or through legislative action** in the destination countries.

The option of migrants returning to their home countries after a long stay abroad should also be considered. This practice is especially beneficial to the country of origin as it can, upon the return of migrants, facilitate the



transfer of human capital, social knowledge and financial resources. The measures implemented in the context of circular migration, as well as “return of talent” programs, can contribute in this regard.

The success of the migratory experience is critical for several reasons. In addition to the positive impact that it can have on the migrant, it can also benefit the receiving country (better integration of migrants into society and the labor market) and the country of origin (maintenance of ties with the country of origin, remittances to families, investments). **Prospective migrants should, therefore, receive training in their country of origin** in language skills, professional qualifications (education and vocational training) and cultural awareness and understanding.

It is also important to capitalize on the entrepreneurial skills and innovative capacity of migrants. **Recognizing and promoting the approaches** described above will benefit both sides by helping to bridge the gap between the perception of migrants in host societies and the lived reality of migration.

Information sharing on skills needs and the mutual recognition of qualifications by countries, including the “invisible skills” that migrants possess and which they find difficult to have recognized in host countries, are two key elements that need to be taken into account when addressing the common labor market concerns that affect the Mediterranean region.

Strengthening social protection, by, for example, expanding comprehensive coverage or enhancing social assistance and social insurance plans and **promoting the transferability of social rights acquired in the host country** (especially pensions and retirement benefits) would help reduce the uncertainty surrounding the issue of the rights of a mobile workforce.

■ The digital revolution and the transformation of labor markets

The possible reconfiguration of regional value chains in the post-COVID-19 context could unsettle regional labor markets. The countries of the region should boost their resilience to economic shocks, while enhancing their capacity to diversify and expand production into new and emerging industries (green economy, renewable energy, industry 4.0). These changes will have a major impact on the institutional requirements that influence labor mobility, and could, for example, play out in the form of salaried employment contracting at a higher rate, as more flexible but more precarious forms of labor, such as self-employment and entrepreneurship, become more widespread. The authorities and economic and social actors on both shores could collaborate on **the preparation and implementation of new institutions to regulate and protect non-salaried employment**.



At the same time, **countries should adopt coordinated approaches to the critical and quantitatively significant issue of informal work.** The reduction of informal employment should therefore be a common objective for the countries on both shores. Public policies designed to steer migration in the direction of the formal sector should seek to ensure that education, including vocational training, is more focused on the needs of the productive sector.

Technological developments, including telework, can provide very attractive prospects to young graduates from countries on the southern shore.³⁶ The countries of both shores could coordinate efforts to **promote investments that boost the technical capacity of trans-Mediterranean telecommunications networks.**

■ **Euro-Mediterranean labor market integration**

Given the effects brought about by changes in production systems and value chains, new models of development will be required to strengthen performance within the region (redeployment of value chains, increased integration of systems of production, improved division of labor, enhanced productivity, shorter value chains, greater value-added for each country, regionalization, complementarity, implementation of the future of work at a more accelerated pace, etc.). At the same time, in order to respond more effectively to emerging needs in labor markets, the mobility of workers between the two shores will be a key requirement. Apart from these changes, it is widely acknowledged that labor markets, together with their related services, have entered a transitional phase. A more adequate definition of labor markets and their role is therefore required; one that describes **their extended scope of action: promoting the effective link between labor supply and demand, supporting vocational training, and making social benefits available to workers.** It is therefore indispensable to **reshape labor markets in the region, and reorganize them so that they may be fit for purpose and more effective,** and thus better able to achieve the strategic objective of promoting and facilitating job mobility, especially for youth.

Convergence remains a long-term objective, which can only be attained by implementing a series of wide-ranging and ambitious measures. The signing of a ministerial-level **agreement** between the countries of the Mediterranean, **declaring that the convergence between employment policies and those that govern the labor markets is an objective shared by both sides and establishing a roadmap for its attainment,** could be a first step in this direction. Such an agreement would seek to facilitate the examination

³⁶ India has made great strides in this area, especially in digital technology jobs.



and assessment of existing regulatory systems and their capacity to promote labor mobility within the Mediterranean region. It would also seek to streamline and adapt these systems to meet the new requirements for economic growth, and promote the joint assessment of achievable outcomes, as well as of those results that have actually been achieved.

Subsequently, various measures may be envisaged, such as the **creation of a joint agency, or network of national agencies**, charged with studying the governance models of the respective labor markets; the **establishment of an intergovernmental roundtable on innovation and new jobs**, linked to the new development scenarios (new jobs, new skills, new careers); the **setting up of a Mediterranean platform for job seekers**; and the **implementation of a pilot project for the harmonization of the labor market regulations in selected local and regional administrations**.

It is particularly vital to **strengthen effective organic collaboration between State and non-State development partners**, in the context of the joint initiatives being undertaken between the States of the Mediterranean region. This collaboration may be effected with public support, to promote the practice of a tripartite social dialogue (States, social partners and civil society), in order to come up with the labor mobility solutions that most effectively respond to the needs of individuals and enterprises, and propose such solutions to State institutions.

As part of the tripartite social dialogue, it is equally important to establish a process for reviewing and strengthening the links between labor and social policies. This is yet another factor that has had a significant impact—and will have an increasingly greater influence in the future—on the dynamics of labor mobility. Consequently, in order to identify workable solutions and encourage flexible work and extensive mobility, it is particularly important to **promote an in-depth discussion on pension plans in the Mediterranean region, as well as on individual rights and the portability of such rights**.

As this document is being written, States have reacted to the COVID-19 pandemic by closing national borders. When the pandemic ends, the resumption of mobility will, necessarily, be a gradual process. The creation of spaces that encourage regional mobility should help advance the integration of the Mediterranean region.



This paper is the product of the discussions of a working group that was hosted by the Center for Mediterranean Integration. The working group was composed of economists, psychologists, demographers and policy analysts from both shores of the Mediterranean, who were appointed *intuitu personæ* for their knowledge of the subject and of the region.

The following people took part in meetings of the working group:

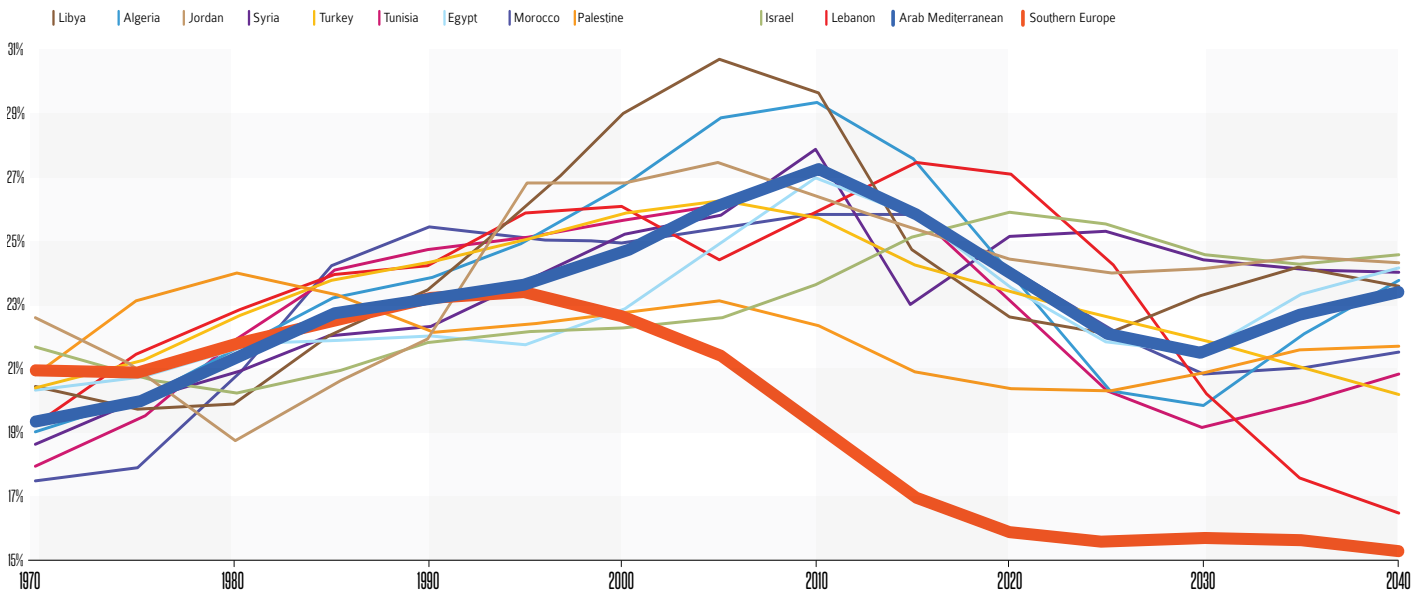
Mr. Mehdi ALIOUA, Ms. Lise BARBOTTE, Mr. Eric BAULARD, Ms. Dorra BEN ALAYA, Ms. Rim BEN ISMAIL, Mr. Kamel BRAHAM, Mr. Salvatore CAPASSO, Mr. Mohamed CHAFIKI, Mr. Rohen D'AIGLEPIERRE, Ms. Cécile DUQUESNAY, Mr. Philippe FARGUES, Mr. Noomane FEHRI, Ms. Hend HASSASSI, Ms. Aurelia HOFFMANN, Mr. Ahmet İÇDUYGU, Ms. Holly JOHNSTONE, Mr. Olivier LE MASSON, Ms. Agnès LEVALLOIS, Ms. Giulia MARCHESINI, Mr. Rafael MORENO, Ms. Blanca MORENO-DODSON, Mr. El Mouhoub MOUHOUD, Ms. Sulafa MUSA, Mr. Guénolé OUDRY, Mr. Jacques OULD AOUDIA, Mr. Lorand REVAULT, Mr. Marco RICCERI, Mr. Furio C. ROSATI, Mr. Matteo SGARZI, Mr. Mongi SMAILLI.

Project coordinator: Ms. Giulia Marchesini, Senior Partnership Specialist



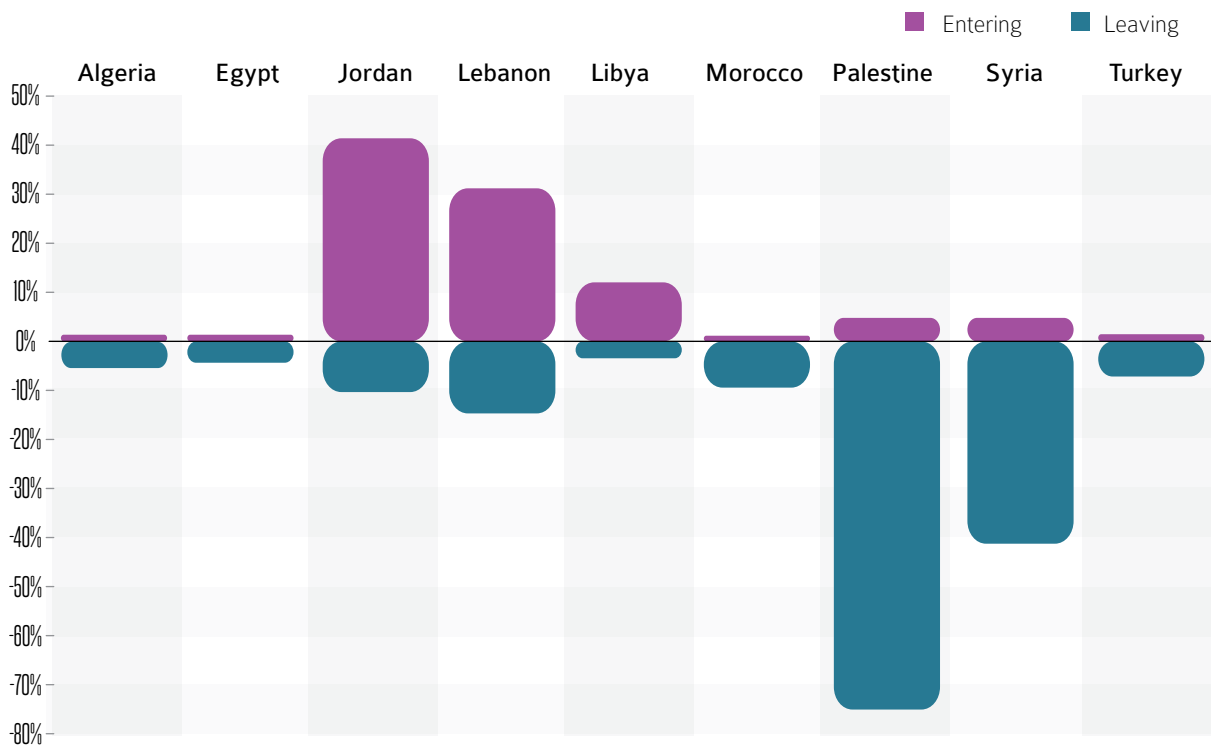
5 ANNEX

Figure 1. Proportion of young adults aged 20–34 in Mediterranean countries (1970–2040)



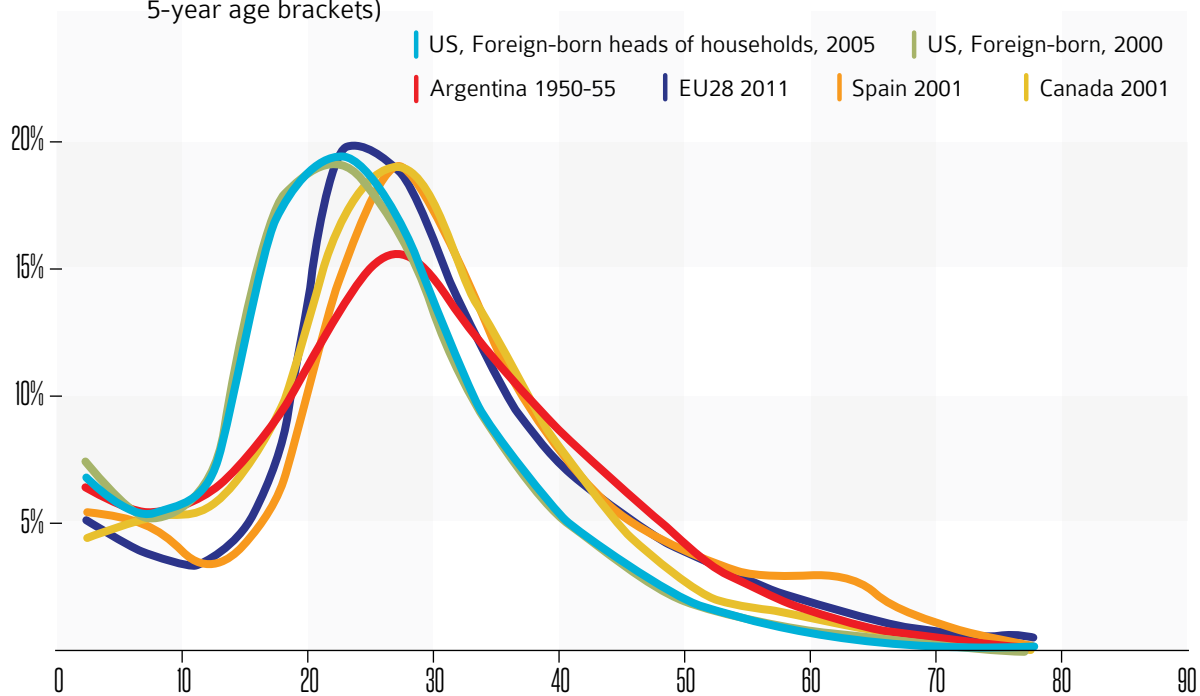
Source: UN DESA World Population Prospects (2015)

Figure 2. Migrants entering and leaving Mediterranean countries from the Arab world, as a percentage of the total population – 2019 estimates



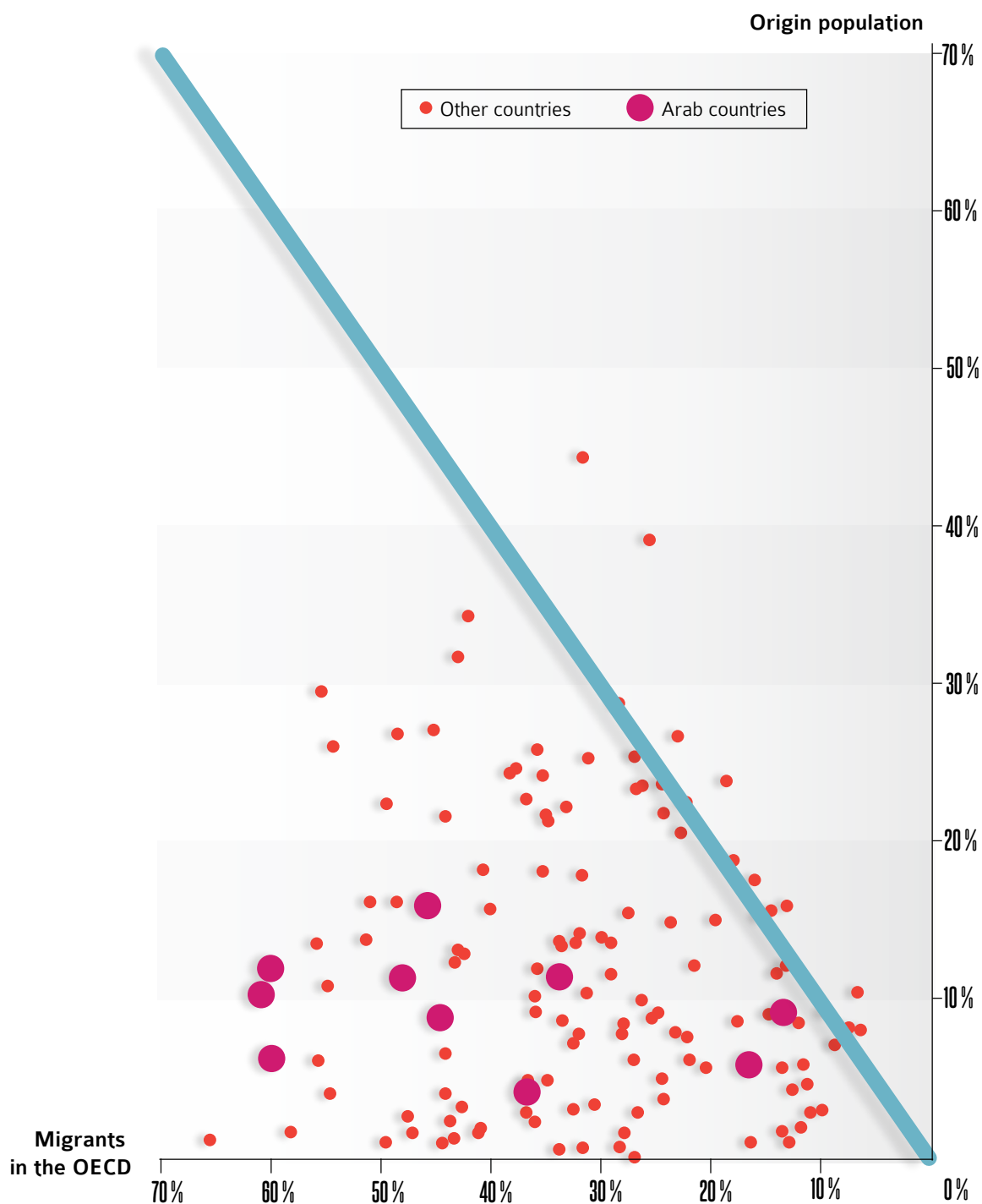
Source: UN DESA

Figure 3. Percentage distribution of migrants of different ages in selected countries (curves based on 5-year age brackets)



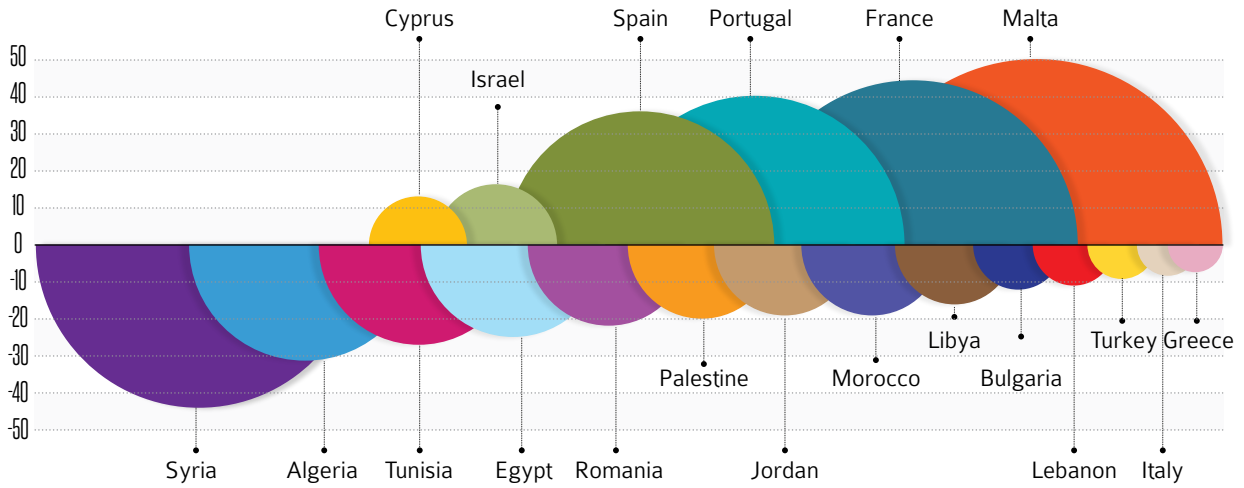
Source: UN DESA and EUROSTAT

Figure 4. Percentage of population (male and female) aged 25 years and over among OECD nationals and migrants who have completed at least a short course of higher education – ca. 2010



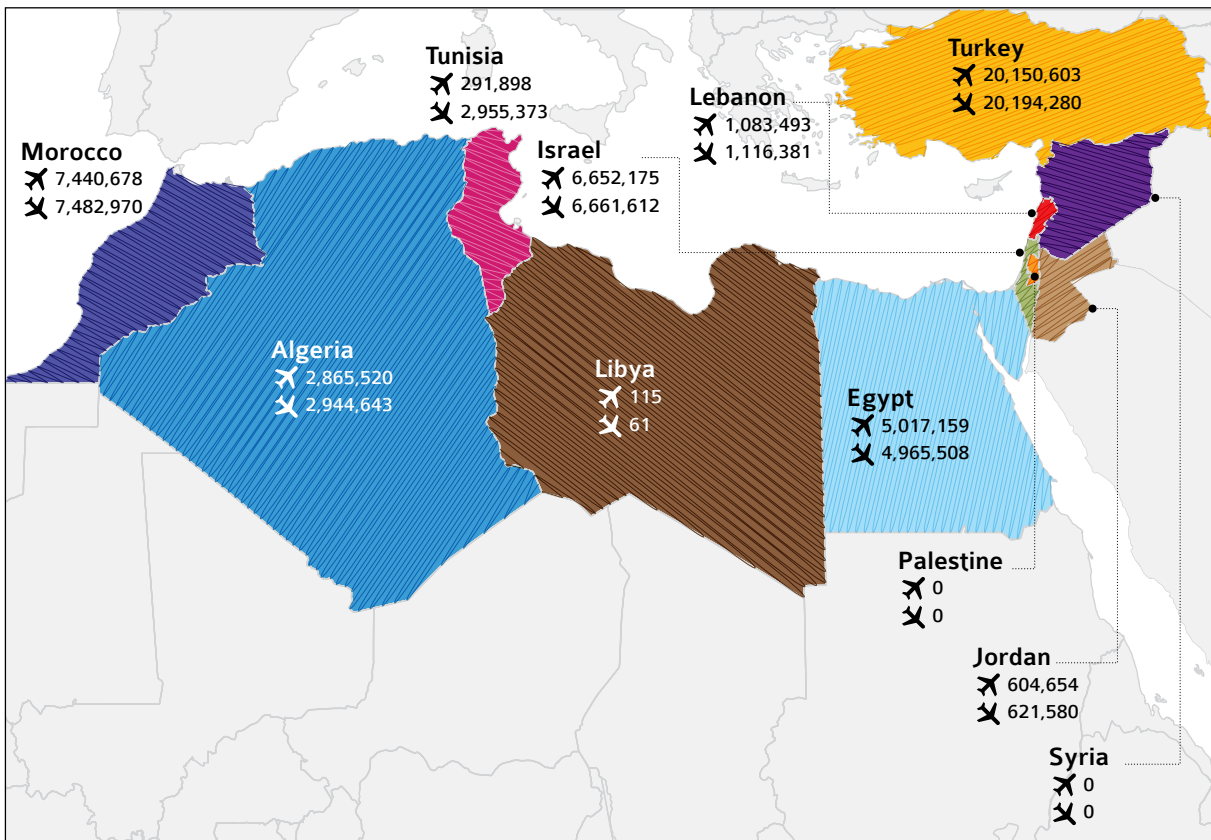
Source: Philippe Fargues, International Migration and Education – A Web of Mutual Causation, Think Piece prepared for the 2019 Global Education Monitoring Report Consultation, ED/GEMR/MRT/2019/T1/1, UNESCO, 2017.

Figure 5. Gallup Poll, Potential Net Migration Index in South Mediterranean countries (gains and losses, percent)



Source: Neli Espiova, Julie Ray and Anita Pugliese, December 10, 2018.

Table 1. International air transport in 2018 of passengers outside the EU, by partner country (number of passengers)



Source: EUROSTAT

https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database?p_p_id=NavTreeportletprod_WAR_NavTreeportletprod_INSTANCE_nPqeVbPXRmWQ&p_p_lifecycle=0&p_p_state=normal&p_p_mode=view&p_p_col_id=column-2&p_p_col_pos=1&p_p_col_count=2

