

SUBREGIONAL COOPERATION FOR SDG IMPLEMENTATION

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- Migration is well integrated into the 2030 Agenda with human mobility referenced across its 17 Goals, including priority goals for this region, in particular Goals 3 and 5. It is most explicitly mentioned within Goal 10 on reducing inequality within and among countries, under Target 10.7, which motivates countries to “Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies”.
- Migration is one of key transboundary issues. Considering the migration dimension of different goals and targets helps to bring out the connectivity and interdependency among countries – the neighbouring ones as well as those further apart but connected by a migration route.
- International migration always involves more than one country, it therefore simply cannot be addressed in isolation. As such, migration is one of the issues for which cooperation, including regional and sub-regional, is of paramount importance. Cooperation and dialogue on migration, including at regional level, has been expanding, and this is something IOM has been actively supporting for many years.
- There are many different types of frameworks and mechanisms for cooperation on migration at different levels. Currently, many of them are looking at how they can support the achievement of migration-related aspects of the 2030 agenda.
- One well-recognized and successful cooperation model in the migration field is usually referred to as the Regional Consultative Processes on migration (RCPs). RCPs promote policy dialogue, cooperation and partnership on migration issues among their Member States. In some cases, they include other stakeholders in addition to the states. There are RCPs in almost every region of the world, with 160 countries a member of at least one RCP. In the UNECE region, there are several such RCPs: the Almaty Process on Refugee Protection and International Migration, the Budapest Process and the Prague Process. These processes have been set up at different times, have different geographic scopes and focus on different aspects of migration. However, they do have some key elements in common: they are state-led and ongoing, and mostly non-binding. This type of fora has shown to be effective at enabling dialogue and joint work on migration issues, despite their often sensitive nature, and can also be conducive to cooperation needed for attaining the SDGs.
- Last year, the Global Meeting of Chairs and Secretariats of Regional Consultative Processes on Migration, which IOM organizes each year, was dedicated to the role of these mechanisms in the achievement of the SDGs. This meeting has shown that many RCPs see support to the 2030 Agenda as a priority. About half of

these processes have included a discussion of SDGs in their meetings last year (in the UNECE region that includes the Almaty Process and the Budapest Process). Furthermore, many RCPs have ongoing projects or activities in support of various SDGs. This includes the Almaty Process for instance, which has identified an explicit role for itself in supporting the achievement of several migration-related SDG targets (in particular SDGs 10.7, 5.2, 8.7, 16.2, 1.5, 11.5, and 17.18) through policy dialogue consultations, capacity building, and research.

- Overall, the RCPs clearly have a role in supporting the implementation of migration-related SDGs through policy dialogue, networking, strategy (re)-formulation, policy development, as well as targeted project interventions, capacity building, data collection, analysis and research. One of the recommendations from the meeting is that regional consultative processes should, to the extent possible, build into their agendas practical ways to implement the SDGs.
- Another important function of the regional/sub-regional level is to serve as a link between the national and the global levels. It is particularly important in the migration field, as migration connects not only neighbouring countries, countries within a given region or sub-region, but also countries on a migration route, origin, transit and destination, which can span several continents. So, cross-regional and global level cooperation is key for the attainment of migration-related aspects of the SDG agenda. In this context, the on-going inter-governmental process to develop a Global Compact on Safe, Regular and Orderly Migration, to be adopted next year, is of key importance. The Compact should, for the first time, present a comprehensive framework for migration governance, which is needed to achieve the ambitious commitments of the SDGs. The process towards the development of this compact includes a regional dimension to be led by the regional commissions, but other regional structures, notably RCPs are expected to contribute.
- In addition to RCPs, there are a number of other important migration dialogue platforms in the UNECE region, including those that are more formal than the RCPs, for example the Eastern Partnership Panel on Migration and Asylum or the Migration, Asylum, Refugees Regional Initiative (MARRI). Also, migration is increasingly being placed on the agenda of regional integration processes and regional organizations with another thematic focus, be it development, security, health or other issues (e.g. OSCE, the Central European Initiative, the Black Sea Economic Community, the South-eastern Europe Health Network, etc.). Such platforms allow highlighting important linkages with other key policy areas. This cross-thematic approach is very much in the spirit of the 2030 Agenda.
- The sub-regional and regional cooperation platforms on migration and on related issues are already now contributing to the realization of migration related aspects of the 2030 Agenda. Going forward, it is important to encourage more explicit focus on supporting and contributing to the 2030 Agenda, to make use of existing mechanisms in place to discuss progress, share experiences, and address some of the challenges in implementing migration-related SDG targets.
- Overall, cooperation and partnerships at the regional level in particular with UN RECs and regional economic organizations, promote dignified, orderly, and safe migration for the benefit of all and thus contribute to the attainment of migration-related SDG targets.