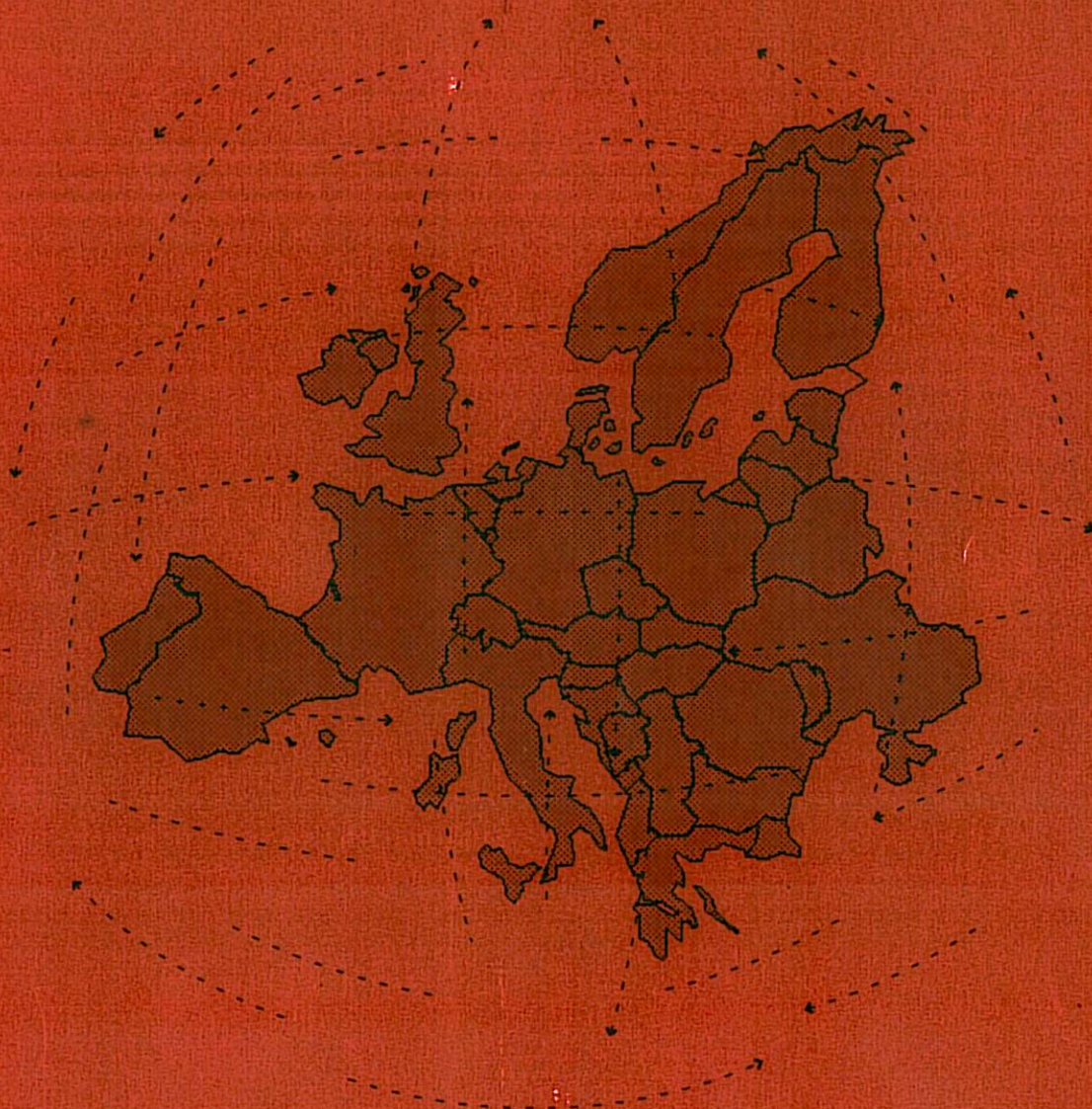


MIGRATION AT THE CROSSROADS: NEW TRENDS IN MIGRATION IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

by Delbert Field



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INTRODUCTION

This paper discusses international migration trends and issues in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and sets forward a comprehensive policy approach to deal with the migration problems and challenges confronting the sub-region in a balanced, effective and meaningful way. It has been prepared for the seminar on "Migratory movements within, towards and from Central and Eastern Europe" which took place in Strasbourg from 27-29 November 1995 under the auspices of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe. The seminar was organized by the *Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe* (CCME), the *National Confederation of Free Trade Unions in Romania* (FRATIA), the *Ecumenical Council of Churches in Hungary* and the *International Movement against all forms of Discrimination and Racism* (IMADR).

On the basis of a short overview of the migration landscape in Central and Eastern Europe a number of problems experienced by the governments of the sub-region in terms of migration management will be discussed. A second component of the comprehensive approach addresses the issue of existing pressures for emigration in the sub-region. In this context, the need to strengthen the economic build-up of the sub-region, to reinforce democratic structures as well as to create strong human rights regimes, including constitutional provisions that guarantee respect of ethnic minorities' and migrants' rights, takes on enhanced significance.

A coalition of actors is necessary to give effect to the comprehensive approach to the migration challenges currently affecting Central and Eastern Europe. Individual contributions will be highlighted, focusing in particular on the action of international and non-governmental organizations.

THE MIGRATION LANDSCAPE IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE IN 1995

1.1. The migration landscape

Contrary to early and often alarmist forecasts, the opening of national borders in Central and Eastern Europe and the political changes which have occurred in the sub-region have not resulted in massive population movements towards Western Europe and North America. Although migration to these countries, and in particular to Germany, originating from the newly emerging democracies in Central and Eastern Europe is by no means negligible, these flows have somewhat declined since 1993, even if temporary labour migration has been increasing.

After having developed rapidly beginning in 1989, emigration to Western countries, notably towards Germany, has slowed. In spite of this decline, however, the presence of many ethnic minorities in central and eastern European countries still represents a significant potential for emigration to a number of Western countries, whether it be ethnic Finns and ethnic Germans residing in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), ethnic Greeks in Albania or ethnic Turks in Bulgaria.

The number of refugees and asylum seekers originating from central and eastern European countries has also declined. Western countries now consider nearly all those countries as "safe" countries, whose citizens should in principle not be requesting asylum. Moreover, the introduction of visas for the citizens of the former Yugoslavia has since 1992 in several western European countries led to a reduction in the number of asylum seekers from that region, offset, however, by an increase in the number of persons granted temporary resident status on humanitarian grounds.

Whereas permanent emigration to Western countries is declining, temporary migration of workers is developing from East to West and between central and eastern European countries themselves. Temporary labour migration is dominated by Polish nationals. Around 350,000 Poles work abroad, predominately in Germany but also in France, the Czech Republic and Sweden. In Germany, the majority of Poles in temporary employment fall under inter-governmental agreements for seasonal work and the provision of services.

1.2. Emerging migration trends: reversal in net migration balance and transit migration

Recent migration developments in Central and Eastern Europe reflect two emerging trends. First of all, since the early 1990s, the number of immigrants has tended to increase, and in some central and eastern European countries probably exceeds the number of emigrants.

The net migration balance of the Czech Republic, which had been negative from 1989 onwards, became positive in 1993 due to the decline of emigration and the onset of immigration. Immigration has also increased in Hungary, Poland, and Bulgaria.

The magnitude of flows between the countries of Central and Eastern Europe explains in large part the growing importance of migration in this region. The opening of national borders, the economic changes related to the transition towards a market economy and the dissolution of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia are the principal causes of the growth in regional migration. Overall, the main sending regions are the CIS, Romania, Poland, and Bulgaria, as well as the former Yugoslavia and the Baltic states.

A number of central and eastern European countries, where the transition towards market economies is taking off at a higher speed than elsewhere, are experiencing a growing influx from nationals from the CIS and from neighbouring countries attracted by job opportunities. The Czech Republic has been in the vanguard of labour immigration in Eastern Europe. There were an estimated 34,600 foreigners employed here in mid-1994, a majority of whom were Ukrainians and Poles. Poland, too, has experienced growing labour immigration, the number of work permits issued rising from 4,000 in 1991 to 12,000 in 1992.

Secondly, migration within Central and Eastern Europe and the CIS is strongly influenced by ethnicity. Movements of ethnic minorities to countries of titular nationality essentially involve Hungarians (in Romania, the Slovak Republic, and Serbia), Turks in Bulgaria and Poles (in the CIS). A group that is particularly involved in cross-border movements, are the gypsies, of whom some three million live in Central and Eastern Europe.

Thirdly, civil and international wars have resulted in large-scale displacement of populations in the sub-region. So far, the former Yugoslavia has constituted the main trouble spot, generating substantial migration flows to countries in the sub-region. In Hungary, for example, the number of refugees from the former Yugoslavia is estimated at more than 50,000 persons.

A *second* emerging migration trend that can be identified in the sub-region is the phenomenon of *transit migration*. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe have become an area of transit, an intermediate and temporary stop over for potential immigrants who hope to reach Western Europe or North America. Transit migrants come from neighbouring countries such as Turkey, Albania or the former Yugoslavia, but also from the CIS and from such distant countries as Bangladesh, India and Iran. The countries most affected are Poland and the Czech Republic due to their common borders with Germany. Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria also receive transit migrants seeking to reach Austria and Greece, respectively.

A significant portion of transit migration movements take place under the auspices of trafficking agencies, which often provide a complete package of migration services to individual would-be migrants, from the moment of departure in countries of origin to the arrival in countries of destination in Western Europe. A critical development in this respect concerns the criminal nature of some international migrant trafficking agencies, who through extended networks in countries of destination exploit individual migrants after arrival as a cheap source of labour in legal enterprises owned or controlled by these networks.

Transit migration has given rise to additional patterns of immigration in several central and eastern European countries. A number of transit migrants who live and work in the sub-region for an extended period of time, while preparing for the final part of their journey to countries of destination in Western Europe, have increasingly decided not to give up a status of relative prosperity in exchange for an uncertain future further West.

On the other hand, a substantial amount of transit migrants become *stranded* in the sub-region, due to increasing difficulties of reaching countries of final destination in Western Europe. This

phenomenon is expected to witness significant growth in the near future as a result of the entry into force of the Schengen Agreement, which provides for tighter controls of the common external border of the Schengen member states. Accordingly, the demand for the services of professional migrant traffickers, who through up-to-date knowledge of transit routes can offer better chances of slipping through international borders, can be expected to rise as well.

IDENTIFYING MIGRATION CHALLENGES IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

2.1. Migration challenges

Two sets of issues deserve particular attention from the international community, as they pose obstacles to creating regular and orderly patterns of international migration in Central and Eastern Europe and contribute to building up migration pressure in the countries of the sub-region.

First of all, most migration movements affecting the sub-region of Central and Eastern Europe are *irregular*, in the sense that they take place without proper control by national authorities. This is due to the fact that international borders throughout the sub-region are largely "porous".

Inadequate border controls are part of a wider problem in the sub-region, as coherent immigration and asylum legislation and policies are lacking or have only been partially established in the countries of the sub-region. Insufficient administrative capacities of governments as well as inexperienced staff to implement national policies add to these difficulties. The capacity of central and eastern European governments to manage migration is therefore often underdeveloped and unfit to assume urgent tasks of combatting irregular migration and trafficking in migrants.

Secondly, the broader political and economic context prevailing in the countries of the sub-region is of relevance to the subject of international migration, as adverse economic conditions, upheavals resulting from civil or international war, as well as political structures that may place ethnic minorities at a disadvantage vis-à-vis indigenous populations are conducive to propelling emigration flows both to Western Europe and to neighbouring countries in the sub-region of Central and Eastern Europe.

Beyond the case of the former Yugoslavia other regions are potentially inflammable and may also give rise to large-scale displacement of civilian populations. Furthermore, the position of ethnic minorities in a number of central and eastern European countries is a point of concern, as practices of discrimination may contribute to propelling emigration of these groups to countries of titular nationality, thereby straining bilateral relations with neighbouring states.

Economically motivated out-migration to countries of Western Europe as well as of late among the countries of Central and Eastern Europe themselves, with Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic being the main poles of attraction, has been in evidence since 1989. Perceived imbalances between East and West in terms of standards of living and employment opportunities typically underly individual migrants' decisions to leave their home country and to build a new life elsewhere. At the same time, receiving countries in Western Europe are unable to accommodate these newcomers in a situation where domestic labour markets are largely satisfied and general social and political conditions make a careful selection of new entrants necessary. Consequently, there is a need to better address the labour abundance prevailing in Central and Eastern Europe in order to moderate the tendency towards irregular out-migration.

2.2. Irregular migration, domestic problems and migrants' rights

Current practices of irregular migration and transit migration in the sub-region, accentuated by central and eastern European governments' inability to effectively cope with them, entail a number of significant negative effects both for individual migrants and for the countries in the sub-region. These tend to result in situations where nationals from central and eastern European states face growing competition from foreigners, *inter alia* in the housing sector and on the labour market, which may cause social tensions and give rise to an anti-foreigner mood.

The incompleteness of legislation covering the stay of foreigners, as well as inadequate administrative capacities to enforce compliance with any such policies, further complicates the task of establishing a human rights policy that effectively protects the rights of individual migrants, regardless of their legal status, as stipulated in the *United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Human Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Family* of December 1990 and recalled in the *Programme of Action* of the *United Nations International Conference on Population and Development* of September 1994.

The issue of the rights of national minorities is inherently linked to the broader human rights issue. Insufficient recognition and protection of the rights of ethnic minorities in national constitutions has resulted in national practices where minority groupings are not allowed to use their language in public or to receive education in the minority language as well as experience other forms of discrimination based on their membership of a national minority. The fact that many countries in the sub-region are still a long way from fulfilling the provisions on the protection of minority rights, as stipulated in the November 1994 *Convention on the Protection of National Minorities* of the Council of Europe has reinforced the tendency towards emigration among ethnic minority groupings.

2.3. Need for stock taking, prioritizing and coalition building

In view of the complex nature of migration challenges in the sub-region, IOM advocates the adoption of a coherent and action-oriented approach by the international community to meet these challenges in a well-conceived, meaningful and effective manner. A *coalition of actors*, including governments, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations, seems necessary to implement comprehensive solutions, with each actor taking responsibility for a specific field. Section 2.4. of this paper discusses the contribution international organizations can make to meet the objective of making migration in the sub-region more manageable and ease the pressure of irregular migration within, towards and from Central and Eastern Europe. The specific role of NGOs will also be highlighted, (Section 2.6).

An issue that takes on enhanced significance in the run-up to the 1996 CIS Conference on Migration is the delineation of responsibilities among the various players in their efforts to create regular and orderly patterns of migration on the whole of the European continent. Especially the contribution the central and eastern European states should make themselves in this process is currently stressed by their western European partners. The Conference's Programme of Action is likely to commit the governments of the sub-region towards more

systematic forms of international cooperation in immigration affairs and to learn from each other's experiences through regularly organizing conferences and seminars at the sub-regional level.

In general, structures for bilateral and sub-regional cooperation on a wide range of issues of concern to central and eastern European states have not been adequately developed. Their absence, however, prevents any benefits from coordinated action from coming about and involves the international community on issues where the central and eastern European states can do the job themselves by closer cooperation at the sub-regional level.

2.4. Towards a comprehensive migration approach in Central and Eastern Europe

A comprehensive approach to the migration challenges in Central and Eastern Europe should follow a dual track, consisting of both a migration management assistance component and a broader stabilization effort targeting central and eastern European societies. Enabling countries in the sub-region to establish more control over patterns of immigration and transit migration is an essential element of managing international migration. In addition, the pressure for irregular emigration flows from the sub-region to countries in Western Europe will be significantly reduced, by drawing central and eastern European societies closer to Western standards of free market-economies and pluralist democracies. In the wake of these reform efforts the situation of individual migrants and asylum seekers present in the sub-region can be expected to improve as well.

The central and eastern European states are first of all in need of technical assistance schemes with a view to enabling them to assume the tasks of migration management in an effective and acceptable manner. As part of this effort, coherent migration policies and legislation have to be established, as necessary. At the same time, technical cooperation schemes should aim at reinforcing administrative capacities and improving organizational structures in order to ensure compliance with laws and regulations established to give effect to comprehensive migration legislation and policies.

The build-up of viable and sound migration systems in the sub-region, which should be mutually concurrent and compatible, constitutes an integral part of a strategy aimed at empowering the countries of the sub-region to combat practices of irregular migration, criminal trafficking in migrants and clandestine employment of aliens, as these practices threaten to jeopardize attempts at creating patterns of legal and orderly migration. International protection of refugees and asylum-seekers deserves particular attention in the context of working immigration and asylum policies, which so far have only been partially established. These would also allow to offer better assistance to transit migrants who are *stranded* in the sub-region.

In the domain of technical assistance to central and eastern European governments IOM is performing important tasks in the sub-region (*see* section 2.5.)

Furthermore, the Commission of the European Union (EU) is assisting a number of central and eastern European countries, with which the EU member states have concluded association or *Europe* agreements, to meet urgent needs in migration management by financing technical cooperation projects in the sub-region through the *PHARE* and *TACIS* programmes.

The EU has also taken a number of initiatives to associate central and eastern European states with the cooperation on justice and home affairs in the framework of the *Third Pillar* of the Maastricht Treaty. This framework for intergovernmental cooperation among the fifteen EU member states also deals with matters of immigration and asylum. The association of central and eastern European states with this Maastricht pillar has created a structure for East-West information sharing and consultation on migration issues of concern to all parties as well as to assist the central and eastern European states in identifying their needs in matters of migration management. The value of *Third Pillar* cooperation, as extended to the central and eastern European states, is clear to both sides and should hence be further pursued.

A further building block in the framework of pan-European cooperation on border controls and migration policy issues is constituted by the *Budapest Group*. The *Group* performs a valuable corollary function with regard to the activities of the *EU Third Pillar* cooperation with the countries of the sub-region.

A second and indispensable element of a comprehensive strategy towards meeting the migration challenges in Central and Eastern Europe consists of a broad stabilization effort targeting the sub-region, through strengthening its economic potential and reinforcing the weight of its democratic structures. The existence of stable domestic societies, based on principles of an open market-economy, democracy, rule of law and international human rights, is generally recognized to be a major precondition for moderating the propensity towards uncontrolled out-migration to EU member countries, for creating legal guarantees for the protection of genuine refugees and asylum seekers as well as for ensuring respect of individual migrants' and ethnic minorities' rights.

In order to address the economic imbalance between the EU member states and the central and eastern European states in an effective manner, the European Union (EU) should deploy greater efforts to integrate the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The abundant labour supply creating emigration pressures in a number of central and eastern European states could be met to a certain extent by expanding possibilities in the EU for temporary migration of workers for seasonal employment. Germany already offers such schemes in the context of a number of intergovernmental agreements with *inter alia* Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary. Furthermore, European investment schemes could significantly increase employment opportunities in the sub-region and therefore deserve strong support.

Section 2.1. also identified weak human rights regimes in Central and Eastern Europe as a ground cause for regional movements of migrants, notably in the context of the outflow of members of ethnic minorities. Moreover, human rights violations and insufficient respect of the personal integrity and human dignity of foreigners constitute a general point of concern with regard to the situation of individual migrants, both regular and irregular, in the sub-region. Both the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) are in the best position to take the lead in a strategy to ensure more respect for basic rights through strengthening the human rights regimes in the sub-region and educating the public-at-large on the matter through mass information campaigns.

The OSCE Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), established in 1991, constitutes an important new focal point

for technical assistance and advisory services on international human rights standards. Furthermore, the office of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities provides an important mechanism to actively monitor the human rights situations of ethnic minorities in the sub-region and confront individual governments, as necessary, with reported practices of serious infringements upon the political, economic, social and cultural rights of population groups falling under the national jurisdiction of sovereign states.

In addition, the strengthening of the democratic nature of the political regimes in the sub-region may be enhanced by drawing the sub-region closer to western security institutions, notably the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Western European Union (WEU). These organizations have already deployed a number of efforts which *inter alia* aim at preventing the former communist states from sliding back into old communist and/or nationalist sympathies.

Overall, it has become clear that a *back to the future* scenario for Central and Eastern Europe, as foreseen by political *realists*, would entail a serious setback for current reform processes aimed at creating more open and democratic societies in the sub-region, which provide a necessary starting-point for meeting the migration challenges of the sub-region in a comprehensive and effective manner.

In this context, IOM is convinced of the need for the international community to speed up and to better streamline its assistance to the sub-region in the context of a dual-track approach, which addresses both the migration management needs of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the underlying root causes of uncontrolled migration to Western Europe and, increasingly, within the sub-region itself.

2.5. IOM activities in the sub-region

IOM involvement in Central and Eastern Europe comprises a number of activities aimed at assisting governments in the sub-region to manage migration and to ease the pressures of both irregular immigration and uncontrolled transit migration.

First of all, the Organization has implemented a number of technical cooperation activities in Albania, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia with an aim to

helping these countries in developing adequate migration policies and legislation. An essential feature of the IOM programmes in the region is the concern for developing a multilateral approach that recognizes the commonality and interconnection of migration experiences in the sub-region. This approach is intended to pave the way for more regionally-focused technical cooperation programmes by IOM in the years to come.

Apart from the technical cooperation programmes in the three countries, which consist of the provision of advisory services and institution and capacity building activities, IOM also contributes to the development of some of the above countries through the transfer of qualified human resources. These activities take the form of temporary emigration schemes for purposes of training, the assisted return of qualified nationals and the sending of foreign experts.

With a view to providing a good basis for efficient and effective policy-making processes on migration affairs in both western and eastern European countries, accurate and up-to-date information on migration issues, as affecting the sub-region of Central and Eastern Europe, is of crucial importance. Aware of the existing lack of accurate and up-to-date information in this domain, IOM has established the *Migration Information Programme* (MIP), based in Budapest, which assists governments in shaping their migration policies by providing reliable data. So far, MIP has produced 15 migration related studies. A number of these studies are dedicated to the subject of transit migration in the sub-region. The value of these studies as information sources on migration issues is increasingly appreciated by governments.

IOM has also implemented information dissemination campaigns in a number of central and eastern European countries, in order objectively to inform both would-be migrants originating from the sub-region and the large contingents of transit migrants present in the sub-region on legal immigration possibilities in western European states. These information campaigns are a practical preventive tool, as large amounts of migrants base their decisions on information that is incorrect or distorted.

International migrants that are *stranded* in transit countries in Central and Eastern Europe have become a special target group for IOM activity to help governments in the sub-region ease migration pressures. In the framework of the *Assisted Return of Migrants Stranded in Central and*

Eastern Europe (SMIT) programme, the Organization offers stranded migrants in transit a way of returning home in safety and dignity. The programme is financed by a number of Western donor countries, which benefit from the programme, as it diminishes the potential flow of migrants to countries of destination in Western Europe. Programme beneficiaries generally originate from countries of origin in Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

IOM's *Emergency Humanitarian Return Programme* (EHRP) has the same objectives and geographical scope as SMIT, but is aimed at former scholarship holders and their direct dependants. These programme beneficiaries are students who after the break-up of the Soviet Union were confronted with a suspension of government assistance. The voluntary return programme constitutes a welcome option for many destitute candidates to return to their home countries.

A substantial portion of immigrants in both Western and Central and Eastern Europe consists of persons who have fled the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia, and who have been granted temporary protected status on humanitarian grounds elsewhere. Although IOM has already assisted individual migrants on a case-by-case basis to return to Bosnia and Herzegovina, the likeliness and feasibility of organized returns to the former Yugoslavia are currently increasing due to the new momentum in the peace process. In this context, IOM has been called upon to prepare contingency plans for a variety of return programmes to the Balkans, involving nationals of the former Yugoslavia currently residing in a wide range of host countries. In view of this, IOM is currently developing an integrated approach to the matter, whereby the Organization *inter alia* bases itself on a series of surveys on the attitudes to the possibility of return of displaced persons from the region.

2.6. The specific contribution of non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

The coalition of partners (see section 2.3.), which should be involved in implementing the comprehensive approach to meeting the migration challenges in the sub-region of Central and Eastern Europe, notably also includes non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

These organizations, through their elaborate networks of collaborators at national, regional and local levels in both Western and Eastern Europe, play a crucial role in alerting the international community to migration related problems in the central and eastern European states. By focusing international attention on the situation of, *inter alia*, *stranded or trafficked* migrants in the sub-region they create good opportunities for international organizations like UNHCR, the EU and IOM to raise funds among donors with a view to establishing programmes aimed at assisting the persons concerned. NGOs may also be better informed of emerging social and political tensions in countries both within and outside the sub-region that have the potential to lead to mass displacement of persons. On the basis of this information, the international community can pursue *preventive* diplomacy in order to diffuse tensions at the earliest possible stage. At a different level, NGOs also raise the awareness, among Western governments and international organizations, of particular difficulties central and eastern European governments experience in their migration management tasks, thereby identifying needs for technical cooperation and advisory services.

In addition, the function of signalling problems, both actual and potential, to a broad audience also relates to the human rights situation of migrants, refugees and ethnic minorities throughout the whole of Central and Eastern Europe. NGOs are in an excellent position to raise human rights questions, as they are not bound by any state or political interests.

At the same time, NGOs assist international organizations in implementing programmes targeting migrants and refugees through raising awareness among migrant communities, both regular and irregular, of activities of international organizations, from which individual migrants may benefit. Thus, NGOs can play a pivotal role in making the above mentioned SMIT and EHRP programmes known to individual candidates as well as refer them to IOM. Overall, NGOs are involved in the counseling of migrants, providing them with reliable information on host and transit countries and possibilities of immigration. The access to individual migrants and knowledge of their personal situation is the key element of the unique role of NGOs involved with refugee and migration affairs.

2.7. IOM-NGO cooperation

IOM has always enjoyed a good relationship with a wide variety of NGOs working in the field of migration affairs. The Organization has invested time and effort in building good working relations with NGOs, as their cooperation is essential in making a number of IOM programmes work. Apart from the above SMIT and EHRP programmes and information dissemination campaigns, implemented by IOM in the sub-region of Central and Eastern Europe in cooperation with NGOs, IOM also benefits from NGO involvement in a number of western European countries, where the Organization facilitates the repatriation of unsuccessful asylum seekers and irregular migrants who want to return to their countries of origin. In Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands, where IOM has implemented these assisted voluntary return schemes at the request of the respective governments, NGOs act as a facilitator or intermediary by referring eligible migrants to IOM offices.

In order to better structure its cooperation with the NGO community, while ensuring maximum benefits to both parties concerned through a regular exchange of information on migration developments, the Organization recently took the initiative of establishing an IOM-NGO Consultative Working Group, which regularly convenes at IOM headquarters in Geneva. As an umbrella organization the ICVA *Task Force on Migration* represents a wide range of NGOs in this consultative working group.

CONCLUSION

The analysis in this paper of the migration problems and challenges facing the sub-region of Central and Eastern Europe led to the formulation of the need of a comprehensive migration strategy for the sub-region, involving a wide range of activities to be undertaken by a *coalition of actors*. The task of dealing effectively with migration realities, control migrant flows in the sub-region, ease emigration pressures in the region as well as of ensuring respect of individual migrants' rights and dignity goes beyond the capacities and mandate of one international organization or individual governments acting on their own.

The comprehensive strategy comprises on the one hand a migration management assistance component and on the other hand a broad stabilization effort targeting the countries of the sub-region through strengthening their economic potential and the democratic nature of their regimes. This dual track approach addresses both the need to assist central and eastern European governments in establishing control over immigration and transit migration processes and the concern to moderate the propensity towards uncontrolled emigration from the sub-region to EU member states and, increasingly, from poorer to relatively better-off countries within the sub-region itself.

In this context, the respective contributions various international organizations (EU, IOM, UNHCR, OSCE, Council of Europe, NATO) can make in this process have been highlighted. Special emphasis has been given to the role of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in the sub-region, as its activities in Central and Eastern Europe are quite extensive and testify to the Organization's capacity and willingness to contribute to finding comprehensive solutions to migration problems in the sub-region. Furthermore, the crucial role of NGOs in raising awareness of migration problems in the sub-region has been singled out.

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