

External Network Encounter

11 September 2020, 11.45 am to 1.30 pm

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Dawn SYVERTSEN, North Sea Commission Advisor - Smart Regions Group

Nidaa BOTMI, REGIN Project Officer

SUMMARY OF PRESENTATIONS / DISCUSSIONS

Brief overview of the REGIN Project

Presented by Davide Strangis, CPMR Executive Director for EU Programmes, Partnerships & Geographical Commissions & Claire Street, CPMR Project and Policy Officer

[Link to the Power Point Presentation](#)

The REGIN External Encounter aimed to create the most synergies possible between the CPMR Migration Task Force members, representatives of the CPMR Geographical Commissions and the REGIN Project.

The meeting was the occasion to:

1. exchange on the project's progress so far and share information on policy and outcome indicators, as well as other tools and practices at regional level;
2. underline areas of collaboration, as well as benefits and added value from the project results.

The REGIN Project was created to mainstream migrant and refugee inclusion within social cohesion policies at regional level. As lead partner, CPMR has been advocating for such project since before the launch of the AMIF call for proposals in 2018, as we believe it can contribute to our policy work and improve the regions' policies and performance on the ground, for the benefit of migrants, refugees and the host communities in the regions.

REGIN embeds two ideas that the CPMR has been working on so far:

1. the regional version of the [Migrant Integration Policy Index \(MIPEX\)](#);
2. a structured and interactive mapping of competences, needs, expertise and experiences of regions related to migration and multi-level governance.

We have gathered CPMR regions from different countries as part of the main project consortium: Azores (PT), Campania and Puglia (IT), Catalonia, Murcia (ES), Skåne (SE). They will be testing pilots developed by technical partners.

A second layer of partnership for transfer, capitalisation and dissemination consists in the CPMR membership and Migration Task Force, as well as associated partners, for example L'Oriental region, that is also very active in the Inter-Mediterranean Geographical Commission.

REGIN's main goals and actions are:

To build a regional network on migrant integration to share knowledge, experiences and common tools beyond the project's partnership. Members of the CPMR Migration Task Force are part and parcel of the network and collaborate to develop dialogue and cooperation.

To develop "MIPEX-R" inspired by the existing national [MIPEX](#), where we are looking at regional policies and outcomes to create indicators and measure performance of migrant integration at regional level.

To create a toolkit for regions through capacity building for regional stakeholders, building up resources and knowledge, as well as training for regional staff. On the basis of the MIPEX-R results, pilot regions will be implementing innovative integration actions, in addition to a particular advanced testbed on health and social inclusion.

Within an **Integration Lab**, to develop a database and interactive map and enable the collection of different practices, focusing on learning processes (drawing on lessons learnt from challenges and aiming towards innovation) to share regional knowledge at European level. This represents another area of collaboration with Task Force members and beyond. In order to ensure the scalability of the project, CPMR members are encouraged to contribute with the sharing of practices.

MIPEX-R (Migrant Integration Policy Regional Index)

Presented by Alexander Wolffhardt, MPG Integration Policy Analyst

[Link to the Power Point Presentation](#)

MPG and CIDOB pioneered indicator-based tools on migrant integration at national level through MIPEX.

A starting point of REGIN is the gap between the key role regions have in migrant integration and the lack of evidence-based framework that would allow to compare across regions and countries how regions are performing in their integration efforts.

That is why a core element of REGIN is the development of an **assessment tool, geared towards the needs of practitioners and policy makers**: it aims to create an instrument that facilitates and encourages policy dialogue, that assesses needs and gaps, while allowing target setting and inspiring evidence-based actions. The Project will therefore have an immediate impact for the participating regions.

As part of the methodology, it is important to explain that indicators cannot be exhaustive; they indicate the state of play or the highest standards in a policy area or an outcome, rooted in an international and EU framework.

MIPEX-R results will also help to support policy messages (better recognition and understanding of regional competences and their role in integration and inclusion, providing an evidence-based tool to help regions orient policy choices...) as it will better define and frame regions' role and competences with a comparative assessment.

Policy indicators relate to policies and implementation framework, while **outcome indicators** correspond to statistics related to the integration state of the population, that help identify and "locate" strengths and weaknesses, best practices and gaps. Outcome indicators are in line with the Zaragoza indicators and focus on demographics, education, employment, income poverty, housing, participation of third country nationals and beneficiaries of international protection in the democratic process.

The core challenge of creating a regional index is the very different situation of regions, in terms of their competences, institutional strengths or weaknesses: therefore, to build our common instrument, our **approach is to focus on governance aspects**, such as:

- Actions, policies, measures (within and beyond formal competences)
- Actors (multilevel governance, stakeholder coordination)
- Resources, funds

As well as stages of the policy cycle:

- Policy formulation (→ policy outputs)
- Implementation
- Evaluation

The secondary dimensions of the analysis focus on the **integration domains and policy areas, such as language, education, health, labour market inclusion, housing, culture, anti-discrimination.**

Indicators and questionnaires were developed, and the 6 partner regions hired independent experts to conduct research (2 per region).

There is **capacity to cover 5 extra regions as part of the project** to complement and extend the MIPEX-R. The final admission in the project will be given according to the selection criteria for the additional 5 regions (**ideally, 1 in Sweden + 1 in Portugal + 2 in Germany + 1 in Italy**). Regions can also conduct research independently (though their own funding) and their results can be added in the MIPEX-R database if they are able to submit their dataset by mid-December.

FOLLOW-UP

Representatives from regions to share information with relevant colleagues and let CPMR know if they want to take part in MIPEX-R

Intervention by L'Oriental region, Morocco

L'Oriental has given great importance to migration, with a focus on the integration of women and youth. For instance, the region has supported women cooperatives to facilitate socio-economic inclusion. Another example of the region's involvement is the signature of an agreement with the French-speaking community of Belgium (COCOF), focusing on migrant and refugee women.

The Region is involved in South-South bilateral cooperation through scholarships for students from Sub-Saharan Africa, as well as triangular cooperation through trainings. A new project deals with Africa background cooperation, also directed at young people and women.

Furthermore, another important area of work for L'Oriental corresponds to the cooperation with European organisations, through decentralised cooperation: for example, through food and sanitary aid. It is also open to further discuss and exchange practices with European regions on migration and integration issues.

Regional toolkit for integration and inclusion

Presented by Silvia Carabello, Instrategies

[Link to the Power Point presentation](#)

The regional toolkit consists in developing a set of instruments and tools that regions can use to promote and foster integration and inclusion.

The first step is to identify and map diverse stakeholders that play, or could play, an important role in migrants' integration and inclusion. As they are crosscutting matters, it is important to map stakeholders as diverse as possible through different levels of governance. Stakeholders should have experience, competences, or commitment to the matter. They should be from the private, public or civil society sector, and represent different scopes and areas of work.

This activity will ensure the sustainability of the project, create a supporting foundation and a regional network and ensure the effectiveness of the integration actions to be implemented in the regions. REGIN regional partners have for example mapped sport clubs as stakeholders, that were not previously included in the integration process and this illustrates an added value of the project, as the regions have increased their outreach to relevant stakeholders within their territory.

Excel list and guidelines for stakeholders mapping will be made available to Migration Task Force members to conduct their own mapping.

Based on the preliminary results of WP3 (Regional indicators of integration), In strategies together with each regional partner will identify in which area or policy dimension there is room for improvement regarding migrant integration.

This first identification process will help to establish and develop integration actions and help to frame the training of regional staff and capacity building of stakeholders.

Each region will hold **two capacity-building sessions** with a minimum of 20 stakeholders, based on the Capacity Building Training Guidelines that are under development and that will also be shared publicly for inspiration. The first session will be aimed at identifying and defining the areas of intervention in the region and is scheduled to take place between October and December 2020. During the second session, stakeholders are invited to discuss and reflect upon the sustainability of the action that is being implemented in each region. Therefore, the capacity building activities will increase the capacity of stakeholders and involve them in the development of the integration action.

Furthermore, each participating region will hold **two training sessions for their regional staff**. The sessions will be based on the Training Guidelines for Regional Staff, a guiding document that is under development. The sessions' objective is to upgrade and maximise staff competencies, knowledge, skills and attitude concerning migrant and refugee integration and inclusion, with the aim of addressing performance gaps on the matter in all sectors of public administration. Guidelines for regional staff training will also be shared with other regions through the CPMR Migration Task Force. According to the project calendar, the first training sessions would take place in January 2021. Both capacity building and training guidelines can be tailored to each region's specific situation.

Each region will develop a new innovative integration action (except Skåne that works on a specific testbed on health and inclusion). These actions will be decided by regional authorities with the support of their regional stakeholders. The actions will also be shared with Migration Task Force as part of the WP6 database and interactive map, to give them the opportunity to take inspiration from them, and to share lessons learnt and good practices.

Question from Campania region about the "supporting foundation": it means building a foundation for close cooperation between the region and stakeholders that creates a common background when organising and selecting pilot activities and that can live beyond the project as an added value of the project. The capacity building for regional stakeholders will look at building a common starting point and narrative, that could lead to a formal structure / forum in each region.

FOLLOW-UP

When available and made public, CPMR will share the different tools (stakeholder mapping guidelines and template, capacity building guidelines and regional training guidelines) with member regions. Regions can then share their feedback / adaptation needs to further refine the toolkit.

Learning from each other

Innovative testbed on health & integration / Progress, adapting to COVID and future expectations

Presented by Anne-Maria Ikonen, Partnership Skåne

[Link to the Power Point presentation](#)

The work delivered within REGIN is part of an assignment from the Swedish Ministry of Health and Social Affairs. **The testbed aims to build up a supportive environment for newly arrived refugees** in Malmö and Eslöv, through **free counselling activity** and a **training programme on health communication**.

Partnership Skåne represents a regional resource system: it involves operators, organisations and authorities at all levels, from all sectors of life in Skåne region. It provides an opportunity to focus on the mental health of newly arrived migrants and for civil society organisations to get more involved in regional cooperation.

The main parties involved in the testbed are civic and health communicators, divided into two main topics that are **mental health and parental support**, through study groups with newly arrived migrants and strong participation of NGOs in the region.

COVID-19 has significantly influenced operations, mainly in 2 ways: on the one hand, the process has slowed down. On the other hand, the initial plan was to focus equally on parental support and mental health, but under the circumstances, mental health has been prioritised. Therefore, the mental health support groups started first, and parental support groups will follow later.

RådRum, an advisory service for migrants in need of support, is a central element of the testbed: it provides free, neutral and confidential guidance to newly arrived migrants. RådRum not only aims at enhancing the autonomy of individuals but also providing them with opportunities to get involved in the civil society activities. During the first 6 months of the project, RådRum volunteers have guided and provided counselling to 143 individuals.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, part of the training of volunteers has been adapted to the digital / interactive format and counselling has been delivered as a distance service through phone / email / Skype / WhatsApp. This situation has not significantly lowered the quality of counselling, neither has it negatively influenced the number of visitors / beneficiaries.

Save the Children is the other key operator within the testbed: it provides personal and individualised guidance, helping families to navigate into the Swedish society. Through a model called **"My Path"**, 15 individuals have been supported - all parents - through a **collaborative network at regional level towards self-development and empowerment**, so that they can find

individual solutions and produce positive changes in their life. They have been linked to relevant institutions, such as health care centres, municipality's parent training programmes and insurance agencies, to improve both their well-being and health, both at individual and family levels.

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected newly arrived parents, as schooling has taken place remotely for children and contacts with the Swedish language are limited. In order to maintain continuity and individual direct support, but also in a long-term perspective, Save the Children needs to upgrade and develop digital tools, as well as to strengthen competences within the organisation to facilitate digital meetings. The project will be evaluated by the Universities of Lund and Uppsala.

The third service provider of the testbed is **NAD**, that stands for **Network, Activity, Participation**. It is a platform (formed by associations in all fields of life, such as study associations, sports clubs, nature associations...) that links civil society organisations together in Skåne. Within the testbed, NAD's role is to provide information to newly arrived people about civil society organisations and available activities, as well as to match them with relevant volunteering activities. NAD also provides support to organisations as they are receiving newly-arrived migrants into their activities.

In the mental health study circles, that represent the true core of the testbed, civic and health communications provide information about health and well-being and provide opportunities to participate in health enhancing activities.

Many municipalities and regions in Sweden have expressed their interest in getting involved in the project. Moreover, [informational films](#) were produced and will be translated into English and Arabic to disseminate project results.

Testimony from a regional partner (Murcia)

Presented by Francisco Ramírez Soler, Murcia Region

The Region of Murcia is a Spanish autonomous community, located in the south-east of Spain, which borders with Andalusia, Valencian Community, Castilla-La Mancha, and the Mediterranean coast. The region of Murcia is one of the largest producers of fruits, vegetables and flowers in Europe, with important vineyards. Population in the region is currently around one and a half million people, and the main cities in our territory are the capital, the city of Murcia, Cartagena and Lorca.

In this context, the **migrant population is an essential economic development factor** for us and, in fact, represents **more than 14% of the total Murcian population**. It is the third Spanish region with the largest migrant population rate, only behind Catalonia and the Balearic Islands.

Murcia has been historically a region of migrants, and that has made it a welcoming and understanding society with the difficulties faced by people who come from abroad. Murcia began to receive foreign workforce in the early 1990s with migrants from the Maghreb and Sub-Saharan Africa and later, in the new century, immigration also increased with people arriving from Latin America, Eastern Europe, and Asia.

The Region is very aware of the **importance of achieving an adequate level of integration of migrants**, which facilitates the creation of inclusive and intercultural societies, because it knows that it results in **better coexistence** and in **greater economic, social and cultural development**. Integration is not just about learning the language, getting a home or finding a

job. It is also about playing an active role in the local, regional and national community to which one belongs, establishing and maintaining real interpersonal contacts through social, cultural or sports activities, and even participation in politics.

There are many challenges to facilitate the integration of migrants and refugees. Probably, the main one would be to understand, correctly, the great complexity of the migratory phenomenon. The region believes that the national **migration policy should be considered in a coordinated way** with the European migration policy, but also, it is necessary that the member states and the European Union **listen carefully to the needs and contributions of the regions** because, ultimately, it is at the local level, the closest to the citizens, where social needs or logistical difficulties appear, and where humanitarian assistance are given and we must not leave anyone behind, beyond their status, administrative situation, origin or any other factor. In this sense, it is important taking into account that regions are key actors in migrants' integration, and it would be positive to **increase the EU funds directly allocated to regions**.

On the other hand, the organization of the Spanish State involves different administrative levels, each with its own competencies and responsibilities, and it is essential to achieve effective coordination to provide an adequate response through **proper multilevel governance**. Even within Murcia's regional administration, there is a distribution of powers and competences in different aspects that are important to consider achieving a comprehensive integration policy (like housing, health, education, social services, employment...).

There are also many **relevant actors outside of public administrations** and public services, for instance: NGOs, migrants associations, unions, business organizations, the media, universities, etc., which **also have a capital importance in these inclusive processes**.

In this sense, we are delighted and grateful for the opportunity that the REGIN project represents for the Region of Murcia, and hope and work to make it a success and fulfil its main objectives. We are sure that all the debates, tools, and all the shared knowledge that this program will generate will be very valuable for our region and the other European regions.

REGIN aims at establishing a network with regional authorities to cooperate on migrant integration, and **we, from Murcia, thanks to the project, are getting in touch with different European regions, being invited and participating in different forums, such as this encounter, discussing and learning from each other**.

REGIN aims at identifying integration indicators that will be use to enhance accuracy, liability, robustness and innovation of our regional policies and outcomes, and currently, coordinated by CIDOB, MPG and Catalonia government, in cooperation with regional experts from the Murcia University and the other regional partners, **we are developing a study that hopefully lays the groundwork to guide integration based on evidence, show us our strengths and weaknesses, and it brings us closer to discovering what works and what doesn't in the integration field, and why**.

REGIN aims to develop and implement an innovative toolkit for regional governments, through capacity-building for key stakeholders in receiving communities and, in fact, despite the great difficulties of the current pandemic situation, from our department, driven by the project, **we are increasing, updating and mobilizing our network of integration stakeholders**.

Finally, we believe that the **different actions of the project will serve for us to be able to better manage our integration policy and build intercultural and inclusive societies**, and we also hope and wish that, beyond the two-year duration of the project, the accumulated experience and knowledge will be very valuable for the rest of the European regions, and we hope their foundations will have continuity in future.



Integration lab: evaluation framework, collection of practices, database and mapping

Presented by Nidaa Botmi, REGIN Project Officer

[Link to the Power Point presentation](#)

The Integration Lab's main aim is to **identify, monitor and evaluate practices** (and experiences) on migrants' and refugees' integration at regional level, **paying special attention to the lessons learnt.**

Through the Integration Lab, the objective is to produce a **sustainable and rolling tool** in the longer term - in order to keep feeding and extending the shared knowledge base that can be available as a resource to regions, to help them plan their own actions using the evaluation tools and inspiring from similar practices carried out in other regions.

From the desk research, it was noted that there are many examples of integration practices at local level (cities and municipalities) but not as many at regional level. Another challenge reflected when analysing migrant integration at regional and local levels is the **lack of monitoring & evaluation tools, as well as the lack of standards or benchmark** in this field. Therefore, **the intention behind the Integration Lab is to help fill this gap.**

The focus is to **gather information and collect regional practices** to emphasise the regions' contribution (directly or indirectly through social actors) in developing and implementing migrants' integration actions and policies. These examples will feed-in CPMR's policy messages at national and European levels.

Examples of practices have been gathered to set criteria for guidelines on the evaluation framework and define the scope for the criteria and the type of practices we want to collect, in line with the MIPEX-R questionnaires.

CPMR, in coordination with the project consortium, is currently finalising guidelines for the **evaluation framework**, that are based on the OECD's criteria of Relevance / Effectiveness / Efficiency / Impact/ Sustainability, as well as an **evaluation matrix** that represent a series of key questions to evaluate how the action corresponds to each criteria. The final version of the evaluation framework will be submitted by end of September.

The approach is to not only focus on good and innovative practices, but to also collect information from regions that have faced challenges, tried practices that have not produced expected results to understand what could be the factors that could have hindered the action. The idea is to **learn from each other not only about what works but also what doesn't work.**

From October to December 2020, a draft survey template will be disseminated through the CPMR network, associated partners and other contacts to collect additional experiences. Puglia will coordinate the collection of practices with other Italian regions. Regions can also share examples, either in English or their regional language.

Evaluating actions on migrants' integration will facilitate knowledge-sharing, promoting inspiration and successful practices to complement the European Web Site on Integration database. The plan is to have the evaluation framework used by other regions, as well to include

the innovative actions led by partner regions and the testbed on health and integration into the database and mapping.

The **database and interactive map** will build on and enhance the existing [CPMR migration visual mapping tool](#) and include layers showing results from MIPEX-R. The mapping will include integration actions from the REGIN's partner regions and beyond, paying special attention to other European regions.

The selection of practices and experiences will be led by Puglia: the target is to gather at least 60 practices in the database, that can be used through a search filter and illustrated with a visual interactive map. Technical solutions for the creation of the database and linked map will be outsourced through the launch of a call for tender in October 2020.

How can CPMR member regions contribute?

- Review and/or update information as part of the CPMR Migration Visual Mapping (regional factsheet)
- Share good practices at regional level as well as examples of initiatives that were not as successful, providing info on limitations / lessons learnt
- Use the evaluation matrix and guidelines and provide feedback for improvement / adaptation
- Share the evaluation framework, database of practices and interactive map with relevant stakeholders

How can CPMR member regions benefit from results?

- Mutual learning between regions based on both successful and less successful practices
- Showcasing of regional integration actions, networking and identifying expertise in specific areas
- Improving design, implementation and monitoring & evaluation of integration practices within your region / adapting the evaluation framework collaborating with other regional stakeholders

FOLLOW-UP

CPMR will share a survey template with members of the Migration Task Force to collect integration practices.

SUMMING UP

The different ways in which CPMR member regions can contribute and benefit from the project are summarised at the end of the [main presentation](#).

Annex 1 - Agenda for the meeting


This External Network Encounter meeting is organised by the CPMR in the context of the Regions for Migrants & Refugees Integration ([REGIN](#)) Project.

REGIN was created to mainstream migrant and refugee integration within social cohesion policies at regional level, by building a common framework to facilitate, guide and improve the performance of regions through innovative tools.

This meeting aims to present to members of the CPMR Task Force on Migration the work in progress on policy and outcome indicators and tools/good practices at the regional level. It will be also an opportunity discuss areas for collaboration within the CPMR network and how regions can benefit from the project results.

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|----------------------|--|
| 11.45 - 11.50 | Brief overview of the project by CPMR |
| 11.50 - 12.10 | <p>MIPEX-R (Migrant Integration Policy Regional Index) - Presentation by MPG</p> <p>A tool to provide ready-to-use evidence on policy, policy perceptions and policy options on migration, asylum, and integration at the EU level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Questionnaire and methodology for policy and outcome indicators ▪ How you can contribute and benefit from results, Q&A |
| 12.10 - 12.20 | <p>Regional toolkit. Presentation by Instrategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stakeholder mapping - a prerequisite for effective and sustainable actions ▪ Capacity building and training to improve regional performance |
| 12.20 - 12.55 | <p>Learning from each other</p> <p>Innovative test bed on health and integration. Progress, adapting to COVID and future expectations. Presentation by Skåne</p> <p>Testimony from a regional partner (Murcia)</p> <p>The “Integration Lab”. Presentation by CPMR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluation framework, collection of practices, database and mapping. ▪ How you can contribute and benefit from results, Q&A |
| 12.55 - 13.00 | Summing up |

Annex 2 – Picture of the participants in the REGIN External Network Encounter



REGIN
REGIONS FOR MIGRANTS
AND REFUGEES INTEGRATION

Website:
reginproject.eu

Friday 11 September 2020

REGIN External Network Encounter /
CPMR Migration Task Force Meeting

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