

CeSPI

CentroStudi di Politica Internazionale

Working Papers
23/2006

Migrants and Local Authorities for the EuroMediterranean Transnational Integration

Flavia Piperno and Andrea Stocchiero

CONTENTS

Executive Summary	5
1. The Euro-Mediterranean Migration and Political Framework	8
1.1 The Euro-Mediterranean migration dynamics	8
1.2 European Union policies on Euro-Mediterranean migration	12
1.3 From a fortress towards a transnational integration policy.....	14
2. Local Authority Co-development Practices: the Italian Case	16
2.1. Mobilisation of economic circuits and productive returns.....	17
2.2. Recruitment projects	18
2.3. Mandatory and assisted returns.....	19
2.4. Community development projects	19
2.5. Channelling and fostering remittances.....	20
3. The Transnational Integration of Migrants and Local Authorities in the European Neighbourhood Policy.....	22
3.1 Linking integration, transnationalism and co-development.....	22
3.2 A stronger transnationalism increases integration	26
3.3 A stronger integration increases transnationalism	28
3.4 Improving the position of migrants and local authorities in the European Neighbourhood Policy	30

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Transnational terrorism has a direct impact on the migration issue in the Euro-Mediterranean basin and on the role of local authorities.

Sharm El Sheikh, London, Madrid, Istanbul, Casablanca and Riad, Cairo and several other cities in Mediterranean countries have experienced tragic terroristic attacks.

In the Euro-Mediterranean area, security is a common political objective that dramatically involves the life of cities. Governments are looking for a new balance between security, freedom and development in the area, addressing specific attention to the management of migrant flows. Cities cannot only suffer the consequences of these problems, they must also participate in their governance.

The Media, politicians and citizens are debating day by day on the linkage between terrorism, Islamic culture and Muslim migrants. In few simple words, the question is the following: are cities threatened by Muslim migrants? Is the answer their assimilation (or segregation) and the reduction of migration flows from South Mediterranean countries?

But we already know that assimilation policies have not been successful in our cities and that the reduction of migration flows is simply not possible, unless we accept more irregular flows and the flourishing of human trafficking.

Combating transnational terrorism requires a new reinforced Euro-Mediterranean transnational cooperation on security, freedom and development, as well as more effective integration policies at local level, based on intercultural dialogue and sharing of human and democratic rights and obligations, in South and North Mediterranean cities and between them, “here, there and between”.

In order to counter the fear and the attitude which leads to the creation of a “fortress”, to separation and segregation, in the cities and between the South and North Mediterranean, a dead end, it is necessary to create consensus on common values and vision, on the open societies concept, supporting hybridisation and syncretism based on the respect of universal human rights. There is the need of effective Euro-Mediterranean, national and local policies to guarantee those rights and the implementation of obligations at transnational level, “here, there and between”, according to partnership, reciprocity, joint responsibility and common benefit principles. To this regard, the European Neighbourhood Policy may be a positive answer wherein migrants and local authorities could become protagonists by proposing innovative contents.

In this new framework, there is space for a new cooperation aimed at nurturing positive migrant transnationalism, isolating negative transnational subjects and practices such as terrorist ones, nurturing intercultural dialogue by isolating terrorist organizations from religious and cultural support, and from the migration issue. Migrants may be partners in combating terrorism and promoting common development, but the pre-condition is a more effective integration: here, in European cities, by guaranteeing a full access to social, economic and political opportunities; there, in South Mediterranean cities, by creating an institutional environment enabling the contribution of migrants to local development; in between, favouring circulation of human, social and financial migrant capitals.

In a interdependent world it is difficult and nonsensical to separate internal and external issues. Local and national migrant integration is permanently tied to their transnationalism and relationships with origin cities and villages. To this regard, we put forward the concept of transnational integration, that is positive practices of transnational individuals, communities and political subjects (migrants and local authorities) who work directly in and between their specific territories for the promotion of human rights and common development (co-development of countries of origin and destination through the enhancing of migrant capitals, capacities and resources). Migrants can be development actors who create hybridisation and syncretism, share values, support preventive security, “here, there and between”; while local authorities may promote

a new governance and partnerships with migrants, civil society organizations and the private sector contributing to local and trans-local development, forging a positive transnational integration, where human rights and well-being are sustained.

But so far, migrants and local authorities have been marginalised and weak actors in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and in the European Union (EU) policy on freedom and security, when, on the contrary, they are increasingly at the forefront of transnational integration problems and opportunities. EU policy, as well as national policies, focusses on stricter control, labour selection and improvement of integration of necessary but undesired migrants. These are insufficient actions. The transnational integration concept and pro-active role of migrants and local authorities (that is the application of the downward phase of the subsidiarity principle) in the external dimension of migration and cooperation with third countries, should be introduced.

Migrants and local authorities are relevant partners for promoting intercultural dialogue, social, economic and institutional capitals to overcome the increasing problems of insecurity and development in the area. Migrant capacities and resources are already supporting social welfare and the balance of payment accounts of countries of origin, and much more could be done in circulating skills and brains, in productive investments and in intercultural dialogue. At local level numerous innovations from below may be identified in the area of transnational integration and co-development practices, for example: mobilization of economic circuits and productive return, recruitment projects, mandatory and assisted returns; community development projects; channelling and fostering remittances. But they are scattered and not enhanced within a strategic framework.

The special and critical position of migrants and cities in relation to transnational terrorism, migrants' role in supporting social welfare in countries of origin, the financial relevance of remittances, the possibilities to enhance skill and brain circulation, the innovative initiatives of migrants and local authorities on migration management and development, and the launch of the European Neighbourhood Policy, can offer motivations and a new opportunity framework where migrants and local authorities can lobby for a new transnational integration programme.

The European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) provides for cross-border cooperation and a thematic programme in the area of migration management, and local authorities should be involved in the partnership ("as appropriate"). This policy is based on the "common benefit of Member States and partner countries, for the purpose of promoting cross-border and trans-regional cooperation" (art.1), and on the integration of external and internal dimensions. Consequently it shows good perspectives for the promotion of links between migration and development, integration and transnationalism, enhancing the role of migrants and local authorities in decentralised and cross-border cooperation.

Local authorities can take stock of their practices and experimentations. The lessons learned and the elaboration of political proposals can steer the European Commission and national governments in setting up a new transnational integration programmes in the framework of ENPI and in reducing legal, procedural and resource constraints. Generally, coherence and harmonization of European and national migration, integration, external and development policies should be promoted.

Migrants and local authorities should improve their position in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and in the near future European Neighbourhood Policy by sustaining the following actions.

First of all, migrants and local authorities should deepen intercultural and political dialogue to build partnerships for transnational integration, involving social and economic actors (NGOs and civil society organizations, banks and financial institutions, enterprises and trade unions...) in South and North Mediterranean.

Second, migrants and local authorities should reinforce their auto organization, improve their knowledge and capacities, increase resources dedicated to transnational integration in decentralised cooperation as much as possible, enhancing public-private partnerships.

Third, European local authorities should build dialogue and political forum with Southern Mediterranean cities on the issue of transnational integration and co-development. The scope of this dialogue is strictly linked to the processes of decentralization and deconcentration in Southern Mediterranean countries. To this regard, the Action Plans established by the EU with Southern Mediterranean governments should support those processes, as in the case of Morocco, as well as a positive management of migration oriented towards co-development. Decentralised and cross-border cooperation should contribute to upgrading institutional capacities of Southern Mediterranean local authorities creating the conditions for the implementation of transnational integration practices and projects.

Fourth, local authorities should include transnational integration in the operative programmes of cross-border and transnational cooperation, as in the case of Andalusia/Spain-Morocco cross-border cooperation. They should lobby the European Commission to introduce the link between transnational integration and cross-border cooperation in the Country and Regional Strategy Papers of ENPI.

Fifth, migrants and local authorities should reinforce their lobby for access to the Euro-Mediterranean political debate to support the concept of transnational integration and its adoption in the Action Plans with Southern Mediterranean countries and generally in EU policies.

1. THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN MIGRATION AND POLITICAL FRAMEWORK

Migration in the Mediterranean area reveals – in a very critical way – some of the main contradictions and problems in the current EU policies:

- a) the contradiction between the need for a strict control on migration for security reasons and the need for a larger liberalization of personal mobility for addressing the demand of the European labour market;
- b) the impossibility to stop or drastically reduce – at least in the short term – a migratory flow which, although unwanted, is still inescapable;
- c) the blooming of irregular flows in a space left empty by the EU “zero immigration” policy;
- d) the schizophrenia – even stronger after September 11 – between the fear of migrant integration and the need for assimilation;
- e) the difficulty to mix internal purposes (EU security and labour market needs) with external aims (Med stabilization, democratisation and development);
- f) the marginalisation of migrants and local authorities in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and in the EU policy on freedom and security, while they are in the forefront of integration problems and they have opportunities to link migrant transnationalism with trans-local Euro-Med development through decentralised cooperation.

1.1 The Euro-Mediterranean migration dynamics

According to the 2003 OECD Annual report on “Trends in International Migration”, the total stock of foreigners and foreign born individuals in OECD European countries, Japan and Korea coming from Africa and the Middle East is quite well-represented (11%), although it is strongly lower than the stock of non-EU citizens (27.4%). On the contrary, South America and Asia are under-represented: the first is 2.8% out of the total, while the second is 12% although the Asian continent accounts for about 60% of the world population¹. In table 1, data on the main nationalities of migrants from Mediterranean countries in some UE countries are recorded.

Table 1. Stock of the main foreign population from Mediterranean countries in the main European Union countries by nationality (thousand, 2002)

	Morocco	Tunisia	Turkey	Algeria	Total foreigner population
Germany			1,912.2		7,355.6
Belgium	83.6		42.6	7.2	850.1
Spain*	282.4			20.1	1,324.0
France§	504.1	154.4	208.0	477.5	3,263.2
Italy*	172.8	51.4			1,512.3
Netherlands	104.3		100.3		700.0
United Kingdom			52.0		2,681.0
Total	1,147.2	205.8	2,315.0	504.8	17,686.2
% main Med immigrants on Total foreign population	6.5	1.2	13.0	2.9	23.6

§: Data refer to 1999.

*: In Spain, after the 2005 regularization, Moroccans amounted to 85,969 units (12.51% out of the total foreigner population) while, in Italy, at the end of 2003, they amounted to 227,940 units (10.4% out of the total foreigner population).

Source: OECD *Tendances des migrations internationales*, SOPEMI, 2004, p. 28.

¹ OECD, *Trends in International migration, Annual Report 2003*, p. 45. Data refer to 2001.

Of course the Mediterranean region does not present homogeneous emigration trends. As a matter of fact, this region includes countries of immigration such as Libya and Israel together with countries of emigration such as Turkey which, however, shows a declining trend of the flows towards Europe. On the contrary, other countries continue to have a high pressure of emigration, such as Morocco and Egypt (see table 2 on the emigration rate by country of birth).

Table 2. Emigration rate² by country of birth (%population 15+)

Egypt	Israel	Jordan	Lebanon	Lybia	Morocco	Tunisia	Turkey	Syria
7.2	3.4	2.0	2.3	1.7	7.2	5.8	3.9	1.2

Source: OECD database (<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/18/25/34792407.xls>).

The migratory pressure is the result of a multiplicity of factors and, at least in the short term, it is not likely to decrease. The demographic explosion which has recently reached its peak and is only recently starting to decrease (with a birth rate decline in absolute terms expected only from 2010³), the strong economical stagnation and the consequent crisis of the labour market and, finally, the risk of political clashes, are some of the main current push factors. On the other hand, the demographic crisis and specialised labour demands in Europe are pull factors for migration. The low return to skills and high unemployment and underemployment create a large offer of labour that meets the quantitative and qualitative demand of European markets. Thus, temporary migration schemes are now considered the more rational measure that could compensate the demographic and labour market problems in the Euro-Mediterranean area⁴.

In this situation, emigration has positive effects on internal problems of Southern Mediterranean governments: it is a social and political safety valve and it originates relevant financial flows, remittances, that ease the management of balance of payments. On the other hand, for individuals and their families, emigration is a choice for improving their social welfare. But probably the net effect of emigration (considering remittances and brain drain together) on the development of Southern Mediterranean countries is negative and increases their dependence on EU economies.

As a matter of fact, between 1990 and 2003, Egypt, Turkey, Morocco, Lebanon and Jordan were respectively the fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh and twelfth largest recipient of remittances in absolute terms⁵. Even in the absence of reliable, systematic and comprehensive data on financial transfers from Europe to the Southern shore of the Mediterranean, the evidence existing for some key emigration countries, suggests that the volume of remittances is expanding, although in many cases remittances flow through almost exclusively informal channels⁶. To this regard, the case of Morocco is exemplary: according to recent features provided by Ansa Med, by the end of May 2005 remittances had reached the total amount of 1.4 € billion, growing at the pace of 4.9%

² The emigration rate from country of origin is calculated by dividing the expatriate population (aged 15+) from that country by the 15+ native-born population of the same country.

³ Philippe Fargues, "Les politiques migratoires en Méditerranée Occidentale: contexte, contenu, perspectives", IOM, Dialogue sur la coopération en Méditerranée Occidentale (5+5), Rencontre Ministerielle, Tunis (2003), in G. Aubarell and X. Aragall, *Immigration and the Euro-Mediterranean Area, Keys and Trends in the Establishment of Policies*, IEMED, 2004.

⁴ Philippe Fargues, *Temporary Migration: Matching Demand in the EU with Supply from the MENA*, European University Institute, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, Euro-Mediterranean Consortium for Applied Research on International Migration (CARIM), 2005, www.carim.org.

⁵ IMF, "Globalization and external imbalances", *World Economic Outlook*, April 2005, p. 72.

⁶ CeSPI, "Remittances and Co-development in the Mediterranean Region", forthcoming in *IEMED Mediterranean Yearbook 2005*.

compared to the previous year. As illustrated in table 3 remittance flows exceed foreign direct investments (FDIs) and official development assistance (ODA) flows.

Table 3. Remittances, FDI (net) and ODA from the world to Mediterranean countries (million \$)

	1996			2002		
	FDI	ODA	Remittances	FDI	ODA	Remittances
Algeria	270	88	233	1,065	91	233
Egypt	636	1,224	3,107	647	650	2,893
Jordan	16	167	1,544	56	384	2,135
Lebanon	80	52	1,225	257	145	2,307
Morocco	322	356	2,166	428	163	2,877
Syria	89	36	313	255	71	200
Tunisia	238	138	736	795	114	1,071
Turkey	722	274	3,542	1,037	376	1,936

Source: World Bank, *Global Development Finance*, 2004.

Such a trend can be observed also by analysing the Italian case where remittances towards Morocco and Egypt are higher both than FDIs and ODA. In Spain the outflow of remittances in 2004 was 3,481 million Euros while the ODA budget was 1,043 million Euros and, specifically towards Morocco, the total amount was 300 million Euros⁷. These data show, on one side, the great importance of the financial flows generated by emigration (that is the dependence from the European labour market) and, on the other side, the aid fatigue and the failure of the Barcelona process (as well as national and multilateral policies) in promoting European direct investment in Southern Mediterranean countries.

Table 4. Remittances, FDI (net) and ODA from Italy to Mediterranean countries in 2003 (million €)⁸

	Morocco	Tunisia	Egypt
FDI*	7.0 (Jan-June 2003)	607.0	N/A
ODA Total Net **	26.7	2.6	4.2
Remittances ***	34.8	1.0	4.8

Sources: *Istituto Commercio Estero 2004; **Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, International Development Statistics <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/50/17/5037721.htm>; *** Dossier Caritas 2004.

The effect of remittances on these countries is complex. From a macroeconomic point of view remittances are extremely important in sustaining the balance of payments, the national currency and in financing imports (especially from European countries: in this sense remittance flows return to Europe). While, at microeconomic level, remittances are spent above all in consumption and may cause inflation and property speculation if the income multiplier effect does not work (where local productive capacity is not available). From another point of view, they sustain family welfare and investment in human capital (education and health), reducing poverty but generating new distributional differences that spur new migration waves. Remittances increase the liquidity in local banks⁹ but the mounting money offer rarely meets productive demands.

⁷ Iñigo Moré, *Las remesas de los emigrantes en España: una oportunidad para la acción exterior*, Documento de trabajo 3/2005, Real Instituto Elcano.

⁸ Rosa Balfour, *Italy's Policies in the Mediterranean*, CeSPI paper presented at the International Workshop "The Barcelona Process Revisited", organised by the Real Instituto Elcano and by FRIDE, Madrid, 13-14 May 2005.

⁹ See Mohamed Khachani, *Migration, Transferst et développement au Maroc*, Institut Universitaire Europeen, Robert Schuman Centre for Advances Studies, CARIM, 2005, p.21; and also Sebastiano Ceschi, Lorenzo Coslovi, Maria Mora

However, depending on the local economic and institutional environment, a minority quota is also invested in productive goals. In Tunisia, for example, between 1993 and 1999, 4,196 enterprises were set up by people who had worked abroad. The total investment amounted to 153 million dinars, and it gave employment to 20,468 people (6.3% of the employees hired between 1993 and 1998 at national level)¹⁰. In Egypt the returnees invest more capital in formal business than non-migrants, and, on average, they create 1.4 more jobs per establishment. Overall, they are responsible for 15% of the capital invested in small enterprises and 15% of the associated employment generation, but the most important expenditure of remittances is for daily household needs and on housing¹¹. In Morocco only 1.3% of migrant investments have been made in the industry sector, while 7.5% in agriculture and 4.9% in commerce (83.7% in property). The data concerning the greatest investments of migrants in destination countries are interesting (3.7% in industry, 6.1% in tourism, 7.3% in agriculture and 17.4% in commerce)¹². In fact migrants are increasingly becoming small entrepreneurs in European countries. They are in search of an economic and social mobility that it is not acknowledged to them because of the brain waste phenomenon.

As many researches on the brain drain issue show, migratory out-flows can also have a negative impact on the local development of many sending countries. According to some studies, emigration of intellectuals from the Arab world accounts for about one-third of the total brain drain from developing countries to the West¹³. Morocco is a very telling case in this regard. Between 1974 and 1984 an average of about 20,000 students per year left the country for family-related and professional reasons as well as for the marked weaknesses of the research market in Morocco. This trend worsened in the '90s due to the economic problems of the country which entailed a massive waste of skills and "brains". Technicians – engineers in particular – are the most likely to emigrate as denounced by some important national institutes such as the *École Mohammedia des Ingénieurs or the Institut National des postes et des Télécommunications*. According to recent statistics, Morocco ranks third in the world for the emigration of high skilled personnel and between 50% and 70% of all Moroccan students who graduate in technological subjects expatriate every year¹⁴. In Egypt, the selectivity of migration involves more and more technicians and scientists: the percentage increased from 20.4% of all professions in 1985 to 40.2% between 1990 and 2002. At the same time, also their length of stay abroad has increased causing a higher rate of brain drain¹⁵.

Theoretically, brain drain could turn into brain gain with the return and circulation of human capital but most immigrants work in the low labour market segment, especially in Italy and Spain, producing the phenomenon of brain waste. Brain waste drastically reduces the possibilities of brain circulation and the creation of an élite which could promote knowledge transfers¹⁶. The loss of highly skilled persons drives some analysts to recommend the implementation of policies to curb the outflow with retention and return measures, as well as more generally with reforms in educational and employment systems in origin countries¹⁷.

and A. Stocchiero, "Egyptian Diaspora Cooperation with the Homeland: Migration Networks and Transnationalism Between Local Contexts", *CeSPI Working Papers* 15/2005.

¹⁰ A. Stocchiero, "Le migrazioni nell'integrazione euro-mediterranea: dal co-sviluppo alla fortezza Europea", in *Afriche e orienti*, n. 3/2002, p. 35.

¹¹ Heba Nassar, *Migration, Transfers and Development in Egypt*, European University Institute, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, CARIM, 2005, p. 23.

¹² INSEA, *Les Marocains résidant à l'étranger*, 2000, pp. 196-197.

¹³ H. Nassar, CARIM, op. cit., p. 2.

¹⁴ P. Salemi, "Il mercato del lavoro in Marocco tra migrazioni e sviluppo locale", *CeSPI Working Paper* 2/2003, p. 41.

¹⁵ H. Nassar, CARIM, op. cit., p. 6.

¹⁶ See the case of the association "Savoir & Développement" in M. Khachani, CARIM, 2005, op. cit. p. 17.

¹⁷ H. Nassar, CARIM, op. cit., p. 29.

Finally, Southern Mediterranean countries such as Lybia and Morocco (and to a lesser extent Tunisia after the successful implementation of the bilateral agreement with Italy on migration control) are becoming crossroads of human movements on a global scale. Transit migration flows from Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa through the Mediterranean towards the European pole are increasing, and Southern Mediterranean countries are facing similar new problems to those of Northern countries.

1.2 European Union policies on Euro-Mediterranean migration

Notwithstanding the high migratory pressure from these areas (which is parallel to an increased need of both skilled and not skilled work in an “older” Europe) and the need of a proper management of these flows for a better economical and social stability and development in and among the Mediterranean countries, during the ‘90s the “Shengen Europe” advocated for a “zero immigration” policy, progressively closing its borders and strengthening the measures of migration control and selection for the labour market.

On the external side, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, established in 1995, considered the migration issue marginally and only for control aims. The European Commission tried to launch a Med-Migra programme, later inserted in the Med-Urbs programme, but the attempt was aborted with its blockage. Over the last ten years (1995-2005), scarce and rhetorical attention has been devoted to the possible migration and development linkages, while an increasing interest has been dedicated to readmission agreements, to the control of borders and to the fight against human trafficking. The articles of the Association Agreements reflect the priorities of EU and Med countries: control of migration flows in return for protection of workers abroad (welfare and labour access and no discrimination of emigrants).

In 1999 the Tampere Council marked a shift in the political agenda of the EU: a comprehensive and coherent approach between internal and external policies was called for to manage migration, human rights, democracy and development, in partnership with Third countries. A pilot budget line of the European Commission (B7-667: cooperation with Third countries in the area of migration) financed projects to manage migration flows and on co-development issues, according the guidelines proposed by the High-Level Working Group on Asylum and Migration.

But later the regulation of the Aeneas programme, that substituted the B7-667 budget line, takes a step back on the migration and development issue, with a greater emphasis on control and restraining actions on migration flows.

In fact, 2001 marks a turning point in international relationships that directly involve the migration issue: the rise of transnational terrorism and the speculations on religious and cultural clashes has reduced the scope for migration and development actions.

The tendency to emphasize security on development was accentuated after September 11 2001. The terroristic attacks in Madrid and recently in London and Sharm El Sheikh raised the European political, media and public opinion’s awareness for the concept of the clash between civilizations, between Islamic fundamentalism/integralism and Western (and Christian) democracies, simplifying a more complex context. All this causes great prejudice towards Muslim migrants from Southern Mediterranean countries and is an obstacle to intercultural Euro-Med dialogue¹⁸.

¹⁸ “In recent years, and especially since the events of 9/11, migrants from Islamic countries the region have been regarded with increasing suspicion by other members of society in the countries to which they have moved. The fact that many of these migrants are young men, who have entered the countries of Europe in an irregular manner and who have subsequently submitted unsuccessful claims to refugee status appears to have reinforced the perception that migrants from the region represent a threat to the national interest of receiving states. In this climate, the Hearing was told, migrants from the Middle East and Mediterranean are increasingly subjected to discrimination and marginalization.” Global Commission on International Migration, *Regional Hearing for the Mediterranean and the Middle East. Summary Report*, Cairo, Egypt, 13 and 14 September 2004.

In 2002, notwithstanding the plan proposed at the Valencia Euro-Mediterranean Conference to balance security and development aims on migration management, the Siviglia EU Council took a stance more inclined towards control objectives¹⁹, while rejecting the attempt to condition aid towards origin countries with their commitment to restraining migration flows. The following Councils continued to be marked by a high political sensibility towards the problems of irregular flows, the need to introduce security mechanisms and to improve integration policies that are not working.

As a by-product, the immigration policies and attitudes of European countries show a bias against Arab/Muslim people and in favour of Eastern European emigrants, sustained by the accession path. The results of the last regularizations in Spain and Italy show the change in the ranking of migrants' nationalities with Moroccans passing from the first to the third community after Romanians and Albanians in Italy, and after Ecuadorians and Romanians in Spain²⁰. This dynamic is probably due to an increased effectiveness of controls on migratory flows coming from the Mediterranean region and to a general preference granted by employers to nationalities other than North African. Features from the 2004 Sopemi annual report also attest this trend in the Netherlands where both Turkish and Moroccan communities are losing relative weight, while a certain increase of the Moroccan community is ongoing only in Belgium²¹.

At the end of 2004, the Hague EU Council endorsed a new multiannual programme concerning 10 priorities for an area of freedom, security and justice, because "it is at the heart of citizens' interests"²². And, in June 2005, the Council and the Commission adopted the Action Plan that, within the chapter dedicated to "strengthening freedom", foresees a reinforced cooperation with Third countries in managing migration and asylum. The cooperation should launch new initiatives on migration and development (a new Communication of the European Commission on this issue was published in September 2005), with the revision of the Aeneas programme, and the integration of migration into the Country and Regional Strategy Papers of external assistance policies, and particularly within the context of the European Neighbourhood Policy (and the foreseen European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument – ENPI – that should begin in 2007, replacing Tacis and MEDA regulations).

The European Neighbourhood policy aims at creating a common space of security, stability and prosperity with East European and Southern Mediterranean countries, and it offers "the prospect of a stake in the EU's Internal Market and further integration and liberalization promoting the free movement of persons, goods, services and capital, the four fundamental freedoms". The EU and its neighbours should put in place "mechanisms that allow workers to move from one territory to

¹⁹ "Recent changes in EU policy on border and external relations have impelled Southern European countries on a path of increasingly restrictive immigration policies. The key strategies underpinning these policy shifts are bilateral cooperation to control coastal areas and land borders; the signing and effective implementation of "readmission agreements" with non-EU countries of transit to regulate the involuntary return of unauthorized migrants; and encouraging the construction of immigration controls in neighboring non-EU countries", *The Changing Mosaic of Mediterranean Migrations* by Martin Baldwin-Edwards, Mediterranean Migration Observatory Panteion University, Athens June 1, 2004 in www.migrationinformation.org of the Migration Policy Institute.

²⁰ http://www.mtas.es/balance/Proceso_norm.pdf.

²¹ OCDE, *Tendances des migrations internationales*, SOPEMI, 2004, p. 28.

²² The priorities encompass diverse strategic objectives on migration issues: a) the conversion of the European Monitoring Centre for Racism and Xenophobia into a Fundamental Rights Agency carrying out actions to combat discrimination, creating a fully-fledged policy on fundamental rights and citizenship; b) the fight against terrorism; c) a balanced approach on migration management with a common immigration policy for a rational use of immigrant workforce, the fight against illegal migration, migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings, and "a serious investment in relations with third countries, both of origin and of transit, through assistance and cooperation"; d) developing an integrated management of external borders for a safer Union with the creation of a common application centre for visas; e) developing a common asylum policy; e) maximising the positive impact of migration on society and economy, contributing to understanding and dialogue between religions and cultures.

another where skills are needed most – although the free movement of people and labour remains the long-term objective”, as well as providing opportunities for cultural and technical interchange with a long-stay visa policy, ensuring integration, combating illegal migration, examining wider application of visa free regimes, facilitating cross-border movements in the frontier areas²³.

An important innovation in this new external assistance policy is the adoption of territorial cooperation: the extension of the Interreg programme of the internal regional policy to Neighbour countries (the Neighbourhood programme in the period 2004-2006 and from 2007 the cross-border cooperation in the ENPI). This innovation acknowledges the role of local authorities by framing common trans-local development through cross-border cooperation. But the following Strategy Paper²⁴ and the Meda Neighbourhood Programme²⁵ of the European Commission fail to indicate concrete perspectives on migration and development issues and on the relative role of local authorities. It's up to local authorities, migrant organizations and civil society at large to lobby and propose political and practical co-development measures.

Finally, the European Commission has put forward the financial perspective proposing a substantial increase of the budget for the area of freedom, security and justice. A 300% increase in spending over the 2006-2013 period, with a total amount of 8.3 billion Euro, which involves three framework programmes. Particularly, the framework programme “Solidarity and management of migration flows” encompasses the creation of 4 funds, respectively related to external borders, integration, return and refugees. For the Neighbourhood policy the Commission proposed an increase of 95%, with a total budget of 13.1 billion Euros over the 2006-2013 period. Even if the agreement on the financial perspective was not achieved in the Council of June 2005, the increase of the budget (however probably less than 300%) for the freedom and security area should be taken for granted as well as that for the Neighbourhood Policy, as these are considered the priorities that various Member States link to the problems of security.

1.3 From a fortress towards a transnational integration policy

Of course, a policy mainly focused on deterring migration in the Mediterranean region is rather short-sighted and cannot be sustainable in the medium and long term.

In the first place, Eastern European countries will not continue to be a key source of workforce in the near future as the out-migration is expected to strongly decrease; this is mainly due to the Eastern countries's demographic profile (low fertility and ageing), to the periods of transition for the free circulation of workers (up to seven years) and to the increasing expectations of improvement of their socio-economic conditions²⁶.

In the second place, as many observers have pointed out, the zero immigration policy turns out to be a “non-policy” or a fortress policy which causes structural conflicts between European and Southern Mediterranean countries²⁷ and fosters the organization of non-institutional actors directly

²³ Commission of the European Communities, *Wider Europe – Neighbourhood: A new framework for relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours*, Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament, COM(2003) 104 final, Brussels 11.3.2003.

²⁴ Commission of the European Communities, *European Neighbourhood Policy – Strategy Paper*, Communication from the Commission, COM(2004) 373 final, Brussels 12.5.2004.

²⁵ Commission of the European Communities, *Meda Neighbourhood Programme, Strategy Paper and Indicative Programme for countries under the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership*, Brussels 2004.

²⁶ G. Aubarell and X. Aragall, op. cit., p. 3.

²⁷ These conflicts were evident since the Barcelona conference where Member States identified as the main and only priority an enforced cooperation with partner countries for the control of illegal migratory flows, while the Southern Mediterranean partners advocated for a partnership which favours the integration of their citizens abroad and preserves the remittances flow. Morocco's decision not to ratify the readmission agreement with Italy is only a further face of these contradictions.

involved in the labour market operating outside the legal framework. The growth in irregular transit movements across the Sahara desert to the Maghreb countries (Lybia, Morocco, Tunisia), and from there, through dangerous maritime smuggling routes, to Italy, Malta and Spain are of course a consequence of this policy²⁸. The decision by European countries to “externalise” the border’s control and to accord a key role in the containment of migratory flows to transit countries, cannot certainly be a solution, also because it often clashes with the respect of human rights. The accusation made by the European Commission to Italy for having adopted – in collaboration with Libya – political measures which abuse migrants’ rights (mass repatriations, financial support for setting up detention centres in Libya which are far below the required standards) is a clear demonstration of these limits.

Third, the attempt to limit migratory pressure by widening the opportunities for goods and capital circulation with the creation of the Euromediterranean free trade zone (which is one of the main declared strategic goals of the Barcelona Process) cannot give the expected results in the short term. The neo-classical theoretical idea of the substitution effect among the production factors may be valid in the long run, but in the short period the circulation of capital, goods, services and persons is complementary. The successful outcome of capital and trade flows calls for an open circulation of persons. Business continue to depend strongly on personal contacts notwithstanding the e-commerce trend.

Fourth, if it is true that a greater socio-economic development means a decrease in the trend of involuntary emigration it is also true that in the short and mid-term an increased social and economic wealth creates more opportunities for emigrating (the so-called migration hump effect). For this reason, strategies focused on "More development for less migration" should rather be shifted in a more comprehensive policy focused on the paradigm "Better migration for more development", which means an active management of migratory flows through policies that can enhance the role of migrants as actors of local development²⁹.

Fifth, stopping migration for security (and cultural) objectives is a short-sighted policy. The security issue linked to the “Islamic threat” does not only cause the tightening of the immigration policy (the decision by France and the Netherlands to temporarily suspend the Shengen agreement after the terrorist attacks in London confirms such a political approach). It also hampers the possibilities for Islamic migrants to fully integrate in European societies while, at the same time, maintaining their cultural identities with the respect of constitutional rights and obligations of destination countries. After 9/11, the Western public opinion tended to associate Islamic culture to the idea of religious fundamentalism/integralism and transnational terrorism and consequently to consider it as potentially threatening. On a political level this psychological attitude was not seriously deterred but, on the contrary, partially legitimated. The idea that Islamic migrants could be accepted by European societies only if they abandoned those aspects of their culture which turn out to be more different and far from the local culture (as for example the use of the veil) seems to prevail. This entailed that European societies prefer to promote the assimilation of Islamic migrants rather than stimulate tolerance and interculturalism with the respect of constitutional rights and obligations, which are basic components of integration. Some of the recent debates carried out at European level – i.e. on the possibility of granting family reunion permits only to under 12 children who are more likely to fully absorb the host country culture or on the opportunity to train religious leaders in Europe, thus contributing to shaping a “European Islam” – clearly reflect European countries’ fear of integrating Muslim migrants and the parallel need to assimilate them.

²⁸ CeSPI in forthcoming *IEMED Mediterranean Yearbook 2005*.

²⁹ Ferruccio Pastore, "More development for less migration" or "Better migration for more development?". Shifting priorities in the European debate, *Migracion Europa*, Special issue, 2003; <http://www.cespi.it/bollettini%20migracion.htm>.

These measures risk creating a Fortress Europe for security reasons and are an obstacle to common human development and open societies in the Euro-Mediterranean area (increasing the European contradiction between security and freedom principles). They also trigger a reaction among Muslim migrants who become stricter in the defence of their cultural identities (stopping their secularization process). There is a need for the refusal of the idea of a clash between civilizations and for the recovery of the positive side of intercultural dialogue, syncretism and hybridization based on the common respect of human rights and democracy. There is the need to break the link between transnational terrorism, Islamic culture and Muslim migrants with policies that support positive migrant transnationalism and integration “here, there and between”.

Migrants and local authorities are at the forefront of these problems and they are experimenting new co-development practices that represent relevant orientations for national and European policies.

2. LOCAL AUTHORITY CO-DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES: THE ITALIAN CASE

In Italy, over recent years, sub-national governments (particularly Regions and Municipalities) rather than the central government have played an increasingly important role in trying to shape (at times unintentionally) a co-development approach in migration and cooperation policies³⁰. On one side, local authorities have decisive and real competencies in the integration of migrants in their specific territories; on the other they have increased their awareness of the trans-local dimension of migration which creates direct ties between territories of origin and destination. Consequently they have reacted to the new glocal interdependent context, connecting migration and development “here, there and between”.

A range of pilot schemes in the field of co-development have been put in place (CeSPI has a data base of more than 60 analysed projects). The practices that have been undertaken in the Italian context linking migration and development can be grouped in the following explanatory typologies:

1. Mobilisation of economic circuits and productive returns
2. Recruitment projects
3. Mandatory and assisted returns of weak categories
4. Community development projects
5. Channelling and fostering of remittances

The actors promoting such practices include Municipalities, Provinces, Regions as well as migrant associations, NGOs and the private sector: in a word, the whole set of actors of the so-called “decentralised cooperation” or partnership approach³¹.

³⁰ This part is drawn on the following sources: a) Petra Mezzetti, Alessandro Rotta, Andrea Stocchiero, co-ordinated by Ferruccio Pastore *The role of the regions in co-development policy in the Mediterranean and the Balkans*, Outline document for Working Groups II and III, Bari Conference, 23-24 October 2003, (<http://www.cespi.it/PASTORE/Mig-Bari/Comm-seconda.PDF>); b) a background paper containing a research carried out in November 2004 by Petra Mezzetti, Flavia Piperno and Andrea Stocchiero, CeSPI, for the Municipality of Milan, *Migranti e città: un patto per il co-sviluppo*. c) Jonathan Chaloff and Flavia Piperno “Italy”, in Jan Niessen and Yongmi Schibel (eds), 2004. *International Migration and Relations with Third Countries: European and US Approaches*, MPG, Brussels; d) Andrea Stocchiero, *Policies and Practices on Migration and Development in Italy: Lessons to be learnt and Suggestions for the EU's Aeneas Programme*, CeSPI Position paper, February 2005.

³¹ See also International Organization for Migration, *Partnerships in migration and development: working cooperatively to manage the benefits and challenges of migration for development*, Workshop Discussion paper,

2.1. Mobilisation of economic circuits and productive returns

Within the first typology, we include: a) the creation of transnational economic circuits within which migrants can play the role of facilitators or direct investors; and b) projects aimed at encouraging productive returns of migrants, who can become the main actors compensating for the brain drain due to migration by investing their competencies and capital in their countries of origin.

With regard to the creation of transnational economic circuits there are: training projects for migrants on economic internationalisation (promotion of trade and foreign direct investment) with internships in small and medium enterprises of the arrival region; training, technical assistance and small credit (or guarantee fund) projects for the start up of migrant enterprises in Italy, some of them trading with the country of origin (ethnic enterprises, travel agencies, trading companies, fair trade circuits, ...). So far, information confirms that these projects are successful in that they are grounded on real dynamics and on the precise selection of beneficiaries. The activities allow migrants to access the market “here and there” and to open new economic linkages between the origin country and the destination one. In some cases, the enhancement of the human and entrepreneurial capital of migrants is part of the internationalisation process of Italian enterprises and migrants are supported in order to be able to return and start up enterprises in their countries of origin (some of them in outsourcing with Italian enterprises).

Box 1. A transnational economic and migrant circuit between Khenifra and Emilia Romagna

The region of Emilia Romagna – with the support of the company Nextia and the consortium of Emilia Romagna productive cooperatives – has financed a project aimed at harnessing Moroccan local development in the agriculture sector as well as at the internationalization of Emilia Romagna cooperatives. The project is particularly interesting as it aims at creating an integrated productive and commercial space between the region of Khenifra in Morocco and the fruit and vegetable district of Emilia Romagna, enhancing the role of migrants as development agents at the same time. In the first phase, the project promotes a network of cooperatives for the processing of biological products. The network will be set up by creating new structures (also by opening local branches of Italian cooperatives) and reinforcing the old ones. At the same time trade agreements with Italy will be endorsed. In the second phase Moroccan migrant seasonal workers – many of which have worked for the Italian cooperatives several seasons – will be trained as agricultural technicians and, once back, hired as skilled workers in the cooperatives of the network or assisted in setting up their own cooperatives within the network.

Productive returns are an area within which more experiments have been undertaken, and more failures have been experienced³². Some recommendations can be drawn from these types of projects:

- Institutional activities must be put in place in order to accompany these projects and allow them to advance notwithstanding bureaucratic obstacles that can delay the beginning of the activities. For this purpose, the international network that local authorities can put in place can be very important and serve as a guarantee;
- Institutional support to the project must be efficient and financial incentives (soft loans), rather than grants and charity, should be delivered;
- Local partners have to be trustworthy and competent considering the technical and business assistance that return migrants need;

Workshop on Migration and Development, Mainstreaming Migration into Development Policy Agendas, 2-3 February 2005, Geneva.

³² In France “voluntary return programmes”, promoting “stay at home” development and reducing migration flows, have been created since the 1970s. These measures affected only a small number of people and were by far insufficient to solve the problem of illegal migration.

- The knowledge that the migrant has about the local context must be verified and often updated;
- It is better if productive returns are group or community projects rather than designed for single migrants (as they have high costs compared to uncertain benefits); the groups must be cohesive and the projects must be innovative and of significant scale;
- In several cases, the problems do not lie in the start-up phase but afterwards. Consequently, accompanying technical assistance should be delivered.
- Migrants must be the ultimate owners of their projects.

2.2. Recruitment projects

There are significant examples of workforce selection and training for recruitment projects in countries of origin, implemented by several Italian Regions. Beyond the problems involved in managing recruitment effectively (until now the number of migrants recruited through these projects is low and the costs are very high), the majority of these projects does not take into account the needs and problems of the country of origin in terms of brain and skill drain and shortage.

Few projects contain components designed to somehow compensate the brain drain:

- financing development initiatives in territories of origin,
- sustaining education in local contexts besides the recruitment, considering the labour market needs of the country of origin,
- trying to programme the return of “brains” to the countries of origin (but so far no evaluations exist)
- or recruiting brains and skills among subjects who are actually unemployed with no perspective in the labour market of origin.

Box 2. Recruitment, integration and development

The region of Emilia Romagna and some municipalities of the region as for example Modena have recently implemented some original projects for the recruitment of foreign workers, above all in the health sector. A project which was successfully concluded led to the recruitment of 120 nurses from Poland. The selected candidates were redundant in the country of origin. They received the possibility to attend Italian language classes in Poland and, once in Italy, obtained a ready recognition of their professional title. Furthermore the Municipality offered them price reductions on food and accommodation for one year. Currently all the beneficiaries, with the exception of one, are steadily employed in the Emilia Romagna health structures. Another interesting project in this field has been attempted by the Municipality of Modena which has compensated the drain of skills produced by the recruitment of 100 Colombian nurses through the allocation of a fund (€150,000) for the setting up of development projects in Colombia. Other projects carried out by some Italian local organizations aimed at reducing the problems created by the skill and brain drain by providing support to local training centres in addition to the recruitment initiatives.

The recruitment projects involve high political issues relative to the competitive position of territories in the globalisation process or international division of labour. Local authorities should consider recruitment projects in a more comprehensive strategic framework of trans-local integration of labour markets, production chains and knowledge sharing in the Euro-Mediterranean and global context. In this framework, decentralised and cross-border cooperation should be coherent and complementary with economic internationalization policies and management of migration flows.

2.3. Mandatory and assisted returns

Programmes to assist returnees (mandatory and ‘spontaneous’) have been mainly addressed at particular and generally ‘weak’ categories of migrants such as victims of trafficking, rejected asylum-seekers, refugees and former detainees. Other projects have often included assistance towards non-accompanied minors, assuring the necessary social protection for reintegrating adolescents in their families or in special communities in their countries of origin, and formulating professional training in the labour market or in school projects. But some Italian local authorities have evaluated these projects negatively due to the high costs and uncertain results, preferring to place minors in foster care and for adoption in destination territories.

Box 3. Assisting the return of weak categories of migrants

The ALNIMA project (an acronym which stands for the countries involved: Albania, Nigeria and Morocco – Marocco in Italian) – financed by the European Union and by the Region of Piedmont – with an ambitious goal: accompanying people expelled from Italy – Moroccan and Albanian ex-prisoners and Nigerian victims of trafficking – to ensure they are treated with respect for their rights and personal dignity, and to facilitate their resettlement in the community of origin. In this way the project proposes a rethinking of existing practices by reporting on the need to consider, among other factors, what happens to returnees once they leave the spotlight in the host country which expels them, and they arrive back in their country of origin. The activities of the project were carried out through the active cooperation of several actors–NGOs, transnational associations, Training and research centres – working both in Italy and in the migrants’ origin countries. A survey of the job market in the countries of origin was carried out, and the results were used as a basis for the setting up of training courses in prisons in the region of Piedmont. In particular a course in carpentry and one in baking were chosen, as they are market sectors which have a high demand for labour both in Morocco and Albania. The beneficiaries therefore had the chance to transform a prison sentence into a training opportunity with the aim of returning to their country of origin with a more “marketable” skill, in the sense that training undergone abroad is more highly esteemed in the home society. At the local level, the direct beneficiaries of the project – and also other members of the community – received technical help and financial assistance (grants, top-up wages or micro-credit) to help them enter the job market or to set up their own businesses.

2.4. Community development projects

Community development projects include all projects that favour the active involvement - through human, social and financial resources - of migrants’ associations. These associations can be involved as beneficiaries of development projects, or directly by promoting initiatives themselves or through lobbying activities on different institutions, or in other cases by playing the role of ‘facilitators’ in processes undertaken by NGOs or local authorities. In the latter case it has been noticed that acting as mediators has helped migrants to further integrate in the arrival territory and to access resources for the implementation of projects in their country of origin. A better integration in the structures and institutions of the receiving countries can become an incentive towards more transnational commitment in development cooperation initiatives (see forward on the concept of transnational integration).

Box 4. Promotion and implementation of development initiatives by HTAs working “here” and “there”

In Italy some migrant organizations have been able to induce NGOs and local authorities to commit in projects for the development of their countries of origin and to address collective funds towards social initiatives in their homeland, matching their funds with money granted by local actors, sub-national institutions or development cooperation organizations. Only in some cases local actors have been ready to respond to such requests. This has been the case of a project supported by the region of Lombardy and the “Nord Sud” NGO and promoted by the Senegalese association “Njambur Self Help”. The project was aimed at renovating the public hospital of Louga (150km from Dakar) and training its personnel. The

Senegalese association identified the target hospital, led the international missions of the Italian experts and co-financed the project through a €6,000 fund. This initiative is particularly interesting because the “Njambur Self Help” association and the Nord Sud NGO are also working for the promotion of migrants’ health on the other shore of the migratory process: in Italy. To this regard, informative and awareness campaigns have been successfully carried out. Similar projects have been promoted in Morocco and Egypt by migrants’ associations which operate both in the origin and arrival country. For example, the Moroccan Association “Migration et Codéveloppement” keeps strong links with the origin communities and finances several religious and development projects often matching collective remittances with funds of the French cooperation.

The opportunities to support community development projects depend basically on the self-organisation capacities of migrants. For example, the capacity of Senegal’s migrant associations (as well as those of other Sub-Saharan communities) is well known while, in general, migrants coming to Italy from Mediterranean countries are less able to organise themselves³³. Hometown associations have a strong ownership of the projects and ask for extra funding. They do not trust Italian NGOs (considered as competitors) and they research connections with local institutions which can offer real competencies and equipment (hospitals, schools, enterprises and artisan’s associations). The community development initiatives carried out through decentralised cooperation, between migrant associations and local institutions, should have the following characteristics: be clear, transparent, concrete, verifiable, and controllable. More should be done to recognise the work of immigrant associations, by promoting these institutions and their public activities, as well as to open development projects to the participation of migrants with relevant skills.

On the other hand, community development projects may pose two kinds of problems: first of all these projects may substitute the accountability of the State and local authorities in the countries of origin (the fungibility problem); and, second, they can increase the dependence of local communities on migrants’ resources. This way, migrants basically sustain the local welfare but they do not act as actors of change.

Local authorities can up-scale their commitment as follows: a) co-financing migrant community development projects, b) co-financing and assist them in projecting, directly or indirectly through external services (NGOs), c) promoting partnerships with civil society organization and economic and financial institutions for involving more capacities and resources in the projects and increasing their development impact; d) insert the projects in multiannual local and trans-local development programmes (territorial partnerships) established with Southern Mediterranean local authorities, possibly in national, European (cross-border cooperation) and multilateral frameworks.

2.5. Channelling and fostering remittances

Remittances are a key issue around which the Italian debate on migration and development has recently evolved. Due to their constant increase, remittances have progressively moved higher on the agenda of policy makers, governments and banking institutions. Furthermore, as mentioned above, during the G8 summit at Sea Island, the Italian government led the debate on the opportunities to foster and channel migrants’ remittances as finance for development. Due to this commitment, the Italian Directorate General for Development Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should address an important part of its strategy towards this objective. Recently, even the Italian banking system is starting to appear more interested in this issue and competition is fostering the offer of new financial products and services.

³³ However, the case of Migration et Développement NGOs shows that the enhancement of collective remittances in community development projects in Morocco can work effectively (see M. Khachani, CARIM, 2005, op. cit., p. 19-20).

With regard to the actors of Italian decentralised cooperation, few projects have been implemented in the last years with limited benefits for local development in origin countries. It is possible to channel remittances through banks, here and there, reducing the use of informal channels, and towards microfinance programmes. But, in some cases, the symbolic and social role of remittances in maintaining trust and identity structures of migrant communities continues to justify the use of informal channels in some cases.

Banks may offer money transfer services at reduced costs, competing with money transfer agencies, but this depends on the perception of profitability and economies of scale, on the availability and performance of international inter-banking agreements (for example few Italian banks have connections with Mediterranean countries), and on the capacities of local banks (depending on the national liberalisation process). Consequently, it is worth while implementing initiatives on the enhancement of remittances for development at national level and networking among the banks operating in different territories where migrants are living.

Box 5. Collective remittances for local development

The Region of Tuscany and the province of Livorno supported a project aimed at transferring remittances from Livorno – where there is a strong Moroccan community – to Khenifra in Morocco. Migrants' savings are transferred to a commercial bank in Khenifra and from there to 5 micro credit organizations. The recipients of remittances are not required to open a current account to draw their money so that also unbanked people can be involved in the project. The transfer service is particularly cheap for migrants and takes an average of 5 days, although the length of time may vary.

The Municipality of Modena (in the region of Emilia Romagna) co-financed an interesting project for gearing Ghanaians' collective remittances towards local development. The project was financed by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) with funds of a broad framework-programme called MIDA which has been implemented with the support of Italian Cooperation. A relevant characteristic of the project is that the Municipality was successful in engaging non-profit organizations as well as the entrepreneurial private sector in the project (namely, the Confcooperative Emilia Romagna network linking different actors which operate in the productive system of the region). Through this project the funds collected by the Ghanaian Association of Modena were matched with funds granted by the IOM-Rome/Italian Cooperation, the Municipality of Modena and the Confcooperative Emilia Romagna network. This fund has been used to support the production and export capability of a local cooperative which cultivates pineapples. Through the project – which is still undergoing – a viable trade circuit for importing pineapples to Emilia Romagna will be identified and the Ghanaian Home Town Association will be committed to the import activity. Finally, part of profits leveraged by the pineapple farm will be collected in a revolving investment fund at the benefit to the Ghanaian HTA in Modena.

Local authorities may play the role of: a) facilitators in collaborating with migrants for the lobbying on banks and possibly assisting them in access to financial services; b) trust institutions establishing guarantees and matching remittances towards investment projects with funds for mobilizing private credit; c) political institutions in the creation of territorial partnerships with South Mediterranean local authorities for improving the economic and institutional environment (regulations and procedures which can obstacle trade and investment) enabling migrants, as well as European enterprises, to implement investment projects.

3. THE TRANSNATIONAL INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN THE EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY

Even if we are witnessing a significant amount of experimentation and creativity with regard to Italian regional and local co-development projects, these projects are often lacking due to a series of **structural shortcomings**. The most frequent are associated with:

- isolated actions, excessive sectorialisation, and lack of continuity (lack of long-term planning and sustainability), also due, at least at the municipal level, to the lack of offices specifically dedicated to migration and development³⁴;
- inadequate coordination with programmes and activities with similar objectives undertaken by other regions or central institutions (also in the origin country);
- lack of specialised staff within the institutions;
- scarce promotion of migrants' associations and limited coordination with them for the projects' implementation³⁵;
- scarce engagement of local communities in the countries of origin in the implementation of the projects.

Furthermore, the Italian national and regional budget allocated for the management of migratory flows is very low and concentrated on urgent needs, mainly first reception for asylum seekers and other migrants in need of protection, and, in some cases, more long-term assistance to particularly weak categories such as unaccompanied minors. Therefore co-development projects are funded by the scarce resources local authorities can allocate to decentralised cooperation and by the scarce and highly sought after resources of the EU Aeneas programme. So, the number of projects and beneficiaries are numerically limited as well as the scope for the cooperation between Euro-Mediterranean local authorities.

In this situation, a convergence of local authorities' innovations and concrete interests for national and European policies and resources is necessary. Local authorities could elaborate a new concept in order to politically sustain their position. The concept of transnational integration may be very useful since it links preventive security - integration and development issues posing migrants and local authorities at the centre of the scenario. This concept could be adopted in the European Neighbourhood policy as well as in the Aeneas programme and in national initiatives.

3.1 Linking integration, transnationalism and co-development

Recent migration literature focuses on the transnational issue: migrants live in two spaces at the same time. In the country of arrival they continue to nurture linkages with their villages and cities of origin. They communicate and exchange information and knowledge, goods and financial capitals between cities of arrival and departure, thus creating social, economic and cultural networks between specific local contexts "here and there". The preservation and evolution of positive transnational links can foster development both in the origin and host country and strengthen the role of migrants as actors of local development (co-development).

The possibility that migrants bridging between two countries (or being "transnational citizens") become vector of co-development has been recognised, at the rhetorical level at least, also in the

³⁴ The result of a recent research promoted by the National Association of Italian Municipalities (ANCI) is that only 37.6% of the Municipalities interviewed (250) had an office specifically dedicated to migration, and the 9% had a development cooperation office: T. Caponio, *I comuni italiani e l'immigrazione*, CeSPI – ANCI, June 2004, p. 19.

³⁵ The weakness of the Italian migrants' associations and the scarcity of institutional spaces dedicated to migrants' representation makes such a problem even worse.

Euro-Mediterranean context³⁶. In the groundbreaking Tunis Declaration of the 5+5 Ministerial Conference on Migration in the Western Mediterranean (October 2002), for instance, an entire section was devoted to co-development; among several other items, the governments representatives engaged themselves to “recognize the economic, social, and cultural contribution of migration in the countries of the Western Mediterranean” and to “improve conditions to enable migrants to fully play their rightful role in the development of their country of origin, in particular through savings and investment” (points 13 and 14).

More recently, the co-development approach found its way even further and started influencing some global fora, such as the G8: the Sea Island Summit (8-10 June 2004) produced, for the first time, a document specifically dealing with remittances, where some French and Italian pilot-projects in Morocco were mentioned as specifically Mediterranean experiences in this area³⁷.

Policy attention on the nexus between transnational migration and development is thus increasing but it is still confused and when we turn to the drafting and implementation of concrete policies still a lot remains to be done³⁸. In this framework a key element which is quite rarely considered – not only by policy makers but also by researchers – is the relation between transnationalism and migrants’ integration in the host country. This fundamental gap in the political and theoretical dialogue is certainly due to the fact that usually transnationalism and integration are seen as contradictory factors, which exclude each other. Traditionally literature features “integration” as the final achievement of a migratory process which is restricted into a bi-dimensional pattern: it starts in one place and ends in another one. In this perspective, integration is the expression of a permanent and successful settlement in the receiving country: the last step of a long process coinciding with the weakening of the desire to return, the loss of relations with relatives and friends in the home country, a reduced willingness to remit and a declining feeling of commitment towards the origin country.

On the contrary, in this paper we sustain the thesis that the development of transnational ties can strengthen the process of migrants’ integration in the host country, and, in turn, a better integration is the fundamental base for the preservation and the evolution of transnational ties and co-development. In these processes local authorities play a strategic role in partnership with migrants because, as before stressed, they are in the forefront of migration problems and opportunities, and because they can play the role of transnational actors who link specific territories “here, there and between” creating transnational integration. The link between integration and transnationalism, consequently, turns out to be a key element for an active and positive management of migratory flows, a fundamental starting point for gearing transnational migrations towards local and trans-local development through the pivotal role of local authorities.

In this sense, we put forward the concept of transnational integration, that is positive practices of transnational individuals, communities and political subjects (especially migrants and local authorities) who work directly in and between territories for the promotion of human rights and common development (co-development of countries of origin and destination through the enhancing of migrant capitals, capacities and resources). Migrants can be development actors who create hybridization and syncretism, share values, support preventive security, “here, there and between”. Local authorities may promote a new governance and partnerships with migrants, civil society organizations and the private sector to contribute to local and trans-local development, forging a positive transnational integration, where human rights and well-being are sustained.

³⁶ The full text is available at <http://www.iom.int/en/know/dialogue5-5/index.shtml>.

³⁷ Annex to the G8 Action Plan: *Applying the Power of Entrepreneurship to the Eradication of Poverty*, available on http://www.g8usa.gov/d_060904a.htm.

³⁸ Cespi, forthcoming in *IEMED Mediterranean Yearbook 2005*.

With positive transnational practices migrants and local authorities create a linkage between two levels of integration: integration at local level here and there, and integration between Euro-Med cities.

Box 6. Strong and spreading migratory networks between Euro-Med cities

The Egyptian case shows how integration and transnationalism reinforce each other. A CeSPI study³⁹ found a strong and structured network between the Banha area and Milan's metropolitan area. One of the most impressive trans-local networks occurs between Kafr Saad – a small village near Banha – and the Municipality of Sesto San Giovanni: more than 50% of the young population from Kafr Saad is currently living in Sesto San Giovanni and accounts for 23% of all the Egyptians living in Sesto, while all the Egyptians represent 22% of all foreigners with residence in Sesto.

As far as the patterns of access to employment are concerned, on the Egyptian front, it has been observed that families have a more or less precise idea, not only about the type of job their relative has in Italy but also about the employment sectors to which their fellow countrymen usually have access: cleaning services, construction and catering. Many migrants depart without having prior working experience. Only in the case of employment in the construction sector, there are cases of working continuity in Egypt and in Italy.

The Italian labour market is highly segmented. It constrains Egyptians (as well as the great majority of immigrants) in low skill jobs and it produces brain and skill waste. However, the brain and skill waste is somehow balanced by the high rate of Egyptian entrepreneurship. Egyptian entrepreneurs own about 18% of all foreign enterprises in the Milan area. Their entrepreneurship rate (7%) is lower only compared to that of the Chinese. Egyptian migrants reach social and economic mobility by starting up new small enterprises in continuity with their preceding jobs (construction and cleaning sector) and in the field of ethnic and migrant services (phone centres, ethnic food and restaurants, Islamic butcheries...).

In order to invest in land or small enterprises in origin villages and cities, migrants seek the help of relatives and friends who advise and inform them about supposed good opportunities on the market. They do not ask for information from institutional structures such as the Chamber of Commerce, for which migrants openly show mistrust and to which they turn exclusively in order to carry out legal procedures once they have started up the business.

In the homeland, it is rare for migrants to use the skills acquired in Italy (which also tend to be considered useless within the context of origin) after their return to Egypt due to the strong differences of the two labour markets. However, in Banha, there are already some interesting cases of capacity transfer between Italy and Egypt. It is the case of some important entrepreneurs in the shoemaking and paper industries. In both cases, the relationship with Italy is continuous, and the set up of the industrial machinery in particular, is carried out by Italian specialists who then supervise the training of employees.

Migrants communicate day by day with their families by phone and internet services (a small number of them). They also buy television sets and satellite dishes in order to watch and listen to Arabic and Egyptian channels. Their cultural space continues to be that of the homeland and their individual lives continue to be dictated by familiar linkages and reproduction cycles (especially with regard to the marriage choice). At the same time, their working lives and economic interests (in the cases of enterprise start-up) are located in the Milan area. The social values of the territory of

³⁹ S. Ceschi, L. Coslovi, M. Mora and A. Stocchiero, *Egyptian Diaspora Cooperation with the Homeland: Migration Networks and Transnationalism Between Local Contexts*, CeSPI Working Papers 15/2005. This research was carried out in the frame of the Integrated Migration Information System (IMIS) project implemented by International Organisation for Migration in collaboration with the Egyptian Ministry of Manpower and Emigration and funded by the Italian Cooperation. CeSPI's research is part of the MigraCtion programme supported by Compagnia di San Paolo.

origin are embedded in the migrants, but individual emancipation processes may be observed for those who are successful in the economic sphere (representing the “big brother” for families).

Finally, the strong Egyptian migrant network and transnationalism in the framework of the continuing and increasing economic trans-local differential between departure and arrival contexts facilitate and determine a cumulative auto-reproduction of the flows. Six cause and effect nexus may be identified. 1) The migratory patterns create new needs and demands (in terms of an improved way of life and of the disproportionate increase in the price of land or of the amount of money traditionally needed in order to marry – *mahr*) which spur new out-flows. 2) Successful migration experiences (demonstration and diffusion effects) confirm and diffuse the validity and profitable perception of the migration choice. 3) Migration improves the education level of youths in origin territories through the investment of remittances, and the young and educated are the most willing to migrate. 4) Remittances are directly invested in new migration flows. 5) Migration causes income distribution inequalities in the context of origin which motivate new migration flows. 6) Migration becomes a “natural” and rational choice for the reproduction cycle of the family.

In the Mediterranean region the implementation of such policies might be particularly problematic (1st chapter) but – for the same reasons – also particularly relevant. Current European and national policies aimed at restraining migratory flows limit the possibilities of circulation and exchange at the transnational level and thus reduce the impact of migrants on local and trans-local development.

At the same time, the process of integration of migrants coming from the Mediterranean region in the countries of arrival turns out not to be really welcome by the governments of both their receiving and sending countries. As mentioned above, in the framework of the new geo-political context created after September 11, European countries appear quite reluctant to favour the integration of Islamic migrants respecting and eventually favouring their identity as a Diaspora (which obviously includes the preservation of transnational links with the home countries). On the other side, many Southern Mediterranean countries don't really welcome the integration of their citizens abroad as in their opinion it would mean a drastic reduction of the remittance flow and eventually a dangerous estrangement from the origin culture and from the political hierarchy: most Mediterranean sending countries, where the role of migrants as development actors is often rhetorically claimed but not yet entirely accepted with all its implications. Full empowerment of migrants is undoubtedly a great development chance, but it would bring with it deep political and social changes that are not necessarily welcome.

In this framework, local authorities, according to the subsidiarity principle, play a key role in overcoming some of the limits which are quite difficult to solve at the national and international level. As a matter of fact regions and municipalities are the first actors called upon to draw up hospitality and integration policies in order to reduce social and cultural conflicts in their territories; at the same time, they have the possibilities and opportunities to enhance the positive side of migration for local and trans-local development participating practically in the management of migration flows and in external cooperation. In order to respond to these more and more pressing needs, local actors at European level are resorting to quite innovative schemes (2nd chapter) that in some cases prove to be successful and to adopt a transnational approach, through the setting up of partnerships with migrants and local authorities overseas in the framework of decentralised and cross-border cooperation.

In the next paragraphs we shall analyse the relation between integration and transnationalism showing how local governments could sinergically strengthen such relation setting up proper policies along different stages and levels.

3.2 A stronger transnationalism increases integration

At a first stage, preventive integration is achieved through migrants' transnational networks: families, friends and communities sustain the migratory choice of their country-fellows offering them the first aid and contacts for social and economic settlement in the destination country. In this sense, integration begins in the origin country where potential migrants learn about better opportunities to leave home and to live in the arrival country, through the media (TV programmes), information technologies, and oral social communications (family and friend networks).

Euro-Mediterranean local authorities can facilitate and improve this process sustaining transparent and correct informative and awareness campaigns in the migrants' countries of origin and eventually promoting trans-local trainings in order to facilitate migrants' linguistic and professional integration "here and there" (see also the 2nd chapter on recruitment projects).

At a second stage, the preservation of migrant's transnational ties as well as the achievement of transnational human, economic and social capitals generate higher standards of quality of life and contribute to intercultural dialogue in the host society. New economic and social practices such as ethnic trade, the setting up and promotion of new commercial and investment ties with the country of origin, can be pursued only by migrants who maintain strong relations with their homeland. These initiatives favour migrants' economic upgrading and social integration in the receiving country⁴⁰.

At the same time, the stronger economic and social involvement of migrants in the country of origin is, the greater their capability to be trustworthy points of reference for the host countries' local actors. A solid transnational network increases migrants' capability to aggregate their own communities on common goals, and provides them with the strongest means for implementing the process of mutual understanding and cultural syncretism in the host country, as well as for the setting up of community development initiatives in home countries. In turn, this process of aggregation increases migrants' capability to represent their own community in the host country, thus intensifying the dialogue with local actors and authorities⁴¹.

Local authorities should support migrant transnationalism as a means to improve intercultural dialogue and they should be ready to consider migrants as partners (the principal stakeholders) in the definition of migration-integration-development related policies. The presence of migrants'

⁴⁰ This is not the case with closed migrant communities like the Chinese one, while it is valid in the case of Mediterranean migrants.

⁴¹ Migrants who have solid roots in their origin countries and the power to aggregate their own community on common goals become key interlocutors for local institutions. The Italian experience shows that many migrant banking programs aiming at a better financial integration of foreigners, have mainly benefited the communities which were more compact and able to lobby on local banks and which have the strongest links with the country of origin in terms of remittance flow and, possibly, of contacts with reliable financial institutes in their home countries. In Italy, at a very early stage, migrant transnationalism has been critical also for making inter-banking agreements effective. This is for example, the case of an agreement set up in '99 between the Banco Ambrosiano Veneto and the Société Générale de Banques au Senegal (SGBS) which allowed to transfer money at a very low rate. However, as many remittance recipients were un-banked, the biggest Senegalese association in Asti (Turin) agreed on channelling money towards the current account of a selected member of their community in Senegal who would have been entrusted with delivering it to the recipients.

In other cases migrants' transnational networks and their simultaneous engagement in two different countries have made them important stakeholders for those local governments which were attempting a transnational approach to a policy linking migration and development, thus – again – making it more effective. This process is particularly interesting in Italy where migrants – at least sometimes – become part of the institutional structures which deal with development cooperation (as consultants, beneficiaries or collaborators of Municipalities or members of the regional cooperation boards), although their associations are still not recognised as official development actors by the Italian national law on cooperation. Finally, the effort in pursuing transnational activities (as, for example, development projects in the countries of origin) brings migrants to better integrate in the host country.

representation forms at the local institutional level turns out to be a key element in this regard and should be strengthened.

Local authorities should reduce regulation and procedural obstacles and support migrants' and HTAs' commitment for the achievement of social and economical goals in the arrival as well as in the origin country: increasing their skills through specific trainings (i.e. for the identification and management of community development projects or for the setting up of economic activities – see also the 2nd chapter), and co-financing projects which present a significant economic or social added value. Migrant associations should also be considered reliable actors and important stakeholders able to implement the projects promoted by the local authorities themselves⁴².

Local authorities should promote and support migrant's partnerships with local actors on co-development practices, for example with the establishment of guarantee funds for mobilizing private credit to migrants (see the 2nd chapter on remittances), and in the country of origin (i.e. favouring the relation with local micro-credit organizations or with village associations).

Box 7. Transnationalism as a means of integration: an experience on the field

The experience of COS-RMH - a regional centre for international cooperation in the Netherlands – is very relevant in this regard and shows how the relation between transnationalism and integration – which in countries as Italy has never been pursued as a political objective – can be promoted through specific policies. COS-RMH, that in the last 4 years, has given advice and support to approximately 250 migrant volunteer organisations in the field of development cooperation stresses that: “Based on our experience we come to the conclusion that setting up international cooperation projects helps migrants integrate into the Dutch society”.

According to the Dutch organization, there are two main reasons for which ‘transnationalism’ can reinforce integration: the first one is that in order to raise funds for their transnational activities, migrants have to submit proposals to funding organisations and, in order to achieve the expected results, they have to improve their (language) skills and knowledge of rules and regulations, two aspects of successful integration. In second place, in order to set up an international cooperation project, immigrant volunteer organisations also need to cooperate with other groups at the local level. The reason can be that they need a partner that can help them collect money (for example a local church, or the school of their children) or, for example, a partner that can give them specialized expertise. In order to have access to this kind of relations, these organizations are obliged to have a strong network of formal and informal contacts. According to COS-RMH, as a consequence of this fact, in the Netherlands there is a growing tendency towards multicultural volunteer organisations, with migrants working together with persons who are born and raised in the Netherlands (in the same organisation and on the same project).

At a third stage, transnationalism is a more and more important component of integration as it contributes to creating an open society and a new concept of integration which links two spaces through migrants behaviours and activities. In this frame, integration encompasses not only the destination country but also the migrants' homeland. It corresponds to the search for coherence between EU external policies addressed to improving the well-being in developing countries and internal policies aimed at social inclusion, as well as at the Neighbourhood policy principle on common benefits, overcoming the traditional separation between internal and external policies. Local authorities could promote this process by stimulating intercultural dialogue and strengthening trans-local migrants' practices through decentralised cooperation projects, and within territorial partnership agreements in cross-border cooperation.

⁴²The research promoted by ANCI stressed out that, in Italy, a very high number of Municipalities resorted to Italian non profit organization for the implementation of their migration related activities (60% out of a total of 250 Municipalities interviewed), while the engagement of migrant associations is much lower (30%).

3.3 A stronger integration increases transnationalism

Migrants' integration in destination territories does not break linkages with the homeland, rather (according to the specific characteristics of migrant communities) it creates new ties with the origin villages and cities. Some studies show that many migrants continue to feel that they belong to their country of origin although they are perfectly integrated in the host country and they often keep circulating or remitting also after more than 10 years in the receiving countries⁴³.

Migrants' integration can be conducive to a better transnationalism. Specific policies, implemented by local authorities, can improve the integration of migrants removing critical constraints which deter them from maintaining, fully managing and developing their transnational ties.

A fruitful dialogue and the establishment of a smoother relation and partnership between migrants and local authorities and society at large is all important. Only through a strong linkage with migrants, local institutions can carry out activities such as awareness campaigns, organization of cultural events, legal and health assistance programmes, information activities, and so on⁴⁴. In this perspective integration is not only the objective of the policies carried out by local authorities, but also the means for carrying them out.

At a first stage migrants' commitment to transnational activities is the indirect result of integration policies pursued by local authorities. The initial integration allows migrants to have a better access to information, services and, in general, beginning to acquire the social and human capital for setting up transnational practices. It is not a coincidence that, in Italy, most of the projects carried out by migrants have been set up by individuals or associations which already collaborated with the municipalities for the implementation of a wide range of integration policies.

At a second stage, the deepening of integration allows migrants and their HTAs to increase their auto-organization, capabilities and access to local resources. They can lobby local institutions on the issue of the link between migration management and development cooperation and, with the support of local authorities, they can set up partnerships with different local actors (NGOs and other civil society organizations as well as social services and economic companies) to channel resources towards co-development projects. They can benefit from specific training (for community leaders and development agents), from financial incentives (for promoting a better remittances channelling, and for support investment in local development), from networks and awareness campaigns co-sponsored by local authorities in order to promote their transnationalism.

Different levels at which a better integration might be conducive to a tighter transnationalism and to a broader "here and there" development are analysed, in particular with regard to economic, social welfare, legal and institutional dimensions.

As far as the economic level is concerned, a better integration in the labour market (both on a seasonal and permanent basis) and in the university system could foster transnational ties through the accumulation of financial, human, and social capitals. A better qualification and protection of migrant work has a positive impact not only in the arrival country but also in the origin country as it improves the quality and the content of the "capital" that can be spent there. This paves the way for the creation of a transnational market where skills, know how and investments can circulate in a productive integrated space. Training, protection of workers' rights and assistance to the circulation/return of skilled migrants are key elements for accompanying such dynamics and could be promoted by local authorities through proper policies in partnership with entrepreneur associations, universities and training centres. Measures aimed at favouring the recognition of

⁴³ In this regard interesting researches have been carried out by R. Brown (University of Queensland in Australia) and S. Vertovec (Oxford University, <http://www.transcomm.ox.ac.uk/wwwroot/drsteve.htm>).

⁴⁴ In order to achieve a stronger linkage with migrant communities, local institutions set up collaborations with migrant leaders, hire cultural mediators and, some time, incentivate the aggregation of migrants on an associative basis in order to facilitate dialogue.

professional titles as well as policies for favouring the integration of students through the granting of scholarships could also be relevant in this frame ⁴⁵.

A better access to the banking system and a better connection between financial institutions in the migrants' countries of origin and arrival could improve the possibility to save and invest at transnational level, optimising the migratory project; migrants could also be assisted in controlling and consciously addressing their remittances towards specific purposes in the country of origin.

Local authorities can incentivate this process by setting up guarantee funds, promoting dialogue between migrants and banks to improve financial services and products (particularly for reducing money transfer costs), offering information and consultancy to migrants⁴⁶, supporting projects linking remittances with micro-finance institutions in origin countries.

A better integration in the host countries' welfare system might favour transnationalism and co-development. The possibility of accumulating and collecting contributions for pension funds⁴⁷ allows migrants to better plan their migratory project, their relation with the family in their origin country and their return. Migrants are becoming new clients for the private market of welfare insurances at national and transnational levels. Some European insurance companies have experimented welfare-schemes that could be used for insuring both migrants in the host country and their relatives in the homeland⁴⁸. This kind of system reinforces transnationalism and integration at the same time.

Better welfare schemes should then reach the foreign population to a larger extent, but also empower those migrants who are themselves providers of welfare services in western countries. A better protection of foreign people working in the welfare system – in terms of defence of their rights, affiliation to social cooperatives and other formal structures, psychological preparation and training – would increase their level of integration in the host country and would improve their skills and motivations making them more able to grant welfare services here and there. Social and human capital in the field of care (which is not only “cleaning” but also assisting elderly people, babies or even problematic children) might turn out to be a key resource in those origin countries where female migration and the consequent “drain of care” are creating critical gaps in the local welfare systems. These people could also have the skills for assisting returning minors who represent a great social problem for several local authorities. However this kind of “welfare internationalization” is not very likely to occur in a spontaneous way and should rather be induced through proper policies (which in a certain way would compensate the extraordinary savings of money made possible by the “externalisation of welfare” to migrant labour).

Local authorities might address social funds for better training and protecting care workers in the arrival country; they could protect care workers as well as elderly people by covering at least part

⁴⁵ Students who receive scholarships can dedicate themselves to their academic tasks, going deeper into the research issues, attending the lectures instead of working full time, and strengthening their ties with universities in their country of origin. Other projects financed by local authorities assist workers (i.e. nurses) in having their professional titles recognised, in obtaining better conditions for accommodation and in the improvement of skills which respond to the demand of both the arrival and origin countries.

⁴⁶ The Municipality of Rome, in partnership with the Banca di Credito Cooperativo (BCC) of Rome, has allocated a fund for granting mortgage loans to more than 1,700 migrants. The Municipality has also allocated a guarantee fund in order to facilitate the granting of banking loans to migrants who want to set-up a business in Italy. Similar schemes are supported also by the Provincia of Turin in partnership with banks and local entrepreneurial associations which give assistance to migrants in elaborating business plans improving their access to credit.

⁴⁷ Every year, in Italy, the National Social Security Institute (INPS) receives around € 1.3 million from migrants, but migrants cannot receive a pension unless they are more than 60 years old or have worked for 35 years at least.

⁴⁸ In England the MET Care Insurance company gives the opportunity to Ghanaian migrants to insure a relative back home paying an extra quota (15 pounds per month) on their own insurance. This way the beneficiaries in Ghana can gain access to several hospitals for free. A similar scheme has been set up in France by the MEDIREX Insurance company and allows Ivorian migrants to insure themselves and a relative/friend in the country of origin at the same time.

of the private assistance costs. Local authorities in partnership with social and health services might also promote policies for better training circular and returning migrants and for facilitating their integration in the social care market in the countries of origin. For example, health cooperation of Italian Regions could involve care migrants in carrying out projects in partnership with hospitals and care institutions in origin countries.

At another level, the removal of the administrative and legal constraints, which still hamper the preservation of transnational ties (especially with regard to the concession of Visas and residence permits), would allow migrants to better integrate in the host country and at the same time to commit more in the sending one. In Italy, the difficult access to a full citizenship as well as the short length in time of the stay permits and the long procedures for their renewal (around 10 months) keep migrants in a precarious state, absorb their energy for facing problems on a “daily” scale (thus reducing the space for long-term plans), and restrain their possibility to freely circulate and to set up transnational activities.

In this framework, the lobbying activities that local authorities can undertake towards national government in order to improve the current legal and administrative regulations, as well as their promotion of a better coordination of administrative procedures between local services for reducing the waste of time that migrants are suffering, are very important.

3.4 Improving the position of migrants and local authorities in the European Neighbourhood Policy

The full implementation of transnational integration actions depends on the political, legal and insitutional framework at national and European Union levels, as well as in Southern Mediterranean countries. To this regard, migrants and local authorities face very few windows of opportunities and strong constraints. National governments continue to maintain a strong grip on migration policies and local authorities have to gain ground as far as participation to programming and the increase of access to resources are concerned.

However, the special and critical position of migrants and cities in relation to transnational terrorism, the role of migrants in supporting social welfare in their countries of origin, the financial relevance of remittances, the possibilities of enhancing skill and brain circulation, the innovative initiatives of migrants and local authorities on migration management and development, and the launch of the European Neighbourhood Policy, can offer motivations and a new opportunity framework within which migrants and local authorities can lobby for a new transnational integration programme.

The ENPI⁴⁹ provides for cross-border cooperation and a thematic programme in the area of migration management, and local authorities should be involved in the partnership (“as appropriate”). This policy is based on the “common benefit of Member State and partner countries, for the purpose of promoting cross-border and trans-regional cooperation” (art.1), and on the integration of external and internal dimensions. Consequently it shows good perspectives for the promotion of the links between migration and development, integration and transnationalism, enhancing the role of migrants and local authorities in decentralised and cross-border cooperation.

Local authorities can taking stock of their practices and experimentations. The lessons learned and the elaboration of political proposals can steer the European Commission and national governments in setting up a new transnational integration programme in the ENPI and in reducing legal, procedural and resource constraints. Generally, coherence and harmonization of European and national migration, integration, external and development policies should be promoted.

⁴⁹ Commission of the European Communities, *Proposal for a Regulation of the European Union and the Council laying down general provisions establishing the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument* (presented by the Commission), COM(2004)628final, Brussels 29.9.2004.

Migrants and local authorities should improve their position in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and, in the near future European Neighbourhood Policy, by sustaining the following actions.

- First of all migrants and local authorities should deepen intercultural and political dialogue to build partnerships for transnational integration, involving social and economic actors (NGOs and civil society organizations, banks and financial institutions, enterprises and trade unions).
- Second, migrants and local authorities should reinforce their self-organization, improve their knowledge and capacities, increase resources devoted to transnational integration in decentralised cooperation as much as possible and enhance public-private partnerships.
- Third, European local authorities should build dialogue and a political forum with Southern Mediterranean cities on transnational integration and co-development. The scope of this dialogue is strictly linked to the processes of decentralization and deconcentration in Southern Mediterranean countries. To this regard, the Action Plans established by the EU with Southern Mediterranean governments should support these processes, as in the case of Morocco, as well as a positive management of migration oriented towards co-development. Decentralised and cross-border cooperation should contribute to upgrade institutional capacities of Southern Mediterranean local authorities creating the conditions for the implementation of transnational integration practices and projects.
- Fourth, local authorities should insert transnational integration in the operative programmes of the cross-border and transnational cooperation, as in the case of Andalusia-Morocco cross-border cooperation. They should lobby the European Commission to introduce the link between transnational integration and cross-border cooperation in the Country and Regional Strategy Papers of ENPI.
- Fifth, migrants and local authorities should reinforce their lobbying actions in order to access the Euro-Mediterranean political debate and support the concept of transnational integration and its adoption in the Action Plans with Southern Mediterranean countries and generally in EU policies.