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*Policy Conversations across the
Mediterranean: Migratory governance.
Europe and Lebanon in the Spotlight*

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The *EuroMedMig Policy Papers Series* aims to promote knowledge exchange and dialogue among actors working on a particular topic on Mediterranean Migration, comprising of international and Mediterranean organizations, stakeholders, civil society organizations, policymakers and politicians at all levels of government.

This Policy Paper is a summary of the conversation entitled “Mediterranean Migration Governance: From State-centric to City-centric? Exploring Alternative Policy Paths.” organized by GRITIM-UPF on 11 March 2021 and held online. The agenda of this Workshop is in section V.

This paper has been written by Gemma Aubarell and Carmen Geha after an open conversation moderated by Luisa Faustini, author of the introduction, about the next decade of policies towards migrants and refugees in the Mediterranean, the governance new trends and role of decentralized actors in the scene with a focus on the Syrian refugees’ situation in Lebanon. It expands the horizon of the conversation drawing in trans-disciplinary insights from both academia and practice in order to propose new bridges and learning that can advocate for migrant protection and guard against policies of exclusion.

The main objective of this Policy Paper is to summarize the premises put forward during the workshop with the purpose of sharing what was considered as substantial policy-relevant arguments and recommendations for the development of *MedMig* policies.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Luisa Faustini, GRITIM-UPF, Barcelona, Catalonia, Spain.

The Mediterranean is a region highly affected by complex migration dynamics. Such phenomena have diverse causes and consequences for the multiplicity of actors involved in its governance and is currently a central and multidimensional policy issue. The European Union (EU), alongside its member states (MS), have been key actors in the Mediterranean Migration (Med Migration) Governance – being the main interest in ‘managing’ and ‘controlling’ such phenomena (Aragall 2018). This means that Med Migration has been above all a matter of high politics, that is, something handled by traditional politics at the state level or higher governance stances. There is, however, generalized criticism towards the policies carried out by state-actors, pointing out their incapacity of producing proper and sustainable solutions. Consequently, many voices call for moving beyond such a state-centric model, considered insufficient for tackling the issue of Med Migration in all its complexity.

On the one hand, some voices claim the necessity of setting forth a constructive migration policy based on a multilateral approach and true cooperation between North and South. Nowadays it is more about EU multilevel governance projected in the neighbourhood than a joint work of North and South actors in a truly ‘supranational’ arena. On the other hand, some voices argue the importance of Mediterranean cities in dealing with the issue. They underline how migration is above all an urban phenomenon and how cities and local governments have been increasingly claiming their space in the management of migration and diversity (Zaragoza, 2020; Zapata-Barrero, 2020). The general premise seems to be that moving either upward or downward in the governance continuum would imply paradigmatic changes and challenges. What is up for discussion is whether moving in those directions is either possible or desirable.

Therefore, the purpose of this policy paper is twofold. First, by having the Lebanese case as the backdrop, it aims to open a debate about how new and alternative actors are being incorporated in the management of Med migration crisis, mainly the 2015 refugee crisis that has been aggravated with the COVID-19 pandemic, while the state and official bodies fail to do so. The case of Lebanon is presented as a paradigmatic example that helps us to debate Mediterranean migration governance at different scales, considering the role of actors from outside the institutional and formal state apparatus. Moreover, the authors underline how refugees themselves and the local population have been navigating these crises and the consequences for their rights, livelihood, and wellbeing.

The case introduces the problematic and complexity of Med migration, providing the ground floor for the second part of the paper, which aims to go beyond the Lebanese case and discuss proposals for a new cooperation frame for Med migration policies. It aims to bring to the forefront how new global and Mediterranean instruments can facilitate the inclusion of new actors in the migration policy making. The idea is to provide concrete proposals of how a different sort of regional migration governance could be achieved and even call for action within a new framework of cooperation.

Overall, the policy paper aims at fostering a most needed debate about the similarities and differences of different levels of governance, as well as the advantages and possibilities of overcoming the current state-centric framework that currently predominates Med Migration governance. At the same time, it also aims to project the Mediterranean region-making from a multiple perspective, trying to move beyond Euro and State-centrism and putting migrants and refugees as well as local communities at the centre of proposals, frameworks, and policies.

II. MEDITERRANEAN MIGRATION CRISES AND GOVERNANCE. THE LEBANESE CASE

C. Geha, American University, Beirut, Lebanon

Migration policies in the Mediterranean region have recently been confronted with major crises that substantially and simultaneously affect all dimensions of migration strategies. The deployment of these policies is involving many public and civil society actors who are increasingly feeling more legitimized to contribute with their voice in this traditionally state-wide field of action. The fundamental change in the last stage was brought about by the migration crisis of 2015 with an avalanche of refugees caused because of the conflicts in the region. From this moment on, mobility and its consequences at the management level will open new parameters of response also requested by a citizenry and public opinion that demands different solutions to a human drama of the first magnitude. The crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has made the extreme situation even more relevant for those on the frontline of migration movements.

Lebanon is home to the highest number of refugees per capita worldwide. That is not the news; the story is how Lebanese society and local communities responded to the waves of refugees, and most recently the Syrian refugee crisis since 2011. Lebanon is not signatory to the

1951 Geneva Convention and as such does not recognize refugees as refugees but rather as displaced persons. The politicians have used refugees as a card to negotiate funding from EU institutions threatening covertly to “send refugees on a boat” to European shores. The state failed miserably to respond to the needs of refugees leaving some kids to die in the snow in Aarsal, countless others with no schooling, no prospects for jobs. Politicians incited hatred and tensions leading up to burning of refugee camps in some areas. Refugee women were discovered tortured as part of a prostitution ring quasi-managed by members of the Internal Security Forces. And yet, according to UN High Commissioner for Refugees, António Guterres, “Lebanon is a key pillar in the international framework for the protection of Syrian refugees, and without it, that entire system would collapse.” (UN News Center, 2014).

Syrian refugees in Lebanon have survived thus far in spite of state policies and not because of state policies. While the UN has championed a narrative around the resilience of local communities, this masked a darker reality where the Lebanese state traded reform for resilience. As a result, almost 90% of informal refugee settlements live in poverty and refugee communities in the North are often caught between rounds of fire and violence. Instead of pushing the state for reform towards greater respect of human rights, UNHCR stopped registering new-borns at the request of the Lebanese government in 2015, leaving a major data deficit and a tendency by Lebanese politicians to treat and describe refugees as a single monolithic entity, discarding different needs and priorities among refugees as individual human beings. We propose here a new framework built on solidarity and building pockets of resistance through institutional collaboration around refugee health, education, civil liberties, and mobility in the Southern Mediterranean.

Today, the risk of forced repatriation looms as well as the risk of the Lebanese state and politicians exploiting the plight of refugees in order to force the EU to make concessions in funding and aid. However, there can be another story and angle here, whilst the government and ruling politicians have failed miserably, local institutions and individual advocates have risen to the occasion exhibiting new models of response and inclusive practices. If the EU is looking for local partners to truly advocate for refugee protection, then they will find a typology of actors and private institutions, from schools to hospitals. Even universities have expanded scholarship programs up to the MA levels to help young Syrians who are here to stay and have student visas. Civil society actors staged protests and sit-ins with “Refugees Welcome” signs as their counterparts in Europe did. During the October 2019 revolution, activists carried slogans

demanding equal rights and legal protection for refugees, some of whom lost their lives in the protests due to police violence.

Lebanon as a case matters not only because it is currently facing a wave of immigration and potential refugees from its own citizens, but because it is home to 1.5 million refugees who can be saved and by supporting local institutions safeguarding against human rights abuses, forced repatriation, and stigmatization.

Is the State enough to face these crises?

Governance issues such as efficiency in the management of resources and services, notions such as responsibility and solidarity and the binomial between legality and irregularity are put on the table at the level of all actors involved. Meanwhile, at the level of local and regional actors, they are involved and called to the action that increasingly challenges them. In this period, new initiatives appear that significantly demand a more active role of cities and regions in this area of governance that until now was limited to issues of integration and application of policies¹.

Three areas arise from such a situation. First, the internal and external dimensions of migration management are beginning to appear as two sides of the same coin. That situation will affect the vision of migration policies that are merely outsourced in control and will add value to dynamics of cooperation that are much more open to collaboration and dialogue between inclusion and citizenship policies and those management and control. As well as the building of sustainable partnerships with third countries based on decentralized cooperation actions with peer Regions and other local or territorial stakeholders in countries of origin and transit.

On the other hand, the appearance of narratives linked to solidarity for a better public good will also mean a break with the binomial responsibility-solidarity. The effectiveness of humanitarian management policies also requires the assumption of public responsibilities. However, a third element of accountability also requires an analysis. Especially about the lack of effectiveness that affects both multilateral structures (poorly coordinated and with reactive responses), as well as states that in the north and in the south of the Mediterranean coast seem to be linked to dynamics of outsourcing and little open management-. This situation has not,

¹ To underline the interest of this matter in terms of political demands for better governance, twenty regions from the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) signed a letter urging the EU to adopt EU budget to ensure human rights, health of migrants, responsibility sharing and cope with territorial needs <https://cpmr.org/wpdm-package/letter-signed-by-the-presidents-of-20-cpmr-regions-expressing-concerns-regarding-the-welfare-of-migrants-and-refugees/>

however, strengthened the sub-state actors in their management efficiency. Several reasons would explain the difficulty of management, on the one hand the requirement of adequate resources and funds that go through an explicit recognition of its role in migration management (with multilevel governance). All this radiography, however, goes through the circumstances and contexts of societies in the north and south of the Mediterranean coast.

Stuck in Lebanon

Lebanon's political system poses great risk to the rights of people residing in Lebanon, not only for the Lebanese. The explosion of the Beirut port on August 4th, 2020, followed by the surge in corona virus cases in early 2021 epitomize this reality that all who live in Lebanon suffer the consequences of corruption and negligence. For the 1.5 million or so Syrian refugees (UNHCR, 2020), the politics of their host country Lebanon affects not only their situation at present but also their futures. Increasingly after 2018, and with the severe economic crisis in 2020, there have been calls advocating for the return of Syrian refugees back to Syria. The Syrian regime has held multiple conferences and issued statements demanding refugees return such as the International Conference for the Return of Refugees in Damascus on November 12, 2020. On the other hand, UN agencies report that the situation in Syria is still not conducive to a safe return. In fact, the UN has stipulated 22 conditions that have to be met before refugees can return safely to Syria. Reviewing those conditions one by one shows that Syria is a long way from being safe for refugees to return.

Refugee return has been an international debate for a long time. All refugees have the fundamental human right to return safely to their country of origin at a time of their own choosing. This is codified in several international instruments, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Refugee return should be based on a voluntary, free, and informed decision. It should not be coerced either directly through forced return, or indirectly through changes of policies that restrict refugee rights or by limiting assistance to refugees in the country of asylum, which in effect affects refugees' ability to take free decisions. Yet, modern history is full of cases of involuntary return defying the international principle of non-refoulement. Right now, Syrian refugees stuck in Lebanon face an uncertain geo-political situation and growing political discontent for their presence. They strongly need advocates from both sides of the Mediterranean

to avoid turning them into more pockets of misery and open the way for radical and extremism groups to exploit their plight.

The Syrian refugee crisis has been referred to as the ‘greatest humanitarian crisis in a single generation.’ The crisis, which began in 2011, caused forced mass migration as well as millions of internally displaced persons. Much of Syria’s infrastructure, economy, and national wealth has been destroyed, over half a million people have been killed, over 11 million people have been forced from their homes, with a population of over 4.7 million Syrian refugees seeking asylum outside of Syria according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, update). Most of the Syrian Refugees (3.66 million refugees) came to neighbouring countries such as Lebanon (1.5 million refugees) and Jordan (658,000 refugees).

In Lebanon, more than 1.5 million Syrians have taken refuge since 2011 (UNHCR, 2021). This number is estimated to be a quarter of the Lebanese population, which makes it the highest proportion in the world. Lebanon’s refugee population is unique in that a large extent of the Syrian refugees seeking refuge in this country follow the urbanization pattern of the host population, as there are no formal camps. The refugees have found shelter mainly through the formal and informal tented settlements. Nowhere have the spillover effects of the overlapping domestic, regional, and international war for Syria proved more devastating than in the Republic of Lebanon. Lebanon, a small Middle Eastern country bordering Israel and Syria, faces constant political and geo-political pressures. Home to a population of approximately 300,000 Palestinian and Iraqi refugees, Lebanon is home to more than 1.5 million Office of the UNHCR-registered Syrian refugees since 2012 (UNHCR, 2021). It is notable that this data does not include the thousands of undocumented Syrian refugees residing in the Republic of Lebanon, bringing the real-time number of Syrian refugees in Lebanon to greatly exceed UNHCR estimates. The point raised here is very important in our research and will be explored further in our paper. The fact that many refugees are undocumented complicates the policy on return. If we cannot count people or know what they are experiencing, how can we develop a policy on safe return?

The Government of Lebanon considers individuals who have been crossing the Lebanese Syrian border since 2011 to be “displaced persons,” citing its reservation to its sovereign right to determine their status according to Lebanese domestic laws and regulations. This is a deliberate use of the word “displaced,” by the Lebanese government, in place of the word “refugee,” as both terms are legally charged with state responsibilities under international Law; in this instance the Lebanese government successfully dodges the legal status of refugee hood therefore denying them basic rights and protection. This sovereignty argument is maintained by the fact that

Lebanon is not a signatory to the 1951 Geneva Convention. Restrictive policies in Lebanon and Jordan may force refugees to return to an unsafe environment in Syria while Syrian public policy makes it difficult, undesirable, and in some cases, fatal, to return.

III. PROPOSALS FOR A NEW COOPERATION FRAME IN THE MEDITERRANEAN MIGRATION POLICIES.

G. Aubarell, GRITIM-UPF, Barcelona, Catalonia, Spain.

How new global and Mediterranean instruments can facilitate the inclusion of new actors in the migration policy making

The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) launched in September 2018, sent a powerful political message that migration and refugee matters had become major issues squarely in the international agenda with a proposed framework to advance for the recognition and guarantee of migrants' rights. Meanwhile, at the European level (the EU), the refugee and migration crisis highlight the shortcomings of the EU's own capacity to provide an effective and coordinated response to migration in asylum management. The New Pact for Migration and Asylum launched by the EU in September 2020 puts forward its vision in this complex and common policy area. This frame seeks for more involvement of stakeholders including regional and local authorities and civil society organizations (CSOs) and at the same time, mainly in terms of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation by facilitating the development of partnerships with third countries. More recently, the Mediterranean Agenda was proposed by the European Commission in February 2021, and one of its five main objectives is about the challenges of forced displacement and irregular migration and facilitating safe and legal pathways for migration and mobility. However, this basic approach of easing restrictions on legal migration is in return for better performance on controlling the illegal variety through more effective return and readmission arrangements (Moran, 2021).

Will this new approach be enough to manage the challenge of reception and integration of migrant people (education, health, social services, housing...)? In this regard, and in the view of the new debate about European funds, we should stress the importance of the integration funds (versus regulatory ones) and the need to share the management of the European funds to reception and integration (AMIF) with the implication of regions and local authorities. When these funds are left to the state, the priority goes mostly to border control and not as much to receiving and

integrating migrants (or to the reception and integration) as it should be. And at the same time, the regional and local authorities are placed in the front line facing urgent challenges not always related to regular situations such as non-accompanied minors or refugees' management that need decentralized and efficient policies (and funds) from the state.

Assuring multilevel governance can facilitate in the field when local and regional authorities can be useful and have competencies to implement, they can act as a pivotal role (state, regions, private sector, CSOs). To be possible, there should be more effective governance instruments: regional capacities and needs to be considered in the national plans by the states facilitating consultations involving regions (policy dialogue) when it comes also, to the European Union in Europe and international stakeholders in the southern shore. Better coordination between Migration and Development: legal paths and mobility, diaspora engagement, development coordination AMIF (institutional cooperation) we should stress the actions regarding refugees although the number is not significant, is a very crucial question. The same as the humanitarian situations we are facing in the sea (all the people that cannot be attended). It applies to the external policies and funds. Once again, other than to provide support, there is a need to provide coherent strategies linked to the situation of the countries of origin, supporting local active civil society and promoting actions regarding cooperation aid and other instruments.

Promotion of the values of sustainable human development, plurality, dialogue, and progress, as well as shared spaces of freedom and democracy. In addition, understanding the opportunity of a Mediterranean agenda that prioritizes human development and emphasizes issues such as dialogue and participation, to overcome social exclusion and fractures, and the enhancement of education for citizenship and democratic participation. There is clearly a need for a balance in policies to address migration. The current emphasis on stabilization and security policies is detrimental to the priority in democratization and human development. We are also talking about displacement and refugees, which are currently becoming one of the most important humanitarian challenges at a global and European level. This frontier of mobilities, differences and humanitarian crises make it much more difficult to work in a common framework applicable to all countries.

Projects aiming to share experiences and to reinforce capacities between north and southern actors should be encouraged. Open possibilities for financing these peer-to-peer experiences (at integration level) can be a positive step also to profit and capitalize on the diaspora actors. This typology of programmes should be encouraged with the active participation

of the LRA and CSO's. Reinforcing external Neighbourhood, development international cooperation funds with action to tackle root causes of irregular migrations (proposal of the EP to incorporate local and regional authorities to the CSOs). Adequate resources and flexibility of funding instruments based on a long-term structural approach to support the ambition of the new Migration and Asylum Pact by reinforcing AMIF external actions and the Neighbourhood Development and International Cooperation Instrument with LRA participation.

How can we learn from each other? New players about solidarity and responsibility.

We will refer to some outstanding initiatives in terms of mobilizing regional and local actors, which have become part of the agenda of existing networks that embrace the issue of migration. These groups do not always bring together actors from the north and the south of the Mediterranean, while many of them are structured initiatives around lobbying in European policies with an impact on the region. All the cases have been positioned as an immediate result of being confronted at the forefront of this situation. There are demands for more resources and instruments to make their inclusion programs more effective, either in terms of the right to the city (conception urban agenda) as well as referring to social cohesion (intercultural agenda) or the best management of social demands (services agenda). On the other hand, their proposals address the field of solidarity responsibility to be able to manage the problems arising from the European crisis in a global sense, making proposals for open management to solve a problem facing other territories facing the human drama of refugees. Finally, there is the interest in the field of policy cooperation and outsourcing, since with the cooperation programs undertaken in many cases; they also represent a demand for complementarity in foreign action and migration management.

Some relevant examples of regional and local actions involving actors from the north and the southern area. The World Organization of United Cities and Local Governments (CGLU) launched the Mediterranean Cities Migration Project (MC2CM). Initiated in 2015 in conjunction with ICMPD and UN-Habitat, the MC2CM project is a practical laboratory that allows cities to exchange their experiences and share good practices favouring the inclusion of migrants involving about twenty Euro-Mediterranean cities. The Euro-Mediterranean network of CPMRs (peripheral and maritime regions) set up the task force on migration management in 2015. This task force has been highlighting the importance of a multi-level governance and multi-sectoral approach to migration management and raising awareness of the needs and added value of regional action in all areas in which they have either formal competence in the field or where regional action is needed to implement EU and national objectives.

In Europe, the Assembly of European Regions (ARE) is promoting an Intercultural Regions Network to better work together to develop comprehensive intercultural strategies to manage diversity and migration (November 2019). Inspired by the Intercultural Cities Programme (ICC) of the Council of Europe, the Intercultural Regions Network aims to provide a platform for regions to share knowledge, resources, and experiences to promote intercultural integration at regional level.

In terms of solidarity, some of the most relevant is the 'Barcelona, Refugee City' plan launched in 2015 in response to the crisis. The objective is to prepare the city up to receiving and assisting refugees and guaranteeing their rights. This plan drives actions in countries of origin and along the route, coordinates, and collaborates with other cities and international NGOs and bodies working on the ground. In terms of networking, Barcelona and Athens have been the driving force behind the European refugee cities network Solidarity Cities, which has also been joined by many municipalities in Europe to promote cooperation and the sharing of information and good practice, both for mutual support in emergencies and to share intervention strategies.

The Catalan Scholarship for Refugees, funded by the Government of Catalonia in 2018, gives refugees who have already started higher education but could not finish it in their countries of origin the opportunity to do so in Catalan universities. The programme is aimed at refugees who are located outside the EU and provides an alternative pathway to entry. The more recent initiative such as the Government of the Basque Country "Share proposal", 2020, for a relocation through redistribution of asylum seekers supported by numerous Spanish and French regions for the voluntary relocation at the regional level of refugees, unaccompanied children, or vulnerable migrants in an irregular situation based on transparent criteria.

A Call for Action: New Framework of Cooperation

The Euro-Mediterranean relations present a paradox: all but human mobility. Bilateral relations and agreements have been responding without solving the problems of inequality, and without agreements to provide conciliatory scenarios for mobility. Moreover, this and above all, without finding a framework that would value the diversity and intercultural coexistence between the Euro-Mediterranean societies themselves. We should refer to complementarities, inclusion, dialogue, interculturality and resilience. We are convinced that in the horizon of the coming years, any European and Mediterranean policy that considers migration will talk about youth, adjustments in education and employment systems.

In this scenario, we propose a new decentralized approach of cooperation linking cities, municipalities, and civil society organizations together. This has two aims: first, it strengthens local capacity and transforms actors from victims into agents for refugee protection, and second it mobilizes support and solidarity at the local level to create a hegemonic state-led narrative against refugee settlement and integration. Some relevant examples of regional and local actions involving actors from the north and the southern area should be supported.

In second term, we propose a new framework build on solidarity and building pockets of resistance through institutional collaboration around refugee health, education, civil liberties, and mobility in the Southern Mediterranean. In this frame, it is relevant to support the local and regional actors in their actions to promote solidarity in response to the crisis, receiving and assisting refugees and guaranteeing their rights by driving actions in countries of origin and along the route and coordinating and collaborating with other cities and international NGOs and bodies working on the ground. Resources are needed to facilitate active local and regional support to the Refugees in terms of inclusion. Moreover, this has to do with scholarship for Refugees in European universities and relocation through redistribution of asylum seekers for the voluntary relocation at the regional level of refugees, unaccompanied children, or vulnerable migrants in an irregular situation based on transparent criteria.

A third proposal refers to the challenges in terms of inequality that have to do with social discontent and revolts, populism, hate narratives and authoritarianism. This frame should build on European complicities and Mediterranean neighbourhood alliances, allowing stressing common challenges for all of us in a more global and interconnected space we are living. The need for social inclusion policies, with everybody in and nobody outside this society should be reiterated. The exchanges of education and citizenship practices, schools, professionals, and students can become particularly good preventive measures, by preparing citizens in the North and the South to combat all ideologies of hate. At this stage, activating external cooperation instruments, also to profit from the current networks, can offer the possibility to work on preventive measures in a collaborative north-south perspective.

Overall, we need to reactivate the view of cities and regional spaces as laboratories of innovative social ideas and spaces for intercultural encounters in which it is necessary to work. It is becoming increasingly important to provide policies with a comprehensive view of mobility that considers the different and increasingly complex dimensions of human flows. When we talk about mobility, we refer to challenges that are not merely economic development; mention is made of the need to support transformational processes, through civil networks, immigrant

communities and local governments, betting on processes of opening the southern shore societies. Highlighting the importance of a multi-level governance and multi-sectoral approach to migration management and raising awareness of the needs and added value of regional action in all areas in which they have either formal competence in the field or where regional action is needed to implement EU and national objectives.

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V. ANNEX

Workshop Programme



Mediterranean Migration Governance: From state-centric to city-centric? Exploring Alternative Policy Paths

Day: Thursday March 11th, 2021

Time: 18:30 – 20:30

Place: IEMed, Carrer Girona, 20, Barcelona.

Framework of the debate

The Mediterranean is a region highly affected by complex migration dynamics. Such phenomena have diverse causes and consequences for the multiplicity of actors involved and is currently a central and multidimensional policy issue. Med Migration has been above all a matter of high politics, that is, something handled by traditional politics at the state level or higher governance stances. There is, however, generalized criticism towards the policies carried out by state-actors, pointing out their incapacity of producing proper and sustainable solutions. Consequently, many voices call for moving beyond such state-centric model, considered insufficient for tackling the issue of Med Migration in all its complexity. On the one hand, some voices claim the necessity of setting forth a constructive migration policy based on a multilateral approach and true cooperation between North and South. On the other, some voices how migration is above all an urban phenomenon and how cities have been increasingly claiming their space in the management of migration and diversity (Zaragoza, 2020; Zapata-Barrero, 2020). The general premise seems to be that moving either upward or downward in the governance continuum would imply paradigmatic changes. What is up for discussion is whether moving in those directions is either possible or desirable.

Therefore, the purpose of this roundtable is twofold. First, to discuss Mediterranean migration governance at different scales, considering the role of the region, states, and cities. Second, to debate Mediterranean region-making from a multiple perspective, trying to move beyond Euro and State-centrism. The idea is to foment a most needed debate about the similarities and differences of different levels of governance, as well as the advantages and possibilities of overcoming the current state-centric framework that currently predominates Med Migration governance.

Key questions we seek to answer are the following:

- Is there space for a change of paradigm in Med migration governance, from a state-centric scale to a city-centric one?
- Would an alliance of Mediterranean cities be the solution to overcome the lack of integration and coordination between North and South? In this same line, could this be an important step for overcoming eurocentrism that prevails in both research and policy?

- Is the current health crisis an opportunity for changing the paradigm and giving cities a more important role or will the state obtain even more importance due to the regained weight given to border control?
- Can cities foster a new Mediterranean Narrative in terms of migration?
- Does the solution pass through integrating the different levels of governance (local, national, and regional) and fostering a multi-level dialogue?

Chair/Moderator: [Luisa Faustini Torres](#) (GRITIM-UPF, Barcelona)

Participants: [Gemma Aubarell Solduga](#) (Department of Foreign Action, International Relations and Transparency of the Generalitat de Catalunya, Barcelona) and [Carmen Geha](#) (American University of Beirut, Lebanon).

List of Expert Biographies



Gemma Aubarell Solduga (gemma.solduga@gmail.com) currently serves as Head of the Mediterranean Relations and European Networks Service of the Generalitat de Catalunya, Ministry for Foreign Action and Open Government. She is associate researcher at GRITIM-Pompeu Fabra University. Through her professional career, she has held the position of head of the Programmes and Networks Unit of the Anna Lindh Foundation for Dialogue between Cultures (Alexandria, Egypt) 2009-2016 and director of the Department of Programs of the European Institute of the Mediterranean (Barcelona) 1998-2008.

She is Associate Professor at the School of Communication and International Relations. Blanquerna-URL in Barcelona, president of the ethical advisory board of the Horizon 2020 TransGang project on youth organizations and conflicts (UPF) and member of the board of the Global Fund for Educational Citizenship (ideaborn, Barcelona). Author of collective books and articles on civil society, migration, intercultural dialogue and Euro-Mediterranean relations. Among them she coordinated the edition of the Mediterranean Yearbook (IEMed) until 2008 and the Anna Lindh Report on Intercultural Trends (ALF) 2012 - 2014 editions. She was responsible for the European programs Dawrak-Citizens for Dialogue (2012-2014), coordinator of the Youth program Mediterranean Voices (2012-2016), member of the scientific committee of the UE Sahwa research project (2014-2017) and main expert of the program labelled by the UpM “Forming Responsible Citizenship in the Southern Mediterranean” (2017-2018).



Luisa Faustini Torres (luisa.faustini@upf.edu) holds a PhD in Political and Social Sciences from the Universitat Pompeu Fabra. Prior to that, she completed a Master in Immigration Management at the Universitat Pompeu Fabra (2015) and a Master in International Relations at the Barcelona Institute for International Studies (2012), where she specialized in global governance and foreign policy. She also holds a B.A. in International Relations from the IBMEC University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Her PhD research focused on the nexus between EU external migration policies and the democratization of countries in the Southern Mediterranean

neighbourhood (with a focus in Morocco as a case study). Her main research interests are international politics, immigration policies and migration diplomacy. She is particularly interested in policy analysis and qualitative research methods (content and text analysis with CAQDAS).



Dr. Carmen Geha (cg10@aub.edu.lb) is an Assistant Professor of Public Administration, Leadership and Organizational Development at AUB. She is also the Director of the “Education for Leadership in Crisis” scholarship program for Afghan women. She is a founding faculty member of the Center for Inclusive Business and Leadership for Women at the Olayan School of Business, specializing in readying gender inclusive employers across the region.

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