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AND NORMATIVE FRAMES  
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MEDITERRANEAN STAKEHOLDERS  
ON MIGRATION AND MOBILITY ISSUES,  
IN THEIR RELATIONS WITH THE EU

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# INVESTIGATING COGNITIVE AND NORMATIVE FRAMES OF SOUTHERN AND EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN STAKEHOLDERS ON MIGRATION AND MOBILITY ISSUES, IN THEIR RELATIONS WITH THE EU

Emanuela Roman, Ferruccio Pastore, Irene Ponzo, Nouredine Harrami and Marouan Lahmidani<sup>1</sup>

## ABSTRACT

This paper outlines the conceptual and methodological guidelines for research in MEDRESET Work Package 7 (WP7). WP7 aims to develop a more sophisticated knowledge and awareness about the diverse frames, perceptions and priorities of a variety of stakeholders with regard to migration and mobility issues in the Mediterranean space, focusing on local stakeholders in four southern and eastern Mediterranean countries (Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia) – and among them on those actors who are generally excluded from Euro-Mediterranean dialogue and decision-making (e.g., civil society and grassroots organizations). Following an introduction on the dominant EU-driven frames on migration and mobility issues and the related policy agenda, the second section of this paper reviews the existing academic and expert literature produced on the two shores of the Mediterranean, highlighting dominant patterns and common trends. Drawing upon Boswell et al. (2011), the fourth section of this paper provides the conceptual framework for the WP7 analysis of policy frames and framing processes in the area of migration and mobility, while the fifth section outlines the methodology adopted in WP7 research. The final section classifies the literature on migration and mobility produced on the two shores of the Mediterranean.

## 1. SOME INTRODUCTORY REMARKS ON DOMINANT FRAMES AT THE EU LEVEL

International human migration and mobility represent an ever more vital but highly contentious field of governance in Euro-Mediterranean relations. Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in this policy area has long been characterized by fundamental divergences of views, interests and approaches, not only between the two shores of the Mediterranean, or between (predominantly) sending, transit and receiving States, but also among institutional actors and non-institutional or civil society actors on each side of the Mediterranean.

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<sup>1</sup> Emanuela Roman is Researcher at the Forum of International and European Research on Immigration (FIERI). Ferruccio Pastore and Irene Ponzo are respectively Director and Deputy Director of FIERI. Nouredine Harrami is Professor of Sociology and Anthropology at the Moulay Ismail University of Meknes. Marouan Lahmidani is Assistant Professor of Philosophy at the Moulay Ismail University of Meknes. This paper was jointly researched and written by the FIERI and the University of Meknes. FIERI wrote sections 1, 2.1, 3, 4, 5 and 6; University of Meknes wrote sections 2.2 and 6. We would like to thank Daniela Huber (IAI) and the gender expert for their useful comments.

The profound implications of these internal and external cleavages have too often been overlooked, thus hampering cooperation in this crucial area of policy. Euro–Mediterranean cooperation on migration and mobility has thus either been confined to sectoral and security-oriented approaches (e.g., bilateral and European readmission agreements), or diluted into more comprehensive but formalistic and hardly influential instruments (e.g., Mobility Partnerships).

This has left ample room for the prevalence of unilateral and bilateral migration strategies pursued both at the European level and at the bilateral level by some Member States. The limited involvement of Mediterranean partner countries in the elaboration of cooperation initiatives in the area of migration and mobility has *de facto* resulted in a lack of ownership of such officially cooperative policies on the part of the partner countries, often leading to outcomes that are unsatisfactory for all the parties involved (i.e., institutional and non-institutional actors on both sides of the Mediterranean).

WP7 aims to develop a more sophisticated and detailed knowledge and awareness about the diverse frames, conceptions, priorities, sensitivities and expectations of a variety of stakeholders with regard to migration and mobility issues in the Mediterranean space, focusing primarily on local stakeholders in four southern and eastern Mediterranean (SEM) countries (Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia) – and among them on those actors who are generally excluded from Euro–Mediterranean dialogue and decision-making (e.g., civil society and grassroots organizations). In the framework of the MEDRESET project, WP7 will then offer the possibility for EU-level stakeholders to be confronted and to engage with an alternative framing of migration and mobility issues, corresponding to the perspective of southern and eastern Mediterranean stakeholders. In doing so, WP7 will contribute to identifying avenues and methods for a more effective and authentically cooperative (not only in a formalistic, or sectoral and hierarchical sense) Euro–Mediterranean cooperation in this field of governance.

The issue of migration and mobility in the Mediterranean space is very clearly framed in terms which are determined exclusively by the agenda of the EU institutions and some key Member States. These frames, and the European policy agenda related to them, have been changing substantially over the last years, in particular following the Arab Spring unrest, in parallel to an increase in so-called “mixed migration flows” crossing the Mediterranean towards Europe. This expression corresponds to the perception of European national governments and EU institutions that it is increasingly difficult to distinguish within Mediterranean migration flows between persons who move because they are forced or displaced and in need of protection, and those who move voluntarily and are economically motivated (A1-Oelgemöller 2011: 112).<sup>2</sup>

Despite their relevance, the collective perception and knowledge of Mediterranean mixed flows is still incomplete and too undifferentiated. In particular, public awareness and empirical understanding of the gender dimension of these flows is lacking, both in quantitative and

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<sup>2</sup> Our bibliography aims also at classifying the literature by types of documents and sources (for more details on the rationale of this methodological choice, see below at the beginning of Section 6). The references are therefore organised in sub-sections, identified by a letter (and in some cases a number) as follows: A) academic literature (divided into two further sub-sections: A1) Europe/United States; A2) Southern Mediterranean); B) literature produced by research institutes and independent think tanks (internally divided in: B1) Europe/United States; B2) Southern and eastern Mediterranean); C) literature produced by international organizations; d) literature produced by non-governmental organizations (NGOs); e) official documents; f) others.

qualitative terms. The female component of these flows tends to be either overlooked, and its specificities ignored, or described through stereotyped categories, which depict women as necessarily dependent from male migrants, or associate them with children as the weakest and most vulnerable segment of the migrant population. This “gender blindness” or “gender bias” is largely reflected into migration policies, which tend to marginalize and/or victimize female migrants and refugees on both sides of the Mediterranean (A1-Belloni and Pastore 2016, A1-Belloni et al. 2017).

Based on an overall analysis of EU policy documents and literature, the fundamental structure of the European migration and mobility agenda appears to be tripartite and includes three distinct (although interdependent and in some cases overlapping) policy areas, which correspond to equivalent types of migration flows.<sup>3</sup> These are:

1. the governance of legal migration, and especially labour migration;
2. the governance of irregular migration flows, including the components of such flows that are seeking international protection (“mixed flows” is therefore the designation now most commonly used at the EU level);
3. the governance of short-term mobility from Mediterranean partner countries to EU Member States, including the issue of visa facilitation that is under discussion with some Mediterranean States.

Each of these policy areas, as they are defined at the EU level and by EU institutions, deserves here some further concise specification. Firstly, labour migration governance is here considered in a broad sense, as including not only the elaboration and implementation of rules on selection, admission and job-matching of migrant workers, but also what comes before and after admission. Therefore, WP7 aims to analyse the frames and perspectives of different stakeholders (especially from SEM countries) on issues such as: joint skills development strategies, circular migration and assisted voluntary return schemes, migrant-sensitive active labour market policies in receiving States, etc.

The second policy area deals with the articulation and distribution of national and supranational control and protection tasks between countries on the two shores, in light of the growing mixed flows in the Mediterranean region. This increase in mixed flows is largely due to the geopolitical fracture in the SEM region originating from the 2011 civil society uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt and the outbreak of civil wars in Libya and Syria, whose consequences continue to have a significant impact on Europe, *inter alia* in terms of managing migrant and refugee flows. WP7 aims to examine the perspectives of SEM stakeholders on, for instance: the viability of proposed solutions based on some form of pre-examination/screening of protection claims in the territory of the Mediterranean partner countries; the viability of Euro–Mediterranean forms of solidarity in the field of international protection, including through resettlement schemes; the viability of solutions to enhance police and judiciary cooperation in the fight against human trafficking and smuggling, etc.

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<sup>3</sup> It is not our purpose to conduct here an overall analysis of different frames through which migration and mobility issues have been conceptualized at the EU level (e.g., securitarian frame, technocratic frame, etc.); the tripartite distinction that we present here corresponds to the dominant EU-driven categorization of migration flows (and corresponding areas of policy intervention), which has emerged and consolidated over the last decades.

Thirdly, the governance of short-term mobility is a crucial area both for the actual development of grassroots Euro–Mediterranean relations (e.g., in the social, economic and cultural spheres) and for the shaping of mutual perceptions and attitudes between the inhabitants of the two shores of the Mediterranean. This is also one of the policy areas where the EU has exerted a deeper harmonizing role, through its common visa policy. Moreover, this is currently a particularly dynamic policy area, with visa facilitation standing out as an important topic in policy agendas at different levels, especially in Tunisia, following the October 2016 launch of negotiations for a Visa Facilitation Agreement parallel to (and as a *quid pro quo* for) the negotiations for an EU readmission agreement. WP7, thus, aims to analyse the approaches and views of different stakeholders in the field of visa procedures reform and short-term mobility governance.

However, it is worth stating very clearly that the research carried out under WP7 will not take this EU-driven tripartite framing of the issue as a reference and starting point. The fundamental theoretical and methodological approach of WP7 research will instead be to investigate the frames of SEM stakeholders, without superimposing or taking for granted that they will abide by or correspond to EU-driven frames.

In addition, although the main focus of the analysis will be on migration and mobility dynamics from the SEM region to the EU, WP7 will refrain from a reductionist migratory perspective that considers countries on the southern and south-eastern Mediterranean shores only as sending or transit areas. Indeed, the four SEM target countries involved in the MEDRESET project are by now also receivers of migration flows of different types (from war-driven refugee flows to economic migration, from international students to short-term business-driven mobility, etc.). The new policy and policy-making challenges generated by this growing migratory complexity in SEM countries directly impinge on perceptions, attitudes and policy approaches of local institutional and non-institutional stakeholders, also with regard to migration towards the EU.

## 2. ACADEMIC AND EXPERT LITERATURE ON MIGRATION AND MOBILITY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN SPACE: AN OVERVIEW OF DOMINANT PATTERNS

This section explores the existing academic and expert literature on migration and mobility produced on the two shores of the Mediterranean, i.e., in Europe (section 2.1) and in southern and eastern Mediterranean countries, i.e., Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia (section 2.2).

### 2.1 EUROPEAN LITERATURE

As highlighted in the first MEDRESET concept paper (B1-Huber and Paciello 2016), European research and literature on Euro–Mediterranean relations has always been very Euro-centric; it has to a large extent adopted the EU's definition of the Mediterranean area, while overlooking contending perspectives and frames, and it has been largely influenced by the EU's security concerns and interests. Even when European literature has been critical towards EU policies, this critique has largely remained within the framework set by the EU, using European categories and standards to assess EU policies (B1-Huber and Paciello 2016: 3). More specifically, the Euro-centric approach of existing literature on Euro–Mediterranean relations

has been characterized by:

- 1) a narrow geopolitical conceptualization of the Mediterranean space driven by European economic and security interests; 2) the application of European concepts and values to the Mediterranean, manifested also in a sectoral (instead of integrated) approach to deeply linked policy issues; and 3) the marginalization of local perspectives and human security concerns/the needs of people in the region. (B1-Huber and Paciello 2016: 4)

The same can be said with regard to the copious European literature on the governance of migration and mobility in the Mediterranean area, which has to a substantial degree repeated and contributed to reinforcing the mainstream Euro-centric approach.

### 2.1.1 ACADEMIC LITERATURE

European studies and European migration studies have analysed the emergence of an "external dimension" in the EU migration and asylum policies from an "internal" perspective, as a further development in the process of Europeanization of migration and asylum policies. From this point of view, the abolition of internal border controls has required not only an enhanced intra-EU cooperation between Member States but also an increased cooperation with countries of origin and transit in order to strengthen controls at the EU external borders and limit migration into the EU.

Therefore, according to Boswell (A1-2003), the process of externalization was to some extent the "natural continuation" of the process of Europeanization of migration and asylum policies. Similarly, Lavenex has highlighted the interrelation between internal communitarization ("shifting up") and external widening ("shifting out") of European migration policies; according to the author, this process "reflects the continuity of a policy frame that emphasises the control, and, therewith, security aspect of migration" (A1-Lavenex 2006: 330).

In line with this internal perspective on externalization, a number of scholars have emphasized also the role played by European national bureaucracies both in the process of Europeanization and in the process of externalization of migration and asylum policies (A1-Guiraudon 2000 and 2003, A1-Guiraudon and Lahav 2000, A1-Lavenex 2006). According to these authors, communitarization and internationalization may be interpreted as a strategy by interior ministers and immigration officials to increase their autonomy against political, normative and institutional constraints on their restrictive control-oriented migration policy-making. In particular, the development of an external action in the Justice and Home Affairs field may have represented "an 'escape' road for national executives resisting a communitarisation of their domain" (A1-Lavenex 2006: 346).

Even though these studies represent an interesting key to interpretation of the externalization process, they are delimited by a purely Euro-centric approach that frames EU external policies in the area of migration as part of the EU integration process.

Along with literature that has tried to explain the reasons for and main features of the externalization of EU migration policies in the Mediterranean, there is an abundant literature that has addressed this process critically, from different perspectives and involving various

disciplines. Critical legal scholars have typically criticized EU external migration policies from a human rights perspective, focusing on how “*non-entrée* policies” (A1-Hathaway 1992) and cooperation with third countries in the area of migration management and border control may hamper migrants’ access to protection and right to asylum (B1-Gammeltoft-Hansen 2006, A1-Gammeltoft-Hansen 2011, A1-2012 and A1-2014, A1-Gammeltoft-Hansen and Hathaway 2015) or on how States may bear a responsibility for migrant deaths occurring as an indirect effect of their restrictive migration policies (A1-Spijkerboer 2007 and 2013).

Critical migration studies have focused on the security-oriented approach characterizing EU external migration policies in the Mediterranean, and have analysed extensively the securitization of migration control as one of the main features of externalization (A1-Huysmans 2000 and 2006, A1-Collyer 2006, A1-Ceyhan and Tsoukala 2002, A1-Lutterbeck 2006, A1-Bigo 2005). Also the increasing involvement of private actors and international organizations, such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in the management of migration at or outside the borders of the EU, has been object of specific empirically based research.

Scholars have argued that European States and the EU have gradually delegated non-state actors and international organizations to carry out typical State duties, in order to maximize the effectiveness and minimize the costs and visibility of measures and operations in the fields of migration control, border surveillance, migration detention and forced return. Migration management has been analysed by various scholars as a lucrative business for private actors, as an “industry” producing profits and specific “services” – i.e., assistance to migrants in organizing migration or to States in controlling it (A1-Andersson 2014, A1-Gammeltoft-Hansen and Nyberg Sørensen 2013).

Other scholars have focused on migration management as a way for international organizations like the IOM and the UNHCR to legitimize and expand their role and activities, to affirm their own logic, and to partly emancipate themselves from their own funders – i.e., the States (B1-Triandafyllidou 2014, A1-Geiger and Pécoud 2014, A1-Korneev 2014). Other scholars have argued that, nevertheless, by taking part in the removal and reintegration of unauthorized migrants and rejected asylum seekers in third countries, the IOM and the UNHCR legitimize and support the overarching return objectives and security agenda of the EU and its Member States (Koch 2014, A1-Scheel and Ratfisch 2014). Drawing upon studies on the securitization and privatization of migration management, a number of scholars have analysed also if and to what extent processes of technocratization and depoliticization may have characterized the EU external migration policies in the Mediterranean (A1-Pécoud 2015, B1-Lahav 2000 and 2014).

A further cluster of critical literature on the governance of migration in the Mediterranean area is increasingly concerned with the issue of human smuggling. A number of scholars have examined the criminalization of migrant smuggling and have denounced the dominant criminological approach characterizing research on this topic, as well as the framing processes that have resulted in smugglers being oversimplistically represented as criminals (B1-Baird 2016, B1-Achilli 2015, A1-Tinti and Reitano 2016; for a comprehensive analytical and critical literature review on migrant smuggling, see A1-Baird and van Liempt 2016). These scholars have highlighted the limits of existing smuggling studies and argued for more critical work and knowledge production in this field (A1-Baird and van Liempt 2016). At the policy level,

they have claimed that European policy responses aimed at countering migrant smuggling should go beyond a dominant security-oriented approach and be accompanied by more structural and comprehensive solutions, including accessible pathways for people to cross the Mediterranean into Europe (B1-Achilli and Sanchez 2017).

The different branches of critical literature on EU external migration policies analysed so far share a certain Euro-centric approach, if only because their criticism is based on European categories and discourses. In contrast, some international relations (IR) scholars have adopted an alternative perspective, arguing that far from being solely a unilateral process whereby the EU and its Member States export migration control instruments outside their territory, EU external migration policies in the Mediterranean consist of a network of complex and ever-changing bilateral and multilateral relations, whereby the EU, its Member States and SEM countries exercise power or pressure on the counterpart across different policy fields (B1-Paoletti 2010 and 2011, A1-Paoletti 2011, A1-Cassarino 2007, B1-Cassarino 2005 and 2010b, B1-Paoletti and Pastore 2010, A1-Pastore and Trinchieri 2008). According to these scholars, the EU external dimension cannot be understood only in terms of externalization of migration control at the expense of countries of origin and transit (as it has traditionally been) but rather as a "bargaining process", where both parties involved are able to affect the behaviour of their counterpart using all instruments at their disposal, not only in the area of migration, but also in other policy areas (e.g., foreign affairs, trade, development, energy, security).

With the exception of these IR scholars and, to some extent, of certain critical smuggling scholars, this review of European literature on the governance of migration in the Mediterranean space has revealed that the existing literature is biased by a Euro-centric approach and that there is a significant lack of research on how the externalization of EU migration policies impacts on SEM countries and is perceived by SEM societies.

### 2.1.2 GREY LITERATURE

Grey literature includes reports, studies, papers, policy briefs and articles produced by research centres and independent think tanks, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs); it may also include newspaper articles, blog posts and other online sources. Over the past twenty years Europe has witnessed a flourishing of specialized research centres, independent think tanks, thematic websites and blogs dealing with European policies in the field of migration, mobility and asylum; as a result, there has been a significant development of non-academic literature on these topics, with particular regard to the Mediterranean area.

However, this multiplication of sources of knowledge production on the EU migration and asylum policies has not corresponded to a significant diversification of approaches. Apparently, grey literature produced in Europe on these issues shares to a large extent the mainstream Euro-centric approach of academic literature, possibly with the exception of some research centres (Migration Policy Centre, International Migration Institute) and international NGOs (Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch), which have tried to shift the focus of their analysis from Europe to southern and eastern Mediterranean countries, e.g., by involving researchers and scholars in SEM countries and the Global South and/or by focusing on the role of civil societies.

Among the numerous European university-based or independent research centres and think tanks specialized on migration and asylum issues, some have become particularly influential in the European context and on European policy-making; e.g., the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS),<sup>4</sup> the European Policy Centre (EPC),<sup>5</sup> the Migration Policy Centre (MPC) at the European University Institute (EUI),<sup>6</sup> the International Migration Institute (IMI) at the University of Oxford,<sup>7</sup> the European Stability Initiative (ESI)<sup>8</sup> and the Migration Policy Institute (MPI Europe).<sup>9</sup>

Along with the research outputs and publications of research centres and think tanks, a similar influential role is played by the studies commissioned by the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) Committee of the European Parliament to European migration and asylum experts on specific migration- and asylum-related topics.<sup>10</sup> These studies are considered to be particularly valuable by both institutional and non-institutional EU-level stakeholders. Similarly, also commentaries and analyses by prominent European migration scholars published on specialized blogs represent a relevant source for European decision-makers.<sup>11</sup>

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4 CEPS is an independent think tank on EU affairs with a specific research area on migration (<https://www.ceps.eu/topics/migration>). It publishes on a regular basis policy insights, commentaries and papers on legal, policy and judicial developments in the area of migration at the EU level, addressing in particular European policy-makers (e.g., CEPS Papers in Liberty and Security in Europe). A relevant part of CEPS research and publications have focused precisely on the external dimension of the EU migration policy.

5 EPC is another independent think tank on EU affairs with a specific research programme on European Migration and Diversity ([http://www.epc.eu/prog.php?prog\\_id=6](http://www.epc.eu/prog.php?prog_id=6)). It publishes on a regular basis commentaries, policy updates and research papers; however, compared to CEPS, it is less focused on EU external migration policies.

6 MPC conducts policy-oriented research on migration, asylum and mobility with the purpose of contributing to the development, implementation, monitoring and assessment of migration-related policies at both the EU and the global level (<http://www.migrationpolicycentre.eu>). It has coordinated and/or participated in numerous research projects and it publishes on a regular basis policy briefs, policy papers and working papers covering different disciplines, thematic fields and geographical areas (e.g., updated Migration Profiles of SEM countries).

7 IMI conducts research on international migration at the global level with the purpose of providing policy-makers with instruments for impactful policies (<https://www.imi.ox.ac.uk>). It has coordinated and participated in various research projects under four thematic areas (development, inequality and change; diasporas and identity; drivers and dynamics; policy and states) producing influential publications (e.g., IMI Working Paper Series). Compared to the other research centres mentioned here, IMI's research is more academic and less policy-oriented, and its focus is more on the governance of migration at the international level than at the European level. In September 2017 the IMI in its known form as an Oxford-based research centre has been closed and a new IMI network has been launched ([https://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/about/Note\\_to\\_our\\_users](https://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/about/Note_to_our_users)).

8 ESI is an independent think tank focused on South East Europe and European enlargement and committed to providing policy-makers with relevant strategic analysis (<http://www.esiweb.org>). In the last two years it has become famous for its policy proposals on the so-called "refugee crises" in the Eastern and Central Mediterranean, and in particular for its role in promoting the EU-Turkey Agreement of 18 March 2016 (<http://www.esiweb.org/index.php?lang=en&id=597>).

9 MPI Europe aims to provide a better understanding of migration in Europe and to promote effective policy-making; it publishes on a regular basis reports, commentaries and policy briefs addressing governmental and non-governmental stakeholders at the EU level (<http://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/mpi-europe>).

10 Studies commissioned by the LIBE Committee are available on the European Parliament website, by searching the Database of Supporting Analyses (<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/supporting-analyses-search.html>).

11 For instance, the EU Immigration and Asylum Law and Policy blog managed by the Odysseus Academic Network (<http://eumigrationlawblog.eu>) and the EU Law Analysis blog managed by prof. Steve Peers (<http://eulawanalysis.blogspot.it>) host accurate analyses of policy, legal and judicial developments concerning EU immigration and asylum law and policy.

As concerns grey literature produced by international organizations in the area of migration, mobility and asylum, a crucial role is played by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which publish annual reports, thematic studies, policy briefs, newsletters, etc. on a broad variety of migration- and asylum-related issues at the global level. In particular, since 2013 both organizations have come to play a relevant function in the context of migration management in the Mediterranean area, becoming the main actors responsible for collecting data and figures on migrant arrivals and migrant deaths across the Eastern, Central and Western Mediterranean routes, making them publicly available and updating them on a daily basis.<sup>12</sup>

Finally, EU agencies such as the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (FRONTEX), the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) and Eurostat also produce and publish on a regular basis periodic (annual, quarterly or monthly) reports, analyses, statistics, country studies, thematic papers, newsletters, etc., which may be considered as a relevant part of the European grey literature on asylum- and migration-related topics.

All these kinds of grey publications produced by different research centres, think tanks, academic networks, international organizations and EU agencies share a common characteristic. Having a markedly policy-oriented nature, they tend to replicate concepts and categories that are typical of European politics and European mainstream knowledge and reflection on migration. Since this literature rather explicitly addresses European policy-makers and aims at informing and supporting decision-making processes, it has to "speak the language of politics". As a result, the space for critical work and radically alternative views is extremely reduced; the predominant approach in grey literature continues to be Euro-centric, while perspectives from SEM countries, even if included, play only a marginal role.<sup>13</sup>

Also international and European NGOs are among the authors of grey literature on migration- and asylum-related issues. Amnesty International (AI) and Human Rights Watch (HRW) are among the most active and influential NGOs producing on a regular basis reports, investigations and articles concerning European policies in the field of migration management and refugee protection in the Mediterranean area. Their approach differs, at least in part, from the approach of international organizations, EU agencies, research centres and think tanks, as they try to include and value the perspective of SEM stakeholders, civil society organizations (CSOs) and migrants and refugees themselves, who are directly affected by European policies. In their reporting, they also adopt a gender perspective and they often focus on the needs of specific categories of vulnerable people. Based on first-hand information gathered through field research and interviews in target countries, AI and HRW usually take an openly critical stance towards policies and practices of the EU and its Member States.

12 See IOM Missing Migrants Project, <https://missingmigrants.iom.int>, and UNHCR Operational Portal Refugee Situations, <http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean>.

13 Amongst the few exceptions, it is worth mentioning the Consortium for Applied Research on International Migration from, to and through the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries (CARIM-South), located at the Migration Policy Centre (MPC) at the European University Institute (<http://carim-south.eu>). Also the International Migration Institute (IMI) at the University of Oxford has made specific and worthwhile research to overcome a Euro-centric perspective on migration, also by expanding research capacity in sending countries, particularly through its African Migrations Programme (<https://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/completed-projects/african-migrations-programme>).

Among European NGOs, Statewatch (<http://www.statewatch.org>) plays a relevant monitoring function in the fields of the State, justice and home affairs, and civil liberties in Europe. It aims to encourage informed discussion and critical research through the publication of full-text EU legislative and policy documents (including working, draft and confidential documents) and through the provision of news and analyses, including in the area of EU immigration and asylum policy.

However, having as their main interlocutors European stakeholders and decision-makers, even international organizations like AI, HRW and Statewatch, tend to have, at least in part, a Euro-centric approach; even when they are critical towards the EU and Member States policies, their criticism is mainly based on European categories. Moreover, human rights NGOs tend to conceptualize the fundamental rights of migrants and refugees in typical Western terms, focusing mainly on political and civil rights, while neglecting socio-economic rights (as argued also in B1-Huber et al. 2017).

## 2.2 SOUTHERN AND EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN LITERATURE

Lebanon, Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco are countries of intensive transnational migration, with interesting migration inflows and outflows together with transit mobility. Many similarities could be noticed between Tunisia and Morocco, due to the same historical background, namely the starting of mobility towards Europe (because of the shared colonial history), the targeted countries of destination (France, Italy), and their position as transit countries towards the northern shore of the Mediterranean.

In all these countries emigration is of great relevance for the economy, namely through remittances. Egypt, Lebanon and Morocco are classified among countries having a high average of remittances in the region, and all of their policies as well as institutions are constructed in such a way as to successfully manage the linkage with their emigrants abroad. With respect to the governance of migration inflows, the four countries have developed a repressive apparatus against illegal migration but their policies are largely ineffective in dealing with the situation of refugees.

In fact there is a hard issue concerning refugees protection; as we will see further, in all the four countries there is no official law about refugees and asylum. The only law, promised by the Moroccan government many years ago, has not yet been presented to the legislative institution. Lebanon also has not ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention. Among the three countries, Lebanon may be distinguished for its adoption of *Alkafala*<sup>14</sup> (a policy widely shared among the Gulf states and Jordan); this has a harmful effect upon migrants, exposing them to different sorts of market exploitation and indignation.

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14 The *kafala* system means "sponsorship system". It is used in the case of migrant workers, primarily employed in the construction and domestic sectors, in Lebanon, Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE. The system requires all low-skilled workers to have an in-country sponsor, who is responsible for their visa and legal status. This role can also be played by companies or associations as well. The sponsor is the only legal warranty for the migrant: workers can never leave these countries without a sponsor's permit (A1-Beaugé 1986).

Migration and mobility policies have long embodied the assumption that migration is a phenomenon more prominent among men than women; they are thus more biased towards male migrants. However, a recent progress of such policies indicates a new interest towards the diversity of migrants' needs and living conditions from a gender perspective. For instance, this may be noticed in the case of Morocco, where a change of the family law now enables Moroccan mothers married with foreigners to transmit Moroccan nationality to their children.

Compared to Europe, research on migration and transnational mobility in the southern and eastern Mediterranean has produced less academic writings; the sort of research socially needed (namely at international level) is recent and still in progress, and it is generally conducted in descriptive and empirical terms. In certain countries, it is openly influenced by activists struggling for migrants' fundamental rights.

The main points in almost every publication in the field of migration can be reduced to the following themes: a) structure and evolution of migration; b) rights and public policies on migration; and c) remittances and impact of migration upon departure zones.

### 2.2.1 STRUCTURE AND EVOLUTION OF MIGRATION

The tendency of studying both the structure and evolution of migration and mobility is widely shared by academic and grey literature on the subject. In the four countries, the reviewed writings portray the forms and the consistency of the phenomenon from a demographic and socio-economic viewpoint, in addition to its evolution in time.

Reviewed publications put much emphasis on the historical background of migration, as if they want to legitimize emigration within a context of closed borders; hence, in Tunisia, Morocco and to a certain extent in Lebanon, research focuses on migration and colonialism, as a matter of historical fact. According to this literature the far causes of current mobility must be sought in the colonial history of North Africa, the reason being that France, as the main colonial power in the region, started the first huge flux of migration towards Europe, consisting of workers, soldiers and occupants as well (A1-Baroudi 1978, A2-Dubus and Oueslati 2009).

In Lebanon, the ancient feature of transnational mobility is much underlined. In the contemporary history of the country, migration is represented as an active phenomenon. Since the second half of the 19th century (B2-Karam 2013) under the hegemony of France, the colonial power which occupied Lebanon, migrations towards western Africa (A1-Abdulkarim 1993: 113) were registered. Lebanese emigration was much more intensive during the civil war between 1975 and 1990, and after the war because of the economic policies and political instability in the region (B2-Labaki 2011). Currently Lebanon diasporas consist of about 13 million individuals (B2-Karam 2013) living mainly in the USA, Canada, Australia, France, Germany and Sweden. The favourite destination is the USA, which hosts a quarter of these people. The loss of highly qualified individuals is one of the main features of Lebanese migration: for every ten Lebanese, four of them are already migrants in one of the western countries (C-Gubert and Nordman 2009: 15).

In Egypt, migration is much oriented towards the Gulf countries (2.4 million Egyptian migrants in 2013) (C-Serageldin 2014: 3); Egyptian emigration is also active in many other destinations in Europe (B2-Wahba 2014), the USA and Australia (B2-Elbadawy and Roushdy 2010). Such

mobility includes women too: Egypt was third after Palestine and Morocco with 1.2 million migrant women in 2013 (B2-Karam 2013). In the majority of writings about the genesis and evolution of migration, emphasis is put mostly on emigration, while immigration has been integrated more recently into research efforts.

With respect to emigration, publications in Morocco and Tunisia have established a typology that clarifies the migration evolution. They focus on different sorts of emigration, e.g., mobility of adult men and family reunification – a later process that has permitted a huge mobility of wives and children as well – but the latest writings have added to their scope also migration of autonomous women (B1-Bel Haj Zekri 2009, B2-Khachani 2004), transit and migration for study purposes (B2-Dubois and Chamkhi 2011), as well as the brain drain phenomenon (B2-Khachani 2004, A2-Boubakri 2009). Lately, there has been considerable progress on the Jewish migration in Morocco, a phenomenon which was long left unnoticed (B2-Sekkat 2016).

Analysis shows the socio-demographic features of migration fluxes as well as their specific destinations and sorts (C-OECD 2017). The earlier migration consisted only of the mobility of unqualified men with low educational levels, unlike the latest tendencies which include intensive mobility among women as well as among more qualified individuals. This change in mobility practices is embedded in certain social and political contexts, which are characterized by an intensive control of migration, as well as by the deterioration of economy in leaving communities (A1-Harrami 2016, A1-Harrami and Mahdi 2008).

The latest studies in the Egyptian case have shown more progress in research on immigration. Egyptian studies underline new aspects such as transit migration from southern Saharan countries (B2-Hafez 2012: 14), but also the most recent migrations caused by military conflicts in Libya (C-IOM 2015: 18) and Syria (B2-Ayoub and Khallaf 2014), namely the huge numbers of refugees.

As for Morocco and Tunisia, immigration and transit migration from sub-Saharan Africa are currently the favourite subject matter under investigation (B1-Fourati 2008). The attention paid to these phenomena is still in progress; in Morocco both European migration (A2-Therrien 2016, B2-Mouna 2016) and immigration (E-Morocco HCP 2006, B2-El Moukhi 2016) have become central in literature about migration.

### 2.2.2 RIGHTS AND PUBLIC POLICY ON MIGRATION

Studies about public administration of migration are mostly characterized by a descriptive approach. They portray the tools in use for controlling migration as well as the changes in states' attitudes towards the phenomenon; the descriptive and empirical line is much more prevalent in grey literature. Hence, in Egypt the reviewed writings show the latest interest in migration expressed by the government. Its effective control over migration dates to the beginning of the first Iraq-Iran war and has grown since then as a reply to the nationalization of public services by the Gulf states in 1980 (C-IOM 2015: 91). The Egyptian government has multiplied its policies to help Egyptians abroad, as well as to assist migrants within its national territory (B1-Zohry and Harrell-Bond 2003: 26).

Like Morocco, Egypt has taken into account the relevance of migration for the economy, namely the benefit of remittances in repairing budget deficits and the financing of private projects; migration is also an effective mean for solving job market problems and dealing with the pressure of social needs (B1-Zohry and Harrell-Bond 2003: 27). The 2014 Egyptian constitution defines the status of migrants in the country. It provides for the state's duties towards them, and also contains a call for their participation in political issues and their contribution to the national economy (C-IOM 2015: 101).

Starting in 2001, the Egyptian government also began to take irregular migration into account; yet the registration of this phenomenon was only later to become systematic. Real action upon it is not yet fully legislated, but the 2016 Law No. 82/2016 did make irregular migration a crime punishable by law. This law establishes a new framework for political coordination to fight irregular migration, and lays out an overall strategy for the period 2016-2026.

The reviewed literature indicates another emerging aspect of mobility in SEM countries, the forced movement of refugees, i.e. people who escape their country of origin or place of habitual residence and seek safety and security in a different country. Literature describes this new pattern of forced migration and highlights the problematic aspect of refugees' status and living conditions in SEM countries. For instance, in Egypt many deficiencies have been noticed: no means of protection are provided by the government (B1-Grabska 2006: 13), as it does not yet have any effective strategy to resolve the complex situation of refugees (B2-Kagan 2011).

In spite of the fact that Lebanon has experienced different sorts of migration due to the surrounding military conflicts and its permanent reception of refugees (B1-Kiwan 2005: 4), the government does not have a comprehensive legal framework on asylum; moreover, Lebanon has not signed the 1951 Refugee Convention yet. The UNHCR remains the only organization which deals with refugees in Lebanon; as for the case of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, the UNRWA is the only international organization responsible for them. The official administration of refugees is limited to the functions assigned to the national security services, which coordinates with the UNHCR following the memorandum signed between them in 2003. This agreement provides for temporary residency for refugees and asylum seekers in Lebanon as they wait to return to their countries of origin, or get asylum in other countries; the point is that Lebanon itself does not accord them a legal and permanent status (B1-Kiwan 2005: 4).

As for Lebanese emigration, the country has an administration supervised by the ministry of foreign affairs. It organizes many cultural and social activities for its citizens and their families; it aims at facilitating their visits to their country of origin as well as at protecting their rights abroad (B1-Kiwan 2005: 15).

Migration policies in Tunisia, like in Morocco, focus on protecting the country's own citizens abroad as well as encouraging more investments in their homeland, by sending money via remittances and by introducing new technologies; conversely, the struggle against irregular migration is due to the pressure exerted by the European Union upon the government. This phenomenon has gained a central place in the latest research on migration in Tunisia (B1-Kiwan 2005: 28, A1-Boubakri and Mazzella 2011: 154, A2-Chekir et al. 2004).

In Morocco, the analysis of the phenomenon has focused on many aspects: the map of Moroccan migrants in Europe and the relevance of migration for the economy; the strategic position of Morocco as a matching point of different international mobility fluxes; and the pressure upon the Moroccan government to apply serious border controls. In addition to these factors, the latest Moroccan policy towards African countries (A2-Lahlou 2007: 28) has hugely modified the state's perspective: migration has become an issue of internal policy as well (B2-Alami M'Chichi 2005, B2-Khachani 2004, A2-Belguendouz 2000).

At a global level, the most important choices of public policy dealing with migration could be stated as follows. Concerning national outflows, Morocco still considers migration as a means of job market resolution (B1-Khachani 2016: 3). With respect to transit flows, Morocco adopts both humanist as well as economic approaches, but at a political level it applies the issue as an effective element while negotiating relations with the EU (A2-Lahlou 2007: 20, A2-Charles 2008: 151, A1-El Qadim 2010). Moroccan policy aims at empowering human, cultural and economic bonds with migrants by encouraging them to increase remittances, as the primary source of foreign currency in the country (B1-Khachani 2016: 3). Concerning the north-south migration, Morocco encourages the entrance and establishment of European migrants (A2-Zeghib and Therrien 2016).

We can describe the government policy on migration in Morocco in the following terms. The Moroccan state has created many institutions, some of which represent the interests of Moroccan migrants, *inter alia* the Department of Foreign Affairs (Law No. 19-89 of 25 June 1990) and more recently the Council of the Moroccan Community Living Abroad (CCME) (Dahir No. 1-07-208 of 21 December 2007). Still, many writers evoke the necessity of guaranteeing Moroccan migrants access to political life, as well as to the representative institutions (A2-Belguendouz 2004 and 2003b).

In order to deal with irregular migration towards the EU by both Moroccans and transit migrants, the Moroccan government has responded to EU pressure by building new means of control along the borders. It has adopted a national strategy to combat irregular mobility, consisting of the modernization of surveillance systems and processes of identity control, as well as creation of a national observatory for migration aimed at dealing with mobility and border surveillance. This security approach has been corroborated also at the level of legislation, through the adoption of Law No. 02-03 of 11 November 2003 concerning the entrance and residence of foreigners, as well as at the practical level in the management of irregular migrants within the territory (B2-Khachani 2006). Applying this controversial law was a response on the part of Morocco to the EU call for greater border security; in taking this action it has become what some writers describe as the policeman of Europe in the region (A2-Belguendouz 2003a and 2005, B2-Lahlou 2005).

As for the administration of entrance, the reviewed writings agree that it depends on the migrants' origins. With respect to EU citizens who choose to live in Morocco, the government responds by applying less taxes; its policy targets mainly French pensioners. As for migrants from southern countries and transit migrants, Morocco has been serious about security issues, and since 2003 the government has adopted a national strategy for fighting against illegal migration. However, in 2011 new perspectives emerged about a global and comprehensive integration of migrants in Morocco.

The 2011 constitution gives migrants the right to vote in local elections (Article 30 of the Moroccan Constitution); in addition, new functions are added to the Department of State, which becomes responsible for the entry and residence of EU citizens in the country. The regularization of sub-Saharan migrants started in 2013 (Circular governing the Special Regularization of the Status of Residence of Foreigners), supervised by King Mohamed VI, in response to the call of the National Council of Human Rights (E-CNDH 2013) in Morocco. Also an asylum law is being drafted, but this has not yet been presented to the parliament.

The main changes to Moroccan migration policy are due to the increasing activism of civil society struggling for migrants' rights, the rising number of associations supporting migrants (B2-Arroud and Abushi 2016: 14, A1-Feliu Martinez 2009), and the role of some trade unions. However, more recently, Morocco's return to the African Union Organization has played a central role in the conflicting diplomacies of Morocco and Algeria. The problem of Western Sahara has generated different orientations towards southern migration flows. The latest violent actions of the Algerian military forces against sub-Saharan migrants in December 2016 led King Mohamed VI to call for the beginning of a second stage of regularization in Morocco (F-MAP 2016), as well as for the sending of humanitarian aid to assist the victims (F-Lamlili 2016).

### 2.2.3 MIGRANT REMITTANCES AND IMPACT OF MIGRATION ON THE LEAVING ZONES

In the four SEM target countries, much writing has addressed the impact of migration upon the countries of origin. Concerning Egypt and Lebanon, the increasing attention given to the benefits of migration is measured in macro-economic terms. With regard to the two countries, remittances are analysed from a historical perspective to show their relevance in creating national budget equilibrium and a better standard of living for the whole population (B2-David and Jarreau 2015). Such a macro-economic evaluation of migration effects is widely used in both Moroccan and Tunisian literature also. Some of these studies provide figures on the practice of migrant remittances (B2-Hamdouch et al. 2000, B2-Hamdouch 2005), while others are more interested in the types and amounts of investments from remittances (B2-Khachani 2004, B2-Chigueur 2005, B2-Boubakri 2006, C-Boubakri 2010, A2-Dubus and Oueslati 2009).

Alongside macro-economic studies, there are other inquiries into the micro-social impacts of migration upon the native zones of migration in both Morocco and Tunisia. From a quantitative point of view, the impact of international mobility on the countries of origin has occupied a great part of academic research in both Morocco and Tunisia. These studies have for the most part been conducted within Departments of Geography; they have tried to show the hidden transformations caused by migration in native regions, especially in the areas affected by intense international migration dynamics. Descriptions and analyses have targeted the reshaping of social space and economy of the leaving zones, resulting from international migration. The analysis of transformations in social relations from a gender perspective, and of changes in the status of both women and men in the leaving zones under the effect of migration dynamics, has occupied a central point in the scientific literature in both Tunisia and Morocco (F-Fettah 2002, F-El Hafnaoui 1998, F-Ellaik 1998, A2-Belhedi 1996, F-Korchid 1992, F-Ghouil 2000, A2-Gammoudi and Sghaier 2007, B2-Harrami 2011 and 2015 and A1-Harrami 2016).

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## 2.3 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Building upon the literature review conducted so far, a number of issues may be highlighted. First, what clearly emerges is a significant development of European academic and grey literature in the field of migration and mobility over the past twenty years, including different clusters of literature characterized by a distinctive critical approach. In contrast, SEM literature on these topics appears to be much more limited in amount and scope; its nature is mainly academic and its approach is descriptive rather than normative or critical.

Even in terms of dominant themes, literature produced in SEM countries seems to be to a large extent influenced by European literature. It is predominantly focused on labour migration towards Europe (without neglecting internal migration and migration towards the Gulf countries), its socio-economic determinants, and its socio-economic impact on countries of origin (in terms of remittances, return migration, and impact on different socio-economic development factors such as income inequality, wealth, schooling, child work, women role and men-women power relations, etc.). SEM literature also analyses the governance of labour migration and, more generally, the main features of migration policies in SEM countries, usually focusing on the role played by European countries in shaping restrictive and security-oriented migration policies in the southern and eastern Mediterranean; however, the approach of these works tends to be more descriptive than genuinely critical.

In addition, the impact of the 2011 uprisings on migration represents a further relevant issue of analysis in SEM literature, which nonetheless reveals the weight of European research and policy interests on knowledge and research produced in SEM countries. An additional topic of analysis is the situation of refugees in SEM countries (with particular regard to Palestinian and more recently to Syrian refugees), their legal status and protection regime, and the lack of proper asylum policies and national asylum systems in those countries. Again, the increasing interest of SEM literature in this issue seems to, at least partly, reflect European interests and priorities.

Therefore, the literature review carried out so far in the framework of MEDRESET WP7 has brought to light existing "power relations" in the Mediterranean scientific space, highlighting their unbalanced nature and a certain EU- or Western-oriented approach. With regard to grey literature, indeed, in SEM countries it is mainly produced (or financed) either by international organizations like the IOM, the World Bank and the UNHCR or by research centres based in SEM countries. The latter are typically linked to and funded by either European or Western institutions (e.g., the Centre for Migration and Refugee Studies at the American University in Cairo) or by both regional and international donors (e.g., the Economic Research Forum in Cairo). The role played by Western international organizations and public and private institutions as sponsors and funders of research produced in SEM countries may actually influence the choice of topics and approaches (which will most probably reflect a certain Western or Euro-centric approach) and impact on the degree of independence and novelty of studies carried out in SEM countries.

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### 3. INTEGRATING THE GENDER PERSPECTIVE IN OUR WORK

As stated in the first MEDRESET concept paper, gender research has highlighted that Western policies in the MENA region have used “normatively loaded gender policies to delimit boundaries between the ‘civilised West’ and the ‘backward Arab world’” (B1-Huber and Paciello 2016: 8). Moreover, even in the context of the Arab Spring, the Western discourse towards SEM countries has focused on the victimization of marginalized gender groups, thereby denying their agency (A1-Khalid 2015). This is particularly true in the context of migration and asylum.

Reports and studies published by international organizations and NGOs (and to a limited extent also academic literature) have focused on specific gender issues relating to migration and asylum or on specific “gendered” subjects, e.g., migrant women, refugee women, victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation, LGBT refugees, gender violence in migration contexts, etc. However, the approach to these issues tends to be one of victimization, where women and gender minorities are represented through stereotyped categories, as the weakest and most vulnerable segment within a population already depicted in indiscriminately victimizing terms. Female migrants and refugees are generally depicted as dependent on male migrants; they are associated with children’s vulnerability and represented as the subjects of violence and persecution, who need assistance and protection on the part of Europe (A1-Belloni and Pastore 2016, A1-Belloni et al. 2017).

Without ignoring the specific protection needs of female forced migrants, in the framework of WP7 we commit to taking distance from such a reductive perspective on gender groups and gender-related issues, and to considering migrant women and female/LGBT refugees as agents rather than as mere victims. To this end, we will be sensitive to integrating a gender perspective in the selection of interviewees, in order to guarantee that the voices of women and gender minorities from SEM countries are included in our research.

### 4. ANALYSING STAKEHOLDERS’ FRAMES ON RELATIONS BETWEEN SEM COUNTRIES AND THE EU IN THE FIELD OF MIGRATION AND MOBILITY: PRELIMINARY CONCEPTUAL REMARKS ON THE OBJECT OF OUR ANALYSIS

The conceptual framework of the MEDRESET project is based on the notion that the Mediterranean is a constructed and contested space. Not only have its social constructions varied over time, but most importantly for this project, its inhabitants and its stakeholders have framed the Mediterranean space in different terms (B1-Cebeci and Schumacher 2016, B1-Ehteshami and Mohammadi 2016). Euro–Mediterranean relations and cooperation policies have also been framed and perceived in different ways by different stakeholders. In this regard, it is important to underline that civil society can foster the emergence of new public spheres through networks, partnerships, mobilisations and advocacy and those spheres may differ according to gender, generation and socio-economic conditions.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> For instance, diasporic women activists and feminists across the Middle East and Europe tend to frame their

The MEDRESET project aims specifically to examine overlaps and differences in the understanding of EU policies in the Mediterranean and Euro-Mediterranean relations across four policy areas (i.e., political ideas; agriculture and water; industry and energy; and migration and mobility, corresponding to four thematic work packages, WPs 4 to 7), focusing in particular on bottom-up framing processes involving civil society actors in SEM countries. Among the four thematic work packages dealing with these policy areas, WP7 addresses the issue of migration and mobility, with the purpose of investigating whether the ways this issue is framed by different stakeholders in Europe and in SEM countries are conflicting, competing or converging with current EU policies. Furthermore, WP7 (like the other MEDRESET thematic work packages) has the potential to show alternative discourses to that of the EU, which may be in resistance to the dominant European frames. Through an innovative methodology that we called Recursive Multi-Stakeholder Consultations (RMSCs) (see section 5 below), WPs 4 to 7 aim to expose oppositions, exclusions and silences in the EU discourse and bring to light issues that the EU may have unintentionally ignored without being itself aware of it.

As described in the second and third concept papers, the MEDRESET project is informed by a critical constructivist approach (B1-Cebeci and Schumacher 2016: 4-5, B1-Ehteshami and Mohammadi 2016: 4-5). The project attaches great importance to "discourse", understood as "a specific series of representations and practices through which meanings are produced, identities constituted, social relations established, and political and ethical outcomes made more or less possible" (A1-Campbell 2013: 234-235). In the framework of the MEDRESET project, discourses are thus intended in a broad sense, as combinations of social practices that determine how actors perceive themselves and their behaviour (A1-George 1994: 29-30) or as "systems of signification" that provide meaning to the world (A1-Milliken 1999: 229). These construction processes generate multiple discourses. The intention of this WP, consistently with the entire project, is to acknowledge the multiple views of social groups, rather than the dominant one only.

Over the past decades, scholars have analysed the role of discourses and ideas in policy-making, exploring how different paradigms of thought, conceptions and beliefs can influence political decision-making and policy change (A1-Goldstein and Keohane 1993, A1-Radaelli 1995, A1-Berman 2001, A1-Bleich 2002, A1-Schmidt and Radaelli 2004). These scholars have stressed that both policy problems and their possible solutions (i.e., policy interventions) are constructed or framed by different actors mainly drawing upon ideational resources rather than objective facts and interests.

With particular regard to the issue of migration (which is the focus of WP7), European scholars have generally talked about "policy frames" (A1-Bleich 2002 and 2011, A1-Scholten 2011) or "policy narratives" (A1-Boswell 2011, A1-Carling and Hernández-Carretero 2011) when analysing the role of ideas, perceptions and knowledge claims in migration policy-making and policy change. "Frames" have been defined by Schön and Rein as "underlying structures of belief, perception and appreciation" (A1-Schön and Rein 1994: 23) that offer ways of "selecting, organizing, interpreting and making sense of a complex reality to provide guideposts for

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agenda in relation to both the gender-biased legislation of their countries of origin and residence, and the trans-border dynamics fostering discrimination and conflicts, thus engendering new transnational public spheres (A1-Salih 2010, A1-Abdo and Lentin 2002, A1-Cockburn 1998, A1-Yuval-Davis 1999).

knowing, analyzing, persuading and acting" (A1-Rein and Schön 1993: 146).

In their landmark book *Frame Reflection*, the authors argue that social reality is constructed through a complementary process of naming and framing. Together, these two processes

carry out the essential problem-setting functions. They select for attention a few salient features and relations from what would otherwise be an overwhelming complex reality. They give these elements a coherent organization, and they describe what is wrong with the present situation in such a way as to set the direction for its future transformation. (A1-Schön and Rein 1994: 26)

Hence, "framing" is an operation of selectivity and organization of complex information-rich situations.

It is worth noting that generally in Arab countries the public debate on migration policies is not gendered, or it tends to reproduce certain gender ideologies and roles, while in the European and international debate the gender perspective is largely focused on abuse and trafficking, and so are the policies addressing migrant women (B1-Salih 2011). This can also be regarded as the result of the scarce access of women to the above-mentioned process of naming and framing, as in patriarch societies women have limited opportunities to re-frame the context and perception of a given issue and the mainstream discourse built around it. Policy problems are not necessarily defined by those who are affected by them and women generally tend to be excluded, based on the assumption that men and women experience problems in similar ways and that the solutions to such problems will benefit both in the same way. Both assumptions are incorrect; in all policy issues the differences between women and men perspectives should be recognised and duly considered. Therefore, in our WP, we aim to both highlight women's limited access or exclusion from framing processes and try to include their viewpoint on migration and mobility issues and policies (e.g., by including women organizations in the sample of interviewees).

When analysing frames in the context of WP7 we include in the object of our analysis the stakeholders' ideas, perceptions, beliefs, normative appreciations and knowledge claims concerning a certain migration issue or migration policy-making. Drawing upon Boswell et al. (A1-2011: 4-5), we conceive frames as consisting of three essential components:

1. the *definition of the policy problem*, which typically involves claims about the scale and nature of the problem, including a delineation of the "target population" at which interventions are directed;
2. the *causes of the problem*, including claims on the extent to which such causes can be controlled through policy interventions; these "causal stories" often imply attributing blame to specific factors or actors; and
3. the *solutions to the problem*, including claims about how policy interventions have affected, or are likely to affect, the problem.

The first and second components described by Boswell et al. (A1-2011) correspond to what Snow and Benford (A-1 1988, A-1-Benford and Snow 2000) identify as the first "core framing task", which they call "diagnostic framing"; this includes both the identification of the problem and the identification of the source(s) of causality, blame and/or agents responsible for the problem. The third component identified by Boswell et al. corresponds to Snow and Benford's

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second core framing task, i.e., "prognostic framing", which involves the articulation of a proposed solution to the problem and the strategies to achieve it.<sup>16</sup>

This literature typically refers to "policy problems" as the object of policy frames. However, the use of this terminology risks being in itself a way of framing negatively (i.e., as a problem) the subject matter one is dealing with (in our case, migration and mobility). Therefore, in the framework of our research (and particularly when it comes to interviewing stakeholders) we prefer to talk about "policy issues". The adoption of a more neutral terminology may allow the respondents to frame the issue at stake not necessarily as a problem or threat, but also as an opportunity.

The above categorization largely overlaps with the three-dimensional multi-actor, multi-layer and multi-sector analytical framework of the MEDRESET project: (i) stakeholders, (ii) policy instruments and (iii) policy issues (B1-Huber and Paciello 2016: 11-12). In fact, *policy issues* concern the "definition" and the "causes" of the issues, namely the identification and definition of the key challenges that the Mediterranean region faces in the area of migration and their causes, focusing in particular on how different stakeholders (i.e., public actors and civil society organisations) frame contentious issues relating to the governance of legal migration, mixed flows and short-term mobility (see section 1 above).

"Solutions" to the issue largely correspond to *policy instruments*, i.e., the methods and initiatives through which migration policies are and/or should be implemented, with a special attention to the issue of perception. For instance, while the EU may frame a policy instrument like Mobility Partnerships (MPs) as a multilateral policy tool, the partner countries as well as civil society actors may perceive MPs as a European unilateral imposition, with negative implications for the effectiveness of that policy instrument.<sup>17</sup> With regard to *stakeholders*, as mentioned above, primary consideration will be given to the frames produced by non-governmental and civil society actors, without neglecting those produced by institutional stakeholders, because the former are probably constructed in relation (or even in opposition) to the latter. In this perspective, we aim to include also the perspectives of those social groups, including women, that are usually marginalised in public discourses on migration and mobility as constructed in Mediterranean countries and reported at EU level.

Different framings of migration and mobility issues can be identified not only across the two shores of the Mediterranean (European framings vs. southern and eastern Mediterranean framings) or *vis-à-vis* other key state powers at the regional or global level, but also between different countries within the same region (e.g., southern vs. northern EU Member States).<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, different frames of migration and migration policy-making may emerge within

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16 Snow and Benford describe a third core framing component, i.e., "motivational framing", which consists of identifying a rationale for engaging in collective action. This "agency" component is not included in the theoretical framework proposed by Boswell et al. (A1-2011), which does not deal specifically with social movements as, in contrast, the works of Snow and Benford do. For this reason we consider the analytical framework proposed by Boswell et al. to be more suitable for the type of frame analysis that the MEDRESET project aims to carry out.

17 This has been the case for the MPs signed with Tunisia and Morocco, which have been largely criticized by Tunisian and European NGOs and CSOs (D-EMHRN 2014, D-EMHRN et al. 2014).

18 As argued in other MEDRESET background papers, states have constructed their particular understanding of the Mediterranean space based on their identities, national interests and strategic priorities (B1-Ehteshami and Mohammadi 2016: 3, B1-Cebeci and Schumacher 2016: 2-3).

the same region and within the same country between different actors.

In this regard, Schön and Rein (A1-1994: 23) distinguish disputes into two categories: "policy disagreements", where the parties to the contention are able to settle the dispute simply by examining the empirical facts of the situation, and "policy controversies", where "the contending parties hold conflicting frames". The latter are particularly difficult to settle by appeal to facts or reasoned argumentation because "the parties' conflicting frames determine what counts as a fact and what arguments are taken to be relevant and compelling". According to the authors, the struggles over the naming and framing of a policy situation are "symbolic contests over the social meaning of an issue domain, where meaning implies not only what is in question but also what is to be done" (A1-Schön and Rein 1994: 29).

With regard to stakeholders' frames and framing processes, as mentioned above, WP7 will focus in particular on non-governmental and civil society actors, including international and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations (CSOs), trade unions and employers' organizations, as well as research centres, independent experts and members of academia. With regard to the latter, it is worth noting that the knowledge produced by scholars and experts on a certain topic or policy area contributes in a potentially significant way to the framing of that specific issue. Therefore, expert discourse production on migration and mobility represents part and parcel of the process of (differentiated) framing that the MEDRESET project aims to analyse. For this reason, WP7 considers both the academic and grey literature produced on the two shores of the Mediterranean not only as a mere list of references but rather as a constitutive element of a process of frame production, where research centres, academic institutions, individual scholars and international organizations are among the stakeholders involved in the framing of migration policy issues.

Indeed, expert knowledge and research can contribute in a significant way to the construction and reproduction of migration policy narratives (A-1 Boswell 2009, A1-Boswell et al. 2011) or to the framing of migration policy (A1-Scholten 2011). Scholten (A1-2011: 79) rightly observes that science is "one of the institutions that can affect how policy problems are framed". Hence, in the framework of WP7, special attention will be paid to aspects such as identifying the institutions and organizations supporting or conducting research in the area of migration on the two shores of the Mediterranean, their sources of funding, their level of autonomy in setting their research agenda, etc. This approach is reflected also in the classification of literature presented at the end of this paper (see section 6 below).

Besides analysing processes of differentiated framing, WP7 aims also to map the networks of stakeholders who produce such frames, i.e., the networks of stakeholders who are involved in migration policy-making in the four SEM countries under consideration. The purpose of this analysis is to assess the ability of non-institutional and civil society stakeholders to make their voice heard and influence decision-making processes in the area of migration and mobility. Ideally, this approach should inform WP7 research and fieldwork in the four target SEM countries (Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia) in a consistent way, in order to allow also for comparative considerations across countries.

## 5. METHODOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS: HOW TO CARRY OUT A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF STAKEHOLDERS' FRAMES

WP7 aims to analyse the narratives and frames of different stakeholders in the southern and eastern Mediterranean with regard to migration and mobility issues, based on a multiple methodology consisting of three distinct components:

1. A review of the academic and grey literature produced on migration-related topics in the SEM area, which serves the purpose of providing an overall picture of the frames characterizing the academic and expert discourse produced in SEM countries (see section 4 above);
2. A qualitative document analysis of official policy documents produced by the key stakeholders identified while preparing the maps of stakeholders for the four SEM target countries (Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia); and
3. A qualitative analysis of the stakeholders' frames based on information gathered through Recursive Multi Stakeholder Consultations (RMSCs).

These reviews and analyses will all be conducted with a gender lens in order to assess how gender issues are portrayed. This should also allow us to better inform the rest of the research with a gender perspective.

Recursive Multi Stakeholder Consultations (RMSCs) are an innovative methodology applied to the four MEDRESET thematic work packages (WPs 4 to 7). The process consists of:

1. A first round of face-to-face in-depth unstructured interviews with individual stakeholders in the four SEM countries, which aims to involve also those social groups, including women, that are generally marginalised in the public debates on migration and mobility issues;
2. A second round of semi-structured interviews with a selected number of previously interviewed SEM stakeholders, who will be confronted with and invited to react to the main outcomes of the first round of interviews; the purpose of this second consultation round is to get a more detailed understanding of the stakeholders' framing of certain key issues, as they emerged from the first interviewing phase; at this stage, we will bring the gender issue explicitly into the reflection, by reporting the different gender perspectives gathered during the first interviewing round and the literature review and collecting feedbacks on that; and
3. A round of face-to-face semi-structured interviews and/or focus groups with selected EU-level stakeholders, who will be invited to react and position themselves with reference to the inputs coming from the SEM stakeholders interviewed in the previous phases.

The first round of interviews with southern and eastern Mediterranean stakeholders will be structured in three parts; ideally, this interview structure should be shared across the four thematic work packages of MEDRESET (WPs 4 to 7).

The first part of interviews will consist of a set of more general non-sectoral questions on the Mediterranean space, inviting interviewees to reflect on what, in their view, are the main issues and policy priorities. Questions will not address Euro-Mediterranean relations directly, but will rather use a broader terminology and refer to the more encompassing concept of "Mediterranean space"; this may allow for alternative (and less Euro-centric) framings to emerge.

The second part of interviews will focus more specifically on the topic of each thematic work package; in the case of WP7, this section will focus on migration and mobility. Questions will be phrased in broad terms and will try to address issues indirectly, in order not to predetermine the interviewees' framing of a given subject matter. Interviews will ideally proceed from a more general to a more specific level of information and detail.

The third part of interviews will focus on the EU's and Member States' policies in each of the four MEDRESET policy fields; with regard to WP7, this section will deal with the EU's and Member States' policies in the area of migration and mobility. Questions will aim to investigate and assess: (i) the interviewees' level of knowledge of European policies in this area; (ii) the interviewees' evaluation of European policies in this area; and (iii) the interviewees' possible alternative policy solutions and proposals to redraft the European agenda.

According to MEDRESET ethical standards, interviews with stakeholders shall be anonymous and shall not be recorded; therefore, there will be no written text or transcript from interviews, and researchers will only be allowed to take notes. For this reason, in the framework of WP7, we renounced the idea of using discourse analysis as a methodology to analyse information gathered from interviews, since discourse analysis can only be applied to written texts or transcripts from (recorded) oral speeches. Rather, we decided to analyse the stakeholders' frames and framing processes as they will emerge from a qualitative assessment of the interview content and other information gathered from fieldwork, based on the notes made by the interviewers/researchers. Frame (or framing) analysis may, indeed, be based both on written and unwritten materials, as it aims precisely to bypass the limits of discourse analysis, with particular regard to the latter's dependence on written texts.

This qualitative analysis of stakeholders' frames will be based on a number of qualifying parameters relating to the *structure* and *content* of frames. As concerns the structure of frames, our interviews (and the analysis that will follow) will focus on the three components of policy frames/narratives identified by Boswell et al. (A1-2011: 4-5) (see section 4 above). These are: (a) claims about the policy issue (definition of the problem); (b) claims about the causes of the issue; and (c) claims about possible solutions to the issue.

As concerns the content of frames, for each of these three components we will consider: (a) the *scale* of the issue/of its causes/of proposed solutions from a spatial and temporal perspective, including consideration of actors involved;<sup>19</sup> (b) the *nature* of the issue/of its causes/of proposed solutions, focusing on whether an issue is framed as a threat or

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19 With regard to the definition of a given policy issue (1), its scale may be defined through the spatial categories of entry/exit (immigration, emigration, return migration, transit migration, etc.), south/north (south-south, south-north, north-south, regional migration) and through the temporal categories of permanent/temporary (long-term, short-term, circular, transit migration). With regard to the causes of the issue (2), the scale may be determined through the spatial categories of endogenous/exogenous (internal causes, regional causes, causes related to relations with the EU, global causes, etc.) and through the temporal categories of long-term/short-term; claims about the causes of an issue usually include also the "blaming" of certain actors (national governments, other national institutional actors, EU institutions, EU Member States, regional actors, global actors, international organizations, NGOs, etc.). Similarly, with regard to possible solutions (3), the scale may be defined with reference to the spatial categories of endogenous/exogenous and the temporal categories of long-term/short-term; this definition of the scale of possible solutions may be complemented with the identification of possible actors involved in elaborating and implementing solutions (multilateral and cooperative, unilateral, bilateral, regional solutions).

an opportunity (first variable), and whether an issue/its causes/its solutions are framed as belonging to the economic, demographic, social, cultural or political field (second variable).

This analytical framework will be applied throughout the entire process of interviews with SEM stakeholders, i.e., it will inform the three parts of interviews detailed above. Moreover, this analysis of stakeholders' frames and framing processes based on materials gathered from interviews will be complemented through the abovementioned analysis of policy documents produced by SEM stakeholders and literature produced in SEM countries.

The analytical model that we propose for WP7 is in our view essential in order not only to gain an in-depth understanding of individual stakeholders' frames, but most importantly in order to allow for a useful comparison of different stakeholders' frames and framing processes. This model will hopefully prove useful to compare different stakeholders' frames on a variety of policy issues within a given country, across different SEM countries, and possibly across different thematic work packages.<sup>20</sup>

## 6. AN ATTEMPT AT A CLASSIFICATION OF LITERATURE ON MIGRATION AND MOBILITY POLICIES AND POLITICS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN, BASED ON AUTHORS AND MODES OF PRODUCTION

This section consists of a slightly more articulated list of bibliographic references, compared to a common bibliography. It presents a classification of literature on migration policies and politics in the Mediterranean area, based on authors, modes and area of production/publication. It distinguishes between: a) academic literature; b) literature produced by research institutes and independent think tanks; c) literature produced by international organizations; and d) literature produced by non-governmental organizations. For two groups of literature (a and b), we further distinguish between literature produced in Europe/US and literature produced in Southern and eastern Mediterranean countries.

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20 In order to link the different frames emerged from the fieldwork to the respective organizational and social profiles, including gender profiles, and account for the diversity of frames, some basic information on the interviewees and organizations they belong to will be reported in the notes (although always guaranteeing the anonymity of interviews).

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# MED RESET

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Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI)  
Via Angelo Brunetti 9  
I-00186 Roma

Tel. +39-063224360  
Fax +39-063224363

[iaia@iaia.it](mailto:iaia@iaia.it) | [www.iaia.it](http://www.iaia.it)



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