

## **The Report, Conclusions and Recommendations**

**of the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Regional Conference: “Inclusion and integration in diverse societies: Strategies and experiences of diversity management in Central and South-Eastern Europe – The Refugee Crisis in 2015 and Challenges of Migrations” organized by the INSTITUTE FOR ETHNIC STUDIES (IES) and FRIEDRICH EBERT STIFTUNG (FES), ZAGREB OFFICE in Ljubljana, Slovenia, 20-21 November 2015.**

The conference that was held at the City Hotel, Ljubljana, Slovenia, 20-21 November 2015 gathered more than 30 participants – scholars, trade union and civic society activists as well as politicians – from the countries of Central and South Eastern Europe, who participated in discussions actively.

As the conference concept paper indicates, successful inclusion, integration and adequate management of all socially relevant diversities in plural and internally diverse societies remain important themes for the region of Central and South-Eastern Europe and its countries and will not lose their relevance in short-, medium- and long-term. Consequently, it is of vital importance that a permanent process and (organizational) framework are established and developed to study and address those topics. The participants of this and last year’s conferences stressed that the series of annual international regional conferences on inclusion, integration and diversity management organized by the IES and FES in Ljubljana can be an essential core of such process and expressed their willingness to become parts of this process. They suggested that the discussions, findings, conclusions and recommendations of the conferences should be presented and made available to all relevant actors in the region, but also globally. The participants agreed that they would do their best to inform relevant social actors, particularly political ones in their respective environments and stimulate them to make adequate use of these findings, conclusions and recommendations in their work and decision-making.

The choice of central topics of the second conference on inclusion and integration in diverse societies should not be a surprise. Considering recent developments this conference focused on intensified migrations into Europe and paid special attention to forced migrations provoked by wars and brutal violence in the Middle and Near East as well as by severe social and economic instability and crisis in several Arab and African countries that manifested as the refugee crisis. These developments and contexts further increase the importance of comprehensive and successful strategies and policies of integral diversity management of which important segments are migration policies and strategies as well as the prevention, management and resolution of crises and conflicts and post-conflict development. In this context, the organizers reiterate that at all levels the past and current strategies and policies of inclusion, integration and diversity management (including minority protection and non-discrimination as well as concepts and policies of segregation, assimilation, “melting pot,” guest-workers, multi- and inter-culturalism, voluntary integration, etc.) have been proved inadequate and limited. Consequently, there is an urgent need to re-visit, review and (re)elaborate the goals, principles and concepts of those strategies and policies as well as criteria for their evaluation. Furthermore, the current refugee crisis and increased migrations require urgent responses and measures that do not encompass just successful immigration

and integration strategies, policies and programs in European countries, but also concerted efforts of the international community. All these actors need to address comprehensively several social, economic and cultural problems of the societies from which refugees and migrants originate. Considering the current situation(s) and main challenges, every successful strategy and policy of diversity management needs to pay particular attention to:

- ending wars and armed conflicts in those societies and regions (also by the direct involvement of the Western Countries in defeating the extremist movements and armies as well as terrorist organizations that shall result in reducing and/or eliminating the impact upon and their repression and violence against the local populations of those extremist formations), and
- adequate economic, developmental, political and military assistance that will contribute to peace, stability and prosperity thereby giving people there brighter perspectives in their societies and reducing emigration pressures.

As stressed before, successful, strategies and policies of inclusion, integration and diversity management should consider, regulate and effectively manage all socially relevant pluralities and diversities (such as e.g., social, educational, economic, gender, ethnic, linguistic, religious and ethical, etc.) that exist in contemporary societies; they should take into account specific situations and circumstances in every environment (from the local level to the global international community); these strategies and policies should take into account intertwined realities and lives as well as the existing interdependences in Europe and globally. Such strategies, policies and programs are particularly important in post-conflict and divided societies as well as in societies in transition, such as the countries in Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe (CESEE).

The conference paper and discussions at the conference indicate that the main goal of the series of annual conferences focusing on the CSEE region (Central and South-Eastern Europe and its countries) is to detect and list socially relevant pluralities and diversities that need to be addressed, regulated and managed adequately in order to ensure and promote social stability, inclusion and sustainable (green) development as the necessary bases for voluntary, full and equal integration of all individuals and distinct communities. Considering the inability of affected countries and the international community to handle adequately the migration and refugee crisis, the development of their capacities to manage such crises as well as elaboration and development of more effective integral diversity management strategies, policies and programs seem to be urgent. In this context, the second conference focused on migration strategies and policies in general and, specifically, on the strategies, policies and measures for the management and resolution of the current refugee crisis. Policies and strategies as well as operative programs of diversity management shall create and stimulate synergies, inclusion and integration that contribute to a stable and economically, ecologically and socially sustainable development. Considering broader contexts, such development(s) shall take into account, stimulate and mobilize all potentials and comparative advantages of a specific environment searching for synergies of all actors and building upon local, regional and broader infrastructure, networks and cooperation. Simultaneously, strategies and policies of diversity management shall be aware of and shall respect all social and natural limitations, including environmental and climate ones. Furthermore, they shall establish and enforce the actual (economic, social and environmental) costs of economic and other activities that shall be paid by all those who profit from them, considering the principles of justice, equality and

solidarity. Against this background, the current policies and strategies and their impact(s) as well as possible consequences of the absence of such policies and strategies need to be evaluated. This evaluation shall critically assess successes and problems, results and impacts of policies, programs (of actions), activities and practices, considering particularly their stated principles, goals and, so-called, “achievements/ables”. The expectations and attitudes of people need to be assessed and shall serve as the framework for the proposals and recommendations to scholars, policy makers, all socially relevant actors and public, thus hopefully leading to more successful and elaborated strategies and policies of inclusion, integration and diversity management.

What follows in this report is a list and brief overview and summary of selected topics, discussions, evaluations, conclusions and recommendations from this conference. These topics were addressed at sessions as well as at the public round table on migration and refugee crisis that was held within the conference under the auspices of the President of the Republic of Slovenia Mr. Borut Pahor. (All presentations and discussions were recorded and are available at the IES, although the quality of recordings might not always be the best).

The participants agreed that the conference and its themes were timely and necessary. The concept paper offered a good basis and framework for the discussions and conclusions that were multi- and interdisciplinary and took into account different perspectives, combining also different approaches and disciplines. Consequently, diversity of participants – considering their background, different professional and social roles (scholars, politicians, public opinion leaders, trade union and civic society activists, practitioners, public servants, etc.) as well as their different theoretical, value and ideological positions and backgrounds – proved to be important added value, while the brain-storming format of the conference stimulated dynamic, inclusive, open, informal and holistic discussions. This format encouraged participants to engage into discussions, express and confront their views considering their specific experiences and case studies as well as the global framework. Following experiences from the first conference the discussion(s), particularly in the initial stage paid special attention to terminological, conceptual and methodological issues, which proved to be an excellent basis for the discussions addressing general topics as well as specific cases. It is important to note that substantive and important differences (conditioned by a specific situation, social setting(s) and unique conditions, historic, social and economic development, diverse needs and interests, etc.) exist in every environment. Consequently, broad generalizations are hardly possible, although certain similarities and common features might be detected in different and diverse environments. These facts need to be taken into account also in developing, (re)shaping and executing of strategies and policies of diversity management, integration and inclusion at all levels as well as in coordination of those strategies in ways that will provide for their synergies.

Confirming the findings and conclusions of the first conference, the participants agreed that every term, definition and concept used in discussions as well as theory mentioned needs to be presented, described and defined as precisely and clearly as possible. In this context, it is important to stress that languages as codes and means of communication, theories and sciences, including social sciences and humanities that are particularly relevant for this conference are complex systems and dynamic (social) processes that constantly evolve and are not value free and ideologically neutral, but rather value and ideology dependent

and conditioned. In other words, languages, theories and sciences used as tools (instruments) and yardsticks (measures) to describe, analyze and interpret social phenomena mentioned above as well as natural phenomena are social phenomena themselves. These tools and yardsticks are neither fully objective nor perfect; scientific approaches and methods that scholars are using in their research, however, contribute to a greater objectivity and repeatability of research results. Regardless of that, terms, concepts and definitions frequently do not reflect adequately all relevant dimensions of examined phenomena, including their relational (social), spatial (e.g., actual – geographic – space, imagined and/or mythical space, virtual space) and temporal dimensions. E.g., often we describe social phenomena as situations (static crosscuts of social relations/processes in time and space) and build our definitions and concepts accordingly, thereby reducing their complexity (that, otherwise, might be extremely difficult to detect and comprehend) and overlooking their dynamic nature reflected in changes in time. Traditionally, we define two types of changes of social phenomena and of societies as whole – evolutions and revolutions – that both are “normal” social and historic events and developments. Regardless, of the complexity of concepts and definitions we shall be aware of the fact that they are always “simplifications” of very complex realities and processes. Considering our capacities and ability to understand, such simplifications – more precisely simplified explanations of realities – might be necessary for our comprehension of complex social phenomena (as processes) and societies. However, we shall be aware of their reductionist nature. Consequently, terms, definitions, concepts, (theoretical) models and theories should not be confused with the reality. Rather, it should be recognized that they are tools and yardsticks (measures) that we agree upon and can be used to analyze and describe our realities characterized by the existence of multiple and multidimensional diversities and asymmetries. Consequently, the participants stressed that when using certain terms and concepts discussants need to describe and explain them as well as their specific use and understanding in a specific context. Such a practice is particularly important for certain terms, such as diversity, interdependence, inclusion, participation (in all spheres of social life, particularly cultural, economic, social and political life), openness, justice, equality, solidarity, integration, etc. as well as diversity management (regulation and management of diversities) that could be promoted as positive values, standards and (long-term) social goals in diverse societies. These terms and concepts based upon them can serve as the basis for common ideologies and integral strategies and policies of diversity management, integration and inclusion at all levels. The discussions at the conference confirmed the suggestions in the concept paper that past and current strategies and policies of inclusion, integration and diversity management (including minority protection and non-discrimination as well as concepts and policies of segregation, assimilation, “melting pot,” guest-workers, multi- and inter-culturalism, voluntary integration, etc.) have been proved inadequate and limited. Furthermore, some of these strategies and policies, such as segregation (including the most extreme case of Apartheid), (forced) assimilation, forced migrations, “ethnic cleansing” and genocide used in the past are considered problematic and unacceptable, while some (e.g. genocide) are prohibited by the international law and constitute crime against humanity.

Considering the central focus of the 2015 conference, initial terminological and conceptual discussions addressed the term and concept of migration(s). Migration is a permanent process that characterizes and plays a key role in the historic evolution of modern humans and humankind; through migration(s) our predecessors have conquered the world and

settled in almost all environments, even those that seem to be rather hostile to human existence. In a way it could be said that migrations have shaped and transformed humankind into what it is today. In attempts to conceptualize migration and determine specific historic cases, the role and impact of different push and pull factors can be examined that stimulate humans to move from their current location to new ones. Push factors are those (circumstances, conditions, developments, etc.) that repulse individuals and groups and stimulate them to leave a certain environment, while pull factors reflect the attraction of possible destination environments for individuals and groups that consider leaving their current location. Usually, people leave a certain environment because they are forced to do so or because they seek better existence and life. Based on this distinction, in theory migrations can be classified as forced and/or voluntary migrations. Usually, forced migrations are associated with wars, terror, man-made, natural and/or climate disasters. However, such a classification might be problematic and oversimplified. In reality migrants consider a complex specter of reasons and factors when they decide; consequently, from a perspective of a specific migrant the decision of an individual or group to migrate might be and often is partially forced and partially voluntary.

Although all classifications developed and used by the scholars might be problematic (and, as stressed above, should not be confused with the reality), they are useful in studying the phenomena of migration. Consequently, a few classifications were mentioned and used by the participants of the conference; e.g. considering specific criteria for classification the following types of migration were mentioned:

- From the perspective of time: temporary (from daily to such that might last several years or decades, depending on specific perceptions/perspectives) and permanent;
- From the perspective of law: legal, irregular, illegal;
- From the perspective of (“formal”) distance, states and international community: internal and international/external;
- From the perspective of push and pull factors that determine decisions to migrate: voluntary (among them e.g., economic, political, personal) and/or forced (crises, disasters; sometimes it is difficult to distinct between natural disasters and human-made disasters, such as wars, climate and environmental consequences of local, national and global economy, etc.); etc.

It was suggested that in describing the actual (spatial) movement of individuals and/or groups the broadest and most inclusive terms would be “migrant(s)” and “migration(s)”. Consequently, all movements of people, permanent or temporary can be described and generalized as migration(s); all individuals who migrate – for whatever reason, regardless of temporal and other dimensions of migrations – can be defined as “migrants”. These general categories can then be specified in specific sub-categories. E.g., individuals who are forced to migrate and, therefore, should be considered “persons who need (special) protection” by the international and national law; they could be described as “forced migrants” and their migrations as “forced migrations”. In this context, traditionally, the following categories were considered:

- Refugees,
- Asylum seekers,
- IDPs – Internally Displaced Persons, etc.

The first two categories that refer to international forced migrations are defined and enjoy protection by the international law, more precisely asylum law. The third category related to internal forced migration does not enjoy protection by the international law. However, these three categories do not cover all possible situations and statuses caused by forced migration; additionally, they do not indicate the reasons of forced migrations. Refugees might have fled the societies of their origin because of wars, personal (particularly political) prosecution and terror. Recently it has been recognized that refugees might be forced to leave the territory of their traditional settlement because of natural disasters; it is estimated that the number of climate and environmental refugees by the mid of this century will exceed 50 million. However, people might be forced to leave their homes also due to the economic crises and extremely poor (particularly economic and social) conditions in their environments. Can they be considered refugees? Are they economic migrants or refugees? Currently, this is an important issue in the EU member states and other countries, particularly those along the Balkan migration route; in their attempts to manage the current migration flow and crisis states started to deny the entrance to those migrants that they define as economic migrants, who originate from states that are not recognized as war zones. This is, of course, in breach with the existing asylum law that requires that every asylum request should be processed and decided upon individually. To overcome these problems some scholars as well as participants of the conference suggest that the concepts and terms of “survival migration” and “survival migrants” that include all these situations and types of migration are introduced and used in public and scholarly discourses. The introduction of those terms and concepts would require also the development and implementation of adequate procedures, standards of protection and statuses that would address the needs and problems of survival migrants and, in long(er) term perspectives (if and when they decide to stay in a new environment), enable their inclusion and voluntary full and equal integration. It is particularly important that the highest standards of human rights, including minority rights and protection are introduced and regulated adequately; these standards, rights and protection should be included in national legislations as well as in international law.

In this context special attention needs to be paid to narratives that exist in different environments. The analysis of public discussions and narratives shows that they are often ideological and based on negative stereotypes and myths, by which migrants as a general collective category are presented and characterized. Usually, based upon these negative stereotypes and myths in public discourses migrants and migrations, particularly current mass migrations are presented as problems and deviations that have negative impacts on “our, traditional society/societies, culture(s) and identity/identities”. However, one can argue that the true problems are not migrants and migration(s); rather the problems are “we”, more precisely stereotypical, idealized and mythologized perceptions of “our society/societies, culture(s) and identity/identities” that often are exclusive, discriminatory and unequal, sometimes inflammatory and xenophobic. These perceptions and myths serve as the basis for exclusive and populist political ideologies, policies and slogans, particularly nationalist ones that are used to mobilize people, particularly supporters and followers; they resonate in the public and media. In our view luckily, they also provoke criticisms of, reactions and actions against such views and attitudes by a democratic part of the public, scholarly community and media, humanitarian organizations and associations, civic society activists as well as some public and state institutions. They demand a more neutral discourse that would present holistic, relevant and objective information that should be checked

adequately and shall contain both positive and negative views and attitudes. Migration should be given a human face; consequently in media and public discourse more inclusive discourse shall be present, building upon narrative(s) that would present actual personal and family stories of migrants, particularly survival migrants. If people knew and saw refugees and migrants as human beings, with their needs, fears, capacities and expectations as well as their knowledge, skills and resources that they can contribute to the target societies they would no longer be perceived just as threats and problems. This should contribute to the broad recognition that migrants and migrations are not deviant phenomena, problems and security risks, but rather normal phenomena throughout the historic evolution of humankind and, most likely, a part of solution that can sustain the current standard of life and sustainable development of target societies, considering the current demographic trends in most European states. In other words, current exclusive and negative narratives should be replaced or, at least, complemented adequately by more open, inclusive and dialogue and narratives, based on human rights discourse.

An additional problem that needs to be addressed in this context is the “securitization” of the public discourse on migration and migrants, linking migration with different security risks, such as terrorism and extremisms, particularly Islamic fundamentalism and extremism. Such a discourse is used to justify more restrictive migration policies and practices that are being discussed in several European countries, including Austria, Denmark, Germany and Slovenia.

Objective, inclusive, open and balanced narratives, discourses and perceptions are instrumental for functional political socialization, stability and democracy in diverse societies as well as for successful integration policies and practices that should be based upon inclusion and full equal and voluntary integration of all individuals and distinct collective entities (that chose to integrate). In the view of conference participants unfortunately, however, the majority of existing narratives, discourses and perceptions are rather different; in their nature they are often exclusive, closed and unbalanced, based upon the “negative,” emotionally and ideologically/value loaded definitions of involved identities of relevant collective identities, such as cultural, ethnic and religious ones (rather than elaborating and defining positive contents and characteristics of those entities, “negatively” defined collective identities build upon establishing the differences that distinct “us” from the “others” and try to determine the borders, both spatial/territorial and non-spatial ones; in other words, the “content and extent” of a specific identity of one collective entity is defined in contrast with “others”, frequently against the “others”). Consequently, there is an immanent need to initiate inclusive open dialogue and transform the existing narratives, discourses and perceptions into inclusive, open and balanced ones. As the key actors that should contribute to and should be responsible for such changes of narratives, discourses and perceptions the following can be listed:

- Politicians, political parties and institutions,
- State with its institutions, particularly institutions of government,
- Education systems and institutions, both formal and informal ones,
- Media and journalists,
- Religious institutions, communities and leaders,
- Trade unions, their leaders and activists,
- Public opinion leaders,

- Civic society, (social) activists and NGOs as well as all interested and involved individuals,
- Scholars and researchers, scholarly community; etc.

These actors should work in concert following their central goal to establish and develop an open, inclusive, balanced and positively oriented process of communication and dialogue/polilogue in which both the majorities and all (social) minorities, among them also ethnic minorities, including immigrant communities as well as individuals belonging to these communities can participate (if they chose to do so) on equal footing in creating a common ground and in promoting empathy for all. As already mentioned, within this process it is important that all communities, both majority and minority ones as well as persons belonging to those communities are presented and present with their human faces as interdependent and vulnerable fellow human beings.

Inclusive and open discourse and dialogue/polilogue shall include and address adequately all relevant topics/themes, views and options with an aim to establish, reaffirm and develop common interests, principles and short-, medium- and long-term goals as the basis for common strategies of diversity management. It was suggested that such common strategies should be built upon human rights, including minority rights as well as upon principles of equal rights, equality and inclusion that might be considered yardsticks of democracy (particularly of the level of democratic development) in a specific social environment.

The conference participants stress that the absence of adequate strategies of diversity management at all levels in Europe and globally is a major problem today that is critical particularly in the times of crises (such as the current migrant/refugee crisis), when the escalation of intolerance and xenophobia as well as conflicts might be expected in plural and diverse social environments. Namely, such short-, medium- and long-term strategies of diversity management as the necessary basis and framework of policies, measures, programs and activities shall stimulate and provide cooperation, concerted action and inclusion of all actors at all levels that – by promoting and developing human rights, democratic principles, common interests and goals, inclusion and integration, interdependence, coexistence and cooperation, etc. – can contribute to successful prevention or de-escalation, management and resolution of crises and conflicts. In turn, the absence of such strategies reduces the ability and capacities of societies, institutions and states to deal with crises and conflicts. Reactions of states and other actors, securitization of discourses and repressive responses, etc. in the current migration and refugee crisis might be cases in point.

With regard to migration in general as well as considering particularly the current and possible future migration and refugee crises successful diversity management strategies of states and international organizations as the most influential regional and global actors should include particularly the following main (longer-term) goals:

1. Regulation and management of migration flows, including forced migration in regular and human(istic) ways within established and stable migration, asylum and refugee strategies, regulation/legislation and policies as well as adequate institutions and capacities at all levels;

2. Integration (in all spheres of life) into immigrant societies of immigrants built upon voluntary, equal and full inclusion and integration of individuals and distinct communities based upon principles, strategies and policies as well as measures and (action) programs of multiculturalism/interculturalism; it is important to stress that integration, rather than just a central goal in individual cases is a permanent process in all diverse societies (in the case of immigrants integration does not end with the permanent residence permits or acquisition of citizenship (nationality) by naturalization for individual immigrants, but shall take into account and adequately address also the needs of the second and the following generations);
3. Regulation and management of voluntary return of those refugees that voluntary decide to return to the countries/environments of their origin.

In addition to these central goals additional ones should to be considered and included in development of specific strategies of diversity management (when needed) considering diverse situations, needs and interests in respective environments. One of such goals might be that the current international and national standards and regulation of asylum, status(es) of refugees (including temporary statuses) are developed and revised so that they will be better adjusted to changed circumstances and to increasing migration and refugee flows. Among issues that can be relevant for the elaboration of these strategies are the regulation and management of re-emigration of migrants to the environments of their origin (in this context some speak of the return) or to other environments, new immigrant societies; in this context the reasons (including push-pull factors) for their decisions to migrate again should be addressed.

Participants pointed out that special attention needs to be paid to problems in the elaboration, development and realization of strategies, policies and practice of diversity management. It is particularly important that the goals and objectives that the strategies at all levels determine are translated successfully into adequate and effective policies, programs and measures of diversity management, migration and integration that shall be implemented at all levels and in all environments. Special attention shall be paid to the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the strategies, policies, programs, measures and practices, particularly good practices and problems in respective environments. The monitoring and evaluation shall result in the permanent development and evolution of these strategies, policies, programs, measures and practices, considering changing circumstances in and evolution of those environments. All actors listed above should be involved in these processes.

#### SSPECIFIC CONCLUSIONS:

These considerations, conclusions and proposals should be presented to responsible local and regional authorities, national governments, continental and regional organizations and authorities, including the Council of Europe, OSCE and European Union as well as their bodies and institutions, such as the European Parliament, European Council and European Commission. Participants, also on behalf of their institutions and organizations offered their suggestions and assistance in the process of development of adequate strategies, policies and procedures, including algorithms for different activities and practices related to the

successful management of diversities, integration, migration(s) and particularly migration flows. In the time of migration and refugee crises, these suggestions and assistance might be particularly important for the implementation and development of current migration, asylum and integration strategies, policies and practices. In this context, the participants indicate some problems in the existing practices, such as the fact that the ethnic profiling of migrants should be considered the violation of human rights and existing standards that require individual approach that in taking the decision shall consider all specific circumstances of every individual. They point out that the current system proves inadequate in crisis situations; it needs to be developed and should move from the solutions in 1951 refugee convention. Political and legal solutions as well as implemented practices should be based on solidarity and shared humanity.

States and the existing international organization shall consider the establishment of a new international entity, possibly a coordinating body that will be responsible to develop, define and enforce effective new strategies, policies, regulations and standards. Considering the role and status of states in the international community, the states will remain crucial for their enforcement. However, the new international body should focus on the initiation and stimulation of the cooperation as well as the coordination of states. Additionally, it shall act as the initiator of new strategies, policies and measures. In this context, it shall be mandated to coordinate and concert the policies and measures in areas, such as the coordinated and fair national tax systems that shall be synchronized, harmonized and effective and shall be based upon real-time exchange of information. It is particularly important that huge trans- and multinational companies cannot evade the existing rules and standards; in other words, they shall pay their fair share of taxes, thereby contributing to social welfare and wellbeing of people in all environments rather than just bringing the maximal profit to their owners.

In addressing the broadest social and economic context, the participants of the conference stressed that new global economic and political order are necessary. This new order shall be built upon new narratives and concepts of economy and development. Consequently, the economy of growth must be replaced by a fairer, just, inclusive and sustainable green economy that focuses on the needs and quality of life of people in all environments. The new economic and political order shall contribute to creating adequate economic basis and wellbeing for a decent existence of everyone and every community. Thereby it will decrease the current frustration of individuals and communities in present conditions, particularly in less developed environment that shall be considered an important reason for migration. The new economic order shall be based upon solidarity and shall result in the creation of developmental perspectives in all parts of the world. For the implementation of this idea it is particularly important that in concert with all other actors, mentioned above also the entrepreneurs and all economic subjects, including trans- and multinationals contribute their share in the global framework.

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Ljubljana, July 2016