



# International Migration in the Arab Region



Population Policies, Expatriates and Migration Department  
League of Arab States •

# International Migration in the Arab Region

- The Arab region is both a sending and receiving region at the same time.
- In 2013, it hosted almost 30.3 million migrants, more than twice the number it hosted in 1990. The majority of these migrants come from Asian countries to the Gulf Countries.
- Migration from Arab countries is also high; the region sent 21.9 million migrants in 2013. Almost half of these migrants move to other Arab countries, while around 3.1 million moves to Europe especially from the Maghreb countries.
- Several countries in the Arab region have become important points of transit along the irregular migration routes taken by migrants from outside the region.

# League of Arab States

Since its establishment, the League of Arab states (LAS) has been focusing on the issue of international migration and Arab Expatriates, in an effort to: develop more effective policies for utilizing migration in favor of Arab regional development, integration and international cooperation, and to communicate with its expatriates, build bridges of dialogue and cooperation with them for the benefit of both parties. This has been reflected in issuing many resolutions at both the summit level and the ministerial level in this regard since 1955.



# Arab summits and International Migration

In the past decade, most of the Arab summits' declarations and announcements included some paragraphs concerning International migration and Arab Expatriates, among them:

- **Tunis Declaration in 2004 .**
- **Brasilia declaration** - Summit of Arab States and the countries of South America in **2005**.
- **Khartoum declaration** in **2006**.
- **Doha declaration** - Second Summit of Arab States and the countries of South America in **2009**.
- **Arab Economic and Social development Summit** held in Kuwait in January **2009**.
- **Africa- Arab Summit** held in Kuwait in November **2013**.

# Cooperation on Migration

LAS and its specialized organizations offered a framework for the Arab countries to cooperate on issues related to migration and human mobility within the region, and with sending and receiving regions.

Intra-regional cooperation in the field of migration in the Arab region started in the 1950s with the 1957 Agreement on Arab Economic Unity issued by the Arab Economic Council. A set of follow up agreements, declarations, and charters have been issued. These agreements focused on freedom of mobility for Arab citizens to live and work throughout the Arab region in addition to giving Arab labor priority over non-Arabs and to simplify recruitment procedures.

# Arab Agreements, Declarations Charters and Strategies regarding International Migration

Agreement/Declaration/Charter	Date
The Agreement on Arab Economic Unity issued by the Arab Economic Council	1957
The Arab Economic Council Resolution No. 77 on the Freedom of Movement, Residence and Labour, as stipulated in the Agreement on Arab Economic Unity.	1965
Arab Agreement No. 1 issued by the Arab Labour Organization (ALO) on the Movement of Arab Manpower	1966
Arab Agreement No. 3 on the Minimum Level of Social Insurance	1971
Arab Agreement No. 4 issued by the Arab Labour Organization (ALO) on the Movement of Arab Manpower	1975
Arab Agreement No. 8 relating to Trade Union Freedoms and Rights	1977
Arab Agreement No. 9 on Vocational Guidance and Training	1977
The Arab Economic Council Resolution No. 784 on the Freedom of Movement of Technical Manpower among Arab States	1978
The Declaration of Principles on the Movement of Arab Manpower among Arab States	1978
Arab Agreement No. 14 on the Arab Worker's Right to Social Insurance when Moving for Employment in an Arab Country	1981

# Arab Agreements, Declarations Charters and Strategies regarding International Migration

Agreement/Declaration/Charter	Date
Arab Agreement No. 15 on Wage Determination and Protection	1983
Arab Charter on Child Rights	1993
Arab Declaration on Family Rights	1994
Declaration on Childhood	2001
Arab Charter on Human Rights	2004
Arab Declaration on International Migration	2006
Marrakesh Declaration	2012
Declaration of international Migration in the Arab Region	2013
Cairo Declaration: Development Challenges and Population Dynamics in a Changing Arab World	2013
Cairo Declaration: Implementing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for Women and Girls: The Post- 2015 Development Agenda	2014
Regional Strategy on Protection of Arab Women: Peace and Security	2014

# Population Policies, Expatriates and Migration Department

- The Arab Expatriates department was established in 2002, besides the already established "Population Policies and Migration department". Since the beginning of 2014, the two departments were merged together in one department under the name "Population Policies, Expatriates and Migration department (PPEMD)".

- LAS, PPEMD, gives special attention to the skilled Arab migrants and their role in development, migrant women and their role in preserving the Arab identity of the migrating family as the base of the family, as well as the youth of the second and third generation of expatriates, who represent the link between their original Arabic culture and the culture of their new society.



# I. Policy coordination between member states

## **Arab Regional Consultative Process on Migration (ARCP)**

- LAS established an Arab Regional Consultative Process on Migration (ARCP), as a State-driven, non-binding, flexible and informal forum to facilitate dialogue and cooperation between LAS member States on migration issues of common concern, based on the resolution No. 7833 issued by LAS Council at the ministerial level in its regular session (142) in September 2014 on the periodic convention of the regional consultation meetings on migration in the Arab region as a "regional consultation process".
- The ARCP Terms of Reference (ToRs) were adopted in its first meeting held on 27-28 April 2015. The ToRs included that LAS (Population Policies, Expatriates and Migration Department) is the Secretariat of the process, chairs its meetings and represents it in international forums.
- The aim of the ARCP is to establish an Arab platform to discuss issues of international migration, and work on: strengthening cooperation between the participating countries and working towards a more profound understanding of migration issues in the Arab region, promoting a common understanding about the causes, dimensions, patterns and effects of migration and its future trends in the Arab region, as well as helping governments to participate with a unified vision in the global events related to migration; such as the Global Forum on migration and Development and the high-level Dialogue on Migration and Development and others.

# I. Policy coordination between member states

## **Meetings of Arab Ministries of Migration and Expatriates Affairs**

- The first meeting was held in 2008 within the framework of the preparation for the Arab Social and Economic Development Summit. The meeting discussed the general assessment of the motives and repercussions of migration and the status of Arab migrants abroad.
- The second meeting was held in 2009, in the framework of implementing the recommendations of the first meeting, and in pursuance of the Declaration and Plan of Action of the Arab Summit on Economic and Social Development, held in Kuwait in January 2009. The meeting adopted a number of recommendations regarding the following: Coordination among Arab countries regarding migration, expatriates and Arab communities in countries of destination, exchanging experiences, supporting rights of Arab migrants abroad; correcting wrong conceptions about the Arabs abroad, defending Arab causes, making use of Arab competent individuals residing abroad in promoting sustainable development in the Arab countries.

# I. Policy coordination between member states

## **Regional consultative meeting on Migration and development**

- Within the framework of the preparation for the second High-level Dialogue on migration and development which was held at the United Nations General Assembly in 3-4 October 2013, LAS, UNESCWA and IOM organized a "Regional Consultative meeting on International Migration and Development in the Arab Region" at the headquarters of the general secretariat of the League of Arab States in Cairo on 4-5/6/2013.
- The meeting was attended by official representatives of 15 Arab countries from authorities in charge of migration, expatriates affairs and communities living abroad and authorities in charge of labour in some Arab countries as well as representatives of Arab, regional and international organizations, civil society organizations and experts.
- A "Final Declaration" on International Migration and Development in the Arab region was adopted by the participants and served as a background document to the high level dialogue, that provides information about the key issues relating to international migration and development in the region.

## II. Cooperation with International Organizations in the Field of Migration

### Working Group on International Migration in the Arab Region (RWG)

- A Working Group on International Migration in the Arab Region (RWG) was established according to LAS initiative in order to promote coordinated normative and technical work on international migration in the region; prevent duplication of efforts; and ensure a consistent, system-wide message and strategy for migration. The functions of the Regional Working Group include: information sharing, establishing priority areas for cooperation and potential joint programmatic responses, dissemination of innovative/good practices and lessons.
- The RWG is co-chaired by LAS, UN-ESCWA and IOM, and with the membership of 12 UN agencies.
- The RWG is implementing its first work plan for 2014-2015. In this framework, a training workshop was organized to official from Arab States in 2014, and the first edition of the Situation Report on International Migration in the Arab Region will be launched in December 2015.



## II. Cooperation with International Organizations in the Field of Migration

### **Africa-Arab Technical and Coordination Committee on Migration (TCCM)**

- According to the resolution adopted by the Africa Arab Summit held in Kuwait in November 2013, a Technical and Coordination Committee on Migration (TCCM) co-chaired by the African Union (AU) and LAS was established with the aim to strengthen their cooperation in migration management, and to promote and protect migrants rights, especially in the provision of sound advice to Member States on issues related to migration in both regions, in conformity with regional and international instruments.
- The TCCM will build on existing initiatives to deliver specific outputs that will support the overall implementation of the provisions of the Africa-Arab Partnership Strategy and Joint Action Plan 2011-2016 as well as migration instruments and programs of AU and LAS.

## II. Cooperation with International Organizations in the Field of Migration

### Cooperation with the European Union (EU)

- LAS coordinates with the EU in several issues of common concern, including migration, within the framework of the Arab - European dialogue to activate political, economic and technological cooperation between the two sides, which has various bodies like the European Arab ministerial meetings.
- LAS has convened a session for the European neighbouring Arab states on the side-lines of the first meeting of the Arab Regional Consultative Process on Migration (ARCP). A position paper was issued towards the New Policy with regard to migration, which was submitted within the framework of the consultations undertaken by the EU to strengthen bilateral and regional relations with its neighbouring countries.
- The EU is participating in the training workshop on “Illegal Migration and Mixed Migration flows” organized by LAS in November 2015.

# III. Communicating with Arab communities abroad

## **First Conference of Arab Expatriates: A Bridge for Communication**

- LAS held the First Conference of Arab Expatriates: A Bridge for Communication in its headquarters in December 2010, with the attendance of Arab Ministers in Charge of Migration and Expatriates Affairs, representatives of Arab Expatriates and Arab Expatriates youth, Arab civil society organizations abroad, representatives of the embassies of foreign countries, and LAS missions abroad.
- The conference discussed three main themes: the role of the civil society organizations in the advancement of the Arab Communities, the role of Arab Expatriates in the development and strengthening of the dialogue of civilizations, cultures and religions, towards establishing an organizational and information framework for Arab Expatriates.
- At the end of the conference, the participants issued the "Declaration of the First Conference of Arab Expatriates", which included recommendations concerning the themes discussed in the conference.

# III. Communicating with Arab communities abroad

## **Celebrating Arab Expatriates day**

- LAS celebrates the Arab Expatriate's Day on annual basis according to the resolutions of the Ministerial Council No.6464 dated 14/9/2004 and No. 7411 dated 13/9/2011 concerning the celebration of Arab expatriate's Day annually on December 4, which came as a recognition of the importance of the role played by Arab expatriates and in support to their scientific and practical efforts and achievements. These resolutions also show a strong determination to extend bridges of communication with Arab expatriates abroad.
- On this occasion, LAS organizes annual celebrations in cooperation with its missions abroad and in coordination with the Arab ambassadors' councils. Representatives of Arab communities abroad participate in these celebrations, and LAS honors symbols, leaders and heads of Arab communities as well as their civil society organizations on their accomplishments to serve their community.

## **Visits to communicate with Arab Communities abroad**

Within the framework of the efforts undertaken by Las to communicate with the Arab communities abroad, LAS organizes visits in coordination with its missions abroad to stand on the problems the Arab communities are facing and their aspirations, and to strengthen their role and activate their political and economical participation in their new communities.



# III. Communicating with Arab communities abroad

## Cultural Exploratory Trip for Second Generation of Arab Expatriates



In the framework of the attention given to Arab expatriate youth from the second and third generations of Arab expatriates, LAS organizes cultural exploratory trips in cooperation with its member states. Seven cultural exploratory trips for the second generation of Arab expatriates were organized during the period from 2003 to 2009 in seven different countries. These trips were hosted by Egypt in 2003, Lebanon in 2004, Saudi Arabia in 2005, Algeria in 2006, Qatar in 2007, Jordan in 2008 and Morocco in 2009.

# IV. Engaging Arab Expatriates in the Development Process in the Arab Region

## Conference of Arab Expatriate Scientists “When Arab Minds Integrate”

LAS in collaboration with the Society for the Advancement of Science and Technology in the Arab World, United States of America, (SASTA), held the Conference of Arab Expatriate Scientists under the theme “When Arab Minds Integrate” at the General Secretariat of LAS in December 2012, with the participation of the Egyptian Ministers of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Arab Republic of Egypt, heads of Arab universities and relevant bodies in the Arab countries, academics, researchers and Arab scientists, in addition to a distinguished group of Arab scientists living abroad .



# IV. Engaging Arab Expatriates in the Development Process in the Arab Region

## "The role of German woman from Arab origin in transferring the Micro Project Management skills to the Egyptian woman"

- LAS implemented a project titled "The role of German woman from Arab origin in transferring the Micro Project Management skills to the Egyptian woman" in the period from Dec2009- March2011. The project aimed to enhance the level of Egyptian women participation in economy through acquiring knowledge, skills and work style on small-scale projects from female Arab migrant entrepreneurs in Germany.
- The outcomes of the project have been widely disclosed and disseminated. The outcomes included: publications, lessons learned and relevant tangible and concrete results. The learned experience throughout the project is supposed to serve as guidelines for NGOs strategies and programs in future.



# V. Reports, Studies and Publications

## Report on Arab Migration (2006,2008,2014)

- 2006 theme on **Arab Labour migration**, 2008 was on **migration of Skills** “brain drain or brain gain”, and the 2014 report focused on **"International Migration and Development"**. The fourth report is to be issued in 2016 under the thematic focus of “Irregular Migration in North Africa”.
- Studies: **"A study on the Dynamics of Arab Expatriate Communities: Promoting Positive Contributions to Socioeconomic Development and Political Transitions in the Homelands"** LAS-IOM (2012).



دراسة حول ديناميكيات الجاليات العربية المغتربة:

تعزيز المساهمات الإيجابية في التنمية الاجتماعية والاقتصادية والتحويلات الديمقراطية في أوطانهم الأصلية



# V. Reports, Studies and Publications

## A Situation Report on International Migration in the Arab Region

- LAS, in partnership with member organizations of the Working Group on International Migration in the Arab region, is preparing a joint report every two years on the situation of international migration in the Arab region, with the aim to address the knowledge deficit on international migration in the Arab region by providing a multi-disciplinary and comprehensive overview of relevant contemporary migration trends and their economic and social consequences in the Arab region for policy makers, researchers and practitioners, drawing on the expertise and mandates of the member agencies of the Working Group. It will highlight the need for coordinated and holistic responses to international migration challenges.
- The first issue of the report, to be issued in December 2015, is focusing on "**Migration, Displacement and Development in a Changing Arab Region**". It sheds light on refugees' conditions in the region, their rights and the impact of their presence on the social and economic development in countries of asylum.

## Newsletters

- LAS issues a non-periodic newsletter titled "**The Arab Expatriate**". includes the latest events and activities LAS has organized in the field of migration and Arab expatriates, as well as the activities it participated in and were organized by other entities, its initiatives in the field of migration, news on Arab communities living abroad, information on Arab expatriate figures, in addition to some information about Arab communities in certain countries.

## V. Reports, Studies and Publications

### **Studies presented to the seminars and academic conferences**

- LAS organizes seminars and conferences in collaboration with academic institutions and international organizations concerned with migration; where studies are prepared and presented on issues related to migration and expatriates.
- Three seminars were organized in coordination with the Afro- Egyptian Studies Program, the Faculty of Economics and Political Science, Cairo University in 2005, 2007 and 2008 .
- International seminar on "*International Migration in the Middle East and North Africa after the Arab Uprising: A Long Term Perspective*" was held in 2013, in cooperation with the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUSSP), the Center for Migration and Refugee Studies (CMRS) - the American University in Cairo (AUC), UKAID.



## VI. Capacity Building Programs

LAS organizes a training workshop for officials from the Arab Mediterranean countries on “**Mixed Migration and Irregular Movements**” in November 2015. The workshop will be organized in collaboration with the UNHCR and IOM. The EU and the African Union participate in the presentations during the workshop sessions due to their experience of the subject.

In the framework of the Working Group on International Migration in the Arab region, LAS, UN-ESCWA and IOM carried out a capacity-building workshop for Arab countries of origin in order to build their capacities to **mainstream international migration into their development strategies** in September 2014.

LAS organized two training workshops for government officials of LAS member States on **international migration, refugees, and human displacement**, in collaboration with IOM and UNHCR in 2013 and 2014.



# VII. Data Collection

## MED-HIMS Programme

- LAS is participating in the implementation of the programme of regionally coordinated Household International Migration Surveys in the Mediterranean Countries (MED-HIMS Programme), in cooperation with the EU, World Bank, UNFPA, ILO, UNHCR and IOM.
- MED-HIMS is a regional programme of coordinated international migration surveys requested by the National Statistical Offices of 8 Arab countries (Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Syria and Tunisia).
- MED-HIMS is composed by the regional level, where mainly the common methodology and instruments are discussed and developed/reviewed and activities are evaluated/planned under the coordination of international organizations, and the national level, where the household surveys are implemented under the responsibility of the national statistical institutes.

## LAS Information System on Migration

- LAS is seeking to establish an information system for migration and Arab expatriates affairs, which is based on the integration of migration information systems in the Arab countries. The system includes three databases: database of **highly skilled Arab Expatriates**, database of **associations, unions and organizations** established by Arab communities in countries of destination, database of **laws, legislations and regulations** related to migration and expatriates, and database of experts working in the field.
- The establishment of such a system would contribute to create the necessary mechanisms to benefit from the current situation of Arab migration within the framework of the current international circumstances and developments, and to maximize its positive side and minimize its hazards to serve economic and social development in the Arab world.



**Thank You..**

