

Thematic Meeting on visa facilitation

30 November- 1^{er} December 2016

Cidade Velha, Cabo Verde

Chaired by the Republic of Cabo Verde and co-chaired by the Portuguese Republic

Agenda

Context

It is symbolic that the thematic Meeting on visa facilitation and wider aspects of mobility takes place in the framework of the Euro-African Dialogue on Migration and Development. Indeed good governance of mobility creates value on a daily basis for the development of millions of people, increases the competitiveness of the countries concerned and enriches respective societies. Given the recognised potential mobility has in terms of supporting economic, human and social development, its central role for the Rabat Process has been reaffirmed not only in the Rome Declaration but also in the Valletta Declaration, inviting the participating states to encourage policies promoting the mobility of entrepreneurs, students and researchers, and to facilitate the short-term visa-related procedures.

In the light of the enhanced post-Valletta efforts to foster inter- and intracontinental investments and economic development in general, unimpeded people-to-people contacts through education and training, trade and business, cultural exchanges, tourism or local border traffic is gaining growing importance. In this framework, the partners of the Rabat and Khartoum Processes have engaged, in a spirit of partnership discussions on visa facilitation, through available legal and policy options at corresponding levels (i.e. between Europe and Africa as well as within the African continent) and in all relevant areas (i.e. short-term visa facilitation for specific categories of travelers; entry and residence of students, and researchers; etc.).

Given its role to establish a continuous dialogue for enhanced cooperation on migration and mobility as well as fostering regional collaboration between countries of origin, transit and destination regarding the migration route between the Horn of Africa and Europe, the Khartoum Process Membership has also been invited to this Thematic Meeting on visa facilitation.

In agreement with the Rome Declaration adopted at the Ministerial Conference in Rome in 2014 and also in light of the Khartoum Process' commitment to the Valletta Declaration – impetus has been provided for the Process to work also in close collaboration with the Rabat Process on key migration areas. For example the Valletta Declaration and Action Plan adopted at the 2015 Migration Summit in Malta recommends to conclude on-going negotiations of agreements on visa facilitation and, where appropriate, open new such negotiations.

The involvement of the Khartoum Process members in this Rabat Process thematic Meeting on visa facilitation allows for the sharing of best practices and measures in the regions spanning both Processes.

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Key topics

We propose four main areas of focus for this thematic Meeting on visa facilitation and wider aspects of mobility:

- * How to boost the travel and tourism sector through better visa issuance procedures, removal of unnecessary bureaucratic barriers for travel, use of innovative solutions and modern technologies?
- * How to increase students' and researchers' mobility? How to ensure that African youth and research community make better use of available opportunities, especially after the adoption of new policy framework at the EU level? How to attract European students and researchers to African universities and research centres? What are the opportunities for intra-African knowledge-driven mobility?
- * What are the main challenges for the greater mobility of representatives of business community and what are the available policy options to address those challenges?
- * What are the main advantages of cross-border mobility and which policy toolkit can be used to this end? What are the lessons learned from the European experience with the implementation of local-border traffic regimes and can this experience be relevant in the African context?

The principal aims of this meeting include:

- Sharing information and relevant experiences for enhanced mobility of the above-mentioned categories of persons;
- Identifying main challenges and corresponding solutions;
- Enhancing dialogue in the field of visa facilitation and wider aspects of mobility in accordance with the aims and actions reflected in both the Valletta Declaration and the Action Plan.

Expected results of the meeting:

- To identify a list of shared objectives among the countries.
- To prepare the ground for concrete initiatives based on best practices that could allow states to reach visible results.





30 November 2016 (Wednesday)

08:30 – 09:00 Reception and registration of participants

Opening ceremony and context (09:00 – 13:00)

Welcoming address from the Mayor of Ribeira Grande de Santiago

Statement by the Rabat Process Secretariat

Luis Gouveia, International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)

Statement by the European Union (EU)

Ambassador José Manuel Pinto Teixeira, Delegation of the European Union

Statement by the Portuguese Republic

Luísa Maia Gonçalves, National Director, Immigration and Border Service (SEF)

Statement by the Republic of Cabo Verde

Minister of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers and Sports

09:30 Official photo

09:45 – 10:00 Coffee break

10:00 – 13:00 Presentation of the context

Notions and key examples on visa facilitation

Mr. Mananashvili, ICMPD

The European Union policy framework

Ms. Lazar, European Union, European Commission, DG Home

The African Union policy framework

Ms. Tumuhimbise, African Union Commission

Presentation of issues at stake and introduction to meeting by the co-chair

Outline of the Working Groups, presented by the moderators

13:00 – 14:00 Lunch break

Working Groups, WG (14:00 – 16:00)

For this session, the participants will be divided into two parallel working groups. Each working group will treat different sub-topics. The session will be opened by a chair and the discussion will be led by a moderator/rapporteur.

WG 1 : Visa facilitation for tourists

Travel and tourism are among the most dynamic economic sectors and offer opportunities for growth, development and job creation. As such, economic impact simulations of different visa facilitation scenarios have been made, particularly in relation to the opportunities offered by information and communications technology. This session will discuss the economic impact of visa facilitation tourism measures and address the series of recommendations and facilitation undertaken by the UNWTO and WTTC and focused on five pillars: 1) improve the circulation and access to information; 2) facilitate the visa issuing process





(simplification of documentation, etc.); (3) differentiate the treatment of visa applications to facilitate tourism; (4) implement e-visa programs; 5) establish regional agreements.

Chair of the session : Mr. Ghoneim, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Egypt

Moderator : Ms Lazar, European Union, European Commission, DG Home

Dr. Glaesser, World Tourism Organization (WTO): *Visa facilitation challenges for the African tourism industry*

MJur Gözl , Federal Foreign Office, Germany: *Good practices in visa facilitation for tourists*

Mr. Wayimbilanga, Kenya Immigration Services, Ministry of Interior, Kenya: *Common visa Experience in East Africa with Rwanda and Uganda*

Mr. Grosjean, International Organization for Migration (IOM) : *A brief overview of the ACP EU Migration Action – a demand-driven program supporting the ACP EU Dialogue on M&D. The case of Benin: a feasibility study towards an E-visa*

WG 2 : Attractiveness policy for students and researchers

A key feature of economic development is its increasingly strong dependence on the production and use of new knowledge. Such a development leads to continued growth in terms of needs for international students, which is the potential pool of scientists and engineers. There is a global reality of mobility for higher education and research, with increasing competition between institutions or between countries. Many states, concerned about preserving their competitiveness, have also put in place mechanisms to attract and retain a "reservoir" of students and/or researchers especially in science and technology. The ability to attract foreign students and researchers also becomes a cultural and technological influence-factor with its related profits in other areas: adoption of international standards, export of models of organisation and thought. This session will discuss the national and regional political attractiveness of students and researchers with a focus on visa facilitation mechanisms.

Chair of the session : Ms. Chaves, Immigration and Borders Service (SEF), Cabo Verde

Moderator : Ms. Zanette, ICMPD

Ms. Kups, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD): *The international mobility of students and researchers: overview and challenges*

Mr. Rybicki, European Union, European Commission, DG Home: *New European policies with regards to students and researchers and examples of some operational programmes*

Ms. Camara, National Identification Office, Côte d'Ivoire : *The status of entry and residence for ECOWAS students and researchers as well as the applicable regime for non-ECOWAS students*

Mr. Ben Raiss, Moroccan International Cooperation Agency (AMCI) : *The Moroccan public policy*

16:00 –16:30 Coffee break

16:30 –17:30 Presentation of the results of the WG by the moderators, followed by a discussion

19:00 WELCOME COCKTAIL OFFERED BY CABO VERDE AT THE HOTEL PESTANA

1st December 2016 (Thursday)

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Opening of day 2 in the plenary session

09:30 – 10:00 Outline of the working groups, presented by the moderators

Working Groups, WG (10:00 – 12:00)

For this session, the participants will be divided into two parallel working groups. Each working group will treat different sub-topics. The session will be opened by a chair and the discussion will be led by a moderator/rapporteur.

WG 1 : Visa facilitation for business persons

The promotion of trade and investment, the growth in key sectors such as banking or new technologies that come *in fine* with regional integration efforts require the mobility of skilled, innovative and entrepreneurial persons. However, numerous constraints and barriers related to the issuance of visas remain and are explained mainly as a result of safety, impact on local economies, potential revenue loss associated with the removal of administrative fees, etc. This session will discuss the mobility of categories of people such as businessmen, businesswomen or entrepreneurs and will consider issues such as visa reciprocity, the regional visa regimes (role of Regional Economic Communities), the issuance of visas upon arrival, and simplified measures of visa implementation.

Chair of the session: Mr. Sharp, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, United Kingdom

Moderator : Mr. Mananashvili, ICMPD

Mr. Asima, Ghana Immigration Service, Ghana: *The Ghanaian experience on the generalisation of visa issuance upon arrival to nationals of African countries*

Mr. Mendes, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Portugal: *Experience of the Common Visa Centre*

Mr. Chabala, COMESA Business Council (CBC): *The CBC advocacy for facilitating the movement of business people*

WG 2 : Facilitating cross-border movements

The main objective is to discuss and exchange on specific visa regimes for the facilitation cross-border movements. The working group aims in particular at deepening the understanding of the potential of specific arrangements targeting cross-border populations or aiming at facilitating cross-border activities in specific sectors, as a genuine development tool in border regions, exploring inter-linkages with key development policy areas, including trade facilitation and regional economic integration, migration and mobility, and security.

Chair of the session : Ms. Kaita, Central African Republic

Moderator : Ms. Barros, Director General Immigration, Cabo Verde

Ms. Vibeke, Ministry of Justice and Public Security, Norway: *Local Border Traffic. The European experience*

Dr. Wolfgang Zeller, ABORNE Network : *Cross-border movements in the African contexts*

Ms. Tumuhimbise, African Union Commission -tbc

12:00 –12:30

Coffee break

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12:30 –13:30	Presentations of the results of the Working Groups by the moderators, followed by discussion
13:30 –15:30	<i>Lunch break</i>
Conclusions of the thematic Meeting (15:30 - 16:30)	
Presentation of the conclusions of the co-chair	
Closing remarks by Portugal Ambassador of Portugal in Cabo Verde	
Closing remarks by Cabo Verde Minister of Foreign Affairs and Communities	
16:30	Closing of the meeting

