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## MIGRATION MANAGEMENT IN AFRICA: INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL APPROACHES

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### Annotation

Due to the global refugee crisis migration from Africa to Europe has recently attracted much attention both of the public and political circles, especially in European ones. The International Organization for Migration always plays a crucial role in managing migration processes despite of whether the focus is on migrants and refugees arriving on European shores or improving border security in African countries. On the other hand, with increasing subregional migration, regional organizations are given great importance. The author analyses the activities of IOM and the main regional organizations in Africa within the research in order to identify the role of IOM and regional associations (ECOWAS and IGAD) in the process of managing migration flows, as well as the main areas of organizations' activity in this area, assuming that it varies depending on the field of migration policy.

**Keywords:** migration, Africa, ECOWAS, IGAD, IOM, migration management, migration policy.

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### Author

#### Hasina Valona Patricia Andrianantenaina

Graduate student of the Department of Comparative Political Science of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences RUDN University (Moscow, Russia)



Recently, trans-Saharan and trans-Mediterranean (unregulated) migration from Africa to Europe has attracted much attention from the public and political circles, especially in Europe, amid the global refugee crisis. The European political discourse was dominated by calls for reducing and curbing the illegal migrants influx and eliminating the root causes of forced migration. However, migration within the African continent is more common than migration from Africa to Europe or other parts of the world. About two thirds of African international migrants live in another African country [1. — pp. 102–118]. Considering it, the African Union has defined norms and strategic guidelines governing migration and forced displacement, and regional organizations such as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in the Horn of Africa and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

have established migration management structures in the region.

Regional mobility regimes and relevant organizations are increasingly becoming targets of cooperation in Africa by international development organizations as well as recent European agreements related to migration. Moreover, regional migration management has become important as an object of scientific research, especially in studies of international relations and comparative regionalism.

Among other things, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) always plays a crucial role in managing migration processes [2] regardless of whether the focus is on migrants and refugees arriving on European shores, the resettlement of refugees to Canada or improving border security in African countries. The International Organization for Migration considers itself a leader and developer of standards [3], as well as responsible

for managing migration and mobility on a global scale [4]. Thus, the influence of the IOM goes beyond the simple conceptualization of a static interstate system.

In this article, the author analyses the activities of IOM and regional African organizations on international migration management. The author focuses on the migration process in Africa: the article examines the approaches to solving migration issues in the region by the IOM, as well as the role of regional organizations in managing migration in Africa.

### **IOM migration management activities in Africa**

The International Organization for Migration plays an important role in managing global migration, as its mission is to promote the search for practical solutions to international migration problems and provide humanitarian assistance to migrants and refugees in need, as well as internally displaced persons within the borders of one country or region. The organization strives to provide its services and advice to States and migrants themselves. It is worth saying that the IOM has become a prominent player on the world stage and in individual countries. The general trend also lies in the fact that the IOM and other more widely known IO are increasingly in demand not only from states in need of advice and assistance, but also from non-governmental organizations (NGOs), as well as other international organizations, commercial structures and the media. In fact, international organizations have gained great influence in interpreting the events and (perceived) realities of migration [5]: international organizations report live through traditional media, such as television and newspapers, but more often through social networks, and tell the world audience about the tragedies and deaths of migrants and refugees, about the situation of displaced persons in countries reception, etc.

IOM was established in 1951 as the Intergovernmental Committee on European

Migration (ICEM). At that time, it was responsible for many people displaced during World War II. Currently, IOM's activities are divided into three areas. Firstly, these are "operational" services: IOM manages detention centres for migrants in transit or being expelled from the country of arrival. Secondly, the IOM informs (through information campaigns) potential migrant women about the threats associated with international migration, and also carries out activities to "protect" victims in order to counter "human trafficking" or "smuggling" of people. Thirdly, IOM acts as an advisory agency for States on migration policy issues. In this context, the organization offers training in areas such as border surveillance or new technologies for controlling migration flows.

Finally, IOM is an important participant in the discussion and dissemination of knowledge and relevant information about the international migration process. The organization generates and spreads its vision of what migration should be: "managed" movements that are beneficial for everyone, primarily for destination countries, but also for countries of origin, and even for migrants themselves. Nevertheless, the IOM supports the policies of developed countries to a much greater extent at the moment than to protect the right to movement that it provides to citizens of the "global South".

The IOM conducts a wide range of activities on five continents, but the African region is of particular interest for this study. The following is an overview of how IOM approaches migration issues in sub-Saharan Africa [6].

Conflicts in the Central African Republic, Ivory Coast, Mali, and Nigeria have forced thousands of migrants to leave their homes and their countries in West and Central Africa. The IOM also notes that Mali and Nigeria are facing security problems due to widespread groups in the region, such as Boko Haram and Al-Qaeda<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Boko Haram and Al-Qaeda are organizations banned in Russia.

IOM helps displaced persons in the region, in particular by providing migrants and refugees with clean water, food and other necessities [7. — pp. 65–68]. For example, in the Central African Republic 687,000 people have been displaced because of the war that began in 2013. A report published on June 29, 2018 declares, the IOM provided 450 sets of pots and dishes, plates, cups and cutlery to households.

In East Africa, IOM, together with the UN and local health ministries in the region, has taken the initiative to provide approximately 48,000 Somalis with the opportunity to use health services [8]. In Burundi, IOM organized training in agriculture and entrepreneurship for internally displaced persons (IDPs). Armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia and South Sudan, as well as drought and climate change are among the driving forces of migration in the region.

In southern Africa, IOM, among other things, conducts medical research on vulnerable populations in the region. According to the Migration Data Portal, which is managed by the IOM, four million immigrants lived in South Africa in 2017 [9]. The UN DESA reports, the majority of immigrants in South Africa are from the African continent [10].

Thus, the International Organization for Migration pursues a policy aimed at providing support and assistance, carrying out active activities in Africa, first of all, to the most vulnerable category of migrants, including refugees and their families. At the same time, IOM not only provides internally displaced people with basic necessities, but also implements humanitarian programs aimed at educating and informing migrants in the region.

The role of regional organizations in migration management in Africa

Since the peak of the European refugee crisis in the summer of 2015, the issue of managing migration and refugee flows between Africa and Europe has occupied an important place in academic and policy programs and research. The prevailing view is that European aid for the devel-

opment of Africa plays an important role in containing the present and preventing the mass influx of migrants and refugees to Europe in the future. This should happen mainly by reducing the root causes of forced displacement of people and improving migration management [11].

It should be noted that within the framework of the current discussion on migration processes in the African region, two important factors remain without due attention. Firstly, most cross-border refugees and migrants move between neighbouring countries, within (sub)regional spaces. This is often due to the limited availability of resources for migrants, but also to the advantages of migration to closer countries with linguistic and/or cultural similarities, but at the same time a higher level of political or economic stability. West Africa, where more than 80% of international migrants move within the subregion, is paradigmatic in this regard. As for movement outside (sub)regions, many move to other countries of the African continent.

Secondly, not all this migration is a negative phenomenon from the point of view of development, it rather serves the desire of people to improve living conditions for themselves and their families, as well as expand educational and professional opportunities. Although relocation decisions are often made against the background of difficult socio-economic circumstances and the lack of alternatives in the countries of origin, temporary or permanent migration really represents the most important survival strategies for migrants and their dependent family members [11].

How do regional and continental organizations in Africa manage the variability of migration flows in terms of drivers, models and outcomes? Given the predominance of intraregional migration and the often regional nature of the driving forces (such as poverty, drought or conflict), this is an urgent issue. However, there is surprisingly little information in the world community, the media and in the scientific field, and equally little discussion concerning the institutional characteristics, priorities and

provisions of African regional organizations that carry out their activities in the field of migration management.

The research project of the German Development Institute (DIE) on regional and multilevel migration management eliminates this gap [12]. It focuses on two regional organizations in Africa: Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in the Horn of Africa region. Both organizations represent the main regions of African migrants origin and refugees to Europe, which is why in recent years, ECOWAS and IGAD have significantly expanded their activities in the field of migration policy.

DIE found that the Horn of Africa region and the West African region show noticeable differences in relation to priority migration models and migration management models, depending on the regional and institutional specifics, as well as the directions of migration flows.

The ECOWAS Regional Organization, founded in 1975 after the conclusion of the Lagos Treaty, has a long history of regulating regional labour migration along established corridors crossing national borders, for example, between Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire or Ghana and Nigeria. In 1979, the Protocol on the Free Movement of Citizens was concluded within ECOWAS, which became one of the first stages of the liberalization of mobility even on a global scale. Formulated with a comprehensive intention to promote economic and trade liberalization among its 15 member States<sup>1</sup>, the Protocol enjoys high support from the participating countries. And this is despite the fact that its implementation still faces challenges (partly related to national policy), especially with regard to its more ambitious elements, such as the liberalization of intraregional employment and business creation rights.

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<sup>1</sup> The ECOWAS member States are Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

IGADD, founded in 1986 as an inter-governmental authority on drought and development and renamed IGAD in 1996, was created to address humanitarian crises usually affecting its seven member States<sup>2</sup>. Although the organization became a regional economic community in 1998, it still enjoys the greatest recognition for its involvement in addressing issues of regional peace and security. It is illustrated by the Collective Rapid Reaction Force (CRRF), which is an innovation in the process of global governance and the implementation of refugee norms. This is true, but the degree of implementation of the system by IGAD member countries varies, and the organization's enforcement capabilities are limited.

African regional organizations such as ECOWAS and IGAD play an important role in managing migration in the region. Notably, their activities vary depending on the area of migration policy. For example, the 2012 IGAD Migration Policy Framework addresses a wide range of issues, ranging from more effective border management, prevention of unregulated migration, and ending with facilitating labour migration through free movement. Similar statements can be made regarding the "Common Approach to Migration and Development" of ECOWAS, formulated in 2008, which is the political basis of the organization's strategy.

Summing up, we can say that cooperation in the field of migration in the regional dimension seems relevant and in demand due to the increasing migration flows both in a particular region and around the world, which leads to a relationship of interdependence (and partly common interests) between the States concerned. In this context, the role of the International Organization for Migration is indisputable. It is actively involved in regulating migration in the world as a whole, and in particular in Africa, where the situation of migrants

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<sup>2</sup> IGAD member States are Djibouti (head office), Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda.

and refugees remains unenviable, and the solution of issues related to migration (both intraregional and interregional) requires the involvement of the entire world community. Speaking about regional migration management institutions, the examples of IGAD and ECOWAS show that regional organizations can often rely on an already established history of cooperation in the migration field. At the same time, the division of labour between continental and regional organizations is an urgent issue, since the African Union (AU) has re-

vised its participation in migration policy, which was manifested in the renewal of the Foundations of Continental Migration Policy, as well as in the agreement on the Protocol of Continental Free Movement. The issue of the most effective support for the advantages of regional migration regimes in Africa, as well as the elimination of gaps in the implementation of migration policy to regulate migration flows will be important additions to the discussions on the further development of the African region.

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Author of the translation of the article  
from Russian into English:

**Kirill Vasilev**

MCU, Institute of Foreign Languages

