



7-12 luglio 2006

MEETING  
INTERNAZIONALE  
MIGRAZIONI  
LORETO



Agenzia Scalabriniana per la  
Cooperazione allo Sviluppo

## FINAL DOCUMENT OF THE 9<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL MEETING ON MIGRATION

**Loreto (AN)** The 9<sup>th</sup> International Meeting on Migrations organised by the **Scalabrinian Missionaries and Lay people, the Agenzia Scalabriniana per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo (Scalabrinian Agency for Co-operation and Development)**, in collaboration with the **ISMU Foundation** in Milan and the **Agnelli Foundation** in Turin was held in Loreto from 7<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> July.

The goal of this traditional meeting was taking stock of the European policies during a specific period when governments are changing and the laws dealing with immigration in various European nations are being modified.

The meeting – which saw the participation of researchers coming from several European countries - led to the clear idea that **migration policies have often been used as an instrument to preserve the status quo and to slow down cultural and social processes.** However, since such policies failed to tackle the actual problems of the European societies, they led to an increase in illegal immigration both owing to their restrictive character and their inability to govern migration flows.

Migration policies – often derived from the ideological clashes of national electoral campaigns and still dwelling on the exclusive or primary identification of immigrants according to the needs of the labour market – are lagging behind the actual situation in individual societies, which from a structural viewpoint involves the presence of a certain share of immigrants from abroad.

From the viewpoint of both the studies of European researchers and the political and legislative practice, the goal of the Meeting was ascertaining the processes and prospects that can give immigrants their legitimate as meaningful stakeholders in the development of social cohesion.

**Social cohesion is the ultimate goal of today's politics and democracy founded on participation and solidarity of which migrants themselves have to become protagonists and be recognised as such, since they have become an increasingly irreplaceable share of society.**

During the Meeting it was ascertained that our European societies are basically reluctant to perceive themselves as multicultural societies.

This vision is derived from the idea of the Nation-State dating back to the 1800s and leads to situations and legal systems that tend to deal with migration problems mainly according to a partial and limited view, without realising that **a society that is incapable of developing an integration project for the immigrants is a society that is also incapable of developing a project to deal with its own future.**

As a matter of fact, our societies are increasingly bound to take into account immigrants and a population that is increasingly failing to be reflected in the very much praised national identity.

**That is why immigration policies and in particular policies aimed at the integration of immigrants cannot be considered an independent and distinct political agenda, rather an integral part of a development and co-existence political planning aimed at an integrated – and not a disrupted – society.**

Actually, regardless of the scope of the national policies taken into consideration (education, welfare, economics, development, culture...), the presence of immigrants may provide an extraordinary opportunity to revise the overall policy of our societies.

A revision is necessary of two main issues related to the presence of an increasingly numerous immigrant population including second-generation immigrants.

First of all, there is a need to **revise the right of citizenship** that is currently connected to nationality only. In this respect, also in those states currently strictly complying only with the jus sanguinis to grant their nationality, a progressive implementation of the jus soli is desirable.

Secondly, **granting immigrants the right to vote in local elections**, which de facto is already envisaged in the European Union pursuant to the Strasbourg Convention (**not ratified by Italy**) would be an important step forward in the process to include migrants in the democratic process of our societies and an acknowledgement of the positive political role played by migrants.

One of the problems characterising the "new" destinations of immigrants (Italy and Spain in particular) is the presence of a large share of illegal immigrants, who quickly re-emerge after each extraordinary legalisation initiative, which by the way follow one another at regular intervals.

Irregular immigrants are mainly related not only to migration pressures, but also to national laws limiting legal access according to a biased and ideological approach and which at a later stage prevent a process of individual legalisation of the number of illegal immigrants who arrive gradually.

In this respect, the legal experiences and administrative approaches implemented in other European nations (Spain, for example) may also be a model for necessary and urgent legal reforms in Italy.

The introduction of more flexible norms to legalise new migrants, both when they arrive and during their migration experience, plays an important prospective role. Namely, **only if legal access to destination countries is made possible will the respect for the law be accepted by second generation immigrants.**

The 9<sup>th</sup> International Meeting on Migrations stresses the need for legal changes.

First of all **succeeding as soon as possible in drafting a law on the right of asylum is necessary in the light of the unacceptable delay of Italy in this very important sector.**

In addition to ratifying the Strasbourg Convention, which grants immigrants the vote in local elections, it should be stressed that Italy has never even signed the *Charter of migrant workers and their families* drafted by the UN.

With a view to a new migration law, **there is an urgent need to amend certain aspects of the Bossi-Fini law to eliminate the existing inconsistencies:** residence contracts, Municipal Authorities responsible for the management of residence permits, assignment of residence documents, revision and progressive reduction of the welcoming centres for immigrants until they are fully closed.

At local level, **an enhancement and update of the regional immigration laws is expected, along with the strengthening of local integration good practices.** Meaningfully, the most effective integration initiatives take place at local level.

It should be mentioned that the welfare system is one of the fundamental achievements of our European democracy; **the International Meeting on Migrations hopes that the funds in the training and participation sectors are not decreased but increased,** as requested by immigrants and their Associations.

The unification process of the European politics today is undergoing a stalemate, right when containment and control migration policies are being devised. **If the idea of a composite and intercultural European society were accepted, a grass-root European citizenship could be envisaged starting from heterogeneous ethnical and cultural origins.**

**First-generation migrants and second-generation migrants in particular – mainly thanks to their factual transnational migration experiences – overcome national boundaries and categories.**

**That is why the political role of migrants and their pro-active contribution to democracy may play a paramount role in developing a Europe capable of overcoming local, national and religious affiliations.**

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**ABOUT SCALABRINIANS**

At the end of the 1800s, Giovanni Battista Scalabrini, bishop of Piacenza beatified in 1997 by Pope John Paul II, founded the religious congregation of the Scalabrinian missionaries and the San Raffaele Laymen's company to support and help socially and religiously the numerous Italian emigrants. His social philosophy and his strong sensitiveness relating to important issues such as emigration, the worker's condition, problems in the agricultural sector were to become constant reference points for the Scalabrinians in the following years. Human mobility was to become the main sector in which the Congregation was involved, at first to support Italians abroad and help them in the process of their integration in the countries of destination, then to provide their support to other migrant ethnic groups. After Italy has become a destination for immigrants, the Scalabrinians transferred their century-old experience to help the social and civil integration of those who have been forced to leave their places of origin to earn a living far from their homelands. The activities of the Scalabrinians, thanks to their network or researchers all over the world, is also focussed on the research on and the analysis and study of the major social phenomena of our age. [www.scalabrini.org](http://www.scalabrini.org)

**ABOUT ASCS**

The AGENZIA SCALABRINIANA PER LA COOPERAZIONE ALLO SVILUPPO (Scalabrinian agency for co-operation and development) is the operational branch through which the Scalabrinian missionaries carry out their activities in the field of International Co-operation aimed at Development.

Its initiatives include the following:

- Development co-operation projects
- Development of a network of partners
- Development of training initiatives for international volunteers and voluntary missions abroad
- Fund raising and event promotion initiatives to support projects
- Awareness campaigns for an intercultural society respecting diversities and accounting for migration flows

Today ASCS is operating in Europe, Africa and Latin America through projects supporting migrants, refugees and minors in the field of education, human promotion and development of self-sustainable enterprises America. [www.ascs.it](http://www.ascs.it) email [development@scalabrini.net](mailto:development@scalabrini.net)

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**Detail forms and photographic galleries updated daily may be downloaded from the following site: [www.meetingloreto.it](http://www.meetingloreto.it)**