



7TH INTERNATIONAL BORDER MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

27-28 November 2024
Carthage Thalasso Hotel
Gammarth, les côtes de Carthage
Tunis, Tunisia

CONCEPT NOTE

Key information

Dates: 27-28 November

Venue: Gammarth, Tunis, Tunisia

Title: *Border Management and Capacity Partnerships: Joint Leadership and Shared Responsibilities to govern and partner in the present to adapt to or shape uncertain futures.*

Format: The conference will take place under Chatham House rules and will be upon invitation only. The programme will include both plenary sessions and side thematic events to expand the coverage of the conference and include specific thematic sessions relevant to delegates. Participants will include country delegations, experts, representatives from relevant entities and international organisations. The format of the conference is in presence only, and simultaneous interpretation will be provided in English, French, Arabic and Russian.

Partners: hosted by the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Tunisia, organised by ICMPD.

Objectives: The main objective of the conference is to pave the way for capacity partnerships to serve anticipatory border governance. The focus of the conference will particularly delve into the four drivers identified by the ICMPD Mediterranean delivery framework MCP Med (Migration Capacity Partnerships for the Mediterranean), notably: governance, professionalisation, modernisation, and communication. The conference will also be the occasion to share, present and discuss practices and methods for supporting concretely and align the implementation of these drivers at multiagency level but also across borders.

Background



The **International Border Management Conference (IBMC)**, ICMPD's annual thematic flagship event since 2018, brings together practitioners, policymakers, donors, and experts from various sectors to discuss the latest trends, innovations, good practices, and policies in border management across regions. With three decades of expertise and a broad network of partners, ICMPD uses its **Integrated Border Management (IBM)** approach to address emerging challenges in a rapidly changing geopolitical landscape. This approach balances themes such as migration, mobility, trade, security, and fighting cross-border crime addressing emerging issues through the prism of cooperation, border security, human rights, health, and economic development.

This year's conference in Tunisia, a country exposed to unique border management challenges given its strategic Mediterranean location, will contribute to shed light on experiences to manage contingent migration pressures, and how to face these challenges while pursuing the potential of trade and tourism in different contexts. Promoting secure borders, orderly migration, and trade facilitation is key, with a focus on international cooperation and coordinated policies with countries of origin. The principle of **"Joint leadership and shared responsibilities"** is, in ICMPD Mediterranean view, the cornerstone of capacity partnerships. As a result, investing in, valuing, and mobilising respective capacities is of the essence. To translate this principle into a reality, in partnership with EU notably, the host country Tunisia established **governance** frameworks promoting and delivering on inter-agency cooperation. Equally, further **professionalisation** of national stakeholders entrusted with border management was deemed essential for Tunisian competencies to be invested in, benchmarked and valued against mutually acknowledged industry standards and mobilised accordingly in partnership with Europe and neighbouring countries. Tunisia joined ICMPD's Training Institute for Migration Capacity Partnerships (MCP MED TI) as a member of the Governing board, developing accredited curricula, authorising professional trainers, and licensing training premises. The latter required investment to be steered towards the **modernisation** of infrastructure, equipment, and digital services, translating into the building of inter-agency training centres, with the support of Europe and the Netherlands notably. Ultimately, Tunisia's **communication** is that border and migration governance whether within the territory or along migration routes requires partnership to address capacity gaps, capitalise on contextual know-how, and mobilise competencies. **In short, the above drivers are a synthesis of the six key IBM intervention areas highlighted in the Guidelines for Integrated Border Management in European Commission External Cooperation, namely: Legal and regulatory framework; Institutional framework; Procedures; Human resources and training; Communication and information exchange, and Infrastructure and equipment.**

➡ **Focus of the Conference in 2024:** The **7th International Border Management Conference**, hosted under the auspices of the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of

Tunisia, will bring together a wide range of countries and stakeholders from various regions, under the general topic of ***Border Management and Capacity Partnerships: Joint Leadership and Shared Responsibilities to govern and partner in the present to adapt to or shape uncertain futures.***

Objectives of the Conference

The main objective of the conference is to pave the way for capacity partnerships to serve **anticipatory border governance**. The focus of the conference will particularly delve into the four drivers identified by the ICMPD Mediterranean delivery framework MCP Med (Migration Capacity Partnerships for the Mediterranean), notably: **governance, professionalisation, modernisation, and communication**. The conference will also be the occasion to share, present and discuss practices and methods for **supporting concretely and align the implementation of these drivers at multiagency level but also across borders**.

Discussions shall revolve around practical approaches to highlight the relevance of the four MCP Med drivers to define recommendations for future practices in supporting capacity partnerships in border management. Main reflection areas are identified as follows:

- ➔ **Governance drives capacity partnerships:** *Effective border management requires seamless coordination among diverse actors to ensure the smooth movement of goods, services, and people. In today's context of growing instability and polycrisis, no single agency can address these challenges alone. Strengthening cooperation among border management stakeholders—whether in security, intelligence, or trade facilitation—is essential.*
- ➔ **Professionalisation drives capacity partnerships:** *Border management competencies must be developed, benchmarked, and aligned with industry standards, with continuous training as a core element. Joint capacity development should be a priority, integrated within the IBM concept, in partnership with neighbouring countries and beyond the region. Furthermore, fundamental rights and human rights are crucial in all border management activities, ensuring compliance with legal and regulatory standards.*
- ➔ **Modernisation drives capacity partnerships:** *Significant investments in border management infrastructure and technology for digitalisation, including AI, are set to continue. While leveraging these advancements, it is crucial to balance technical, ethical, and legal considerations to ensure sustainable progress that benefits all.*



➔ **Communication drives capacity partnerships:** *Migration and mobility shape geopolitics, making effective communication on border management essential. Narratives drive or are driven by policies, and proactive communication is key to successful partnerships. A holistic approach to public communication taking into consideration governments, communication stakeholders, media, and citizens is crucial for fostering dialogue and cooperation.*

Conference Format

The conference will be organised in presence format exclusively. Presentations and discussions can be held in a language of choice of presenters/participants: **English, French, Arabic, and Russian**. Simultaneous interpretations will be provided in the remaining three working languages of the conference, as previously indicated, both during plenary sessions and side events.

Participation will be upon invitation only. Invitees will be required to fill in a registration form provided via a hyperlink, within a deadline indicated by the organisers. Only invited and confirmed registered participants will have access to the conference. All discussions will be held under the Chatham House Rule, to ensure a trusted environment for dialogue, allowing for an open exchange of ideas and perspectives.

The main event, held on **November 27th and 28th**, will include plenary sessions as well as thematic side events of more technical nature, covering topics such as digitalisation, tourism-friendly border management, communications and narrative strategies, and human rights-centred border management. These discussions will consist of expert-led discussions and interactive exchanges aimed at identifying solutions and fostering collaboration. At the conclusion, participants will summarise key insights and propose actionable steps for future engagement.

IBMC 2024 has benefitted from a preparatory event focusing on Digitalisation in Border Management, including potential role and challenges related to the use of AI, which took place in Amman, under the auspices of the Ministry of Interior of the Kingdom of Jordan in July 2024, involving Mediterranean participating countries and international experts. The recommendations from the working sessions will be presented in one of the side events included in the IBMC programme.

Contact Information

BMConference@icmpd.org

Details and background information: <https://www.icmpd.org/about-us/border-management-conference>