

# Global Migration Group



ILO

IOM

UN-DESA

OHCHR

UNICEF

UNCTAD

UNFPA

UNESCO

UNHCR

UNDP

WORLD BANK

UNODC

UNITAR

UN REGIONAL COMMISSIONS

Acting together in a world on the move

# What

## What is the GMG?



The Global Migration Group (GMG) is an inter-agency group bringing together heads of agencies to promote the wider application of all relevant international and regional instruments and norms relating to migration, and to encourage the adoption of more coherent, comprehensive and better coordinated approaches to the issue of international migration. The GMG is particularly concerned with improving the overall effectiveness of its members and other stakeholders in capitalizing upon the opportunities and responding to the challenges presented by international migration.



This information note provides an overview of the GMG, its membership and Terms of Reference. The note summarizes the issues which are of current interest to the GMG and provides a short summary of the work undertaken by each GMG member in the field of international migration.

# Who

## GMG members



The GMG consists of 14 organizations that are actively involved in international migration and related issues:

- International Labour Organization (ILO)
- International Organization for Migration (IOM)
- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
- United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
- United Nations Regional Commissions (ECA, ECE, ECLAC, ESCAP, ESCWA)
- World Bank



# When

## Background

The GMG was established by the United Nations Secretary-General in early 2006 in response to a recommendation of the Global Commission on International Migration for the establishment of a high-level inter-institutional group of agencies involved in migration-related activities. The GMG was created by building on an existing inter-agency group with a more limited membership, the Geneva Migration Group, which was established in April 2003. Four new members were admitted at the end of 2007: UNESCO, UNICEF, UNITAR, and the Regional Commissions.

The GMG meets at regular intervals. The Chair is held on a rotating basis for periods of 6 months by the executive heads of its member organizations. The GMG contributed actively to preparations for the 2006 General Assembly High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development and to the meetings of the Global Forum on Migration and Development the first of which was held in Brussels in July 2007.



# What

## What does the GMG do?

Regional Commissions 

According to its Terms of Reference, the GMG's regular consultations are undertaken for the following purposes:

1. Establishing a comprehensive and coherent approach in the overall institutional response to international migration.
2. Providing direction and leadership in a system-wide context and promoting interest, dialogue and debate on migration-related issues, including trade and development aspects, with governments, employers' and workers' organizations and civil society.
3. Contributing to greater consistency in policy formulation and programme implementation.
4. Exchanging information and expertise to improve understanding, inter-agency cooperation and collaboration, to promote synergies and avoid duplication.



5. Identifying critical issues, opportunities, challenges, weaknesses, gaps and best practices.
6. Pooling efforts in and exchanging the results of research, data collection and analysis.
7. Developing common positions, responses and actions in addressing specific situations or themes.
8. Agreeing on common activities to develop and exchange thematic expertise among staff, especially in the field of capacity building and inter-agency transfers.
9. Reinforcing the human rights, labour rights, human security and criminal justice dimensions of migration governance and management, with a focus on the protection and well-being of migrants, including victims of trafficking.
10. Contributing to major initiatives of GMG members and the international community such as the 2006 General Assembly High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development and the follow-up to the report of the Global Commission on International Migration.
11. Enhancing the efforts of individual states, regional bodies, regional and global consultative processes in the field of international migration.
12. Finding appropriate mechanisms for the GMG to interact with states.



In addition to regular exchanges of information on developments in the migration field and in their work, the Group undertakes research and data collection, including surveys, conducts capacity-building activities, develops compendia of its work, experience and effective policies and practices in different areas, and works on identifying gaps.

Areas of work include: migration and development; migration and gender; migration and human rights; and the network of interactions between international migrants, governmental entities and international organizations.

A joint initiative on an "International Partnership on Migration and Development" has been developed. The Group has been supporting the efforts of States hosting and participating in the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD).



# Activities

## What do GMG members do on migration?

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ILO



ILO, the UN specialized agency on labour issues, has been dealing with labour migration since 1919. It has pioneered international Conventions to guide migration policy and protection of migrant workers. All major sectors of ILO – standards, employment, social protection and social dialogue – work on labour migration within its overarching framework of ‘decent work for all’. ILO adopts a rights-based approach to labour migration and promotes tripartite participation (governments, employers and workers) in migration policy. It provides advisory services to member states, promotes international standards, provides a tripartite forum for consultations, serves as a global knowledge base, and provides technical assistance and capacity-building to constituents. ILO has recently developed a multilateral framework on labour migration to guide its constituents in labour migration policy.

IOM



IOM is dedicated to promoting humane and orderly migration for the benefit of all. IOM acts with its partners to: uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants; encourage social and economic development through migration; assist in meeting the growing operational challenges of migration management; and advance understanding of migration issues. It does these by using its long experience and world-wide presence to provide a full range of services and advice to governments and migrants, from projects and practical solutions to policy and broad strategic approaches, from data collection, research and analysis to the provision of a forum for states, intergovernmental organizations and civil society to exchange views and experiences and promote cooperation and coordination of efforts on international migration issues.

**OHCHR**



OHCHR promotes a human rights approach to migration throughout its work. In particular, it supports the mandates of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants and the UN Special Rapporteur on Trafficking and services the Committee on Migrant Workers, the treaty body supervising compliance with the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families. OHCHR also implements a technical cooperation project on Trafficking which is guided by OHCHR's Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking. Issues of migration, development and human rights are further addressed and analyzed, including at the regional and country level, through a variety of other mandates and programmes, such as that of national human rights institutions.

**UNCTAD**



UNCTAD, the UN focal point for the integrated treatment of trade and development, aims, inter alia, to make migration work for development and contribute to the achievement of the MDGs. Under its three pillars (research and analysis, technical assistance and inter-governmental consensus-building), UNCTAD actively promotes coherence and global understanding by offering strategic policy analysis and options on the nexus between migration, trade and development, including through expert meetings and key publications. It undertakes analytical work and provides advice and technical assistance to policy makers, trade negotiators and regulators on: contribution of migrants to development; the potential benefits and opportunities of trade, investment and developmental links between countries of origin of migrants and their communities abroad; and the potential of migrants' remittances to contribute to development. It also contributes to the knowledge base on trade- and development-related issues and trends including on circular migration; gender-related migration; brain-drain and brain circulation. UNCTAD's work on trade in services include market access, regulatory issues and institutional frameworks to facilitate the temporary movement of natural persons at the multilateral (GATS Mode 4), regional and bilateral levels as well as trade in labour-intensive services and fostering skills development and recognition of qualifications. UNCTAD collects migration-related data and information and participates in the inter-agency Task Force on Statistics of International Trade in Services.



The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the UN Secretariat is the primary source of information on matters related to international migration and development for the General Assembly, ECOSOC and its functional commissions. UNDESA's activities in this area are part of its overall responsibilities for the analysis of development prospects globally, and aim at providing the foundation for the policy debate on maximising the benefits of international migration for development. They include providing objective analyses of the causes and consequences of international migration; compiling, analyzing and disseminating statistics on international migration; working to improve the availability and comparability of those statistics; and, in collaboration with the Regional Commissions, monitoring national and regional policies on international migration.



UNDP's aim is to maximize the developmental benefits of migration for poor countries, and mitigate any negative consequences. UNDP country offices provide capacity development support to governments that wish to develop pro-poor, pro-development and human rights-based migration strategies, as part of their broader MDG-based national development strategies. Particular attention is given to the efficiency and use of remittances, retaining key skills, improving the participation of diasporas, strengthening local governance and investment in education. Within the international debate on migration, UNDP advocates for a focus on sustainable human development and protecting the rights of migrants, as well as progress on the GATS Mode 4 negotiations on the temporary movement of labour.



UNESCO emphasises the human face of migration and addresses the implications of the movement of people in its fields of competence. These include: the migration-education nexus and the challenges raised by brain drain/gain, student mobility, and the international recognition of qualifications; the migration-development nexus, with a particular emphasis on the development of knowledge diasporas through the use of ICTs; the impact of environmental trends and climatic change on forced migration; the cultural integration of migrants in host societies, with particular attention to the balance between social cohesion and the respect for cultural diversity; and the research-policy nexus through the creation of research networks and of innovative platforms enabling exchanges between researchers and policy-makers. It does so by cooperating with a wide range of partners, including intergovernmental organisations, civil society groups and universities.

## UNFPA

International migration has important implications for demographic dynamics and thus for the core mandate of UNFPA. UNFPA's approach towards policy and programmatic interventions in this area is rights-based and culture and gender sensitive. Among issues of particular concern are the challenges of female migration, including trafficking and smuggling; migration and the spread of diseases such as HIV/AIDS; the provision of basic social services, including reproductive health services, in areas of destination; and protection of the human rights of migrants. UNFPA seeks to improve data, research and institutional capacity for formulating and implementing migration policies and programmes. UNFPA is strongly dedicated to providing directed policy, advocacy and technical support to ensure that international migration is recognized as an important factor in development.

## UNHCR

In order to fulfil its mandate to protect refugees and find durable solutions for them, UNHCR is actively involved in a range of activities with a direct bearing on migration. They include contributing to the work of regional fora on migration and asylum; assisting states to address the phenomenon of mixed migratory movements; capacity-building and institutional support relating to asylum; data-collection and analysis on forced migration and secondary movements of refugees; advocacy relating to asylum, statelessness and the phenomenon of internal displacement; provision of assistance for the voluntary repatriation and reintegration of refugees and return of displaced persons; advocacy to encourage the development aid community to recognize and mitigate the development impact of hosting large numbers of refugees or receiving back large number of refugees and displaced persons.

UNICEF



UNICEF, guided by the Convention of the Rights of the Child, is dedicated to the realisation of the rights of children and women affected by migration. It carries out policy research and evidence-based analyses to find practical solutions to the challenges that migration can bring, including an assessment of unaccompanied and separated migrant children. UNICEF focuses on the social impact of migration and remittances on children left behind, and the role that social protection and legislative reform can play in supporting the realization of the rights of affected children and women. UNICEF is currently testing methodologies to measure the social impact of migration and remittances on children left behind, and is working jointly with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) to estimate the numbers of international migrant children. In addition to its research and analysis, UNICEF is also strongly committed to working directly with governments and civil society to develop protective policies for children, adolescents and women affected by migration, including human sustainable development, child trafficking and child protection.

UNITAR



The United Nations Institute for Training and Research's (UNITAR) mandate is to strengthen the effectiveness of the United Nations system through capacity development. For over a decade, UNITAR has been involved in inter-agency collaboration on international migration and related issues, providing training to government officials in most regions of the world. In addition, it supports the progress of international policy dialogue processes, principally the Global Forum on Migration and Development and the United Nations General Assembly's debate on international migration and development. Together with its partners, UNITAR works to enhance knowledge on legal underpinnings, policies and good practices related to migration and development, thereby enabling governments to make informed decisions in this field. Dedicated to promoting inclusive dialogue among all stakeholders in the migration process across sectors and world regions, the Institute offers a platform for networking, trust building, the exchange of ideas and the dissemination of lessons learned.



UNODC, as custodian of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children as well as the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, which both supplement the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, assists governments in their ratification and implementation. UNODC promotes international cooperation among governments, assisting them in implementing comprehensive, multi-disciplinary approaches, with a special focus on criminal justice responses. It provides legal assistance and supports capacity-building for law enforcement, prosecution and the judiciary. Victim support and witness protection are also part of UNODC's work. The implementation of the two Protocols will contribute to the reduction of irregular migration and related criminal activities.

## UN Regional Commissions



International migration is a phenomenon that exhibits regional specificities. The work of the 5 United Nations Regional Commissions is dedicated to fostering incorporation of the regional perspective in any analysis of international migration and in addressing the multidimensional aspects of migration, which entails the integration of this phenomenon with development goals.

Their activities include monitoring the development of regional and subregional consultative processes focusing on migration, striving to move towards interregional convergence and regional integration initiatives. As a complement to these efforts, the regional commissions are actively engaged in analysing the countries' priorities and experiences regarding labour markets, training, exchanges of human capital and portability of pension and health benefits.

## World Bank

The World Bank's engagement on international migration focuses on the development impact of migration and remittances for developing countries. The focus to date has been largely on generating reliable data and deepening existing knowledge on the potential benefits and costs of migration at both the household and aggregate level. This work has led to a number of important global and regional reports and has improved the availability and quality of data on priority issues. Operational work to date has focused on reducing the costs of remittances and better channelling of these resources; enhancing the portability of pensions and strengthening the protection of migrant workers. The World Bank has also been actively engaged in the attempt to gain global policy coherence in the area of international migration by means of improved partnerships and coordination.

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Global Migration Group

For more information on the Global Migration Group (GMG) please go to:

[www.globalmigrationgroup.org](http://www.globalmigrationgroup.org).

Additional information on each of the members of the GMG can be found at the following institutional websites:

[www.iom.int](http://www.iom.int)

[www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org)

[www.ofchr.org](http://www.ofchr.org)

[www.unctad.org](http://www.unctad.org)

[www.undp.org](http://www.undp.org)

[www.un.org/esa/desa](http://www.un.org/esa/desa)

[www.un.org/regionalcommissions](http://www.un.org/regionalcommissions)

[www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org)

[www.unfpa.org](http://www.unfpa.org)

[www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org)

[www.unhcr.org](http://www.unhcr.org)

[www.unitar.org](http://www.unitar.org)

[www.unodc.org](http://www.unodc.org)

[www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)