

## Regional Review of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in the UNECE region

12 and 13 November 2020

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### Roundtable 1 – Thursday, 12 November 2020, 10:30 – 12:10

<b>GCM objective 14:</b> Enhance consular protection, assistance and cooperation throughout the migration cycle	<b>GCM objective 15:</b> Provide access to basic services for migrants	<b>GCM objective 16:</b> Empower migrants and societies to realize full inclusion and social cohesion
<b>GCM objective 19:</b> Create conditions for migrants and diasporas to fully contribute to sustainable development in all countries	<b>GCM objective 20:</b> Promote faster, safer & cheaper transfer of remittances & foster financial inclusion of migrants	<b>GCM objective 22:</b> Establish mechanisms for the portability of social security entitlements and earned benefits

### Background Note

Migration has significant potential for contributing to the socio-economic development of migrants as well as to their host and origin communities. Through their varied skillsets and experiences and the positive effects of cultural exchange on societies, migrants can contribute to the socio-economic prosperity of their host countries. To that end, the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) recognizes that migrants should be empowered to exercise their rights and obligations, have access to social services and enhance the skills necessary for their socio-economic integration; while integration actors, particularly at local levels, are to be entrusted with the development and management of tools necessary to include migrants in their communities, service delivery and other broader social processes. For migrants to additionally contribute to the development of their origin countries, the right conditions and an enabling environment are also needed – including the establishment of strong diaspora networks with appropriate mechanisms to transfer their skills and knowledge back to their origin community, as well as lowering remittance transfer costs to maximize the volume of remittances received by migrants’ families and communities.

Today, migrants in vulnerable situations still face important challenges globally. Some migrants experience lower educational and health outcomes and can be disproportionately affected by unemployment, underemployment or poor working conditions when employed; they can lack social protection guarantees and social networking opportunities; they are faced with high remittance transfer costs; and they continue to endure barriers in accessing basic services

including to health, education at all levels, and housing. Migrants also tend to live in areas more prone to environmental stressors, and with more limited public services, all of which can impact their wellbeing, integration and social cohesion. All of these factors combined perpetuate social inequalities, bar migrants from reaching their full potential, lead to the underutilization of migrants' skills and contributions and can create inter-group tensions within communities and societies at large.

In a global pandemic context, these tensions have been further exacerbated and pre-existing inequalities have deepened, as economic resources have become scarcer and social infrastructure more fragile. COVID-19 has also negatively impacted origin countries' development prospects through, for example, reduced remittance volumes as a result of migrant workers abroad losing their jobs in the face of economic precarity, as well as increased returns of migrants into an already weak labour market in communities of origin. Yet, at the same time, the pandemic has also pointed to migrants' essential contributions to origin and host countries' crisis-response efforts as their labour in critical sectors. This includes health, agriculture, transport and food-processing industries – thus contributing positively to the response to the pandemic. This highlights that national and regional socio-economic recovery plans must ensure that migrants are duly included and are given the opportunity to contribute to recovery efforts, both in host and origin countries.

The GCM provides a cooperative international framework to support migration governance in overcoming the challenges associated with today's migration, in promoting migrants' health and wellbeing and strengthening the contribution of migrants to sustainable development. Progress towards the GCM's objectives will also accelerate achievement of the goals set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development when appropriately integrated into development and sectoral policies. A comprehensive policy approach to integration and development should consider interlinkages between both policy areas and combine short-, mid- and long-term efforts to ensure that all migrants, regardless of migration status, have inclusive and equitable access to essential services, and to facilitate migrant integration, support broader social cohesion and catalyse their potential contributions to sustainable development. This calls for implementing the GCM's guiding principles, including those of a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to strengthen cooperation among national and local governance actors and foster innovative partnerships, including among public and private entities, civil society organizations, local authorities, non-governmental actors, consular services and migrant and diaspora associations.

This roundtable will provide a space to further discuss these ongoing challenges, share good practices on migrant integration and their contribution towards development, and brainstorm on effective ways to capitalize on existing opportunities, moving forward. This will also contribute to sharing of best practice on the GCM's Knowledge Platform and Connection Hub.

## Guiding questions

All guiding questions should be assessed through the prism of the GCM's guiding principles, particularly through the whole-of-government, whole-of-society approach, whilst also being gender-responsive and child-sensitive.

1. What has been the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the implementation of the GCM and more particularly of the 6 objectives of this roundtable?
2. What are some of the good practices identified at national or local level that support the mutual empowerment of migrants and/or local communities to realise migrants' inclusion in social, economic and/or civic processes? To what extent are these initiatives effective in empowering migrants and societies to realize full inclusion and social cohesion? (GCM Objective 16)
3. What are some of the key challenges identified with regards to ensuring equitable and inclusive access for migrants' to basic services? How has the pandemic impacted their access to essential services? How best can service-provision mechanisms be inclusive of migrants' needs (for example, through mainstreaming or by adopting targeted or hybrid approaches)? (GCM Objective 15)
4. What actions or structures are in place to engage and empower migrants and diaspora communities to contribute to sustainable development to both countries of origin and destination? What are some of the obstacles that migrants may still face in that respect? (GCM Objective 19)
5. What are the key challenges faced by migrants in sending or receiving remittances? How best to ensure that migrants are sufficiently included in digital and financial measures to foster the transfer of remittances at lower costs? What steps have been taken to facilitate the efficacy of money transfer providers and/or to reduce remittance transfer costs borne by migrants? (GCM Objective 20)
6. Do migrant workers have access to social protection in their host country or city and profit from the portability of social security entitlements and earned benefits in their countries of origin? Does this apply to migrant workers at all skills levels? How has the COVID 19 pandemic impacted access to social protections? How have the private sector, trade unions and other stakeholders been engaged in addressing concerns of migrant workers? Has any progress been made in legal and policy frameworks regulating social protection rights for migrants in your country? What are some of the key loopholes that remain in that area? (GCM Objective 22)

7. To what extent and in what way(s) can/do countries of origin to engage and cooperate with consular missions globally in order to promote the protection and full inclusion of their citizens living abroad? To what extent can this benefit migrants' integration abroad? (GCM Objective 14)

## Background materials

[Video](#): The Global Compact for Migration in a Nutshell

UN Secretary-General [Policy Brief](#): COVID-19 and People on the Move

UN Network on Migration [Statement](#): COVID-19 Does Not Discriminate; Nor Should Our Response

UN Network on Migration [Policy Brief](#): Enhancing Access to Services for Migrants in the Context of COVID-19 Preparedness, Prevention, and Response and Beyond

UN Network on Migration [Policy Brief](#): The Global Compact for Migration (GCM): Well Governed Migration as an Essential Element of Effective COVID-19 Response

UN Network on Migration [Statement](#): International Day of Family Remittances: The Global Pandemic Highlights the Crucial Role of Remittances for Migrant Families

## Communications

During the roundtable, the UN Network on Migration secretariat will live tweet from its [Twitter account](#) (@UNMigNetwork).

If there is content you would like to share publicly via the Network's channel, you can send it to the team via direct messages during the event.

To tweet during the event, the following hashtags can be used: #GlobalCompactforMigration and #GCM

All materials related to this meeting are available [here](#).