

Voluntary Review of the Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration by the Republic of Belarus

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1. Methodology for preparing the voluntary GCM review

Belarus is one of the 152 countries which voted to adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), which strongly contributes to the strengthening of cooperation in the field of international migration in all its dimensions.

Belarus reaffirms its commitment to the vision and guiding principles of the GCM and emphasizes the importance of strengthening of international and regional cooperation in the field of migration, given the transnational nature of migration.

Since the start, Belarus adopted a proactive approach being one of the first countries in the region to organise, in 2016 and 2017, national consultations, with the support of the IOM Office in Belarus, in order to develop national priorities and contribute to the draft GCM. The national consultations were attended by the representatives of all stakeholders: ministries, nongovernmental and international organisations, diasporas and businesses.

To support the government in the effective implementation of the GCM at the national level, the UN Country Network on Migration (UNCNM) for Belarus was established in 2020.

During the preparation of the Review, the following resources were used: national and international statistical data for 2019, laws and regulations, official documents and materials from 15 state agencies, background information on key international projects in the field of migration provided by international organisations, migrants' stories provided by civil society organisations.

The preparation of the Review involved analytical review and consultations in order to take into account the contributions of all stakeholders, including nongovernmental and international organisations.

The structure of the Review is based on the following topics and GCM objectives:

- Management and migration (GCM objectives 1/3/12/14/17/23)
- Labour migration and development (GCM objectives 2/7/5/6/18/20)
- Border management and human rights (GCM objectives 4/8/9/10/11/13/21)

- Rights of migrants and integration (GCM objectives 15/16/19/22)

Each topic includes a set of statistical data and information on progress and best practices.

The information on the legal environment, best practices and progress covers the period from December 2018 to July 2020. The short term of this voluntary review and the COVID-19 situation make it impossible to give a high-quality assessment of the migration statistics over time. Therefore, the statistical data are provided for 2019. They will be used as the base level to assess the developments in the next reviews.

Since Belarus is the country of origin, destination and transit of migrants, the term “migrant” is used herein to refer to either a foreign citizen who enters the territory of Belarus, or a citizen of Belarus entering the country, depending on the context.

The Review takes into account the provisions of the National Strategy of Sustainable Socio-Economic Development of the Republic of Belarus for the period until 2030, the Concept of Integrated Management of the State Border of the Republic of Belarus for 2019-2023, the Concept of Ensuring Border Security of the Republic of Belarus for 2018-2022 and other relevant programmes and plans.

The Review was coordinated with the UN and the Republic of Belarus Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for 2021-2025, facilitating both the realisation of the potential of migration to help achieve all SDGs and the effective use of the impact that the achievement of the SDGs will have on migration.

The preparation of the Review coincided with the final process of drafting the Concept of the Migration Policy of the Republic of Belarus for 2020-2025, which is being prepared for adoption in 2020, and the Programme of the Socio-Economic Development of the Republic of Belarus for 2021-2025, which is fundamental to the national implementation of the SDGs. This made it possible to analyse the links between these important documents and to develop an integrated national system of management of safe, orderly and regular migration.

The aim of this Review is to provide information on the initial conditions of the implementation of the GCM objectives by Belarus, in correlation with the fundamental national programmes and indicators in the field of migration and the vision of prospective development directions.

2. Policy and enabling environment

Belarus is conducting a multivector migration policy, which is the result of internal socio-economic and political factors, historical, cultural and economic connections with the members of the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Eurasian Economic Union, migration policies of the neighbouring European Union member states.

The key characteristics of the migration profile of the Republic of Belarus are:

- continuing appeal of the Republic of Belarus for migrants, in particular, migrant workers and students who wish to receive higher education in Belarus, which leads to the positive balance of the migration exchange;
- increase in the number of Belarusian citizens leaving the country in search of employment and the insufficient rate of filling of existing and new vacancies by incoming foreign specialists;
- problem of labour resources deficit, especially considering that the number of citizens of the Republic of Belarus of working age compared to the total population of the country is decreasing;
- decrease in the number of irregular migrants due to the strengthening of migration control;
- effective control of the human trafficking situation (both internal and external), intensification of measures preventing the trafficking of children;
- internal migration and urbanisation of the Belarusian population, whereby the population increases in big cities, especially in Minsk;
- in the current period from January 2020, in the context of COVID-19, it should be noted that a number of migrants are “stuck” in the territory of Belarus and they have received assistance in terms of extending the documents allowing them to stay in the country.

The Concept of the Migration Policy of the Republic of Belarus for 2020-2025 that is being developed includes strategic milestones of the state related to the implementation of the migration policy and assessment of migration situation in the country taking into account the socio-economic development. The document sets forth the priorities for cooperation and migration policy for the nearest five-year period, with the subsequent approval of the relevant action plan of its implementation.

The Concept will set forth the following priority areas:

1. Optimisation of internal and external migration flows, achievement of the positive balance of external migration, including by enhancing the Republic’s investment and tourist appeal, facilitating migration for educational purposes and academic mobility, fulfilment of international obligations to protect the rights of forced migrants, facilitating voluntary permanent resettlement to the Republic of Belarus of Belarusians living abroad and other persons who are able to successfully reintegrate into the Belarusian society, creating conditions for adaptation and integration of migrants, development of constructive collaboration between the migrants and the Belarusian society;
2. Improvement of the external labour migration regulation system;
3. Combating irregular migration and further development of mechanisms and means of prevention, diversion, detection and suppression of violations of the law of the Republic of Belarus in the field of migration;
4. Improvement of the statistical data collection mechanisms.

These priorities are in line with the GCM objectives, and the state invites you to read about the progress made in these areas in part 3 of the Review.

The Republic of Belarus has developed a comprehensive legal framework regulating all aspects of migration, primarily based on the Constitution of the Republic of Belarus, the Criminal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Code of Administrative Offences, as well as the following laws of the Republic of Belarus:

- “On the Citizenship of the Republic of Belarus”;
- “On the State Border of the Republic of Belarus”;
- “On the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens and Stateless Persons in the Republic of Belarus”;
- “On External Labour Migration”;
- “On the Procedure for Leaving the Republic of Belarus and Entering the Republic of Belarus by the Citizens of the Republic of Belarus”;
- “On Combating Human Trafficking”;
- “On the Population Register”;
- “On Granting Foreign Citizens and Stateless Persons Refugee Status, Subsidiary Protection, Asylum and Temporary Protection in the Republic of Belarus”.

For the purposes of general coordination and management of migration, a subprogramme No. 6 “External Migration” is being implemented within the State Programme “Health of the People and Demographic Security of the Republic of Belarus” for 2016-2020.

In the country, consistent and focused work is being done to improve the legal regulations in the field of migration.

In 2019, the amendments to the Law of the Republic of Belarus “On the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens and Stateless Persons in the Republic of Belarus” of 4 January 2010 No. 105-Z were approved, which came into effect on 1 July 2020. The current version of this law specifies the definition and objectives of migration control and of handling the foreigners’ personal data; regulates the issues of provision of medical assistance to the foreigners detained in Belarus for violating the law on the legal status of foreigners, including the provision of free medical assistance; determines the functioning of the migrants accommodation centres under the local internal affairs agencies and border guard service agencies; extends the deadline for the registration of foreigners in the citizenship and migration divisions upon arrival; makes less strict the requirements for foreigners wishing to reside in Belarus permanently, etc.

As a follow-up to this law and in order to protect irregular migrants, the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus adopted the decree of 29 June 2020 No. 383 “On

the Provision of Medical Assistance to Foreign Citizens and Stateless Persons Detained for Violating the Law and the Functioning of Temporary Detention Centres for Foreign Citizens and Stateless Persons”. The decree approved the Regulations on Medical Assistance, the List of Medical Services Provided Free of Charge to Foreign Citizens and Stateless Persons Detained for Violating the Law on the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens and Stateless Persons in the Republic of Belarus, which include emergency, primary and specialised medical assistance, as well as the Regulations on the Functioning of Migrants Accommodation Centres for Foreign Citizens and Stateless Persons, which determine the living conditions and the healthcare coverage of detained foreigners.

In order to strengthen the border security and to harmonise the rules (standards) accelerating the crossing of the State Border of the Republic of Belarus by people, vehicles and goods, there have been adopted and are being implemented the Concept of Ensuring Border Security of the Republic of Belarus for 2018-2022 and the Concept of Integrated Management of the State Border of the Republic of Belarus.

In order to help improve the effectiveness of the national and transnational measures to combat the smuggling of migrants, human trafficking and human smuggling, and to provide assistance to persons affected by this type of criminal activity, Belarus is implementing the State Programme on Combating Crime and Corruption for 2019-2022 (which includes a section on combating organised crime and human trafficking), as well as the National Organisational and Analytical Action Plan for the Protection of Minors from Sexual Violence and Exploitation for 2020-2022. In 2020, amendments were made to the Regulations defining the national mechanism of identification and referral of victims of human trafficking approved by the decree of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus of 11 June 2015 No. 485.

The management of migration processes is directly connected to and taken into account in other key country programmes: the National Strategy of Sustainable Socio-Economic Development of the Republic of Belarus for the period until 2030, the National Action Plan for Gender Equality in the Republic of Belarus for 2017-2020, the National Action Plan for Improving the Status of Children and Protection of Their Rights for 2017-2021. These programmes help ensure that vulnerabilities are taken into account during migration management.

In Belarus, based on international standards, there have been established and are continuously improved the legal framework and enforcement practices, in order to enable the development of regular and orderly migration, which will facilitate the fullest implementation of the GCM objectives.

The implementation of the GCM is aligned with the implementation by Belarus of the SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11, 13, 16 and 17. During 2017-2020, tremendous work has been done to institutionalise and integrate the SDGs in Belarus. The national coordination mechanism was established (the position of the National Coordinator of

the SDG Implementation and the National Council for Sustainable Development were created). A list of national indicators for the SGD implementation monitoring was created, on which the National SDG Reporting Platform is based.

Belarus is continuously developing the national and international cooperation in the field of migration. An important milestone was the signing and coming into effect in 2020 of the Agreement between the Republic of Belarus and the EU on the Facilitation of the Issuance of Visas and the Agreement on the Readmission of Persons Residing Without Authorisation.

Belarus is one of the participants of the action plan under the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility. In 2016, there was signed the Joint Declaration on a Mobility Partnership between the Republic of Belarus, the European Union and its participating Member States (including Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Finland). The Declaration is aimed at increasing the effectiveness of migration flows management, strengthening of efforts to counter illegal migration, improving the mechanisms of granting asylum and refugee status and effective facilitation of integration of migrants in economic processes of the receiving state.

Belarus is a signatory of all universal UN conventions on combating human trafficking, as well as the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings.

In order to strengthen the interregional and cross-border cooperation, Belarus is an active participant of the Convention on Cross-Border Cooperation between the CIS Member States, the Convention on Interregional Cooperation between the CIS Member States, the CIS Member States Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Labour Migration and Social Security of Migrant Workers, and the relevant concepts and plans.

In the field of external labour migration, the Republic of Belarus participates in the events of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). In order to eliminate the barriers to the free movement of labour, Belarus has participated in the development of the project called “Unified Search System “Work Without Borders”. The implementation of agreements and participation in international and regional collaboration helps to strengthen the capacity of the Republic of Belarus in the field of migration.

3. Progress on GCM objectives

3.1 Management and migration (GCM objectives 1/3/12/14/17/23)

Statistical data:

In 2019, foreign citizens and stateless persons (hereinafter – foreigners) entered the Republic of Belarus over 4.92 million times and left it 5.19 million times. The citizens of the following countries crossed the State Border of the Republic of Belarus most often: Ukraine (3.03 million), Russia (2.61 million), Lithuania (1.86 million), Poland

(0.95 million), Latvia (0.34 million), Moldova (0.17 million), Germany (0.11 million) and Kazakhstan (0.09 million). The main purposes of entry and stay of foreign citizens in Belarus were: visit, official, tourism, employment and transit through the territory of Belarus.

As of 2019, around 230,000 foreigners resided in Belarus, which equalled nearly 2.5% of the population of Belarus. As of 1 January 2020, the internal affairs agencies have registered 56,500 foreigners with temporary residence permits and 173,200 foreigners with permanent residence permits. In 2019, around 21,000 people left the country and 34,800 people entered the country, which means that the migration balance remained positive. The largest number of foreigners resides in Minsk, the capital.

The crime situation in the country related to the presence of foreigners has not changed significantly compared to the previous years and is stable and controlled.

In 2019, 20,976 people left Belarus. The main destination countries for Belarusians in 2019 were the CIS member states, Poland, China, Germany, Israel, and Lithuania.

Progress and best practices:

The most important step in the management of safe, orderly and regular migration is the establishment of a working group and the development of the Concept of the Migration Policy of the Republic of Belarus for 2020-2025 with the subsequent approval of the relevant action plan.

Belarus is constantly improving the methods and technologies of collection of data on the population migration at the national level (1). The census form of the national census held in 2019 included additional questions related to migration (country of birth, parents' country of birth, country of citizenship, country of residence prior to the census, date of last entry and reason for migration).

The National Statistical Committee regularly surveys households in order to research employment issues (1). According to the data, in the first quarter of 2020, 86,800 Belarusians were employed abroad for a term of up to one year.

In 2019, Belarus, for the third time, took part in the next round of the multiple indicator cluster survey to assess the situation of children and women (MICS6). The survey programme included some questions related to the migration of respondents (women age 15-49, men age 15-59): the change of residence, including the region (country) and type of locality from which the respondent moved, and the time that has passed since the move.

There has been created and launched the National SDG Reporting Platform. The Platform enables the collection, consolidation and dissemination of up-to-date information on the current status of the SDG implementation in the country. The Platform collects data and information on 17 SDGs, including 5 indicators connected with migration (1).

There has been created and is successfully operating the automated information system “Citizenship and migration”. This information resource is being continuously improved to ensure the most accurate collection and analysis of migration data (1).

One of the recent improvements is connected with the increased coverage of data on foreign citizens employed in Belarus. The analytical materials include information from other states on the Belarusian citizens working in their territory. In order to enhance the collaboration and the consistency of data (1) the information is sent to the National Statistical Committee.

Due to the historical traditions of peaceful interethnic relations and targeted and consistent policy, Belarus is free of discrimination and conflicts based on ethnicity, race or culture. Belarus is working to develop the systems of public information and communication policy which are based on gender-sensitive approach and respect of human rights and ensure tolerant attitude toward migrants (17) and migration in general.

With the support of international actors, work is being done to ensure that public media understand the terms and use them correctly when reporting on the issues of migration and dealing with stereotypes related to migrants.

The state provides accurate, transparent and timely information (3, 12, 14) on the rules regulating the entry of foreigners in the Republic of Belarus, their stay and departure from the country. This information is posted and updated on the websites of competent authorities and services, in the arrivals area of the Minsk National Airport and in places where large numbers of migrants gather (educational facilities, markets).

The improvement of the procedure and quality of provision and registration of information is facilitated by the EU-IOM joint project “Helping Belarus Address the Phenomenon of Increasing Numbers of Irregular Migrants”. Among other things, this project entails equipping of the hotline on safe travel abroad for employment purposes of the Department of Citizenship and Migration (DCM) of the MIA with modern technical means which will help increase the quality of consultations provided to the labour migrants at all stages of migration. The DCM of the MIA and non-profit organisations have websites which contain information on the legal migration opportunities, enabling the migrants to make informed decisions about migration before departure. One of the country’s best practices is consulting the migrants on the issues of safe and legal migration using modern information technologies (online through the website for potential migrants, through Viber and Telegram chats, Facebook and VKontakte social media platforms), which made it easier for Belarusian migrants who are already abroad to receive consultation support.

Another good practice is the implementation of bilateral projects aimed at raising awareness of Belarusian citizens working in specific countries.

3.2 Labour migration and development (GCM objectives 2/5/6/7/18/20)

Statistical data:

Belarus remains appealing to labour migrants. In 2019, 20,862 people entered the country for employment purposes (16,172 in 2018). Most of the foreigners who entered Belarus for work were citizens of Russia (6,741), China (4,318), Ukraine (3,145) and Uzbekistan (1,336). The overwhelming majority of working migrants entered Belarus to do manual labour (5,681). 3,051 people entered as qualified workers and specialists, 428 foreigners entered to work in agriculture 1,320 – to work in services and trade, 1,210 – to take positions in management.

The number of Belarusians who travel abroad for work with the help of licensed firms, according to the official statistics, is decreasing (9,061 in 2019). The countries of destination are Russia, Poland, Lithuania, Czech Republic, and Germany. However, the number of citizens leaving without assistance is growing. According to competent authorities of the Russian Federation, 163,410 citizens of Belarus with “employment” as their purpose of entry were registered in 2019. According to the official Internet resources of the Republic of Poland, 29,129 Belarusian workers were legally employed in Poland in 2019¹.

According to the National Bank of the Republic of Belarus, in 2019 the Belarusian migrants sent 1,049.8 million US dollars to Belarus and foreign migrants sent 166.5 million US dollars from Belarus.

Progress and best practices:

In Belarus, procedures have been established to facilitate fair and ethical recruitment and safeguard conditions that ensure decent work (6). To employ a foreign citizen, a company has to obtain a special permit. The permits are issued subject to the approval of the local labour, employment and social security agency. Foreigners are employed based on the needs of the employer, state interests, labour market situation in the Republic of Belarus and strictly in accordance with labour contracts.

The activity related to the employment of Belarusian citizens abroad must be licensed by the MIA, and the draft labour contract must be approved. The protection of Belarusian citizens employed abroad is ensured by a set of regulations. One of the developments in this field is the launch, in July 2020, of publicly accessible Unified Register of Licenses, where anyone interested can check whether the required license was issued or not.

One of the best practices in the field of labour migration regulation is the facilitation of access to pathways for legal labour migration (5). Belarus is preparing to sign bilateral agreements on the exchange of migrant workers with the UAE and Bulgaria,

¹ <https://psz.praca.gov.pl/web/urzed-pracy/-/8180075-zezwolenia-na-prace-cudzoziemcow>

which set forth flexible mechanisms for the employment of migrant workers and protect their right.

It is important for Belarus to progressively implement the GCM objectives, which help minimise the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin (2, 7). The human development in Belarus is characterised by sustained growth. In the global human development index ranking of 2019 Belarus was three points higher than in 2017, the 50th of 189 countries. The country actively contributes to the achievement of the SDGs. In Belarus, there was established and is being improved the legal framework against domestic violence; the National Action Plan for Gender Equality in the Republic of Belarus for 2017-2020 is gradually implemented. In 2019, with the support of the UNDP, the programme on the promotion of effective employment and self-employment of population in small and medium-sized towns in Belarus through the encouragement of entrepreneurial initiative was implemented, which included the establishment of the National Centre for Subcontracting on the basis of the Belarusian Fund of Financial Support to Entrepreneurs. These measures have already significantly contributed to the reduction of vulnerabilities in the migration process, and they will continue to be implemented.

It is important that the state ensure the transformation of the resource economy into the knowledge economy. In order to further invest in labour migrants' development and the mutual recognition of skills, qualifications and competences (18), Belarus confirms its commitment to the further integration of the European Higher Education Area principles and instruments in the country's higher education system. One of the developments was the loan agreement signed with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development to update Belarus' higher education in 2020-2025.

In terms of managing remittances (20) as resources for economic development and growth, Belarus is actively entering into bilateral agreements on the avoidance of double taxation and the prevention of income tax evasion. As of 1 January 2020, 71 agreements were executed.

The economic assessment of the impact of the cross-border migration is reflected in Belarus' balance of payments based on the methodological principles set forth in the relevant Statistics Manual of the International Monetary Fund used by other countries when compiling the balance of payments.

Due to the COVID-19 epidemic, the numbers of foreigners returning to their states and workers (including migrants) made redundant due to economic difficulties were not large.

The Belarusian internal affairs agencies, *inter alia*, taking into account the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus disease, have taken measures to regulate the legal status of foreign citizens and stateless persons who are present in Belarus and cannot leave the Republic of Belarus.

As of 15 September 2020, since it was impossible to leave the territory of Belarus due

to the travel restrictions imposed by other states and the problems with transport connections between the states, 3,370 foreign citizens had their registration terms extended or received temporary residence permits in the Republic of Belarus.

3.3 Border management and human rights (GCM objectives 4/8/9/10/11/13/21)

Statistical data:

In 2019, foreign citizens and stateless persons (hereinafter – foreigners) entered the Republic of Belarus over 4.92 million times and left it 5.19 million times. The citizens of the following countries crossed the State Border of the Republic of Belarus most often: Ukraine (3.03 million), Russia (2.61 million), Lithuania (1.86 million), Poland (0.95 million), Latvia (0.34 million), Moldova (0.17 million), Germany (0.11 million) and Kazakhstan (0.09 million). The main purposes of entry and stay of foreign citizens in Belarus were: visit, official, tourism, employment and transit through the territory of Belarus.

In 2019, the internal affairs agencies and border guard service agencies eliminated 20 irregular transit migration channels, identified 18 organised groups of irregular migrants, detained 311 people who illegally crossed the state border, of which 211 were irregular migrants. The law enforcement agencies of Belarus solved 246 cases connected with the violation by foreigners of the prohibition to enter the Republic of Belarus and 48 cases connected with irregular migration organisation.

In 2019, the internal affairs agencies identified 128 victims of human trafficking, including 30 minors, 93 crimes in the field of human trafficking (offences specified in the Palermo Protocol) and 15 channels for smuggling the victims abroad.

Progress and best practices:

In order to manage borders in a coordinated and secure manner (11), there has been developed and is used the Concept of Integrated Management of the State Border of the Republic of Belarus for 2019-2023, aimed at addressing border threats and harmonisation of rules accelerating the crossing of the State Border by people, vehicles and goods.

In order to ensure that migrants have adequate documentation (4) and to make it easier to obtain such documentation, since 2019, the foreigners are registered electronically through the unified electronic services portal (**portal.gov.by**) free of charge.

In 2020, the project “Unified Search System “Work Without Borders” is launched, which will make it possible to search for vacancies or resumes in all the EAEU member countries.

In order to combat irregular migration (9) Belarus regularly implements preventive operational measures.

In order to facilitate safe and dignified return (21), on 9 October 2019, the Protocol of Intent to Cooperate was signed between the MIA of the Republic of Belarus, the State Border Committee of the Republic of Belarus and the IOM Office in Belarus, to facilitate the voluntary return of foreign citizen to their state of citizenship or permanent legal residence, which defined the mechanism of cooperation for voluntary, orderly and humane return of foreigners based on the migrant's own decision, taking into account the international experience in this area. In 2019-2020, 96 migrants returned to their homes.

Migrant's story

Nivaldo Ciriaco, a Brazilian football player, came to Belarus in 2015 during the 11th Futsal World Cup (indoor football championship) as part of the Brazilian team. In 2019, he became the coach of the Dinamo-Minsk junior team.

Due to the spread of COVID-19, Ciriaco's life changed dramatically, since one of his main sources of income – private football lessons – was lost. This was a serious blow to the family budget. The football player started thinking of returning to Brazil. However, his savings were depleting faster than he would have hoped. Then the family found out about the IOM's Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration Programme.

This gave Ciriaco and his family hope: "I'm happy to return to Brazil and to my life there, to see my family. But, at the same time, I'm sad, because I believe that I could have been successful here". Ciriaco and his family safely returned to Brazil.

In order to create up-to-date infrastructure to detain irregular migrants in accordance with international standards (13), work is being done to establish two temporary detention centres for foreigners. These centres will be built taking into account the special needs of different categories of migrants, with particular attention to the needs of detained women and children.

In order to develop speedy and effective procedures for the identification and return (21) of persons, who do not meet or no longer meet the entry, stay or residence conditions, in order to facilitate the transit of such persons in the spirit of cooperation, in 2019, Belarus signed an Agreement on Readmission with Ukraine, and, in 2020, an Agreement on Visa Facilitation and Readmission with the European Union. In 2019, in order to strengthen the capacity of the State Border Committee, in partnership with the IOM, there was developed a unique guide for practitioners, which included all the relevant information and described the procedure of accelerated readmission based on respect for human rights and dignity. The guide is now part of the Border Guard Service Institute curriculum.

The main goals of the Belarusian state policy in the field of combating human trafficking (10) are set forth in the Law of the Republic of Belarus "On Combating Human Trafficking" and a number of other legal documents, on which the country's system of combating human trafficking, protection and rehabilitation of victims of human trafficking is based.

In order to prevent human trafficking and irregular migration in Belarus, the DCM of the MIA and nongovernmental organisations operate hotlines, hold information campaigns, trainings, seminars and other events for at-risk populations.

In 2007, the International Training Centre (ITC) for Migration and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings was established in Belarus with the IOM's support. This centre for training, upgrading skills and retraining of personnel working in the field of migration and combating human trafficking is the core educational institution for the specialised training of experts from the CIS member countries.

In 2019, with organisational and financial support of international organisations, there were held 23 trainings and other events on various aspects of combating human trafficking, including 13 advanced courses (in which 305 people participated), organised by ITC for Belarusian and foreign specialists.

3.4 Rights of migrants and integration (GCM objectives 15/16/19/22)

Statistical data:

As of 1 January 2020, the internal affairs agencies registered 56,500 foreigners with temporary residence permits, including 12,900 foreigners who came to join their spouses or close relatives, more than 22,000 foreigners who entered the country for education, 14,300 foreigners who came here for work and 173,200 foreigners with permanent residence permits.

According to the 2019 census, 84.9% of the country's population are Belarusians and 15.1% are other nationalities, including Russian (7.4%), Polish (3.1%), Ukrainian (1.7%), Jewish, Armenian, Tatar, Roma, Azerbaijani, Lithuanian (0.1% each).

Progress and lessons learned:

In order to provide access to health services for migrants (15), healthcare workers receive training on culturally sensitive service delivery, *inter alia*, taking into account the relevant recommendations set forth in the Framework of Priorities and Guiding Principles to Promote the Health of Refugees and Migrants prepared by the WHO.

Minor foreign citizens and stateless persons who have been granted refugee status, subsidiary protection or asylum in the Republic of Belarus, or are applying for protection, have the same right to medical assistance as the minors citizens of the Republic of Belarus.

In Belarus, the right of migrant children to access preschool, general secondary and special education is guaranteed at the legislative level, which facilitates complete social integration (16). Minor foreign citizens and stateless persons who are temporary residents of the Republic of Belarus, as well as minor foreign citizens and stateless persons who have been granted refugee status, subsidiary protection or asylum in the

Republic of Belarus, or are applying for protection, have the same right to preschool, general secondary and special education as the minors citizens of the Republic of Belarus.

Cultural and national diversity is very important to Belarus. In this regard, it is vital to create conditions for the development of diasporas (19). In Belarus, significant cultural events of ethnic minorities are covered in the media and special TV-shows devoted to inter-ethnic and inter-confessional relations are broadcasted. “Belarus” radio station broadcasts live in seven languages, including Polish, German, French, Spanish and Chinese.

Ethnic minority organisations (for example, Polish, Jewish, Armenian, Lithuanian, Ukrainian) print their own publications. Every year, Belarus celebrates the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development (21 May) and the International Day for Tolerance (16 November). Every two years, the Republican Festival of National Cultures is held in Grodno uniting all ethnicities living in Belarus. Also, the Children’s Festival of National Cultures is held in Minsk.

Belarusian diaspora abroad is considered to be an important national, intellectual, socio-cultural, demographical and economic resource for Belarus. To approach the issues of the development of cooperation with the Belarusian diaspora in a systemic manner, the “Belarusians in the World” subprogramme is being implemented in 2016-2020, as part of the “Belarusian Culture” programme.

Belarus is consistently developing cooperation in the field of migrants’ social security (22). In order to ensure portability of pension entitlements earned in the territory of the state of employment, Belarus signed agreements on social security (pensions) with the Czech Republic, Republic of Estonia and Republic of Moldova. In 2019, agreements were signed with the Republic of Poland and the Eurasian Economic Union members (they have not yet entered into force).

4. Means of implementation

Belarus is actively strengthening regional and international cooperation in the field of safe, orderly and regular migration, and sharing its expertise. In this regard, in terms of building multi-stakeholder partnerships for mobilising and sharing knowledge, expertise, technologies and financial resources to support the implementation of the GCM, an important role is played by the CNM, including the United Nations Resident Coordinator Office, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, IOM, UNHCR, WHO, UNAIDS, World Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, as well as other UN system agencies. These agencies, as well as civil society organisations working primarily in the field of combating irregular migration and human trafficking, are actively involved in joint projects in the field of migration.

The following areas require additional support to implement the GCM:

- strengthening of national capacity in the field of migration data collection and analysis; development of a standard set to determine the number of migrants and the direction of their movement, document the models and trends in the field of migration, migrants' characteristics, drivers, benefits and impacts of migration;
- preparation of analytical projection of migration situation development, analysis of migration risks;
- strengthening of migration management through the implementation of the Concept of the Migration Policy of the Republic of Belarus for 2020-2025 and monitoring the results;
- implementation of the readmission and visa facilitation agreements between the EU, Belarus and Ukraine;
- implementation of programmes to shape the perception of well-managed migration as a development factor for Belarus;
- incorporation of the health needs of migrants into healthcare, *inter alia*, by strengthening capacities for medical services provision.

5. Next steps

The preparation of the Review enables to share with the GCM member states information and experience related to the trends, challenges and best practices in dealing with the issues of international migration.

The IOM Office in Belarus has compared the National SDG Indicators System and the GCM objectives. The monitoring system already includes the collection of key migration indicators on SDG objectives, one of which is well-managed migration policies (SDG objective 10.7).

Integration of key indicators on GCM objectives into the SDG monitoring system will become an important step towards the integration of the country's indicators system as a whole, which will ensure sustainability, quality and coherence of state policies, including the migration policy.

In order to enhance the implementation of the GCM, there are plans to approve the draft Concept of the Migration Policy of the Republic of Belarus for 2020-2025.

In cooperation with the UN system agencies and other partners, Belarus will work to familiarise the population of the country with the GCM provisions in order to raise awareness of the society and implement coherent and systemic migration policy.