

## **Norway – voluntary inputs to contribute to the Regional Review for the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM).**

Oslo, 13 October 2020

We thank UNECE and IOM for the invitation to contribute voluntary written inputs on experiences with the implementation of GCM.

Norway takes part in the implementation of the Global Compact, in particular with a view to improving migration management and stemming irregular migration. In Norway, implementation is being pursued at the national level by relevant ministries responsible for the various topics covered by the Compact's 23 goals. A large part of the measures contained in the Global Compact, especially as regards the human rights of migrants, are already being implemented in Norway.

As stated in the Norwegian explanation of vote regarding the GCM in the General Assembly 19 December 2018, GCM reaffirms the sovereign right of States to determine their national migration policy and their prerogative to govern migration within their jurisdiction in conformity with international law. Moreover, it allows countries to reserve certain rights and welfare benefits for regular migrants. It remains our position that Norwegian migration legislation and governance function well and that there is no need to make changes to achieve conformity with the GCM. The Norwegian government ensures fair treatment of third country nationals who reside legally in Norway. Social inclusion of migrants is a priority, and many key initiatives have been developed in this area. The aim of Norwegian integration policy is to provide opportunities for refugees and other immigrants to participate in the Norwegian workforce and community life.

Recognizing the key role of IOM in the implementation of GCM, Norway has provided unearmarked core support to IOM annually since the adoption of GCM to strengthen IOM's operational effectiveness and performance in this respect. To support the establishment of the capacity-building mechanism called for in GCM, Norway has contributed NOK 15 million to the GCM fund in 2020, earmarked for thematic areas 2 and 3.

In accordance with Objective 2 of the GCM, "Minimize the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin", Norway is a major provider of international development assistance and humanitarian aid. Recognizing the need to establish a comprehensive migration policy that covers all stages of migration, Norway has been a contributor and partner to the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF) since its inception. Norway is also a contributor to IOM and UNODC efforts to combat human trafficking and people smuggling. The promotion of human rights and democratic principles is at the heart of Norwegian foreign policy. This policy is implemented both in international forums such as the UN, the OSCE and the Council of Europe, and at country level. Norway provides support for multiple human rights initiatives and humanitarian actions that include migrants, especially vulnerable migrants. Norway is a staunch supporter of the fundamental International Labour Organization conventions and the Sustainable Development Goals as regards the importance of decent work and access to it for foreign workers.

Norway aims to secure the availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration, even though we do not see GCM as conferring any obligation on Norway to further expand legislation or change practices regarding labour migration, education opportunities, family or other immigration. However, for legal pathways for migration to remain open or be expanded, there must be a common understanding of the obligations of countries of origin and destination respectively. The GCM clearly confirms the obligation of all countries to readmit their own nationals if they have been staying illegally in other countries, whether they return voluntarily or not, and to cooperate in organising their return. With this in mind, Norway has approached a number of relevant countries of origin to gain acceptance for reciprocal return and readmission arrangements, with the utmost respect for both individual and procedural guarantees. The arrangements often include partnerships and financial support for capacity building. Norway also offers reintegration support to irregular migrants should they choose to return voluntarily to their home country. Nevertheless, some countries of origin fail to comply with their obligation to cooperate in the return and readmission of their own nationals, particularly as regards forced returns.

Norway would like to point out that lack of cooperation in the return and readmission of migrants that are staying illegally remains a major obstacle to further pursuit of the visions laid out in the Global Compact.