

## **The status of implementation of the GCM – the Danish contribution to the regional review**

Denmark signed up to the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, which is a non-legally binding framework, with a view to strengthen international cooperation to improve migration management and reduce irregular migration at the global, regional and national level. Migration is a global phenomenon and solving challenges related to migration requires international cooperation for which the GCM offers a useful platform for dialogue.

At the national level, it is the overall assessment that Denmark lives up to the 23 commitments put forward in the GCM. Accordingly, Denmark has not prepared a national implementation plan for the GCM, however Denmark is engaged in a number of areas in support of the implementation of the GCM. Relevant sector ministries are responsible for the various topics covered by the GCM, but close coordination and collaboration is taking place between key ministries like the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (which is also responsible for development cooperation), the Ministry of Immigration and Integration and the Ministry of Justice promoting a whole-of-government approach with regards to the implementation of national migration policies.

As stated in the Danish 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.

Denmark offers legal pathways for regular migration that reflects labour market realities as mentioned in Objective 5. Denmark has a wide range of legal pathways for migration that are open for all third country nationals, whom fulfil the set requirements. In this regard, it is important to note that Denmark does not operate with quotas with regards to the number of persons that can make use of these legal pathways. However, Denmark would like to underline that decisions regarding which legal pathways to provide at any given time remain at the sole discretion of the State concerned.

We also underline the importance we attach to the fact that the media in our country enjoy extensive freedoms to debate all issues of importance to society, including the issue of migration in all its aspects.

Denmark has established cooperation with a number of relevant countries of origin for reciprocal return and readmission arrangements, with respect for both individual and procedural guarantees. The arrangements often include partnerships and financial support for capacity building as well as reintegration support to persons who do not have the right to remain, 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 in accordance with Objective 21. Lack of cooperation on the part of states representing country of origin regarding return and readmission of rejected asylum seekers and irregular migrants remains a major obstacle to achieve safe, orderly and regular migration.

At the global and regional level, Denmark has contributed 15 million DKK to the Multi-Partner Trust Fund for 2020 – 2021 to support the establishment of the capacity-building mechanism called for in the GCM and the implementation of the GCM in developing countries and along migratory routes. This is also in support of the UN Network on Migration established by the Secretary-General.

Denmark has provided core support to IOM annually since 2018 to support IOM in fulfilling its new role in the UN architecture on migration, including strengthening IOM's organizational effectiveness and in support of capacity building for better migration management and addressing drivers of irregular migration at global level.

The fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is highly relevant for achieving the objectives of the GCM. Since 2017, Denmark has had a joint development cooperation and humanitarian aid strategy, which is guided by the SDGs and includes a strategic aim on "Migration and Development".

Denmark has in accordance with GCM objective 21 (Cooperate in facilitating safe and dignified return and readmission, as well as sustainable reintegration) fostered institutional contacts with relevant officials from countries of origin and destination by appointing an Ambassador-at-Large for Migration with responsibility for supporting return and readmission along with a special adviser on migration issues as well as three regional migration counsellors strategically posted at Danish embassies in select regions. The goal is to maintain and improve bilateral relations, assist in specific readmissions and identify opportunities for enhancing reintegration opportunities in countries of origin as well as funding capacity building efforts in support of countries of origin and transit towards improved migration management. Denmark has furthermore been a member of ERRIN (European Return and Reintegration Network) since June 2016 via an associated partnership agreement. Where ERRIN does not yet have programmes, Denmark has entered into agreement with the European Reintegration Support Organisations' network to provide sustainable reintegration support via local partners<sup>1</sup>.

In accordance with GCM Objective 2, (Minimize the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin), Denmark is a major provider of international development assistance and humanitarian aid and one out of only five countries that fulfil the UN target of providing 0.7 pct. GNI as development assistance. Denmark works with a human rights-based approach to development cooperation and has a strong focus on gender equality.

To better achieve Danish priorities with regards to asylum and migration an Inter-ministerial Migration Task Force has been established to promote solutions that can change the incentive structures behind present and future irregular migration flows including developing capacities in third countries along the migratory routes to secure better management of mixed migration movements. The activities of the Migration Task Force will i.e. contribute to the implementation of the GCM's objectives 2, 4, 9, 10, 11 and 21.

It is of particular Danish priority to improve management of irregular migration, including strengthened border control, combatting human smuggling and trafficking, cooperation on return and readmission, addressing drivers of irregular migration, and enhancing international and regional cooperation on migration. Denmark contributes to IOM and UNODC efforts to combat human trafficking and smuggling of persons as part of the transnational response to smuggling of migrants and efforts to prevent, combat and eradicate trafficking in persons in line with GCM Objectives 9 and 10. Moreover, Denmark has contributed to OHCHR projects on strengthening human rights fulfilment in migration management and border control in the Middle East and North Africa region and the promotion of a human rights based approach to climate related migration challenges in the Sahel Region in line with i.a. Objectives 7 and 11. Denmark is also actively supporting IOM in a number of countries in Africa, Asia and the Balkans with a focus on migration management and capacity building of migration authorities.

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<sup>1</sup> ERSO has recently engaged with ERRIN in a partnership agreement which endeavours to make services available in some additional countries.

Support is also being provided to the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) in areas such as border management and migration data management.

Going forward, Denmark would like to see a stronger focus on border management in full respect of human rights, including developing the capacity of asylum and migration authorities in countries of origin and along migratory routes and on supporting member states in the implementation of Objective 21 on return and readmission. Denmark will continue to seek the effectiveness of return and readmission of third country nationals without a right to stay through diplomatic consultations and direct bilateral cooperation. In order to ensure sustainable return and reintegration Denmark will continuously establish and join reintegration programs via ERRIN or via bilateral agreements with NGOs / IGOs or other countries' authorities. In addition, ensuring close collaboration with other existing UN system coordination mechanisms addressing migration-related issues to seek out synergies while avoiding duplication is a strong Danish priority. To this end, Denmark encourages other UN agencies with whom Denmark has strong collaboration to support the work of the UN Migration Network, notably via support to the Secretariat.

*Denmark will continue to work within the framework of the GCM and to support safe, orderly and regular migration. Migration also involves irregular migration, mostly in relation to movements due to economic factors such as poverty, lack of employment etc. Moreover, human traffickers earn fortunes while migrants suffer abuse or die along the migratory routes or in the Mediterranean Sea. In the search for a legal stay many irregular migrants end up applying for asylum. Therefore, we have to address the root causes of irregular migration by providing more and better assistance in the regions of origin.*