

TERMS OF REFERENCE

United Nations Country Network on Migration

Background

Migrants represent approximately 3 per cent of the world's population, but they produce more than 9 per cent of global GDP, some USD 3 trillion more than if they had stayed at home (IOM and McKinsey & Company 2018). Migration can thus only be recognized as a source of prosperity, innovation, and sustainable development in our globalized world, which can be optimized by improving migration governance. Although the relationship between migration and development is increasingly recognized, it remains relatively underexplored.

Governments recognize that migration is a defining feature of our globalized world, connecting societies within and across all regions, making all countries of origin, transit and destination of migrants. Governments have also recognized the continuous need for international efforts to strengthen knowledge and analysis of migration, as shared understandings will improve policies that unlock the potential of sustainable development for all.

Governments have determined to make an important contribution to enhanced cooperation on international migration in all its dimensions, and on 19 December 2018, the General Assembly adopted the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), which rests on the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and amongst others the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Agenda's core principle to "leave no one behind", including migrants, recognizes for the first time the contribution of migration to sustainable development, and as a cross-cutting issue, relevant to all of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). 10 out of 17 goals contain targets and indicators that are relevant to migration or mobility.

SDG target 10.7 Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well- managed migration policies aims at ensuring that current and potential migrants are fully informed about their rights, obligations and options for safe, orderly and regular migration, and are aware of the risks of irregular migration; as well as provide access to objective, evidence-based, clear information about the benefits and challenges of migration, with a view to dispelling misleading narratives that generate negative perceptions of migrants.

The GCM is a cooperative framework, comprising 23 objectives, implementation modalities, as well as follow-up and review mechanisms. Each objective contains a commitment, followed by a range of actions considered to be relevant policy instruments and best practices.

Following the GCM adoption, the UN Network on Migration¹ (UNMN) was established as a collaborative community of UN entities coming together to ensure effective and coordinated system-wide support to Member States in implementation, follow up and review of the GCM. Its core priorities include, support for strengthening country and regional level United Nations migration coordination mechanisms; supporting more effective integration of migration-related issues into the design and implementation of UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCFs); supporting the development of GCM national implementation plans, where requested; and more.

Migration in Belarus

Traditionally representing a crossroad between east and west, Belarus was predominantly a country of transit and nowadays has become a country of origin and destination for migrants, which provides an opportunity for social and economic development through migration and requires a well-coordinated approach to migration governance with respect to human dignity and well-being of migrants. There is an estimated 1,069,000 international migrants within the country, and equals to 11.3% of the total population with 54.2% female and 45.8% - male share, while international emigrants abroad make up to 1,500,000 people with 57% female and 43% male.² With negative population growth, Belarus is experiencing an aging population (around 22% of population are aged 60+) with increasing gaps between labour supply and demand. This is particularly apparent in certain regions of the country, particularly in rural communities, experiencing both internal rural-to-urban migration (around 78% of population lives in urban areas) as well as emigration to other countries of destination (according to different resources, the Belarusian diaspora may amount to 3 million people).

Belarus has clearly indicated its interest in better leveraging migration trends to meet its broader economic and development objectives within its forthcoming Concept for National Migration Policy (CNMP). The CNMP outlines an ambitious agenda for the government to harness emigration flows for development as well as to promote immigration in order to meet labour market and demographic gaps, and support investment and economic development.

Belarus became one of the first countries to hold consultations on migration and elaborate on the national migration-related priorities. Acknowledging the benefit of migration in socioeconomic growth and sustainable development, in December 2018 Belarus voted in favour of the GCM adoption, and in turn the implementation of its objectives. To ensure provision of support to the government in effective implementation of the GCM at the national level, an UN Country Network on Migration (UNCNM) for Belarus was set up, comprised of the interested UN entities, agencies, funds and programmes included into the UNCT Belarus and IFIs.

Overall objective of the UN Country Network on Migration (UNCNM)

In line with the Terms of Reference for the UN Network on Migration in particular para. 34³, the overall objective of the UNCNM is to ensure effective, timely and coordinated system-wide support to the Government of Belarus in the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM). In doing so, the UNCNM will also ensure coordination with

¹ <https://migrationnetwork.un.org/>.

² <https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/estimates19.asp>, accessed on May 19, 2020.

³ https://www.un.org/en/conf/migration/assets/pdf/UN-Network-on-Migration_TOR.pdf.

as well as complementarity between the GCM and existing national and UN plans and framework including but not limited to UNSDCF, government plans, etc.– UNCNM work will align with the national priorities in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2021–2025 (UNSDCF) pillars: 1) Green transition for inclusive and sustainable growth; 2) Future generation orientation: adolescence and youth; 3) Digital transformation and social innovation; and 4) Gender equitable society. Due to COVID significant impact on mobility and migration, UNCNM support and engagement for GCM implementation, review and follow-up will be guided through lens for COVID preparedness, response and recovery stages.

Specific objectives and responsibilities of the UNCNM

1. *Support the Government of Belarus in implementation, follow-up and review of the GCM and migration-related Sustainable Development Agenda and provide contextual support in development and implementation of planned and well-managed migration policy in line with GCM objectives;*
 - 1.1. Hold national consultations with relevant ministries and state agencies of Belarus on migration policy and migration related issues and identify priority areas and opportunities for planned and well-managed migration in Belarus and in line with GCM objectives;
 - 1.2. Hold consultations with Civil Society partners, and identify areas of potential cooperation in advancing the GCM objectives;
 - 1.3. Foster collaboration between relevant existing coordination mechanism and the GCM, provide leadership to mobilize coordinated and collaborative action on migration, including by speaking with one voice when necessary, and in coordination with the UNMN.
 - 1.4. Facilitate collaboration among UN agencies and other partners in the implementation of the UNSDCF and CCA (Common Country Analysis) with migration as a cross-cutting topic in achieving Sustainable Development Goals; contribute to relevant communication, advocacy and reporting;
 - 1.5. Ensure effective, timely and coordinated UNCT-wide support to the Government in follow-up and review processes of the GCM at both regional and global levels⁴

2. *Implement capacity-building activities that supports the Government of Belarus, UNCT and CSO efforts to implement GCM;*
 - 2.1 Identify and address capacity gaps related to migration in governmental and non-governmental partner organizations;
 - 2.2 Organise capacity building and information workshops on the preparation of GCM national implementation plans involving all relevant stakeholders, and support regional as well as global plans when possible;
 - 2.3 Build and enhance national capacities in data collection, analysis and dissemination on migration and related issues.

⁴ The International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) will take place every four years beginning in 2022 and will serve as the primary **global platform** to discuss and share progress on the implementation of all aspects of the GCM, including as it relates to the 2030 Agenda, and with the participation of all relevant stakeholders. **Regional Platforms** are invited to support the review and the implementation of the GCM at regional level, beginning in 2020, in order to inform each edition of the IMRF, with the participation of all relevant stakeholders.

3. *Facilitate joint UN and government interventions within the framework of the GCM and migration policy of Belarus:*
 - 3.1. Facilitate and coordinate joint UN interventions related to the GCM, including coordinating project proposals, implementation, monitoring, reviewing and reporting related to the Start-Up Fund for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (Migration MPTF);
 - 3.2. In line with the GCM, contribute to promoting and building partnerships and information exchange between the members of the UNCNM and with relevant actors including Government, counterparts, CSOs and other relevant stakeholders to ensure effective implementation of the GCM;
 - 3.3 Lead resource-mobilisation and project development on GCM-related projects, including those to the Migration Multi-partner Trust Fund.
4. *Share regular updates on key, emerging migration issues and activities with the members of the UNCNM, including data, documents, studies and practical information in order to foster a comprehensive and holistic understanding of the evolving migration dynamics in Belarus, including the linkages with regional dynamics and trends.*

UNCNM composition

The UNCNM is comprised of two permanent Co-Chairs, RC and IOM, and UNCT Belarus members and IFIs for which migration is of relevance to their mandate, representatives of the RCO.

UN Heads of Agencies and the UN RC nominate members to the UNCNM, preferably from among staff performing migration-related functions within their own entities.

The Co-Chairs are responsible for:

- a. Convening meetings;
- b. Chairing meetings;
- c. Identifying specialized resources to assist the UNCNM in discharging its duties in the most competent manner;
- d. Reporting on the activities of the UNCNM to the UNCT on a quarterly basis, including on the objectives and activities outline above;

The Co-chairs will receive secretariat support for UNCNM provided by IOM, responsible for:

- a. Coordinating the schedule of the UNCNM meetings;
- b. Producing and disseminating minutes from UNCNM meetings;
- c. Overseeing receipt and timely distribution of relevant documentation to UNCNM members;
- d. Ensuring that files of documentation pertaining to the submissions under calls for proposals and meetings are complete.

The Co-Chairs may request the attendance of other internal or external participants as well as the national beneficiaries and other national partners relevant to the topic of discussion as needed and in relation to any special considerations discussed at the UNCNM.

Working modality

The work of the UNCNM is guided by the principles of the Sustainable Development Agenda and the GCM and corresponds to the UNSDCF and national priorities.

UNCNM is assumed to meet bi-monthly or as often as necessary to carry out their responsibilities and as convened by the UNCNM members. UNCNM will work based on the annual / biannual workplans drafted by its members with support of the Secretariat. UNCNM will report to the extended UNCT on progress against the workplan.

Based on needs, extended UNCNM meetings including governmental counterparts, donors, international organizations, CSOs, media or other relevant actors may be organized.

Members of the UNCNM will contribute to design and implementation of the UNCNM's objectives, provide advice on strategic direction(s) and share information and knowledge about their migration related work. The members of the UNCNM will promote coherence of migration-related activities within the UN system.

Decisions by the Network will be made by consensus of UNCT after full consultations with all Network members.

Reporting mechanism

The UNCNM updates the UNCT Belarus on a quarterly or/ and on-demand basis. The minutes of the UNCNM meetings are documented by the Secretariat provided by IOM.

Composition of the UNCNM

UN entities, agencies, funds and programmes who are members of the UNCT Belarus and IFIs.