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## **Advancing the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration – Key lessons learned from the GCM regional review processes – inputs from the Asia-Pacific and Europe regions**

A Virtual Side Event of the HLPF2021

8 July 2021 7:30 – 9:00 am (New York), 1:30 – 3:00 pm (Geneva); 6:30 – 8:00 pm (Bangkok)  
7:30 -9:00 pm (Manila), 12:30 – 2:00 pm (Lisbon)

Please register [HERE](#)

Organizers: Department of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines; Permanent Mission of Portugal to the UN; ESCAP, United Nations Network on Migration.

### **Background:**

International migration is a global reality and a defining aspect of our time. Yet, while governments have committed to empower migrants and support their critical contributions to sustainable development, many migrants continue to face challenges in countries of origin, destination, and transit.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the vulnerabilities of migrants and their families, often including women and children. Many migrants, particularly when they are undocumented or otherwise in situations of vulnerability, have been exposed to greater risk of infection, and their access to decent work and to public health, protection, and

support services has been reduced. Some migrants have also been subject to discrimination and other human rights violations, stigmatization and xenophobia. As a result of border restrictions, their mobility has been curtailed.

In 2018, United Nations Member States adopted the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) to improve cooperation on international migration. The GCM is the first inter-governmentally adopted framework covering all dimensions of international migration in a holistic and comprehensive manner. It is based upon the core purposes and principles of the United Nations, including its Charter, international human rights law, international labour law and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It describes cross-cutting interdependent guiding principles, 23 broad objectives, and concrete actions for implementation.

The GCM is firmly rooted in the 2030 Agenda, and work toward achieving the 2030 Agenda goals will support implementation of the GCM objectives, and vice versa. A number of SDGs under review at the HLPF in 2021 relate directly to international migration. In particular, SDG 1 (no poverty), SDG 3 (good health and well-being), SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth), SDG 10 (reduced inequalities), SDG 13 (climate action) and SDG 17 (partnership). It is critical, in this Decade of Action to achieve the 2030 Agenda, that the HLPF takes full account of the complex links between migration and sustainable development, including new and emerging challenges and opportunities, best practices and lessons learned, as identified in the reviews conducted ahead of the 2022 International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) and GCM follow-up.

In order to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration for the millions of migrants and their families around the world, Member States committed to concerted efforts at the global, regional, national and local levels for GCM implementation. They also committed to regularly reviewing progress made at the local, national, regional and global levels through a State-led approach with the participation of all relevant stakeholders in a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, beginning in 2020.

### Asia-Pacific

The Asia-Pacific region, the origin of 40 per cent of the world's migrants, reviewed the implementation of the GCM in March 2021 for the first time. The Philippines, one of the elected co-chairs of the [review meeting](#) and a GCM champion country, was among the most active of the 34 Member States, 44 stakeholder organizations, and numerous international organizations that took part in reaffirming their commitment to GCM implementation and noting its importance to achieving the 2030 Agenda. They also highlighted challenges that were exacerbated by the pandemic, such as inadequate access to social protection, including public health, limited opportunities for decent work, fair and ethical recruitment, as well as recognition of skills, qualifications and competencies. It was acknowledged that migrants in the region faced complex human rights challenges including discrimination, that stigmatization and xenophobia against migrants were on the rise, and that lack of comprehensive, disaggregated data on migration hindered effective and inclusive policymaking.

At the national levels and as of May 2021, 6 out of 23 GCM champion countries are in Asia and the Pacific.<sup>1</sup> They often work closely with relevant stakeholders on implementing the GCM using a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, with due regard for human rights, child-sensitivity and gender responsiveness.

## Europe

The [Europe Regional Review meeting](#) was the first GCM regional review to be held, from 12-13 November 2020. Over 200 government representatives and stakeholders participated in the virtual meeting. A total of 28 Member States and 17 stakeholders submitted reports to the Review. As a GCM champion country, Portugal engaged actively in this review, consistently with its adoption of a “National Plan for the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration”. The implementation plan has been developed to address the principles of the GCM, with a view to a 360-degree vision of migration, and it serves as a good practice for implementing the GCM at the national level. Portugal has also put inclusivity at the center of its COVID-19 response and recovery efforts, following the compass of the GCM., and it serves as a good practice for implementing the GCM at the national level. Portugal has also put inclusivity at the center of its COVID-19 response and recovery efforts, following the compass of the GCM.

### **Scope and objectives:**

This side event will focus on GCM regional and national level implementation, follow-up, and review in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development. Building on the GCM regional reviews – including the Asia-Pacific Regional Review and the Europe Regional Review –the event aims to:

1. Highlight achievements, challenges and promising practices in GCM implementation drawing on the regional reviews and national level implementation experience, including of GCM champion countries.
2. Discuss ways to advance GCM objectives on the ground in concert with diverse regional and national-level actors.
3. Explore ways of building an effective and inclusive path to achieving the 2030 Agenda during the decade of action, and considering the theme of the HLPF 2021, examine the impact of COVID-19 on GCM implementation.
4. Identify actionable next steps in GCM implementation drawing from the national experiences and the experiences of the regional review processes in the Asia-Pacific and Europe regions.

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<sup>1</sup> This includes countries in North and Central Asia which are part of the ESCAP region. See more on the GCM Champions Initiative at <https://migrationnetwork.un.org/champion-countries-initiative>.

**Format:**

The event will be conducted through a virtual platform. It will consist of presentations and a moderated discussion. The event will feature two rounds of discussion with speakers reflecting on the recently held Asia-Pacific Regional Review and UNECE Regional Review meetings and providing examples of good practices and lessons learned on GCM implementation at national levels. Member States, stakeholders and representatives of the United Nations Network on Migration will speak at the event. Other GCM Champion Countries and stakeholder representatives are invited to make interventions from the floor in order to share key lessons learned from national GCM implementation and/or from the regional reviews.

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## PROGRAMME

Welcome Remarks: H.E. Enrique A. Manalo, Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the United Nations

Overview: Mr. Jonathan Prentice, Head, Secretariat of the UN Network on Migration, IOM

**Panelists:**

Undersecretary Sarah Lou Y. Arriola, Undersecretary for Migrant Workers Affairs, Department of Foreign Affairs, Philippines

Asst. Secretary Rico Fos, Office of Migrant Workers Affairs, Department of Foreign Affairs, Philippines)

Ms. Sónia Pereira, High Commissioner for Migration of Portugal (tbc)

Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, UN Undersecretary-General and Executive Secretary of ESCAP

Mr. Ola Henrikson, Regional Director, IOM Regional Office for the European Union, Norway and Switzerland

Ms. Chiloko Asada- Miyakawa Assistant Director-General, Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific, International Labour Organization

Ms. Michele LeVoy, Director of the Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM)

Mr. Rey Asis, Programme Coordinator for Advocacy and Campaigns, Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants

Q & A Interventions from the Floor and Question and Answer

Closing Remarks: H.E. Francisco Duarte Lopes, Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations

Event moderated by: Craig Mokhiber, Director, New York Office, OHCHR

Further information on the Regional Review in Asia and the Pacific and in Europe:

United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) (2020). [Asia-Pacific Migration Report 2020: Assessing Implementation of the Global Compact for Migration](#) (ST/ESCAP/2801).

Asia-Pacific Regional Review of Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, including all parliamentary documents: <https://www.unescap.org/intergovernmental-meetings/asia-pacific-regional-review-implementation-global-compact-safe-orderly>

Europe and North America Regional Review of Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration: <https://migrationnetwork.un.org/country-regional-network/europe-north-america>