



Economic Commission for Europe
**Regional Review of the Global Compact
 for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration
 in the Economic Commission for Europe Region**
Second session

Geneva, 11 March 2024

**Report of the Regional Review of the Global Compact for
 Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration for the Economic
 Commission for Europe region on its second session**
Contents

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. Organization and attendance	1-7	2
II. Opening of the session and adoption of the agenda	8-12	2-3
III. Thematic sessions	13-16	4-5
IV. Closing of the session	17-21	5
Annex		
Co-Chair's summary of the discussions	1-40	6-12



I. Organization and attendance

1. The second Regional Review of the Global Compact for Safe Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) for the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) region was held on 11 March 2024, in Geneva, ahead of the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for the ECE region on 13-14 March.
2. The Review was jointly organized by ECE and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), as the Coordinator of the United Nations Network on Migration (Network), pursuant to the decision of the ECE Executive Committee at its 128th meeting on 15 May 2023¹. It was co-chaired by H.E. Ms. Elma Saiz, Minister for Inclusion, Social Security and Migration of Spain and H.E. Ms. Jana Costachi, State Secretary of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Moldova.
3. The Review included an Intergovernmental Conference and a Multi-stakeholder Hearing. The Intergovernmental Conference consisted of an opening segment, followed by four thematic sessions, and a closing segment. The thematic sessions were organized on the same basis as the four roundtables of the May 2022 International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) in New York, and offered space to discuss and review regional, sub-regional and cross-regional collaboration in the implementation of all the objectives of the GCM, bearing in mind that the Compact is based on a set of cross-cutting and interdependent guiding principles.
4. Representatives of the following member States of ECE attended the second Regional Review for the ECE region: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Netherlands North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Tajikistan, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Uzbekistan.
5. The European Union (EU) was represented by the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva, the European External Action Service (EEAS), and the European Commission, with Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs (DG-HOME) and Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG-NEAR), respectively.
6. Representatives of the following United Nations bodies, departments, funds and programmes, specialized agencies, related organizations and initiatives attended: Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), International Labour Organization (ILO), International Organization for Migration (IOM), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), , United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office (UNRCO), and World Health Organization (WHO).
7. Representatives of over 65 non-governmental organizations and other relevant stakeholders also participated. A complete list of participants can be found on the website of the regional meeting.

II. Opening of the session and adoption of the agenda

8. The Intergovernmental Conference started with the adoption of the provisional agenda of the meeting, as contained in document ECE/GCM/2024/1.
9. In their opening remarks, the Co-Chairs H.E. Ms. Elma Saiz, Minister for Inclusion, Social Security and Migration of Spain and H.E. Ms. Jana Costachi, State Secretary of the

¹ https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2023-06/item%20202%20_EXCOM%20Conclu-128.pdf

Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Moldova expressed their strong commitment to multilateralism and to addressing migration through a comprehensive and human rights-based approach. Over half of the world's international migrants in 2020 were located within the ECE region, driven by factors such as employment opportunities, family reunification, education, climate change and environmental disasters. Tragically, thousands of migrants have lost their lives during mixed migration movements, highlighting the urgency of enhanced cooperation and humanitarian assistance, and the persistent challenge to ensure the safety and rights of people on the move. The Co-Chairs expressed their unwavering commitment to the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, recognizing it as a crucial tool to improve international cooperation on migration. With a view to continue enhancing the safe, orderly and regular movement of people within, to and from the region, it is critical for Member States to collaborate and systematically implement and adopt regular and rights-based pathways for migration that can give people alternatives to facing situations of violence, vulnerability, exploitation and abuse along irregular migration routes. The Co-Chairs also commended the progress made, particularly through initiatives like the Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund, but also acknowledged the climb ahead and emphasized the need for continued member State support to achieve the Compact's goals of safe, orderly, and regular migration for sustainable development.

10. The ECE Deputy Executive Secretary, Mr. Dmitry Mariyasin, on behalf of the ECE Executive Secretary, Ms. Tatiana Molcean, stressed the importance of having a holistic approach when addressing migration, the importance of linkages between the Global Compact and the 2030 Agenda, and the need for systemwide partnerships. He underscored ECE's focus on migration statistics, and its aim to improve data collection and utilization. This effort is in line with the 2030 Agenda principle of leaving no one behind. ECE offers guidance and tools for measuring various aspects of international migration, including asylum seekers and refugees, and explores innovative data sources like big data while ensuring privacy protection.

11. In her video message, the Director General of the International Organization for Migration and Coordinator of the United Nations Network on Migration, Amy Pope, urged discussions to be bold and ambitious, emphasizing the centrality of the human rights of migrants and the importance of stakeholder partnerships in progressing implementation of the GCM. 2024 will see more than 60 national elections and a pivotal regional election in the European Union. Migration and migrants will be a major topic in many of these elections and therefore she urged that dialogue in the ECE Regional Review be based on facts and grounded in the rights of migrants.

12. Ms. Irem Arf, Stakeholder Rapporteur, highlighted the key insights from the Multi-Stakeholder Hearing held prior to the meeting and the importance of the report generated from these consultations containing examples of good practices and challenges.² She underscored that the increase in anti-immigration policies and narratives in the ECE region, poses threats to democracies and the safety of migrants. In tandem, migration practices such as the externalization of borders, criminalization of migrants and aid providers, and detention practices are increasing. In many contexts, migration enforcement and overreliance on temporary labour migration schemes takes precedence over the rights of migrants, forcing them into abusive and exploitative conditions. The Rapporteur also highlighted positive examples, such as the activation of EU's temporary protection directive, enactment of policies that empower migrant workers to organize and stand up against abuse and exploitation, and regularization programmes that have greatly contributed to migrants in an irregular status to effectively access their rights. The implementation of the GCM should continuously be guided by human and labour rights, including gender-responsive and rights-based migration pathways.

² The Summary Report of the ECE Stakeholder Pre-consultation is available at [Summary report for the ECE Stakeholder Pre-consultation - November 2023 \(1\).pdf](#)

III. Thematic sessions

A. Session 1

13. The first session of the Regional Review for ECE offered space for discussion of progress made and challenges accomplishing Objectives 2, 5, 6, 12, and 18 of the GCM.

Lead Organizers: ILO and Regional United Nations Network on Migration

Moderator: Ms. Paola Cammilli, Global Campaigns at Building and Woodworkers International (BWI), Member of Council of Global Unions (CGU)

Substantive inputs presented by: Belgium; Canada; Germany; Greece; Portugal; Serbia; Spain; Tajikistan; Turkmenistan; Ukraine; United Kingdom; United States of America; European Commission/European External Action Service; American Center for International Labor Solidarity; International Lawyers Assisting Workers Network (ILAW); ILO; International Organization of Employers (IOE); Platform on Disasters Displacement (PDD) – UNOPS.

B. Session 2

14. The second session of the Regional Review for ECE offered space for discussion of progress made and challenges accomplishing Objectives 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, and 21 of the GCM.

Lead Organizers: UNHCR and Regional United Nations Network on Migration

Moderator: Ms. Susan Fratzke, Migration Policy Institute (MPI)

Member State Speaker: Sweden

Substantive inputs presented by: Armenia; Belgium; Belarus; Denmark on behalf of Cyprus, France, Malta, Norway, Netherlands and United Kingdom; Germany; Greece; Kyrgyzstan; Norway; Türkiye; Turkmenistan; Ukraine; United Kingdom; European Commission/European External Action Service; Friends World Committee for Consultation; International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC); Network of Girls Against Human Trafficking, Network of Girls Against Human Trafficking (NoGAHT); UNODC. Azerbaijan exercised their right of reply.

C. Session 3

15. The third session of the Regional Review for ECE offered space for discussion of progress made and challenges accomplishing Objectives 14, 15, 16, 19, 20 and 22 of the GCM.

Lead Organizers: WHO and Regional United Nations Network on Migration

Moderator: Ms. Stella Opoku-Owusu, African Foundation for Development (AFFORD)

Member State Speaker: Albania

Substantive inputs presented by: Canada; Germany; North Macedonia; Spain; United Kingdom; European Commission/European External Action Service; African-German Working Community / Afrikanisch-Deutsche Arbeitsgemeinschaft e. V. (A.D.A.G.E.); Asociación Rumiñahui; ILO; IOM; UNDP. Armenia exercised their right of reply.

D. Session 4

16. The fourth session of the Regional Review for the members of the ECE offered space for discussion of progress made and challenges accomplishing Objectives 1, 3, 7, 17, and 23 of the GCM.

Lead Organizers: UNDP, IOM Regional United Nations Network on Migration

Moderator: Ms. Michele LeVoy, Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM)

Member State Speaker: Kazakhstan

Substantive inputs presented by: Azerbaijan; Canada; Norway on behalf of Cyprus, Denmark, France, Malta, Netherlands and United Kingdom; Portugal; Serbia; Spain; United Kingdom on behalf of Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Spain and United States; European Commission/European External Action Service; Asociacion Ruminahui; Building and Woodworkers Association; International Detention Coalition (IDC); International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC); Migrant Youth & Children Platform; Lutheran World Federation. The Russian Federation exercised their right of reply.

IV. Closing

17. In her closing remarks, the representative of the Migration Youth & Children Platform (MYCP), Ms. Feblezi Huebi, urged for the inclusion of young migrants and children in national action plans, strategies and policy spaces to ensure a whole-of-society approach to migration governance, particularly when addressing the identified priorities of access to education; trafficking of persons; safe and regular pathways; alternatives to detention; and labour exploitation, in order to create a more just, equitable, and inclusive future for all young migrants across the region.

18. The Deputy High-Commissioner for Human Rights, OHCHR, Ms. Nada Al-Nashif, encouraged participants in her closing remarks to transcend polarized mindsets on migration and embrace narratives of inclusion. OHCHR also called for a fundamental shift towards strategies centred on human rights and protection, acknowledging the critical need to address vulnerabilities in this context, notably for children. Central to this transformation is the availability of safe and regular pathways grounded on human rights and humanitarian considerations. OHCHR further urged member States to enhance international and regional cooperation and leverage the GCM in their policies and practices, maximizing synergies with ongoing processes and recalled that the UN stands ready to provide system-wide support in this endeavour.

19. The Executive Secretary of ECE, Ms. Tatiana Molcean, expressed her appreciation for the statement of the migrant youth representative, hearing about the clear expectations towards the ECE member States and United Nations. She further thanked the organizers, participants, UNOG personnel including the interpreters and technicians. She concluded with the commitment to help translate the GCM discussions into practice.

20. Before closing the meeting, the Co-Chair of Spain, H.E. Pilar Cancela, Vice Minister for Migration of Spain, shared some final observations including on the need to recognize the different challenges in the area of migration and employment; the different demographic trends that require governance based on human rights and the principle of tripartism that benefits all relevant stakeholders. The Co-chair also noted climate change is increasingly considered an adverse driver of migration and the need to ensure consistency in migration and climate change policies. She further recognized the need to facilitate fair and ethical recruitment and safeguard conditions that ensure decent work in line with human rights frameworks and through social dialogue. Furthermore, improved data collection and use, as well as timely, accessible and transparent information were mentioned. Situations of vulnerability in the context of migration are often a result of policies and practices that do not protect the human rights of migrants, particularly as they relate to children and gender issues. In this regard, the Co-chair called for strengthening international and regional cooperation between governmental actors from countries of origin, transit and destination, and on all levels and among other non-governmental stakeholders.

21. The Co-Chair of Moldova, H.E. Ms. Jana Costachi, State Secretary of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Moldova, also thanked organizers and participants and explained that the draft report of the GCM Regional Review, including the Co-Chairs' summary of discussions, would be circulated for comments by participants by 10 April. The final version will constitute the official input from the ECE region to the 2026 IMRF.

Annex

Co-Chairs' summary of the discussions

Session 1

1. Countries reiterated their commitment to the objectives of the GCM and recognized its role as a framework for cooperation on migration in support of the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Speakers recognized widespread skill gaps and demographic trends in the ECE region, especially as it concerns the population ageing. Some speakers acknowledged the significance of labour migration, mentioning the need to achieve rights-based labour migration governance based on tripartite social dialogue to ensure triple win outcomes aligned with the GCM.
2. The contributions of migrants to sustainable development in countries of destination and origin were stressed, including their role filling key labour market gaps, enabling the circulation of skills and knowledge between countries, and supporting communities of origin through remittances. However, many speakers noted that the protection of migrant rights throughout the migration cycle, from pre-departure to return, was critical to ensure fair and equitable outcomes and to realize the guiding principle of both the GCM and 2030 Agenda to promote human rights and leave no one behind. The need to strengthen data on migration as a basis for effective policymaking was addressed by several speakers, and the potential of the GCM indicator framework was noted in this regard.
3. Several countries explained that they had developed plans, policies or strategies to address GCM implementation. The ratification of fundamental ILO Conventions and ILO Conventions related to labour migration, and the development of policies aligned with these Conventions to address both the adverse drivers of migration and protect the rights of migrant workers was also stressed.
4. Many speakers highlighted that climate change impacts were emerging as a major adverse driver of migration. Several speakers noted that despite the need for pathways for people impacted by climate change, and the actions some countries have taken to protect people at risk of or affected by climate change, these efforts needed to be scaled up and generalized. Others appealed for coherence between climate change and migration policies, and highlighted progress in this regard.
5. Speakers discussed interventions to address the root causes of migration such as inequalities, decent work deficits, and sustainable development challenges, and mentioned support provided to communities of origin through the provision of development and humanitarian assistance, policies to strengthen decent work opportunities, and strengthened links between migration and development, including across a routes-based approach. Several speakers highlighted the importance of ensuring that migration is a choice, rather than a necessity, and emphasized the complementarity between sustainable development planning and GCM implementation.
6. The importance of flexible, rights-based and regular pathways for work, study and family reunification among others to prevent irregular migration and protect migrants' rights was stressed. Bilateral labour migration agreements, multilateral cooperation, humanitarian pathways, dedicated programmes to provide information, and the possibility of providing regular pathways to those at risk of irregular were discussed. The use of digital tools, the simplification of visa processes and institutional reform to increase the predictability, accessibility and efficiency of these systems was highlighted. Several countries mentioned efforts to directly reach out to prospective migrants in countries of origin through dedicated centres. Others outlined procedures to create migration opportunities for people with specific skill profiles of particular importance in the context of labour market trends. The need for greater involvement by social welfare partners to ensure they respond to real needs and protect migrant workers' rights in the development of such pathways was emphasized.

7. Speakers addressed efforts to ensure decent work for migrant workers and fair and ethical recruitment at zero-cost to migrant workers, in line with international labour standards. They highlighted legal and regulatory changes to meet this objective, and cooperation between countries of origin, UN entities, and stakeholders. The need to ensure fundamental principles and rights at work including freedom of association and collective bargaining was emphasized, with countries mentioning efforts such as strengthened labour inspection to protect migrant workers. Other speakers discussed efforts to connect migrants and employers for mutual benefit.

8. Some countries noted that they had undertaken efforts to regularize migrants in irregular situations, while others highlighted initiatives to provide information to prospective migrants to enable them to benefit from regular pathways, ensure they are aware of their rights, and have access to services while in countries of destination. In line with that, speakers also highlighted pre-arrival services which aim at preparing prospective migrants already in the countries of origin as best as possible for life and work in the countries of destination.

9. Many speakers highlighted initiatives in countries of origin and destination to enable people to move to develop their skills, such as streamlined procedures to improve comparability of qualifications and ensure skill recognition including through unilateral measures in countries of destination, as well as forms of regional cooperation to enhance safeguards as demographic shifts steer a need for migrant workers. Speakers recognized that, when designed through social dialogue, these measures strengthen migrants' contributions to development in countries of origin and destination, and help migrants enjoy decent work. Skills mobility and talent partnerships were mentioned as tools for mutually beneficial skills mobility, if designed and implemented with social partners, and the role of the Global Partnership on Skills Mobility was noted.

10. Speakers emphasized the importance of international cooperation, such as the Canada-Spain-US trilateral statement on their joint commitment to Latin America which addresses labour migration pathways, fair and ethical recruitment, and the rights of migrant workers. Initiatives at the European Union level such as the Talent Pool and Talent Partnerships and proposals laid out in the New Pact on Migration and Asylum equipping the European Union with a sustainable migration and asylum system were also highlighted. Collaboration in creating safe, regular pathways with countries of origin especially in Latin America and Africa was noted. The importance of both whole-of-government and whole-of-society stakeholder engagement approaches were recognized as key drivers of successful interventions. Others also noted their appreciation for the contribution of United Nations entities in supporting GCM implementation, and the role of the UN Network on Migration in providing comprehensive and holistic support.

11. Stakeholders emphasized the importance of recognizing the human dimension of migration and highlighted the potential of their role in helping support GCM implementation through inputting to policy development, implementation and monitoring, and providing complementary support to empower migrants. Stakeholders also highlighted that employers play a crucial role in implementing the GCM; they can contribute to crafting pathways that meet labour market needs while protecting migrants, establishing frameworks for fair recruitment, and addressing skills shortages and recognition systems. Additionally, employers can shape a positive narrative based on data and economic impact.

Session 2

12. During this session, most speakers recognized the benefits of migration and the significant contribution of people on the move to sustainable development in host countries. In line with the GCM, some speakers outlined 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.

13. Speakers highlighted their commitment to protect vulnerable migrants, prevent exploitation, abuse, trafficking and smuggling. Some speakers also recognized that vulnerabilities can often be limited through the modernization and digitalization of government services.

14. Current mixed flows within the ECE region are characterized by a complex mix of drivers and a high level of involvement of smugglers, and speakers highlighted the need to employ a broad toolbox including whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches, localization, as well as human rights-based approaches as part of the response. These are all also common guiding principles shared by the GCM and the Global Compact for Refugees, and therefore strengthening the complementarity between both compacts can be mutually reinforcing. Speakers stressed that a functioning asylum and migration management system, encompassing safe and dignified return and sustainable reintegration, are key priorities contributing to both a fair and efficient asylum system and addressing smuggling, human trafficking and irregular migration.

15. In this sense, the member State speaker opening the session highlighted the need to discuss new and innovative models that can complement current approaches and mentioned the route-based approach as a way to address mixed movements of people, underlining a 360-degree response. Some countries recalled that enhanced international cooperation among all relevant actors on migration and refugee movements, especially among neighbouring countries, is key, acknowledging that no State can address migration alone. The continued high numbers of deaths along routes are a significant concern. Cross-border operational cooperation and timely information sharing remain crucial.

16. A notable development to promote safe and regular migration was the European Commission's introduction in November 2023 of a package aimed at countering migrant smuggling. This package launched a Call to Action for a Global Alliance to Counter Migrant Smuggling and proposed a new Directive laying down minimum rules to prevent and counter the facilitation of unauthorized entry, transit and stay, reflecting the EU's commitment to enhancing border security and migration governance. EEAS Commission noted action plans have been presented for key routes, including the Mediterranean and Western Balkan routes.

17. The session emphasized the need to strengthen collaboration between countries of origin, transit and destination along routes of mixed movement of refugees and migrants in order to foster sustainable policies. It was articulated that comprehensive partnerships with countries outside the European Union are pivotal for the effectiveness of EU strategies. Sustainable migration and asylum systems require comprehensive approaches. In this context, the European Return and Reintegration Network - Sustainable Reintegration in Afghanistan (ERRIN-SRA) project was noted as an example aimed at improving long-term reintegration opportunities for Afghan citizens returning from Europe, underscoring the importance of comprehensive approaches and stakeholder cooperation for sustainable migration and asylum systems.

18. Member States shared insights into their national and collaborative efforts and challenges. Several member States showcased their progress in providing identity cards and travel documents and enhancing border management, demonstrating a national commitment to improving migration governance. Technology and digitalization are also key means to manage borders. Organized crime and trafficking must be tackled comprehensively and with a people-centred approach, from countries of origin to destination, coordinated across borders and regions to protect those at risk and prevent dangerous journeys. Speakers stressed the importance of collaboration to reduce the risks for those in vulnerable situations, particularly women and children, and to ensure that survivors are provided with necessary support. Several Member States and stakeholders also called for alternatives to detention, particularly for children and families with children, and one Member State drew on its provision stating that it will not detain children and young people, as well as that families with children will not be taken into custody to secure departure or repatriation.

19. Member States noted it is important to acknowledge that the GCM recognizes the existing obligation of all States to duly receive and readmit their nationals. Nationals who do not or no longer have the right to stay in a country that is not theirs must be readmitted. Interventions emphasized the need for increased international cooperation in facilitating safe and dignified returns moving forward.

20. Other Member States stressed the need to shift the migration narrative towards opportunities and solutions, allowing people to make informed choices rather than ones based on fear, misinformation or outright deception. False expectations and the lack of choices should not be drivers for migration.

21. Local actors and grassroots organizations were recognized for their pivotal role in responding to migration issues, with a call to prioritize greater cooperation to ensure migrants' access to safety, basic assistance including through humanitarian service points along land and sea-based points, and integration into local communities. NGOs' interventions emphasized the need for dignified reception and protection services, and the promotion of inclusivity to combat discrimination and xenophobia effectively. Too little happens to improve and realign policies to save lives. Speakers highlighted the need to again find the political will to work together to put people at the centre of the discussion, as seeking to prevent migration alone does not save lives, and given that 2023 was the deadliest year on record for migrants according to the Missing Migrants Project. One suggestion that emerged was a high-level panel or a group of eminent experts to help maintain focus and sustain the political will to meet that determination to save lives.

Session 3

22. Overall, this session served to underscore the importance of migrant contributions to social and economic development, the efforts needed to enhance their socio-economic inclusion especially in education and health services and provide comprehensive and easily accessible information, as well as the relevance of strengthening an integrated approach to migration management with the active participation of governmental and non-governmental stakeholders.

23. Several speakers recognized the crucial role and challenges faced by diaspora, stressing their role towards improved social cohesion, financial stability and knowledge transfer. Among the wide array of contributions, it was mentioned that diasporas enable political stability, help combat poverty and contribute financially to social services systems. Despite diaspora and migrants' contributions to sustainable development, some concerns were raised about the increasingly discriminatory narratives across the region, emphasizing the need for government support for migrant organizations and stakeholders, and the importance of strengthening political participation of young people with migration backgrounds. Others mentioned that despite their contributions to development, migrant workers continue to be excluded from social protection regimes, preventing them from enjoying their earned benefits, and this must be addressed.

24. Some speakers highlighted their commitment to promoting greater visibility of diasporas' engagement for development at the international level, for example, through the inclusion of diaspora representatives in their delegations to the Global Forum on Migration and Development. Other member States introduced their work to strengthen diaspora engagement over the years, for example by helping diaspora organizations to cooperate with local partner organizations, or by assisting diaspora members to establish businesses that contribute to sustainable development in their countries of origin.

25. Member States and stakeholders also stressed the important role diaspora actors play in social cohesion efforts in their country of residence and their country of origin. The transfer of financial resources and knowledge can contribute to development efforts in the countries of origin. Stakeholders underlined the importance of engaging local governments, host communities, civil society and grassroots migrant organizations, acknowledging their valuable expertise and knowledge. Some stakeholders further expressed severe concerns about the increasing polarization of discourse around migration and proposed the collection and use of data and indicators to assess the level of discrimination in countries.

26. Some speakers also highlighted the role of remittances, indicating that through remittances migrants contribute to poverty-reduction and support the achievement of the SDGs in their countries of origin. Member States highlighted the importance of expanding access to remittances, by reducing their costs and promoting digital and innovative solutions.

27. Key take-away messages included the need for improved access to services, including access to healthcare and vaccines, which have been essential, particularly in addressing the challenges posed by COVID-19. The role of migrants as key players in the provision of basic services and the legal and practical barriers that migrants face when accessing basic services related to health, education, social protection, child protection, and decent work, particularly

if they are in an irregular situation, was also mentioned. Including migrants and promoting their active participation in consultative and decision-making processes can help ensure that integration and inclusion policies are more effective and reflect real needs

28. Some speakers highlighted that migrants often remain out of social protection systems, that it is essential to ensure social security as a right, and to establish mechanisms for the portability of social security entitlements and earned benefits. Some member States reiterated their progress on this, including through the promotion of electronic payments to enhance financial inclusion, and the implementation of bilateral agreements between countries of origin, transit and destination. Additionally, other speakers highlighted that universal social protection systems are essential in order to reduce poverty, promote social inclusion, and achieve the SDGs.

29. During this session, speakers promoted fostering international as well as inter-regional cooperation along migration routes, emphasizing the importance of collaboration between all relevant partners and stakeholders, including migrants.

Session 4

30. The session opened with key questions crucial for effective policy development: Who is collecting the data, and how? Are migrants and civil society able to access information? How to develop child-sensitive and gender-responsive migration policies? And how could that be done in areas that do not lie directly in the field of migration policy, but still affect migrants? How can we ensure that migration policies do not strengthen and reinforce vulnerabilities? Is there the right balance of bilateral agreements in the region, in terms of numbers and areas they are focused on?

31. Member States highlighted their commitment to the GCM, through the integration of all 23 objectives into national policies since 2018, reflecting a comprehensive approach to migration management. Action has been taken in areas to reduce the vulnerabilities of migrants including through the implementation of an electronic portal for streamlined public services, advocacy to eliminate discrimination in nationality laws against women, efforts to resolve statelessness as well improving access to birth registration in order to protect the rights of migrant children and vulnerable groups. Collaboration with governmental and non-governmental authorities and better coordination in GCM regionally and globally was deemed significant to counteract discrimination and promote inclusivity. The importance of international cooperation in addressing the root causes of migration, such as poverty, conflict and climate change was also emphasized.

32. Member States reconfirmed their commitment to further advance GCM implementation in the region and emphasized the importance of social public awareness, institutional cooperation and collaboration across the region in addressing migration issues. They recognized that the GCM provides a framework for safer and better-governed migration, requiring international cooperation to reduce irregular and dangerous journeys. Reducing vulnerabilities within migrant flows emerged as a critical priority. All participants emphasized the importance of early detection and response to risks, particularly through gender-responsive migration management and child protection measures that take into account the effects of parents' migration on children who stay behind.

33. Attention was drawn to the significance of providing accurate information to migrants to facilitate informed decision-making and ensure safer journeys. Strategies include scaling up awareness campaigns to highlight the risks of irregular migration and smuggling, while also promoting legal migration alternatives. The provision of tailored information is crucial to facilitate access to rights and protection measures.

34. A group of States reaffirm their commitment to supporting the Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund (Migration MPTF). They emphasize the importance of international cooperation in addressing both the opportunities and challenges presented by human mobility. The Migration MPTF aims to implement the GCM by promoting migration approaches that benefit communities and migrants across all stages of migration. Notable initiatives supported by the fund in the region include addressing migration-related vulnerabilities in Tajikistan and enhancing migration data collection in North Macedonia.

Although significant progress has been made, they urged other member States to contribute to the Migration MPTF, considering its 2024 funding target set at USD 25 million, to further enhance migration governance and address challenges such as the impacts of climate change on migration. They emphasized the collective impact that can be achieved through pooled resources, promoting safe and regular migration while mitigating risks to individuals and communities.

35. Member States and stakeholders stressed the need for data collection and evidence-based policymaking for managing migration effectively. They also stressed the importance of adopting evidence-based national frameworks to support the implementation of the GCM, providing concrete measures and actions for that purpose. Efforts are underway to improve the comparability and reliability of national migration data, as well as preparedness, with initiatives such as the EU's Migration Preparedness and Crisis Management Network (Blueprint) facilitating collaboration among EU member States, agencies, and partner countries. The crucial roles of local communities and civil society in fostering inclusive policy development and the need for centralized support for local initiatives were stressed.

36. Member States and stakeholders welcome the development of a limited set of indicators to review progress related to GCM implementation. Certain countries emphasized that States have the sole authority to distinguish between regular and irregular migratory status, highlighting the need to reflect this principle in the proposal. Additionally, they emphasized the need to ensure that the indicators accurately capture the GCM's 360-degree nature, differentiate between regular and irregular migrants and maintain a balanced approach across all its objectives. Member States stated their commitment to ending gender-based violence and targeting gender equality in humanitarian assistance. Attention was drawn to recent reports showing that most migration policies disproportionately negatively affect individuals from certain national origins, and ethnic, racial, and religious groups often involving structural racism. The ECE region strives to incorporate inter-state cooperation to work on the root causes of forced migration, address poverty, exclusion, global economic inequalities, and other drivers like the current climate emergency, the exploitation of natural resources and armed conflicts.

37. The need for cooperation between countries of origin, transit and destination was regarded as crucial for upholding human rights and non-discrimination principles in the GCM and was identified as a practice that should feature more heavily in the review. Member States and stakeholders called for the rejection of policies that perpetuate racial injustice and urged for the promotion of policies based on a positive migration narrative that facilitate appropriate procedures that address structural human rights violations and combat racial discrimination, including in border management. Participants highlighted the importance of addressing negative narratives that fuel hatred, xenophobia, misinformation and violence against migrants and their families, using evidence of migrants' contributions to economic, social, and cultural development. Along the same lines, institutional cooperation is seen as a priority across different administrations to combat racism, xenophobia, and other forms of discrimination. National efforts are underway such as developing or updating national anti-racism strategies. Member States stressed recent achievements in effectively regulating immigration and employing foreigners to facilitate regular migration pathways, with several measures put in place to respect the rights of migrants and establish monitoring systems to track progress on GCM goals.

38. During the session, the exploitation of migrant workers through recruitment fees emerged as a theme, along with the vulnerabilities faced by irregular migrants, such as the lack of adequate documentation, freedom of association and access to justice. This prompted calls to regulate private employment agencies and enhance protection in sectors where migrant workers are highly vulnerable, such as the construction sector. Many stakeholders urged for member States to address barriers to safe migration and strengthen legislation to prevent exploitation and lower the risks faced by vulnerable groups along dangerous migration routes.

39. Member States emphasized the importance of multilateral partnerships with other governments to address irregular migration including smuggling and trafficking and forced displacement, and to advance initiatives promoting a balanced discourse on migration. The need for a collaborative approach was also mentioned. The European Commission adopted a

New Pact to prioritize collaboration with partners at bilateral, regional, and global levels to achieve safe, orderly and regular migration. Participants identified the need to prioritize early action, gender-responsive, and child sensitive migration management, specialized care services, and safe humanitarian environments through protection, dignified voluntary return, and by combating human trafficking.

40. Overall, Member States and stakeholders reaffirmed their collective commitment to enhance international cooperation, provide accurate information, reduce vulnerabilities, and strengthen data and evidence collection efforts to effectively manage migration and foster safe, orderly and regular migration.
