

GCM EUROPE REGIONAL REVIEW GUIDING QUESTIONS

For submission to UNNM by March 4, 2024

1. Has your government developed a GCM national implementation plan or integrated the GCM and its guiding principles into existing frameworks, plans and policies? If so, please elaborate on the process. If not, please indicate if your government has plans to do so, and what the envisaged process is.

Promoting GCM alignment domestically

Following the adoption of the Global Compact for Migration (GCM), Canada has examined its domestic and international programs and policies against the framework of the GCM.

Analyses of policies and programs have shown that Canada is generally well-aligned with the 23 objectives of the GCM; therefore, Canada has not developed a GCM national implementation plan, and instead, we have adopted a more targeted approach.

Domestically, Canada's immigration department (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada) has reviewed alignment between policies and programs being developed and the text of the GCM - and more recently, the text of the 2022 IMRF Progress Declaration. Relevant information on the GCM objectives, guiding principles and action items have also been provided to subject matter leads who are developing new policies and programs, with a view to promoting increased alignment with the GCM and the IMRF Progress Declaration.

Canada first examined and reviewed GCM alignment with its policies at the time of adoption of the GCM in 2018, and then did a more targeted review in 2022 in the lead-up to the first International Migration Review Forum (IMRF).

Canada intends to continue to promote GCM implementation with a targeted approach by doing another alignment review, in advance of the 2026 IMRF, that will take into consideration the Progress Declaration, to identify gaps and challenges that may require further attention.

Canada has also continued to raise awareness of the GCM domestically. Following the adoption of the Compact, Canada engaged other levels of government, including provinces, territories and municipalities, in order to understand the extent to which existing practices were consistent with the Compact. This engagement followed from consultations with provinces and territories during the negotiations of the GCM. For Canada, engaging the whole-of-government is crucial as the responsibilities for migration policies and programming fall to different levels of government, and provinces have shared or sole jurisdiction over areas covered by the GCM. However, comprehensive engagement specifically on the GCM, its objectives, and guiding principles remains challenging, given the range and diversity of partners and stakeholders implicated in implementation, and the many competing pressures and issues affecting our migration and refugee protection systems. Nevertheless, the guiding principles of 'whole-of-government approach' and 'whole-of-society approach' are embedded into our practices.

Most recently, Canada conducted thorough stakeholder engagement in the context of a Strategic Immigration Review. Canada also continues to hold annual consultations to inform its annual immigration levels plan (more information on these practices is provided in the next section).

Another example of how GCM guiding principles are integrated into practice and policy is associated to gender-responsiveness. The Government of Canada requires all federal government departments to apply an evidence-based and data-informed [Gender-Based Analysis Plus](#) (GBA Plus) lens when developing policies, programs and legislation. This

analysis ensures that Government of Canada actions recognize and address the multiple and intersecting experiences faced by migrants, particularly women and girls, on the grounds of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age, disability, race, national or ethnic origin, language, and other relevant identity characteristics.

The GBA Plus lens helps design and implement policies that are more inclusive of diverse identities, perspectives and realities, and supports the domestic implementation and international promotion of gender-responsive approaches. Federal departments also offer their employees specific training in conducting GBA Plus to support gender-responsive policy development.

International cooperation

As the GCM is a tool for international cooperation, Canada has developed an international engagement plan with four priority areas and a number of engagement activities to help focus its efforts – particularly as we recognize that engaging on all aspects of the GCM, all the time, remains challenging due to its wide coverage.

The four priorities for Canada's international engagement under the GCM are: 1) promoting balanced and evidence-based narratives on migration, 2) encouraging a gender-responsive approach to migration management, 3) promoting best practices for integration and social cohesion, and 4) encouraging countries to put in place more regular migration pathways and deter irregular migration.

Canada has leveraged international and regional forums such as the IOM's International Dialogue on Migration (IDM), the Transatlantic Council on Migration (TCM), the Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees (IGC), the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM), the Global Forum for Migration and Development (GFMD), and UNNM events (e.g., Regional Reviews, IMRF, technical meetings, GCM Talks, etc.) to promote and exchange knowledge on these priority areas.

Some specific examples of international cooperation efforts are provided under questions 2 and 3.

2. How has or will your government integrate the recommended actions to accelerate the implementation of the GCM as set out in the IMRF 2022 Progress Declaration into their relevant **national policies and plans** and reflected in their engagements in **relevant international fora** (e.g. High-Level Political Forum, Regional Forum for Sustainable Development, COP Climate Change Conference, etc.)? Furthermore, please indicate how the whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches were implemented and/or advanced in this regard.

Promoting GCM alignment domestically

Strategic Immigration Review

In February 2023, Canada launched a **Strategic Immigration Review** involving extensive whole-of-government and whole-of-society engagement to explore how its immigration policies and programs can be improved to best support the country's present and future needs. This included cross-Canada dialogues with migration thought leaders, businesses, Indigenous representatives, youth councils, migrants, and a public online survey. Canada heard from more than 17,500 voices, including over 2,000 organizations and over 2,100 current or former clients, such as foreign workers in Canada on a temporary basis, international students and permanent residents.

To ensure a whole-of-government approach, Canada's immigration department (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada) worked with more than 20 federal

government departments and agencies, as well as with provinces, territories and municipalities to obtain views on the future immigration system.

The findings from this consultative process have been published in the [Strategic Immigration Review public report](#). The Strategic Immigration Review identified 30 action items to improve Canada's immigration system, many of which are aligned with GCM objectives, guiding principles, and recommendations as set out in the IMRF 2022 Progress Declaration. As Canada considers the implementation of measures identified in the report, GCM objectives and guiding principles will be considered.

Some examples of measures identified in the report that may help further align our practices with the GCM include, but are not limited to:

- *“Building an advisory body with lived experience in immigration to guide policy development and improvements to service delivery.”*
 - This advisory body will support recommended actions under paragraphs 51, 53 and 56 of the IMRF Progress Declaration on meaningful migrant participation in policy discussions and issues that affect them. It will also support a number of GCM objectives, including: the provision of information, migrant inclusion and social cohesion, addressing discrimination, and promoting migrant and diaspora contributions.
 - This initiative is also aligned with the GCM's people-centred and whole-of-society guiding principles.
- *“Creating the role of Chief International Talent Officer to align Canada's immigration policies with a long-term skills and labour strategy.”*
 - This will involve organizing global skills missions in collaboration with government representatives, employers and stakeholders to recruit the talent Canada needs.
 - This initiative will support recommended actions under paragraph 66 of the IMRF Progress Declaration and is aligned with the GCM's whole-of-society guiding principle. It will also contribute to GCM objectives on recruitment and decent work, as well as skills development and recognition.
- *“Seek to integrate housing and health care planning, along with other important services, into planning Canada's immigration levels.”*
 - As Canada continues to welcome high numbers of newcomers, we must take into account the capacity of communities to house and care for them.
 - IRCC leads on an annual plan to project how many new permanent residents Canada will welcome in the following year(s). The Department will explore options to develop a more integrated plan to coordinate housing, health care and infrastructure between federal government departments, and in close collaboration with provinces, territories and municipalities.
 - These efforts will require a whole-of-government approach and will support recommended actions under paragraph 52 of the IMRF Declaration (on integrating public health considerations into migration policies).
 - This work also aligns with GCM objective 15 on access to basic services.

Annual consultations for Canada's Immigration Levels Plan

In line with paragraph 69 of the IMRF Progress Declaration on employing whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches, IRCC engages annually with a broad range of stakeholders from across the country to inform the development of Canada's Immigration Levels Plan, which plans how many new permanent residents Canada will welcome under Canada's economic, family and refugee and humanitarian migration programs.

For the [2024-2026 Immigration Levels Plan](#), IRCC sought perspectives on the balance among different categories and programs, how immigration can support the vitality of communities in all parts of the country, and Canada's response to humanitarian crises. The Department also wanted to better understand the economic and labour market needs that could be addressed through category-based selection, a new enhancement to Express Entry – the online system that IRCC uses to manage immigration applications from skilled workers – that allows for the selection of candidates who meet defined economic goals.

IRCC invited a total of 4,780 stakeholder organizations to participate in the survey and received a total of 633 completed surveys. Participating stakeholders included, but were not limited to, non-profit organizations, settlement or resettlement organizations, academic and educational institutions, government bodies, employers and businesses, chambers of commerce, Francophone and official language minority community organizations, and industry and sector councils. The number of stakeholder organizations invited to participate in the survey represents a substantial increase from the 2,867 stakeholder organizations invited in 2022, and reflects the department's commitment to expand outreach and seek a plurality of views on immigration.

In addition to the online survey, IRCC also engages with provinces and territories and other federal departments and leverages public opinion research, labour market information and immigrant outcomes data as part of its annual Immigration Levels Planning.

Promoting international cooperation

As a GCM Champion country, Canada is committed to advancing GCM objectives and guiding principles domestically and internationally. As discussed under Question 1, Canada has identified a few priority areas for engagement. For instance, internationally, Canada continues to promote balanced and evidence-based narratives, gender-responsive approaches to migration, and regular pathways through information sharing and engagement with multilateral organizations.

Promoting balanced and evidence-based narratives on migration

Canada is committed to advancing actions under paragraph 54 of the IMRF Progress Declaration, as well as objective 17 of the GCM to eliminate all forms of discrimination and promote evidence based public discourse to shape perceptions of migration. Promoting balanced and evidence-based narratives on migrants and refugees both nationally and internationally can help combat xenophobia and strengthen social cohesion, support for diversity, economic growth and innovation.

Through the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), Canada has created and maintained an international space for multi-stakeholder partnerships through co-chairing the GFMD Working Group on Public Narratives on Migration. This Working Group developed a practical "[Communications Guide on Shaping the Public Narrative on Migration and Migrants](#)". Canada also co-chaired the roundtable discussion at the GFMD Summit in January 2024 on narratives with the

Government of the Philippines: this produced the background paper ([English](#), [French](#), [Spanish](#)) for the roundtable, and produce the “Global Migration Narratives Outlook” [report](#) and [summary](#), which looked at academic research and analysed approaches to narratives, with examples of recent or current campaigns around the world. Some findings of effective approaches include: appealing to common interest, rather than self-interest; and fact-checking can be effective to balance the narrative.

Canada has also worked with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to develop and implement the [It Takes a Community \(ITAC\)](#), a global social media communications campaign, which aims to positively shift public discourse on migration by increasing public awareness of the contributions that migrants and refugees make in their communities.

Narratives and public perception of migration also means the inclusion of migrants themselves, in lifting their voices, and in policies and programs being responsive to their needs and lived experiences. Canada sponsored two youth delegates to attend the 2024 Youth Forum and GFMD Summit in January 2024 in Geneva, in an effort to promote diverse voices in international forums.

Canada’s experiences in the GFMD have shown clearly the power of international cooperation and global partnerships (objective 23), as well as the importance of employing a whole-of-society approach with multi-stakeholder partnerships to advance GCM implementation, particularly as it relates to objective 17. Canada is open to exploring ways in which GCM objectives could be further discussed and advanced in other multilateral spaces.

Gender-responsive migration

Canada is committed to advancing actions under paragraph 56 of the IMRF Progress Declaration, on developing gender-responsive migration policies. In addition to its domestic policies on gender (such as [Canada’s Feminist International Assistance Policy](#) and [GBA Plus](#)), Canada also supports international initiatives that promote gender-responsive migration, such as the [Gender + Migration Hub](#), which develops tools and compiles resources to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women, girls, and LGBTQI+ people on the move; as well as the [Gender and Migration Research Policy Action Lab](#) (GenMig), an initiative led by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), focused on impact research for supporting gender-responsive policies, operations, programming and practices in migration. These projects provide concrete resources and guidance in support of gender-responsive migration policies.

Gender is a priority theme for Canada’s engagement across the multilateral system, so the initiatives above are complemented and reinforced by efforts in support of the Global Compact on Refugees, and more broadly in the context of human rights, peace and security, humanitarian response, development, and other fields.

Promoting regular pathways

Canada is committed to advancing actions under paragraph 59 of the IMRF Progress Declaration, as well as objective 5 of the GCM on regular pathways domestically and through international engagement.

Internationally, at the most recent North American Leaders’ Summit (NALS) in Mexico City on January 10, 2023, Canada committed to trilateral collaboration with the U.S. and Mexico to work towards safe, orderly and regular migration in the

Americas, including by promoting and sharing information on regular migration pathways and programs.

Canada has also committed to helping address irregular migration through safe and regular migration pathways by welcoming 15,000 people from the Americas. To do this, we have launched a new pathway that grants permanent residence for Colombian, Haitian and Venezuelan nationals who are living in Mexico, Central or South America or the Caribbean, and outside of Canada and the United States, with family connections to Canada. In addition to the new humanitarian pathway, Canada is welcoming 4,000 more people from temporary foreign worker streams than the previous year, as well as up to 1,000 people under the Economic Mobility Pathways Pilot.

In the European context, Canada also engages bilaterally with international partners, including European countries and the EU, on issues related to labour migration as well as other regular migration pathways by sharing lessons learned and good practices.

For instance, Canada has held technical discussions with other Member States in Europe on the topic of refugee labour mobility both bilaterally and in cooperation with multi-stakeholder partners in the Global Task Force on Refugee Labour Mobility. These pathways are driven by labour market needs and aim to promote safe, orderly and regular economic pathways for refugees. This in an area that demonstrates the importance of promoting complementarity between GCM and GCR, as the current and future reality of people on the move is mixed migration flows, where there aren't any or sufficient regular pathways to manage such flows.

Beyond these priorities, Canada also promotes other GCM objectives and guiding principles **in international fora and through** its international migration and protection **capacity building projects**. Some examples are included below:

Addressing climate mobility

Addressing climate change and its effects is a priority for Canada, and the impact of climate change on human mobility is a key international migration and protection policy issue that will continue to require our global attention and collaboration. The GCM represents a significant achievement in helping to accelerate action to address migration and displacement in the context of climate and environmental change. The Compact includes references to acknowledge and address increased movements in the context of natural disasters, environmental degradation, and climate change. It provides a platform for encouraging greater international attention to, and ultimately strengthened collaboration on, these cross-cutting issues. Canada welcomed the inclusion of considerations related to the impact of climate change on human mobility in the May 2022 Progress Declaration of the International Migration Review Forum.

Recognizing the urgency of addressing climate change and its implications for human mobility, Canada regularly engages in discussions related to the climate change and migration nexus, both domestically and internationally. We also invests in targeted capacity building projects that aim to strengthen data and the evidence-base related to climate mobility, and enable the development of adequate local solutions and targeted adaptation strategies that can help increase resiliency. For example, as announced at the Global Refugee Forum 2023 in December, Canada is funding a project with the IOM in Southern Mexico to help build data and the methodological foundation on how climate change is impacting people's decisions to move. These efforts align with both the GCM and the IMRF Declaration

emphasizing the need for comprehensive responses to the drivers of migration, including environmental factors like climate change.

Capacity building to promote managed migration

Additionally, Canada uses capacity building assistance to help partner countries develop tools and policies to better manage migration movement, strengthen asylum and protection systems, and better support migrants and refugees to integrate into local communities. These efforts support both safe and regular pathways for migration, the deterrence of irregular migration, as well as strengthen regional and global protection systems.

3. Please list some examples of **achievements, promising practices** and lessons learned that relate to **national, inter- and sub-regional collaboration** to the implementation of the GCM.

NATIONAL COLLABORATION

Settlement and integration programming (objectives 16, 17, gender-responsive, whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches)

Collaboration is key to effectively advancing the objectives of the GCM. Canada's approach to settlement and integration of newcomers is premised on social inclusion and shared effort and responsibility between newcomers and Canadian society. This involves collaboration among a wide range of partners and stakeholders, including all levels of government, as well as private and public sectors and civil society.

For instance, Canada has bilateral arrangements with most provinces/territories with respect to settlement and has established local coordinating working groups under the MOUs as a mechanism to successfully coordinate settlement service delivery, identify priorities, and exchange information.

Canada's federal Settlement Program (over \$1 billion CAD annually outside of Quebec) provides a continuum of settlement supports and programs free of charge to immigrants and refugees, from the pre-arrival stage through to their citizenship acquisition, to enable full participation in the economic, social and cultural life of Canada. Settlement services, delivered through more than 550 third-party service provider organizations, include information and orientation to help newcomers make informed decisions about their settlement and better understand Canada's laws and institutions, language training to help with integration into communities and the labour market, community connections services to help build a sense of belonging, and employment-related services such as job-search orientation, employer connections, and information about foreign credential recognition pathways. In addition, the Program provides funding for indirect services that strengthen the settlement sector and the communities where newcomers settle. For example, Local Immigration Partnerships coordinate services and engage a wide range of local actors around newcomer needs at the community level.

Through the Settlement Program, the Government of Canada ensures that targeted settlement supports for populations facing multiple barriers to integration remain a priority and that Gender-based Analysis Plus (intersectional analysis) is continuously applied to assess the potential impacts of policies, programs, and services on diverse groups of people. The Government of Canada provides funding to service provider organizations to deliver tailored settlement services for racialized newcomers, women, survivors of gender-based violence, youth, seniors, persons with disabilities, and LGBTI populations. These tailored services include in-school and after-school programming for youth, peer

mentoring, gender-based violence supports and resources, LGBTI settlement supports, women's only language classes, and conversation circles for seniors.

- For example, under *Canada's Strategy to Prevent and Address Gender-based Violence (GBV)*, the government has enhanced the Settlement Program to implement a settlement sector strategy on GBV through a coordinated partnership of settlement and anti-violence sector organizations. The Gender-based Violence Strategy Partnership builds the capacity of the settlement sector to effectively address GBV by through resources and training that enable front-line workers to identify GBV, and provide support to clients who are at risk or experiencing GBV.
- This partnership has developed training webinars and a English-French online course, called "[Bridges to Safety](#)". Settlement organizations and staff are receiving nationally consistent training and information to help them respond to gender-based violence issues, which has increased their awareness of where to access gender-based violence-related information, training, and support.
- Canada's Settlement Program's strategy on GBV is an example of a promising practice to advance gender-responsive policies on settlement and integration by establishing whole-of-society partnerships that leverage the expertise of different sectors.

REGIONAL COOPERATION

Organizing/hosting events on GCM-related topics

Canada, through its embassies in Europe, regularly organizes and hosts events that promote GCM objectives and guiding principles, including gender-responsive migration, integration and social cohesion, and complementary pathways. A couple of recent examples include:

- To promote best practices on integration and social cohesion, IRCC Rome hosted an event in Milan in November 2023 where Canadian stakeholders discussed with six Italian municipalities and UNHCR Italy about their experiences and best practices in integration and settlement of newcomers, migrants, and refugees.
- In 2023, IRCC Paris, in partnership with non-governmental organizations, organized an event to promote regular pathways among key stakeholders in France, including government representatives. In addition, the embassy hosted the IOM film festival in 2023, which promoted regular labour mobility pathways in addition to fostering a positive narrative on the contribution of migrants to their host society.

Canada, through IRCC Rome, has collaborated with Italian organizations and institutions since 2016 through a variety of events, workshops, and conferences to promote regular pathways as well as GCR objectives such as community sponsorship.

Information sharing through multilateral or regional forums

Canada is a firm supporter of multilateral and regional forums as they promote exchange and dialogue, and allow us to learn from each other.

Canada maintains a close bilateral relationship with the European Union. High-level engagement is formally supported by the EU-Canada Strategic Partnership Agreement's Joint Consultations on Migration and Asylum (JCMA). Additionally, the Canada-EU Platform formally supports working-level engagement. Both JCMA and the Platform provide opportunities to share experience and information on a broad range of topics aligned with the GCM's objectives, including regular and irregular migration, migration

narratives, integration, and our respective responses to situations of displacement, resettlement, removals and gender.

Canada is a member of the Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees (IGC). Canada has benefitted from the IGC's Chatham House rule format allowing for open conversations. For instance, the IGC has been an important forum for gathering and sharing information on migration crisis management and responses, and the IGC has the ability to quickly convene discussions on specific themes. Recently, Canada had the opportunity to contribute to IGC discussions by highlighting Canadian approaches, successes and lessons learned in the areas of settlement, integration, inclusion, balanced migration narratives, and citizenship.

Similarly, through the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM), Canada supported and attended the First Regional Forum of Champion Countries in the Americas, organized by the RCM in September 2023. This forum provided an opportunity to bring together RCM Member Countries and other GCM Champion countries over two days to share tools and best practices and promote greater regional collaboration on a set number of targeted topics, including: migration governance; integration and development; and, protection, preparedness and irregular migration. This form of engagement facilitated more focused discussions and exchanges, proving beneficial as comprehensive engagement on the GCM can be challenging without specific focus areas.

Canada also appreciated the opportunity to participate in the Informal Cross-Regional Dialogue of GCM Champion Countries organized by the Regional UN Network on Migration in West and Central Africa and the Government of Ghana. This event brought together 28 GCM Champion countries and stakeholders, and discussions focused on a limited number of GCM objectives, namely: data, legal identity and documentation, regular pathways, inclusion and social cohesion, eliminating discrimination, and international cooperation.

Capacity building in the Americas

To demonstrate our commitment to strengthening bilateral and regional cooperation in the Americas, Canada is increasing its assistance for capacity-building efforts in this region by investing \$75 million over six years for projects across Latin America and the Caribbean. Some of the areas to be targeted with this funding will include: strengthening asylum and protection systems, helping to promote regular and alternative pathways, and supporting migrants and refugees to better integrate into local communities and labour markets, consistent with our commitments under both the GCM and the Global Compact on Refugees.

These efforts aim, to support origin, transit, and destination countries in the region better respond to and manage the large scale mixed migration movements through capacity building and international cooperation (objective 23).

Currently, IRCC focuses its capacity building efforts in the region on three main areas:

- (1) strengthening national asylum and migration systems;
- (2) strengthening socio-economic integration of migrants and refugees in host countries; and
- (3) improving opportunities for regularization of refugees and migrants in host countries.

This provides opportunities to engage with stakeholders and states, and to advance the GCM and GCR concretely.

4. What are the main **gaps and challenges to existing **inter- and cross-regional collaboration** on the implementation of the GCM?**

While a 360-degree vision is essential for the comprehensive implementation of the Compact, the wide range of GCM objectives and action items may inadvertently dilute collaborative focus and hinder effective regional actions in support of GCM implementation. Sequencing or phasing a number of common regional priorities could help improve coordinated actions.

There are also resource constraint considerations that may hinder regional collaboration on GCM implementation, particularly in the face of competing pressures and crises that affect the capacity of our migration and refugee protection systems.

Given the political salience of migration in this region, cooperation may also need to shift and adapt to changes in government, making harder to implement longer-term initiatives.

5. Outline areas (GCM objectives and/or guiding principles) where the region would benefit from strengthened cooperation in terms of finance, capacity-building, policy advice, data gathering and analysis, technology, multi-stakeholder partnerships, etc.

Over the past years, the world has witnessed a constant series of crises that have put tremendous pressures on immigration and protection systems and have underscored the urgency of longer-term systemic changes.

As referenced in question 3, Canada benefitted from engagement and information sharing on the topic of migration crisis management and responses. As issues emerge, it will be important for states to continue to engage and exchange on topics ranging from crisis response to labour mobility, as well as on horizontal issues such as how to increase meaningful migrant participation.