Expert Group Meeting:
Strengthening national capacities for evidence-based policymaking
to implement the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration
in North and Central Asia

10 March 2022, Virtual meeting

CONCEPT NOTE

Background

In 2020, there were almost 18 million international migrants residing in North and Central Asia, and over 21 million migrants from the subregion were residing outside their countries of birth. The Russian Federation, followed by Kazakhstan are preferred destinations for labor migrants from neighboring countries, such as Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

The Russian Federation is one of the most important source countries for remittances in the world, while countries such as Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are some of the most remittance-dependent countries in the world. There, remittances accounted for almost 30 per cent of the GDP in 2020 and helped Kyrgyzstan to reduce poverty rates by 6-7 percentage points per annum.

In 2018, United Nations Member States adopted the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) which recognized that safe, orderly and regular migration works for all when it takes place in a well-informed, planned and consensual manner. They also recognized that migration should never be an act of desperation, and they committed to improving cooperation on it in the future.

The Global Compact is rooted in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and it builds upon the recognition that “migration is a multidimensional reality of major relevance for the sustainable development of countries of origin, transit and destination, which requires coherent and comprehensive responses. … The Global Compact aims to leverage the potential of migration for the achievement of all Sustainable Development Goals, as well as the impact this achievement will have on migration in the future”.

The Global Compact echoes the call of the 2030 Agenda for data, monitoring and accountability and for strengthening the means of implementation and revitalization of the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development (SDG17). Its Objective 1, for example, emphasizes the need for collecting and utilizing accurate and disaggregated data as a basis for evidence-based policies. Objective 23 focuses on strengthening international cooperation and global partnerships for safe, orderly and regular migration and the cross-cutting and interdependent guiding principles emphasize the whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to its implementation and follow-up.

In collaboration with the United Nations Expert Group on Migration Statistics, the United Nations Statistics Division recently developed an overarching conceptual framework and accompanying definitions for the upcoming revision of the Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration. Endorsed by the Statistical Commission in March 2021, the conceptual framework builds stronger
links with data needs for national policymaking, covers new migration patterns and new data sources, and will be the basis for statistical capacity efforts conducted by the Statistics Division and partners.

In March 2021, ESCAP, with support from the Regional UN Network on Migration, organized the first Asia-Pacific Regional Review of Implementation of the Global Compact. At the meeting, Governments reaffirmed their commitment to the Global Compact for Migration, including its cross-cutting and interdependent guiding principles and 23 objectives. In the Chair’s summary of the meeting, participants called for more timely, accurate and integrated data and for enhancing national capacity on migration data, especially to integrate migration and the corresponding Sustainable Development Goal indicators into policies and programmes (para 75).

In follow-up to the Asia-Pacific Regional Review meeting, ESCAP started implementing a project on “Strengthening national capacities for evidence-based policymaking to implement the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in North and Central Asia”. Funded by the Russian Federation, one of the project’s objectives is to build capacities of Governments and key stakeholders to strengthen the production and dissemination of high quality, comparable and sex-disaggregated and publicly available data and information on migration. Moreover, the project aims to foster evidence-based dialogue on migration issues and to develop policy solutions which support safe, orderly and regular migration and the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The following countries are target countries for this project: North and Central Asia, in particular: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The project ends in December 2024.

Date of the meeting

The meeting is scheduled to take place on 10 March 2022 from 15:00 pm to 18:30 pm, Indochina Time /09:00 am to 12:30 pm, CET.

Purpose of the meeting

The purpose of the meeting is to:

a) Provide an overview of the main messages emanating from the Asia-Pacific Regional Review of Implementation of the Global Compact and relate them to the migration situation in North and Central Asia;
b) Provide an overview of data availabilities and needs in the subregion;
c) Explore the possibility of launching a survey on data needs and availability in North and Central Asia and further capacity-building.

Expected outcomes

It is expected that after the meeting, country focal points and partners will have:

a) Increased understanding of the outcomes of the Asia-Pacific Regional Review of Implementation of the Global Compact with a focus on data and capacity-building;
b) Better knowledge of data availability and needs;
c) Agreement on next steps for launching a survey on migration data and capacity-building.
Participants

National focal points on migration from target countries nominated by Governments of North and Central Asia to ESCAP will participate in the meeting. Some representatives of civil society, academia/research institutions and United Nations entities working in North and Central Asia will also attend and support the consultations.

Modality of the meeting

The meeting will be conducted virtually with presentations, plenary discussions and possibly breakout sessions. A technical information note on the modality of the meeting, including dial-in details, will be prepared and shared with participants in advance. Participants are invited to make ad-hoc interventions from the floor.

The meeting website can be accessed at: https://www.unescap.org/events/2022/strengthening-national-capacities-evidence-based-policymaking-implement-global-compact

Language of the meeting

The meeting will be conducted in English and Russian with simultaneous interpretation provided.

Documents prepared for the meeting (see also meeting website)

Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (A/RES/70/1)

Asia-Pacific Migration Report 2020 (ST/ESCAP/2801)

Report of the Asia-Pacific Regional Review of Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (ESCAP/GCM/2021/3)

Report of the Secretary-General: Migration Statistics (E/CN.3/2021/11)

Recommendations on Statistics on International Migration (ST/ESA/STAT/SER.M/58/Rev.1)

Handbook on the Use of Administrative Sources and Sample Surveys to Measure International Migration in CIS Countries (ECE/CES/STAT/2016/2) (for the Russian version, see: https://bit.ly/3qJo5zd