

Concept Note and Programme

Labour Migration and the Global Compact: Ensuring Rights, Protections and a Decent Work Agenda

Side event during UN negotiations on the Global Compact for Safe,
Orderly and Regular Migration

15th May, 2018

13:15-14:45

UNHQ, Conference Room 7

Co-Sponsors:

Government of Germany, Government of Ethiopia, International Labour Organization, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Global Coalition on Migration, Migrant Forum in Asia, ITUC- Council of Global Unions, Solidarity Center, Public Services International, Mediterranean-Sub-Saharan Migration Trade Union Network

Most migration today is linked directly or indirectly to the search for decent work opportunities. Even if not the primary driver, employment usually features in the migration process at some point.

Employment prospects in destination countries and the lack of decent work opportunities in origin countries are a driving force for millions of migrants. The ILO estimates that today there are 150 million migrant workers, representing over 65 per cent of all migrants. Among migrant workers, 56 per cent are men and 44 per cent are women.

During the GCM negotiations, Member States have attached a high priority to rooting the discussion around the 2030 Agenda and the issue of decent work and labour migration. This is certainly well reflected in the draft of the negotiation text itself in the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. Temporary labour migration programmes can offer regular pathways and migration options for millions of migrant workers. The Resolution concerning fair and effective labour migration governance adopted at the International Labour Conference of 2017 states: “Temporary labour migration can be positive for labour markets of countries of origin and destination and can fill genuine short-term labour and skills gaps in certain sectors. However, careful consideration needs to be given to effective governance of temporary labour migration to protect the rights of migrant workers and national workers, ensure decent work, afford equal treatment in accordance with national laws and regulations and international obligations, and respect the fundamental principles and rights at work.”



Yet, temporary labor migration schemes - especially for low-wage workers - may have structural flaws that lead to the denial of labor rights, including the freedom of association and creation of vulnerabilities to forms of exploitation. Workers who have contributed to pension and retirement funds often face obstacles when claiming social security entitlements. Migrant women workers may face discrimination due to gendered labour market segmentation and gendered care-giving roles, and find themselves made vulnerable to workplace exploitation and gender-based violence.

Guiding questions:

- *What is the evidence base of existing labour migration programs and what are the effects of such programmes on migrant workers and their families, on countries of destination and origin?*
- *What are the core elements of proposed labour migration schemes, including human rights-based and gender-responsive components and monitoring mechanisms?*
- *How can the active role of migrants themselves, trade unions and civil society be promoted in the design, implementation and review of labor migration programmes?*
- *How can the Compact uphold the contributions of migrants beyond their labour value to host countries and expand other regular channels for mobility?*

Programme:

13:15 Moderated by Monami Maulik, Global Coalition on Migration and Felix Braunsdorf, FES Berlin

13:20 Opening Remarks

- Reinhard Krapp, Head of the Economic Department, Permanent Mission of Germany to the UN
- Yanit Abera Habtemariam, Second Secretary at the Permanent Mission of Ethiopia to the UN

13:26 Discussion Starters

- Hatem Laouini, Mediterranean-Sub-Saharan Migration Trade Union Network
- Ellene Sana, Migrant Forum in Asia
- Migrant Worker - testimony and policies
- Herbert Beck, PSI - ver.di

14:00 Moderated Discussion

14:35 Closing Remarks from Panelists

14:45 Closing by Moderator

Main actors:

Sponsoring Member States
Migrant-led civil society networks
Trade unions

Target group:

Member States and negotiators
Members of civil society, particularly migrant-led and regional/Global South networks
Trade unions

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