COMMITTEE ON MIGRATION ISSUES OEA/Ser.W

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CONCEPT PAPER

"INTEGRATION SUPPORT AND EMPLOYABILITY PATHWAYS FOR MIGRANTS IN COLLABORATION WITH THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION (ILO)"

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(Prepared by the Chair of the CAM with the support of the Technical Secretariat)

With the increase of mixed migratory flows in the Americas, the socioeconomic integration of migrants and refugees has been recognized as a necessity to ensure, in the medium and long term, the well-being of their families and host communities, as well as to enable migrants and their families to participate fully in the economic, social, cultural, and political sectors of the receiving communities and to be active agents for development.

The ILO estimates that by 2019 migrants accounted for 5% of the global workforce, with the Americas being the region with the second highest number of migrant workers (43.3 million people, equivalent to 25.6% of migrant workers worldwide). It also stated that while the proportion of workers in North America decreased from 23.7% in 2013 to 22.1% in 2019, migrant workers increased in Latin America and the Caribbean due to intra-regional migration flows.[[1]](#footnote-1)

In general, these workers lack protection and work in the service sector, making it necessary to adopt a perspective focusing on the economic rights of migrants, their integration, and employability routes in the host communities. In this area, access to a decent livelihood is considered a crucial factor for integration. In addition, migrants and refugees who are able to work and generate income contribute with their work and experience to the economic productivity of the host countries and at the same time play an important role as agents of resilience and innovation. Through their contributions as workers, entrepreneurs, investors, consumers, and contributors to the social system, migrants and refugees have a positive impact on the economic growth of their host country[[2]](#footnote-2) and provide better development opportunities for their families.

That being so, the availability of labor market integration services should be a public policy commitment underlying the response to the socioeconomic inclusion of migrants and refugees in host countries. This is a pressing task insofar as there are still evident challenges in guaranteeing equal opportunities and equal treatment in the workplace for this population in the region.

These services should focus on the recognition of migrants and refugees as persons endowed with rights, especially when the main challenges faced by migrants and refugees in accessing formal employment are the lack of access to identification documents in the country of destination. As a result, it is estimated that this population tends to work in sectors that require fewer skills and no social security – according to the most recent statistics (2020), around 65% of the migrant population in Latin America and the Caribbean works in the informal sector.[[3]](#footnote-3)

Promoting the labor integration of migrants entails developing employability routes through which solutions are offered for regularization and access to the legal documentation required to work, the availability of labor skills certification programs, more effective management of the gap between supply and demand, informing and updating employers on labor legislation, strengthening the labor skills of migrants and refugees, and mobilizing the business sector to promote their inclusion in the labor market.[[4]](#footnote-4)

In addition to these measures, it is necessary to continue promoting campaigns against xenophobia and the dissemination of negative stereotypes of migrants and refugees. Discrimination and exclusion of this population run counter to the region's development objectives in that they hamper the enjoyment of their rights and the positive contributions that could make in an environment free from discrimination.

In this regard, the ILO notes that millions of migrant workers move across world borders in search of opportunities, and it has analyzed the design of legislation and programs that respect the rights of migrants to be treated on equal terms with national workers, their rights to unionization, decent working conditions, working hours, and decent wages.

This session aims to draw attention to actions to promote the socioeconomic integration of migrants and refugees based on a strategic and collaborative approach by States, the private sector, and international organizations to ensure that the needs of all sectors and actors are taken into account and that the technical and financial resources required for this task to be successful and sustainable over time are made available.

For this reason, this thematic session will address these challenges and some solutions in terms of initiatives promoted in the region by the panelists. After the presentations, delegations will be able to take the floor to talk about the above-mentioned topics.

States are requested, above all, to share sound practices in this area, in order to consolidate the information and make it available to the member states.

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1. . [Crece el número de trabajadores que migran a otro país (Growing number of workers migrating to another country) | UN News (un.org)](https://news.un.org/es/story/2021/06/1493892) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. . For more information, please refer to the IOM article entitled: "Five contributions of migrants to the growth of Latin American economies" available at: <https://rosanjose.iom.int/en/blogs/five-contributions-migrants-growth-latin-american-economies> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. . For more information, please refer to the IDB article entitled: "How to get migrants jobs and boost economic development for all." available at: <https://blogs.iadb.org/migracion/en/how-to-get-migrants-jobs-and-boost-economic-development-for-all/> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. . For more information, please refer to the executive summary of the "*Propuesta de hoja de ruta piloto de implementación para lograr empleos de calidad en la ciudad de Barranquilla para la población migrante proveniente de Venezuela*” (“Pilot pathway proposed for creating quality jobs for migrants from Venezuela in Barranquilla”) available at: <https://www.uninorte.edu.co/documents/13400067/26556190/Resumen-Ejecutivo-hoja-de-ruta-y-piloto-de-implementacion-para-lograr-empleos-de-calidad-en-Barranquilla-para-poblacion-migrante.pdf/7ed9155d-3cf4-afe8-df3e-64e95e0e2b9d?t=1656023085686> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)