



Wilton Park

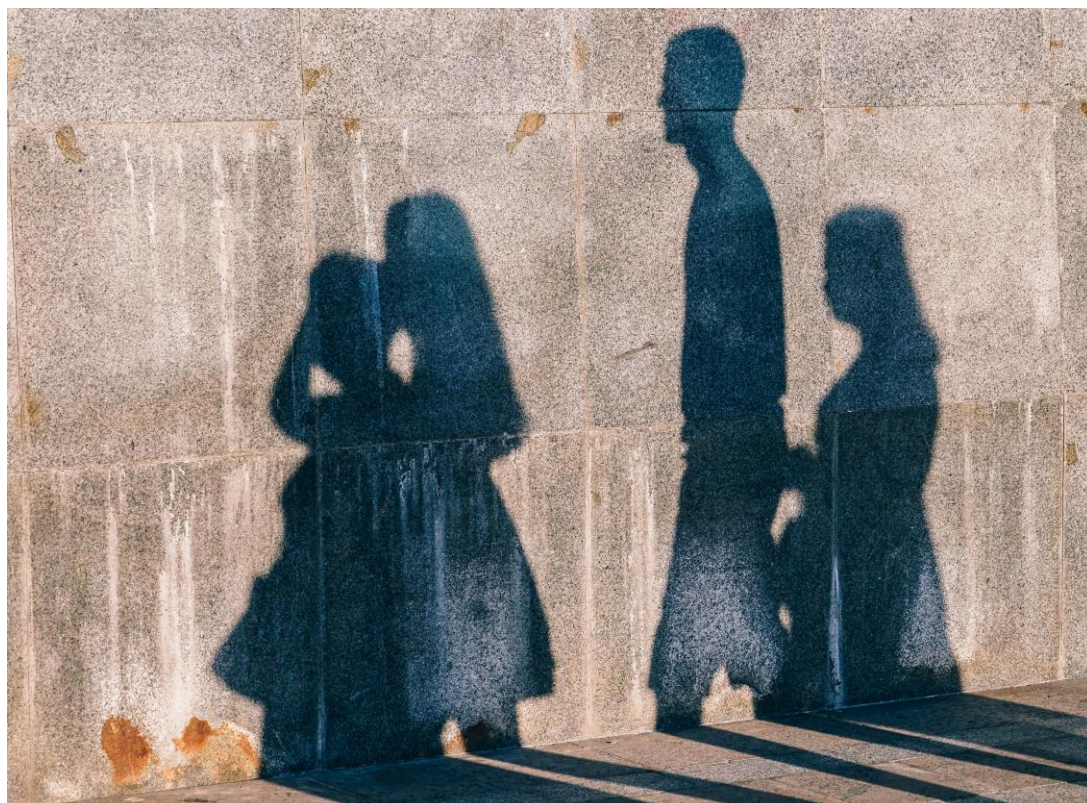


Image: Fancycrave on Unsplash

Report

Global Compact for Migration: from political to practical

Wednesday 24 – Friday 26 October 2018 | WP1634

In partnership with:



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA





Wilton Park

Report

Global Compact for Migration: from political to practical

Wednesday 24 – Friday 26 October 2018 | WP1634

In partnership with the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and the Overseas Development Institute

Executive summary

The text of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) was agreed in July 2018. It was a historic moment against a backdrop of increasingly restrictive immigration policies and hostile public narratives. In December 2018, in Marrakech, Morocco, the GCM will be formally adopted by most United Nations (UN) Member States and stakeholders will move into the implementation of its 23 objectives.

Member States will lead the implementation, aligning the objectives with their domestic priorities. They will be supported by a new UN Migration Network led by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and other key stakeholders including regional institutions, sub-national governments, the private sector, civil society and academia. The implementation of the GCM will need the support of champions, within and outside governments, encouraging devolved ownership of the process to those who have a stake in the outcomes.

There is a strong focus on the need for innovation and partnership in order for Member States and other actors to meet the objectives of the GCM. It is important to build on progress made by the migration community over the previous decades. Stakeholders will need to work together to prove progress early on, demonstrating the relevance and practical potential of the GCM and illustrating that migration has a positive impact on both economic and social development.

Introduction

Human mobility is a reality: people have always moved and will continue to do so. There are 258 million migrants in the world today, and this number is expected to grow. Population growth, increased economic opportunities, rising inequality and climate change will all play a part. Migration can contribute to all aspects of global economic and social development, including poverty reduction. However, if poorly regulated or badly managed, migration can pose challenges for migrants, host communities and states alike.

The Global Compact for Migration (GCM)....

In recognition of the importance of global agreement on these issues, in September 2016 the United Nations General Assembly adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants. It included a number of commitments, expressing the will of Member States to save lives, protect rights and share responsibility for all refugees and migrants.

The New York Declaration contained a move to initiate negotiations, developing both a Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) and a Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM). The process to agree the latter began in April 2017. It involved 18 months of extensive consultation and negotiation with stakeholders across the world including Member States, international organisations, regional institutions, sub-national governments, the private sector, civil society and academia.

On 13 July 2018, following a period of intense and at times polarised negotiations, the text was agreed in a historic moment. Securing the backing of the vast majority of Member States marks a significant step forward. Migration is now firmly on the international agenda in a way it has never been before. In December 2018, the GCM will be adopted during an inter-governmental conference to be held in Marrakech, Morocco.

“the GCM is not a one-off event, but a long-term project”

... from political to practical

Despite the overwhelming attention on the outcome of the Marrakech summit, the GCM is not a one-off event, but a long-term project. Securing political backing in December 2018 will be important, as is the recognition that the GCM offers a framework for Member States to move forward with their migration priorities. States will need to balance the possible trade-offs between their domestic agendas and the need for international cooperation. Successful and practical implementation of the GCM, will depend on a variety of innovations and partnerships.

“States will need to balance the possible trade-offs between their domestic agendas and the need for international cooperation”

Ahead of the Marrakech meeting, the Wilton Park conference brought together representatives from key stakeholders to:

- Explore the practical mechanisms for implementing and monitoring the implementation of the GCM, including the involvement of multi-stakeholder partnerships;
- Share best practice and innovative approaches, based on case studies and existing initiatives;
- Seek ways in which to enhance future collaboration, exploring the balance of interests and concerns between origin, transit and destination countries; and
- Develop and strengthen collaborative approaches through new partnerships and greater international cooperation.

This report draws together the discussion under key themes and suggests some innovations and partnerships which could be presented in December 2018.

“Most people are moving ‘South-South’, often between middle income countries and within regions”

Migration: one of the defining features of the 21st century

A challenge, and an opportunity

1. Today, there are over 258 million migrants living outside their country of birth and over 1 billion people ‘on the move’. Their reasons for moving are complex and overlapping, including escape from crises, and the search for economic and social opportunities. Most people are moving ‘South-South’, often between middle income countries and within regions.
2. As origin countries develop, it is likely that there will be a larger number of people competing for limited options to migrate. In the regulation of those who are allowed through borders, state sovereignty is key. This raises some common questions and challenges for all states, including the need to find better ways of regulating the number of people coming in, the methods for selection, and the level of support and rights that migrants can expect. Over time, states have shifted from supply- to

“Immigrants contribute nearly 10% of global gross domestic product (GDP), despite only making up 3.4% of the world’s population”

demand-based policies, focusing on whether locals can fill skills shortages and, if not, turning to immigration. For those who are admitted, firm and time-bound restrictions are often placed on their ability to work, travel and access services.

3. Well designed migration policies can lead to improvements in development and poverty reduction. Immigrants contribute nearly 10% of global gross domestic product (GDP), despite only making up 3.4% of the world’s population. They grow labour forces in their destination country, promote entrepreneurship and innovation, and contribute to social, cultural, racial and religious diversity. The consequences of mismanagement are large.

The importance of the Global Compact for Migration (GCM)

4. Migration is a global phenomenon, but the structures and policies needed to regulate it are distinctly domestic. Most countries, especially those in the Global South, are countries of origin, transit and destination. Without effective regulation in place, these countries could miss out on the substantial benefits migration offers. To date, some countries have pulled out of the GCM negotiations, but the vast majority are set to adopt the document at the Marrakech conference.
5. The GCM is not a contract to be fulfilled. It is a ‘living entity’ which should evolve and adapt, becoming the spine around which all migration efforts can be aligned. The 23 objectives are far-reaching and all-encompassing, requiring their own implementation mechanisms, innovations and partnerships. They are not designed to be achieved in chronological order, nor are they prescriptive. The objectives are a ‘menu’ of options, helping all stakeholders work better and smarter together.

“The GCM is not a contract to be fulfilled. It is a ‘living entity’ which should evolve and adapt”

Understanding the key stakeholders

States

6. The GCM was negotiated by Member States, and designed to be implemented by them. It is incumbent on every state to decide their challenges, future priorities, and what objectives they plan to implement and how. Within these ‘national strategies’, it will be important to demonstrate and record progress. Some efforts could be ‘quick-wins’, eg. developing the practice of providing migrant support centres on transit routes, enhancing consular assistance and cooperation, and better coordinating with diaspora networks. States will need to encourage and demonstrate buy-in and ownership, particularly given the voluntary nature of the GCM’s commitments.
7. A key variable affecting this implementation is the public narrative. In some countries, there is a lively and nuanced debate about migration, demonstrating much compassion, sympathy and respect for human rights, but with a low level of public awareness of the GCM. In other countries, there is a high level of debate about the nature of the GCM, including misconceptions in the media that it compels states to act. There is a need for better education of the media and the wider public about the GCM, including what it is and what it is not, and how it can help improve migration management.
8. There are many examples of the GCM already being used by states and other actors to take action on migration policies and practice. In Nigeria and Kenya, for example, national migration committees including all government stakeholders are being created, to coordinate government activities and ensure policy coherence. Both countries are also reaching out to other actors to formulate national common positions on the GCM.

International organisations

9. The newly formed UN Migration Network – coordinated by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) – will support Member States in their implementation and will ensure coordination within the UN system. Other bodies such as the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) will also play a key role.

“The purpose of the Network is to bring all UN agencies focusing on migration under one umbrella”

“The GFMD was set up in 2006 to address the interconnections between migration and development”

10. **The UN Migration Network**, was the result of discussions at the international level about the capacity of the UN system to support states in their implementation of the GCM. A commitment to this effect was set out in the Secretary General’s report in January 2018, and echoed by Member States throughout the negotiations. The purpose of the Network is to bring all UN agencies focusing on migration under one umbrella, to support the four-yearly follow-up and review mechanism (through the International Migration Forum), and manage two other main components:
 - i. *Working groups*. These groups will focus on a number of the key elements within the GCM’s objectives, on a changing thematic basis. The aim is for them to be light, agile, task-focused and time-bound, and coordinated with other international structures. Currently, the Network is working on finalising the Terms of Reference and the initial composition of membership, leading to an early workplan of cross-cutting issues.
 - ii. *A capacity building mechanism*. This will encompass three parts: a knowledge platform, a connection hub and a start-up fund. The Terms of Reference are being drafted, and governance structures organised. In particular, the start-up fund will require a multi-stakeholder management approach, and political and financial support from external partners.
11. The GFMD was set up in 2006 to address the interconnections between migration and development. It provides one of the only fora that brings civil society, the private sector, international organisations and states together to exchange experiences and good practice, foster multi-stakeholder partnerships and promote innovation.
12. In 2019, Ecuador will take on the role as Chair of the GFMD. In the lead up to this, there is active engagement on ways in which the GFMD can support the GCM to translate objectives into action. Primarily the focus is on the Platform for Partnerships (PfP). This currently has two components: an online repository which showcases over 1,000 migration and development policies and practice; and meetings which allow for sharing of best practice and lessons learnt. The idea is to build on the PfP by reinvigorating an older GFMD idea, the Marketplace. The Marketplace, provided a platform whereby states could identify needs, for review by a central body and subsequent distribution to providers. Similar efforts in the past suffered from a lack of awareness, attendance, funding, coordination and follow-up. Looking forward, the GFMD regards the new UN Migration Network as a positive mechanism by which the Marketplace could promote both the innovation and new partnerships that the GCM needs to succeed.
13. Overall, there is a sense that international organisations and bodies have a strong role to play in coordinating state activities, and aggregating up quick wins in order to demonstrate the value of the GCM on a global scale. These efforts need to be coupled with detailed theories of change for the objectives, and a learning culture which promotes sharing of best practice and lessons learnt.

Regional institutions

“It is important for regions to self-identify their strengths in managing migration – turning regions into ‘champions’ and encouraging buy-in and ownership of the GCM”

14. The majority of migration occurs within regions. In this context, regional institutions such as the African Union, the European Union and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have an important role in governing labour mobility and empowering their members. It is important for regions to self-identify their strengths in managing migration – turning regions into ‘champions’ and encouraging buy-in and ownership of the GCM. A number of regional migration innovations have already been implemented such as the ECOWAS Common Passport and the Latin American Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF). Yet more opportunities remain, such as an African Union passport, and the use of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement to promote free movement of skills. These experiences need to be built upon and showcased.
15. Following the negotiations, many of the regions are now considering practical ways in which they can support the implementation of the GCM. There is discussion about

“cities and local communities experience the impact of integration, whether successful or unsuccessful”

“The private sector has a critical role to play, and there is a strong sense that many corporates are keen to engage and participate in the implementation of the GCM”

“Throughout history, civil society has played an important role in holding states to account and catalysing domestic change”

the use of existing mechanisms, especially the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), to allow consistent monitoring and evaluation across both.

Sub-national governments

16. National governments have the primary role in setting migration policy, however cities and local communities experience the impact of integration, whether successful or unsuccessful. In spite of this, sub-national governments often have limited capacity and funding to support immigration responses, and their needs at the local level may not accord with national policies.
17. There are a number of active local government leaders speaking publicly about the benefit of immigrants to their city economies, and exchanging best practice eg. the Global Mayoral Forum, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) and ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability. Using a problem-statement approach, cities can identify the issues that they are currently facing and get the right people around the table. They could also explore twinning: finding cities around the world with similar experiences of immigration to share lessons learnt and identify best practice.
18. While much attention is currently paid to the potential of the GCM to support migration policies and initiatives within cities, it is also important to recognise the needs and realities of rural communities, where many migrants live or are needed to support local economies.

The private sector

19. The private sector has a critical role to play, and there is a strong sense that many corporates are keen to engage and participate in the implementation of the GCM. While it is not always politically viable for CEOs to speak out publicly about the benefit of migration, companies increasingly recognise the impact of immigrants to their core business objectives and are actively engaged in a variety of initiatives to support migration - for example, through involvement in the GFMD Business Mechanism. These are all positive bases from which to start.
20. Not all companies are willing to engage in a public way. Many are concerned that they could offend important clients or their shareholders. In addition, public engagement requires internal approval and risk analyses; often, these hurdles are insurmountable. However, some companies are able to engage privately. Some facilitate immigration across the globe on behalf of their clients, attempt to streamline and improve visa processing, and engage on a pro bono basis with migrants and refugees on the ground.
21. The GCM could give the private sector a basis from which to act – lobbying government and promoting more targeted labour mobility initiatives. To assist those companies working both publicly and privately for migration, international organisations and states need to engage more directly with them – elucidating how the GCM can assist their efforts.

Civil society and academia

22. Both civil society and academia have a part to play in the implementation of the GCM, particularly to ensure progress through lobbying and monitoring. Throughout history, civil society has played an important role in holding states to account and catalysing domestic change, particularly after the adoption of other non-binding agreements (for example, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights or the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development). Migrants, migrant-rights groups, diaspora networks, faith-based groups, inter-faith groups and local leaders should understand which commitments their governments are actively pursuing and hold them to account.
23. Similarly, academia has an important role in both creating and disseminating evidence about the impacts of migration (both positive and negative) and supporting the implementation. Particularly on the former, groups such as the Alliance of Leading Universities on Migration (ALUM) and the G20 Eminent Persons Group are

exploring new evidence on migration and how global systems could perform better. Despite this, the same issue remains: getting information about migration to those who need to hear it in an era of fake news and general distrust of experts.

“The migration community should focus on ensuring innovations and partnerships are self-sustaining, scalable, and successful, lowering the barriers to entry and demonstrating impact”

“Employing targeted and effective immigration policies may help improve the public narrative while meeting broader needs”

Moving into implementation: innovation and partnerships

24. The GCM adoption meeting in Marrakech is explicitly focusing on new innovations and partnerships. However, there is a risk that such frameworks are created, but then fade away once global attention has passed. The migration community should focus on ensuring innovations and partnerships are self-sustaining, scalable, and successful, lowering the barriers to entry and demonstrating impact.
25. The meeting identified six areas where the GCM can utilise both innovations and partnerships to meet its objectives.

Facilitate labour mobility through skills partnerships

26. For many countries, the driving force for engagement in the GCM process is to stop irregular migration. One way to do this is to create and expand legal migration pathways. These pathways have positive impacts on border management, tackling modern slavery and human trafficking, and contributing to economic and social development in both origin and destination countries. Often these pathways are demand driven – plugging skills gaps in destination countries with willing (and high-skilled) migrants. Employing targeted and effective immigration policies may help improve the public narrative while meeting broader needs.
27. One such pathway is the Global Skills Partnership (GSP) – a bilateral agreement between two countries with the heavy involvement of the private sector. Once a future skills shortage in a destination country is identified, a training institution is built in an origin country. The costs of this institution, and all future costs, are borne by the destination country. Once trained, some of the participants migrate to the destination country to plug the skills gap (the ‘away’ track); others stay and contribute their skills to their origin country (the ‘home’ track). The training institution can adapt over time as skills needs in both countries evolve. In this way, destination countries can shape the skills of migrants before they move and the terms on which such migration happens (regular, formal, and potentially circular).
28. Skills partnerships of this nature are common, many piloted in recent decades (including the Australia-Pacific Technical College (APTC), and a model run by the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ)). It would be useful to create a repository of such partnerships and analyse them, to better learn about the design features which generate the benefits described above.
29. Of course, such partnerships will not satisfy all demand. In the next 30 years, 800 million new working-age Africans will enter the labour market, and many will want to seek work elsewhere. Skills partnerships often only accommodate a few workers, and are difficult to scale. In response to this: firstly scale existing skills partnerships which have already been proven to work; secondly, look regionally to see whether there are similar products that can work on a larger scale; and finally, explore other types of legal migration pathways. Overall, this is a promising innovation which deserves piloting and reviewing before skills shortages become urgent.

Improve border management

30. A border is more than just a physical line – it is often used in both political and public debate as a proxy for migration management. On the one hand, states have the right to protect their borders, and manage them in a secure and efficient way. On the other hand, they should also respect human rights and afford protections to those crossing their borders.
31. These aspects should be balanced both in a crisis and in day-to-day management. Through partnerships with the private sector and civil society, states can provide documentation and register migrants quickly, allowing the state to know who is

arriving and the migrant to gain prompt access to services. A 'hot-spot' approach combined with new technologies allow actors to come together and deliver these services quickly and efficiently. There are many positive spill-overs from such speed: for example, shorter waiting times for visas reduce the likelihood of abuse and exploitation. In support of this, training of both frontline officers and policy-makers needs to be improved.

Reduce exploitation

32. Exploitation of migrants and refugees can take many forms – from modern slavery, to human trafficking, to smuggling. In this context, the GCM is a significant milestone representing a long-term shift in thinking. It improves knowledge and understanding, facilitates a common recognition of existing migrant smuggling commitments, and provides a platform to bring together different stakeholders to tackle these issues.
33. To date, many efforts have responded by suppressing mobility and seeking prosecutions of known individuals. However, these efforts have not stopped exploitation and have limited impact on root causes. For example, there is a perception amongst some migrants that smugglers and some recruitment agencies provide a needed service, particularly when borders are otherwise closed to them. To tackle this, states should conduct targeted awareness raising – showing how the demand for particular goods and services is often met through exploitative behaviour. Examples include low-priced nail salons and car-washes. Public campaigns could also assist to identify and define people who have been exploited as victims and lead to better service provision.
34. Much exploitative behaviour occurs within supply chains. Ensuring ethical recruitment and fair work practice, requires meaningful partnerships with the private sector. Private organisations could voluntarily report compliance with anti-exploitation legislation (for example, in the UK, with the Modern Slavery Act) to demonstrate their commitment to reducing exploitation. States can benchmark and measure progress within existing UN Security Council review mechanisms on trafficking.

“Public campaigns could also assist to identify and define people who have been exploited as victims and lead to better service provision”

Promote access and equality of opportunity for women

35. Globally, over 48% of migrants are women and this figure is increasing, particularly in Africa. Many women are moving not to accompany their husbands, but due to economic and social needs, leading to what some call the 'feminisation of migration'. If harnessed, there is great potential from new female migrants. Women often work in sectors which are hard to fill domestically, such as nursing and care work, allowing states to plug skills gaps. They tend to send a higher proportion of their earnings home, bolstering GDP growth in origin countries, with investments in land and property leading to greater empowerment.
36. The GCM should promote both access and equality of opportunity for women. It should develop better disaggregated data to highlight the contribution of women and expand good practice; for example, the Philippines and Saudi Arabia recently entered into an agreement to raise wages and protections for female domestic workers. There should be a focus on ideas and implementation, partnering with stakeholders to ensure real monitoring of progress. Agreements such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Migrant Framework provide useful models – standardising the ways in which states categorise gender issues -such as female genital mutilation (FGM) -which drive migration.

“Globally, over 48% of migrants are women and this figure is increasing”

“there is great potential from new female migrants”

Take a child-focused approach

37. Similarly, children and youth were recognised as integral to the success of the GCM. A child-focused approach is needed, particularly with regard to detention, education and non-discrimination. Despite a general principle 'in the best interests of the child' there is limited information about how that translates into practice. Engaging children in the discussion would increase understanding, as well as encouraging them to promote the GCM and migration in general. While children and youth issues should be mainstreamed, there is a danger they could become relegated to a singular

“While children and youth issues should be mainstreamed, there is a danger they could become relegated to a singular working group, siloed and resulting in a tick-box exercise”

“Most global polling data suggests that people are not strongly opposed to immigration, but belong to the ‘anxious middle’ – those who can see the positive and negative impacts”

“there is a consistent default to dichotomies such as origin versus destination countries, migrants versus refugees, despite the limited practical meaning of these distinctions”

working group, siloed and resulting in a tick-box exercise. This is often how gender issues are treated and stakeholders should work proactively to ensure this does not happen.

Increase and share both data and best practice

38. There is much discussion, both within the GCM and between stakeholders, about the need to increase and share both disaggregated data and case studies showcasing best practice. Improved data allows Member States to conduct better monitoring and case studies ensure stakeholders capitalise on past efforts to implement the now-codified objectives. However, there is a strong sense that the GCM needs to go beyond merely exchanging practice and should act to develop and promote a learning culture.
39. The UN Migration Network and the GFMD can help. They could conduct a mapping exercise to identify existing knowledge sharing platforms, ways in which they can be linked together and where there are gaps. This exercise should be done in conjunction with the new African Migration Observatory, which is conducting similar work. The findings of this mapping could then be built into the new knowledge platform. Best practice could be shared through a twinning exercise, potentially through GFMD’s new Marketplace – linking states with similar issues together. Finally, they could assist countries to prepare in advance for large-scale return movements.
40. With regards to data, international organisations and states could promote and develop better disaggregated information (for example, showing the contribution of female migrants to societies, demographic changes or climate change patterns) and feed these baselines into national strategies. Such information would help both international organisations and Member States monitor the impact of the GCM, and plan for and cope with future migratory flows. Here, it is important that the GCM coordinates with the GCR – particularly when considering emergency responses.

Improve the public narrative

41. Most global polling data suggests that people are not strongly opposed to immigration, but belong to the ‘anxious middle’ – those who can see the positive and negative impacts. However, views vary wildly between and within states, and the voices of those who are anti-immigration are becoming louder.
42. Unless these concerns are addressed, states will not be able to implement the GCM’s objectives to the extent they would like and international cooperation will become increasingly difficult. It will also impact on integration, social cohesion, and the pervasion of unhelpful stereotypes. For example, it was noted that there is a consistent default to dichotomies such as origin versus destination countries, migrants versus refugees, despite the limited practical meaning of these distinctions.
43. All stakeholders have a part to play in promoting successful integration and improving public attitudes.
 - **International organisations** could build upon their ‘11 Basic Principles for Integration’, formulated in 2011. These principles provide a benchmark for Member States to work with, and for civil society to lobby around.
 - **Member States** should focus on providing meaningful work, skills development, education and language classes, adjusting to changing circumstances and new migrant populations. Political leaders and policy-makers should push back against incorrect facts and terminology, and promote the economic and social impact of migrants to communities at the local level – Canada’s new ‘Immigration Matters’ campaign provides a positive model.
 - **The private sector** could speak publicly about why migrants are necessary for their business case, how many large companies are headed by migrants, and how government policy could harm their economic interests. In addition, they

should ensure they are using consistent messaging in how they refer to people (for example, not using 'expat' to refer to some citizens, and 'migrant' to refer to others).

- **The media** should be involved in discussions about migration to ensure they understand the impacts of the GCM and the terms being used. To encourage good practice, an advertising Code of Conduct could be created.
- **Academics** need to provide information about the positive and negative impacts of migration, and how the GCM will help.
- **Civil society** needs to encourage diversity and new voices to be heard, especially through creative routes such as exhibitions, performances, film festivals and fashion.

44. All stakeholders need to listen to and understand public concerns at a local level and speak to these through trusted 'champions'. Data and evidence will play a part in demonstrating the impact of the GCM, but effective engagement and conversations will have a greater influence on positive public discourse.

Helen Dempster

Wilton Park | November 2018

Wilton Park reports are intended to be brief summaries of the main points and conclusions of an event. Reports reflect rapporteurs' accounts of the proceedings and do not necessarily reflect the views of the rapporteur. Wilton Park reports and any recommendations contained therein are for participants and are not a statement of policy for Wilton Park, the FCO or the UK government.

Should you wish to read other Wilton Park reports, or participate in upcoming Wilton Park events, please consult our website www.wiltonpark.org.uk. To receive our monthly bulletin and latest updates, please subscribe to <https://www.wiltonpark.org.uk/newsletter/>