African Employers Consultation - Business Perspectives on migration with focus on Africa

on Thursday, 27 May 2021 – from 11:00 to 13:30 (CET)

in preparation for the
Africa Regional Review for the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM)
and the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF)

Adopted in December 2018 by the United Nations General Assembly, the GCM[1] is an instrument that sets a framework for the governance of safe, orderly and regular migration. Its implementation is sought to be reviewed at the regional level, with the involvement of all relevant stakeholders in order that its outcome will inform the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF), scheduled to take place in 2022. Member States underlined the importance of engaging with all relevant stakeholders to ensure a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach for effective implementation.

In this same light, the International Organisation of Employers (IOE), Business Africa, and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) are partnering to host a series of consultations with employers in view of the Africa Regional Review in July 2021 and ultimately the IMRF in 2022.

What are employers' priorities on migration?

IOE hosts the Business Advisory Group on Migration[2], a global network of employers' organizations and businesses that provides business outlook on three priority issues on labour migration governance:

1. Flexible, transparent, and predictable labour mobility frameworks that respond to labour market needs
2. Regulatory frameworks that promote and ensure responsible recruitment of foreign workers
3. Improved systems for identification, recognition, and development of skills to enhance business access to foreign skills

Leveraging emerging technologies is promoted across these three priority issues to improve migration governance.

Why does the GCM matter for employers?

Through the IOE, employers' priorities were raised at the GCM negotiations and are reflected in the following GCM objectives:

- ➔ Objective 5: Enhance availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration
- ➔ Objective 6: Facilitate fair and ethical recruitment and safeguard conditions that ensure decent work
- ➔ Objective 18: Invest in skills development and facilitate mutual recognition of skills, qualifications and competences

As governments are implementing the GCM, employers have a key role to play to bring forward business recommendations to address the challenges associated with tomorrow's needs for skills, as well as to strengthen the contribution of migration to sustainable development and economies.

[1] Link to the GCM: https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/73/195
[2] More information about the Business Advisory Group on Migration: www.business-migration.org

Why is a dialogue on migration between employers and governments needed?

The rise in digital remote work, necessitated as a measure to contain the pandemic, can be expected to continue into the recovery period and beyond. Technologization, automation and digitalization trends accelerated during the pandemic are changing the labour market landscape. Some industries face decline whereas others are developing, impacting the demand for labour and skills, including different skills sets needed for certain professions putting upfront digital skills and making lower and middle skilled workers more affected by the changes. Recruiting foreign talent and skilled workers is becoming increasingly important, raising the need for cooperation and whole-of-society approach to achieve better migration governance of skills mobility through a whole-of-society approach.

Employers are aware of the needs for skills, can predict the needs of the national labour market and therefore provide the necessary information to national governments in origin and destination countries to identify the needs in labour migration, mobility, training and educational policies to reflect the job market realities. Governments can in turn use such information for the design of skills mobility partnerships between origin and destination countries, in line with the implementation of the GCM. This furthermore creates a positive narrative on well-regulated migration, which benefits migrants, the private sector in both sending and receiving countries as they will jointly invest in the skills sets they will need in the future.

As all stakeholders are adapting to new economic realities, it is now high time for stronger collaboration between governments and the private sector on labour migration issues.

Objectives:

The outcomes and recommendations of the consultation will as a first step, feed into the GCM Regional Review for Africa. The objective of the meeting is to identify key recommendations of African employers on the business priorities in light of GCM objectives 5, 6, and 18.

These recommendations will set the scene to draft an African Employers' Declaration which will be further elaborated in a series of sub regional consultations in the third and fourth quarter of 2021 to be endorsed by the participating employers towards the end of 2021, in lead up to the 2022 IMRF.

Platform: Zoom

Registration: Please register Here to receive the zoom link to connect to the meeting

Languages: Translation will be provided in English, French and Arabic

Format: Group discussions on key priorities for employers fostering informal exchange, leading to two-three main recommendations for each session.

Program: **Thursday, 27 May 2021 – from 11:00 to 13:30 (CET)**

Introduction	**Scene-setting: Business Perspectives on migration – why should employers be at the table?** • **El Mahfoudh Megateli**, Regional Vice-President Africa at IOE and Secretary General at Confédération Générale des Entreprises Algériennes • **Jacqueline Mugo,** Secretary-General, Business Africa • **Aissata Kane**, Senior Regional Advisor for Africa, IOM
Focus on GCM Objective 5	**What does Skills Mobility mean for business? A discussion on effective policies and challenges** **Moderated by Stephen Obiro, Head of Advocacy, Communications & Partnerships, Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE)** • **Lindiwe Sephomolo,** Chief Executive Officer, Association of Lesotho Employers and Business • **Lunga Mani,** Practice Leader, Fragomen South Africa • **Zied Charfi,** Administrator, Union Tunisienne de l'industrie, du commerce et de l'artisanat **Open discussion**
Focus on GCM Objective 6	**Responsible recruitment: what does an effective regulatory framework look like for businesses?** **Moderated by Amadou Sako, Adviser for the Africa Region, IOE** • **Ali Serhani,** Managing Director, Gesper Services (Morocco) • **Patricia Veringa-Gieskes,** CEO, The Job Factory (DRC) • **Douglas Opio,** Executive Director, Federation of Uganda Employers **Open discussion**
Focus on GCM Objective 18	**Skills identification and development: matching and updating skills to labour market needs** **Moderated by Jason Theede, Labour Mobility & Human Development Senior Specialist, IOM** • **Aline Valérie Mbono,** Executive Director, Groupement inter-patronal du Cameroun • **Edouard Ladouyou,** Head of Human Capital and Social Relations Department, Confédération Générale des Entreprises de Côte d'Ivoire • **El Sayed Torky,** Senior Advisor, Federation of Egyptian Industries **Open discussion**
Conclusion	**Highlighting main recommendations on three sessions**