

## Business Perspectives on Skills Mobility: A roadmap to recovery. Focus on Middle East <sup>1</sup>

**Employers-only consultations**  
**Wednesday, 1<sup>st</sup> September, 10:30 – 14:00 (GST)**

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As GCC Governments are reviewing migration policies in times of Covid-19 recovery and in the framework of their implementation of the Global Compact for Migration<sup>2</sup>, the business community can play a key role in supporting the policy-makers craft legal frameworks that are conducive to skills mobility and respond to labour market needs. Private sector representatives should come prepared to provide examples on collaborations related to GCM Objectives 5 and 18. The outcome will be presented to governments during a dialogue session on 2 September 2021.

### Objectives:

1. to share best-practices and challenges for employers in the region to attract talent
2. to craft common recommendations to be shared with governments on 2 September 2021.

### **Session 1: Migration Governance in light of Covid-19 recovery - Access to talent, key to ensure full and productive employment**

Led by Melissa Siegel, Head of Migration Studies, Professor of Migration Studies, Maastricht Graduate School of Governance, UNU-MERIT

*GCM Objective 5: “Enhance availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration and GCM” - what does it mean for business?*

- Stephanie Winet, Head of Stakeholder Engagement, IOE

*Initial findings of the research: “Exploring the Successes, Opportunities and Challenges of business immigration frameworks in the Middle East”*

- Azeem Mohiuddin, Practice Leader, Fragomen Qatar

### *Discussion among participants*

#### *Key themes for discussion:*

- Migration policies that facilitate skills mobility post pandemic, ensuring full employment during recovery
- Migration governance (transparency, application timing, access to information)

#### *Guiding questions:*

- What do businesses look for in an “ideal” migration framework in time of recovery?
- How do businesses respond to migration policies? Is their clarity in the regulations? How is the information disseminated to business?
- How is movement between companies regulated and how is it applied/implemented at national level?
- What are the benefits of labour market mobility and of national labour market reforms?
- How easy is it to hire a female employee on company sponsorship – new hire vs transfer? What are the different rights and benefits for family members?
- How can companies that comply with the law, be differentiated with those that do not?
- How can digital tools improve immigration systems and migration governance?

<sup>1</sup> Invited countries (Government and Private sector): Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates

<sup>2</sup> Link to the GCM: [https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/73/195](https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/73/195)

## Break:

### Session 2: Skills assessment, skills development and skills recognition – what are businesses' needs in tapping into foreign skills?

Led by Stefano Merante, Skills Development / TVET Programme Officer, ITCILO

*GCM Objective 18: “Invest in skills development and facilitate mutual recognition of skills, qualifications and competences” – what does it mean for business?:*

- Stephanie Winet, Head of Stakeholder Engagement, IOE

### *Discussion among participants*

#### *Key themes for discussion:*

- Skills anticipation – skills needed in time of recovery
- Skills recognition systems in the GCC

#### *Guiding questions:*

- Skills assessment: Who should determine what skills are needed business or government?
- Is there value in differentiating between low, medium, and highly skilled workers in legal requirements?
- Should the treatment of employee/employers be the same?
- What types of skills will be needed in time of recovery?
- How can employers best guide/advise governments in identifying skills needed and establish the related visa categories?
- What type of skills recognition is in place at regional level, and does it serve the business community's purpose?
- What digital tools can we use to streamline skills recognition processes?

## Business Perspectives on Skills Mobility: A roadmap to recovery. Focus on Middle East <sup>3</sup>

Dialogue between Employers and Governments  
Thursday, 2<sup>nd</sup> September, 11:00 – 13:00 (GST)

### Introduction and scene setting

- **IOE**
- **H.E. Mohammed Hassan Al-Obaidly**, Assistant Undersecretary for Labour Affairs, Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs (ADLSA), State of Qatar
- **Murtaza Khan**, on behalf of Austin Fragomen, Chair of the Business Advisory Group on Migration

### Migration Governance in light of Covid-19 recovery - Access to talent, key to ensure full and productive employment

- **Two Private Sector speakers**
- **Government of Saudi Arabia**
- **Government of United Arab Emirates**

Open discussion

### Skills assessment, recognition and development: a skills agenda aligned with migration policies

- **Two Private Sector speakers**
- **Government of Saudi Arabia**
- **Government of Kuwait**
- **Government of Oman**

Open discussion

### Conclusion

Language: Translation will be provided in English and Arabic

Platform: Zoom: connection link will be provided

<sup>3</sup> Invited countries (Government and Private sector): Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates