

Foreword

We are pleased to present this first international *Handbook on Establishing Effective Labour Migration Policies in Countries of Origin and of Destination*, jointly produced by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the International Labour Office (ILO).

Our organizations recognize that migration has become one of the most visible and critical concerns in ensuring security, stability and economic progress, national welfare and social cohesion for our participating countries. Recognizing that a comprehensive approach is essential to enhance the positive impact of labour migration, IOM and ILO joined the OSCE to prepare this unique and timely resource by combining our respective and complementary competencies.

The aim of the *Handbook* is to assist States in their efforts to develop new policy approaches, solutions, and practical measures for better management of labour migration in countries of origin and of destination. It has been prepared primarily for use by *decision-makers* and *practitioners* in the OSCE area and countries served by IOM and ILO. It analyses effective policies and practices and draws upon examples from OSCE participating States as well as other countries that have considerable experience in this field.

Some 90 million or about half of the world's migrants live in the OSCE area. The majority has left their countries in search of employment, often leaving situations where decent work is simply unavailable or where social, economic and political conditions have seriously deteriorated.

Patterns of migration are increasingly complex, with temporary and circular migration as well as permanent migration reflecting an emerging paradigm of international labour mobility. Migration remains a natural and inevitable phenomenon, but the path to orderly labour migration is not an easy one. Abuse and exploitation, irregular movements, xenophobia, lack of integration, and erosion of standards and stability are amongst its hazards, along with trafficking in persons, smuggling of migrants and corruption.

Foreword

Migration through cross-border or trans-national flows can effectively be managed only by way of international cooperation. The development of fair and sustainable labour migration policies and practices requires dialogue amongst governments at all levels and has to include other key stakeholders, namely social partners (employers and trade unions) and civil society organizations.

Over the last few years, evolving but not necessarily coherent national responses have been complemented by intergovernmental dialogue and recommendations on migration. Important recent contributions include the IOM's International Dialogue on Migration as well as the Berne Initiative and the ensuing International Agenda for Migration Management; the report of the Global Commission on International Migration feeding into the United Nations General Assembly High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development in September 2006; and the new ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration deriving from the 92nd Session of the International Labour Conference of 2004.

The European Union has achieved an impressive legal, policy and practical *acquis* in the area of migration while the Council of Europe has developed broad policy guidance and cooperation among its wider membership.

The OSCE participating States have long expressed concern with the need to better manage migration: migration and integration were the thematic focus of the OSCE Slovenian Chairmanship in 2005 which placed migration firmly on the OSCE agenda of political priorities, reflecting the crucial role of regional organizations in addressing migration in the context of security and stability.

The 13th OSCE Economic Forum, held in Prague, Czech Republic from 23 to 27 May 2005, provided the impetus for the joint OSCE, IOM and ILO initiative to produce a Handbook on Establishing Effective Labour Migration Policies in Countries of Origin and of Destination.

While directed particularly towards concerned governments, we expect that this *Handbook* will also be useful to social partners, the media, non-governmental organizations and academia. Furthermore, we hope that the *Handbook* will inspire further dialogue and cooperation among national authorities and other stakeholders, and stimulate the exchange of information and good practice among States in the OSCE area and beyond.



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