

The Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD)

Fact Sheet

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See also: www.gfmdcivilsociety.org

Nature and components of the GFMD

The Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) is a state-led, voluntary process dedicated to informal, non-binding and outcomes-oriented dialogue. Emerging as an outcome of the first ever UN General Assembly *High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development* in 2006—but created to operate as a process *outside* of the UN system—policymakers and stakeholders from countries worldwide participate in various GFMD meetings, in particular a large annual GFMD convening, to discuss the relation between migration and development, share experiences and forge practical cooperation.

Over the five years since the High Level Dialogue, there have always been two components to the GFMD: a states programme, and a civil society process that normally accompanies, complements and feeds into the states programme.

Each year the GFMD is organized by a different host government: to date: Belgium (2007), the Philippines (2008), Greece (2009) and Mexico (2010). The Chair for 2011 is Switzerland. It is not yet known which government will take on the Chairmanship for 2012. In 2013 the second UN General Assembly *High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development* will be held, after which Sweden will host the GFMD in 2014.

Every year, civil society days (CSD) have been organized prior to the annual meeting of states, by a foundation or civil society organization that the Chair has chosen to resume responsibility over the format, themes and participation of GFMD civil society activities. Indeed, although state-led, civil society actors, including human rights, labour, migrant, diaspora and development organizations, academia and business are directly engaged in the GFMD process. Like the states programme, civil society actors meet among themselves and then in a more limited period of time together with governments, to provide input and make recommendations and concrete proposals towards governments.

GFMD themes

The GFMD is the world's premier opportunity for national and international civil society organizations alike to engage among themselves and with governments to discuss important intersections and practices of international migration and development at all levels: global, regional, national and local. Among the issues that civil society and governments have examined over the first four years of the GFMD are:

- Detention and enforcement , including militarization of borders and criminalization of migrants
- Environmental and climate change-induced migration
- Evidence, research and data collection
- Feminization of migration and gender perspectives
- Global governance of migration
- Irregular migration
- Labour mobility, including circular and temporary migration
- Labour rights and conditions of migration
- Migrant and diaspora empowerment and engagement for development
- Migrant remittances and development
- Migration and human development
- Policy coherence
- Protection and human rights of migrant
- Public-private partnerships
- Safe migration versus perilous transit
- Social cohesion, integration and xenophobia
- Social costs of migration, including brain drain, separated families and children left behind

Official background papers were written on many of these themes for the GFMD discussions, and are available on the websites of both the states (www.gfmd.org) and civil society (www.gfmdcivilsociety.org.)

GFMD 2011: *states programme*

Under the leadership of the Swiss Chair, the central theme of the states' program for the 2011 GFMD is: *Taking Action on Migration and Development: Coherence, Capacity and Cooperation*. Under this central theme, the thematic program of the states is structured around three thematic clusters on (I) Labour migration and development (II) Addressing irregular migration through coherent migration and development strategies and (III) Tools for evidence-based migration and development policies. In addition to the annual global convening of States, the Swiss Chair is also (co-)organize with states and other actors a number of smaller, focused and action-oriented meetings around the world: to tap into the concrete experiences of practitioners on the ground, explore some of the practical applications of GFMD discussions, and promote concrete follow-up and action between the larger annual meetings. Results and outcomes of these meetings will be drawn together during the annual meeting of states on 1 and 2 December in Geneva, this year called the "Concluding debate".

Reports, background papers, participant lists and contact details for these thematic meetings, as well as more information can be found on the GFMD website: www.gfmd.org.

GFMD 2011: *civil society programme*

Upon the formal invitation of the Swiss Chair, the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) serves as the Civil Society Coordinating Office for the 2011 GFMD. Acting upon the opportunity extended by the Swiss Chair to exercise greater autonomy over format and themes of the civil society programme, and picking up naturally with reference and relevance to the government programme, this year's Civil Society Program will focus on *Labour Migration, Development and the Protection of Migrants and their Families in the context of Work*.

This year the Civil Society days (CSD) of the Global Forum will take place on 29 and 30 November, in Geneva just prior to the states meeting. A statement of results and recommendations from the CSD will be presented to the states during their opening session on 1 December. Following the opening session there will be a "common space" for deliberation including representatives of civil society and international organizations together with government participants.

Participation in the CSD is open to various sectors of civil society, including human rights, development, labour, diaspora and migrant organizations, academia and the private sector. CSD 2011 will offer space to 150 - 200 Delegates. Per organization only one application will be accepted. Selection of Delegates will take into account sectoral, geographic, and gender diversity, and relevant experience and knowledge on migration and development issues.

For more information on the GFMD Civil Society program and themes, and to apply for participation in 2011, visit: www.gfmdcivilsociety.org