

Forum: General Assembly 2

Issue: Measures to mitigate the impact of overseas employment

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Introduction

Overseas employment has an important role in the global economy, contributing to both the host countries and the origin countries. People migrate internationally for many reasons. Economic migrants migrate internationally in search of better job opportunities, higher wages, and a better quality of life. These migrants' labor contributes to their host country's productivity and overall economic output. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), in 2019, there were 169 million international workers globally. It is important to note that a significant fraction of these workers financially support their families back home in the form of remittances, remittances which in developing countries represent a substantial portion of national income, in some cases exceeding foreign aid or direct investments. One example includes the Pacific island nation of Tonga, whose overseas workers' remittances accounted for a 41% share of its total GDP in 2023.

However, despite the economic benefits, overseas employment poses several challenges that affect migrant workers, their families, and also their home countries. In their host country, workers can encounter labor exploitation, poor working and living conditions, discrimination, and limited access to social services. A common phenomenon in the world of economic and labour migration is "**brain drain**", the emigration of skilled individuals, often from developing countries. This can deprive sending countries of the skilled human capital they need to develop vital sectors including infrastructure (civil, energy, etc.) engineering, maintenance, and healthcare.

Protecting these migrant workers' rights requires effective and comprehensive measures and strategies, as well as international cooperation, diplomacy, and dialogue.

Definition of Key Terms

Economic migrant

“A person who leaves their home country to live in another country with better working or living conditions” - Cambridge Dictionary - *(Not to be confused with a **refugee** or **asylum seeker**)*

Labor migration

Labour migration is a helpful keyword for further research regarding overseas employment. It is defined as “the movement of persons from their home State to another State for the purpose of employment” (IOM and Labour...)

Brain Drain (informal)/ Human Capital flight (formal)

Brain drain is a slang term that describes a phenomena that occurs when “there’s a lack of opportunity in a certain area” (Young). This leads to the substantial emigration or migration of individuals out of a country (Young). Generally, the incentive for individuals to migrate comes from more favorable job opportunities (generally in developed countries, higher standards of livings in other countries, and turmoil within the country (Young). This usually results in the loss of valuable human capita, notably professionals such as doctors, healthcare workers, scientists, and financial professors (Young). Brain drain and the loss of human capital often negatively impacts countries that suffer from it, leading to a talent drain (explained below) and loss in tax revenue. Countries suffering from brain drain are encouraged to make economic investments to boost growth and incentivize citizens to stay. Sometimes, brain drain can be caused because of situations within a country, but in the context of overseas employment, brain drain should be considered from a geographical point of view. Note that brain drain is considered a slang term and informal when crafting your resolution and speeches.

Talent Drain

Also referred to as skills shortage, talent shortage, talent scarcity, or talent deficit. Refers to a shortage in skilled manpower, in which companies struggle to find candidates possessing the skills needed to fill open job positions (Industry Week). This can result due to a skill gap and shortage of talent in the local area. This gives opportunities to workers who possess technical skills and expertise for negotiation of higher wages and exploration of new opportunities (Industry Week). On the management side, this could lead to financial costs (incurred due to recruitment expenses, lost productivity, etc.) and negatively impact employees’ morale (Industry Week). The root cause of talent drain is associated with brain drain (explained above).

Origin countries

Refers to the country where migrant workers come from (World Migration Report...). These countries generally are not as developed as destination countries. Statistics show that 80% of migrants come from low-and middle-income countries (“The development impact...”).

Destination countries

Refers to countries where migrant workers travel to (hence destination); generally, these countries have some sort of pull factor that attracts migrants (World Migration Report...).

Developed countries are generally the destination that many migrant workers end up at. According to a report published by the Global Commission on International Migration, 60% of migrants live in developed countries, and almost 1 of every 10 persons living in developed countries is a migrant (“Opportunities and challenges of...”). Additionally, more developed regions received about 2.3 million migrants each year from less developed regions, which accounts for 60% of their population growth (“Opportunities and challenges of...”).

Remittances

Many migrants send formal remittances (money earned from working overseas) to their relatives in their country of origin. In 2004, this has increased to 216 billion US dollars, with 150 billion of that going to developing countries; this forms the largest source of foreign capital for several countries (“Opportunities and Challenges of...”).

Background

Overseas employment itself is not an issue. Historically, the movement of people is natural, especially for individuals to maintain a moderate quality of life (“Opportunities and Challenges of...”). However, recently, the scale at which individuals are migrating for work has increased drastically. According to an International Labour Organisation (ILO) report, between 2017 and 2019, over 169 million individuals migrated internationally due to work (Ethical Recruitment...). Also, recent data shows that there is an even steeper increase in highly skilled emigration, especially in regards to international students (Marsh and Oyelere). This results in economic, social, and cultural implications across all countries involved (“Opportunities and Challenges of...”). This has coincided with the growing global unemployment crisis, which has further created incentives for migrants to seek recruitment in developed economies (“Opportunities and Challenges of...”).

Experts generally agree that social-economic situation in the individuals' original country is a main incentive for migration; Individuals usually come from low-income, developing countries and relocate for better job opportunities for themselves, and to live in an environment with more developed infrastructure (such as healthcare, education).

Patterns in migration

Even though we can already classify countries as destination and origin countries, countries can also be differentiated based on regions. For example, Asia generally houses migrants based on temporary labor contracts; the Americas and Africa experience more irregular migration patterns; The Middle East usually admits migrants for fixed period; Countries such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the USA accept migrants for permanent jobs, settlement, and citizenship (“Opportunities and Challenges of...”).

Large-scale impacts and consequences of overseas employment

Migrant workers contribute to the growth and development of the countries they end up working in, and these countries greatly benefit from their remittances and the skills provided (“Labour Migration”).

Small-scale impacts and consequences of overseas employment

Migrants can enjoy more work opportunities and better quality of living after migration. However, it's generally understood that the migration process leads to complex challenges and problems related to protection of migrant workers' human rights, and many migrants face inequality and human rights abuses (“Labour Migration”). For example, labor migrants face three times more risk of forced labor; they can also earn up to 25% less than locals working the same job (“Labour Migration”).

Many organizations are calling for action to make labor migration fair for all. **Your resolution could potentially aim to make reforms related to labor migration practices.**

Reactions to steep increase in overseas employment

Different countries will have different views on overseas employment. There are some countries generally recognized as a “winner” of talent mobility, while there are also countries that suffer from it (Marsh and Oyelere).

Destination countries

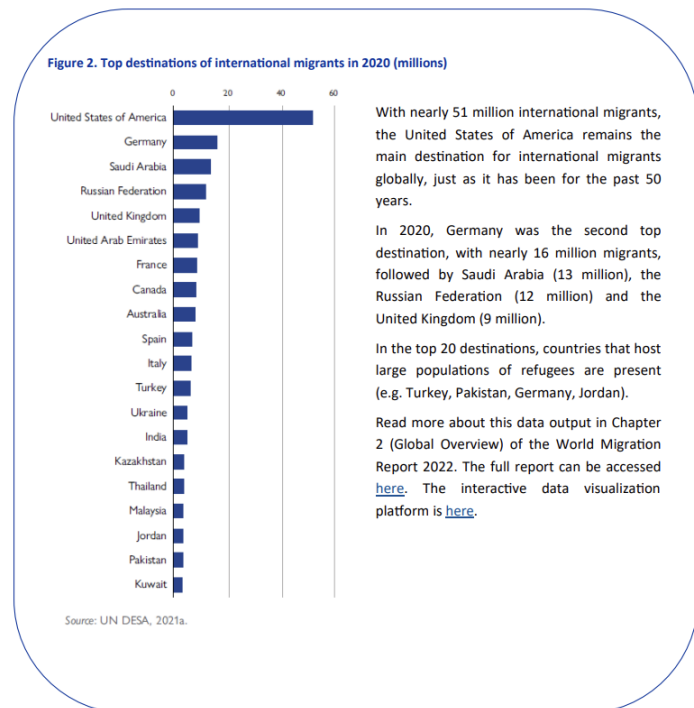
Some of the countries with the highest amount of foreign-born labor force include the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, and Canada (Statista). **If your country is listed in the chart below, they may benefit from overseas migration; you might want to consider that when interacting in your committee.**

Destination countries can benefit from the transfer of skills and cultural enrichment as a consequence of an influx of labor migrants; however, this can also lead to political, economic, or social tension in the country (“Opportunities and Challenges of...”). Misinformation in particular, can lead to migrants not being accepted by the population of the destination country (“Migration”)

For destination countries, many firms are considering the issue of sourcing overseas talent and large amounts of immigrants immigrating to their country from an ethical viewpoint. Some have raised the concern that over-sourcing from overseas talent creates problems, such as taking away professional workers from “communities that need them” (Ethical Recruitment...). Some countries have attempted to mitigate the impacts of human capital flight through systematic approaches (Ethical Recruitment...). For instance, the UK government and the Philippines have entered an agreement to create a more “balanced approach to international recruitment into the UK workforce” (Ethical Recruitment...).

Several destination countries, including Switzerland, UK, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand have already introduced or are planning on introducing policies to create a more selective migration process, favoring highly skilled workers (“Opportunities and Challenges of...”).

Origin Countries



The data shows that India is the top origin of international migrants, followed by Mexico and the Russian Federation (World Migration Report...). **If the country you are representing has been listed in this chart, you may want to consider their stance on overseas migration when interacting in your committee.**

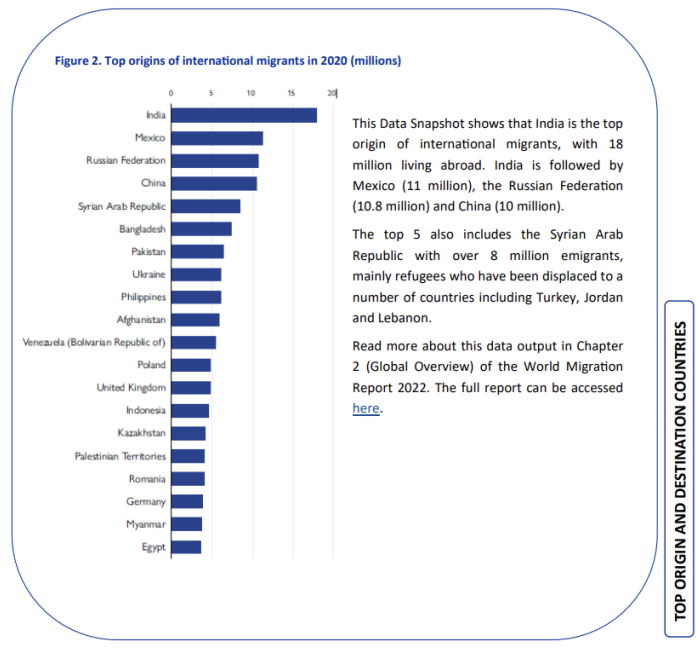
Overseas employment can often hurt origin countries due to the loss of workers, particularly skilled and educated workers (“Opportunities and Challenges of...”). This can hurt origin countries’ states as they this “deprives the state of revenue and prevents countries of origin from gaining an early return on the investment they have made in education and training of those people”. This can often seriously impact the supply and quality of essential services such as health and education.

On the other hand, emigration can relieve pressure in the domestic market; by decreasing the amount of competing workers in the domestic market, overseas migration may help alleviate unemployment and increase the incomes of the remaining workers (“The Development impact of...”). Origin countries can also enjoy a stable source of capital through remittances sent by migrant workers; from a macroeconomic perspective, remittances can increase a country’s access to international capital markets, financing local development projects, consequently leading to GDP growth; from a microeconomic level, remittances can reduce poverty by increasing household income and standard of living (“The Development impact of...”). Overseas migrants may also be able to reflect more progressive social-political norms back to their origin countries, such as calls to halt corruption; however, this can also lead to negative social norms, such as discriminatory norms (“The Development impact of...”).

Arguments for and against Migration

Opponents of immigration believe that:

- Migrants steal jobs and depress wages



- Immigration can potentially produce conflict among ethnic/cultural groups
- Increasing number of migrants may destroy the local community's identity and its institutions
- Creates an over-competitive environment that ends in low-income native born groups competing with migrants for jobs and resources

Proponents of immigration believe that:

- Immigrants do not cause locals to lose jobs, as they generally do labor-based jobs that local workers do not want to engage in
- Migrants create added value to the economy since they consume and stimulate the economy, creating new jobs and economic growth
- International migration could facilitate the transfer of skills

Food for Thought

Currently, one of the largest actions to be taken is to formulate effective policies that help destination countries balance the interests of their local population, which also providing opportunities for millions migrating to their countries in search of jobs (“Opportunities and Challenges of...”). It may also be important to consider protecting migrants’ human rights when crafting resolutions, as they are one of the main stakeholders of the problem.

Some view overseas immigration as a result of failed development policies from origin countries; to incentivize migrants to return to their origin countries, that country’s standard of living must be appealing enough.

Major Parties Involved

United States of America (USA)

As of 2023, there were around 33 million foreign-born workers in the country. The USA is a destination widely aspired by people in developing countries, particularly Latin American countries, where they try to migrate to, legally, or illegally in search of better employment opportunities and quality of life. Many of these workers, skilled or unskilled in their home country fill the USA’s “undesirable” jobs by working in low-paying and low-skilled jobs such as garbage collection, cleaning people, cashier, etc. However the US government is aware that these migrants contribute to the country’s economic growth and fill labor shortages, and so it welcomes high-skilled foreign workers through programs like the H-1B visa. The

USA deems itself a strong upholder of human rights, that include fair and safe treatment of migrants. National policies on economic migration are often influenced by neighboring countries and sources of economic migrants like Mexico. US authorities collaborate with Mexican authorities to control illegal migration. Furthermore, the US invests in the countries its immigrants most emigrate to try to reduce economic migration in the long-term by reducing poverty at the source. *The Alliance of Prosperity* initiative in Central America (Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador) was launched in 2014 by the US government to address the root causes of migration by helping economically develop the region, providing the population with access to education and workforce training, as well as investing in anti-corruption measures to ensure funds and state money is not being diverted from its intended purpose. The US also provides security funding and training to local law enforcement authorities to reduce gang violence and insecurity in the region, a factor that is often the reason migrants decide to leave their country.

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Established in 1951, IOM the UN's Migration Agency is in charge of supporting migrants worldwide by collaborating with governmental, intergovernmental, and non-governmental entities on creating labor policies that balance the interests of host and sending countries, and that protect migrant workers. IOM also provides migrant workers with any protection and assistance they might require through legal aid, housing, and healthcare.

The IOM views international labor migration as being an essential component of social and economic development. Thus it advocates for the protection of migrant workers' rights and strongly advocates for fair wages and safe working conditions. The organization's primary belief is that all migrant workers, no matter their background, should be treated with respect and dignity.

International Labour Organization (ILO)

The ILO is an agency of the UN specializing in labor and dedicated to promoting social justice and internationally recognized human and labor rights. This agency is the fruit of the 1919 Treaty of Versailles that officially terminated World War 1. Its main objectives and functions are to set international standards for labor rights that enhance social protection access to workers and its effectiveness, as well as to create more opportunities for decent employment and income for men and women. The ILO works towards these goals among other forms through policies that it develops with respective governments, employers, and workers from the ILO's 187 member states.

Timeline of Events

| Date | Description of event |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1919 | Founding and establishment of the International Labour Organization (ILO) |
| September 19, 2016 | On this date, the UN’s General Assembly passed a high-level resolution known as “ <i>The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants</i> ” stating that refugees and migrants have the same universal human rights and that their challenges and vulnerabilities are common. Furthermore, the resolution acknowledges that migrants positively contribute to a global sustainable and inclusive development. |
| December 19, 2018 | “ <i>Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration</i> ” (GCM) |

Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

International Organization for Migration (IOM) Initiatives

In 2009, the IOM launched capacity building workshops focused on educating migrant workers about their rights, safe migration practices, and available resources to combat exploitation. Since their introduction, the IOM has held over 500 workshops in various countries, directly reaching more than 50,000 migrant workers annually. The workshops cover topics such as labor rights, legal recourse, and financial management, aiming to empower migrants to navigate their work environments safely.

Moreover, in 2011, they launched return and reintegration programs. These programs provide comprehensive support for returning migrants, helping them reintegrate into local economies. As of 2023, the IOM has supported over 20,000 returning migrants through tailored vocational training, job placement services, and psychosocial counseling. In addition to individual support, these programs have fostered community development by encouraging returning migrants to invest their skills and savings in local enterprises, leading to the establishment of more than 1,000 small businesses.

International Labor Organization (ILO) Standards

The ILO has established critical frameworks to protect migrant workers, notably through Convention No. 97 on Migration for Employment, ratified by numerous countries since 1949. This convention sets

standards for fair treatment and equality of opportunity, and over 60 countries have aligned their national policies with its principles. Additionally, the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, adopted in 2018, encourages member states to engage in collaborative approaches to migration management, prioritizing the safety and rights of migrants. Since its adoption, more than 150 countries have participated in dialogues to implement its provisions, with many launching national action plans to enhance migrant protection.

Possible Solutions

Establishing regulatory frameworks

Request for governments to enact comprehensive labor laws that specifically address the rights of migrant workers, including regulations on wages, working conditions, and grievance mechanisms. These frameworks could incorporate international labor standards, such as those set by the International Labour Organization (ILO). Additionally, countries can collaborate on bilateral agreements that outline shared standards and protections for migrant workers across borders.

Implementing Capacity-Building Programs:

Capacity-building programs can include pre-departure training that informs workers about their rights, the cultural background of the host country, and practical skills for finding jobs. Workshops can be conducted in collaboration with local NGOs, government agencies, and community organizations. These programs can also provide crucial information on legal support and resources for reporting things such as exploitation or abuse, empowering migrants to advocate for themselves effectively.

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https://www.investopedia.com/terms/b/brain_drain.asp

Good case studies here for whoever is doing case studies

<https://www.industryweek.com/talent/article/21971144/five-tips-to-fight-the-talent-drain>

Ethical Recruitment: Brain Drain and Its Moral Challenges - Migrate.

www.migratehr.com/post/ethical-recruitment-brain-drain-and-its-moral-challenges.

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2024, [www.statista.com/statistics/1339018/countries-highest-foreign-born-labor-](http://www.statista.com/statistics/1339018/countries-highest-foreign-born-labor-workforce-worldwide)

[workforce-worldwide](http://www.statista.com/statistics/1339018/countries-highest-foreign-born-labor-workforce-worldwide).

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https://www.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd1486/files/our_work/ICP/IDM/Labour-Migration-Infosheet-2008.pdf.

“Migration.” OECD, www.oecd.org/en/topics/policy-issues/migration.html.

All citations must be in MLA format. You may use www.noodletools.com or www.easybib.com to create your bibliography. Please ensure that all entries in this section are ‘left-justified’ – as this paragraph is set out. Also, any websites cited must be in hyperlinks (you must be able to click on them in this document to refer to the website). You should put the **most useful links in bold**. Below is an example:

"United Nations Convention against Corruption." *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime*. United Nations, 2004. Web. 13 Nov. 2009.

<http://www.unodc.org/documents/treaties/UNCAC/Publications/Convention/08-50026_E.pdf>

“Labour Migration.” International Labour Organization, 29 Aug. 2024, www.ilo.org/topics/labour-migration.

“Opportunities and Challenges of International Migration for Sending and Receiving Countries / T.C. Dışişleri Bakanlığı.” Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Dışişleri Bakanlığı, www.mfa.gov.tr/opportunities-and-challenges-of-international-migration-for-sending-and-receiving-countries.tr.mfa.

OECD. The Development Impact of Migration in Origin Countries. OECD, 12 Dec. 2016, pp. 183–216. OECD iLibrary, https://doi.org/10.1787/persp_glob_dev-2017-11-en.

Appendix or Appendices

Please include any materials that will be helpful to delegates. I would recommend documents or websites that delegates can find easily on the internet. **This section is optional**. Below is an example of what should be included here:

- I. <http://media.transparency.org/imaps/cpi2009/> (Transparency International’s annual CPI)

Why this website is useful.....

II. https://www.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl486/files/our_work/ICP/IDM/Labour-Migration-Infosheet-2008.pdf (IOM and Labour Migration)

This pdf (short, 4 pages) provides useful information related to the topic. In particular, it explains some actions the IOM has taken towards labour migration management, which could give context and help you brainstorm possible solutions to add to your resolution.

III. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xCBpDbHSqe0>

Super short youtube video (40 seconds) providing some statistics on the topic.

IV <https://www.ilo.org/topics/labour-migration>

Larger, more informative website about Labour migration. If you scroll to “News and Articles”, there are some updates of how groups are doing work to mitigate the impacts of overseas employment. Also helpful for context and potential solutions

V. <https://www.mfa.gov.tr/opportunities-and-challenges-of-international-migration-for-sending-and-receiving-countries.tr.mfa>

If you have time, you should really read this source. It’s very informative on impacts of overseas migration for different countries and includes discussion on country stances.

VI https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/persp_glob_dev-2017-11-en.pdf?expires=1730031800&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=35E1920B7CE2DAF50BF95A830AF636B9

If you have even more time, you should also really read this source. It’s extremely informative on the impacts of overseas migration on origin countries, and includes a lot of statistics. I didn’t use all the information I read in the “background” section as it was too detailed, but its really worth a read.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask the Secretariat team.

Plagiarism will NOT be tolerated. There is no need to elaborate on this point.

You will serve as the “expert chair” for the topic on which you wrote your research report, meaning that you should be familiar with it and able to guide delegates that are working on addressing “your” issue.

Other conferences require longer Research Reports than BEIMUN does. With this in mind, high quality, condensed and concise information is expected.