The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is the leading intergovernmental organization in the field of migration and is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society.

IOM was born in 1951 out of the chaos and displacement of Western Europe following the Second World War. Mandated to help European governments to identify resettlement countries for the estimated 11 million people uprooted by the war, it arranged transport for nearly a million migrants during the 1950s, and responded to successive crises around the world. From its roots as an operational logistics agency, it has broadened its scope to become an essential international actor in the field of human mobility, supporting migrants across the world, developing effective responses to the shifting dynamics of migration, and a key source of advice on migration policy and practice. The Organization works in emergency situations, developing the resilience of all people on the move, and particularly those in situations of vulnerability, as well as building capacity within governments to manage all forms and impacts of mobility.

After 65 years of global operations, IOM formally joined the United Nations system in 2016, and is now the Coordinator and Secretariat for the UN Migration Network, established in 2019.

In 2015, IOM’s Member States endorsed the Migration Governance Framework (MiGOF). The MiGOF sets out three objectives and three principles which, if fulfilled and enacted, form the basis for an ideal approach to migration governance.

In view of IOM’s new status as a related agency of the UN system, and the adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in late 2018, a document rooted in the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the IOM has developed a five-year Strategic Vision to prepare the Organization for the next decade of work.

In 2019, the number of international migrants globally was estimated to be 272 million, 3.5 per cent of the world’s population, of which 52 per cent were male, and 48 per cent female. The vast majority (74%) were of working age. In 2018, the global refugee population was estimated at 25.9 million, and more than half of these were under 18 years of age. At the same time, the number of internally displaced persons reached 41.3 million, and the number of stateless persons, 3.9 million.

Migration patterns vary from region to region. While most international migrants born in Africa, Asia and Europe reside within their regions of birth, the majority of migrants from Latin America and the Caribbean, and Northern America reside outside their regions of birth. More than half of all international migrants (141 million) lived in Europe and Northern America.

Migration is not only increasing in frequency, but the complexities of migration patterns and experiences are becoming more apparent. This is, in part, related to our growing evidence base on migration and migrants.

In its strategic vision 2019–2023, IOM aims to:

1. Advance the socioeconomic well-being of migrants and society.
2. Effectively address the mobility dimensions of crises.
3. Ensure that migration takes place in a safe, orderly and dignified manner.

IOM STANDARDS

IOM is committed to the core values and principles that are at the heart of its work, including the principles enshrined in the UN Charter, and upholding human rights for all. Respect for the rights, dignity and well-being of migrants remains paramount.

Principled humanitarian action is an organization-wide commitment. Humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence are the core humanitarian principles that make it easier to secure and maintain safe access to vulnerable communities, to navigate humanitarian dilemmas, to enhance protective programming, and to manage uncertainty and risk in challenging and unstable operating environments.

IOM’s STRATEGIC VISION 2019–2023 sets out a number of strategic priorities, based on a landscape assessment of what the next decade will bring. There are three main pillars of work:

Resilience: IOM will need to prepare for higher numbers of people moving in and out of vulnerable situations, stemming from a range of complex drivers, including climate change, instability, poverty and exploitation. IOM will endeavour to take a long-term and holistic approach to emergency response, integrating development objectives, and acknowledging changing drivers and vulnerabilities.

Mobility: The ways in which people move are constantly changing. As migration dynamics evolve, so must the tools that manage movement, whether relating to selection, identification, entry, stay or return. In this regard, IOM will pursue innovative approaches to design and implementation of systems to manage migration, based on its existing knowledge of what works, where, and for whom, and specific regional and political contexts.

Governance: IOM is already an important partner for Member States in terms of delivering services to migrants that governments cannot deliver themselves. With the advent of the Global Compact for Migration, there is a new opportunity for IOM to support governments to build capacity for the governance of migration, support for migrants, and to build stronger cooperation with other United Nations agencies. This requires stronger partnership with a broad range of stakeholders and partners, and the development of strong research and data collection capacities, to support decision-making in an often-difficult space.

It also sets out key drivers for success, outlining areas of institutional development that will be needed to fully realize the goals of the organization. The full document can be viewed here ▶
INSTITUTIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

Key Facts and Figures (2019)
Tracking and monitoring of displacement and needs were met for:

- 24.9 million internally displaced persons (IDPs)
- 16.5 million returnees
- 4.6 million returnees from abroad
- 225,758 persons transported internationally

Camp coordination/ management → 2.5 million beneficiaries in 28 countries
Water, sanitation and hygiene → 6.7 million in 27 countries
Shelter and non-food → 4 million in 41 countries
Emergency health → 3.6 million in 31 countries
Over 343 recovery, stabilization and solutions initiatives in 76 locations

INSTITUTIONAL STATISTICS

As of June 2020

- 15,311 Total number of staff
  - 8,139 male
  - 7,172 female
- 168 nationalities represented
  - 140 nationalities - international professional level
  - 84 nationalities - senior level (P4 and above)

USD 2.13 billion Combined total revenue in 2019
  - assessed contributions
  - voluntary contributions
  - other income

In 2020, the combined total revenue will probably exceed USD 2 billion as of November 2020

173 Member States
590 Offices as of 15 November 2020

IOM Strategy on Migration and Sustainable Development
In recognition of the fact that well-managed migration can be both a development strategy and a development outcome, IOM has developed an institution-wide strategy to foster sustainable development for migrants and their communities. Through this, IOM is working to maximize the potential of migration to achieve sustainable development outcomes by supporting the integration of the impact of migration and migrants’ needs in policy planning across all sectors and levels of governance, an approach echoed in the Global Compact for Migration, which can serve as a roadmap to help achieve the migration dimensions of the SDGs.

Migration and Climate Change
The international community can no longer implement migration and development policy without considering the impacts of climate change. During the UN Climate Action Summit in September 2019, IOM, together with the governments of Portugal and Fiji, hosted a ministerial breakfast to discuss the situation of small island developing States (SIDS), outlining the critical need to respond to build resilience within the most affected populations. Looking forward, IOM’s Division for Migration, Environment and Climate Change (MECC) is drafting a strategy to build upon IOM’s strong position within the international community to influence key policy processes while supporting IOM offices to provide assistance and protection to those populations most severely affected by environmental change.

Establishing the UN Migration Network
In May 2018, the Secretary-General committed to establish a UN Network on Migration to ensure effective, timely and coordinated system-wide support to Member States in their implementation, follow-up and review of the Global Compact for Migration. IOM has been designated the Coordinator of the Network, and houses the Network Secretariat, which is responsible for servicing the work of the Network.

Creating IOM’s Policy Hub
On 1 April 2019, a Policy Hub was launched within the Office of the Director General, designed to facilitate information flow within IOM. It has the core objective of drawing together and delivering policy knowledge across the Organization. The Policy Hub will foster cross-cutting communities of practice and develop new mechanisms for policy-related knowledge management.

World Migration Report 2020
Launched at the 2019 IOM Council meeting by IOM’s Director General, the latest edition of its flagship publication, the World Migration Report 2020, continues the Organization’s commitment to providing information on migration that is well-researched, rigorous and accessible. First published twenty years ago, this tenth edition in the World Migration Report series provides the latest data and information on the migration “big picture” as well as analysis of complex and emerging migration issues. Thematic chapters on human mobility and environmental change, migrants’ contributions in an era of disinformation, children and unsafe migration, migration and health (among others) are not only timely but are also highly relevant for both specialist and general audiences. The report can be accessed at www.iom.int/wmr/.