



The International Dialogue on Migration Red Book Series. ©2010 (Photo: Patrice Quesada)

# IOM's International Dialogue on Migration

IOM is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. As an intergovernmental body, IOM acts with its partners in the international community to: assist in meeting the operational challenges of migration, advance understanding of migration issues, encourage social and economic development through migration, and work towards effective respect of the human dignity and well-being of migrants.

## The International Dialogue on Migration in Brief

- Is a forum for policy dialogue between countries of origin, transit and destination, civil society, migrants, experts and other stakeholders.
- Was created in 2001 by the IOM membership, in line with IOM's functions set out in the Constitution, and reaffirmed in the 2007 IOM Strategy.
- Provides an informal and non-binding setting in which all stakeholders have an equal right to participate, fostering trust, openness and genuine exchange.
- Addresses the full range of migration issues and their linkages with other policy domains.
- Is steered by the IOM membership which selects topics for discussion.

## A Core IOM Activity

Dialogue and cooperation are today important features of global efforts to govern migration, in step with the growing realization that no country remains isolated from international migration and no country can tackle the issue on its own. The past decades have witnessed an expansion of intergovernmental and other initiatives to develop joint approaches to migration. IOM's International Dialogue on Migration (IDM) has held a pioneering role in bringing together all migration stakeholders, at a global level, for free and open discussions on the opportunities and challenges which migration presents. The IDM places value and emphasis on a diversity of topics, views and actors in order to shed light on migration issues in all their complexity.

The IDM provides a forum for IOM Member and Observer States, as well as international and non-governmental organizations and other partners, to share experiences and perspectives on contemporary migration matters with a view to identifying practical solutions and fostering greater cooperation. The IDM also serves a capacity-building purpose, enabling experts from different domains and regions to exchange policy approaches and effective practices in particular areas of interest and to develop networks for future action.

The IDM is consistent with one of the five purposes of the Organization set forth in the IOM Constitution, specifically to provide a forum for discussion of migration issues:

*“To provide a forum to States as well as international and other organizations for the exchange of views and experiences, and the promotion of co-operation and co-ordination of efforts on international migration issues...”*  
Art. 1(1)(e)

The IDM was launched at the eighty-second IOM Council session in November 2001 on the occasion of IOM's 50th anniversary. At that session, the Council adopted Resolution No. 1055, welcoming the discussions of migration policy matters and resolving:

*“To strengthen the role of the Council as a forum for migration policy dialogue, consistent with the Organization's Constitution.”*  
(Resolution No. 1055)

The Membership quickly asked that the IDM take place not just during the annual Council session but also between sessions of Council. Consequently, the

IDM's primary activities are annual IDM sessions, which take place at the year-end IOM Council session, and two intersessional workshops per year.

In 2007, the Membership explicitly confirmed the IDM as a priority activity of the Organization when it adopted the IOM Strategy:

*“To promote, facilitate and support regional and global debate and dialogue on migration, including through the International Dialogue on Migration, so as to advance understanding of the opportunities and challenges it presents, the identification and development of effective policies for addressing those challenges and to identify comprehensive approaches and measures for advancing international cooperation.”*

(Activity 7 of the IOM Strategy)

## IDM Governance

Regular informal consultations (two to three per year) provide a platform for the Membership – which includes Member States as well as Observer States and Organizations – to govern the IDM. Through this mechanism, the IOM Administration solicits the Membership's input into future events and feedback on past events and reports on IDM-related activities.

Specifically, it is through the informal consultations process that the Membership selects the yearly overarching theme to guide the IDM and the topics of the intersessional workshops. Written surveys are also occasionally sent by the Administration where the results of the informal consultations are not conclusive or the Membership requests more time to provide its views.

Each year, the Administration proposes two options for the overarching theme to guide the IDM for the following year for consideration and decision by the Membership. In doing so, the Administration reflects on the discussions and suggestions made by the Membership at prior informal consultations, IDM sessions and other fora. The Membership may also propose different themes during the consultation should they so wish. At the following informal consultation, the Administration provides the Membership with three to four possible topics for the two intersessional workshops to take place in the framework of the chosen overarching theme, and the Membership may propose additional topics. From these topics, the Membership selects two or requests a combination.

In past years, the Administration has also sought the participants' feedback on the IDM intersessional workshops by distributing satisfaction surveys during the second workshop of the year. The general satisfaction rate among the respondents with the event and the background materials exceeded 80 per cent.

### IDM Format

Consistent with the purpose of the IDM in serving as a platform for policy dialogue, the workshops give priority to the participation of government representatives, both as speakers and as participants. The Administration exercises care to ensure balanced representation of developed and developing countries, countries of origin, transit and destination and different geographical regions. In addition, and true to its inclusive and informal nature, representatives of civil society, the private sector and academia are consistently invited to participate and present their views and activities.

A special "Migrant's Voice" session – in which someone is invited to share his or her personal migration story with the audience – is an integral part of every workshop, to ensure discussions remain grounded in the genuine experiences of migrant men and women.

As often as possible, the Administration pursues IDM activities in partnership with other agencies and entities with expertise relevant to the guiding theme of the workshop.

Since its inception the IDM was organized under a two workshops format. In 2013, in consultation with Member States, the Administration decided to combine the two regular workshops into a single high-level event dedicated to diasporas. Subsequently, it was decided to alternate the biannual IDM workshops with a single high-level conference.

### IDM Publications

The Organization also produces an International Dialogue on Migration ("Red Book") publication series, which includes workshop reports and related material. The workshop reports have evolved over the years to better suit the needs of policymakers and practitioners, focusing on key messages, lessons learned and examples of effective practices for policies and programmes in different areas of migration management.

Information and documents relating to the IDM are consistently stored on the IOM website ([www.iom.int/idm](http://www.iom.int/idm)) and IDM publications can be obtained via the IOM Bookstore (<http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/>).

### IDM Funding

The IDM intersessional workshops rely on voluntary and ad hoc donor contributions.

The Administration continually seeks to minimize the costs of the workshops, for example through the choice of venue or by obtaining low air fares.

There are three major cost items:

- venue facilities;
- provision of simultaneous interpretation during the workshop (in accordance with IOM's obligations as a trilingual organization);
- participation of experts from developing countries and civil society: this constitutes the largest cost item (up to 75% of the budget) and specifically concerns economy class travel, daily subsistence allowance and accommodation for speakers and, if possible, participants with no formal speaking role. The IDM strives to facilitate the participation of experts from governments and non-governmental bodies from developing countries, deemed crucial for the fulfilment of the capacity-building function of the IDM.



IDM meeting, 18–19 July 2017, Geneva. © IOM 2017 (Photo: Muse Mohammed)

Year	Overarching theme	Workshops
2001*	Migration Challenges in the 21st Century	
2002*	Selected Policy Challenges	Integration of Migrants
		Diaspora Support to Migration and Development
		Comprehensive and Solutions-oriented Approaches to Addressing Irregular Migration
2003	Migration in a Globalized World	Approaches to Data Collection and Data Management
		Trade and Migration
		Labour Mobility / Capacity Building**
2004	Valuing Migration	Health and Migration
		Trade and Migration
		The Image of Migrants**
2005	Toward Policy Coherence on Migration	Migration and Development
		Developing Capacity to Manage Migration
2006	Partnerships in Migration: Engaging Business and Civil Society	Migration and Human Resources for Health: From Awareness to Action
		Migrants and the Host Society
2007	Migration Management in the Evolving Global Economy	Free Movement of Persons in Regional Integration Processes
		Making Global Labour Mobility a Catalyst for Development
		Expert Seminar on Migration and the Environment***
2008	Return Migration: Challenges and Opportunities	Managing Return Migration
		Enhancing the Role of Return Migration in Fostering Development
2009	Human Rights and Migration: Working Together for Safe, Dignified and Secure Migration	Effective Respect for the Human Rights of Migrants: A Shared Responsibility
		Trafficking in Persons and Exploitation of Migrants: Ensuring Protection of Human Rights
2010	Migration and Social Change	Migration and Transnationalism: Opportunities and Challenges
		Societies and Identities: The Multifaceted Impact of Migration
2011	The Future of Migration: Building Capacities for Change	Climate Change, Environmental Degradation and Migration
		Economic Cycles, Demographic Change and Migration
2012	Managing Migration in Crisis Situations	Moving to Safety: Migration Consequences of Complex Crises
		Protecting Migrants during Times of Crisis
2013	Diaspora Ministerial Conference****	Diasporas and Development: Bridging Societies and States
2014	Human Mobility and Development: Emerging Trends and New Opportunities for Partnerships	South - South Migration: Partnering Strategically for Development
		Migration and Families
2015	Conference on Migrants and Cities	
2016	Follow-up and Review of Migration in the SDGs	Follow-up and Review of Migration in the SDGs
		Assessing progress in the implementation process of migration related SDGs
2017	Strengthening international cooperation on and governance of migration towards the adoption of a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration in 2018	Strengthening international cooperation on and governance of migration towards the adoption of a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration in 2018
		Understanding migrant vulnerabilities: A solution-based approach towards a global compact that reduces vulnerabilities and empowers migrants
2018	Inclusive and innovative partnerships for effective global governance of migration	Inclusive and innovative partnerships for effective global governance of migration
		Towards effective migration governance: partnerships for capacity development

\* In 2001 and 2002 the IDM took place exclusively at the IOM Council Session.

\*\* These took place during the IOM Council Sessions.

\*\*\* This seminar took place in addition to the IDM cycle and was presented during the IOM Council Session.

\*\*\*\* In 2013 the IDM dedicated its regular intersessional workshops to a high-level conference focused on diasporas.