

International Organization for Migration (IOM)
International Partnerships Division (IPD)
Assessment of Inter-State Consultation Mechanisms on Migration

Summary of Findings per ISCM

As part of an assessment of inter-state consultation mechanisms on migration (ISCMs), a survey was conducted in 2019. Carried out by IOM among ISCMs, their Member States and relevant inter-governmental organizations, the survey aimed to assess ISCMs' continued relevance and contribution to migration governance at all levels (national, regional and international) and the synergies among ISCMs and with other actors. The findings of this survey were presented at the global gathering of ISCMs in 2019 and were used to develop recommendations to enhance ISCMs' engagement in migration governance.

46 States and 22 ISCMs and 3 inter-governmental organizations provided answers to the questionnaires. The results are to be found in the 2019 assessment report: Advancing a common understanding of migration governance among regions, which provides an overview on ISCMs' organization, engagements, their continued relevance and synergies with relevant actors in the area of migration management. In addition to the report, the information below is meant to outline each individual ISCM's thematic priorities, structure, impact and relevance.

Name of the Inter-state consultation mechanism (ISCM): ***Commission of Migratory Authorities of SICA Member Countries (OCAM)***

1. Evolution of programing and thematic focus

Since its establishment in 1990, OCAM's thematic focus has shifted towards policies and governance, human rights and migration and development. OCAM's thematic shift into migration governance was inspired by global initiatives on migration.

OCAM's strategy is laid out in the "Regulation of the Council of Ministers of Interior, Justice and/or Public Security for the Strengthening of Comprehensive Regional Migratory Management," adopted by most of OCAM's Member States in 2011.

In 2019, its work was implemented according to the workplan adopted in November 2018. This workplan is monitored and evaluated through the SICA platform.

2. Contribution to migration governance at national, (inter)regional and global levels (with examples)

National level: OCAM's contribution to national migration governance ranges from criminal classification of trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants in national legislations, over facilitating agreements in migration procedures and border integration systems, to strengthening migration management and border management in its Member States. OCAM's border and migration management initiatives include the Centro American passport, modernization of the entry and exit system of people and Advanced Passenger Information

(APIS). Furthermore, OCAM facilitated reforms to the national migration legislation of Costa Rica, Panama, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.

(Inter)regional level: OCAM has contributed to migration governance at an interregional level in few instances. Among them are the Central American Integration System's (SICA) Regional Policy on Equity, Equality and Gender (PRIEG) in 2013 and SICA's Regional Health Policy, adopted in 2015. Since 2011, OCAM has proposed the drafting of a comprehensive regional migration policy. However, this has not yet been approved by the SICA Commission.

OCAM plans to expand its contribution to migration governance in the areas of legislation and policy, information systems (data sharing), human rights, security and cooperation. By being incorporated into state policies and legislation and government plans and thus having stable resources, such plans could be better facilitated.

3. Salient ISCM structures

OCAM comprises of a Chair, a Secretariat, working or expert groups and an ad hoc information technology and legislation advisory committee. It has formal associations with SICA which also functions as the permanent secretariat of the ISCM. IOM serves as the technical secretariat of OCAM, taking over functions such as organization of meetings, monitoring of OCAM's work, knowledge management, organizing communication and participating in meetings and funding. Moreover, IOM assumes the role of a cooperating and advisory body to OCAM. OCAM's two sources of funding are its secretariat and contributions from a member organization. This has an influence on OCAM's agenda – Member States feel that sometimes the donor decides on the relevance of OCAM's areas of interest. To attend OCAM's meetings, each country covers its travel expenses itself. OCAM's funding sources are unstable and to increase OCAM's sustainability, a permanent funding source is needed. By linking their work more to IOM's projects and receiving support from SICA, OCAM aims to increase its sustainability. Since its establishment, the Dominican Republic joined OCAM as a new Member State. Also, Mexico joined as an observer and the United States of America and the Regional Network of Civil Society Organizations for Migration (RROCM) demonstrated interest in becoming OCAM observers as well.

4. Partnership models by the ISCM

OCAM is part of the institutional framework of SICA and thus has established strong synergies with this **regional political and economic union**. In addition, OCAM maintains partnerships with various other **IGOs**, such as IOM. To address topics of mutual interest and exchange of experiences, OCAM also collaborates with UNHCR to ensure protection of refugees, with UNODC to fight trafficking in persons, with ILO on labor migration, with OAS on issues of security and border control and with the Inter-American Development Bank to address migration issues in economic integration projects. With CELAC, OCAM occasionally cooperates on technical matters. OCAM has established links with other ISCMs, namely RIAM (on prevention and prosecution of human trafficking), RCM (on global initiatives addressing migration) and SACM (knowing experiences and exchange of best practices). To promote dialogue on migration dynamics from a migrants' viewpoint, OCAM also maintains close collaboration with the **civil society**. This happens mainly through its engagement with

the Regional Network of Civil Society Organizations for Migration (RROCM) and Comité Consultivo del SICA (CC-SICA). Moreover, OCAM works with the private sector (CC-SICA and IATA) to build alliances and with academia institutions (Consejo Superior Universitario (CSUCA/SICA) for research and capacity building. To enhance cooperation, OCAM plans to strengthen its networking capabilities.

5. Added value of Membership in the given ISCM for States and Organizations (with examples)

Member States value their participation in OCAM for common understandings and approaches to migration issues from a regional perspective. Member States benefit from OCAM facilitating agreements on intra and extra regional migration flows and massive movements. OCAM provides them with a platform for continued dialogue among authorities and coordination of actions and policies. This gives Member States an opportunity to establish networks at a technical and decision-making level. Through their participation in OCAM, Member States have the opportunity to jointly analyze emerging migration issues.