IRIS Global Policy Network to Promote Ethical Recruitment

Frequently Asked Questions – March 2022

1. What is the IRIS Global Policy Network?

- The IRIS Global Policy Network (GPN) was launched on December 3rd, 2020, as an IOM Member State-driven collaboration that brings together policy makers, regulators, and government practitioners to (1) discuss key challenges related to cross-border recruitment, (2) identify and co-develop solutions to recruitment-related challenges, and (3) highlight promising practices in the field of policy, regulation, enforcement, and protection.
- The GPN creates a space for governments to discuss and address the challenges they encounter in regulating recruitment and protecting migrant workers. It is a vehicle for dialogue and exchange but through its link to the IRIS: Ethical Recruitment Initiative is also solutions- and impact-oriented.
- The GPN is aligned with IRIS: Ethical Recruitment. In fact, it should be viewed as IRIS' government pillar, which complements the Initiative's work with recruiters (Capacity Building and Certification), business (employers and brands), and civil society (Migrant Voice) by enhancing migrant worker protection and encouraging recruitment regulation that "levels the playing field" to create an enabling environment for ethical recruiters.

2. Who is involved in the GPN?

- The Network invites participation from all public authorities responsible for or involved in recruitment regulation and migrant worker protection.
- The Network adopts a "whole of government" approach and involves representatives of all relevant Ministries, agencies, and departments (horizontal) across all levels of government (vertical), including national and sub-national authorities. Ministries of Justice, Interior, Immigration, Foreign Affairs, Labour, Development Cooperation, and others are involved, including inspection services, consular affairs, counter-trafficking authorities, public employment offices, business licensing and registration authorities, etc.

3. Why should governments and public authorities join the GPN?

- Membership in the GPN is free of charge and helps IOM Member States implement their commitment to safe, orderly, and regular migration and strengthen their migration governance. The GPN serves to

introduce Members to leading-edge, innovative solutions to the common challenges that policymakers and regulators face around the world.

- The GPN offers a space for governments to openly discuss the challenges they face in regulating recruitment and protecting migrant workers. Through Thematic Working Groups (TWGs, see below), members have the opportunity to learn from peers and counterparts around the world, share perspectives, and co-develop strategies and solutions that can be tested in home jurisdictions.
- The Network also provides members with an opportunity to identify relevant counterparts in other IOM Member States that are strategically important for their government, for example a Ministry or public authority in a country of origin or destination.
- Dialogue within the GPN links directly to IOM programming, projects, and operations. It is IOM's intention to support GPN members in their fundraising efforts related to ethical recruitment and to provide technical support, capacity building, etc., wherever new resources and projects can be established.

4. What will the structure of the GPN look like and how will it be governed?

- The structure of the Network includes a Member State-led International Steering Committee, which serves as the highest level of governance and provides strategic guidance and policy direction to the Network and its Secretariat. Two Stakeholder Advisory Groups advise the Steering Committee, with one comprised of private sector and employer representation and the other comprised of civil society representation. Thematic Working Groups are the main vehicle for Network activities. They bring together Members to discuss a range of priority topics (see below).
- The Steering Committee, Advisory Groups and TWGs are governed by their own Terms of Reference. The IRIS Secretariat in Geneva serves as the Secretariat for the GPN.
- The IRIS Secretariat coordinates all administrative and logistical aspects of the Network, including meeting preparation and support to the Steering Committee, Advisory Groups and TWGs. It also serves as a member liaison for Network participants who have questions or would like to be placed in direct contact with other public authorities, while serving to link the GPN to other aspect of the IRIS Initiative, including Certification, Capacity Building, and the Migrant Voice mechanism. Finally, the Secretariat manages external communications and promotion of the Network through the management of a Network website, social media presence, etc.

5. What is discussed in the Thematic Working Groups?

- Thematic Working Groups are the main vehicle for dialogue within the GPN. It is here that senior-level technical experts discuss common challenges, exchange perspectives, and propose solutions to unethical recruitment.
- Existing TWGs include (1) inspection and enforcement, chaired by the UK; (2) licensing and oversight of labour recruiters, chaired by Uganda; (3) recruitment in temporary and seasonal migration schemes, chaired by Costa Rica; and (4) bilateral cooperation and recruitment, chaired by Sri Lanka. A (5) donor and fundraising working group has also been established, chaired by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and the Global Fund to End Modern Slavery. The thematic priorities and goals of each TWG are set by the membership through their TORs. It is anticipated that new TWGs will be established over the course of 2022.
- Each TWG meets virtually on a quarterly basis (e.g., January, April, July, October).

6. How does a Member State join the GPN and is there a membership fee?

- To join the GPN or learn more about membership, prospective members are encouraged to contact the IRIS Secretariat directly (see contact information below) or discuss with your local IOM country office and focal point. At the time of writing, the GPN has 50 members from around the world.
- There is no membership fee or financial obligation to participate in the GPN. Network infrastructure and activities will be supported through projects funded by public and private foundation donors as well as through IOM's regular budget.
- The process for becoming a member is simple and flexible. A government or public authority that is interested to join the GPN is encouraged to send a message expressing this interest. IOM will respond with a formal letter of invitation via its country office or the Network Secretariat, which can serve as the basis for internal discussion and decision-making. A positive response to that letter is sufficient to confirm GPN membership, with follow up involving bilateral discussion on next steps and selection of priority TWGs. This may also involve the identification of a Network focal point in the government.

7. What level of commitment (time, participation, etc.) is expected from Member States once they join the Network?

- A commitment to participate in good faith and to learn and share with participating States is the only responsibility of Network Members. Active listening and learning are considered important forms of participation, particularly for those Members who are new to the topic of ethical recruitment.
- The Network has adopted a flexible model of participation that allows Members to join TWGs based on their interests, needs and priorities. This means that a representative from the consular affairs office of a Member may wish to join the Working Group on bilateral cooperation, while another from the same Member's recruiter licensing agency may wish to join the group on licensing. Furthermore, the Development Cooperation arm of the Member may wish to send a representative to the Donor Working Group to discuss better coordination across fundraising opportunities. This approach spreads the benefit of GPN participation while also spreading the responsibility of Network representation across different individuals and agencies.
- Participation is continuous, and we ask Members to identify primary and alternate representatives as a reflection of good practice and flexibility.

8. What are the current plans and timelines for Network development and rollout?

- The Network is currently in its second year of implementation; this involves maintenance and growth of the TWGs, an ongoing membership drive and building Network governance. The Secretariat is working closely with Members to ensure that the Network best reflects their priorities and needs.
- As of March 2022, the Network has more than 50 public authorities as members. Membership is global and diverse, representing different Ministries, national and sub-national authorities and regions including the Americas, Europe, North and Southern Africa, and Asia-Pacific.
- The Network held its inaugural all-members meeting (virtually) in May 2021. It is anticipated that a second all-members meeting will take place in September 2022.

- In parallel to these developments, the IRIS Secretariat is currently building a global, modular training programme for governments to support greater awareness and capacity on topics related to recruitment regulation. The programme is based on the Montreal Recommendations on Recruitment: A Road Map towards Better Regulation.[1]

9. What are the Montreal Recommendations on Recruitment?

- The foundation for the GPN was established at a global conference held in Montreal in 2019. The conference resulted in the aforementioned Montreal Recommendations on Recruitment, which articulate global guidance for policy makers on recruitment regulation and protection of migrant workers. The Montreal Recommendations are aligned with the International Labour Organisation's *General Principles and Operational Guidelines on Fair Recruitment*.
- The Montreal Recommendations provide the GPN with an indicative list of themes to examine related to recruitment regulation, including recruitment fees and costs, licencing and registration of labour recruiters, the role of inspection services, bilateral and multi-lateral cooperation, consular affairs, and voluntary initiatives.

10. Contact and further information

- More information about the GPN can be found on its website.[2]
- A GPN LinkedIn Group has been created to support networking and sharing of information among members. To join the Group, please send a request using the contact information below or directly through LinkedIn.[3]
- The IRIS Secretariat serves as the principal contact for the Network and its activities. To learn more about the Network, please do not hesitate to contact: phunter@iom.int or iris@iom.int.

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[1] https://publications.iom.int/books/montreal-recommendations-recruitment-road-map-towards-better-regulation

[2] https://policynetwork.iom.int/

[3] https://www.linkedin.com/groups/9014439/