

**THIRTEENTH COORDINATION MEETING ON  
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION**

Population Division

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**PROMOTING DECENT WORK FOR MIGRANT WORKERS<sup>1</sup>**

*International Labour Organization (ILO)*

**Executive summary:** Migration today is linked, directly or indirectly, to the world of work and the quest for decent work opportunities. As a result, there can be no discussion of international migration in the future global agenda on sustainable development without consideration of decent work. The outcome document of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals now includes a target (Target 8.8) on “protecting labour rights and promoting safe and secure working environments of all workers, including migrant workers, particularly women migrants, and those in precarious employment”. This paper proposes a number of indicators to measure target 8.8. They include indicators on international labour standards, on employment, wages and working conditions, on social security coverage, on skills and qualifications recognition, on reducing the costs related to recruitment and on social dialogue. This paper also argues that labour migration costs must be seen in the broader context of employment and labour markets – not merely through the narrow lens of remittance transactions.

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<sup>1</sup> This paper was prepared by the International Labour Organization as a basis for discussion during the thematic meeting on migration in the post-2015 UN development agenda of the Global Forum on Migration and Development in Geneva, Switzerland, 5 February 2015.

## **Introduction**

Migration today is linked, directly or indirectly, to the world of work and the quest for decent work opportunities, either within countries or across international borders. Approximately 50 per cent of the 232 international migrants in the world today are economically active. Even those fleeing persecution, conflict, violence and environmental disasters may eventually end up in the labour market. Family members joining migrant workers abroad may also wish to work, either as employees or in self-employment. Almost 50 per cent of international migrants are women, who are increasingly migrating for employment on their own account. An estimated one in eight are young people between the ages of 15 and 24.<sup>1</sup> The total number of migrants has risen by 57 million since 2000 and 19 per cent of this increase occurred within the past three years. Most importantly, 57 per cent of the increase in total migration between 2000 and 2013 was due to higher levels of South–South migration.<sup>2</sup> The diverse labour market profiles and changing flows and patterns of migration suggests that migration is largely a labour market and decent work issue.<sup>3</sup> Consequently, there can be no discussion of international migration in the future global agenda on sustainable development without consideration of decent work. Indeed, in his report on fair migration, presented to the International Labour Conference in May 2014, the ILO Director-General observes that “the UN post-2015 development agenda is an opportunity to give renewed impetus to the shared responsibility to promote decent jobs and social protection everywhere”,<sup>4</sup> including for migrant workers.

This purpose of this discussion paper is to demonstrate the important social and economic role of decent work for migrant workers in meeting sustainable development outcomes, and to provide some indication of how the decent work of migrants could be measured in the post-2015 development agenda. In discussing the role of decent work for migrant workers in meeting sustainable development outcomes, the paper first provides an overview of the concept of decent work, as it relates to the three pillars of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental) and that can serve as the foundation for protection of migrant workers.

The next section highlights the growing recognition of the need to ensure decent work for migrants, and its increasing prominence within the global development agenda since the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000. The discussion paper points to some preliminary data demonstrating how reducing labour migration costs – the second action point in the Secretary-General’s eight-point agenda for action presented in his report to the UN General Assembly High-level Dialogue on International Labour Migration and Development<sup>5</sup> – can greatly enhance both decent work and significant economic savings for migrant workers that can improve development prospects. This should be considered as part of the discussion on financing for development which will set the framework for the implementation of the future Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Finally, the paper outlines some tentative indicators for the migration-related target in Goal 8 of the General Assembly’s Open Working Group (OWG) proposal for SDGs,<sup>6</sup> based upon the ILO’s Decent Work Indicators which can provide a solid basis for discussion on implementation.

## **The concept of decent work**

Decent work is a multifaceted concept that goes beyond merely having a job. The ILO’s Decent Work Agenda contains four inseparable, interrelated and mutually supportive

objectives: (i) respecting, promoting and realizing the fundamental principles and rights at work; (ii) promoting employment by creating a sustainable institutional and economic environment; (iii) developing and enhancing social protection measures; and (iv) promoting social dialogue and tripartism.<sup>7</sup> The fourth objective recognizes that the principal world of work actors, namely representative organizations of employers and workers, together with labour ministries and other relevant parts of government, have a critical role to play in implementing and taking forward the Decent Work Agenda. Clearly, therefore, decent work should be viewed as an important means of achieving equitable, inclusive and sustainable development.<sup>8</sup>

## **Decent Work and Global Development: From the MDGs to the post-2015 UN development agenda**

In the Rio+20 outcome document, migration and the protection of the human rights of migrants is recognized as a critical element of development, and discussed in the context of productive employment, decent work and social protection.<sup>9</sup> Migration was not included as a goal or target in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) but was referenced in the United Nations Millennium Declaration in the context of democracy, human rights and good governance.<sup>10</sup> Similarly, productive employment and decent work only appeared in the Declaration.<sup>11</sup> In the lead-up to the post-2015 development agenda, both have featured more prominently.

The Declaration of the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, adopted by the General Assembly in October 2013, likewise emphasizes “the need to respect and promote international labour standards as appropriate, and respect the rights of migrants in their workplaces” and “the need to establish appropriate measures for the protection of women migrant workers in all sectors, including those involved in domestic work”.<sup>12</sup>

Given the growing recognition of migrant workers’ contribution to development, their place in global labour markets, and that the Rio+20 outcome document sets out a mandate for the establishment of the OWG to develop a set of SDGs and also to provide a basis for their conceptualization,<sup>13</sup> it is an important milestone that migrant workers feature in one of the targets for proposed “Goal 8 - Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”.

Indeed, it has now been recognized that world of work issues constituted a significant omission in previous debates on development. In his Synthesis Report on the Post-2015 Agenda, the Secretary-General noted that all contributions to the discussions have thus underlined that “Member States will need to fill **key sustainable development gaps** left by the MDGs, such as the multi-dimensional aspects of poverty, decent work for young people, social protection and labour rights of all”.<sup>14</sup> This is closely tied to the concept of “leaving no one behind” and the need to ensure “equality, non-discrimination, equity and inclusions at all levels”. In this regard, migrants, refugees and displaced persons are explicitly identified among the groups that have to be included.<sup>15</sup>

### **Box 1. Fair migration agenda**

Migrants make considerable economic and social contributions to societies worldwide but the fragmented nature of the multilateral system has limited governments' capacity to deal with cross-border labour mobility. As a result, migration is treated as a "toxic issue."

In his report to the International Labour Conference in May 2014, the Director General of the International Labour Organization set an ILO **Fair Migration Agenda** that takes into account labour market needs while placing the rights of all workers, including migrants, at its core. The tenets of this agenda are:

- Making migration a choice by creating decent work opportunities in countries of origin;
- Respecting the human rights, including labour rights, of all migrants;
- Ensuring fair recruitment and equal treatment of migrant workers to prevent exploitation and leveling the playing field with nationals;
- Forging stronger linkages between employment and labour migration policies;
- Involving Ministries of Labour, trade unions and employers' organizations in migration policy making; and,
- Fostering genuine cooperation between countries and within regions.

## **Reducing labour migration costs: Emerging trends and evidence**

The high economic and social costs of labour migration are increasingly being recognized as serious impediments to realizing sustainable development outcomes. It is important to view labour migration costs in the broader context of employment and labour markets and not merely through the narrow lens of remittance transactions which has essentially comprised the approach to date. Indeed, the Secretary-General's eight-point agenda for action, contained in his report to the HLD, views such costs more broadly:

There are enormous gains to be made by lowering costs related to migration, such as the transfer costs of remittances and fees paid to recruiters, especially by low-skilled migrant workers. In addition, countries can strengthen the benefits of migration by enhancing the portability of social security and other acquired rights, and by promoting the mutual recognition of diplomas, qualifications and skills.<sup>16</sup>

This list of labour migration costs is by no means exhaustive and includes wages and working conditions of migrant workers. The ILO Global Wages Report 2014-15 found that there continue to be significant wage gaps between migrant workers and nationals in relation to both high and low-wage earners, which are only partly explained by differences in experience, education, occupation and other labour market characteristics. The unexplained part of this wage gap could be attributed to such factors as employer discrimination against migrants, differences in returns to education acquired abroad, or a lack of representation or under-representation in collective representation structures. In Europe, there is a wage gap of

17.5 per cent between nationals and migrants, of which 6.2 per cent are unexplained. In countries like Cyprus, Spain, Greece, Italy and Portugal, the wage gap between migrants and nationals is above 25 per cent.<sup>17</sup> It is worth noting here that women migrants experience a “double wage penalization” as they suffer discrimination versus nationals and migrant men. For example, in the United States, “[skilled]immigrant women earn 78 per cent of the hourly wage for immigrant men and 82 per cent of the hourly wage for native men.”<sup>18</sup>

**Table 1. Wage gap between migrants and nationals in Europe (%)**

Country	Actual wage gap	Explained wage gap	Unexplained wage gap
Cyprus	34.8	11.9	22.9
Spain	29.9	25.4	4.6
Greece	29.9	21.7	8.3
Italy	26.7	14.6	12.0
Portugal	25.4	20.7	4.7
Iceland	24.4	9.3	15.1
Estonia	22.7	21.7	1.0
Denmark	21.0	-10.9	31.8
Ireland	19.2	4.7	14.6
Netherlands	16.5	-0.5	17.0
Austria	15.8	9.2	6.6
Luxembourg	14.9	-0.9	15.8
France	14.9	6.0	8.8
Finland	14.7	2.1	12.6
Norway	12.2	-2.4	14.6
Poland	12.2	-6.4	18.6
Belgium	9.8	3.3	6.5
Latvia	9.0	10.4	-1.4
United Kingdom	8.4	0.8	7.6
Sweden	8.4	-3.9	12.3
Germany	7.4	-3.7	11.0
Slovenia	6.9	3.8	3.1

(Source: ILO. 2014. Global wage report (The data behind the charts), available at: <http://www.ilo.ch/global/research/global-reports/global-wage-report/2014/lang--en/index.htm>)

Under the auspices of the Thematic Working Group on Low-Skilled Labour Migration of the Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development (KNOMAD), the ILO and the World Bank are presently undertaking empirical research to assess the extent of labour migration costs, including the costs associated with migrant recruitment, which are extortionate in certain high-volume migration corridors. Reducing such costs could result in significantly improving development outcomes for all concerned.

Private employment agencies should refrain from charging “directly or indirectly, in whole or in part any fees or costs to workers.”<sup>19</sup> There is a tendency among employers to cover the migration costs of highly skilled migrants in full given that demand usually exceeds supply for such workers,<sup>20</sup> but the opposite is true for low-skilled workers who often pay a disproportionate share of migration costs. For example, a recent study under the umbrella of the ILO-KNOMAD research cited above found that farm workers employed in Spain –

between four to nine months – paid six to 12 per cent of expected earnings in migration costs, and that worker-paid migration costs averaged from 1 to 1.5 months of typical earnings in Korea and four months of typical earnings in Kuwait.<sup>21</sup> Countries of origin have set limits on worker-paid migration costs but these limits are not always respected. Bangladeshi workers, for example, pay USD 2,445 instead of the USD 1,027 limit set by the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment, suggesting that recruiters are profiting from almost two-thirds of the total worker-paid migration costs.<sup>22</sup>

Almost 10 million people use regular channels to migrate in search of employment every year<sup>23</sup> At least half of them (5 million) use the services of recruiters, likely paying USD 1,000 on average each,<sup>24</sup> but though in some corridors closer to USD 2,000.<sup>25</sup> Halving migration costs could save migrants between USD 2.5 and 5 billion a year in direct costs and even more if pre-departure loans and corresponding interest rates<sup>26</sup> – sometimes ranging between 24 to 36 per cent a year – are considered.<sup>27</sup> In fact, reducing recruitment costs for some migrants could yield larger benefits than reducing remittance transfer costs. The World Bank's 5x5 program would reduce remittance costs over five years from 10 per cent to five per cent: this saves, for example, USD 250 for a low-skilled worker in a three-year, \$200 a month contract, who will remit USD 5,000 of his/her USD 7,200 in earnings. However, if she likely paid USD 1000-2000 to a recruiter for this contract, halving these recruitment costs saves the migrant USD 500- 1,000 or two to four times the savings compared to his/her remittance costs.<sup>28</sup> If recruitment fees are eliminated entirely, as per ILO standards, the savings could be 8 times this amount for the migrants. The significant potential economic contribution brought to migrants by reducing labour migration costs, especially in adhering to international labour standards, should not be disregarded in debates around the SDG targets and/or financing for development.

The absence of good governance mechanisms also affects trafficking and smuggling. Migration costs are reaching a new high in view of the numbers of refugees and migrants desperate to board unseaworthy vessels to escape the growing violence and economic insecurity in their countries of origin. Migrants pay between 1,000 USD and 10,000 USD<sup>29</sup> depending on the route (length and safety) and amenities provided during the journey. Twenty-metre fishing boats are reported to earn smugglers USD 1.5 million a trip (500 migrants/3,000 USD each) with some sources estimating that smugglers have grossed more than USD 1 billion in 2014 alone.<sup>30</sup> Countries of destination, on the other hand, are spending millions in search-and-rescue and border control operations. Under the *Mare Nostrum* programme, Italy has spent the equivalent of USD 13 million a month in search-and-rescue operations,<sup>31</sup> while Spain has spent EUR 289 million between 2007 and 2013 on strengthening border controls between the Spanish cities of Ceuta and Melilla and Morocco.<sup>32</sup> Where possible, governance strategies should include more regular channels of migration and avoidance of policies that create dual or segmented labour markets, or which lead migrant workers into the informal economy, with a view to giving all migrants, including refugees and those in an irregular status, opportunities for a decent life.

Migration costs are not limited to recruitment-related costs. They are mediated by the existence or lifting of barriers to migration mobility in destination countries, working conditions, and the quality of job matching, among other factors:

- Migrants face **multiple forms of exploitation** that limit their earning and ability to contribute to the development of countries of origin and destination. In the Republic of Moldova, for example, 45.64 per cent of returned migrants worked for little or no

pay while 24.85 per cent received late payments. In Armenia and Georgia the results were almost similar, with 20.22 per cent and 19.76 per cent respectively working for little or no salary.<sup>33</sup> This reality is further compounded by the gap between the wages promised to migrants and real wages. A study by Verité (2013) on the trafficking of Nepali migrant workers to Malaysia<sup>34</sup> found that Nepalese workers were earning considerably less than told pre-departure (the wage gap was USD 704 for security guards, USD 354 for factory operators, USD 454 for janitors and USD 304 for restaurant workers).

- **The lack of coherence between employment and labour migration policies** can result in inefficiencies in the labour market, which are exacerbated by the absence of workers' and employers' organizations, for example in making effective use of labour market information systems, and planning and improving education, vocational training and lifelong learning to ensure skills for employability.<sup>35</sup> A recent ILO study found poor skills' matching in at least half of the European countries assessed.<sup>36</sup> For example, between 25 and 45 per cent of workers in Europe are either over- or under-qualified for their job, leading to a substantial mismatch between supply and demand in the region's labour markets. This not only reduces business productivity, but studies show that it leads to lower wages, brain waste and deskilling. Among those most affected are foreign-born workers. This trend may become even more pronounced for those sectors of the economy that are highly dependent on foreign labour, for example, domestic work, construction, and the service industry which may experience social dumping, particularly in wages, and increase labour market segmentation with low-skilled jobs becoming the exclusive domain of immigrants.<sup>37</sup> At a more global level, there is growing mismatch between the declining labour force growth rates in developed economies and the increase in the number of young migrants resident in developing countries (62 per cent of the migrant population are under 20 years of age). Accordingly, in his 2014 report on fair migration to the International Labour Conference, the ILO Director-General called for the design of migration policies which match the distribution of job opportunities with working-age people in the world.<sup>38</sup> Deskilling stands in the way of migrants' ability to exercise "their optimal human capital training, directly impacting their working conditions and remittance earnings".<sup>39</sup> At the same time, origin countries lose a significant number of their skilled workforce.<sup>40</sup>
- **Restrictions on mobility within destination countries** may affect wages for migrant workers and hinder labour market competition. The inability of migrant workers to transition to new employers, including without the approval of their previous employers, is a barrier to appropriate jobs-skills matching and economic productivity, as well as to the freedom of migrant workers to move and negotiate wages.<sup>41</sup>

## **Proposed OWG Target 8.8 on Protecting Migrant Workers: Some tentative indicators**

In 2012, the ILO published a Manual on Decent Work Indicators,<sup>42</sup> which was based on an earlier framework adopted at an international Tripartite Meeting of Experts on the Measurement of Decent Work in September 2008, and presented to the 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians in December 2008. These indicators include, for example, employment by branch of economic activity, minimum wage as percentage of median wage, occupational injury frequency rate (both fatal and non-fatal), and labour inspection (i.e.

inspectors per 10,000 employed persons). While these indicators apply to all workers, there are also some specific statistical indicators relating to labour migration in the Manual.<sup>43</sup> Such indicators can be used as a basis to further develop indicators in proposed SDG 8, including those relating to migrant workers (see below) as well as in other proposed SDG goals where other components of the Decent Work Agenda are located. For example, SDG 1 - End poverty in all its forms everywhere, refers in Target 1.3 to implementing “nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors...”, and thus, in principle, would also cover migrant workers and their families, not only in the destination country but also if they return to their country of origin, as well as in the development of bilateral and regional arrangements to ensure portability of social security benefits for migrant workers.

With regard to the labour migration aspects of the OWG proposed SDG 8 target referred to in the Introduction, a number of tentative indicators, which are all highly relevant for promoting decent work for migrant workers, can be advanced, ranging from indicators on international labour standards, employment, wages and working conditions, social security coverage, recognition of skills and qualifications, to reducing the costs relating to migrant recruitment, and social dialogue. Given the overlap with the other proposed target explicitly relating to migration in SDG 10 - Reduce inequality within and among countries – on the facilitation of orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration,<sup>44</sup> it has been argued by some that the indicators relating to portability of social security benefits and skills and qualifications recognition could also be included there, although they would be better placed in SDG 8, or in the case of social security, also in SDG 1 (see above) and SDG 3 – “Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages” in which Targets 3.7 and 3.8 relate to universal access to health services and coverage given their relevance to the realization of the employment and social protection objectives of the Decent Work Agenda described earlier. Table 1 below lists these tentative indicators, which are still in the process of development, and also provides information on their measurement and the potential data sources. This list is by no means exhaustive and further indicators could be envisaged.

**Table 1: OWG Target 8: Tentative indicators and measurement criteria, including data sources**

Tentative Indicators	How to measure?	Data sources
<p><b>1. Indicator on international labour standards</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of countries that have ratified relevant international labour standards and whose national legislation provides for equality of treatment in respect of employment (in particular wages, social security benefits and skills recognition).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The eight ILO fundamental Conventions and other key instruments.<sup>45</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ILO Information System on International Labour Standards (NORMLEX),<sup>46</sup> ILO General Surveys, Official Gazettes.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Indicators on employment, wages and working conditions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wage gap between employed migrants and employed nationals reduced by X per cent (by gender and sector);</li> <li>Share of migrant workers in regular employment<sup>47</sup> (by gender).</li> <li>Share of migrant workers subject to occupational injuries (by gender).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Earnings Structure Survey, ensuring that migrant workers are taken into account in the sample design;</li> <li>Labour Force Survey target population should cover migration population by suitably designed sample.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National surveys, conducted by the National Statistical Offices on employment, wages and working conditions;</li> <li>ILO international Labour Migration Module.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Indicators on social security coverage</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of social security agreements ensuring the portability of social security benefits.<sup>48</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Records made available by the relevant national authorities, e.g. National Social Security Institutes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National social security authorities; Official Gazettes; ILO mapping of bilateral agreements, including on social security (KNOMAD</li> </ul>

		research).
<p><b>4. Indicators on skills and qualifications recognition</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of countries concluding bilateral agreements for the recognition of education/qualifications, skills/competencies;</li> <li>• Share of migrant workers whose foreign qualifications are recognized by the national authorities (by gender);</li> <li>• Number of countries having adopted procedures for recognition of prior learning;<sup>49</sup></li> <li>• Number of persons who have received recognition of prior learning (by sector, profile and gender).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Records made available by the relevant national authorities, and data is organized in an adequate way and made accessible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Education;</li> <li>• Ministry of Labour;</li> <li>• National authorities in charge of qualification recognition.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Indicator on reducing costs relating to recruitment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of migrant workers in respect of whom recruitment costs are eliminated or are subject to reduced recruitment costs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ILO-KNOMAD research and surveys</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ILO-KNOMAD Thematic Working Group on Low-Skilled Labour Migration</li> </ul>
<p><b>6. Indicators on social dialogue<sup>50</sup></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trade union density (including numbers of migrant workers);</li> <li>• Participation of workers' and employers' organizations in policymaking on labour migration;</li> <li>• Number of sectors and/or enterprises with collective bargaining</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Records made available by trade unions, governments and associations, and data is organized in an adequate way and made accessible;</li> <li>• Surveys' target population should cover migration population by suitably designed sample.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrative records maintained by trade unions, government agencies, registrars of associations and collective agreements or the registers of other organizations such as bargaining councils;</li> <li>• Surveys of enterprises or establishments on the number of workers belonging to a trade</li> </ul>

<p>agreements;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share of migrant workers among workers represented at the company level.</li> </ul>		<p>union and the number of workers covered by collective agreements.</p>
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## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> See United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), Population Division, *Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2013 Revision – Migrants by Age and Sex*, available at <http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/index.shtml>, and *International Migration in a Globalizing World: The Role of Youth*, UN DESA, Population Division, New York, 2011.

<sup>2</sup> ILO, *World of Work Report 2014. Developing with Jobs*, International Labour Office, Geneva, 2014, pp. 183 and 189.

<sup>3</sup> P. Wickramasekara, “Labour Migration: A thematic think piece” (ILO, unpublished paper), p. 2.

<sup>4</sup> *Fair Migration: Setting an ILO Agenda*, Report of the Director-General, International Labour Conference, 103<sup>rd</sup> Session, 2014, Report 1 (B), International Labour Office, Geneva, 2014, p. 6, available at [http://www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/103/reports/reports-to-the-conference/WCMS\\_242879/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/103/reports/reports-to-the-conference/WCMS_242879/lang--en/index.htm).

<sup>5</sup> United Nations, General Assembly (G.A.), 68<sup>th</sup> Session, *International migration and development*, Report of the Secretary General, UN doc. A/68/190 (25 July 2013), para. 113.

<sup>6</sup> SDG 8 - Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all: Target 8.8 “protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments of all workers, including migrant workers, particularly women migrants, and those in precarious employment”. See <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/focussdgs.html>. See UN G.A. resolution 68/309 of 10 September 2014, UN doc. A/RES/68/309 (available at [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/68/309](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/68/309)), deciding that “the proposal of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals contained in the report shall be the main basis for integrating sustainable development goals into the post-2015 development agenda, while recognizing that other inputs will also be considered, in the intergovernmental negotiation process at the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly” (para. 2). For the latest information on the post-2015 intergovernmental negotiations, see <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015>.

<sup>7</sup> See ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, International Labour Conference, 97<sup>th</sup> Session, June 2008, Part I, paras. A and B. Gender equality is regarded as a cross-cutting issue in the Decent Work Agenda.

<sup>8</sup> As noted in the Introduction, the world of work and the Decent Work Agenda cut across the three pillars of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental). For example, as underlined in an earlier ILO paper: “One of the strategic objectives of the ILO’s Decent Work Agenda is developing and enhancing measures of social protection, which is not only fundamental to the social pillar of sustainable development but is also integral to the economic pillar because it serves as an important investment in terms of increasing or at least upholding productivity. In this regard, extension of social protection to all residents, including migrants, through the four basic social security guarantees outlined in the ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202), is key to sustainable development. Moreover, it should also be recognized that migrant workers contribute to the sustainability of social security systems in countries of destination, particularly in developed countries.” See “The International Labour Organization and the 2013 High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development”, Eleventh Coordination Meeting on International Migration, Population Division, DESA, United Nations Secretariat, New York, 21-22 February 2013, available at [http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/events/coordination/11/docs/ILO\\_Paper\\_UN\\_11th\\_CM\\_on\\_Migration\\_2013\\_15022013.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/events/coordination/11/docs/ILO_Paper_UN_11th_CM_on_Migration_2013_15022013.pdf). The basic social security guarantees in Recommendation No. 202 comprise essential health care to all persons; basic income security for children; basic income security to persons of active age who are unable to earn a sufficient income, in particular in cases of sickness, unemployment, maternity and disability; and basic income security for older persons.

<sup>9</sup> *The future we want*, UN G.A. Resolution 66/288 of 27 July 2012, UN doc. A/RES/66/288, para. 157: “We call upon States to promote and protect effectively the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all migrants regardless of migration status, especially those of women and children, and to address international migration through international, regional or bilateral cooperation and dialogue and a comprehensive and balanced approach, recognizing the roles and responsibilities of countries of origin, transit and destination in promoting

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and protecting the human rights of all migrants, and avoiding approaches that might aggravate their vulnerability”.

<sup>10</sup> United Nations Millennium Declaration, UN G.A. Resolution 55/2 of 8 September 2000, para. 25, with the heads of State and Government resolving “[t]o take measures to ensure respect for and protection of the human rights of migrants, migrant workers and their families, to eliminate the increasing acts of racism and xenophobia in many societies and to promote greater harmony and tolerance in all societies”.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 20. However, “Target 1.B: Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people” was subsequently added under MDG 1 – Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. See <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/poverty.shtml>.

<sup>12</sup> Declaration of the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, UN G.A. Resolution 68/4 of 3 October 2013, UN Doc. A/RES/68/4, paras. 14 and 12 respectively.

<sup>13</sup> OWG proposal for SDGs, op cit., para. 1.

<sup>14</sup> *The Road to Dignity by 2030: Ending Poverty, Transforming All Lives and Protecting the Planet*, Synthesis Report of the Secretary-General on the Post-2015 Agenda, New York, December 2014 (advanced unedited version), para. 50.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 51.

<sup>16</sup> *International migration and development*, Report of the Secretary General (2013), op cit., para. 113.

<sup>17</sup> ILO, *Global Wages Report 2014/15: Wages and income inequality*, International Labour Office, Geneva, 2015, p. v (preface by the Director-General) and pp. 50-53, available at <http://www.ilo.ch/global/research/global-reports/global-wage-report/2014/lang--en/index.htm>.

<sup>18</sup> Lopez, Mary J. 2012. Skilled immigrant women in the US and the double earnings penalty. *Feminist economics* 18(1): 99-134.

<sup>19</sup> Article 7 of the ILO Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No. 181).

<sup>20</sup> Kuptsch, Christiane (ed.). 2006. *Merchants of labour*. Geneva: ILO.

<sup>21</sup> Abella, Manolo and Philip Martin. 2014. Measuring recruitment or migration costs: A technical report for KNOMAD’s Thematic Working Group on Low-Skilled Migrants – co-chaired with the ILO (unpublished manuscript).

<sup>22</sup> Agunias, Dovelyn Rannveig. 2012. *Regulating private recruitment in the Asia-Middle East labour migration corridor*. Washington, D.C.: Migration Policy Institute (August 2014, Issue No. 4).

<sup>23</sup> Martin, Philip. 2014. “Lower migration costs to raise migration’s benefits”. *New Diversities* 16(2).

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>25</sup> Worker-paid recruitment costs averaged USD 1,900 USD in Kuwait (*cf.* Abella and Martin 2014); USD 2,445 for Bangladeshis going to the Middle East (see note 21 above).

<sup>26</sup> Ratha, Dilip. 2014. Reducing migration costs, available: <http://blogs.worldbank.org/peoplemove/reducing-migration-costs> [accessed on 26/1/2014].

<sup>27</sup> Wickramasekara, Piyasiri. 2014. “Regulation of the recruitment process and reduction of migration costs: Comparative analysis of South Asia”. In *Promoting cooperation for safe migration and decent work*. Dhaka: ILO.

<sup>28</sup> Martin, Philip. 2014. “How to reduce migrant worker recruitment costs”, In *Migration: A COMPAS Anthology*, edited by B. Anderson and M. Keith, Oxford: COMPAS.

<sup>29</sup> Mahmood, et al. 2014. “It costs USD 10,000 to get from A to B even if B is the seabed”. *The Guardian* (21 October 2014).

<sup>30</sup> Yardley, Jim. 2014. “Survivors of a ruthless trade; Mideast turmoil turns smuggling of migrants into a booming business”. *International New York Times*, 21 October 2014.

<sup>31</sup> Simmie, Scott. 2014. “Dodging death on the Mediterranean; nearly 200,000 desperate people – fleeing war, terror and poverty – have tried crossing the sea from North Africa to Italy. Those who survive are still far from la dolce vita”. *The Toronto Star*, 8 November 2014.

<sup>32</sup> “How the rest of Europe compares; Times columnists examine how other EU nations are affected by migration and what they are doing to tackle it”. *The Times (London)*, 22 October 2014.

<sup>33</sup> ILO. 2014. *Profits and poverty: The economics of forced labour*. Geneva: ILO.

<sup>34</sup> Verité. 2013. *Labor brokerage and trafficking of Nepali migrant workers*. Amherst: Verité.

<sup>35</sup> ILO Tripartite Technical Meeting on Labour Migration, Conclusions, 25 November 2013, paras. 7(ii) and (iii), available at: [http://www.ilo.org/actrav/WCMS\\_230515/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/actrav/WCMS_230515/lang--en/index.htm).

<sup>36</sup> ILO: Skills Mismatch in Europe, *Statistics Brief*, September 2014, available at: [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---stat/documents/publication/wcms\\_315623.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---stat/documents/publication/wcms_315623.pdf)

<sup>37</sup> Lemaître, Georges (2014). “The demography of occupational change and skill use among immigrants and the native-born” in *Matching Economic Migration with Labour Market Needs*, OECD/European Union, p.113.

<sup>38</sup> *Fair Migration: Setting an ILO Agenda*, op cit., p. 10.

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- <sup>39</sup> Maliy, Froilan and Tchiapep, Oliver. 2013. Labour migration and deskilling in the United Arab Emirates: Impacts on Cameroonian labour. Retrieved from Cornell, ILR School site: <http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/workingpapers/171/> [accessed on 26/01/2015].
- <sup>40</sup> Siar, Sheila V. 2013. From highly skilled to low skilled: Revisiting the deskilling of migrant labour. *Philippine Institute for Development Studies Discussion Paper Series* No. 2013-30.
- <sup>41</sup> See, e.g. Naidu, Suresh, Yaw Nyarko and Shing-Yi Wang. 2014. Worker mobility in a global labour market: Evidence from the United Arab Emirates. *NBER Working Paper 20388*, National Bureau of Economic Research, Inc., which examines restrictions on mobility within countries and found that removal barriers has increased workers' real earnings – following a contract's expiration – by over 10 per cent and increased the share of the marginal product paid to incumbent workers to 60 per cent
- <sup>42</sup> ILO, *Decent Work Indicators, Concepts and Definitions: ILO Manual - First version*, International Labour Office, Geneva, May 2012, available at [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---integration/documents/publication/wcms\\_229374.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---integration/documents/publication/wcms_229374.pdf). For further background information and documentation, see <http://www.ilo.org/integration/themes/mdw/lang--en/index.htm>.
- <sup>43</sup> E.g. the forced labour rate among returning migrants with regard to work that should be abolished; a measure for discrimination by race/ethnicity of (recent) migrants, where relevant and available at the national level; and a measure of dispersion for sectoral/occupational distribution of (recent) migrant workers with regard to equal opportunity and treatment in employment. *Ibid.*, pp. 102 (Table 6) and 126 (Table 8).
- <sup>44</sup> SDG 10, Target 10.7: “facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies”. See <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/focussdgs.html>.
- <sup>45</sup> In particular, the Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97), the Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143), the Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No. 181), and the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189).
- <sup>46</sup> See <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:1:0::NO>.
- <sup>47</sup> Regular employment refers to a job with a written or verbal contract, regularized employment relationship under agreed terms.
- <sup>48</sup> Target 1.3 under SDG 1 and targets 3.7 and 3.8 under SDG 3 should also be disaggregated accordingly.
- <sup>49</sup> Prior learning (RPL) – The process of recognizing previous learning towards gaining a qualification, see: [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/---ifp\\_skills/documents/instructionalmaterial/wcms\\_103623.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---ifp_skills/documents/instructionalmaterial/wcms_103623.pdf)
- <sup>50</sup> Hayter, Susan and Stoevska, Valentina, “Social Dialogue Indicators”, (International Statistical Inquiry 2008-09), Technical Brief, ILO Department of Statistics, November 2011, available at: <http://laborsta.ilo.org/applv8/data/TUM/TUD%20and%20CBC%20Technical%20Brief.pdf>.