



Since 2005 the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) has promoted a comprehensive approach to labour migration management. This includes a balanced combination of policy instruments and control mechanisms and emphasizes the need for cooperation between countries as well as with relevant stakeholders such as social partners, business community, civil society and academia.⁴ OSCE together with partners has produced a number of tools⁵ to assist States in developing a comprehensive approach to labour migration management. OSCE places a particular emphasis on and raises awareness about the gender dimension of labour migration.

This conference is the fifth in a series of conferences on refugee protection and international migration.⁶

within the region and to neighbouring countries, particularly the Russian Federation. The importance of labour migration to some economies in Central Asia is underscored by recent World Bank remittance data, indicating that in 2008 remittances comprised 28 and 50 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan respectively.⁷ An increasing number of women form part of these labour migration movements, but not enough information is available on the size and particular challenges of female labour migration.

The economic crisis which many countries in the region have been facing may also have contributed to migration within and beyond the region and from the region to other destinations. Social exclusion, harassment and sometimes even violence and persecution of some groups, notably ethnic minorities, have also been contributing factors. Additionally, in some regions environmental degradation such as the desertification of the Aral Sea region has forced an estimated 100 000 people to move to neighbouring countries during the 20th century, including to other Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries. Human trafficking is reported to take place internally in each country, across borders within Central Asia, and out of Central Asia, notably to other areas of Asia, the Middle East, the Russian Federation and Western Europe.

A significant percentage of the movement to and through the region consists of men and women fleeing armed conflict, persecution and/or violations of their human

security situation in their country or origin, prospects for rehabilitation remain slim. All

displacement in the region internal to be assess
 displacement of thousands of people, with an additional
 refugees in Uzbekistan..

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refugees, chapter VIII: addressing secondary movements and chapter X: information strategies); and

- The establishment of legal migration alternatives, including through the utilization of existing regional legal frameworks and bilateral arrangements (10-Point Plan, chapter IX: alternative migration options).

Identify areas where States require more targeted support from the OSCE, UNHCR, IOM, UNRCCA, and other organizations to develop and implement their protection responses within the mixed migration context.

Share best practices for the identification, referral and reception of persons in need of protection and assistance in accordance with the different needs of persons within mixed migratory movements.

Improve data collection and exchange.

4. Preparation for the conference

UNHCR will undertake a regional study on refugee protection and international migration in Central Asia which will examine migration trends and protection challenges for people on the move. More specifically, o peF42(M)-1.-310.33ifieF422.16558(I)-(t)

6. Proposals for the agenda

In addition to presentations in the plenary sessions, thematic working groups will be set up to address specific topics, so as to ensure an open dialogue among participants. The working groups will deliberate separately and report back to the plenary sessions. The main conclusions and recommendations of the conference will be shared with all participants and the conference documents will be published.

Introductory sessions:

- Opening session
- Regional migration trends and patterns
- Overview of key regional protection challenges
- Presentations by representatives from governments, international agencies and civil society on topics such as migration and child protection, migration caused by environmental degradation, migration and development, labour migration.

Suggested topics for the Working Groups:

- **Managing borders while ensuring refugee protection** (dissemination of protection information, capacity-building for officials to ensure adequate expertise in refugee and asylum law);
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