

MIGRATION TODAY

It is estimated that 214 million persons, representing just over three percent of the world population, currently live outside their country of origin as migrants. Almost half of international migrants are women, who increasingly migrate independently and as main income-earners. The International Labour Office estimates that economically active migrants number some 105.4 million; these and family members accompanying them account for almost 90 per cent of total international migrants.

Migrants are first and foremost human beings, unequivocally the holders of universal human rights. However, migrants are generally more vulnerable to violations of their human rights. Migrants, in particular the low skilled and irregular migrants, often suffer exclusion, discrimination, disadvantage and abuse which affect the full spectrum of public life, including conditions in the workplace, access to social services, justice, education, housing and health care, and participation in decision-making processes. This not only represents a violation of migrants' human rights, but also an obstacle to their inclusion and integration into society. It is therefore imperative to ensure that adequate safeguards are in place to guarantee the effective protection of migrants' human rights.

International Steering Committee

- December 18
- Human Rights Watch
- International Catholic Migration Commission
- International Federation for Human Rights
- International Labour Organization
- International Organization for Migration
- International Trade Union Confederation
- Migrants Forum in Asia
- Migrants Rights International
- Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
- Public Services International
- UNESCO
- World Council of Churches
- Amnesty International (OBSERVER)

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The Global Ratification Campaign for the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families on its 20th Anniversary



THE CONVENTION

The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families was adopted on 18 December 1990 by the UN General Assembly. It entered into force on 1 July 2003. To date, the Convention has been ratified by 44 States, and another 15 have taken the first step toward ratification by signing the Convention. The Convention constitutes a core international human rights instrument, whose importance lies on its establishment of an international consensus concerning the need for greater protection of the rights of migrants. It sets out legal standards and provides guidance for national laws and policies that recognise the specific vulnerabilities of migrant workers and their families and promote humane and lawful working and living conditions.

THE CAMPAIGN

The International Steering Committee, a unique network of UN agencies, international organizations and global civil society organizations, launched the Global Ratification Campaign.

The Campaign calls for governments to act immediately to end the widespread human rights violations suffered daily by migrants around the world, by ratifying the Convention.

Events in Brussels, Geneva and Yerevan have kicked off activities to mark the 20th anniversary year of the Convention, and more events will follow worldwide.

The Campaign raises awareness about the Convention with government officials, diplomats, politicians, NGOs and the public-at-large, nationally and internationally.

The Campaign has an online petition (www.migrantsrights.org). Each month signatures will be collected for one or two countries and will be delivered to the relevant authorities in order to urge the governments to ratify the Convention.

12 REASONS TO RATIFY

- 1 To put in place the legal foundation essential for national migration policy to regulate labour migration and ensure social cohesion.
- 2 To uphold and strengthen the rule of law by ensuring that legal norms define the basis of labour migration policy, its implementation, and its supervision.
- 3 To contribute to ensuring that legal parameters define treatment of all persons on the territory of a country by setting the extent and limits of human rights of migrant workers and members of their families.
- 4 To signal that origin countries demand respect for the human rights of their nationals abroad and are accountable for the same standards as destination countries.
- 5 To reinforce the sovereign exercise of a State's prerogative to determine labour migration policy by affirming conformity with universal legal and ethical norms.
- 6 To obtain public support for and compliance with labour migration policy and practice by demonstrating legal soundness and conformity with internationally accepted principles of social justice and human rights.
- 7 To strengthen social cohesion by establishing that all persons must be treated with respect by virtue of legal recognition and protection of their rights.
- 8 To explicitly discourage the 'commodification' and consequent abuse of migrant workers by legally asserting their human rights.
- 9 To reduce irregular migration by eliminating incentives for labour exploitation, work in abusive conditions and unauthorised employment that fuel trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants.
- 10 To facilitate the establishment of effective national policy by calling on advisory services as well as good practice examples provided by the relevant standards-based international organisations.
- 11 To obtain clear guidance for bilateral and multilateral cooperation for lawful, humane, and equitable labour migration.
- 12 To obtain international guidance on implementation of legal norms through the reporting obligations and periodic review by independent expert bodies.