

MegaMUN 2026

World in transition



ILO **c o m m i t t e e**

Ensuring fair and ethical
recruitment, integrating migrants
into the labour market and
addressing potential social impact

Letter from the chairs

Dear Delegates,

It is an honor to welcome you as your chairs to MegaMUN's 2026 United Nations International Labour Organization. Together, we will be debating over a really interesting topic: the integration of refugees in our society's labor market while ensuring fair recruitment and treatment.

We will give our best to ensure meaningful debates and a diplomatic and including atmosphere throughout the entire MUN. But we also want to remind you that committees like this one work best when everyone feels safe to speak, question, negotiate and even disagree. The ILO committee is built on dialogue and these sessions are your chance to test, challenge and learn from others. So come in a curious, respectful and ready to collaborate.

We recommend you to read this document carefully as this Study Guide will help you as a preparation for your position paper and to the committee sessions by introducing you to the main points of the topic. However we highly encourage you to do your own research and deepen your knowledge on your country's stance as the information provided in this document isn't enough to ensure a meaningful debate.

We are looking forward to meeting you and listening to all the innovative ideas you will bring up during committee sessions. Best of luck for your preparations and don't forget to follow our social media to stay tuned !

Sincerely,

Chair of ILO Emeline Buck

Chair of ILO Lauranne Huyghe

Introduction to the committee

Founded in 1919 as part of the Treaty of Versailles, the International Labour Organization (ILO) is a United Nations agency devoted to promoting social justice and internationally recognized human and labour rights. The ILO places a lot of importance on the cooperation between governments and employer' and worker's organizations in fostering social and economic progress. It sets labour standards and develops policies and devises programmes.

The ILO accomplishes its work through 3 main bodies: The International Labour Conference, which sets the labour standards; the Governing body, which takes decisions on policies and budget and the International Labour Office, the administrative arm of the ILO.

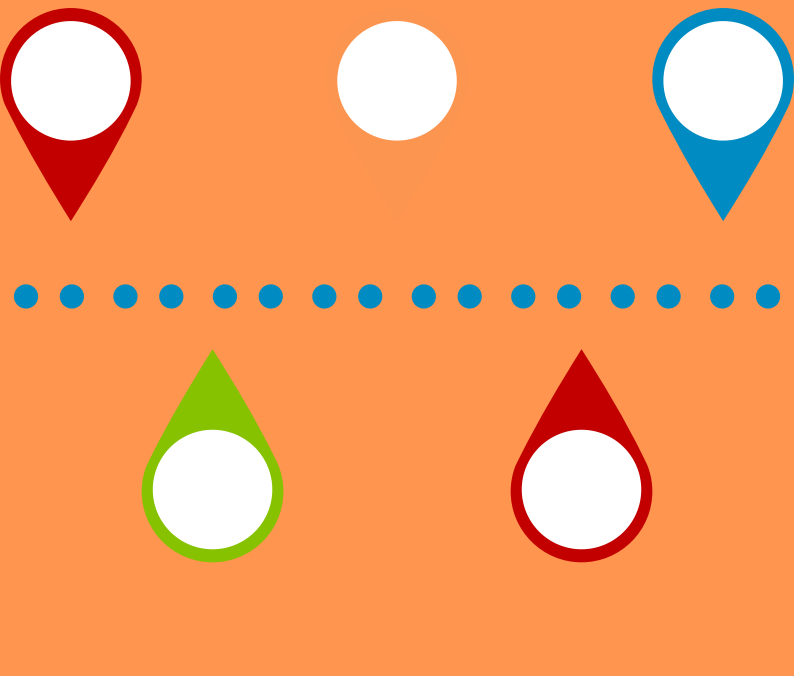
The ILO regularly examines the applications of standards in its member states and tries to assist countries if there are any problems.

The ILO's work affects millions of workers globally and provides a platform for countries to cooperate on social and economic progress

Introduction to the topic

In 2022, 167.7 million migrants were working worldwide, representing 4.7% of the global workforce. Migrants play a vital role in the functioning of labor markets. However, they face numerous obstacles: their unemployment rate is higher (7.2% compared to 5.2% for non-migrants), due to factors such as discrimination, lack of recognition of qualifications, language barriers, and a lack of childcare options.

Within the European Union, the situation is even more stark: the unemployment rate for EU citizens is 5.2%, while it reaches 12.3% for non-EU nationals. Furthermore, the majority of migrant workers face difficult working conditions: long hours for low wages, a lack of job security and social protection, and increased vulnerability to exploitation, often linked to debt. This issue therefore concerns a significant and growing share of today's workforce.



Historical context

The Industrial Revolutions caused millions of Europeans to migrate to the U.S., Canada, and Latin America to work in factories, infrastructure, or mines. That's when labor movements and unions arose and set standards against workers' exploitation.

After WW2, many migrants were recruited to help reconstruct destroyed cities, and as the oil economy grew, a great deal of migrant workers were attracted to Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

Nowadays, there are around 281 million migrants around the world, many as workers. There are two types of migrant workers: the high-skilled ones, who are attracted to technological progress, and the low-skilled ones, who are mainly employed in agriculture, domestic work, and construction.

One can also say that the migrant workforce has always been heavily relied upon, whether as slaves in the past or as today's global migrants.

The Roman Empire and ancient China already relied heavily on slavery and war captives for their agriculture, construction, and domestic services. Later on, during the Middle Ages, seasonal migration became more and more common, and merchants also migrated for their work.

During the colonial era (16th–19th centuries), over 12 million Africans were enslaved and deported for plantation labor. After slavery's abolition, colonial powers recruited millions of foreigners, mostly Indian and Chinese, as workers in the colonies, which led to racial hierarchies, exploitation, and social tensions.

Current situation

Several actors are involved in the integration of refugees and migrants into the labor market.

1. The refugees and migrants themselves: they most often seek opportunities for decent work, social protection and integration into the host society.
2. Host countries: the main ones include the United States, Germany, Saudi Arabia, France, and the United Kingdom.
3. Countries of origin: the most affected include India, China, Mexico, Ukraine, and Russia.
4. International organizations: UN, ILO, Human Rights Council (HRC), International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the European Union (EU) play a key role in issues related to migration.

Host countries consider migrants an essential economic resource that helps address the lack of workforce in important sectors. They also need to manage the rise of populism and political tensions, with fears that their culture will be lost and the country will lose its identity. Thus, it is really hard for them to help migrants integrate into society and not become victims of racism or discrimination.

For migrants and refugees, the main objective is to achieve safety and build a stable life with decent work. They want their qualifications to be recognized for their true value and to fight against discrimination and injustice. In practice, many face a dilemma: contributing to the host country's economy while sometimes being exploited, underpaid, or subjected to difficult working conditions.

International organizations play a crucial role in guaranteeing the rights of migrant workers. The EU implements cooperation measures between countries on immigration and asylum, the UN and the Human Rights Council emphasize the protection of refugees and their rights, and the IOM facilitates safe migration. Their objective is to promote a cooperative and multilateral approach, where migration is seen as an economic and social opportunity, subject to respect for human rights.

Main Issue

The integration of migrant workers in the society is quite complex. Even though migrants bring a big economical advantages for the host countries , they also bring social and cultural problems that are important to consider to enable a better integration.

Here are the most common issues that migrants face :

- access to work and precariousness

one of the biggest challenges for migrants is to find a stable employment . Even though most migrants come to the host country seeking for a job and better economical opportunities they often rely on luck and are uncertain of finding a job. This is most often caused by the lack of recognition of the work qualifications they got in their country and also to the language barrier.

Migrants might also end up in a activity sector with a lot of concurrence with few possibilities to progress. they are often victim of exploitation, long work days and in less favorable conditions than those of national workers. This can also lead to an uncertainty of ever getting access to social rights such as social security or retirement.

- Discrimination and stereotypes

Migrant workers are frequently confronted with discrimination in different life domains such as their workplace but also access to accommodations. Prejudices about their ethnicity, religion and social status can lead to inequalities in access to an employment, formations and public services. Often, negative stereotypes such as their qualifications of “ job stealers “ or “weight for the economy”, contribute to a climate of rejection and mistrust . Even if they get an employment, discrimination can manifest itself with different wages between migrant employee and national employee even though they have the same position and migrants tend to be humiliated verbally and in public also having a negative impact on their integration.

- Language barrier and access to information

Mastering the host country's language is one of the biggest obstacles to fair integration of the migrant workforce. Migrants who do not speak the language can find themselves isolated, with difficulties communicating with their colleagues, defending their rights, or accessing public services. Language classes are essential for migrants, but they are often too expensive and insufficient, and many migrants do not even have time to take classes due to family responsibilities or work commitments.

- social segregation and accommodation

In many cities, migrants are constrained to live in poor conditions, often in remote neighborhoods that have limited access to public transportation. This can create a feeling of exclusion, limiting access to proper education or healthcare. Social segregation is a phenomenon where migrants live in specific areas of a city with few interactions with locals. This separation contributes to social divisions.\

- access to public services and healthcare

In certain countries, migrants can have limited access to these services due to their status as temporary workers or their lack of administrative regularization. This can lead to significant harm to their health, as they might be afraid to visit the doctor for fear of being reported to the authorities. Migrant workers might also face difficulties enrolling their children in local schools.

Actions of UN

To tackle underpayment, labor and workers' rights movements began in the U.S. and Europe, and international treaties were implemented in 1990. The 8 core ILO conventions include:
 Forced Labour (No. 29), Abolition of Forced Labour (No.105),
 Equal Remuneration (No.100),
 Discrimination (No.111), Minimum Age (No.138), Worst Forms of Child Labour (No.182),
 Freedom of Association (No.87),
 and Collective Bargaining (No.98).

The economic impact of migrants was largely positive: they filled labor shortages in industry and agriculture, reduced production costs, boosted competition, and supported urban infrastructure. Local workers sometimes faced wage decreases, and some qualified workers moved abroad. Migrants also brought cultural enrichment, stimulating creativity, innovation, and intercultural exchange.



Points to consider

- **Social integration**

Encouraging inclusion and participation in the society

Guaranteeing migrants' access to education and training of all kinds

- **Access to education**

- **Access to public services and healthcare**

Providing essential health care and services

- **Access to employment**

Fair employment opportunities and decent working conditions guaranteed

Protecting rights and preventing exploitation

- **Legal protection**

- **Conditions for the recognition of qualifications**

Validation of foreign skills, training and qualifications

Main organisations

United Nations (UN)

The UN protects refugees and their rights. Its role is to ensure that migrant workers are treated fairly and that their fundamental rights are respected.

Human Rights Council (HRC)

The Human Rights Council protects the rights of refugees and migrants. It promotes policies and monitoring to prevent violations and discrimination against migrant populations.

International Labour Organization (ILO)

The ILO sets labour standards, develops policies, and implements programmes, in order to promote fair working conditions globally. It works through three main bodies and regularly reviews how standards are applied in member states, assisting countries when problems arise.

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

The IOM facilitates safe migration. It plays a crucial role in guaranteeing the rights of migrant workers and promoting a cooperative and multilateral approach, where migration is seen not as a threat, but as an economic and social opportunity, subject to respect for human rights.

Most involved countries



United States of America

One of the largest host countries, recruiting migrants to fill labor shortages.

Germany

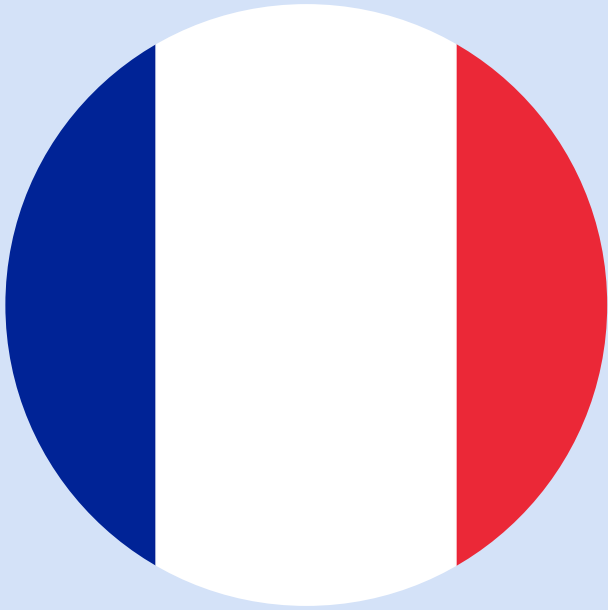
An important host country in Europe, managing integration and migration policies.



Saudi Arabia

An attractive country for migrant workers, particularly for its oil economy.





France

Highly sought-after European host country, strongly involved in integration programs.



United Kingdom

Host country faces daily challenges in managing migrant labor and social integration.



India

Country of origin of many migrants which is affected by the significant departure of its population.

Dictionary

ILO (International Labour Organization)

The United Nations agency that deals with issues relating to work and employment worldwide.

Labour market

The place where people who want to work meet companies that want to hire.

Fair recruitment

A hiring process that ensures all candidates are treated fairly, transparently and without discrimination, based solely on their skills, experience and potential.

Social integration

A process that allows an individual to find their place in society and be fully accepted within it. It is the opposite of exclusion or isolation.

Recognition of qualifications

The official process that confirms that a diploma, training or skills acquired abroad are valid and meet the standards of another country.

Core ILO conventions

International treaties defining essential workers' rights, such as the prohibition of forced labor and the protection of children

Multilateral approach

Method of cooperation where at least three countries work together to create common rules and solve global problems.

Discrimination

The act of treating one person less well than another in an identical situation, solely because of their personal characteristics (such as their origin, gender, age, disability or religion).

Forced labour

Any work that a person is forced to perform against their will, under threat of punishment or sanction.

Recommendations

Research:

This study guide serves as a basis for your research, but you should delve deeper into the subject using reliable sources. You can consider these steps:

- Understand your country's stance on migrant labour.
- Identify past actions and policies your country has taken regarding migrant labour.
- Examine international agreements related to the prevention of any type of migrant worker discrimination.
- Study existing UN programs and their impact in countries hosting migrant workers.

Position Paper:

Each delegate must submit a position paper outlining their country's stance on the topic. Your paper should include:

1. Your country's position regarding the resolution of the issue.
2. Previous policies and actions taken by your country.
3. Proposed solutions and contributions your country is willing to make.
4. Reliable and formatted sources

The final word

Dear Delegates,

Congratulations and thank you for reaching the end of this study guide. We would just like to remind you of a few final rules that we consider essential for smooth debates.

All delegates are expected to be courteous and participate fully in the debates.

Any form of hate speech, discrimination, or disrespectful behavior (including racism, sexism, personal attacks,...) will not be tolerated, and the delegates responsible will face consequences.

Given the complexity of the issue, delegates must be aware of the importance of their decisions and their potential impact.

Every intervention must be made professionally and with the aim of finding sustainable and equitable solutions.

Now, we officially wish you good luck with your preparations !

Sincerely,

Chair of ILO Emeline Buck

Chair of ILO Lauranne Huyghe

SOURCES USED

-  <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-convention-protection-rights-all-migrant-workers>
-  Haut-Commissariat aux droits de l'homme
-  <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/top-statistics-global-migration-migrants>
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-  <https://www.migrationdataportal.org/themes/migrant-rights>
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-  <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09669582.2025.2491695>