



International Migration Law (IML)
NGO Learning Initiative

Session Four

International Migration Law: Supporting Migrants in Realising Their Labour Rights

Objective of the session: Pursuing work and livelihood opportunities is one of the main reasons behind migration. According to ILO data in 2010, migrant workers and members of their families accounted for approximately 90 per cent of international migrants, with women making up almost half (49 per cent) of all migrant workers. Therefore, equal access to labour rights is crucial in migration governance. Guaranteeing labour rights for migrant workers is not only a State obligation under international law, but also a crucial tool to ensure that migrants are self-sufficient and able to contribute to their country of destination.

In principle, all international labour standards, unless otherwise stated, are applicable to migrant workers. Therefore, this session will briefly discuss the international legal framework on labour standards, before going into specific instruments on migrant workers. The session will also bring a reality check with two organization sharing on the challenges migrant face in accessing and realizing their labour rights as well as various examples of what NGOs can do to support them.

⇒ Introduction: organisers (8')

⇒ First speaker: **Katerine Landuyt, Specialist in Labour Migration, ILO**

ILO standards (20')

- ILO mandate/standards– why relevant to protection of migrant workers?
- Which ILO standards apply - a snapshot (fundamental ILO Conventions, ILO Standards of general application, migrant specific ILO Standards);
- Why do they matter and implementation challenges;
- Supervision of ILO standards - examples of impact;
- Other ILO standards-based instruments and tools (ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration; General Principles and Operational Guidelines on Fair Recruitment, Guiding Principles on Access to Labour Markets for Refugees and Forcibly Displaced Persons)

⇒ Second speaker: **Ambet Yuson, Secretary General, Building and Wood Workers' International (BWI)**

Trade Unions and their engagement in protecting the rights of migrant workers (15')

- An overview on BWI and its work related to migrant workers
- Using the existing international legal framework at the benefit of migrants: examples from BWI global campaigns

⇒ Third speaker: **William Gois, Regional Coordinator, Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA)**

An NGO perspective on protecting the labour rights of migrant workers (15')

- International advocacy to promote equitable and fair migration and development policies
- Impact of COVID-19 on the rights of migrant worker and the Justice Mechanism Initiative
- MFA regional experiences in protecting the rights of migrant workers: challenges and successes

⇒ Questions and Answers (Q&A) session (30')

⇒ Closing remarks: organisers (8')

Further reading:

- ILO, [International Labour Standards on Labour Migration](#)
- ILO Policy Brief, [Protecting migrant workers during the COVID-19 pandemic Recommendations for Policy-makers and Constituents](#), April 2020
- Cholewinski, R., de Guchteneire, P. and A. Pecoud eds. (2009) Migration and Human Rights. The United Nations Convention on Migrant Workers' Rights. UNESCO Publishing and Cambridge University Press
- Ruhs, M. (2017) '[Protecting Migrant Workers: The Case for a Core Rights Approach](#)', in McAuliffe, M. and M. Klein Solomon (Conveners) (2017) Ideas to Inform International Cooperation on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, IOM: Geneva.
- International Trade Union Confederation, [Migration: A decent work issue](#), 2011