Permanent Mission of Canada
to the United Nations
and the World Trade Organization

Mission permanente du Canada
auprès des Nations Unies
et de l'Organisation mondiale du commerce

GLOBAL COMPACT ON MIGRATION:
THEMATIC CONSULTATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS, INCLUSION AND INTEGRATION
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Check Against Delivery

Panel 2: Inclusion and Social Cohesion

Thank you Mr. Moderator, thanks to the co-facilitators and for the interesting presentations made by the panelists.

Mr. Moderator, as many others have mentioned already, migrants make positive contributions, particularly when they are included in the economy and life of their host community. They should not be seen as a drain on society. In the longer term, diversity benefits the economic and demographic growth, nation building, innovation, and prosperity of a country[i].

A positive and mutually beneficial approach to migration builds public confidence in a state's ability to manage mobility, improves understanding of cultural differences, reduces racial and migrant-related tensions, and can ultimately help to counter xenophobia.

Specifically, Canada would like the Compact to:

First, call on states to develop policies and legislation in support of inclusion and social cohesion. Canada's framework[ii] of inclusive laws and policies underpins a whole of society approach to migration which supports immigrant participation in our economic, political, social and cultural life, and includes a pathway to Canadian citizenship[iii]. Legislation ensures national commitment and allows for meaningful investment, both in support of migrants, such as language training, labour market orientation, credential recognition; and also for receiving communities.

Second, the Compact should promote whole-of-society approaches to inclusion and call on states to work with a wide array of societal actors. Canada sees integration as a two-way process based on mutual adaptation – with expectations placed both on newcomers and host communities. Integration really happens in the workplace and in schools, and more generally, at the municipal and community level. As a result, the engagement and buy-in of national and sub-national governments, cities, educational and other public institutions, the private sector, community organizations and individuals is essential.

Alone or in partnership with the national government, all of these players develop policies and programs and engage in initiatives that build community connections, mutual trust, social cohesion, attachment and a sense of belonging.

Canada

Some of the best examples of inclusion and integration we have seen come from community-based partnerships, school-based outreach programs,[iv] and employment. These foster inclusive communities and improve settlement and integration outcomes. Living, working, studying and socializing with newcomers, particularly from a young age, builds trust, understanding, and rapport.

Given my limited time today, Canada will be pleased to share concrete examples of promising practices in its written submission to the co-facilitators for this panel.

We know there are many other good global examples. We encourage you to share them – with the international community, and among your citizens.

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[i] The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development found that migrants arrive with skills and contribute to human capital development in receiving countries. It also found that migrants provide more in taxes and social contributions than they receive in benefits.

[ii] There are now more than 200 different ethnic groups represented in Canada, with 13 of those groups having Canadian populations of over one million. One-fifth of our population was born outside of Canada. Immigrants also make up more than one-fifth of the total labour force. We expect they will make up all of our labour force growth within the next decade and nearly 80% of our population growth by 2030.

[iii] This approach has brought together people of diverse backgrounds and has allowed us to share the many success stories from Canadian communities, helping us promote intercultural and interfaith understanding, acceptance of shared values, civic knowledge and pride, and a sense of belonging – all of which contributes to countering negative perceptions and generalizations.

[iv] Two Canadian examples: Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) are community-based partnerships that enhance collaboration, coordination and strategic planning at the community level in order to foster more welcoming and inclusive communities and improve settlement and integration outcomes. Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) is a school-based outreach program involving school boards, police services, the federal immigration department and other stakeholders and is designed to help newcomer students and their families settle in their school and community. Several OECD reports on education and diversity further illustrate the success of school-based integration approaches: https://www.oecd.org/pisa/pisaproducts/46580959.pdf, http://learningisopen.org/oecd/canada.html