

# FIVE STEPS TO FORMULATING A NATIONAL MIGRATION STRATEGY

*What is a national migration strategy?*

A national migration strategy is a high-level policy framework on migration, which clarifies the government's vision, principles and goals and establishes the priorities and areas for action at a national level.



## BENEFITS OF HAVING A NATIONAL MIGRATION STRATEGY:

- It ensures that various policies complement rather than contradict each other. By providing an overarching vision, it guides all migration-related policies to form a coherent overall national approach.
- It helps identify opportunities as well as anticipate challenges. It also provides a starting point for addressing the opportunities and challenges in implementing the Global Compact for Migration and/or the Sustainable Development Goals.
- It highlights institutional requirements and articulates objectives against which individual policies and programmes can be evaluated.
- It ensures that policies are informed by international obligations and standards as well as by bilateral and regional relationships.
- It provides a rationale to secure public confidence.

1

## GET GOVERNMENT BUY-IN FOR DEVELOPING A STRATEGY

- Promote both the benefits of a national migration strategy and the need to accompany it with a plan of action and resources to be credible.
- Consider the impetus for a strategy. Commonly, the exercise of forming a national strategy is set off by:
  - ◆ politically initiated reviews, such as a mapping or scoping exercise;
  - ◆ policy resets triggered by a change in political leadership; or
  - ◆ changes in national commitments, including as a result of ratifying international treaties or adopting initiatives, such as the [Global Compact for Migration \(GCM\)](#) and [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#).

## 2

## GATHER INFORMATION ON THE CURRENT STATE OF IMMIGRATION

- Examine the existing legal and policy framework and existing migration laws;
- Map relevant international and regional commitments;
- Analyse national migration stock and flow data;
- Review existing policies and programmes. For instance:
  - ◆ What are the objectives and trends of national migration policies for work, study, family and visits?
  - ◆ What are the existing programmes and mechanisms for protection of migrants in the society?
- Map institutional capacity and resources.

## 3

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- To gather feedback on ideas, innovations and opportunities.
- To inform objectives/priorities to guide strategy development.

## 4

## DEFINE A STRATEGIC VISION AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES/PRIORITIES

There are different ways to achieve this. For instance, one might define priorities in the context of an overarching strategic vision according to different migration related areas, such as labour migration, border management, return and reintegration.

See examples of national migration strategies developed by a few countries – as well as tools to develop national migration strategies – in the [EMM2.0 Handbook](#).

## 5

## ARTICULATE AN ACTION PLAN TO IMPLEMENT THE STRATEGY

Among the plan's initiatives and actions, ensure the following are included:

- Identifying leadership;
- Considering focal points within government sectors to ensure that necessary priority is given to implementation;
- Assigning implementing partners; and
- Establishing a timeframe and resources.