

## **REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON STRENGTHENING NATIONAL CAPACITIES TO IMPROVE MIGRATION DATA**

Organized by United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Statistical Division in collaboration with United Nations Population Division (UNDESA)  
Bishkek, 15-17 February 2010

### **OBJECTIVES**

Introduction. The Statistical Division of the Economic Commission for Europe (UN/ECE), in collaboration with the United Nations Population Division (UN/DESA) and in partnership with other partners of the Global Migration Group (GMG)<sup>1</sup>, is organizing a regional workshop on “Strengthening national capacities to improve migration data”. The regional workshop is targeting countries in Central Asia and other current and former member countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

Background and justification. The regional workshop is carried out in the context of the United Nations Development Account Project “Strengthening national capacities to deal with international migration: Maximizing development benefits and minimizing negative impacts”.<sup>2</sup> The main impetus for this project was provided by the 2006 High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, organized by the United Nations General Assembly. At the High-level Dialogue, Governments agreed that international migration could play an important role in national development, provided that it was supported by the right set of strategies and policies. During the 2006 High-level Dialogue, Governments also agreed to create an informal and State-led Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD). The Global Forum met in Brussels (2007), Manila (2008) and Athens (2009), while future meetings will be hosted by Mexico (2010), Spain (2011) and Morocco (2012). Strengthening migration data and research is one of the priorities of the Forum. In 2013, the General Assembly will hold a second High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development. The 2013 High-level Dialogue will take stock of the achievements of the Global Forum process, including advances in migration data.

Objectives. The objective of the regional workshop is to identify the gaps in the availability of data on international migrant stocks, flows, and characteristics in the region and to identify the ways and means to close this gap before the 2013 High-level Dialogue. To this end, the workshop will (a) identify the key migration trends and policies at the global and regional level; (b) review the internationally agreed standards and recommendations for international migration statistics; (c) assess the gaps that exist between these international norms and the data available from countries in the region; (d) propose practical steps to implement the key elements of these recommendations; (e) provide tools for follow-up activities, and (f) identify needs for capacity building. The

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<sup>1</sup> The Global Migration Group is an interagency coordination mechanism on migration, created by the Secretary-General in 2006. GMG consists of 12 United Nations entities, the World Bank and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). See <http://www.globalmigrationgroup.org/>.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.un.org/esa/devaccount/projects/2008/0809A.html>

workshop will consider all possible sources of migration data, including censuses, administrative sources, surveys and border statistics and discuss opportunities for data exchange.

Outcomes and follow-up. The regional workshop will have the following practical outcomes: (a) participants trained in global and regional data standards and made aware of regional and global policy context; (b) gaps in migration data identified; (c) practical strategies on closing this gap discussed and agreed. For follow-up, a three-pronged approach is envisaged. First, UNECE is preparing a practical toolkit to assist countries in putting the results of the workshop into practice. Second, UNECE will present plans for a “clearing-house” for migration statistics to facilitate cooperation and exchange of migration data in the region. Third, GMG member agencies involved in regional capacity building will support countries in implementing workshop recommendations.