



IRIS Handbook for
Governments on Ethical
Recruitment and Migrant
Worker Protection

5

MIGRANT-FACING INFORMATION INITIATIVES

A compendium of examples for governments

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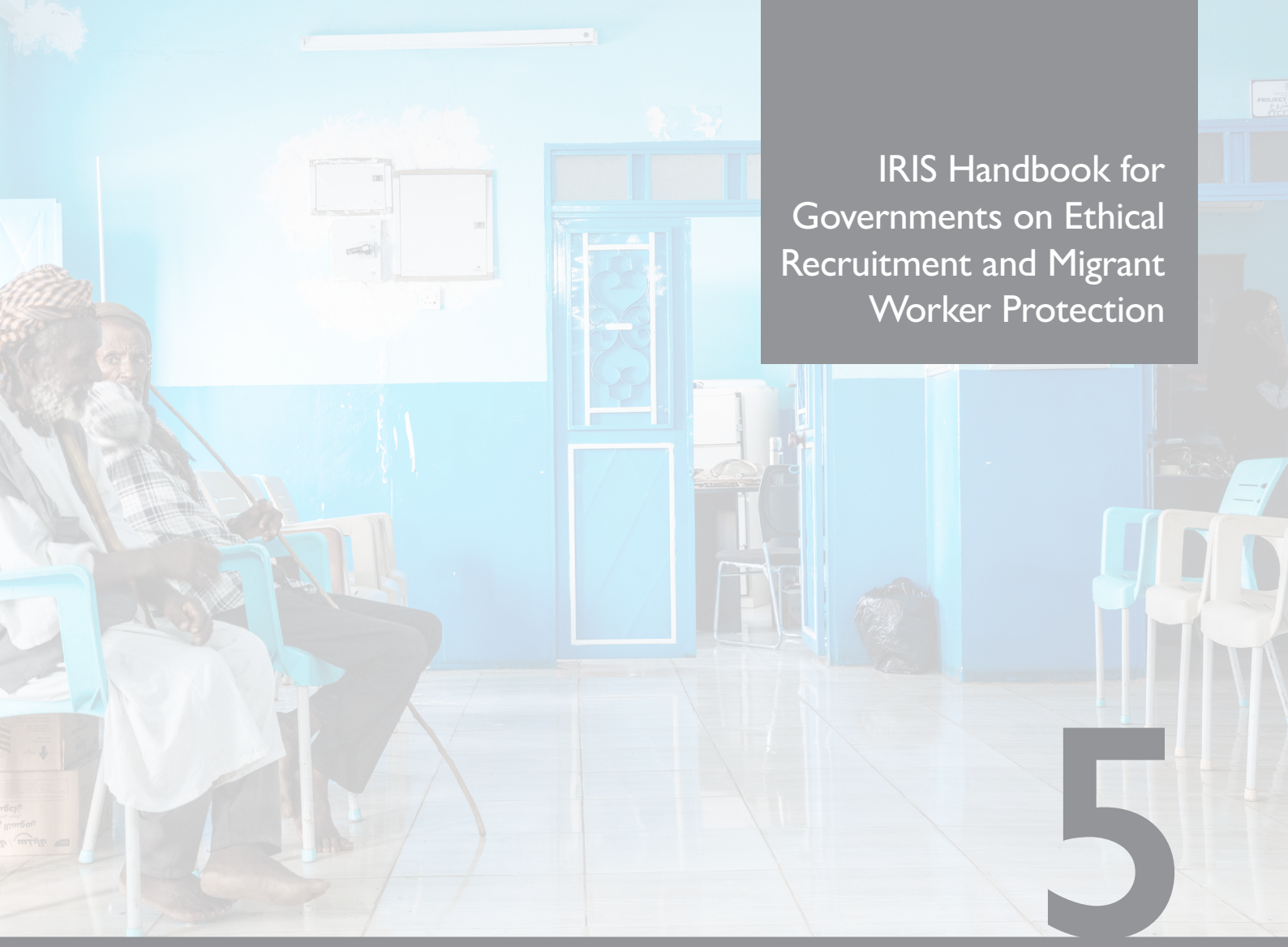
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Introduction and scope

Migrant workers are often unaware of their rights and how to exercise them in relation to their recruitment, migration and employment. In many cases, they do not receive information, or when they do, it is provided in a medium and language they cannot understand. Due in large part to the complexity of labour migration processes, it is not uncommon for misinformation to be shared among informal social networks and social media and in some cases, this can be compounded by certain unscrupulous actors who profit from misleading migrant workers. This puts migrants at a higher risk of unethical recruitment practices and labour exploitation. As such, access to and understanding of accurate, comprehensive and timely information is an essential component of migrant worker protection and empowerment.

Governments should ensure that migrant workers can access and understand information about their rights and protections. This chapter of the *IRIS Handbook for Governments on Ethical Recruitment and Migrant Worker Protection* (hereafter the IRIS Handbook) explores a variety of options to do so, including different information providers, media and delivery mechanisms. Real examples of relevant action from around the world are highlighted to serve as ideas and inspiration from which other governments can draw.

In terms of scope, this chapter focuses on **migrant-facing** information initiatives that involve governments in some capacity. The type of information broadly covers the protection, welfare and well-being of migrant workers, not limited to ethical recruitment. This applies to current, prospective, outbound and returnee migrant workers as well as their family members.¹ Guidance is applicable to countries of origin, transit, and destination, with specific references noted as required. It is intended for government officials in their capacities as communication professionals, regulators, inspectors, labour attachés, and consular officials, at different levels of administration (national, subnational) and across relevant portfolios (such as ministries responsible for labour and employment, immigration, emigration, foreign affairs, and so on). For simplicity, recommendations are addressed to “governments”, to ensure that the full spectrum of pertinent public authorities are captured.

The chapter is structured as follows: Section 1 highlights the **overarching principles** for governments to incorporate when developing information initiatives; Section 2 describes **the kind of information** migrant workers need and **who can provide it**; and Section 3 serves as a **compendium of examples** with more specific guidance on the various initiatives explored. These include non-interactive approaches (text-based and non-text-based media, information campaigns) and interactive approaches (migrant worker resource centres, phone hotlines and online reporting tools, and orientation programmes).

¹ For clarity, “prospective” migrant workers are understood in this chapter as those contemplating foreign employment in the decision-making stage (i.e. at the pre-employment phase in the labour migration process), whereas “outbound” migrant workers are distinguished as having more certainty in their trajectory to leave for work (i.e. at the pre-departure phase). For more on these different phases as conceptualized in IOM’s *Comprehensive Information and Orientation Programme*, see IOM, *Pre-employment information needs of migrant workers in the East and Horn of Africa-Gulf Corridor: Background Report* and IOM, *Pre-departure information needs of migrant workers in the East and Horn of Africa-Gulf Corridor: Background Report*.

It is worth noting that case examples are **not an exhaustive or complete picture of all the information activities in a given country context** – they are presented only to illustrate a specific type of approach.

The IRIS Handbook builds on *The Montreal Recommendations on Recruitment: A Road Map towards Better Regulation*: a set of 49 practical and targeted recommendations for governments on recruitment and migrant worker protection.² The Montreal Recommendations were co-created by 100 regulators from over 30 countries at the Global Conference on the Regulation of International Recruitment in Montreal, Canada in June 2019. This chapter draws attention to select recommendations that implicate migrant-facing information initiatives and expands on each by providing more detailed measures for governments to consider.

² The Montreal Recommendations also include 6 recommendations to IOM and the international community (see policy area: “Maintaining the momentum on regulation”) for a total of 55 recommendations.



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1 Overarching principles to guide migrant-facing information strategies

When designing, developing, and implementing migrant-facing information strategies, governments should be guided by the overarching principles listed below. Underpinning these principles is a **migrant-centric** approach, whereby the protection and well-being of migrant workers are at the centre of both content and delivery of any information intervention.



Firstly, governments should develop initiatives in a **participatory** manner: where migrant workers as well as their representatives are engaged. Civil society and trade union organizations are also valuable partners given their direct work with migrant workers and their knowledge about unique needs and vulnerabilities. This should involve meaningful consultation and dialogue to ensure that initiatives are **responsive** to information needs and existing misinformation. This may involve reviewing what information is available, uncovering gaps in knowledge and understanding, and addressing those gaps and needs in coverage, content, delivery, funding and providers.

Importantly, information initiatives should be fully **accessible** to migrant workers: barriers to access should be accounted for and overcome. At minimum, this involves ensuring information is **free, multilingual, and easy to find and share**. This may involve **geographically dispersing** initiatives (e.g. through mobile offices) and making online media and delivery modalities readily available. Special outreach to migrant workers from and destined to rural areas is also important to integrate so that delivery mechanisms do not rely on migrant workers being physically present in central urban hubs. Distinct outreach to migrant women is also important, for example by accounting for spaces where women gather at the community level. In making information accessible, governments should also protect migrant workers' right to privacy and ensure that inquiries are kept confidential and that appropriate data protection policies are followed.

Information should be **clear and accurate**: the means of communicating and conveying information should be adapted to capture varying levels of literacy and accessibility barriers. It should also be **flexible and up to date** with tools and media regularly updated to reflect changes in contexts and rules, as well as changing learning needs. Updated information should be proactively provided to relevant stakeholders and interlocutors on a systematic basis. This is best supported by dedicated staff and/or offices responsible for these activities.

In addition, information should be tailored to address **specific vulnerabilities** faced by certain groups of migrants who face heightened risks in the recruitment and employment process. Strategies should be **comprehensive** and cover the **entire labour migration cycle**. This often requires collaboration with other governments or partners to capture and tailor needs in a timely manner at different **stages** in the migration process (e.g. pre-employment, recruitment, migration, employment and return and reintegration) and in different **country contexts and corridors** (origin, transit or destination). Where applicable, specific industry and sector considerations should be taken into account.

The importance of **monitoring and evaluating** information initiatives for effectiveness, including assessing outcomes (for example, on improved access to remedy) and other indicators cannot be overstated. Strong monitoring and evaluation strategies should underpin these activities, including systematic feedback loops with migrant workers and their representatives.

Finally, while this chapter is focused on migrant-facing information initiatives, it is imperative that these activities are combined with strategies to provide **information to recruiters and employers** of migrant workers.³ In doing so, the burden to understand is evenly distributed among all parties and ensures that recruiters and employers are equally aware of the legal obligations they must uphold. This may also involve ensuring that recruiters and employers are aware of the specific risks and vulnerabilities facing migrant workers over the course of the labour migration process to encourage adapting policies and procedures accordingly.

³ See further guidance on information awareness for recruiters in [Chapter 2 of the IRIS Handbook](#) (Implementing and improving licensing frameworks) and educational and information interventions with recruiters and employers in [Chapter 3 of the IRIS Handbook](#) (Strengthening the effectiveness of inspectorates).



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2 Content and information providers

This section briefly summarizes the kind of information (content) to be shared and disseminated with migrant workers, as well the actors (providers) involved in the process. Information and sources should be customized and underpinned by the general principles discussed above (e.g. tailored to relevant country of origin and/or destination context, among others).

Content

What kind of information do migrant workers need?

Migrant workers need a range of information regarding their rights and the conditions of their recruitment, migration and employment.⁴ This includes being informed and empowered to counter misinformation, including from unscrupulous recruitment actors. Accordingly, governments should prioritize information that empowers migrant workers to know and access their human and labour rights in case of rights violations.

⁴ ILO General principles and operational guidelines for fair recruitment and definition of recruiter fees and costs: General principle 10: "Workers should have access to free, comprehensive and accurate information regarding their rights and the conditions of their recruitment and employment."

It is worth emphasizing that information needs vary and depend on the **point** at which migrant workers find themselves during the labour migration cycle. For example, deciding to take up foreign employment, engaging a recruiter, and filing a workplace complaint are distinct scenarios that merit tailored information for relevance and utility.

Some of these topics, including broader information to enhance migrant welfare and well-being, are arranged thematically below.



Migrant worker rights and recruitment and employment conditions

- The **recruitment process** (e.g. steps involved, timelines, types of approvals and/or tests required, fees and costs and who pays, etc.) and key obligations of governments, recruiters and employers;
- Relevant labour, recruitment, and migration **laws** and associated **rights** (e.g. minimum labour standards on working hours, periods of rest, and leave; recruitment fee prohibitions, right to keep passport, freedom of association including right to join and be represented by a union, etc.);
- Relevant **complaint, grievance** and **dispute resolution** mechanisms:
 - What **remedies** are available (compensation, recovery, etc.);
 - How to **assert** rights and **access** remedy in case of rights violations;
 - What **evidence** can and should be provided to support a claim and **how to collect and keep relevant records** (e.g. wage slips, pay stubs, bank statements or other proof of financial transaction, contracts, diaries, notes on recruiters, employers and their representatives including names and contact information, copies of emails or text messages, records of verbal agreements, photos, videos, letters of explanation, letters of support, victim impact statements, witness testimonies, etc.);
 - **Who** can assist and support workers during this process.
- Recruitment **actors** and their **compliance history**:
 - Signs to recognize illegal recruiters including red flags (e.g. allegations of fee charging, misrepresentation, relevant legal proceedings), methods to verify and distinguish licensed and unlicensed recruiters (e.g. public list of licensed recruiters), including other regulated actors in the migration process (immigration brokers, consultants, lawyers, etc.).
- Unethical recruitment, forced labour and trafficking: what it is, what it looks like, signs, risks, etc.;
- **Terms and conditions of employment**, including the employment contract and any relevant information as set out in bilateral agreements (e.g. specific to industry or occupation);
- Procedures related to leaving an employer (e.g. options, consequences);
- **Job opportunities** (public job boards) and general **labour market** information for informed decision-making, including job verification procedures where relevant.



Labour migration process

- **Exit** and **admission** requirements, including relevant emigration and immigration laws, policies and rules including rules related to visas, work permits and residency, status adjustments and right and procedures to change employers, and implications in case of non-compliance;
- How to navigate international **travel** procedures (e.g. check-in, documents, airport security, etc.);
- **Registration** procedures with origin and destination authorities and relevant consular protection.



General living and working information

- What to expect when **residing** and **working** abroad (e.g. sociocultural norms and customs);
- Available **social protection** measures (e.g. social insurance or security, health-care coverage);
- Other services and support including **health, psychosocial, legal** and **emergency** assistance;
- **Financial education and literacy** (e.g. taxation, remittance transfer and management, budgeting, saving and investment, and banking services);
- **Language, vocational** and other **training** opportunities;
- **Housing** rules and entitlements (e.g. employer-provided and/or shared accommodation and permissible costs where applicable) and emergency and transitional shelter options;
- **Gender-sensitive** support and services in case of sexual harassment, abuse and gender-based violence;
- **Contacts** in case of emergency, services or assistance (migrant serving organizations and networks, trade unions, emergency numbers and hotlines, consular support and diplomatic representation, etc.);
- **Social support** and **diaspora** networks;
- Information and services related to **stress management, family separation** and **mental health**.

Information providers

Who is providing information to migrant workers?

Governments can provide information **directly** to migrant workers and/or **indirectly** in collaboration, partnership or via legal mandates (i.e. by requiring information provision in law) with other actors. When working with other actors, governments can undertake joint information activities or may solely provide financial support by contracting out these activities. While the chosen modality will depend on context, available resources and capacity, a mix of delivery mechanisms is encouraged to increase the reach and impact of information initiatives. These modalities are briefly discussed below with key considerations for each type.

Directly by governments

The primary duty to provide information to migrant workers rests with governments; particularly in the case of clearly communicating relevant rights and obligations established in policy and legal frameworks.⁵ Governments in countries of origin and destination alike are encouraged to enshrine these obligations in law and policy to ensure that appropriate authorities develop and implement information provision activities. When governments provide information directly to migrant workers, they can do so through both **intra-State** (between agencies in one State) and **inter-State** (between States – with applicable foreign government(s)) modalities.⁶

Within a given country context, different levels of government (national, subnational) and portfolios (labour, migration, foreign affairs) are strongly encouraged to work together to adopt a **whole-of-government** and intra-State approach to information delivery. This is responsive to the multi-jurisdictional nature of international labour recruitment and migration and the different sources of information required in the process. For example, migration bodies or border officials in countries of destination may work with local labour standards counterparts to develop and disseminate information via their distinct touchpoints with migrant workers. Diplomatic and consular offices representing countries of origin (e.g. labour attachés) also serve important roles as information sources abroad, and can establish important linkages between host government agencies to widen the reach of information dissemination.



intra-State and labour attaché examples on page 18 and 28

In recognition of the international nature of labour recruitment and migration, governments are also encouraged to formally **collaborate with other foreign governments**. This is to ensure information flows accurately and efficiently across labour migration corridors and to enhance the quality of information provided. For example, where labour migration agreements are signed, governments are encouraged to negotiate and jointly undertake information initiatives, such as cooperatively developing and disseminating information products through their respective government and consular networks.⁷ Inter-State collaboration can also be done regionally and multilaterally, leveraging consultative processes and regional economic blocs.⁸



inter-State on page 22 and 29

⁵ Where public employment authorities are involved in international labour recruitment, they also play an important role in ensuring timely and accurate information provision on jobs and key labour market information.

⁶ For further guidance on advancing ethical recruitment through inter-State cooperation at bilateral, regional and multilateral levels, see [Chapter 4 of the IRIS Handbook](#).

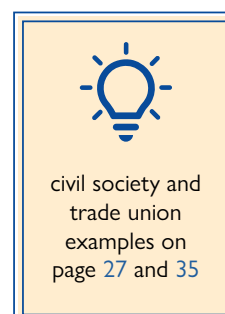
⁷ For example, the MOU between the governments of the United States and Mexico on labor mobility and the protection of participants in temporary foreign worker programs prescribes the intentions of respective agencies to jointly undertake outreach and education to migrant workers, recruiters and employer about rights and obligations under respective laws. This includes developing and disseminating information materials and undertaking in-person workshops.

⁸ See [Chapter 4 \(Section 3\) of the IRIS Handbook](#) for more on consultative processes including regional integration initiatives.

Indirectly via government support, partnership or legal mandate

Civil society and trade unions

Governments should at minimum, conduct meaningful consultations and engage in dialogue with migrant worker representatives on the development and design of information initiatives. This includes community-based migrant support organizations, faith-based organizations, non-governmental organizations, social enterprises, trade unions and legal clinics.



Governments can also fund and/or partner with civil society and trade union actors in their delivery models due to the **close proximity** of these actors to migrant workers. For example, civil society organizations often have direct and community-based access to migrant workers; and trade unions are present in the workplace and at the industry level (including as worker representatives).

In addition, these actors are also among the most **trusted** entities in the information ecosystem, making them well positioned to serve as providers of both information and services to migrant workers, particularly in interactive modalities. Migrant workers are generally more likely to contact, ask questions, and express concerns with these actors than governments, thereby increasing the quality of knowledge production. In many cases, these organizations are often led and represented by individuals with similar sociocultural backgrounds and language profiles, including returnee migrants, bridging the communication gap between migrants and governments.

Relatedly, actors at the grass-roots level are the closest formal actor **tapped into essential informal social networks** (e.g. friends, family, community members at home and abroad) through which a lot of information flows among migrant workers. Partnering with local grass-roots organizations can be an effective strategy to mitigate the risk of misinformation circulating among these informal social networks.

International organizations

Similarly, international organizations like IOM, the ILO and other United Nations agencies bring international **technical expertise and experience** to help develop information initiatives and implement them. Governments are encouraged to review and consider the ways in which international organizations can inform, support and administer their migrant-facing information strategies.



Recruiters and employers

Finally, governments can choose to mandate information provision to migrant workers via private sector obligations. For example, authorities may require recruiters and/or employers to **provide** information resources or **inform** migrant workers about training opportunities. In some cases, governments require recruiters to **deliver** some information initiatives, such as pre-departure orientation programmes. Legal obligations differ depending on the country context: governments in countries of destination may

require recruiter and/or employers to provide information pamphlets to migrant workers as part of the onboarding process; in countries of origin, governments may mandate recruiters to inform migrant workers of mandatory orientation sessions.⁹

While this mandated information approach leverages the touchpoints that migrant workers have with these entities, governments should carefully consider **if and how information can be shared safely and impartially** due to inherent power imbalances in employment and recruitment relationships with workers. In practical terms, it may not be advisable to expect an employer to provide information on worker redress options in case of employer non-compliance, or where recruitment agencies are profiting from unethical recruitment practices, like misleading workers with misinformation. While recruiters and employers may be well positioned, careful consideration should be given to the (dis)incentives they have as a provider of accurate information.

Most importantly, as discussed in [Chapter 1 of the IRIS Handbook](#), governments should ensure that recruiters and employers provide accurate information to migrant workers on the **employment contract** itself to protect against contract substitution and misrepresentation. Accordingly, governments should prescribe in law that migrant workers receive understandable, accessible and enforceable employment contracts, in a language they understand, and that the terms and conditions and position are clearly expressed.

⁹ In Canada, the federal government and certain provincial authorities (Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia) require some type of government publication containing essential information on relevant rights to be distributed to migrant workers by their recruiter and/or employer. In Ghana, the Labour Department is responsible for providing pre-departure orientation to migrant workers and licensed recruitment agencies are required to send migrant workers to this mandatory training.



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3 Information delivery: a compendium of examples

How is information provided to migrant workers?

This section explores different examples of information approaches and delivery mechanisms with real examples taken from around the world. The collection of examples is thematically arranged by **non-interactive** approaches (e.g. for viewing, downloading or reference) and **interactive** approaches (involving the input of and communication with the migrant worker). Governments are encouraged to adopt both approaches, which are highly complementary in nature. For example, a text-based leaflet (non-interactive) can refer to a hotline (interactive), and a migrant worker resource centre (interactive) can hand out informational guides (non-interactive).

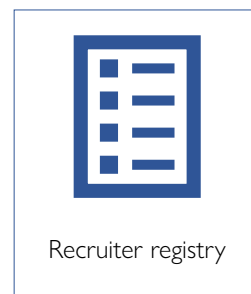
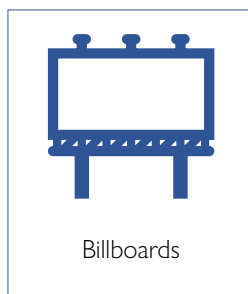
Non-interactive approaches

Montreal Recommendation

37. Governments should produce multilanguage leaflets, posters, mobile phone applications and non-text-based resources, such as videos and podcasts to distribute pre- and post-arrival (available in airports, community spaces and government offices) that inform migrants how to access grievance mechanisms and what help they can receive. These resources should also inform migrants about what evidence should be collected (such as wage slips and contracts) to support a resulting claim.

Non-interactive sources of information encompass **text-based** or **non-text-based** media. They are often disseminated widely (e.g. online), in addition to being provided in one-on-one scenarios, for example by government officials at a border crossing or during an inspection. Governments should produce and disseminate both types of media, described with examples below, to ensure broad reach and access for migrant workers.

Text-based media



Governments have traditionally relied most on text-based **leaflets** and **booklets** as information sources for migrant workers. Handouts of different lengths can achieve different aims: shorter ones can highlight essential information while relatively longer guides can cover more comprehensive details. Length varies widely and governments are encouraged to develop an assortment of materials for different contexts. For example, “quick hits” that are easy to read and digest on key information can be published on **posters** or pocket-sized **cards**.

Governments may also consider advertising such information on **billboards** in prominent public places and in local and diaspora **newspapers**. On the other hand, migrant workers can also benefit from handbooks, binders or guides that provide more wide-ranging information. Perhaps most importantly, governments should ensure that all text-based media is **translated** and available in the languages that migrant workers understand. Despite being text-based, products should also be adapted to cater to migrants with lower levels of literacy by using plain language and visuals.

To ensure accessibility, these materials should be available **online** for viewing and download on government-administered websites and social media pages. This is to ensure that information is retrievable at any time and can be easily shared among social networks, as migrant workers increasingly use and prefer **social media** to both find and share information. Mobile phone applications can be considered as a complementary method of delivery, keeping in mind that certain individuals may be dissuaded to download them due to limited data storage and phone memory. The use of push notifications through mobile phone texting or email newsletters is also encouraged where possible.

Text-based media should also be disseminated in **physical locations** where migrant workers transit and congregate. This is particularly important for migrant workers who do not have access to mobile phones or the internet. These locations include:

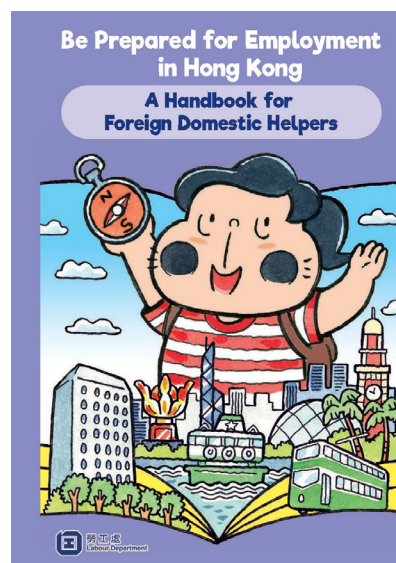
- migrant resource centres and other migrant support organization offices
- grocery, food markets and shopping centres
- training centres during **orientation programmes**
- government offices (e.g. where workers collect identification cards or other government-issued documentation)
- consular offices and consular-organized events
- health care, health fairs and hospital settings
- airports
- popular community and public spaces, including where cultural events are held
- religious gathering spaces
- bus and train terminals
- harbours and ports
- land border crossings
- migrant worker employment sites (e.g. during inspections or on posters as required by law)



Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR), China

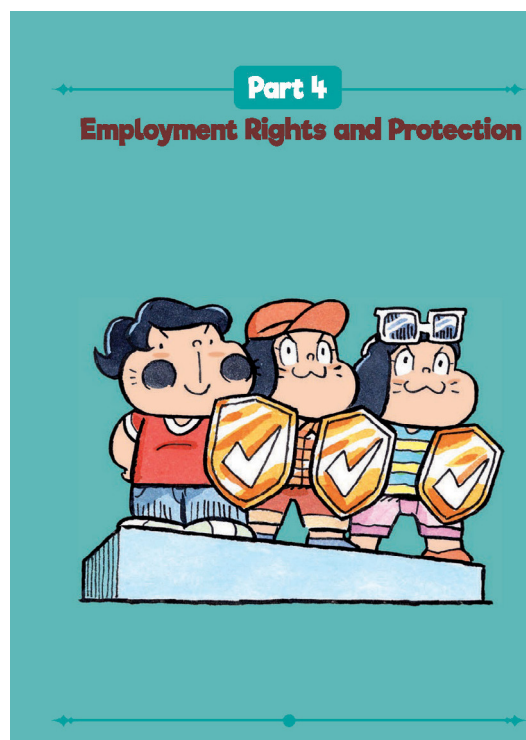
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR), China publishes a variety of useful text-based information materials, including **leaflets, comic strips, practical guides** and **handbooks** that cover a range of important topics with various migrant workers' native languages, lengths and level of detail. For example, the “**Be Prepared for Employment in Hong Kong: A Handbook for Foreign Domestic Helpers**” is a 100-page booklet (currently available in English, Tagalog, Bahasa Indonesia and Thai, with other languages under preparation) that covers a wide range of information sensitive to the needs of migrant domestic workers including:

- what to know when **living in Hong Kong SAR, China** (geography and climate, customs and culture, transport, groceries, money and banking) and relevant civic responsibilities;



Source: [A Handbook for Foreign Domestic Helpers](#), 2023.

- **working in Hong Kong SAR, China** (dealing with employment agencies on fees and written service agreements, avoidance of bogus job placement; standard employment contract for foreign domestic helpers);
- **job duties and responsibilities** (domestic job duties, occupational safety and health; handling of emergency situations);
- **general rights and protection** (minimum allowance wages, statutory employment rights and protection, access to services and justice; right to keep individual properties including passport and information leaflets; right to privacy; protection against discrimination);
- **obligations and responsibilities** (restrictions on employment; limit of stay);
- **employer relationship advice** (effective communication and building mutual trust; respect; handling employment disputes);
- **healthy living** (coping with homesickness and stress; financial management; hygiene and public health; women’s health and pregnancy; leisure activities);
- **support and assistance** (employment claim process; complaint channels; protection on abuse; support from NGOs); and
- a comprehensive **reference list** of contact information (phone and website/email) for relevant departments, consulates and NGOs in Hong Kong SAR, China.



Source: [A Handbook for Foreign Domestic Helpers, 2023](#).

The Handbook also provides a “meaningful story” section shared by a group of Cambodian domestic workers that provides their personal stories and reflections, as well as useful “Tips” such as one on the [Employment Agencies Portal](#). Relatedly, a leaflet: “[Carefully select your Employment Agencies: Beware of Employment Traps](#)” is also published and provides helpful advice on engaging employment agencies, fees, and what to do if rights are infringed.



Bahrain

In a more focused approach, Bahrain’s Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA) has a one-page “[Expatriate Employee’s Guide](#)” which highlights key information on topics like required documents, passport guidance and employer transfers, and how to contact the LMRA for further details, including call centre and website details. The guide is available in 12 commonly spoken migrant worker languages including English, Bangla, Filipino, Hindi, Malayalam, Thai, Urdu, Indonesian, Sinhala, Nepali, Chinese, and Turkish.



Uganda

In Uganda, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development disseminates a “Migrant Information Handbook” that provides travel and work-related information for Ugandan migrant workers destined to Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.¹⁰ The handbook features a mix of text and visuals to portray key information on the migration journey (e.g. contract information, rights, responsibilities, status); safe and smart travel; living and working abroad; and a briefing on individual GCC countries (e.g. work days, working hours, important numbers, etc.). This is an example of how countries of origin can tailor information for specific destination contexts within a more general information product. The publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, with technical support from IOM as part of the Better Migration Management programme.



CONTRACT INFORMATION

Know the following!

You should have a contract. If you are asked to sign a contract after arriving in country of destination, kindly seek the advice of someone you trust to review the contract before you sign it. A contract is important because it is a legal document that states the duties and obligations of both your employer and you as a worker. Make sure you receive a copy of the contract and that you understand all the terms and conditions in the contract. At a minimum, the contract should include details of:

- N** your **name**;
- A** your work **address**;
- E** your **employer**;
- D** your **duties**;
- S** your **salary** and benefits;
- H** work **hours** (not over 12 hours a day, including overtime);
- O** how **overtime** pay is calculated;
- L** **leave** entitlements;
- D** any **deductions** that are to be made;
- T** details about contract **termination**



Source: Migrant Information Handbook, Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Uganda, 2021.

Montreal Recommendation

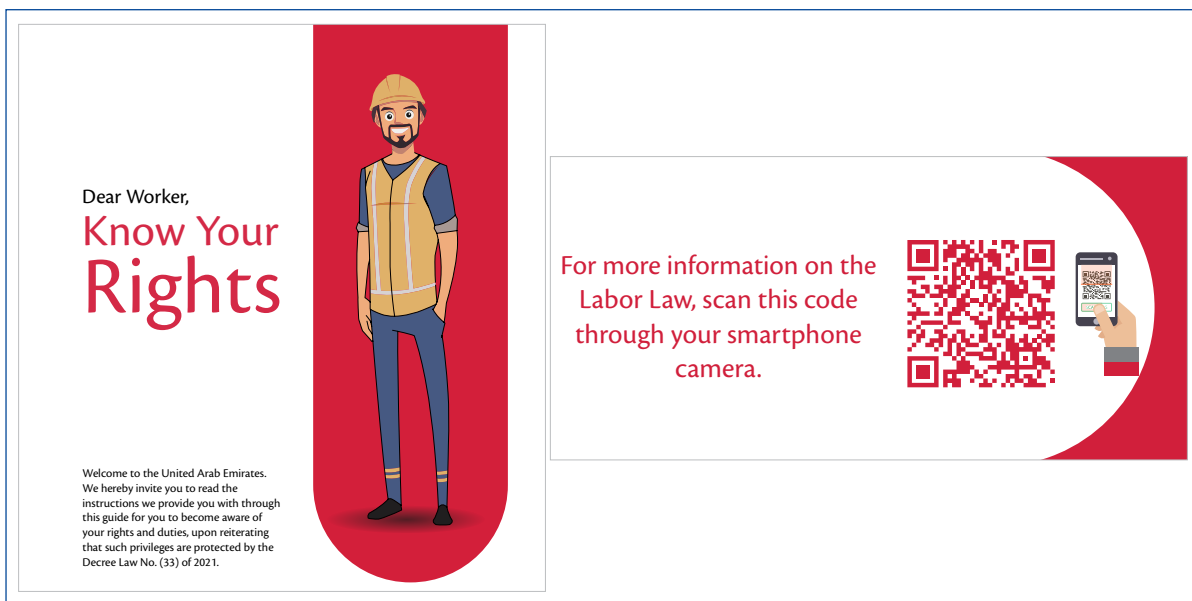
46. Governments should ensure that migrant workers are effectively informed about their rights and protections in the jurisdiction of employment and how to access assistance. This could include commissioning or supporting a CSO [civil society organization] or trade union to produce relevant country-based electronic and paper-based “Know your Rights” leaflets.

¹⁰ Member States of the GCC include Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.



United Arab Emirates

In another example, the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation in the United Arab Emirates, has a “[Know your Rights](#)” guide that communicates seven important messages or “takeaways” for migrant workers including their rights regarding recruitment costs and the employment contract. The guide is available in Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, English, Hindi, Malayalam and Urdu.¹¹ It also includes a QR code to scan through a smartphone camera to find more information on relevant labour laws. In addition to the guide, the Ministry has a [dedicated webpage](#) on its official website providing awareness and guidance to workers, including short films covering a variety of rights.



Source: United Arab Emirates Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation, 2022.



Mauritius

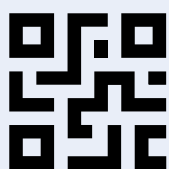
In Mauritius, the “[Know your Rights guide for migrant workers](#)” is available to inform prospective and current migrant workers of their rights and possible remedial actions in case of violations. The pamphlet is intended for migrant workers in secondary economic activities¹² and includes information on recruitment agents, salary, health and safety, training and the dangers of human trafficking. It also provides important government contact details.

The guide is published in English, Bangla, Hindi, Mandarin, Tamil and French and distributed to workers at their employment sites. One unique feature is that it includes a summary section that can be easily removed and kept as a smaller “**pocket-guide**”. The guide was prepared collaboratively by

¹¹ To download a copy of the guide, see publications [here](#).

¹² This includes construction and manufacturing of food products, beverages, textiles and garments, leather and related products, paper products, chemical products, plastic products, fabricated metal products, furniture, machinery and equipment.

multiple ministries, including the Ministry of Justice, Human Rights and Institutional Reforms, the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations, Employment and Training, the Mauritius Police Department, and the Passport and Immigration Office, among others, with financial support from the British High Commission. It is worth noting that this guide is anticipated to be updated; at the time of writing, content was being reviewed with relevant legislative changes in Mauritius.



On shorter documents like one-page leaflets or posters, governments may consider adding a QR code to link to other materials or websites. A QR code is short for “quick response” code: it is a square-shaped black-and-white symbol that is scanned with a smartphone to learn more about a service or product. These encrypted squares can hold content, links, event details, videos and other information that users may benefit from seeing.



Republic of Korea

In a targeted information approach on the **remedy process** for migrant workers, the Ministry of Employment and Labour in the Republic of Korea has a [guide](#) on the procedures involved when filing a claim for rights violations.¹³ The guide is aimed at workers coming under the Employment Permit System and explores remedy procedures for unpaid wages, unfair dismissal, workplace injury, and sexual assault. It includes information on the appropriate documents to retain and provide, steps in the process, as well as differences between filing an administrative claim and seeking remedy through a civil lawsuit and the respective trade-offs (e.g. cost, time, etc.). It also provides relevant information on insurance and important contact information in the Republic of Korea, including embassy information. The guide is available in multiple languages including Bangla, Chinese, Filipino, Indonesian, Khmer, Korean, Kyrgyz, Lao, Mongol, Myanmar, Nepali, Sinhala, Tetum, Thai, Urdu, Uzbek and Vietnamese.

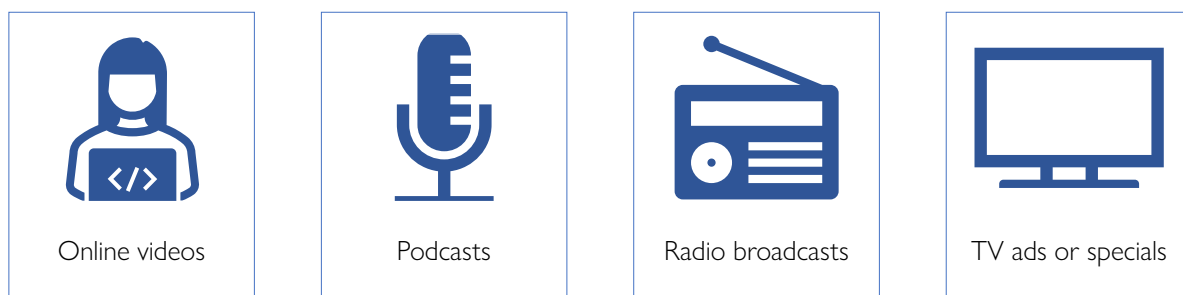
Public recruiter registries

As discussed in [Chapter 2 of the IRIS Handbook](#), where recruiter licensing requirements are in place, governments should ensure that recruiter information is published and regularly updated in an accessible public list as a transparency measure. The ideal medium is an easy-to-find online database of licence holders. Licensing authorities should also consider providing hardcopy lists to migrant support organizations and local government officials and/or publishing this information in popular media sources to overcome scenarios where internet access is limited and to ensure coverage in rural areas. For example, Tunisia’s *Décret n°2010-2948 du 9 novembre 2010, fixant les conditions, les modalités et les procédures d’octroi de l’autorisation d’exercice par les établissements privés d’activités de placement à l’étranger* mandates the authority to publish the list of authorized licensees every year during the

¹³ It is worth noting that other guides are also available on broader topics and for migrant workers under other specific labour migration programmes in the Republic of Korea. For example, since 2019, the Seoul Metropolitan Government has published a [handbook](#) on general labour rights of migrant workers: the 2022 edition is published in [Chinese](#), [English](#), [Korean](#), and [Vietnamese](#). A [working guideline](#) for E-8 seasonal workers published by Gangwon Province is also available in [English](#), [Korean](#), [Nepali](#) and [Vietnamese](#).

month of December in two daily newspapers. The list of the private placement agencies authorized for placement activities abroad is also accessible on the [website](#) of the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training of Tunisia. In another example of an online public registry, the Ministry of Labour and Labour Development (Ministerio de Trabajo y Desarrollo Laboral) in Panama utilizes a [search feature](#) for [private recruitment agencies](#) with relevant contact details, addresses and identification numbers.

Non-text-based media



Governments are also strongly encouraged to develop non-text-based media to complement the media options listed above and to close accessibility gaps, particularly literacy barriers. These can be uploaded **online** (e.g. government websites and social media) and promoted on **television** programs and advertisements, **streaming platforms** (e.g. YouTube) and over the **radio**. This type of media is a particularly effective way to share testimonies of migrant workers and their candid remarks and experiences. In terms of length, it is worth noting that short videos and sound clips can often be the most engaging to broadcast essential information, especially for migrant workers with limited time and/or attention to devote.



Sweden and the Council of the Baltic Sea States

In an initiative to educate potential and current migrant workers in Sweden, the Swedish Gender Equality Agency and the Council of the Baltic Sea States undertook the “[Before you Go](#)” campaign that informs migrant workers and displaced persons on the risks of human trafficking and labour exploitation and where they can turn to for support. The campaign produced a [film](#) that interviews people from Bulgaria, Poland, Romania and Ukraine in Sweden, highlighting their experiences and advice for other migrants. The film is available for viewing on relevant government webpages, social media platforms and streaming sites.



Bhutan

In Bhutan, the Department of Law and Order, Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs produced a [video](#) with warnings about false jobs and human trafficking through the support of the US Department of State. Using a voice-over in Dzongkha, the video educates workers to only apply for jobs with approved and licensed employment agencies and to crosscheck any overseas jobs with the Ministry of Labour and Human Resources.



Estonia

In Estonia, the Social Insurance Board in Estonia maintains a [podcast](#) in Estonian and Russian. In a collaborative episode (#50) with the Labour Inspectorate, government officials share information on labour exploitation in the workplace, activities of the Labour Inspectorate and its hotline.

Information and communication campaigns

Governments should also consider launching information and communication **campaigns**. Campaigns can make it easier for migrant workers to find the right information by deliberately disseminating a variety of information media sources at the same time. They can also increase broader public awareness on key issues affecting migrant workers (e.g. signs of forced labour and risks of unethical recruitment) by using mass media. Campaigns can address a specific theme, topic or timeframe or they can be launched in response to special circumstances (e.g. pandemic or emergency).



IOM X information materials and participatory approach to communication campaigns

IOM X is IOM's communication campaign to encourage safe migration and public action to stop exploitation and human trafficking. Going beyond awareness-raising, it seeks to affect behaviour change by applying a **Communication for Development (C4D)** framework that is both participatory and evidence-based in nature. As a **participatory process**, it not only seeks to understand different contexts and people's knowledge, attitudes and practices around a certain issue, but also endeavours to work with people to develop **empowering and positive** messages and tools for them. The campaign's activities include developing media content for television and online platforms, digital innovations and capacity-building resources.

Notably, the IOM X website maintains a **resource library** of **free and downloadable** materials including videos, factsheets, presentations, research and training guides to support relevant communication campaigns. Many of these materials are provided in editable files so that they can be re-versioned as needed for specific target audiences. Governments are encouraged to explore these materials and learn more about C4D when developing informational and communication products and campaigns on migrant worker rights in the context of their recruitment and employment.



Norway – Know your Rights

In a multinational approach, government agencies in Norway and Bulgaria, Estonia, Lithuania and Romania, among other countries of origin launched the “Know Your Rights” information campaign to empower migrant workers to file complaints and report exploitation. The campaign aimed at increasing the knowledge of migrant workers and companies about rules and regulations on work in Norway. Relying on research, external experts, and labour inspectorates from all implicated countries, the campaign identified target groups and multilingual communication strategies. The use of social media and technology was leveraged, which included targeted advertisements in 40 different Facebook groups where migrant workers were active, as well as the use of a QR code to direct users to the relevant **government website**. The information campaign has since increased the number of contacts to the call centre and non-compliance tips. The implementing team was led by the Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority, with experts from all five participating countries in a notable example of inter-State cooperation between countries of origin and destination.



Source: Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority, 2020.



Brazil – Proteja o Trabalho (Protect the Work)

In response to changes caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Brazilian Labour Inspectorate launched the “Proteja o Trabalho” (Protect the Work) campaign. In partnership with IOM, the ILO and UNHCR, they developed a website with important information for migrants and refugees about relevant labour and employment measures and their rights. The campaign utilized videos, brochures, and online video live stream events, with written materials available in Portuguese, Spanish, English, French and Arabic. The second phase of the campaign addresses general labour rights, with a focus on sectors with heightened risks of exploitation (e.g. domestic work).

The mini-series “Ser Brasil – Migrantes e Refugiados” (Being Brazil: Migrant and Refugees) included several documentary-style video episodes available for streaming on YouTube. The episodes are short (less than 4 minutes each) with testimonies from migrants about work in Brazil as well as guidance from experts on relevant rights, laws, and how to file complaints.

European Labour Authority – Rights for All Seasons

In a regional approach, the European Labour Authority launched an integrated information communication campaign “Rights for all seasons” which ran between June and October 2021. The campaign aimed at raising the awareness of seasonal workers and their employers of their rights, obligations and available counselling services. It was conducted in broad partnership with the European Commission, the EURES network, the European Platform tackling undeclared work, EU Member States and social partners. A range of multilingual resources were developed and published (infographics, checklists, videos, flyers and brochures) for download and distribution. The campaign website also includes a “Happening around Europe” page that directs users to country-specific awareness campaigns and information materials in individual European Union Member States.



Interactive approaches

Governments are strongly encouraged to support, administer, and promote interactive approaches in their broader information provision strategy. In contrast to the options discussed above, interactive approaches establish a **two-way** information channel for migrant workers and afford **human exchange** where migrant workers can ask questions and receive clarification. Information is often delivered **in-person** or **remotely** over the phone or online in an advisory or counselling manner. As a medium, they are also more conducive to service provision and assistance. For example, an interactive approach can not only provide migrant workers with information on their rights, but also practical help in defending and accessing those rights. This approach can equip workers with both the knowledge and tools they need for safe and dignified migration.

Governments can choose from a variety of interactive modes of information delivery, including:

- migrant resource or information centres, including advisory offices;
- mobile information and/or support clinics;
- phone or hotline services;
- online or messaging application platform;
- webinars (e.g. live stream events on social media platforms);
- kiosks or stands at job centres or fairs;
- orientation and training programmes during the recruitment and labour migration process;
- verbal briefings (with question and answer period) during exit and entry procedures;
- ad hoc or planned information workshops during recruitment-related and/or labour inspections.¹⁴

These mechanisms can be established by governments as publicly administered services, or they can be contracted out to other trusted organizations. As some are more resource intensive than others, governments are encouraged, at minimum, to leverage existing interactive touchpoints with migrant workers (e.g. during visa issuance). Some examples of common interactive approaches (migrant resource centres, hotlines, and orientation programmes) are profiled below.

Migrant resource centres and other in-person support

Montreal Recommendation

44. Governments should support the establishment of MRCs [migrant resource centres] in countries of origin, as well as in countries of destination. MRCs can provide a physical space with associated multilingual staff for migrants to seek information about migration, employment, labour recruiters, access to health care, housing and grievance and dispute resolution mechanisms. MRCs may also facilitate access to free legal assistance.

¹⁴ For more on promotion of compliance through information activities during inspections, see Chapter 3 (Section 1) of the IRIS Handbook.

Migrant resource centres (MRCs) are physical spaces where migrant workers can obtain a suite of information, advice and services related to their recruitment, migration and employment in an interactive manner. They are also often referred to as migrant information centres, support or service centres, and advice or advisory offices. Generally, these centres serve as a central hub or a “**one-stop-shop**” that can empower migrant workers with the right range of tools, services and knowledge. Governments in countries of origin and destination alike should support the establishment of MRCs in their respective jurisdictions to ensure that migrant workers can access this type of assistance throughout the labour migration cycle: during the decision-making process, in preparation for travel, at entry and during work and life abroad, and upon return.¹⁵

MRCs can and should offer safe and welcoming environments that encourage migrant workers to visit and return if needed. To do so, staff should reflect the diversity of the migrant population being served, including appropriate language competency and sociocultural understanding. Expertise in local laws and services is also essential with staff trained on the rights of migrant workers, migration procedures, obligations of recruiters and employers, information on support services and how to deliver this information through counselling or outreach programmes. Regarding synergies with other information modalities, MRCs are well positioned to distribute [information materials](#), [operate a hotline](#), and deliver [orientation programmes](#).

Beyond information provision, MRCs can also provide the practical **services and assistance** that migrant workers need. Services differ depending on the country context (origin or destination) and span those related to health and medical, transportation, shelter, as well as psychosocial counselling and legal assistance, among others. Where legal services are offered, staff can assist with administrative and legal proceedings related to complaints or claims in case of rights violations. MRCs can also connect workers with and make referrals to relevant agencies and other bodies.

Migrant resource centres can be directly administered by governments or be contracted to individual or multiple non-governmental organizations or international organizations. In the former case, these functions can be integrated into existing public authorities (e.g. specialized labour standards office or consular function under the relevant labour attaché). A few examples of such initiatives, including **similar in-person methods** in countries of origin and destination are profiled below.



¹⁵ For more detailed guidance on establishing and administering migrant resource centres, with particular focus on assistance to migrants in countries of origin at a pre-departure stage, see IOM, [Running an Effective Migrant Resource Centre: A Handbook for Practitioners](#) (2015).



Slovakia – Migration Information Centre

The [Migration Information Centre](#) is a counselling centre operated by IOM in Slovakia with eight locations in all administrative regions of Slovakia. The initiative is financially supported by the European Union's Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund to Slovakia and within the Recovery and Resilience Plan of the Slovak Republic funded by the European Union NextGenerationEU. Operational since 2006, its main objective is to promote the integration of migrants in Slovakia by providing comprehensive services to them in one place. Services include legal, social, and vocational counselling, retraining and further education, Slovak language courses, labour market inclusion and community support for migrant workers. This also includes assistance with the preparation of relevant documents for administrative authorities.

Services are free for migrants and their families and since launching, beneficiaries have come from over 160 countries. Consultations are provided in person as well as by email and telephone via an information hotline. The centre's [website](#) also provides text-based resources like brochures and booklets on key information pertaining to work and residence in Slovakia. Specialized counselling is offered on “one-stop shop” days that bring together staff from several relevant institutions to provide information to migrants. Notably, the centre also cooperates with cultural mediators (e.g. representatives of migrant associations and communities in Slovakia) through which multicultural and community information events are organized. The centre also offers training and counselling about residency and employment of foreign workers in Slovakia to interested employers.



Kyrgyzstan – Centre for Employment of Citizens Abroad

In a more employment-focused approach, the government of Kyrgyzstan operates the [Centre for Employment of Citizens Abroad](#) under the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Migration. The centre provides Kyrgyz citizens with information on employment services, vacancy advertisements and [licensed foreign labour recruitment agencies](#). It also conducts awareness-raising activities regarding safe and legal employment of citizens abroad with pre-departure orientation for outbound migrant workers. The centre administers a free hotline for migrants who need to clarify any questions or information, with a variety of contact channels including a telephone number, messaging applications like WhatsApp and Telegram, and an online chat function on the centre's website. The dedicated website also provides other relevant information including videos related to the risks of human trafficking, trade union assistance, and the various activities of the centre.



Germany – Fair Integration Advice Centres

[Fair Integration advice centres](#) are operational in all 16 federal states in Germany for non-European Union migrants and refugees to obtain information and advice on social and employment law issues. More specifically, advice is offered to migrants in Germany who are working (including as trainees or interns) or will be starting soon and would like to obtain information proactively.

Advisors are available to communicate knowledge about rights in the German labour market to ensure fair working conditions for migrants. This includes providing advice on issues related to employment law and social legislation directly linked to the employment relationship (e.g. wages, working time, holiday, dismissal and termination, health insurance, employment agency, etc.) as well as information on local trade unions. Where advice on other specialized issues is required (e.g. related to immigration status or if legal representation by a lawyer is necessary), migrants can be referred and connected to the appropriate agency or office. Advice is free of charge and confidential. It can also be provided in the language the migrant understands, either by multilingual staff or through interpretation. Consultations are by appointment and can be offered in person and over the phone.

The advice centres exemplify a broad multi-stakeholder approach. Fair Integration is implemented within the network “Integration through Qualification (IQ)”. A variety of organisations are responsible for the implementation in the respective federal states. Fair Integration is supported and monitored by the Fair Integration Office of IQ Consult gGmbH in Duesseldorf, which is fully subsidized by the Federal Education Agency of the German Trade Union Confederation (DGB). The Fair Integration advice centres and the Fair Integration Office are funded by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) and the European Social Fund (ESF) and administered by the Federal Office of Migration and Refugees (BAMF). The Federal Ministry of Education and Research and the Federal Employment Agency in Germany as strategic implementation partners.



Canada – Migrant Worker Support Program

The Migrant Worker Support Program is aimed at helping migrant workers learn about and exercise their rights while living and working in Canada. The programme is administered by Employment and Social Development Canada and funds existing and new migrant worker support organizations across Canada to deliver interactive information and support activities.

The programme has two streams: (1) airport orientation services and (2) community-based services. Airport orientation provides on-arrival information and referral services at major international airports (Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto and Halifax). The community-based services stream is notable because it engages trusted migrant support organizations with the intent of **developing partnerships among them**. In developing these partnerships, the programme aims at harmonizing services among community organizations, leveraging networks to deter the abuse of migrant workers, and facilitating multi-stakeholder activities and information sharing and networking among funded organizations.

Funded activities are tailored to address the obstacles that migrant workers face such as isolation, language barriers and fear of retribution. These include informing workers about their rights and how to exercise them (e.g. through legal advice, case management, assistance with filing complaints or applications with government agencies); supporting workers to access information and basic services (e.g. through outreach, interpretation to access health care); assisting workers in emergency, transitional

and at-risk situations; helping workers integrate into their communities and reducing their isolation through social, cultural and recreational events; and developing information resources for migrant workers and the organizations that assist them (e.g. webinars, information sessions and brochures).



Philippines – Migrant Worker Offices and labour attaché network

Migrant Worker Offices, as established and mandated by the *Department of Migrant Workers Act (Republic Act 11641 – February 2022)* in the Philippines, exemplify one of the most expansive labour attaché networks worldwide, formerly known as Philippines Overseas Labor Office (POLO). At the time of writing, offices are operational in over 30 countries in Europe, North America, Asia and the Middle East. In terms of wider representation in the future, it is worth noting that the Act also mandates, as far as practicable, all Philippine foreign service posts to have an existing and operational Migrant Worker Office, with priority given to countries with large concentrations of Filipino migrant workers (also called overseas Filipino workers/OFWs).

Relevant activities and functions of Migrant Worker Offices include: ensuring the promotion and protection of the welfare and interests of OFWs and assisting them in all problems arising out of employer-employee relationships including violation of work contracts, nonpayment of wages and other violations; verifying employment contracts and other employment-related documents; providing social and welfare programs and services to OFWs, including social assistance, education and training, cultural services, financial management, reintegration, and entrepreneurial development services; managing cases of, and providing psychosocial services to OFWs in distress, such as victims of trafficking in persons or illegal recruitment, rape or sexual abuse, maltreatment and other forms of abuse; and providing assistance, legal or otherwise in labour, criminal, immigration and other cases filed by or against OFWs.

The role of labour attachés in information and service provision in countries of destination

Labour attachés, sometimes referred to as labour welfare officers or labour advisors, are officials posted in embassies or consulates abroad to ensure the welfare of migrant workers in the respective destination country. As such, they are well positioned to play a key role in information dissemination and service provision to migrant workers. They can do so by coordinating community activities, including with active diaspora communities, participating in traditional media programs (radio, TV, newspapers) and leveraging social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter). In terms of services, they can also provide direct counselling services, assistance and referrals for various reasons (legal, financial, psychological, etc.), and mediation in case of grievances and disputes. In some countries of employment, Labour Attachés oversee a dedicated migrant resource centre that can not only provide key information but provide multi-pronged services such as temporary shelter, training, cultural events and more.



The United States of America – Consular Partnership Program

Under US federal labour laws, all workers in the United States, regardless of immigration status, have the right to full payment of wages earned and to return home safely after the workday. However, migrant and temporary workers, particularly those in low-wage, high-risk industries may either be unaware of their rights, fear the consequences of reporting a violation, or find it intimidating to work directly with a US government agency. To reach these workers, the US Department of Labor (DOL) established partnerships between foreign consulates¹⁶ and DOL enforcement agencies. Consulates offer a safe, trusted place for workers to go for help and can locate their own nationals living and working in the United States more easily than DOL can.

Enforcement agencies such as the Wage and Hour Division (WHD) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) partner through their local field offices with nearby consulates. These agencies employ outreach and compliance assistance specialists who sponsor outreach and information events for workers, unions, employers, and faith and community-based organizations throughout the year.

Since 2004, the US DOL's Consular Partnership Program (CPP) has enabled migrant workers in the United States to know their rights and receive assistance in exercising them through confidential complaint processes. The partners collaborate to ensure workers are protected from retaliation and receive back wages owed to them, even after workers have returned to their home country. The CPP also promotes awareness campaigns for employers on their obligations under US labor laws.

The model has been replicated by other federal agencies in the United States, including the National Labor Relations Board and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, which collaborate with consulates on the laws they enforce. The program has proven successful in the United States thanks to the willingness of a substantial number of foreign consulates to collaborate and the win-win created when governments work together to uphold and enforce labor laws and standards for all workers without regard to workers' immigration status or tenure in the United States. It is worth noting that CPP is one component of DOL's broader information strategy that includes a range of resources and outreach.¹⁷

¹⁶ At the time of writing, DOL's current partners are the embassies and consulates of Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, under three-year non-binding renewable arrangements. Past partners also included Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Peru and the Philippines.

¹⁷ For example the WHD offers a number of publications translated into many different languages, including [fact sheets](#), [posters](#) and [wallet cards](#); and the OSHA similarly publishes multi-lingual [cards](#), [booklets](#), and [posters](#).

Telephone hotline and online reporting tools

Montreal Recommendation

46. Governments should support and fund the establishment of toll-free, CSO-led 24-hour anti-trafficking/labour exploitation hotlines to ensure that appropriate assistance is offered to those who need it and workers are adequately informed about grievance mechanisms, and to monitor patterns of labour exploitation.

Governments should support and fund a multilingual telephone hotline or helpline to ensure migrant workers can obtain relevant information on their rights and grievance mechanisms, as well as assistance in case of labour exploitation. In terms of accessibility, they should be **toll-free** and **available anytime** (i.e. not limited to business hours). Telephone hotlines are often supplemented by online reporting tools, information and advice request forms, or dedicated online portals or email accounts. Most recently, these tools have leveraged more interactive mobile SMS-based messaging platforms and online applications (e.g. WhatsApp, Telegram).

In general, these lines and services are operated by individuals who can provide relevant advice and are equipped to refer callers to relevant agencies for assistance, particularly in case of suspected exploitation or abuse. Interpretation services should be provided where multilingual staff are not available. Some key features of various hotlines around the world are captured below.



Jurisdiction and relevant authority	Hotline features
<p>Alberta (Canada) Ministry of Jobs, Economy and Northern Development</p>	<p>Helpline administered by the Temporary Foreign Worker Advisory Office, where staff respond to complaints, questions and requests for information, among other activities. This can include direct assistance, referrals or coordination with regulators, law enforcement and civil society organizations for individuals who have been victims of human trafficking, employment standards violations, or have been exploited by recruiters. Calls are free and confidential. Helpline has local and worldwide toll-free telephone numbers for migrant workers outside Alberta.</p>
<p>Estonia Labour Inspectorate</p>	<p>Hotline administered by legal advisors and work environment consultants from the Labour Inspectorate who also provide advice over email. Counseling services are related to inquiries on employment contracts, working and rest time, holidays, wages and other matters related to labour relations, safety at work and health workplaces. Calls are free and confidential, and responses can be provided in Estonian, Russian or English.</p>
<p>Lebanon Ministry of Labour</p>	<p>Hotline for women domestic migrant workers to report cases of mistreatment or abuse and receive help. Hotline can be access through a four-digit “quick-dial” number from within Lebanon.</p>
<p>New Zealand Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment</p>	<p>Employment New Zealand call centre can be contacted with reports or complaints about migrant exploitation during business hours (Monday to Friday, 8:00 am to 5:30pm). Callers can connect with an interpreter, available in over 180 different languages. This service is complemented by an online reporting form and complainant can receive a response by phone call, email or text/SMS.</p>

Orientation programmes

Montreal Recommendation

45. Authorities responsible for designing orientation programmes for migrant workers should ensure that they have clarity in their objectives, intended audiences and content. To be most relevant, content should be tailored to individual destination countries and include information about migrants' rights, including access to remedy at home as well as in countries of destination. Governments may wish to allow workers' representatives, including CSOs [civil society organizations] and trade unions, to input into the design of pre-departure programme content as well as to deliver it. The participation of migrant returnees in programmes has also been highlighted as a model of good practice.

Governments in countries of origin and destination alike should invest in orientation programmes for migrant workers. These are crucial opportunities to share relevant information on rights, including access to remedy. Globally these programmes go by different names, often depending on the breadth of content: orientation workshops, training courses and briefing sessions. Their length accordingly varies significantly, from a few hours, to one- to two-day formats, to more intensive week(s)-long commitments. In general, orientation programmes educate prospective and current migrant workers on working and living conditions in the destination country and their rights at home and abroad. More intensive training courses tend to focus on practical vocational and technical skills, including language proficiency.

A special feature of this information modality is that it facilitates an interactive **learning environment** for migrant workers where they can pose questions with time for discussion and reflection. Content and delivery can also be designed to include former or returnee migrant workers as guest speakers and/or resource persons to share first-hand knowledge, experiences and testimonies.

Orientation programmes should be designed in a way that responds to the changing learning needs of migrant workers throughout the labour migration cycle: from **pre-employment** and **pre-departure** to **post-arrival**, **pre-return**, and **return** and **reintegration**, when applicable. This ensures that orientation is delivered over the trajectory of the recruitment and migration journey. Multiple sessions over time also creates more opportunities for social support among other migrant workers and their families, which is often critical for migrant well-being. Governments are encouraged to work together with counterparts in countries of origin and destination and other stakeholders to jointly design and develop this holistic approach, highlighted in the example of the Comprehensive Information and Orientation Programme's approach below.

Comprehensive Information and Orientation Programme

Over the years, IOM has worked closely with governments and non-governmental stakeholders to develop the [Comprehensive Information and Orientation Programme](#) (CIOP) approach. CIOP was developed as part of an inter-regional initiative implemented under the patronage of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, with financial support from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation as well as the United Arab Emirates Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation.¹⁸ At the core of this approach is the strong advocacy that tailored and timely gender-responsive information should be available throughout the labour migration cycle in order to empower migrant workers to effectively navigate life and work abroad, access assistance and support and meet their financial goals. These information initiatives should also be harmonized between countries of origin, transit and destination to effectively address information needs and combat misinformation.

Through four orientation programmes that span the labour migration cycle, IOM supports governments and other stakeholders to conceptualize and deliver orientation programmes that are responsive to target groups' needs, whilst prioritizing sustainability. Under CIOP, IOM has developed regional guides of orientation programmes, country-specific programmes, information, education and communication material, components of an orientation management system and trained CIOP master trainers in a number of different contexts.

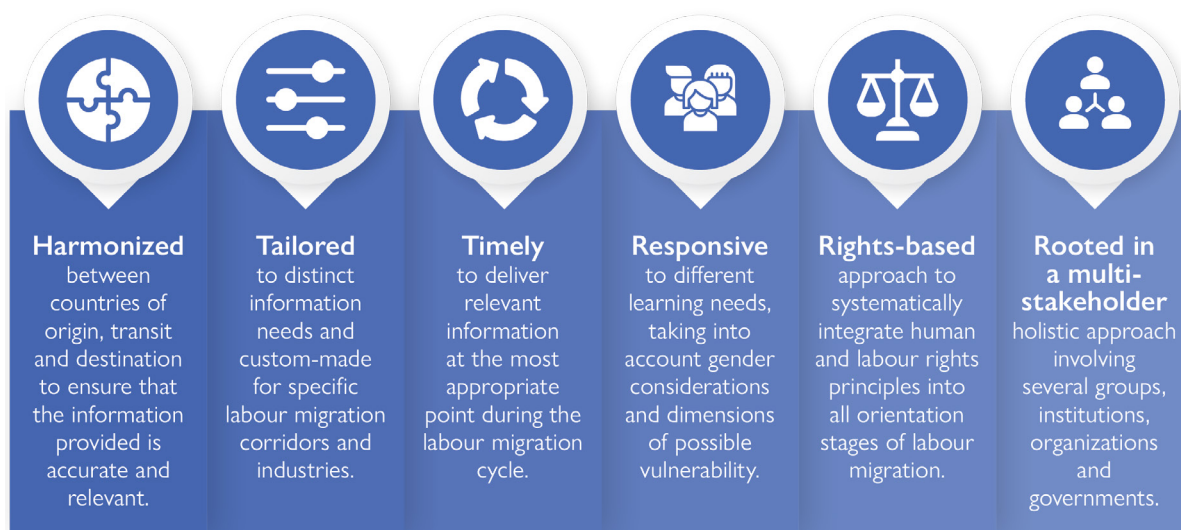


The CIOP approach aims to enhance transparency of information, protect workers from risks of exploitation and abuse, support prospective workers' informed decision-making, and reduce barriers at the workplace while promoting social integration. The CIOP also uniquely emphasizes that orientation programmes should not only be vehicles to disseminate information, but also promote ethical recruitment, skills development and social protection.¹⁹

¹⁸ CIOP was originally spearheaded by the Government of the Philippines and later moved through the Colombo Process and was formally adopted as a regional initiative by the Abu Dhabi Dialogue. For more on regional consultative processes like the Colombo Process and the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, see [Chapter 4](#) of the IRIS Handbook on Inter-State cooperation.

¹⁹ For more on how to incorporate ethical recruitment into new or existing orientation programmes, with particular relevance to trainers, labour recruiters and employers, please see IOM IRIS Global guidance for Comprehensive Information and Orientation Programmes (forthcoming).

Broadly, the CIOP approach advocates orientation to be:



A few other global examples of orientation programmes are profiled below.



Ethiopia – Pre-Departure Orientation

Under Ethiopia’s Overseas Employment (Amendment) Proclamation No. 1246/2021 (No. 923/2016), the Ministry of Labour and Skills (MoLS) in Ethiopia is mandated to provide pre-employment and pre-departure orientations to interested and outbound migrant workers. Orientation sessions generally take place over two days at dedicated centres located close to the capital region as well as throughout the country. They serve as the main information channel used by the Government, with the curriculum and modes of delivery prepared by the MoLS.

To strengthen these sessions and address the unique needs of women migrant domestic workers, gender-sensitive related resources for migrants and trainers alike are also available. For example, pre-departure orientations sessions for this group are guided by the *Pre-Departure Training Manual for Ethiopian Migrant Domestic Workers*, published in 2016 by the MoLS and with the support of the European Union, the ILO and UN-Women. The training manual is accompanied by 21 video modules; a modality that not only benefits workers located in rural areas but can also serve as an alternative to in-person sessions if required (e.g. during a pandemic). The manual has nine core modules covering topics like travel advisories and airport custom procedures; working relationships with employers or sponsors; labour rights and responsibilities; health and occupational safety issues; protection from sexual violence; managing and sending money back home; stress management and dispute settlement; destination countries’ religious and cultural practices and legal conditions; and returning home.



Mexico and UFCW Canada – Migrant Workers Representation Pilot

The [Migrant Workers Representation Pilot](#) is an innovative example of collaboration between a trade union based in a country of destination (United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Canada) and governments in a country of origin (Mexico). UFCW Canada maintains a physical Agricultural Support Centre in Leamington, Ontario, a hub for many migrant farmworkers in the greenhouse sector.

The pilot project engages migrant workers from Mexico participating in the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program, a long-standing seasonal labour migration program in Canada. Training on health, safety and labour rights is delivered by UFCW representatives to migrants before, during and after their work term in Canada. Once in Canada, migrant workers connect with union representatives who can provide advocacy supports and solidarity building opportunities. At the time of writing, the pilot is ongoing and running from August 2022 to October 2024.



Vanuatu – Famili I Redi Programme

The *Famili I Redi* (Family Ready) programme is a five-day pre-departure workshop to prepare and support ni-Vanuatu migrant workers destined for Australia and New Zealand, as well as their family members (i.e. partners or other close family members). The programme creates a training and education environment for migrant families to prepare for migration together. By emphasizing labour migration as a family journey rather than only focusing on one individual, this approach empowers the whole family with access to an array of tools, strategies, skills and knowledge. Its innovation lies in proactively addressing the vulnerabilities of changing family roles, dynamics and stress caused by long distance relationships and the strain that labour migration can place on separated families.

Participants learn about maintaining healthy family relationships, communicating with children while overseas, gender-based violence prevention and family financial management. The curriculum seeks to maximize the socioeconomic benefits of labour migration and reduce the risk of gender-based violence through sessions on emotional intelligence, non-violent communication, stress management and constructive decision-making, as well as budgeting and family financial and remittance management skills. This approach can promote respectful relationships and challenge harmful gender norms. Modules also include practical recommendations on healthy behaviours regarding nutrition, alcohol consumption and COVID-19. Over 2021–2022, 17 workshops were conducted in two provinces in both urban and rural environments with nearly 500 participants. The *Famili I Redi* programme is jointly developed and implemented by Vanuatu's Department of Labour and Employment Services, IOM and World Vision.



Singapore – Settling-in Programmes

In Singapore, the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) mandates post-arrival orientation programmes for migrant workers, referred to as “Settling-in Programmes.” For example, non-Malaysian migrant workers in the construction, manufacturing, marine shipyard and processing industries are required to complete the one-day [Settling-in Programme for Work Permit Holders](#) within two weeks of arriving in Singapore. Participants learn about employment laws and rights (including work injury compensation), local practices and social norms, remittances and unlicensed money lenders, primary care plans and medical centres for migrant workers, and mental health. The cost of the orientation is borne by the employer and it is conducted in the worker’s native language (offered in English, Bengali, Burmese, Mandarin, Tamil, Thai and Vietnamese). The programme is conducted by the Migrant Worker Centre (a bipartite initiative of the National Trades Union Congress and the Singapore National Employers’ Federation), on behalf of the MOM.

For first-time migrant domestic workers, a distinct [Settling-in Programme](#) must be completed within seven days of the workers’ arrival in Singapore, excluding Sundays and public holidays. The one-day programme must also be completed before the migrant domestic worker commences work with the employer and it is similarly offered in the worker’s native language, with costs borne by the employer. Content focuses on adapting to working and living in Singapore, workplace safety, conditions of employment, and relationships and stress management. The programme is administered by training providers accredited by the MOM.



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