



Syrian refugee children in Turkey get ready for class at the SSG, a multi-service center supported by IOM. © IOM 2016/M. MOHAMMED

Migrant inclusion has always been a vital, if not complex, part of the migration phenomenon. With the unprecedented growth in the absolute number of migrants over the last 50 years, anticipating and responding to migrants' needs has become more difficult for governments around the world, as the pace of migration speeds and the profile of 'newcomers' changes rapidly.

More and more, migrants are of diverse origin, education backgrounds, family size and legal status, meaning that public services and capacities must be more broadly "diversity proofed". This is particularly important in light of the greater politicization of migration alongside increases worldwide in polarized politics and exclusionary movements.

Nuanced and context-specific solutions that address both specific and broader issues among migrants and those in receiving communities are needed. As mobility increases alongside broader social, economic and environmental changes, governments and others need to help both newcomers and longer-standing residents gain the skills to adapt and participate in meaningful social interactions. There is a need to invest in policies and initiatives that celebrate diversity and are anchored to the priorities, rights and responsibilities of both migrants and host communities for more inclusive and cohesive societies.

## IOM's Response: DISC Initiative

**IOM's Joint Global Initiative on Diversity, Inclusion and Social Cohesion (DISC Initiative)** is a multi-year, flexible and demanded initiative to enhance IOM's capacity and programming to support Member States and relevant partners in the areas of migrant integration, inclusion and social cohesion. The DISC Initiative serves as a platform to share, learn, develop and implement innovative strategies and interventions that tap into the existing assets and potential of both migrants and communities. It aims to:

- Promote a shared understanding and whole-of-society approach to migrant inclusion and social cohesion
- Develop the skills and capacities of different stakeholders to facilitate inclusion and social cohesion
- Foster an evidence-based and unifying narrative on the contributions of both migrants and communities

## The DISC Initiative proposes an integrative approach to achieve these objectives through:

### Creating a global 'community of practice'



The areas of migrant inclusion and social cohesion are in constant development. The DISC initiative will systematize and consolidate approaches and lessons learned, while ensuring that practitioners and policymakers have enhanced access to programmatic and policy innovation and adequate means for analyzing and sharing good practices.

### Creating a global 'community of inquiry and innovation'



Research will play an important role at different stages of the initiative to promote evidence-based learning and innovation. The DISC Initiative will inspire new solutions to the complex challenges faced by practitioners and policy makers through initiating innovative and collaborative projects across sectoral divides, which tap into the potential and assets of both migrants and communities as a whole.

### Creating a 'unifying narrative'



The DISC Initiative will seek to develop a unifying narrative that recognizes migrants and local populations as important stakeholders in creating a common future. Building coalitions with non-traditional partners and 'bridge-builders' from local and migrant communities will be critical for a more open and fact-based discourse that recognizes unity among diversity.

## Global and Institutional Developments on Inclusion and Social Cohesion



The areas of inclusion and social cohesion have gained considerable traction in various multilateral processes. In line with the principle of "leaving no one behind," the 2030 Agenda emphasizes the need to foster equity and inclusiveness and to promote the positive contribution of migrants (SDGs 4, 10 & 16).



The Global Compact for Migration (GCM) dedicates a specific objective on empowering migrants and societies to realize full inclusion and social cohesion (Objective 16), recognizing that integration is a shared responsibility between migrants and their local communities.



The IOM Strategic Vision 2019-2023 articulates that the development of a broader concept of community inclusion in a wide variety of contexts - and for a deeply heterogeneous set of migrants, government capacities and migration patterns - will be key to success.

As part the stocktaking process of the DISC Initiative, [a series of consultations and other activities](#) have been organized to advance an organization-wide understanding and approach to inclusion and social cohesion and enhance IOM's capacity and recognition as a strategic partner in this area.

 [Video of the Pilot Workshop.](#)

Sep 5-6 | Rome 

## First Strategic Prioritization Workshop on Inclusion and Social Cohesion

The first-ever global workshop in this field served as a strategic visioning exercise to identify the initial elements of IOM's institutional approach.

Participants from Headquarters, Regional Offices and Country Offices exchanged experiences, resources and lessons learned, and built a common baseline of their understanding on fostering socially cohesive societies for migrants and settled communities.



Oct 16 | Geneva 

## Second Strategic Prioritization Workshop on Inclusion and Social Cohesion

It built upon the discussions and outcomes of the pilot strategic workshop in Rome to develop a shared understanding of the field and assessing IOM's positioning and comparative advantage.

Going forward, the workshops' outcomes will inform the development of an institutional model on inclusion and social cohesion to increase technical capacity of IOM and build strategic partnerships with Member States and other external stakeholders.



Oct 31 - Nov 20 | UK 

## Series of 5 Pilot Trainings on the UK Home Office Indicators of Integration Framework

With British local authorities, national government institutions and officers of the Regional Strategic Migration Partnerships, this aimed to promote the understanding and use of the UK Indicators of Integration in the formulation of local government policies on integration of migrants and refugees.

A Training Handbook on the use of the Indicators of Integration Framework in local policy planning will be developed.



**200+**  
IOM staff  
& other  
stakeholders  
(in total)

Stimulating inquiry  
and innovation

Creating a unifying  
narrative

Creating a global  
community of practice

Oct 14-15 | Geneva 



## Technical workshop on "Promoting Good Relations: Enhancing IOM's social cohesion programming"

This brought together country offices engaged in social cohesion programming, relevant experts from Regional Offices and Headquarters, and academics specializing in inter-group theory and related fields.

Participants presented the diversity of their respective social cohesion activities, explored collaboration with the research community to enhance IOM's work, and determine how IOM can best use both research and results of assessments to innovate in the field of social cohesion.

Oct 28-30 | Madrid 



## Migrant Training Focal Points' Workshop

This served as a platform to exchange best practices and strategies among missions that currently have pre-departure and post-arrival programs for migrants of all legal pathways in the countries of asylum and destination.

With a focus on migrant trainings, participants discussed how we better link these programs and services for migrants' successful inclusion in the societies.

## Other initiatives

- Repository of Projects, Publications, Mapping and Consolidation of Innovative Approaches/Practices: <http://tinyurl.com/DISCprojects>
- Guidance Note on Intergroup Contact Theory;
- Pilot Evaluations on Social Cohesion at the Global Migration Film Festival; and
- Global Photo Competition and Exhibition on Migrant Entrepreneurship.

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