

India-EU Common Agenda on Migration and Mobility

Seminar on Talent Mobility

14-15 June 2019, Pune, Maharashtra

**Introductory remarks by Dagmar Walter, ILO Director,
Decent Work Team for South Asia and Country Office for India**

Honourable Secretary and Deputy Ambassador

Our esteemed constituents/guests from Government of India, the European Union, Member States and employers' representatives

Our ecosystem partners – Mr Girbane, Director General, MCCIA, and Mr Kiran and Mr Prasad, NASSCOM

Our valued stakeholders, subject-matter specialists, friends from the media, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to be part of this seminar on India-EU talent mobility with you here today.

The ILO is a specialised UN agency, the only one with a constitutional mandate to include the perspective of and dialogue with employers, workers and governments in policy decision making. This year marks a historical milestone as the International Labour Organization celebrates its hundredth anniversary with the culmination of its Future of Work initiative. This initiative, focuses on examining the impact of transformative global drivers on the world of work, and how we may respond to the challenges to create the future of work we want.

With the global emergence of new forms of work, shifts in demographics as well as labour markets, emerging technologies and increasing attempts at addressing the future business demands; it is well-established that transnational labour migration will continue to play a key role.

The World Economic Forum leaders at Davos, which saw the presence of 140 Indian corporate leaders in 2019, recognised that migration is a central issue in world affairs and will increasingly shape key matters on the Globalization 4.0 agenda.

The ILO is central to this growing multilateral world of work as it provides an institutional framework of establishing standards to safeguard from a vicious cycle of eroding working conditions and a race to the bottom in an international economy. Instead we can generate a

positive cycle where working conditions play a conducive role for productivity and competitiveness, creating sustainable businesses.

The ILO constituents (employers, workers and governments) have adopted two specific migrant-worker conventions and several related conventions, e.g. on social security, and occupational health and safety.

The EU and India are both very central to this global discourse on migration; India is a large origin country for migrant workers, many of whom are high-skilled workers that are in demand across the EU.

Our discussions in this seminar, spread over the course of two days, provides us an opportunity to collectively reflect on the strategic relationship between India and the European Union, focusing on the benefits of talent mobility - high-skilled workers and entrepreneurs, within this corridor. The complementarity of the EU and Indian labour market demands, labour surplus and joint policy priorities, present a promising case of well-governed migration between India and the EU, mutually beneficial to the future of both.

Within this context, the ILO initiated bilateral discussions with the India-EU private sector last year in Brussels. Following on from there, this seminar dives deep into sector-specific policy discussions in three critical industrial sectors: Information Technology, Automotive industry and start-ups.

Information technology sector witnesses one of the most significant flows of high-skilled workers from India to the EU, with 30 per cent of the Indian IT outsourcing revenue generated through this. The increased need for digital skills across sectors, has created a great demand for the Indian IT worker and their services across the world, including Europe. .

The automotive industry is thriving with international expansion. European companies increasingly locating themselves in India tapping into India's emerging economy have resulted in contributing to India's rise on the global charts to becoming the fourth largest market in the automotive industry and an export hub for global brands. Implications for high-skilled mobility underscore the future growth of this industry.

The other perhaps most impactful migrants are the global entrepreneurs. Start-ups are at the forefront of the world of work, with new innovations and jobs being created in the process. A much sought after group, these people need to traverse boundaries with ease to maximise and germinate their ideas.

Within this context, in today's discussions, we look forward to hearing the perspective and voice of these sectors of the industry; to understand from the practitioners' on the benefits and challenges of talent mobility in the India-EU corridor in the present and future world of work. We also view these interactive discussions as a means towards sharing of good practices, policy initiatives by the governments and innovative ideas and recommendations for enhancing high-skilled mobility.

Business mechanism survey 2015 showed that only 27% of organisations participate in public debate and 17% have been able to influence national migration policies. These numbers illustrate the pressing need for business to be part of migration policy dialogues. We hope that this dialogue, amongst the very first being held in India exclusively with the business community, will continue to contribute towards a better governance of migration, which is beneficial to countries, businesses, migrants and their communities.

We are thankful to the European Union and the Government of India for entrusting ILO with the responsibility of supporting their common agenda on migration and mobility through this seminar.

I also take this opportunity to thank Mahratta Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture and NASSCOM for being the ecosystem partners for this consultation and sharing our efforts in ensuring a space for policy interests of the employers in consultative processes.

It gives me immense pleasure to see stakeholders from the bilateral employers' organizations, business chambers, and technical experts participate in this forum. A special thanks go to my ILO colleagues who compromised personal agendas to make this consultation happen and offer you a platform for meaningful exchange and generation of some key policy recommendations in order to gain further benefits from talent mobility in the EU-India corridor.

On behalf of the ILO, thank you for being here. I wish you a productive dialogue.

Thank you!