

How Civil Society is Shifting Migration Narratives: From Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships to Ethical Storytelling

- **Leading partner:** GFMD Civil Society Mechanism
- **Member States:** USA, GFMD Working Group on Narratives
- **International Organisation:** ICMPD

Background: Narratives are at the heart of what we do in all areas of migration, yet migrants themselves rarely have an opportunity to shape those narratives. For professionals working in migration, and civil society working on the ground with migrants and refugees, it is imperative to recognise the impact our actions, words and images have on public perceptions about migration and their influence on the success of migration policies. For migrants, having their experiences and concerns heard and considered by the broader public and policymakers is central to advancing their broader human rights, participating in their host society, and tackling xenophobia.

The GFMD Civil Society Mechanism has been actively promoting more balanced narratives on migration and emphasising the critical role of civil society in addressing harmful narratives and stereotypes about migrant communities. Through campaigns such as It Takes a Community (ITAC) initiated by the GFMD Working Group on Narratives and Public Perceptions on Migration, we have highlighted the need to address structural issues and root causes of negative perceptions of migration, including racist migration policies and practices.

In line with this work, the GFMD Civil Society Mechanism proposes a side event during the 14th GFMD Summit focusing on **multi-dimensional and multi-stakeholder partnerships in balancing public perceptions about migration and migrants**. The objective of the side event is to inspire reflection on the key ingredients **for successful civil society partnerships in the context of promoting balanced narratives on migration**. By combining the element of partnership with ethical storytelling, the side-event aims to highlight how actions and multi-stakeholder initiatives can be translated into words, images and actions that are true to migrants' stories and realities. **Case studies and best practices from projects around the world using different forms of partnerships and communication tools** will be presented to give migrants the platform to have their voices heard. We recognise the value of collaboration with the different actors involved in shaping narratives on migration, including, among others, local and national authorities, international organisations, media, academia and migrants themselves and their respective competence and capacities in achieving this goal.

Format:

1. **Spotlight talks:** This section aims to set the scene of the side event by bringing in a mix of perspectives from civil society and local authorities to present reflections.
2. **Action-oriented panel:** focus on ethical storytelling strategies, use of words and images and communication for migration policy.