



PACE MUN 2025  
CONFLICTS TO CONSENSUS

# BACKGROUND GUIDE

COMMITTEE: SOCHUM

AGENDA: Protecting the Rights of Migrants and Refugees

Amidst Rising Nationalism and Restrictive Immigration Policies



## **LETTER FROM THE CHAIRS**

Dear Delegates,

we are delighted to extend our warmest greetings and invite you to participate in the Model United Nation, As Chairs of the SOCHUM committee, we are enthusiastic about the opportunity to engage in substantive discussions, deliberations, and negotiations on pressing global issues. The agenda for the session will be centered on Protecting the rights of migrants and refugees amidst rising nationalism and restrictive immigration policies. Our aim for this session is to foster diplomatic dialogue, promote critical thinking, and cultivate innovative solutions to the challenges facing the international community. We believe that your expertise and dedication will greatly contribute to the success of the committee session. To ensure a productive and enriching experience for all participants, we encourage you to thoroughly research your assigned country's stance on the agenda items and familiarize yourself with the Rules of Procedure. Additionally, we invite you to engage in pre-conference discussions and collaboration with fellow delegates to explore potential strategies and build consensus. If you have any questions or require assistance in preparing for the session, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. We are here to support you every step of the way and facilitate a rewarding MUN experience. We eagerly anticipate your active participation and insightful contributions to the Model United Nations session . Together, let us strive to embody the spirit of diplomacy, cooperation, and global citizenship.

Warm regards,

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## **INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE**

The Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee (SOCHUM), also known as the Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly, was established in 1945 following the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Its primary focus is on ensuring that fundamental human rights are upheld for all people across the world. These rights include the right to life, freedom of cultural expression, political participation, protection of children's rights, and the promotion of social progress.

SOCHUM also addresses concerns affecting vulnerable groups, such as the elderly, persons with disabilities, crime victims, and individuals impacted by drugs. The committee strives to develop peaceful and cooperative solutions to global social, humanitarian, and cultural challenges. It examines human rights situations, consults with experts, and collaborates with other UN bodies to draft resolutions that guide member states in improving their national practices. Additionally, SOCHUM conducts studies and initiatives that foster international cooperation and promote fundamental freedoms for all.



## **A DELVE INTO THE AGENDA:**

### **I. Introduction**

In a rapidly globalizing yet increasingly divided world, migration and refugee protection have emerged as defining issues of the 21st century. Over 280 million people currently live outside their country of birth, and more than 36 million are recognized as refugees or asylum seekers, according to UNHCR data.

However, alongside these movements of people seeking safety, opportunity, and dignity, the world is witnessing the troubling rise of nationalism, xenophobia, and restrictive immigration policies. From fortified borders and detention centers to tightened asylum laws and anti-immigrant rhetoric, these trends threaten to undermine decades of international cooperation on human rights and humanitarian protection.

Within this complex landscape, the Social, Cultural, and Humanitarian Committee (SOCUM) is tasked with one of the most sensitive and critical challenges of our time: ensuring the protection of migrants and refugees amidst growing nationalist sentiment and restrictive immigration frameworks.

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### **II. Background and Context**

#### **A. Historical Overview**

The global community's commitment to protecting displaced persons was solidified in the aftermath of World War II, leading to the creation of the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, cornerstone instruments defining the rights of refugees and the legal obligations of states.

Over the decades, migration has been shaped by wars, colonialism, economic inequality, and climate change. The end of the Cold War, globalization, and advances in transportation have accelerated cross-border mobility — connecting economies but also creating new challenges for sovereignty and social integration.

In recent years, major crises such as the Syrian Civil War, Afghanistan's



instability, the Venezuelan exodus, and climate-induced displacements in South Asia and the Pacific have reignited debates over state responsibility, international solidarity, and border ethics.

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## B. Current Situation

The rise of nationalist and populist movements across many regions has dramatically influenced migration policies. Governments increasingly prioritize domestic security, national identity, and economic protectionism, often at the expense of humanitarian commitments.

Europe has faced political backlash from migration inflows, with countries like Hungary and Poland tightening borders, while others such as Germany, France, and Belgium push for a shared EU asylum mechanism.

The United States, Canada, and Mexico navigate complex debates over border security and refugee resettlement in the context of the Americas' mixed migration flows.

Australia and New Zealand balance humanitarian responsibilities with strict maritime border controls.

Asian nations including India, China, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia, and the Philippines confront large-scale internal and cross-border migration driven by both economic opportunity and climate vulnerability.

Turkey, hosting millions of Syrian refugees, and Venezuela, facing mass emigration, illustrate both sides of the crisis — as host and source nations.

This global diversity of migration experiences underscores the need for coordinated, compassionate, and rights-based solutions.

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## III. Key Issues and Challenges

### 1. Restrictive Immigration Policies and Border Enforcement

The tightening of visa systems, offshore detention centers, and deportation measures has made migration increasingly dangerous, often forcing individuals into irregular and unsafe routes.



## 2. Rise of Nationalism and Anti-Immigrant Sentiment

Political rhetoric portraying migrants as threats to security, culture, or economy fuels discrimination and violence, undermining social cohesion and democratic values.

## 3. Legal and Humanitarian Gaps

Many migrants — particularly those displaced by climate change or economic necessity — fall outside the definitions of “refugee,” leaving them unprotected under international law.

## 4. Burden-Sharing and Global Responsibility

The unequal distribution of refugee populations, with a few countries hosting the majority, highlights the need for fair and sustainable burden-sharing mechanisms.

## 5. Integration and Social Inclusion

Refugees and migrants often face barriers to employment, education, and healthcare. Successful integration requires inclusive policies, intercultural dialogue, and community participation.---

## IV. International Frameworks and Efforts

The 1951 Refugee Convention and 1967 Protocol – Defining refugee rights and the principle of non-refoulement (protection from forced return).

The Global Compact on Refugees (2018) – Aims to improve international cooperation and equitable responsibility-sharing.

The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (2018) – Encourages humane, coordinated migration governance.

UNHCR, IOM, and OHCHR – Key agencies supporting states in implementing rights-based migration management and humanitarian aid.

Despite these frameworks, effective implementation remains inconsistent due to political resistance, lack of resources, and domestic pressures.



## V. Conclusion

Migration is not a crisis — it is a defining feature of humanity's shared history and future. As nationalism and exclusionary politics threaten to erode global solidarity, SOGUM stands at a crucial crossroads. Delegates are called upon to craft solutions that honor the principles of compassion, justice, and shared responsibility, reaffirming the United Nations' founding vision of peace and human dignity for all.

Through open dialogue, creative diplomacy, and mutual understanding, the committee seeks to shape a world where borders may define geography, but not humanity.



## **PAST ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE COMMITTEE**

SOCHUM's work relating to migrants and refugees demonstrates a continuous effort to uphold human rights in the face of restrictive trends:

- **Adopting Resolutions:** SOCHUM regularly drafts and approves resolutions that are then adopted by the General Assembly. These texts:
  - **Reaffirm International Law:** They frequently recall and reaffirm the obligations of states under international human rights law, refugee law (like the **1951 Refugee Convention** and its **1967 Protocol**), and the **International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families**.
  - **Address Specific Vulnerabilities:** Resolutions often focus on particularly vulnerable groups, such as **women migrant workers, children**, and victims of **trafficking in persons**.
  - **Support Global Frameworks:** They support the implementation of non-binding but influential agreements like the **Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration** and the **Global Compact on Refugees**, both of which aim to enhance international cooperation and uphold migrant and refugee rights.
- **Responding to Restrictive Policies and Xenophobia:**
  - **Condemning Harmful Narratives:** The Committee has expressed concern over the spread of **dehumanizing and harmful narratives, disinformation, misinformation, and hate speech** about migrants and migration, which often fuels xenophobia and supports restrictive national policies.
  - **Highlighting Risks of Restrictive Measures:** Through reports and dialogues with UN Special Rapporteurs (like the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants), SOCHUM addresses how restrictive state policies—such as those focusing on border control, criminalizing irregular migration, and practices like **pushbacks**—increase the vulnerability of migrants and refugees to abuse, exploitation, and violations of their rights, including the principle of **non-refoulement** (not forcing people back to a country where they face serious threats).



- **Urging Rights-Based Responses:** SOCHUM promotes approaches that prioritize human rights, calling on states to expand **legal pathways** for safe and regular migration and to ensure that asylum procedures are **fair and fast**.
- **Engaging with UN Agencies and Experts:** The committee holds interactive dialogues with officials, including the **UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)**, the **Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants**, and the Chair of the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers. These sessions serve as a mechanism to bring urgent concerns about the impact of restrictive policies and rising nationalism to the attention of member states.



## **THINGS TO RESEARCH ABOUT**

1. Current Global Situation of Migrants and Refugees – Statistics on displacement, migration flows, and refugee crises across different regions (e.g., Middle East, Africa, Europe, and the Americas).
2. Causes of Migration – Political instability, conflict, persecution, climate change, poverty, and economic inequality driving migration.
3. Nationalism and Immigration Policies – How the rise of nationalism and populist politics has led to restrictive immigration laws, border controls, and anti-immigrant sentiment.
4. International Legal Frameworks – Major treaties and conventions like the 1951 Refugee Convention, the 1967 Protocol, and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration.
5. Role of the United Nations and SOCHUM – Past UN resolutions, initiatives, and actions taken to safeguard migrant and refugee rights
6. Human Rights Concerns – Violations faced by migrants and refugees such as detention, deportation, discrimination, exploitation, and lack of access to healthcare or education.
7. Regional and Country-Specific Case Studies – Examples of countries implementing restrictive or inclusive migration policies, and their social and political impacts.
8. NGOs and International Organizations – Contributions of organizations like UNHCR, IOM, Amnesty International, and Human Rights Watch in protecting migrant and refugee rights.
9. Socioeconomic Impacts – The effect of migration on host and origin countries, including labor markets, social services, and integration challenges.
10. Possible Solutions and International Cooperation – Strategies to balance national sovereignty with human rights protection, promote safe migration, and foster global cooperation.



## **QUESTIONS A RESOLUTION SHOULD ADDRESS**

### **1. Protection and Human Rights**

- How can the international community ensure the protection of migrants' and refugees' fundamental human rights in countries with restrictive immigration policies?
- What measures can be taken to prevent discrimination, xenophobia, and hate crimes fueled by nationalism?
- How can access to basic needs (healthcare, education, housing, employment) be guaranteed for migrants and refugees?

### **2. Legal and Policy Frameworks**

- How can existing international legal frameworks—such as the 1951 Refugee Convention and the Global Compact for Migration—be strengthened or better implemented?
- Should there be new UN mechanisms or amendments to ensure accountability for countries violating refugee and migrant rights?
- How can nations balance border security and national sovereignty with international human rights obligations?

### **3. International Cooperation**

- How can states improve coordination and information sharing on migration management and refugee protection?
- What role should regional organizations (EU, AU, ASEAN, etc.) play in addressing cross-border migration challenges?
- How can burden-sharing and international solidarity be improved to support host countries with high migrant populations?

### **4. Social and Economic Integration**

- What strategies can promote the social inclusion and economic integration of migrants and refugees into host societies?
- How can education and awareness campaigns reduce stigma and xenophobia among local populations?
- What programs can help migrants and refugees contribute to local economies and development?



## 5. Crisis Response and Humanitarian Aid

- How can international aid and humanitarian response mechanisms be made faster and more effective in refugee crises?
- What steps can be taken to ensure safe and legal migration pathways and prevent human trafficking or smuggling?
- How can technology and data collection be used ethically to improve refugee registration, protection, and resettlement?

## 6. Accountability and Monitoring

- What monitoring systems can be established to evaluate countries' compliance with refugee and migrant rights?
- How can civil society and NGOs be better involved in ensuring transparency and accountability?



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**GOOD LUCK  
DELEGATE!**

See you at the Conference!

