

Evaluation of IRCC's Memberships in International Migration Forums and Organizations

Research and Evaluation Branch

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Acronyms

CAD	Canadian Dollars
FY	Fiscal Year
GFMD	Global Forum on Migration and Development
G&C	Grants and Contributions
IGC	Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees
IIR	International and Intergovernmental Relations Branch
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IMCBP	International Migration Capacity Building Program
IRCC	Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
MIFO	Memberships in International Forums and Organizations
MPDP	Migration Policy Development Program
OGD	Other Government Departments
RCM	Regional Conference on Migration
T&C	Terms and Conditions
TCM/MPI	Transatlantic Council on Migration – Migration Policy Institute
UN	United Nations

Executive summary

The purpose of this evaluation was to assess the relevance, benefits and influence of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's (IRCC) memberships in international migration forums and organizations. This evaluation was conducted in fulfillment under the *Financial Administration Act* and the 2016 Treasury Board Policy and Directive on Results to evaluate ongoing grants and contributions with five-year average actual expenditures of less than \$5 million per year. The evaluation was guided by the draft expected outcomes of these memberships and covered the period since the last evaluation in 2013 to 2021.

Brief overview of MIFO

IRCC engages in international migration forums and organizations to reinforce Canada's collaboration with international stakeholders and partners, advance Canada's priorities, and share Canadian best practices. IRCC funds memberships in the following international migration forums and organizations on behalf of the Government of Canada:

- Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD)
- Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees (IGC)
- Regional Conference on Migration (RCM)
- Transatlantic Council on Migration – Migration Policy Institute (TCM/MPI)
- International Organization for Migration (IOM)

All but one of IRCC's memberships in international migration forums and organizations are funded through the International Migration Capacity Building Program (IMCBP), a grant program that seeks to advance migration policy development and research to further advance Canada's goals of promoting international protection and managed migration. The IOM membership is administered through the Assessed Contribution to the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Conclusions and recommendations

The evaluation found that there was a perceived need for IRCC to fund Canada's membership in international migration forums and organizations, and overall, the international migration forums and organizations provide a good value for money. While benefits varied at the individual forum or organization level, Canada has contributed to international positions through its membership in the international forums and organizations.

The evaluation also found that while the information and knowledge gained from participating in international migration forums and organizations is generally of use to Canada and to IRCC, the evaluation found room for improvement in communicating information gained from the various memberships in international migration forums and organizations, to ensure that all potential parties can benefit from the knowledge gained. In addition, the evaluation found that there is room to improve the collection of outcomes and the dissemination of forum and organization information. While grant arrangements for each international migration forum and organization highlight the objective of Canada's memberships, the Department does not have a performance measurement strategy to report on the outcomes of the memberships overall.

In response to the evaluation findings and in support of continued improvement of MIFO, this report concludes by proposing two recommendations for the program area to consider.

Recommendation 1: IRCC should develop a performance measurement framework for the international memberships to reconfirm their expected outcomes and develop corresponding indicators and measurement tools.

Recommendation 2: In support of strengthening the dissemination of results of the participation in the international organizations and forums, IRCC should:

- a) **Implement a central repository of information accessible to all IRCC employees; and**
- b) **create and implement a communication strategy to share and promote information.**

Evaluation of IRCC’s Memberships in International Forums and Organizations – Management Response Action Plan (MRAP)

The Evaluation of IRCC’s Memberships in International Forums and Organizations and the Evaluation of the International Migration Capacity Building Program (IMCBP)-Funded Projects were conducted in tandem, recognizing that the overall funding mechanism and program outcomes are linked together. As a result, the respective recommendations and action items were compiled in one MRAP document. The same MRAP can be found in the Evaluation of IMCBP-Funded Projects.

Reconfirm program purpose

The broad purpose of the IMCBP-Funded Projects Component, which is intended to allow for a variety of initiatives to be eligible for funding, has diluted the intent of the program, making it difficult to ascertain the need that the program is fulfilling. Presently, the IMCBP-funded projects are contributing to the achievement of migration diplomacy and international bilateral and multilateral relations. The Department would benefit from a review of the purpose and program theory of the IMCBP-Funded Projects Component to better align how the program is operating with the need it is best suited to fulfill.

Recommendation 1: IRCC should review the purpose and program theory for the IMCBP-Funded Projects Component to ensure that the program resources are being used strategically

Response: IRCC agrees with this recommendation.

With the transition of the Migration Policy Development Program to the IMCBP in 2019, and the associated increase in funding, the role of the IMCBP within the Department has evolved.

In recognition of this evolution, the Department agrees that reassessing the IMCBP’s program theory and further clarifying its objectives is timely, and will support the strategic use of funds. Part of this work will include an IMCBP strategic framework and/or amended governance documents will then be used by IRCC to guide program direction and activities.

Action	Accountability	Completion date
Action 1A: Conduct a review of the purpose and program theory of the IMCBP-Funded Projects Component, in consultation with Departmental stakeholders, to assess respective needs and significance of IMCBP for advancement of priorities.	Lead: International and Intergovernmental Relations (IIR) Branch	Q2 2022–2023
Action 1B: Present findings of the review at IRCC’s International Steering Committee and communicate with partners.	Lead: International and Intergovernmental Relations (IIR) Branch	Q2 2022–2023
Action 1C: Develop an IMCBP strategic framework and/or amend governance documents to better identify the intent of the program and the eligible projects, including key IMCBP priorities, and targeted departmental priorities.	Lead: International and Intergovernmental Relations (IIR) Branch	Q1 2023–2024

Ensure effective program monitoring

Subsequent to reviewing the purpose of the IMCBP-Funded Projects Component, the Department would also benefit from a review of the program’s expected outcomes and associated performance measurement strategies. The present outcomes are very broad, and ultimately too ambitious to be achieved with a small budget. Without a clear purpose and achievable program outcomes, it is difficult to identify clear measures to assess program performance which would allow for the demonstration of a more robust program results story. This has created a contradiction in that the program is functioning, but its intended outcomes are not being achieved. Clearly defined and measurable outcomes would help the program to articulate its place within the Department, and the value that it provides.

Recommendation 2: Based on the results from Recommendation 1, IRCC should develop a performance measurement framework for the IMCBP-Funded Projects Component which better defines their expected outcomes and identifies corresponding indicators and measurement tools

Response: IRCC agrees with this recommendation.

While IMCBP’s projects positively contribute to the advancement of well-managed migration, the projects themselves and their respective objectives have been diverse, which represents a challenge with regards to reporting and measuring performance.

In 2020–2021, to better capture project results, performance measurement indicators based on high level objectives identified in the IMCBP Terms and Conditions were integrated into all grant arrangements. The Department will build upon these new processes to develop a representative performance measurement framework.

Active and ongoing performance measurement activities may have resource implications.

Action	Accountability	Completion date
Action 2A: Based on IMCBP’s strategic framework (to be developed under Action 1C, in response to Recommendation 1), develop the IMCBP’s performance measurement framework.	Lead: IIR Support: Research and Evaluation (R&E) Branch	Q1 2023–2024
Action 2B: Present the updated IMCBP performance measurement framework at IRCC Performance Measurement Steering Committee.	Lead: IIR Support: Research and Evaluation (R&E) Branch	Q2 2023–2024

Calibrating level of effort

Given the relatively low materiality of the program (approximately \$700K per year), the Department undertakes many processes and steps to administer and oversee the IMCBP-Funded Projects Component application process. In view of the work done to administer the internal call for proposals process, convene the review committees, present to the committees, and negotiated and develop proposals to successful grant arrangements, the level of effort being undertaken does not correspond to the amount of funding being administered. For the 2021–2022 application year, the IIR Branch launched a streamlined application process, focusing on key funding areas, and not administering an internal call for proposals. With this in mind, the Department would benefit from a review of the IMCBP-funded project application process, looking at ways to streamline this process, while also maintaining good program management, in order to support a more nimble administration of the funds and better align with the needs of the program. When developing the revised process, the Department should take into consideration ways to address the mixed views on the neutrality and the selection process.

Recommendation 3: IRCC should recalibrate the IMCBP-funded project proposal process to better align the level of effort with the scope of the program and the amount of money being administered, while ensuring the selection process is transparent.

Response: IRCC agrees with this recommendation.

Following the permanent increase in annual project funding to \$1,000,000, the Department implemented a robust governance structure to solicit and assess project proposals. The Department implemented an internal call for proposal process, established a Department-wide project review committee, and twin consultation processes through two internal committees. Project selection considered the potential to advance Whole-of-Government and IRCC priorities, and sound stewardship of public funds. While the current process ensures that subject matter expertise is leveraged from across the Department, IRCC acknowledges that the level of effort is high, given the modest project funding.

The Department agrees to identify and implement a less resource-intensive project selection process that continues to achieve these aims, while ensuring that the selection process is clearer. The Department will ensure revised processes provide sponsoring branches with greater clarity on project selection processes and criteria, as well as information on why projects were unsuccessful. Further changes may be implemented to the solicitation and assessment process following the development of the strategic framework (to be developed under Action 1B, in response to Recommendation 1).

Action	Accountability	Completion date
Action 3A: Conduct a review of the 2021-22 IMCBP application year (a streamlined process) for lessons learned.	Lead: IIR Support: Financial Partnerships Branch	Q1 2022–2023
Action 3B: Develop a revised project solicitation and assessment process, including new governance structure, in consultation with implicated IRCC branches, and seek senior management approval.	Lead: IIR Support: Financial Partnerships Branch	Q2 2022–2023
Action 3C: Share updated project documentation and information with partners and stakeholders.	Lead: IIR Support: Financial Partnerships Branch	Q2 2022–2023

Performance Measurement Framework

While grant arrangements for each international migration forum and organization highlight the objective of Canada’s membership, the Department does not have a performance measurement strategy to report on the outcomes of the memberships overall. A performance measurement framework would help IRCC to monitor the extent to which the objectives of the memberships are being achieved and would help provide evidence to show the extent to which the memberships support IRCC’s goals, programs, and policies.

Recommendation 4: IRCC should develop a performance measurement framework for the international memberships to reconfirm their expected outcomes and develop corresponding indicators and measurement tools

Response: IRCC agrees with this recommendation.

In 2020–2021, to better capture project results, performance measurement indicators based on high level objectives identified in the IMCBP Terms and Conditions were integrated into all grant arrangements. The Department agrees to build upon these new processes to build a representative

performance measurement framework focused on outcomes, including from IRCC’s international memberships.

Action	Accountability	Completion date
Action 4A: Develop a performance measurement framework that specifically measures and helps report on the unique characteristics of IRCC’s international memberships.	Lead: IIR Support: R&E	Q1 2023–2024
Action 4B: Present the updated international memberships performance measurement strategy at IRCC Performance Measurement Steering Committee.	Lead: IIR Support: R&E	Q2 2023–2024

Improving information sharing and dissemination of results

While information-sharing mechanisms exist within IRCC and between IRCC and OGDs, the evaluation found room for improvement in communicating information gained from the various memberships in international migration forums and organizations. In addition, knowledge gained from the IMCBP-funded projects could be increased if a systematic dissemination strategy was implemented. To ensure that all potential parties can benefit from the knowledge gained from the international memberships and the IMCBP-funded projects, IRCC should move towards implementing an accessible central repository for this information to allow IRCC employees who may not be directly involved with this work to access and use the information gained.

Recommendation 5: In support of strengthening the dissemination of results of the individual IMCBP-funded projects and of the participation in the international organizations and forums, IRCC should:

- a) **Implement a central repository of information accessible to all IRCC employees; and**
- b) **Create and implement a communication strategy to share and promote information**

Response: IRCC agrees with this recommendation.

To date, the Department has disseminated results of IMCBP-funded projects and memberships through informal channels, to the analysts within IRCC and other government departments who could most benefit.

Given the benefits of sharing this valuable information more broadly, IRCC agrees to develop a central repository of information and a communication strategy to promote awareness, to ensure Government of Canada employees and key stakeholders have access to information gained.

Information management and communication activities will have resource implications.

Action	Accountability	Completion date
Action 5A: Consult Departmental stakeholders and communication experts to identify and develop options for a repository of information.	Lead: IIR Support: R&E and Communications Branch	Q1 2022–2023
Action 5B: Implement selected option, contingent on senior management approval and resources.	Lead: IIR Support: R&E and Communications Branch	Q4 2022–2023
Action 5C: Develop and implement a communication strategy on how to best disseminate and promote information from the repository.	Lead: IIR Support: R&E and Communications Branch	Q4 2022–2023

Introduction

Purpose, focus and scope of the evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation was to assess the relevance, benefits and influence of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada’s memberships in international forums and organizations (MIFO) that are funded through both the International Migration Capacity Building Program (IMCBP) and the Assessed Contribution to the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

The evaluation focused on the added value of memberships for IRCC and Canada, the extent of Canada’s influence through memberships, as well as the IRCC policy and program implications of these memberships.

The scope of the evaluation covered the period since the last evaluations of IRCC’s memberships which took place in 2013 (Evaluation of the Migration Policy Development Program) and in 2015 (Evaluation of Canada’s Membership in the International Organization for Migration), with an emphasis on recent years. As per the Directive on Results and the *Financial Administration Act*, this evaluation was conducted to fulfil the requirement to evaluate ongoing grants and contributions (G&C) with five-year average actual expenditures of less than \$5 million per year.

Program context

IRCC’s memberships in international migration forums and organizations are funded through the IMCBP, formerly known as the Migration Policy Development Program (MPDP), which is a grant program that seeks to advance migration policy development and research to further advance Canada’s goals of promoting international protection and managed migration. The IMCBP is governed by terms and conditions (T&C) that outline eligible expenditures and recipients of funding.

The IMCBP is comprised of three components, as noted in the following figure.

Figure 1: IMCBP Components Administered through the IMCBP as of FY 2020–2021



This evaluation focused on the MIFO component of the IMCBP and a separate evaluation examined the IMCBP-Funded Projects.

Description of funded forums and organizations

IRCC engages internationally to reinforce Canada's collaboration with international stakeholders and partners, advance Canada's priorities, and share Canadian best practices. It also aims to strengthen the Canadian migration and refugee response systems and maintain public support for immigration, including fostering a balanced, evidence based migration narrative. Through participation in various international forums, Canada is included as part of the international conversation, with varying degrees of influence depending on the size, breadth, topic and scope of the organizations.

IRCC funds membership in the following five international migration forums and organizations on behalf of the Government of Canada:

- Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD)
- Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees (IGC)
- Regional Conference on Migration (RCM)
- Transatlantic Council on Migration – Migration Policy Institute (TCM/MPI)
- International Organization for Migration (IOM)

GFMD

The GFMD is the largest government-led, informal and non-binding process that brings together expertise from countries at all stages of social, economic and political development. It offers a space for governments to work with stakeholders in civil society, local governments, the private sector, youth organizations, academia, the United Nations (UN) system, and others to discuss the multi-dimensional aspects, opportunities and challenges related to migration and development. It also gives stakeholders the opportunity to analyze and discuss sensitive issues, create consensus, pose innovative solutions, and share policy and practices.¹

The objective of IRCC's membership in the GFMD is to promote international policy dialogue and cooperation on migration and development opportunities and challenges. As well, the GFMD aims to foster constructive and practical policy discussions, promote the sharing of information and best practices and promote concrete collaboration among states and other stakeholders.²

IGC

The IGC is an interregional, informal, and non-decision making forum that brings together 18 immigrant-receiving states and observers such as the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the IOM, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the European Union (EU) for informal and confidential information, data and best practice exchange as well as policy debate on a wide array of migration and protection-related themes.³ These exchanges take place at regular meetings of senior officials and at the working level where subject matter experts share information through a series of topic-specific working groups.

The objective of IRCC's membership in this forum is to promote the exchange of information and policy debate on issues of relevance to the management of international migratory flows, as well as to identify major issues and developments, policy and operational challenges, recent

¹ [GFMD Background](http://gfmd.org/process/background). <http://gfmd.org/process/background>

² IRCC, IIR (2020). *GFMD Grant Arrangement*.

³ [IGC description](https://www.iom.int/inter-governmental-consultations-migration-asylum-and-refugees-igc). <https://www.iom.int/inter-governmental-consultations-migration-asylum-and-refugees-igc>

trends in international migratory and refugee movements, and areas of cooperation that can inform Canada's policies and programs.⁴ The IGC is also a forum for policy engagement with the EU member states and it presents opportunities for policy officials to meet with counterparts such as the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia.

RCM

The RCM is an intergovernmental forum comprised of 11 member states and five observer countries from North and Central America as well as the Dominican Republic. The mandate of this voluntary, non-binding forum is to provide space for North and Central American states to exchange information and have frank conversations about regional and international migration to strengthen migration governance and border management and address migration challenges faced by the regions.⁵

The objective of IRCC's membership in this forum is to promote the advancement of migration policies and the international recognition and acceptance of principles of managed migration that are consistent with Canada's policies and interests and to assist the forum in providing for the activities of the RCM Executive Secretariat.⁶

TCM/MPI

The MPI is an independent, non-partisan, migration policy think tank led by experts with longstanding reputations in the field of international migration. The MPI is dedicated to the analysis, development, and evaluation of national and international migration and refugee policies. The TCM is a deliberative body created by the MPI that examines and informs policy issues using evidence-based research with intellectuals from the United States, Australia, Canada, and some European countries. The TCM also serves as a resource for governments as they manage challenges and opportunities associated with international migration.⁷

The objective of Canada's funding agreement is to support the operation of the MPI, including the TCM.⁸

IOM

The IOM is the leading UN agency in the field of migration. It is comprised of 174 member states and works closely with governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental partners. The IOM works to help ensure the orderly and humane management of migration, to promote international cooperation on migration issues, to assist in the search for practical solutions to migration problems and to provide humanitarian assistance to migrants in need, including refugees and internally displaced people. IOM activities also include the promotion of international migration law, policy debate and guidance, protection of migrants' rights, migration health and the gender dimension of migration.⁹

The objective of Canada's membership is to meet the requirement under Article 2(b) of the IOM Constitution, which outlines that member states must contribute to the administrative requirements of the organization. In turn, membership in the IOM allows Canada to participate in

⁴ IRCC, IIR (2020). *GFMD Grant Arrangement*.

⁵ RCM (2019). [Regional Conference on Migration Charter](https://rosanjose.iom.int/SITE/sites/default/files/carta_estatutaria_crm_13.11.2019_eng_2.pdf). https://rosanjose.iom.int/SITE/sites/default/files/carta_estatutaria_crm_13.11.2019_eng_2.pdf

⁶ IRCC, IIR (2020). *RCM Grant Arrangement*.

⁷ MPI (2021). [About the Transatlantic Council on Migration](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/transatlantic-council-migration/about). www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/transatlantic-council-migration/about

⁸ IRCC, IIR (2020). *TCM/MPI Grant Arrangement*.

⁹ IOM (2021). [Who We Are](http://www.iom.int/who-we-are). www.iom.int/who-we-are

the governance and decision-making mechanisms of the IOM. As well, IOM membership is linked to IRCC’s capacity to meet its strategic outcomes, including migration that significantly benefits Canada’s economic, social and cultural development while protecting the health, safety and security of Canadians.¹⁰

MIFO funding

Funding for international forums and organizations are provided in different formats, including assessed contributions, voluntary contributions, and membership fees. As these forums and organizations have headquarters outside of Canada, contributions are typically made in a non-Canadian currency. Combined, the fees for the five memberships total approximately \$2.5 million Canadian Dollars (CAD) annually.

Canada’s membership in the GFMD, IGC, and RCM are funded by IRCC through the MIFO component of the IMCBP by means of grant payments. While the TCM/MPI initially received funding as an IMCBP-funded project, since fiscal year (FY) 2018-19, it has been receiving funding as a membership. The grant arrangements for these four forums total approximately \$300,000 annually, and they are anticipated to increase to approximately \$370,000 in FY 2021-22 due to exchange rates and an increase in the membership fee for TCM/MPI.

The IOM membership is administered through an assessed contribution independent of the IMCBP and totals approximately \$2.2M CAD annually. The IOM membership contribution is also separate from other IOM contribution agreements such as the agreements related to IRCC’s Resettlement Program and Settlement Program.

See Table 1 for additional contribution arrangement details. Table 4 outlines the membership fees paid, in Canadian dollars.

Table 1: Contribution arrangements and currency details for each funded international migration forum and organization

Forum/ Organization	Currency of Payment	Contribution arrangement
GFMD	US Dollars	Member states are encouraged to give voluntary contributions to the GFMD.
IGC	Swiss Francs	Member states contribute equal amounts to the IGC.
RCM	US Dollars	Member states agreed on a cost-sharing formula whereby Canada pays approximately 25% of the RCM’s annual budget while the United States pays 50%, Mexico pays 12%, and the remaining balance is paid by the rest of the member states.
IOM	Swiss Francs	Member states give assessed contributions that are based on a formula determined by the UN Scale of Assessment, which considers each member country’s capacity to pay based on its global gross national income, population and debt burden.
TCM/MPI	Canadian Dollars*	Various organizations, governments, corporations, and individuals give voluntary contributions to the MPI. Canada’s contribution is mostly directed towards assisting with the TCM.

*Beginning in FY 2021-22, the MPI contribution will be paid in US Dollars.

¹⁰ IRCC. *T&Cs for the assessed contribution to the IOM*.

Methodology

Questions and scope

The evaluation scope and approach were developed during an initial planning phase, in consultation with the IRCC program area. The evaluation was guided by the questions in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Evaluation questions

1. Is there an ongoing need to maintain Canada's memberships in international organizations and forums?

2. What is the value-added of Canada's membership in international forums and organizations?

3. To what extent has Canada contributed to and influenced international positions and interests through its membership in international forums and organizations?

4. Is membership in international forums and organizations informing IRCC policies and programs?

5. To what extent is Canada effectively contributing to IOM governance and direction-setting?

The evaluation was also guided by the program's draft expected outcomes. As MIFO is not a program in IRCC's program inventory, there is no active logic model or departmentally validated outcomes and indicators for MIFO. The draft expected outcomes used for the evaluation were based on the ongoing work to develop a logic model for international engagement, previous evaluations, and consultations with stakeholders.

Figure 3: MIFO outcomes

Immediate Outcomes

- Canada effectively participates at policy discussions and development forums and organizations related to migration
- Information exchange and networking is facilitated
- Canada influences IOM governance and direction setting through its membership



Intermediate Outcomes

- IRCC policies and programs are informed by global migration conditions, trends and practices
- Canadian migration interests and policies are shared, promoted and defended
- IOM membership facilitates the promotion of Canadian values and interests internationally

Data collection methods

Data collection and analysis for this evaluation took place from July 2020 to July 2021 and included multiple lines of qualitative and quantitative evidence.

Figure 4: Data collection methods

Document review <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Included compiling information from proposals, grant agreements, and Public Accounts, presentations and other program documents.
Financial review <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Undertook a review of SAP data regarding the cost for memberships and contributions to international forums and organizations as well as a review of Public Accounts.
Interviews <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conducted 18 interviews with 23 individuals, which included IRCC staff (located at headquarters and abroad), other government departments (OGD), and representatives from international migration forums and organizations.
Survey of IRCC Senior Management <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conducted in June-July 2021 and administered to members of IRCC's internal International Steering Committee and Vote 10 Committee. The survey had a total of 13 responses out of 37 recipients, representing 35% of the survey population, though one respondent dropped out part way through.

Data collection considerations

The evaluation design employed several qualitative and quantitative methodologies which supported the triangulation of evidence where possible to mitigate the impact of limitations on evaluation findings and conclusions.

As there are few IRCC individuals who are actively involved in the administration of the memberships in international forums and organizations, the evaluation undertook a survey of other IRCC officials with at least some involvement with and/or awareness of these memberships in order to help provide a more fulsome picture of their contribution. The survey population consisted of individuals at the senior management level who are standing members of IRCC's Vote 10 Committee and the International Steering Committee, as these committees regularly receive updates regarding the IMCBP and the international migration forums and organizations. This survey allowed the evaluation to obtain additional views of IRCC individuals not directly involved in the administration of the international memberships, thereby mitigating this limitation.

Evaluation findings

Need for memberships in international forums and organizations

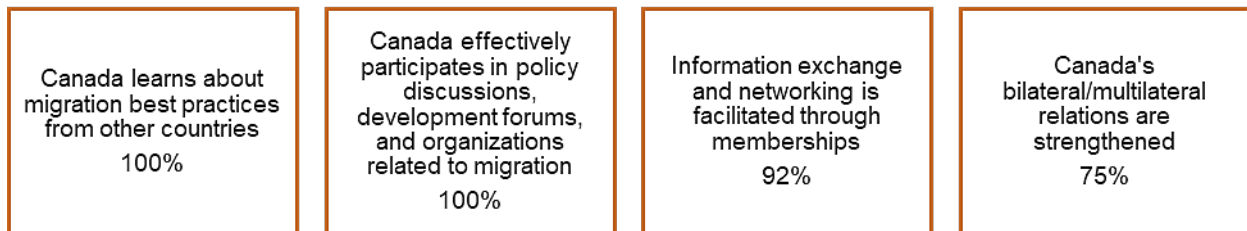
Finding: There is a perceived need for Canada to fund memberships in international migration forums and organizations as it allows for the sharing of best practices, opportunities to network and learn from others, and the potential to influence in the international migration context.

Overall, interviewees from IRCC, OGDs and forums and organizations felt there was a need to fund memberships in international forums and organizations as they provide various opportunities for Canada to share, learn, and influence in the space of international migration. IRCC and OGD interviewees also felt that Canada would miss out on benefits should the memberships discontinue.

Interviewees from international forums and organizations all agreed that there is a need for IRCC to fund their memberships. The need identified by some forums and organizations differed from internal interviewees, as some expressed a need for Canada to pay a membership fee to ensure the continued operation of their forum or organization, while others identified the benefits Canada can obtain by being members.

Almost all survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that memberships in international migration forums and organizations contribute to several positive outcomes for Canada.

Figure 5: Percentage of survey respondents who agreed or strongly agreed that memberships contribute to positive outcomes for Canada



Source: IRCC Survey of Senior Management, n=12.

Value for money

Finding: Overall, the international migration organizations and forums provide good value for money.

In FY 2020-21, the IOM received the largest membership contribution at approximately \$2.1M CAD, followed by the IGC with \$172K, the RCM with \$97K, the TCM/MPI with \$50K, and the GFMD with \$32K.

Table 2: Contributions paid for memberships in international migration forums and organizations, in CAD

Funding year	GFMD	IGC	RCM	IOM	TCM / MPI
2020–2021	\$32,535	\$172,418	\$97,426	\$2,129,543	\$50,000
2019–2020	\$0*	\$160,577	\$98,941	\$2,098,677	–
2018–2019	\$33,608	\$159,245	\$99,721	\$2,200,146	–
2017–2018	\$32,218	\$166,036	\$113,364	\$2,202,642	\$100,000**
2016–2017	\$33,513	\$131,810	\$106,157	\$2,140,178	–
2015–2016	\$34,335	\$140,570	\$107,369	\$1,988,479	–

*GFMD did not receive funding from IRCC in FY 2019–2020 as there were leftover FY 2018–2019 funds that were carried over into FY 2019–2020.

**TCM/MPI received \$100,000 in FY 2017-18 which paid for the membership fees for 2018–2019 and 2019–2020.

Source: SAP Data.

IRCC interviewees found the international migration forums and organizations to offer good value for money. Moreover, some felt that there is not enough money provided to these forums and organizations. This was particularly the case for the IOM, as some interviewees highlighted that in addition to the assessed contribution and the funds provided to the organization to cover cost per service for the resettlement of refugees, Canada could contribute more funds to the IOM as the organization brings a lot of value to IRCC.

Though individual differences arose when comparing the perceived benefits and value, as outlined in section 3.3, each of the forums and organizations were mentioned individually by interviewees as providing good value for money. Forums and organization interviewees also felt that they provided good value for money, as memberships allowed for Canada to voice its perspectives and have international influence through its memberships.

Benefits and value of memberships

Finding: The perceived benefits of memberships varied across the different funded international migration forums and organizations.

All survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their branch, sector, and IRCC benefited from the memberships in international forums and organizations. Also, most interviewees felt that IRCC should continue to fund memberships in international forums and organizations, though the perceived benefits and value of the individual forums and organizations differed.

Table 3: Extent to which memberships met the needs of IRCC

	Not at all	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a large extent	I don't know
GFMD	17%	17%	33%	8%	25%
IGC	0%	0%	25%	50%	25%
IOM	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
RCM	0%	8%	25%	33%	33%
TCM/MPI	0%	17%	8%	33%	42%

Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Source: IRCC survey of senior management, n=12.

Most IRCC interviewees strongly felt that that participation in forums and organizations allowed Canada to advance perspectives and positions, gather feedback on those perspectives, and use this information to inform Canada's work. OGD interviewees highlighted that participation in international forums and organizations is a way to support Canada's migration programs through access to research, data and working groups that align with Government of Canada priorities. They also identified that forums and organizations are an avenue to exchange information and best practices.

Overall, the general sentiment during interviews was that the right international forums and organizations were being funded, though Canada's membership in the GFMD garnered a more varied response.

Table 4: The negative impact of discontinuing membership funding on respondents' work/their branch's work

	No impact	A small impact	A moderate impact	A large impact	I do not know
GFMD	50%	17%	17%	0%	17%
IGC	8%	8%	17%	42%	25%
IOM	8%	0%	8%	83%	0%
RCM	17%	33%	8%	25%	17%
TCM/MPI	33%	0%	17%	25%	25%

Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Source: IRCC survey of senior management, n=12.

Membership in the IOM was perceived as valuable by interviewees and all (100%) survey respondents indicated that this membership met the needs of IRCC to a large extent.

Discontinuing the membership was viewed negatively by a majority of survey respondents, as 83% indicated that discontinuing IOM membership would have a large negative impact on their work and/or branch. Interviewees also indicated that discontinuing membership in the IOM would impact Canada's resettlement program and that Canada would be viewed unfavorably. Furthermore, 33% of survey respondents indicated that IRCC should increase its participation in the IOM.

Table 5: Percentage of respondents who thought participation in the forums/organizations should decrease, stay the same, or increase

	Decrease	Stay the same	Increase	I do not know
GFMD	33%	17%	17%	33%
IGC	0%	58%	8%	33%
IOM	0%	50%	33%	17%
RCM	8%	50%	8%	33%
TCM/MPI	8%	42%	8%	42%

Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Source: IRCC survey of senior management, n=12.

Membership in the IGC was also perceived positively by survey respondents, as 75% reported that the IGC met the needs of IRCC to a moderate or large extent, and 42% reported that discontinuation of funding for the membership would have a large negative impact on their work/their branch’s work.

However, the perceived value of Canada’s membership in the RCM was mixed, as 25% of survey respondents indicated that discontinuing membership in the RCM would have a large negative impact, while 17% indicated it would have no impact.

A third (33%) of respondents expressed that the discontinuation of funding for the TCM/MPI would have no impact to their work or their Branch’s work, though a quarter (25%) expressed that there would be a large negative impact.

The perceived value of Canada’s membership to the GFMD was also mixed, as half (50%) of survey respondents indicated there would be no negative impact to their work or their Branch’s work if funding was discontinued, roughly a third (34%) indicated there would be either a small or moderate negative impact and no survey respondents indicated that it would have a large impact. Regarding the extent to which the GFMD met the needs of IRCC, 17% of survey respondents indicated that the forum “did not meet” IRCC’s needs at all, and this was the only membership that had any survey responses in this category (see Table 3). While a third (33%) of respondents felt that IRCC should decrease its participation in the GFMD, 17% indicated participation should increase.

Canada’s contribution and international influence

Finding: Canada has contributed to and influenced international positions through its memberships in international forums and organizations, though it is difficult to attribute the level of impact on international migration management.

Almost all survey respondents (92%) agreed or strongly agreed that Canada has shared migration best practices, influenced other countries’ approaches to migration management, and shared and promoted Canadian migration interests through IRCC’s memberships in international forums and organizations.

Most IRCC interviewees agreed that the way in which Canada has promoted its interests and positions through memberships in international migration forums and organizations is by chairing and actively participating in forum and organization meetings, conferences, working groups, and roundtable discussions. Some examples of Canada’s participation broken down by forum and organization can be found in Figure 6.

Despite interviewees and respondents agreeing that Canada has influence through these memberships, interviewees highlighted the difficulty of measuring the extent of this influence and the impact of Canada's participation in these international migration forums and organizations. This difficulty in measuring the magnitude and attribution of Canada's influence was also identified in the previous Evaluation of the MPDP. While international influence is outlined as an objective in some forum and organization grant arrangements, MIFO lacks a performance measurement framework to monitor the extent to which outcomes are being achieved.

Figure 6: Examples of Canada's participation in international migration forums and organizations

GFMD
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Canada co-chairs the working group on Public Narratives on Migration and is co-leading the global "It Takes A Community" social media campaign which promotes balanced narratives on Migration. Canada also participates in a working group on GFMD governance.
IGC
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Canada chaired the IGC in FY 2019-20, participates in all senior official meetings, and contributes to various working groups that focus on integration, immigration, asylum and refugees, country of origin information, technology, and admission, control and enforcement.
RCM
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Canada participates in RCM Working Groups on Protection, Labour Migration, Border Management, and Irregular and Mass Migration. Canada also participates in biannual and annual meetings and leads initiatives such as conferences and workshops.
IOM
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Canada participates in IOM governance meetings, IOM-Canada high-level bilateral meetings, and various IOM sub-groups.
TCM/MPI
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Canada participates in the TCM at the Deputy Minister-level and has provided advice on Canada's experience managing irregular migration.

Impact of memberships and IRCC policies and programs

Finding: Overall, knowledge gained from the international forums and organizations was useful and informed programs and policies; however, at the individual forum/organization level, the impact was less clear.

IRCC and OGD interviewees noted several ways in which the information gained from international forums and organizations was used to inform the work of their Departments, such as through briefing notes, decks, and other products related to migration that are shared internally.

Table 6: Extent to which respondents agreed or disagreed that participation in the forums informed IRCC programs

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know
GFMD (n=7)	14%	29%	29%	14%	14%
IGC (n=9)	0%	0%	33%	44%	22%
IOM (n=11)	0%	0%	27%	73%	0%
RCM (n=7)	0%	0%	14%	43%	43%
TCM (n=9)	0%	0%	33%	33%	33%
Overall (n=12)	0%	0%	50%	33%	17%

Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Source: IRCC survey of senior management.

IRCC interviewees noted that Canada is often viewed as a leader in migration and is therefore more likely to inform other countries of best practices through the migration forums and organizations. Notwithstanding, one forum/organization interviewee suggested that forums provide useful information on issues Canada has not yet experienced, thereby enabling Canada with the knowledge and connections to respond to those situations should they arise.

Table 7: Extent to which respondents agreed or disagreed that participation in the forums informed IRCC policies

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know
GFMD (n=7)	14%	14%	71%	0%	0%
IGC (n=9)	0%	0%	22%	44%	33%
IOM (n=11)	0%	0%	27%	73%	0%
RCM (n=7)	0%	14%	29%	14%	43%
TCM (n=9)	0%	11%	33%	22%	33%
Overall (n=12)	0%	0%	42%	33%	25%

Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Source: IRCC survey of senior management.

A large proportion of survey respondents also agreed or strongly agreed that the knowledge gained from participation in international forums and organizations overall had informed IRCC, with 83% reporting that it informed IRCC programs (see Table 6) and 75% reporting that it informed IRCC policies (see Table 7). However, results were often mixed at the individual forum and organization level, and this was particularly the case for the GFMD.

With regards to informing IRCC programs, survey respondents were equally divided between those who were in agreement (43%) that GFMD informed IRCC programs versus those who were in disagreement (43%). The GFMD was the only forum where respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that it was informing IRCC programs.

Table 8: Extent to which respondents worked with forums and organizations

	Not at all	A little	A lot	I don't know
GFMD	39%	39%	15%	8%
IGC	23%	39%	31%	8%
IOM	15%	15%	69%	0%
RCM	39%	39%	15%	8%
TCM/MPI	23%	46%	23%	8%

Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Source: IRCC survey of senior management, n=12.

With regards to informing IRCC policies (Table 7), survey respondents tended to agree or strongly agree that the IOM (100%), the GFMD (71%) and the IGC (66%) were informing IRCC policies.

Overall, there was also a large share of survey respondents who did not know whether the knowledge gained from participation in international forums/organizations had informed IRCC policies or programs, and this was particularly the case for the RCM. This is to be expected, as the RCM was one of two forums that survey respondents indicated they worked with the least, with the second forum being the GFMD (see Table 8).

Information sharing

Finding: Information obtained from international forums and organizations is being disseminated to internal and external partners; however, there is room for improvement to ensure the information is reaching all potential beneficiaries.

Information from international forums and organizations is shared with IRCC through a variety of information sharing mechanisms. Interviewees highlighted that information from these forums and organizations is shared through their respective websites, some of which are secure and are only accessible to member states. Other common mechanisms through which information is communicated to IRCC are reports, meeting summaries, and emails.

Survey respondents identified email updates from International and Intergovernmental Relations Branch (IIR) and International Steering Committee (ISC) meetings as additional sources for this information, as well as International Network reporting and international forum/organization newsletters. Additionally, survey respondents indicated that their branch's working relationship with the international forum or organization was a source of information, and this was particularly the case for the IOM (75%). Most survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the information shared by the international forums and organizations is useful to their branch (92%), their sector (75%), and the Department (92%), and is of satisfactory quality (83%).

Regarding the degree to which this level of knowledge sharing was appropriate, most survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the level was appropriate between international forums and organizations and IRCC (83%). This level of agreement decreases when asked about the level of information sharing between IRCC internal branches, with 67% of respondents in

agreement that the level was appropriate. Interviews revealed that within IRCC, the dissemination of internal emails depends on IIR’s awareness of appropriate departmental contacts, posing a risk that key internal players may not be properly informed. Correspondingly, survey respondents identified additional areas for improved information dissemination, which included the creation of a central repository where information from meetings and discussions could be made available.

Interviewees highlighted that between IRCC and OGDs, knowledge regarding the international forums and organizations is shared through email communications, but that OGDs also obtain this information through their own attendance and participation in meetings. Despite these mechanisms, over half (58%) of survey respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that there was an appropriate level of knowledge-sharing on international forum and organization-related information between OGDs and IRCC.

Interviewees also noted that coordination between IRCC and OGDs in relation to international forums and organizations can sometimes take place at the last minute, and that IRCC should continue to include the perspectives of OGDs to ensure that the positions promoted in these venues are from a whole-of-Canada perspective, rather than an IRCC-only perspective.

Table 9: Extent to which respondents agreed or disagreed that the level of knowledge sharing is appropriate

Knowledge sharing	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know
Between international forums / organizations and IRCC	0%	8%	50%	33%	8%
Between various internal IRCC branches	0%	33%	42%	25%	0%
Between OGDs and IRCC	8%	50%	17%	8%	17%

Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Source: IRCC survey of senior management, n=12

IOM governance

Finding: Canada has effective representation within the IOM Council and various working groups, therefore contributing to IOM governance and direction setting.

As Canada pays a membership fee to the IOM, it is allowed one representative and one vote on the IOM Council. The IOM Council consists of a representative from each member state, and is the highest IOM authority that determines and reviews the policies, programmes and activities of the Organization, including its budget and expenditures.

In addition, Canada is also a member of the Standing Committee on Programmes and Finances (SCPF), which is open to all member states and makes recommendations, generally through the submission of draft resolutions, to the IOM Council for final debate and endorsement. This Committee reviews policies, programs, and activities to discuss budgetary and financial matters, and also makes urgent decisions on matters falling within the scope of the IOM Council when the IOM Council is not in session. Documents highlighted that Canada is also contributing to IOM budgetary decisions through a working group on budget reform that addresses IOM budget issues and works on proposals to strengthen IOM’s core budget.

Converging evidence from documents, interviews and the senior management survey indicate that Canada is contributing to IOM governance and direction setting. A majority of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Canada influences IOM governance (82%), IOM direction-setting (82%), and IOM budget-setting through its membership in the IOM (73%). Generally, interviewees were in agreement that Canada is able to influence IOM governance.

A few interviewees also cited inclusion on the Council Bureau as a way to further influence IOM governance. The Council Bureau, described in interviews as similar to a board of directors, is consulted for governance issues and presently consists of four members who represent the interests of different international regions. However, due to the methodology used to determine the regional divisions, at the time of this report, Canada does not have access to representation on the Council Bureau. Through the IOM working group on Partnerships, Governance and Organizational Priorities, Canada is working to gain representation for itself and other countries not currently able to access representation on the Council Bureau. Canada, as well as a majority of working group participants have supported a governance option to enable Canada's representation on the Council Bureau, suggesting Canada may have more opportunities to contribute to IOM governance and direction setting in the future.

Impact of COVID-19

Finding: The COVID-19 pandemic presented opportunities and challenges for participation in international migration forums and organizations.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a variety of impacts on IRCC and OGDs in the context of memberships in international forums and organizations. IRCC interviewees and survey respondents noted that the forums and organizations were quick to adjust to the pandemic by conducting meetings online and allowing for more people to participate in events. The international forums and organizations have also provided useful information and research regarding migration in the COVID-19 context, and less money was spent as a result of not attending meetings in person. Forums and organizations indicated that they have been able to host more attendees than ever before as a result of online meetings.

However, while the virtual context has had its benefits for participation, there have also been challenges. IRCC interviewees noted that the virtual nature of the meetings makes communicating and sharing information with colleagues more difficult, as meetings no longer take place face-to-face. Interviewees highlighted that sometimes face-to-face meetings are important for ensuring questions are not missed, and to observe context and body language that is missed when participating virtually. Virtual meetings were perceived as decreasing the facilitation of professional benefits typically derived from face-to-face networking. OGD interviewees noted that while forums and organizations are more quickly able to organize events now that participation is online, it has shortened deadlines for OGDs to provide input on items or documents before meetings. International forum and organization interviewees indicated that they have taken on more work by adjusting to online meetings as a result of the pandemic.

IRCC also mentioned neutral impacts of the pandemic situation, in that staff have been presented with an opportunity to rethink multilateral engagement and their participation in international forum and organization meetings and events. For forums and organizations, it was noted that they see a benefit of a hybrid approach to meetings in the future.

Conclusions and recommendations

Overall, there is a need to fund memberships in international migration forums and organizations. Given the low cost of membership fees, there is high value in the benefits that IRCC and Canada derive from these memberships. While the evaluation found that memberships in international forums and organizations are generally viewed favorably by IRCC and OGDs and that the memberships allow Canada to share its perspectives internationally, there is room for improvement with respect to data collection and reporting on the expected outcomes of memberships, and with the sharing of forum and organization-related information.

Performance measurement framework

While grant arrangements for each international migration forum and organization highlight the objective of Canada's membership, the Department does not have a performance measurement strategy to report on the outcomes of the memberships overall. A performance measurement framework would help IRCC to monitor the extent to which the objectives of the memberships are being achieved and would help provide evidence to show the extent to which the memberships support IRCC's goals, programs, and policies.

Recommendation 1: IRCC should develop a performance measurement framework for the international memberships to reconfirm their expected outcomes and develop corresponding indicators and measurement tools.

Dissemination of results

While information-sharing mechanisms exist within IRCC and between IRCC and OGDs, the evaluation found room for improvement in communicating information gained from the various memberships in international migration forums and organizations. To ensure that all potential parties can benefit from the knowledge gained, IRCC should move towards implementing an accessible central repository of forum and organization information to allow IRCC employees who may not be directly involved with the memberships to access and use this information. IRCC should also make efforts to promote the existence and use of such a repository by implementing a communication strategy to share the repository of information with IRCC staff.

Recommendation 2: In support of strengthening the dissemination of results of the participation in the international organizations and forums, IRCC should:

- a) **implement a central repository of information accessible to all IRCC employees; and**
- b) **create and implement a communication strategy to share and promote information.**