unitar
United Nations Institute for Training and Research

United Nations | Department of Economic and Social Affairs

UNFPA

IOM UN MIGRATION

International Labour Organization

UN WOMEN

UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency

World Health Organization

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

ITU

# The right to work for older Migrants, Refugees, and Stateless Persons

14 MAY 2025

10:30 a.m. EDT
3:30 p.m. CEST

5 FREE EVENTS
4th Round!
JUNE-DECEMBER 2025

ROUNDTABLE SERIES

## MAINSTREAMING KNOWLEDGE ON AGEING

*Bridging paths towards strengthening protection and participation*

With the support of:

WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities

hpod Harvard Law School Project on Disability

INPEA

ILC GLOBAL ALLIANCE INTERNATIONAL LONGEVITY CENTRE Designing the Future of Ageing

NGO Committee on Ageing GENEVA

GIA Global Initiative on Ageing

cifal Global Network

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The right to work is a fundamental human right, crucial for ensuring economic independence, dignity, and social participation. However, older migrants, refugees, and stateless persons often face compounded barriers that severely limit their ability to exercise this right. Beyond the already complex challenges of migration and displacement, these individuals encounter systemic ageism, restrictive labor market regulations, limited legal recognition, and inadequate access to social protection systems. These factors together create significant obstacles, preventing older displaced persons from achieving meaningful employment and fully contributing to their host societies.

Ageism, in particular, remains a pervasive barrier. Older individuals are frequently perceived as less adaptable, less productive, or technologically outdated, leading to exclusionary hiring practices. When combined with migration status or lack of nationality, this discrimination is often intensified. Furthermore, legal and administrative hurdles — including lack of work authorization, recognition of prior qualifications, and language barriers — create a situation where older migrants, refugees, and stateless persons are pushed into informal, precarious, and exploitative forms of employment, undermining both their rights and their well-being.

Addressing these challenges is not only a matter of upholding international human rights standards but is also crucial for promoting the economic, social, and cultural inclusion of these groups. Facilitating access to fair work opportunities allows older displaced individuals to regain autonomy, contribute their skills and experience to their communities, and strengthen social cohesion. Ensuring the right to work also reduces vulnerabilities associated with poverty, marginalization, and dependency on limited public resources, while actively combating age-related stereotypes and discrimination.

This event seeks to deepen understanding of why the effective promotion and protection of the right to work for older migrants, refugees, and stateless persons is essential. It will highlight how targeted policies and inclusive labor practices can enhance economic security, preserve dignity, foster social inclusion, and recognize the valuable contributions of older people within society. By addressing these barriers, we can take important steps toward building more just, equitable, and resilient communities for all.

## OBJECTIVE

To better understand why the effective promotion and protection of the right to work for these groups is important for their economic independence, dignity, social inclusion, and active participation in society, while reducing vulnerabilities and combating ageism.

## TARGET AUDIENCE

The event is open to different actors interested in ageing and the rights of older persons, including:

- **Public sector officials, policy makers and practitioners**
- **International Organizations**
- **Civil Society**
- **National Human Rights Institutions**
- **Academia**
- **Private sector This event as well as the upcoming ones from the virtual roundtable series are open and free to All.**

## FORMAT

Online. These events will be celebrated online with the spirit of inclusion to allow participants from different parts of the world to join us.

## SPECIAL NOTES

1. Participants who want to receive a certificate of participation need to fulfill the following criteria: Having participated at least 75% by Zoom (To be measured by the system).
2. You're warmly welcome to send questions or suggestions in advance to **sdp@unitar.org**
3. After the celebration of each event, those participants who joined them will be receiving the respective video recording together with takeaway messages.

*Join us!*

**Register now**

**https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_KERa1Z6zSGeUHatI4KpskQ**

**Earn a certificate of participation!**

# PROGRAM

## Moderator

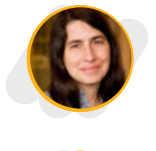
**Mr. Alex Mejía,**
Director, Division for People and Social Inclusion UNITAR
Head, CIFAL Global Network

## Speakers

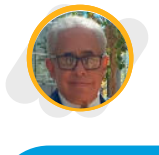
**H.E. Amb. Luis Gallegos,**
Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Ecuador President of the Board of Trustees of WID, Nippon Foundation, and GIA

**Ms. Chitralekha Marie Massey**
Chief of Section, Rights of Older Persons
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

**Mr. Ricardo Pla Cordero ,**
Protection Officer - Ageing and Disability Inclusion,
Division of international Protection / Community Based Protection Unit
UNHCR



**Dr. Jody Heymann (TBC)**
Department of Health and Management.
Former dean of the UCLA Fielding School of
Public Health from 2013-2018



**Mr. Alejandro Bonilla,**
Chair, NGO Committee on Ageing
President of the Association of Former International Public Officials for Development (Greycells)

## Analysis on the Legal Obligations and Responsibilities For Older Persons at International Level

**Hezzy Smith,**
Director of Advocacy Initiatives
Harvard Law School Project on Disability (HPOD)

# Decade of healthy ageing

unitar
United Nations Institute for Training and Research

United Nations
Department of Economic and Social Affairs

UNFPA

IOM
UN MIGRATION

ILO
International Labour Organization

UN WOMEN

UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

World Health Organization

UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

ITU

With the support of:

WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities

hpod
Harvard Law School
Project on Disability

Group of Friends of the Human Rights of Older Persons
UN Geneva

International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse
INPEA
Founded 1997

ILC
GLOBAL ALLIANCE
INTERNATIONAL LONGEVITY CENTRE
Designing the Future of Ageing

NGO Committee on Ageing
GENEVA

GIA
Global Initiative on Ageing

cifal
Global Network