



Statement by the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) in the
General Discussion Committee on Decent Work and the Care Economy at the
112th Session of the International Labour Conference (ILC)

Delivered by Ms. Christine Nathan, President of ICMC, in 3-4 June 2024

“Care is work, work is care”

Members of the Committee, the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) is pleased to deliver this statement at the Committee on Decent Work and the Care Economy. We welcome the report on this topic prepared by the International Labour Organization (ILO).

Since 1951, ICMC has served migrants and refugees worldwide through its extensive network of Catholic Bishops Conferences, other Catholic-inspired and civil society partners, global advocacy, and direct humanitarian and resettlement programming in countries with complex migration and refugee-related issues. We place respect for the rights and dignity of our beneficiaries at the center of our efforts, regardless of faith, race, ethnicity, or nationality.

ICMC wishes to bring the following observations and commitments to the attention of this esteemed Committee:

1. As stated in the report, “Care is central to economic growth and development, social justice, and societal and individual well-being”¹. Although there is not yet a universal definition of the care economy, we wish to bring to the discussion the “Care is Work, Work is Care” approach proposed by the ICMC-coordinated project “The Future of Work, Labour after *Laudato Si*”². The partners of this initiative believe that work is to be at the core of a transformation to respond to the call to “care for our common home”. They concluded that “care is a way of being, doing, and existing, which implies dignity, generosity, freedom, and responsibility. Care is a deeply spiritual human experience. It always is inspired by a concern for unity in the making, of becoming

¹ [Decent work and the care economy | International Labour Organization \(ilo.org\)](https://www.ilo.org/publications/newspapers/2023/01/01/decent-work-and-the-care-economy)

² [The Future of Work, Labour After Laudato Si \(futureofwork-labourafterlaudatosi.net\)](https://futureofwork-labourafterlaudatosi.net)

one both humanly and spiritually. Work, as a transforming activity, is therefore an essential component of care.”³

2. Today, caring for the world of work should include direct attention to internal and international migrants and refugees. We celebrate the findings of the report related to labour migration policies and the strategy 5R Framework for Decent Care Work as an important milestone towards achieving decent work in the care economy. We also highlight the importance of social dialogue at all levels.
3. ICMC is a partner of the Global Coalition for Social Justice and pledges its support for and engagement with this multilateral platform.

To close this statement, let me turn to Pope Francis’ Message to the 109th International Labour Conference (17 June 2021):

“Work is care when it contributes to dignity. Care must be a dimension of each work. Work that does not care, that destroys creation, that endangers the survival of future generations, is not respectful of the dignity of workers and cannot be considered decent. On the contrary, work that takes care and contributes to the restoration of full human dignity, will contribute to a sustainable future for future generations.”⁴

Thank you.

³ Care is work, work is care – An explanatory note (14 September 2023, Global) – The Future of Work, Labour After Laudato Si (futureofwork-labourafterlaudatosi.net)

⁴ Video Message of the Holy Father on the occasion of the 109th meeting of the International Labour Organization (ILO) (17 June 2021) | Francis (vatican.va)