

## **158th WHO Executive Board Meeting 2 – 7 February 2026, Geneva**

### **Item 13 Report of the Expert Advisory Group on the WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel**

The International Council of Nurses (ICN), representing over 30 million nurses worldwide, supports the Advisory Group's recommendations to strengthen the Global Code and urges greater co-investment and enforcement.

The significant rise in nurse migration from low- and middle-income countries to high-income countries exacerbates source countries' workforce shortages, weakens their health systems and masks destination countries' unresolved retention challenges.

Wealthy countries recruiting abroad save significant nurse education costs without evidence that source countries are fairly compensated.

ICN urges recruiting countries to demonstrate that if they take, they also give back.

We call for the Code to ensure:

- Proportional co-investment in source countries
- Fully equitable bilateral agreements
- Clear, binding accountability for non-compliance
- Improved data collection and monitoring, including self-sufficiency indicators
- Protection of migrant nurses' rights