

MIGRATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AGENDA IN ETF PARTNER COUNTRIES

ETF POSITION PAPER



Author: Ummuhan Bardak

Writing contributions: Anna Kahlson, Siria Taurelli

Copyright © European Training Foundation, October 2014, Turin

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
1. Links between skills and migration: an overview of the conceptual debate on 'brain drain', 'brain gain', 'brain circulation' and 'brain waste'	6
2. Why migration matters to the skills development agenda of the Partner Countries.....	9
3. How ETF migration survey findings apply to the skills development agenda	12
4. The EU external migration policy framework: a brief review of policy developments	17
5. International trends on the migration and skills development nexus.....	20
6. A discussion of policy recommendations and policy options.....	25
6.1. Policy recommendations for migration to support the skills development agenda.....	25
6.2. Specific focus on the portability and recognition of migrants' skills	27
List of abbreviations and acronyms	33
References.....	35

Introduction

This paper addresses experts and practitioners working on the skills dimension of migration alongside the wider group of stakeholders in this field within the European Training Foundation (ETF), partner countries and the European Commission services in order to improve knowledge and practice in the sector. It provides a synthesis of the lessons learned from ETF activities and other international experiences, contributing toward an ETF position on how to achieve positive results for migrants and their home and host countries from the migration-skills development nexus. It takes stock of existing initiatives before reflecting upon how the countries of origin can develop skills policies to support migrants. It aims to inspire debate and contribute to the development of tailor-made solutions fitted to the individual country panorama in acceptance of the fact that no one-size-fits-all solution.

Thus the focus of this paper is on countries of origin and how migration can contribute to their human and socio-economic development. There is an unavoidable interaction between skills development and migration policies affecting the outcome. By understanding and analysing this interaction, we hope to raise awareness among policy makers and support them in identifying effective policy actions to increase the benefits of migration. Priority is given to the European Neighbourhood countries in line with European Union (EU) policy, as outlined in the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM) (the key policy framework for EU external migration policy), and the EU mobility partnerships already signed with Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, Morocco, Azerbaijan, Tunisia and Jordan in a chronological order.

The United Nations (UN) defines a 'migrant' as: "a person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least a year, irrespective of the causes and the means used to migrate", whereas movements for less than a year are termed 'temporary moves'.¹ Under such a definition, those travelling for shorter periods as tourists and businesspersons would not be considered migrants. However, common usage includes certain kinds of shorter-term migrants, such as seasonal farm-workers who travel for short periods to work planting or harvesting farm products. For the purposes of this paper, the term 'migrant' is taken to mean labour migrants with at least three months of continuous work experience abroad. Such a definition allows for cyclical and temporary migration experiences to be included in this analysis.

Furthermore, the terms 'skills' and 'skills acquisition' are used in preference to 'education' and 'training', given the broader coverage of the former. While 'education' is widely used as a proxy for 'skills' in the literature, we deliberately use the more transparent term of 'skills' as it is clearly inclusive of all forms of knowledge, experience and ability learned by individuals in formal, non-formal and informal settings.

The ETF has compiled fresh evidence on the migration and skills debate through large-scale surveys in the eight countries of: Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia, in the Mediterranean, and; Albania, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, in Eastern and Southern Europe. This has been complemented by information shared at conferences and workshops on skills policies regarding migrants, pilot actions

¹ It must be emphasised that at the international level, no universally accepted definition for "migrant" exists. The term migrant was usually understood to cover all cases where the decision to migrate was taken freely by the individual concerned for reasons of "personal convenience" and without intervention of an external compelling factor; it therefore applied to persons, and family members, moving to another country or region to better their material or social conditions and improve the prospect for themselves or their family. For more, information, see the IOM website, <http://www.iom.int/cms/en/sites/iom/home/about-migration/key-migration-terms-1.html#Migrant>

implemented in Moldova and Egypt referring to the skills component of legal migration and mobility and migration in relation to development.

These recent surveys of Armenia, Georgia and Morocco provide an insight into the specific skills profile of migrants that highlights the underutilisation of their skills while working abroad and upon return. The outcomes also indicate a need for specific policy interventions to improve the labour market integration or reintegration of migrant workers and returnees, and also to reduce the underutilisation of migrant workers' skills before, during and after migration.

Section 1 of this paper provides a clear explanation of the links between skills and migration and a discussion of the related concepts. Section 2 provides a rationale for placing particular attention on migrant skills in the European Neighbourhood transition and developing countries. Section 3 summarises the key lessons learned from our migration surveys and Section 4 provides a brief overview of the EU external migration policy framework shaping ETF operation.² Section 5 describes international trends in the migration and skills development nexus, including EU mobility tools and ETF pilot projects.

The last one, Section 6, includes a discussion of policy recommendations and policy options, provided in two sub-sections to provide optional additional reading for interested readers. While Section 6.1 lists broader policy recommendations for migration to support skills development agenda, Section 6.2 specifically focuses in more detail on policy options for the portability and recognition of migrants' skills.

It must be emphasised that the paper adopts a functionalist approach, aiming to improve the existing system and tools to help resolve the problems linked to human mobility. However, there are some broader obstacles also at play in making the best use of migrants' skills that have not been given due attention and this is the limitation of the technical analysis in this paper. These obstacles include sexism, xenophobia, racism, political instability, poor infrastructure, social cohesion and equity problems. For the same reason, conventional terms from migration literature are used (e.g. 'brain drain, gain, waste' or 'migration stock'), despite the fact that the brain is attached to a whole person with feelings, dreams, fears, social needs, aspiration and families.

The paper was drafted by Ummuhan Bardak, with significant inputs to different parts of the paper from the migration team members of ETF (Anna Kahlson, Siria Taurelli and Eva Jansova). The paper also benefitted from the comments of several other ETF colleagues as internal peer reviewers and from external peer reviewers (Editorial Board). Special thanks go to Anastasia Fetsi, Head of the Thematic Expertise Department, who provided clear and constructive guidance, useful comments and suggestions to improve the paper. Needless to say the shortcomings of this paper are my own.

Ummuhan Bardak
Senior Labour Market Specialist, European Training Foundation

² The ETF works with 30 partner countries including both transition and developing countries in order to reform their education, training and labour market systems. For more information, see www.etf.europa.eu

1. Links between skills and migration: an overview of the conceptual debate on 'brain drain', 'brain gain', 'brain circulation' and 'brain waste'

Most partner countries face difficult labour market conditions that result in significant labour emigration.³ Increased labour mobility across borders places the skills issue on the international agenda, while education systems are increasingly under pressure to produce qualified workers for both domestic and foreign labour markets. Moreover, human mobility is dependent upon new forms of capital (including social, financial and human capital) while also playing a part in the generation of this, meaning that greater attention should ideally be given to the skills dimension of mobility. The knowledge and skills of migrants can facilitate the flow of knowledge, financial resources, values and ideas across borders, while also contributing to increased earnings, technology dissemination, broader professional networking, investment and better integration into global networks for the countries of origin.

The worldwide increase in international migration, the temporary migration of skilled labour as a result of globalisation in particular, has intensified debate relating to the interaction between skills and migration. However, some difficulty has been encountered in distinguishing regular patterns. For instance, the relationship between individual education level and the decision to migrate is highly variable, depending on the labour market dynamics of both the home and host contexts.

At the same time, some specific features of education and training systems can be used to explain the high or low employability of emigrants abroad, but they do not always throw light on the reasons for migration. There is abundant diversity of reasons for migration based on personal experiences, motivations, needs and aspirations of individuals, but the focus here is on countries and structures. In some scenarios, migration is more attractive to low-skilled workers, especially where legal opportunities for migration are plentiful, whereas in others, highly-educated individuals are over-represented due to the nature of demand and the structure of policy controls for particular destinations. Previous studies have identified different mechanisms for the two groups, demonstrating that better-off migrants are *pulled* toward prospects of a job or education abroad, whereas their poorer counterparts are *pushed* by rural poverty and labour-replacement mechanisms (Skeldon, 2005).

Better performing educational systems and labour markets may produce contradictory effects on migration: (1) diminishing the 'push' factor through full access to education, training and the labour market for all, where the training system is responsive to market needs and offers decent jobs, while; (2) boosting the 'pull' factor through better preparation of potential migrants in terms of professional qualifications and skills, thereby contributing to their better economic integration in host societies. Thus, education tends to increase opportunities but also to decrease economic incentives. It is at the very least an enabling factor for higher labour mobility, both within regions and between countries, as educated people have better access to information, tools and funds. This reminds us of the 'migration hump' theory of Philip Martin⁴ which states that migration is low below a certain socioeconomic development level, increases with economic development due to higher capacities and aspirations, then decreases again once a certain socioeconomic development level is achieved.

The complex interaction between skills and migration is widely discussed in the literature in terms of the concepts of 'brain drain', 'brain gain', 'brain waste' and 'brain circulation'.⁵ The earliest discussions

³ This section summarises discussions from the previous publication (ETF, 2013e).

⁴ In its original formulation by Martin (1993) and Martin and Taylor (1996), the migration-hump theory predicted that constraint-loosening and aspiration-increasing socioeconomic development tends to have an inverted U-curve effect on net migration.

⁵ Please note that the authors made a deliberate choice to use terms from the migration literature such as 'brain drain, gain, waste and circulation' or 'migration stocks' for a technical discussion, though recognising the instrumental nature of this

on the impact of international migration on development were marked by concerns about **brain drain** (e.g. Adams, 1968) where education is considered a major determinant of long-term economic growth, and, therefore, the departure of large numbers of well-educated workers from developing countries represents a loss to the State in terms of investment in education. Had they not migrated, they would have joined the middle class of their original country where they would be demanding better public services and more democratic institutions. As skilled labour is also instrumental in attracting foreign direct investment and in fostering research and development expenditure, skilled migrants are seen to contribute to the concentration of economic activities in specific locations (Docquier and Rapoport, 2007).

This predominantly negative view was challenged in subsequent decades. Although high-skilled migration continued, the mass migrations of the 1960s and early 1970s predominantly involved low-skilled individuals, who represented a smaller investment by the State. Population growth and gradual mechanisation meant the labour of these migrants was not missed in the home country as they were typically unemployed or underemployed before they left. Concerns about the brain drain were thus assuaged and governments in the countries of origin adopted increasingly ambivalent positions regarding the outflow of low-skilled migrants.

Later it has been argued that allowing skilled workers to migrate from a developing country may operate as an incentive for education acquisition, increasing domestic enrolment rates on the basis of better education as a route to emigration (Lowell and Findlay, 2002). Thus, skilled migration may ultimately foster human capital formation and growth in countries of origin where the return to human capital is likely to be low. This positive spin-off from migration is referred to as **brain gain**; under the principle that only a small number of the educated people in a country will actually migrate, meaning that the average level of education of the remaining population will rise in a way that may stimulate economic growth.

This enthusiasm was further fuelled by other developments in the form of remittance transfers and temporary migration. Appreciation of remittance transfers from migrants grew in the 1980s and 1990s, when it became clear that international migrants were not 'lost' to their countries of origin as they could still make a substantial contribution. At the global level, the World Bank (2014) estimated official financial transfers from migrants as \$581 billion in 2014, of which \$436 billion went to developing countries.⁶ Some countries took the strategic decision to train more people than the domestic labour market could absorb in certain professions, thereby deliberately investing in emigration in the hopes of continued returns through remittances; nursing training in the Philippines is probably the best known example. Despite the fact that most funds from remittances are spent on items for daily consumption, it is increasingly recognised that migration boosts the overall human capital of the countries of origin through investment in the education of the next generation, as has been reported in Haiti (Georges, 2010), Nicaragua (Osorio, 2010) and Moldova (ETF, 2008).

It also became clear that migration was not inevitably permanent even among highly skilled individuals, meaning that the country of origin could benefit from the knowledge of returned temporary migrants. In an ideal scenario, the skills of migrants could be enhanced by experiences and training acquired abroad, transforming brain drain into a brain gain with return migration (Stark et al, 1997). Work experience abroad generally increases the employability and entrepreneurial skills of migrants who also often have savings to invest in business start-ups on their return. Returnees with

approach and accepting that brains are attached to whole persons with feelings, dreams, fears, social needs, aspiration and families.

⁶ Estimations for the global amount of remittances in 2016 reaches to \$681 billion, of which \$516 billion will go to developing countries (World Bank, 2014).

entrepreneurial and technological skills, financial resources and networks abroad may actually boost economic development and productivity in their countries of origin. Temporary return programmes in various newly industrialised countries such as Singapore, Korea, Taiwan, Israel and Ireland have deliberately sought to capitalise on this brain gain.

These changing migration patterns and the increasing mobility of high-skilled migrants have led to coinage of the term **brain circulation** to reflect an ongoing circular process in place of the previous preconception of migration as a one-off move. This reconsideration shifts the focus onto knowledge transfer and away from the physical presence of the individual migrant. Brain circulation emphasises the dynamic process of networking and linkages, and also reflects the positive aspects of movements, such as the development of expertise, business contacts, scientific exchange and cooperation, co-authorship and technology transfer. The example of the Indian and Chinese migrants in Silicon Valley (US California) shows the potential of mobile experts in expanding technology transfer and fostering business venture initiatives across borders (Bardak, 2007). Brain exchange and brain circulation, which became key terms in discourse on knowledge spread and technology transfer, allow developing countries to catch up with worldwide developments, particularly through the actions of higher-education students, academics, scientists and entrepreneurs.

Finally, the concept of **brain waste** reflects the experience of migrants abroad where there is a poor link between their level of education and the type of job performed abroad. In some cases, highly-skilled migrants from particular countries face substantial entry barriers to the professions in the form of complex recertification procedures. In contrast, work opportunities for less well-educated individuals may be plentiful and easy to come by. Where low-skilled jobs offer relatively high rewards, better-educated individuals are tempted to take up these jobs, even though they are over-qualified. Where there is no opportunity for promotion or advancement abroad, well-educated migrants may gradually lose the key skills they developed during the formal education process, meaning, should they return, that they will no longer be adequately qualified to exercise the occupation for which they initially trained. Research on the topic (Mattoo et al, 2005; Alquézar et al, 2010; ETF, 2010a) raises an obvious source of concern in regard to the effective use of migrant skills for various reasons, citing the examples of immigrant doctors working as taxi drivers in the USA and Moldovan female university graduates employed as domestic workers abroad.

Some high-skilled migrants undoubtedly find suitable work abroad that allows them to acquire the experience or training they need to develop their skills before a temporary or permanent return to the home country. However, this is not the experience of many, in fact probably most, international migrants. Individuals typically work below their skill level in order to meet the cost of migration and, as a result, they may find that their skill sets have deteriorated when they return home. This kind of brain waste reflects the poor match between the education level of migrants and the jobs they take up abroad, but also the ineffective use of the skills of returnees.

On the whole though, the standard view of the relationship between skills and migration has shifted over time from a highly pessimistic position to a more optimistic view. The current nuanced position accounts better for the full complexities of the issues involved, although it must be noted that the skills discussion has largely focused on the fate of highly-skilled migrants in contrast to that of their unskilled counterparts. Concurrently, medium-skilled migrants, and particularly those with vocational education and training (VET) qualifications, are underrepresented in the literature despite their larger numbers, meaning that greater attention must be paid to this group in order to achieve a fuller understanding of the lives and experiences of most migrants. Because better matching of skills with jobs and effective use of skills are crucial for all migrants, irrespective of their education levels.

2. Why migration matters to the skills development agenda of the Partner Countries

The ETF works with 29 Partner Countries (including both transition and developing countries) to reform their education, training and labour market systems. Although each country is different in terms of socioeconomic development, most are experiencing difficult labour market conditions and labour migration as a common response. Increased labour mobility across borders forces national education systems to take into account international education and skill standards as well as international labour market needs.

Difficult labour market conditions and a lack of decent jobs are well documented for the Arab Mediterranean countries (ETF, 2012a; World Bank, 2011a). As a result, labour emigration has become a structural feature of their economies since the 1960s. According to the World Bank (2011b), 3.7 million Egyptians, 3 million Moroccans and 1.2 million Algerians, almost a million each Lebanese and Syrians⁷, 750 000 Jordanians and 650 000 Tunisians now live outside their countries of origin. Nevertheless, the share of migrants in their populations remains low due to population growth. The main destination for emigrants from the French-speaking Maghreb countries has been Europe (France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany in particular, and, more recently, Spain and Italy), due mainly to bilateral labour agreements signed in the 1960s. Migrants from the Lebanon typically head to North America, while emigrants from Egypt, Jordan, Palestine and Syria head mainly for the oil-producing Gulf countries and Saudi Arabia. Labour migration has thus absorbed domestic labour surpluses and is responsible for a particularly high level of remittances in countries such as Egypt and Morocco, and for a high share of the gross domestic product in Lebanon and Jordan.

Migrants are a far from homogeneous group in terms of their skill levels, but when examined separately, Arab migration has historically provided a low proportion of skilled individuals in the total migration stock, particularly in Europe (Ozden and Schiff, 2005). By and large, Arab migration flows have been dominated by unemployed people from rural areas, reducing unemployment pressure and increasing individual earning prospects. This pattern can be largely explained by the generally low education and skill levels among the population, with most migrants having only basic education. Access to education and training has increased greatly in recent decades, particularly in Jordan, Lebanon and Tunisia, but there are still significant levels of illiteracy in Morocco and Egypt. Vocational education has played an extremely small role in comparison to secondary general education (except in Egypt). Despite the uneven record on education, recent trends indicate increasingly skilled labour flows from Lebanon and Egypt to North America and the Gulf and from the Maghreb to France (Alquézar et al, 2010). In Lebanon, a university education is viewed as a good springboard for migration and 39% of university graduates emigrate. International study options are also frequently selected by graduate and post-graduate students, and professional exchanges for skilled migrants are quite common.

The Eastern Partnership transition economies have experienced similar socioeconomic turmoil and difficult labour market conditions since the early 1990s (ETF, 2011), making labour emigration a new survival option for many households. According to the World Bank (2011b), 6.5 million Ukrainians, 1.7 million Belarusians, 1.4 million Azeris, over a million Georgians, 870 000 Armenians and 770 000 Moldovans live outside their country of origin. Armenia, Georgia and Moldova, with small and ageing populations and low fertility rates, have lost a quarter of their populations to migration, and Ukraine

⁷ These numbers for Syria are for the pre-crisis period and so do not include the millions of refugees who have left Syria in the last three years as a result of the civil war.

has also lost a sizeable part of its population.⁸ The common Soviet heritage (language, work and education systems), strong labour demand, geographical vicinity and lack of need for a visa mean that Russia was the main destination for most of these migrants.⁹ When relations with Russia became strained for Georgia and Moldova, Europe emerged as an alternative destination for Georgia (Greece, Germany and Turkey) and Moldova (Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece).

The initial emigration flows of the 1990s were characterised by the permanent departure of certain ethnic groups, but temporary labour flows came to dominate migration from 2000 onwards. Unlike the more established southern Mediterranean emigration countries, these Eastern countries had only recently joined the world market and were therefore new labour exporters unable to rely on labour agreements, migrant networks or diaspora abroad. Armenia was the only exception to this pattern, given its large and well-established diaspora in the USA and France. Labour migration from these countries is therefore largely temporary, seasonal and irregular in nature, although the impact has still been largely positive as it has reduced unemployment and increased income from remittances. Remittances proved crucial to survival for millions of households during the transition period, contributing a high share of gross domestic product in countries such as Moldova and Armenia.

Naturally, the skill sets of migrants from the Eastern Partnership countries are heterogeneous, but most tend to have relatively high levels of education and more VET qualifications compared to emigrants from the Arab Mediterranean countries. This is perhaps unsurprising as overall education levels are high here, with most people completing upper-secondary education and a considerable number graduating from university. Secondary VET has historically played an important role in this region, although the number of students has fallen to between a quarter and a third of the total following the reforms (ETF, 2011). Despite their high educational levels, however, most of these migrants work abroad in jobs that are low-skilled, unskilled or outside their area of expertise in the low-paid labour-intensive sectors. Most are employed in the construction, agriculture, hospitality and domestic services sector (cleaning and home care) and Alquézar et al (2010) have documented brain waste for these migrants, particularly in the case of better-educated women working in domestic service. Women make up a sizeable proportion of the migrant workers from these countries, and they are generally better educated than their male counterparts.

Migration flow from the European Neighbourhood countries is extensive, but examination of the interplay between skills and migration has yielded little in the way of concrete evidence for brain drain, brain gain, brain waste or brain circulation. Most countries of origin are unaware of the skills profiles of emigrants, details of their skills usage and learning experiences abroad, or the actions of returnees upon return. Skills development policies are made without consideration of this 'migration factor' as though it did not exist, and no connections are made between the phenomenon of huge migration flows and the education, training and labour market policies.

The ETF team adopted this as the starting point for work on a skills development agenda, creating and implementing a series of surveys on the skills dimension of migration in order to better understand the costs and benefits of migration on skills development and labour market integration and reintegration in Albania, Egypt, Moldova, Tunisia, Ukraine, Armenia, Georgia and Morocco. These countries were selected due to their geographical proximity and political priority for the EU. The primary focus of the surveys was on the skill sets of potential migrants and returnees, the use of migrants' skills, skills

⁸ The numbers for Ukraine are from the pre-crisis period and do not include the annexation of Crimea and internally displaced people who left certain districts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions occupied by Russia-backed separatists.

⁹ However, it should be mentioned that Russia has recently made restrictive amendments in its immigration legislation in 2014. This amendment limits the duration of stay i.e. 90 days within 180 days, if not obeyed migrants face with sanctions, deportation and entry ban up to 3 years. Migrant work is forbidden for sectors such as retail, pharmaceutical, sports, open markets. Also the overall quota for temporary residence permits is reduced – only 96 thousand residence permits are available for 2014.

acquisition and skills transfer. The resulting analyses of the survey data were published as country reports (ETF, 2008; ETF, 2013a, 2013b, 2013c), synthesis papers and policy briefs (Alquézar et al, 2010; ETF, 2010a; ETF, 2013d; ETF, 2013e). The main drive of these analyses was to explore whether the link between skills and migration could be used to contribute to the development of home and host countries alike, while also benefitting the migrant in a win-win-win scenario.

3. How ETF migration survey findings apply to the skills development agenda¹⁰

Migration and return outcomes are shaped by varying migration patterns in terms of duration, circularity, regularity and destination and individual circumstances. The median migration period is less than a year in Armenia, less than two years in Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine and six years or more in Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt. Close to half of returnees to Armenia and one quarter of returnees to Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine migrated more than once, indicating temporary and circular movements, in contrast with the patterns for Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco, where most migration is long term. Outcomes are also influenced by the choice of destination, each of which will have the impact of inherent elements such as labour market structure, visa policy and diaspora. Europe is a popular destination for Albanians, Moroccans and Tunisians, while Russia is a typical destination for Armenians and the Gulf States are the usual destination for Egyptians. Migrants from Moldova and Ukraine tend to choose between Russia and Europe, while Georgians go to Turkey, Russia or Greece. **Box 1** summarises the typical profile of migrants and their main motivations.

Box 1. Profile of typical migrants and motivations for migration

Migration is an attractive idea for many young people (particularly in Tunisia, Morocco and Egypt), but there are tight limitations on legal migration opportunities and the reality frequently does not match up to their ambitions. The typical migrant profile is of a young man in his 20s, with primary education (Morocco, Egypt) or secondary education (Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine) and with fewer family links to the country of origin (single and without children). Migrants from the Eastern countries tend to be slightly older, and a considerable number of migrant workers from Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine are female.

Economic considerations such as joblessness, low wages, poor career prospects and low standards of living are overwhelmingly cited as reasons for emigration, although moves for education are cited as a motivation by other groups, especially from Morocco, Tunisia and Albania. Voluntary return typically takes place when necessary for family reasons. Unemployment, underemployment and insecure employment are main factors in prompting men to migrate, whereas women appear to migrate for other reasons (more of life project). In Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt, potential migrants actually demonstrate higher levels of employment than non-migrants, although this can be explained by the fact that employed people generally have better knowledge and connections, while non-migrants are more likely to be women with low or no education.

Brain drain trends: most migrants have an intermediate education level

The skills of migrants largely reflect the general education levels of populations in the countries of origin. For example, higher shares of migrants from Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine have intermediate-level VET and higher education than do their counterparts from Morocco and Egypt. Low education levels in Morocco compare with high education levels in Georgia or Ukraine, leading to differences in the interplay between education and migration intentions. The chief feature of this is that a large proportion of uneducated individuals in Morocco prefer to remain in the country, suggesting there is an 'education hump' in evidence (similar to the previously cited 'migration hump'), making migration highly unlikely at the lowest levels of education (or no education).

Interest in migration gradually increases with primary and secondary education before falling off in higher education, making individuals with primary and secondary education the most likely potential

¹⁰This section is heavily based on the results of ETF surveys published in Alquézar et al 2010, ETF 2013d and ETF 2013e.

migrants. Furthermore, most migrants fall within the intermediate education or skill categories (with variations from lower-intermediate to higher-intermediate levels between countries). Obviously, the relative education levels within each country do not always compare across borders or from one geographical area to another. In the Eastern countries, groups with intermediate education or skills represent the lowest-educated category, while in Morocco and Egypt, they form the moderately-educated category, due to the relatively higher number of illiterate or unschooled individuals. Nonetheless, the focus of the migration and development literature tends to be on high-skilled versus unskilled migrants, with almost no discussion of medium-skilled migrants (with VET qualifications) or skill policies to target this group. Migrants with intermediate-level and VET qualifications are less discussed and less visible than migrants with academic degrees, largely because of the vast differences between VET systems. Consequently, more policy measures are required relating to the needs of medium-skilled migrants.

The strong empowering effect of education is one factor that complicates the well-established trend. In all countries, higher education reduces intention to migrate while increasing the opportunity to do so. This empowerment is most visible in Morocco, Egypt and Tunisia, where overall education levels are far lower and graduate unemployment is higher. Higher-educated people from Morocco and Egypt tend to be more mobile, but they also tend to return home after a period abroad. Indeed, returnees to these two countries were found to be slightly better educated than the remaining population even before migration. This suggests some small degree of self-selection for going abroad among educated individuals, at least among those who returned home afterwards.

Brain gain trends: migration experiences enhance the skills of most people

ETF surveys show that migration has the potential to enhance skills and qualifications; a fact that is recognised by the majority of migrants. However, three elements are necessary in order for the migrant's experience to be of positive benefit to their home country: they must develop new skills during their time abroad by extending their knowledge, experiences, empowerment and learning in formal, informal or non-formal settings; they must return after the period of absence (an element that can be assumed in temporary or circular migration), and; the type of experience gained abroad must be perceived as beneficial in the home country, enhancing their employability on return. Both the symbolic and practical values of the experiences and skills gained abroad may be recognised in the domestic labour market, including elements such as: experience/skills that lead to a job on return; use of those skills at work; broader appreciation of the world; the capacity to empathise with people of other cultures, or; a general openness to novelty and change. Although these factors are difficult to measure, they may well be among the greatest benefits of international migration.

Although the share of migrants receiving formal education and training during their time abroad is low in most of the countries surveyed, a quarter of returnees to Morocco, Tunisia and Albania reported some kind of structured education or training while abroad. Language training, VET, workplace training, undergraduate and post-graduate courses are the most common types. Moreover, most returnees informally develop new skills and experiences abroad. Such skills include mainly mid-level vocational and technical skills learned on the job, language skills, work organisation skills and ethics. However, these are not visible where there are no formal qualifications awarded, and the impact of skills gained via non-formal and informal acquisition has not been analysed in the literature. Research indicates that informally-learned skills may have greater value when reinforced with some kind of recognised qualification.

Overall, the migration experience itself leads to a modest brain gain in many subtle ways, particularly in countries where education levels are generally low, such as Morocco. However, most of these new skills are never certified or made truly visible in the domestic labour market upon return. There is a need to develop mechanisms for the validation of such skills, enabling returnees to use their migration experience as an additional advantage when searching for a job. The brain gain argument is also

supported by the practice of remittances and savings being used in the education of children left at home; a particularly important element in Morocco, Georgia and Moldova.

Brain circulation trends: modest international student flows

A sizeable minority of migrants move for education and training purposes from Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt and Albania. These international student flows are characterised by a high proportion of returnees, reflecting brain circulation and the high premium placed on education acquired abroad within the domestic labour market context. Brain circulation can play a positive role in development, as migration increases human capital and enhances the acquisition and exploitation of global knowledge, work experiences and networks. There is also a close link with migration incentives, for instance, there are good job opportunities for many well-educated Arabs in the Gulf States.

The EU countries appear to be less attractive than the USA and Canada in the circulation of high-skilled migrants, with the best and the brightest tending to prefer North America as their main destination, while highly-educated female migrants from Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine tend to prefer to migrate to France, Germany, the UK, Spain and Italy, as well as the USA and Canada. Conversely, Moroccan, Tunisian and Egyptian flows to Europe (particularly to Spain and Italy) are dominated by low-educated migrants. Language is an important contextual factor in the direction of these flows, with some EU Member States gaining more than others in this brain circulation. For instance, English-speaking countries such as the UK and Ireland attract migrants from countries where English is the primary foreign language, while France draws more migrants from Maghreb countries, where French is the primary foreign language.

Brain waste trends: limited use of migrant skills and skill mismatches

Work experience abroad is shaped by the limited types of jobs and sectors open to migrants, with indications of problems in inadequate job matching and the limited use of migrants' skills. Construction, domestic and personal services, agriculture, hospitality services, commerce, transport and manufacturing are the most common sectors accepting migrants abroad. Most migrants from Georgia, Moldova, Armenia, Albania and Ukraine work abroad as skilled or unskilled workers, irrespective of their education level. This leads to brain loss or waste, given their relatively high education levels, and a high level of skills mismatch. For Egyptian, Moroccan and Tunisian migrants, the education-job match is relatively better, mainly due to the overall lower levels of education, longer stays abroad and more established migrant networks, facilitating a better match. Indeed the most widely used strategy for finding a job abroad is through the support of family and friends already resident abroad.

Although low-quality education, and the poor labour market relevance of this, may be one factor in skills mismatch, the main cause of the issue appears to reside in the nature of labour demand and the invisibility of migrants' skills in the destination countries. There is no common practice for the recognition of qualifications abroad in most sectors, most of which are obtained by higher-educated migrants seeking to continue their studies abroad (more than two thirds of higher-educated Moroccan returnees). Such recognition is difficult to achieve for intermediate and VET education levels. More information needs to be made available on mechanisms for the recognition of qualifications abroad, and potential migrants must be made aware of the importance of this recognition.

In Georgia and Moldova, there is a particularly high level of perception among migrants that they are working at below their actual education level, and this increases dramatically among the highly-educated migrants. Georgian and Moldovan female migrants appear to be the most disadvantaged group in terms of performing jobs below their education level due to four contributory factors: a large number of migrants working in domestic services; migration to diverse destinations for work; a relatively recent migration history, and; the lack of good support networks abroad. Other factors, such as the limited number of legal migration schemes and the irregular status of Georgian migrants in

destination countries may also have an impact. Countries with a longer history of migration, such as Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia, have better access to long-term residency and citizenship in Europe and the Gulf States.

Usage of newly-acquired skills at home where returnees find jobs

Sustained migration benefits are seen to exist where work experience abroad offers benefits to returnees that are subsequently recognised in the domestic labour market. Where the chief benefit for migrants lies in economic gains, the value of circular migration as a positive development tool could be undermined. In such a situation, migration brings economic benefits for individual migrants, but these can only be sustained by repeated migration. For circular migration to be an effective and sustainable strategy, migration experience must be valued in the labour market of the country of origin, thereby offering migrants the option to stop the migration cycle when they decide the time is right.

The ETF surveys demonstrate that the migration experience activates people and increases employment levels upon return in all countries, especially for women. Indeed, returnees have activity and employment rates that are similar to or higher than those of other groups, as their newly-gained skills help a sizeable minority of returnees to find a job upon return. Morocco provides a good example of this process, as two thirds of returnees here are employed, in comparison to less than half of non-migrants, indicating that migration encourages labour market activity and provides better opportunities for employment upon return. Signs of both personal and technical skills acquisition in migrants appear to be valued in the labour markets of countries characterised by very high inactivity rates and low education levels. There also appears to be a more entrepreneurial attitude among returnees in an environment largely dominated by traditional and informal micro-enterprises.

A high proportion of returnees works as employers or become self-employed, with entrepreneurship tending to be especially high among returnees to Morocco, Albania, Egypt and Tunisia. Among Moroccan returnees, the share of employers is double that of the non-migrant group and similar trends are evident in Albania, Egypt and Tunisia. One third of returnee savings are invested in business activities in Morocco (compared with a somewhat lower level in Albania, Egypt and Tunisia), all of which would indicate a strong positive impact of migration on entrepreneurship and the importance of savings for business start-ups in these countries. In Georgia, Armenia and Moldova, however, under half of returnees are employed upon return, although this rate is similar to or better than the employment rate of other groups.

Positive experiences abroad, but less positive return

The fact that the migration experience abroad is reported as successful by most migrants explains the continuous and sustained migration flows. Return outcomes were found to be much less successful however, especially in Georgia, Armenia and Moldova, where close to half of the returnees experienced almost no positive impact on their lives upon return, encountering instead a situation of high unemployment and loss of migration benefits. Low rates of returnee employment may be linked to poor labour market conditions at home, the local pattern of shorter and more repetitive migration, and undeveloped attitudes to and environment for entrepreneurship. Moreover, migration may contribute to deterioration in the qualifications previously acquired at home and reduced knowledge about local labour market conditions. In Georgia, Armenia and Moldova, households with migrants currently abroad are better off than households with returnees or without migrants. This fact suggests that migrants benefit from the most immediate impact of migration in the form of remittances but they are unable to use the migration experience to improve their living standards upon return.

The return experience was more successful for Moroccan, Tunisian and Egyptian migrants, perhaps due to their migration projects being completed and the longer duration and relatively more regular nature of past migration. Economic and social conditions in returnee households were substantially

better than those in households corresponding to other groups in Morocco, reflecting the sustained positive impact of migration after return.

Despite the overall success of migration experiences abroad, the challenge remains for returnees to convert these experiences into improved living standards and reintegration into the domestic labour market in a sustainable way. Better-educated migrants tend to be able to exploit the migration experience upon return more successfully than their more poorly-educated counterparts.

Migration is an individual project, marked by sub-optimal outcomes

Only small numbers of migrants have ever heard of the migration schemes in existence and very few have made use of these. The typical form of organisation used is for migrants to operate independently, mostly relying on the help of family and friends at home and abroad. The picture is the same on the awareness and use of migrant return schemes. Only a small share of returnees participated in pre-departure training, although more potential migrants than returnees plan to attend such training. The service most needed by both migrants and returnees is support in finding a job. Despite the obvious benefits, migration mostly results in sub-optimal outcomes due to the lack of institutional support and policy interventions, resulting in higher costs and lower benefits for many individuals.

Two distinct patterns of gains and losses from migration emerge in the two groups of countries analysed here: group one consisting of Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco (three developing countries with traditional emigration patterns), and; group two of Albania, Moldova, Ukraine, Armenia and Georgia (five Eastern European transition countries with new migration flows). Migration is more likely to be a success story in terms of skills and employment gains in the former group than the latter as Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia have a longer migration history, relatively more regular migration patterns, longer migration periods and the support of migrant networks, all of which tend to reduce the cost of migration and increase the benefits. Moreover, matching between the education level and the job type performed abroad is relatively better, mainly because the overall educational level of migrants from Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia is lower. Overall, migrants with lower education and skill levels tend to benefit more.

In contrast, Albania, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine have a more recent migration history, migration periods are much shorter, and the migration experience is less regular. In countries such as Armenia, a genuine circular pattern of migration has developed with visa-free Russia. Migrants from the other countries in the group travel to more diversified destinations and have fewer migrant support networks. Education-job matching was particularly poorly balanced in this group, and this appears to be due to the overall higher educational levels of migrants, becoming a hindrance rather than a help in the migration process. The fact that Georgia and Moldova have the highest skill mismatches can be further explained by the higher share of educated female migrants working mostly in the low-paid domestic services sector, which is linked to the traditional role of women in economy.

4. The EU external migration policy framework: a brief review of policy developments

Migration and migration management is a topic that has moved up the EU policy agenda since the 1999 Treaty of Amsterdam opened the door to EU migration policies as part of the Home Affairs pillar. Subsequent European Councils established four axes for the migration and asylum policy: (1) the integration of migration policy in EU relations with third countries; (2) efficient management of migration flows adopting a comprehensive approach that includes both combating illegal immigration and finding channels for legal immigration; (3) better integration of third-country nationals legally residing and working in the EU, and; (4) a common European asylum policy. The second of these axes is about properly managed mobility in a secure environment, balancing mobility for bona fide travellers with security against the risks of irregular migration.

These policy developments are being driven by the ageing population and potential labour and skill shortages that are highlighted in some reports. For example, Cedefop's analyses of skills needs in Europe identify trends for a number of skills shortages in certain sectors, in particular medium-skilled occupations (2008, 2012). Similarly, the EU skills panorama and competitiveness reports reveal skill shortages in many Member States for technically related occupations.¹¹ Within this context, the EU multiannual Stockholm Programme 2010-2014 on justice, freedom and security, has taken a proactive approach to legal labour migration in order to enable the reception of migrants with skills that respond to labour and skill shortages in certain sectors, to foster economic dynamism and to promote innovative ideas that enhance competitiveness.

The Stockholm Programme was built on the foundations of previous relevant conclusions. The first EU communication on migration and development (European Commission, 2005) recognised the potential contribution of migration to development through the benefits it brings to countries and individuals, and an EU fund was created to assist third countries in migration management. The EU spent almost EUR 1 billion on more than 400 migration-related projects between 2004 and 2011, and another EUR 200 million between 2012 and 2013 on 90 migration-related projects, funded under various thematic and geographical financial instruments (European Commission, 2013 and 2014).

An EU communication of 2007 (European Commission, 2007) opened the way to temporary legal migration schemes for the first time, introducing mobility partnership agreements as the main strategic, comprehensive and long-term migration cooperation instrument for the EU and third countries. A later EU communication on migration (European Commission, 2011a) reiterated the need to strengthen EU migration policies through partnerships with third countries that would address migration and mobility issues in a mutually beneficial way. It recognised the need for activities in the areas of facilitating labour mobility and job matching, recognition of foreign qualifications and pre-departure vocational and language training with third countries. Similarly, the Third Annual Report on Immigration and Asylum (European Commission, 2012) pointed to the positive contribution of migration to EU growth through the satisfaction of labour and skill shortages, while noting the importance of securing borders and ensuring appropriate legal channels for increased mobility.

In 2011, this approach was systematised in the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM), which is a key EU policy document (European Commission, 2011b) providing a framework for an external migration policy compliant with EU foreign policy, development policy and the Europe 2020 Strategy. GAMM establishes four pillars: (1) facilitating legal migration and mobility; (2) preventing irregular migration and trafficking; (3) promoting international protection and asylum policies, and; (4) maximising the development impact of migration and mobility. GAMM thus emphasises the role of

¹¹ For more information, please see: <http://euskillspacepanorama.cedefop.europa.eu/> and http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/industrial-competitiveness/monitoring-member-states/index_en.htm

good migration and mobility governance alongside the issues of legal migration and of migration and development. Two instruments are proposed for the operation of GAMM: (1) mobility partnerships aimed primarily at the European Neighbourhood countries (both Eastern Partnership and Southern & Eastern Mediterranean), and; (2) common migration and mobility agendas developed with other priority or strategic countries.

In recognising the link between mobility and human development, the accompanying staff working paper on migration and development (European Commission, 2011c) displays a broad and flexible understanding of development issues and promotes a migrant-centred approach to comprehension of the individual effects of migration. Where earlier approaches tended to favour a one-size-fits-all solution that reinforced generalised assumptions, recent empirical work in this field has revealed the key insight that context matters immensely. The contextual variables of each individual country situation means that good solutions are not likely to apply universally as individual variations may be considerable. One of the strengths of the mobility partnership approach is that it provides a framework for this variability (European Commission, 2007).

Mobility Partnerships with interested non-EU countries cover all migration-related issues in a single package. The active involvement of signatory EU Member States in the mobility partnerships alongside the European Commission increases the efficiency, coordination and eventually impact of the different initiatives in line with the four pillars of GAMM as listed above. It is worth noting that the Mobility Partnerships model acknowledges an employment and skills dimension linked to national employment and skills policies in the country of origin, the need for matching jobs with skills and the importance of skills for the developmental impact of migration. Mobility Partnerships chiefly focus on the significant role of circular migration, extending greater control to partner countries, while recognising that flexibility is required both politically and in relation to the complexity of the migration and mobility issues involved (European Commission, 2009).

The conclusions of the European Council of 23-24 June 2012 called for enhanced migration and mobility cooperation with neighbouring countries, a mandate that was reiterated in the conclusions of the European Council of 7-8 February 2013. Within this framework, the EU has signed mobility partnerships with Moldova (2008), Georgia (2009), Armenia (2011), Morocco (June 2013), Azerbaijan (December 2013) and Tunisia (March 2014) and Jordan (October 2014) in a chronological order. The intention of launching similar negotiations for Egypt and Libya has also been announced by the EU, for a future time when the conditions are right.

The Mobility Partnership with Moldova was evaluated in 2012 in a process to review the relevance of the policy approach and instrument to the EU and the national context, rather than to provide any assessment of the results of the different underlying activities. The evaluation strongly stated that this first initiative was an example of good practice, citing: the considerable success achieved in migration cooperation and coordination between Moldova, the EU and its Member States, and; the levels of coherence, internal coordination and cooperation achieved within the Moldovan government institutions. Particular recognition was given of the positive role played by all the parties involved and the importance of visa facilitation in ensuring legal and circular migration. Moldova is the country with the longest experience of the Mobility Partnership and has therefore become a 'showcase' example for good collaboration among the signatories in migration management.

The EU-Moldova experience was reflected in the recent EU communication on maximising the development impact of migration (European Commission, 2013). This document identified migration and mobility as enabling factors for development, while emphasising the need to incorporate multiple stakeholders in both countries of origin and destination in order to ensure sustainable and coherent outcomes. This approach has operated to proven effect in Moldova.

In 2014, the European Commission prepared a report on two years of GAMM, drawing lessons from the Mobility Partnerships as the main instrument for implementation of the external migration policy. The report confirmed that cooperation has been unambiguously strengthened through the Mobility Partnerships and that substantial progress has been achieved with regard to intra-EU coordination and inter-institutional coordination of the relevant institutions in the partner countries (European Commission, 2014).

It must be emphasised that the EU external migration policy builds on EU legislation and legal instruments that have recently incorporated measures to facilitate circular migration, including directives on legal and irregular migration (see **Box 2**), visa facilitation and readmission agreements, common visa application centres, a visa information system and the EU immigration portal.¹² Also, political instruments such as bilateral policy dialogues and action plans are combined with operational support and capacity-building instruments where project support is provided to numerous stakeholders. Capacity-building instruments include the support provided through the EU agencies such as the ETF, but also FRONTEX (frontiers), EASO (asylum) and EUROPOL (law enforcement) and the EU programmes such as TAIEX and MIEUX. The Mobility Partnerships cater for this type of articulated context, building the role in line with the local situation.

Box 2. Key EU directives for facilitating legal circular migration

- **EU Directive 2003/109/EC** on the status of third-country nationals who are long-term residents.
- **EU Directive 2004/114/EC** on the conditions of admission of third-country nationals for the purposes of studies, pupil exchange, unremunerated training or voluntary service.
- **EU Directive 2005/71/EC** on the admission of third-country nationals for the purpose of scientific research.
- **EU Directive 2009/50/EC** on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of highly-qualified employment ('Blue Card' Directive).
- **EU Directive 2011/98/EC** on the application procedure for a single permit for third-country nationals to reside and work in the territory of a member state and on a common set of rights for third-country workers legally residing in a member state.
- **COM (2010)378** - proposal for a directive on conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals in the framework of an intra-corporate transfer.
- **COM (2010)379** - proposal for a directive on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of seasonal employment.

¹² See www.ec.europa.eu/immigration/. This website was launched in 2012 as a one-stop-shop (first point of entry) for clear, accessible, up-to-date, targeted and practical information on EU and national immigration procedures and policies, including visas and work permits for potential migrants.

5. International trends on the migration and skills development nexus

This paper provides abundant evidence of highly diverse migration patterns and large variations in migration outcomes between countries due to specific contextual factors (individual, country, time). Therefore, no simple or straightforward migration result can be predicted, nor can there be a 'one-size-fits-all' policy for all countries. Although the immediate economic benefits of migration is obvious that ensure sustained migration flows, the outcomes from migration process are somewhat sub-optimal due to a lack of institutional support, which generally results in higher costs and lower benefits for many individuals. Migration benefits could be considerably increased for all parties if structured institutional support was available to migrants in the form of targeted policy interventions. Migrants are not the responsibility of destination countries alone, and it may be time for the countries of origin to take on greater responsibility in order to optimise the benefits of migration for their citizens.

An overview of international experiences on migration-skills development nexus shows that little attention is generally paid to the employment and skills of migrants and returnees beyond discussions of brain drain versus brain gain for highly-skilled migrants, and information is particularly scarce for VET and medium-skilled migrants. There is also an overemphasis on the experiences and needs of the destination countries that are currently funding most migrant-related initiatives, while little knowledge exists on policies and interventions in the countries of origin. Overall, policy actions to facilitate labour mobility have been limited and there has been hardly any analysis of the results of these actions. Much discussion has been dedicated to the topic of migration and development, but very little policy action and evidence has been seen. Further work is needed to realise the potential of migration and to explore how the findings can best be used to support skills development, fuel the dynamics of brain gain and personal/community wellbeing.

Growing numbers of international organisations and other stakeholders are concentrating on migration and development policy actions that could increase the benefits. For example, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) have developed a number of instruments for the recognition of higher education degrees, while the UN, International Labour Organization (ILO), International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) focus more on migrants' rights and the developmental impact of migration. International organisations such as the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the World Bank, the European University Institute (EUI) and the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) also contribute greatly to increased knowledge and policy discussion in both home and host countries. Note also that, due to the political importance of migration in Europe, many partially- or fully-funded knowledge and research centres on migration operate in strategic partnerships with the EU.¹³

The EU has developed policies and tools to promote and facilitate intra-EU labour mobility between Member States that have an impact on third countries. Several related EU initiatives help improve understanding of qualifications, experiences and skills, and make jobs easier to find throughout the EU. The aim is to provide greater access to learning and employment opportunities in different countries and to encourage greater mobility for individuals, businesses and other organisations. These intra-EU mobility policies and tools could be of interest to partner countries and could inspire them in their efforts to streamline and facilitate mobility in the future (see **Box 3** for a list of EU policies and

¹³ In addition to research centres located in different universities across all the EU Member States, the most relevant centres and mechanisms include the Migration Policy Institute (www.MPIEurope.org), Migration Policy Group, www.migpolgroup.com), Migration for Development Community of Practice (<http://www.migration4development.org/>), Global Migration Group (<http://www.globalmigrationgroup.org/>), European Migration Network (<http://emn.intrasoft-intl.com/html/index.html>) and the EuroMed Migration III project (<http://www.euromed-migration.eu/fr/>).

tools offering a potential contribution to job or skills matching for migrants that could be explored and taken forward).

Box 3. Learning from intra-EU mobility policies and tools

- **Bologna Process** - Harmonisation of degree structures and quality assurance procedures across higher education systems (open to non-EU countries).
- **Copenhagen Process** - Enhanced cooperation in European vocational education and training systems, including quality assurance, validation of prior learning and credit systems (European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET), European Credit for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET)).
- **European Qualifications Framework (EQF)** - Common European reference framework and translation device to better link different national qualifications systems.
- **Professional recognition of qualifications** - Sectoral directives for seven professions and EU Directive 2005/36/EC on the professional recognition of EU citizen qualifications.
- **EUROPASS** - Increased transparency of qualifications and mobility of citizens in Europe (European CV, Language Passport, Europass Mobility, Certificate Supplement and Diploma Supplement).
- **EURES (European Job Mobility Portal)** - Provision of information and job-matching services through a cooperation network for European public employment services.
- **European exchange programmes** - Facilitating greater mobility in terms of learning and professional experiences abroad (Erasmus, Comenius, Leonardo da Vinci, Grundtvig, Youth in Action and Erasmus-Mundus—the latter of which is open to non-EU countries).
- **CEDEFOP Skills Forecast** - A yearly quantitative exercise to forecast medium-term skills needs in all European countries by sector, occupation and qualification.
- **EU Skills Panorama** - An attempt for one single and integrated database and access point to information and intelligence on skills needs and mismatches from several different national, European and private sources by occupation, sector, country and skills.
- **European Vacancy Monitor** - An overview of recent developments on the European job market, with data on job vacancies and hiring.
- **European Employment Observatory** - Open method of coordination system for the development and implementation of the European Employment Strategy through exchanges of information, experience and evaluation on employment policies and labour market trends in 33 countries.

The ETF has also piloted three projects linked with the skills dimension of migration: (i) the Skills Matching Project for Legal Migration in Egypt (2007-2010), covering the development of Italian-Egyptian occupational profiles for a number of construction and tourism occupations and an assessment system for the skills of legal migrants; (ii) the Skills Recognition Component of the Mobility Partnership with Moldova (2008-2012), supporting the EU-Moldova mobility partnership by developing mechanisms for transparency in professional qualifications and labour market matching for circular migrants and returnees, and; (iii) the Regional Qualifications Project (2010-2013), using technical

expertise offered by three EU member states (France, Italy, Spain), focusing on employment mobility and the national qualifications systems in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia and developing a common methodology to describe and compare qualifications in the tourism and construction sectors.

These projects show the importance of reliable assessment, validation and certification procedures in offering guarantees regarding the skills of migrant workers to potential foreign employers. Indeed, the huge gap between required and acquired skills as a result of poor quality teaching and learning processes is the single most important obstacle to labour mobility (ETF, 2010b). The quality and relevance of education and training systems is central to both meeting local labour market needs and gaining international recognition and credibility. Skills that are not good for a country are generally not good for the global labour market either. Skills recognition is better facilitated when both origin and destination countries have national references or standards against which to benchmark skills. Countries of origin therefore need to have their own transparent standards that also recognise skills acquired on the job, in the domestic labour market or through labour migration.

The Moldovan experience has proved that skill standards at each end of migratory flows should be openly accessible and understandable by both origin and destination countries. Transparency in skills and standards are two elements that must go hand in hand. Permanent dialogue between state authorities, employers and employees, experts and school representatives has been a requirement in successful initiatives involving occupational standards, skills recognition, assessment, validation and certification procedures. Such initiatives have been, by their very nature, time-consuming processes involving learning and negotiation among the relevant stakeholders, typically advancing at an irregular pace and marked by temporary setbacks. In Moldova, the framework provided by the Mobility Partnership agreement was very helpful, but the main success factor lay in how this activity was linked to other developments in domestic labour market and VET policies. **Box 4** summarises the lessons learned from the implementation of the projects mentioned above.

Box 4. Lessons learned from implementation of the ETF projects

- High diversity in migration patterns means there is no simple and straightforward outcome of migration flows that can be applied all countries. Migration outcomes vary extensively depending on the individual, time and country context. Therefore, contextual factors have to be taken into account in any policy design process.
- The economic benefits of migration ensure sustained migration flows, but the results show somewhat sub-optimal outcomes from migration as a result of poor institutional support. Migrants are not the concern of the destination countries alone, and it may be time for the countries of origin to take greater responsibility in order to optimise the benefits of migration for their citizens and countries.
- Migration policies must be linked to other developments in the domestic labour market, education sector and VET systems. The quality of education and training systems must be improved in order to produce high-quality skilled labour that can compete in domestic and global labour markets whether or not migration is directly considered. Improvement must be made at systemic level for all students, as the focus is not on education for migration.
- Strong quality assurance mechanisms are required to ensure the transparency and visibility of educational systems, qualifications and skills across countries, with a particular need in the area of VET and vocational qualifications.
- Mobility Partnership agreements can provide an opportunity to focus on the skills development agenda where countries push for this. The direction of dialogue can be changed through the involvement of a wider group of actors in the discussion of migration issues (such as education and labour ministries); a process that will also increase inter-institutional coordination in the countries of origin.
- Measures to facilitate temporary and circular movements can be effective when home and host countries cooperate, while the establishment of welcoming policy structures at home is vital for successful return.

Migration will occur whether or not such elements are in place, furnishing home and host countries with economic benefits and new skills (if not qualifications), all of which must be viewed as opportunities for development. However, the sub-optimal benefits of migration could be considerably increased for all parties if structured institutional support were in place for policy interventions targeted on migrants. The findings discussed in this paper suggest that greater emphasis should be placed on the employment and skills dimension of migrants in order to ensure better outcomes. Policy measures are needed to support migrants before departure, concentrating on the international visibility and recognition of qualifications and on ensuring more efficient processes for job- and skills-matching. Similarly, measures are needed for returnees in order to validate the new skills gained abroad, to facilitate labour market reintegration and to promote entrepreneurial activities. This is particularly true in situations where there is shorter-term circular migration with higher costs and lower benefits.

As yet, the impact of policy interventions to support migrants and returnees is not well understood and identification of the most valuable support components is incomplete. However, the ETF team have started an inventory of policy measures and good practices that support migrants and returnees from the skills and employment perspectives (the ongoing MISMES project). Migrant support measures

generally take the form of policy interventions aimed at improving the labour market integration of migrant workers and returnees, and at reducing underutilisation of the skills of migrant workers before, during and after migration. Evaluation of MISMEs practices can be used to highlight success factors and common issues and also to identify the challenges faced in implementing individual categories of migrant support measures to support policy-makers in addressing those issues.

6. A discussion of policy recommendations and policy options

6.1. Policy recommendations for migration to support the skills development agenda

This paper provided an overview of literature and a synthesis of the lessons learned from ETF activities and other international experiences on the migration-skills development nexus. It shows that many factors determine the outcome of migration, some of which are country-specific or individual-specific or time-specific (i.e. migration cycle, technological changes). Thus the various notions of brain gain, drain, waste and circulation cannot easily and firmly be concluded. Given this complexity of human movements and interrelations, listed below are broader policy recommendations for migration to support the skills development agenda, while the next section gives a menu of policy options on portability and recognition of migrants' skills for tailor-made solutions.

Quality of education and training systems

The huge gap between required and acquired skills as a result of poor quality teaching and learning processes is the single most important obstacle to labour mobility. This includes both issues linked to the coverage and equal access to education as well as the quality of education services and structures for all. Improving the access and quality of education and training systems is, first and foremost, a policy measure to produce high-quality skilled labour that can compete effectively in both domestic and global labour markets. This is particularly needed for developing countries with low education levels, whereas destination countries could invest more to improve education and training coverage and quality. Education and training systems need to improve regardless of migration considerations, but they must now take migration specifically into account as a possible outlet. Conversely, migration can also be a push factor for system reform.

Current and probable future migration patterns imply the need for internationalised education and training, meaning that curricula design must consider international trends in order to produce qualifications comparable with those of the possible destination countries. Such changes require structural adaptation of entire education and training policies and the development of specific actions to target future migrants. There is a higher chance of success for future migrants where the national systems perform well in language training, entrepreneurial learning and short-term and flexible adult training schemes in particular. Adaptation and anticipation is most needed at the intermediate level of VET qualifications, as this group covers the majority of migrants but continues to be the most difficult area in terms of transparency, portability and recognition.

Training, internship and exchange mobility options can be increased for young people, students, artists, cultural workers, researchers and academics, with synergies developed between mobility and development schemes. Twinning arrangements in VET, higher education and training institutions (with a view to improving long-term labour market complementarity) are good for encouraging cross-border cooperation and exchanges that can contribute toward the alignment and recognition of curricula, certificates and qualifications. In the VET sector, the establishment of dual certification programmes would be particularly useful in specific in-demand sectors, using labour mobility schemes to provide apprenticeship opportunities to trainers and trainees, building sound labour market information on both sides and exchanging regular information regarding skill update needs. The trajectories of international students and the possible impact on national higher education systems should also be monitored.

Migration to be linked with other national policies

Given the sensitivity of migration to employment and economic developments, job creation and employment policies are essential for both home and host country governments. Supporting employment and decent work opportunities in the countries of origin should be part of economic and migration policies aimed at retaining skilled workers as this is a key variable in political stability and economic development.

Migration management must be closely linked to other developments in the domestic labour market and VET policies of home countries, and returnees must be particularly welcomed by these national schemes. Improved and tailored job-placement services for returnees and the encouragement of entrepreneurial investment of migrants' savings must be prioritised, as many returnees wish to create small businesses despite the many hurdles that generally exist in the process. Recommendations include: private-public partnerships to engage migrant entrepreneurs and small businesses in trade and investment; skills transfer between EU and home countries; the development of diaspora investment tools and vehicles to channel voluntary contributions, and; EU resources directed to development-oriented initiatives and investments.

Instruments to match migrant workers with employers abroad

Managing temporary labour migration for employment and human development purposes is not necessarily a bad idea. Assuming that the aim of home countries is employment generation in the short term and human and economic development in the longer run, a circular mobility system could be established based on a commercially viable and demand-driven labour market approach. For this to be successful, coordination mechanisms are required between implementation agencies in the home and host countries for the matching of jobs and migrants (screening and pre-selection of job candidates, especially at the lower skill levels, training and certification, pre-departure counselling, training and orientation). A well-developed labour market information system (LMIS) can produce accurate and timely information on labour market needs and better manage labour migration.¹⁴

There are a multitude of policy interventions at national and international levels that can facilitate labour migration, including bilateral labour agreements, cross-national placement services (e.g. extending EURES), shared databases and websites where job seekers and employers meet (IOM IMIS), skills assessment and certification systems, language training, entrepreneurship initiatives and pre-departure training. Pre-departure training can help tremendously if focused on language training, VET qualifications and information about available institutional pathways for finding employment abroad (e.g. employment offices). Labour market information about available job vacancies abroad and the skill levels of potential migrants can help reduce skill mismatches in destination countries. Differentiated migrant support measures can be developed and integrated into regular public employment services.

Visibility, portability and recognition of migrants' skills

The non-visibility and underutilisation of migrants' skills both in the home and host countries are evident policy issues that must be addressed in order to facilitate labour migration. However, assessment and validation of skills is always problematic, as formal qualifications may fail to reflect the whole reality of experience, while soft skills and skills learned on the job are difficult to assess even though they are increasingly seen as being important. Some relatively novel and ongoing developments addressing the problems of portability, assessment and recognition of skills and qualifications are further explored in more focused section 6.2.

An open and accessible system for the recognition and validation of migrants' skills and qualifications could greatly improve matching between available jobs and migrants' skills. Establishing such a system would require greater transparency and better quality qualifications from the home countries along with effective cooperation with host countries. Encouragement should be provided for specific practices offering flexible options for aptitude tests and examination requirements, avoidance of an

¹⁴ LMIS is defined as the set of institutional arrangements, procedures and mechanisms that can ensure all relevant labour market information is collected, shared and channelled to the relevant institutions to be analysed and processed before being fed into labour market matching and policy planning processes.

'all-or-nothing' approach to certifying foreign professionals and the creation of user-friendly procedures for the assessment of formal diplomas and the validation of prior learning (MPI, 2013).

The newly-gained skills, experiences and savings brought in from the returnees and diaspora must also be recognised and put to good use in the domestic labour market. The validation of prior learning abroad could be used as a relevant instrument for this process through national systems accessible to all citizens. Occupation as a caregiver, for instance, would merit the recognition of these skills. This could reduce the impact of structures that relegate females to home after having a child, currently negating the substantial value of their domestic labour and knowledge. This could also offer incentives to increase male involvement in domestic and caregiving work in longer term.

Mobility Partnership (MP) and EU mobility tools linked to skills development agenda

Despite the diverse contexts of individual countries, their varying levels of drive for migration cooperation and the extensive menu of possible elements for mobility partnerships available, these agreements provide a negotiation framework capable of improving legal labour mobility and labour market access, building partner countries capacities and sharing lessons learned regarding different migration patterns. They facilitate focused discussions, information exchange and coordination between all the parties involved and provide for cooperation with volunteer member states. Moreover, they help to achieve inter-institutional coordination between relevant institutions in partner countries by bringing many different institutions together under a common agenda.

Therefore, the Mobility Partnership framework could be effectively used by partner countries as an opportunity to focus more closely on the skills development agenda and to link migration developments with other domestic policy issues, in particular the domestic labour market and VET policies in home countries. The same is also valid for EU Member States that experience labour and skills shortages as a result of ageing population and other reasons. Particular attention would be given to the medium-skilled and technical occupations which seem to be increasingly needed in Europe as well as in partner countries, while graduate over-production and mismatch between higher education and market demand are becoming a common challenge for all.

The intra-EU mobility tools also demonstrate some interesting examples for higher labour mobility. Several related EU initiatives help to ease the job search process and increase the understanding of qualifications, experiences and skills throughout the EU. The aim is to provide greater access to learning and employment opportunities in different countries and to encourage greater mobility for individuals, businesses and other organisations. EU tools such as the European Qualifications Framework, Europass (European CV, Language Passport, Europass Mobility, Certificate Supplement and Diploma Supplement), European exchange programmes or quality assurance mechanisms in VET can be viewed as sources of inspiration for education and training system reform in the countries of origin.

6.2. Specific focus on the portability and recognition of migrants' skills

The transparency, portability, assessment, certification and recognition of migrants' skills and qualifications and their effective use in circular migration must be considered a factor in labour mobility that is central to effective migration management. Skills validation is becoming increasingly important as formal qualifications may not reflect the whole reality of experience, while the tough-to-evaluate soft skills and skills learned on the job are increasingly viewed as desirable. Three recent developments merit further discussion as part of efforts to address the problems of portability, assessment and recognition in relation to skills and qualifications:

- Emerging National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs) and overarching transnational frameworks such as the European Qualifications Framework (EQF),

- Recognition of qualifications and validation of non-formal and informal learning (VNFIL),¹⁵
- Partial development of specific job descriptions and training needs for low and medium-skilled occupations in high-demand sectors for labour migrants and their inclusion in bilateral and/or multilateral agreements.

All further discussion of these recent developments will be shaped by prior consideration of the two key concepts of: (i) the contextual nature of skills development, and; (ii) differentiated measures reflecting migrant skill levels.

The first of these concepts is that skills are never developed in a void without the influence of some contextual elements. A person who was trained and has worked as a car mechanic in one region or country cannot automatically put those experiences and skills to use in another, different context in a simple act of transference or translational move. Contextual and even cultural differences are bound to exist between the various labour markets in different countries and regions, and even between individual employers, with elements such as language and knowledge of procedures influencing the transition to a new work context.

Moreover, matching migrants' skills (supply side) to the jobs offered by host country employers (demand side) is often hindered by asymmetric information on skills at many levels. The lack of formal signalling mechanisms (harmonised certification and qualification systems) at global level makes it difficult for destination employers to assess the skills of foreign workers. Likewise, potential migrants lack adequate information on the exact nature and level of the soft and technical skills required by foreign employers. Skills' matching thus requires mechanisms to reduce information asymmetries between migrant workers and potential destination employers, with the dissemination of common information on sectoral qualifications and skill profiles. Information on the skills in demand for migrant workers could be used as input for education systems in home countries in a way that would ultimately optimise the allocation of labour in the global economy.

Barriers to the transferability of foreign qualifications are widely acknowledged yet they stubbornly endure. Simply providing employers with better information on the meaning of foreign qualifications will not solve the problem as many migrants need much more than information or a translated diploma. Moreover, the quality of education systems in the countries of origin affects transferability outcomes in many more complex ways. For instance: some migrants may need additional training to fill specific skill gaps, acquire occupational language proficiency and become familiar with the idiosyncrasies of host country work practices, or they may need mentoring or other support to bolster their professional networks and gain local, job-specific knowledge. In other words, gaining local recognition for qualifications is not an isolated task but forms part of a much wider process of acculturation to the destination labour market (MPI, 2013).

The second concept relates to migrant support measures facilitating transition into a new labour market. These measures must be differentiated on the basis of skills levels and education of the migrants. More often than not, the real skills and competencies of any individual do not accurately correspond to their level of education as the learning that takes place outside formal education is not necessarily reflected in their formal diplomas. Incongruences frequently occur, for example: an individual may have a high level of education within their specific discipline coupled with a low level of skill where they have either not worked in their field or where their formal training took place some years ago. The converse is also equally possible, i.e. individuals with a low education level may be highly skilled. As a result, there may be no correlation between skills and education levels, yet it is

¹⁵ Please note that 'validation of non-formal and informal learning' is also named 'validation of prior learning'.

generally assumed that education level can be used as a ‘proxy’ for skill level for various reasons, not less due to the difficulty of measuring skills. In this context ‘being qualified’ really refers to whether an individual has any formal recognition of their skills and competencies, most usually in the form of a diploma or certificate from the formal education system.

As an illustration, we can divide migrants into three main groups: (i) low-skilled and low-qualified individuals; (ii) skilled and low- or medium-qualified individuals, and; (iii) high-skilled and high-qualified individuals (see Figure 1). This division is an analytical simplification, but it provides a useful visualisation of three generic target groups defined by skills and qualifications. **Figure 1A** clearly shows how most migrants have a medium level of education in the eight countries surveyed (Albania, Egypt, Moldova, Tunisia, Ukraine, Armenia, Georgia and Morocco). This is incongruent with reality as there is almost no discussion of cross-border recognition or validation for this category of migrants and VET degrees are still less portable than academic degrees, chiefly as a result of the greater variability in VET systems. Skill policies targeting low- to medium-qualified, but frequently higher skilled, migrants are therefore especially necessary, particularly any targeting those with technical VET qualifications.

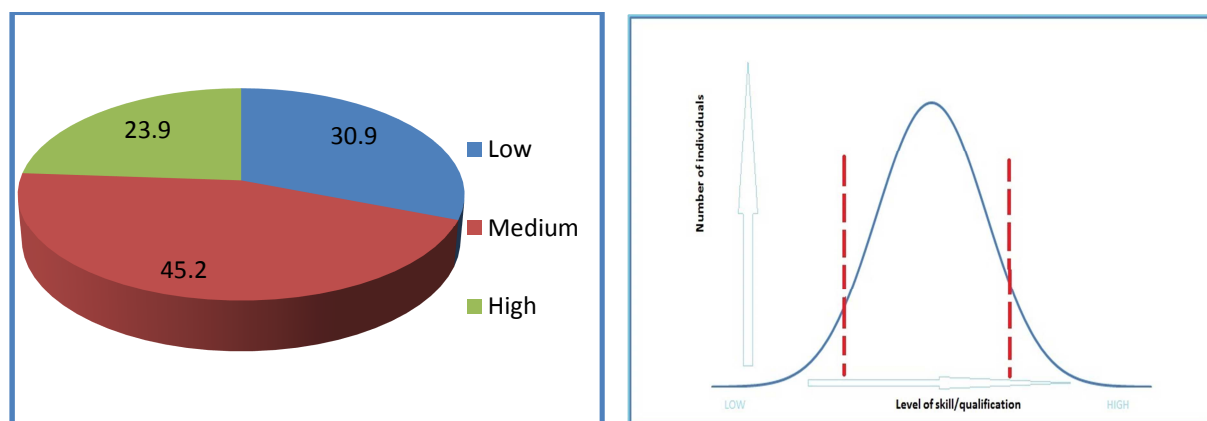


Figure 1. A: Education level of migrants in eight countries. **B:** Expected need for recognition and validation.

Source: Figure 1A ETF reports. Figure 1B: From a presentation given by Patrick Werquin at the 2012 Nordic Network for Adult Learning (NVL) International Conference on Validation: ‘To implement a high-quality validation process – a challenge!’

The two graphics also illustrate that the group expected to benefit most from skills recognition and validation is, in fact, the biggest group: those (highly) skilled people with low- to medium-level qualifications (**Figure 1B**). This group also faces greater problems of portability compared to the group with more standardised university degrees. The high-skilled group is in need of a variety of measures depending on whether or not their skills are formalised or documented. High-skilled and high-qualified migrants are the group most likely will benefit from existing systems for the recognition of qualifications, whereas the skilled and low- to medium-qualified individuals are likely to need measures for the validation of previous learning. Migrants in the low-skilled and low-qualified group will have access to unskilled jobs (agriculture, cleaning etc.) to some extent, but these jobs are unlikely to require skills recognition or validation. The priority for this last group lies in basic orientation and language training in order to perform the necessary work activities.

The recognition of qualifications depends on elements such as transparency, currency and portability, effectively meaning that the skills acquired by a person should be easily recognisable to the users of qualifications, that qualifications should be recognised as having a real and current value (whether for labour market entry or for academic or professional progression) and that it should be possible to use and trust qualifications when a person changes a job or migrates to a different country. For the purposes of this paper ‘recognition of qualifications’ is taken to mean the granting of official status to

skills attested through a qualification as opposed to the broader meaning under which a qualification is merely understood. The EC Directive on Recognition of Professional Qualifications outlines the legal application of recognition.¹⁶

A National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is one way to make qualifications visible and comparable, providing a description and classification of qualifications into a hierarchy of levels. Qualifications are allocated to a particular level based on complexity and are often described in terms of 'learning outcomes' in the form of statements of the knowledge, skills and competences required for that specific qualification. Describing qualifications, or levels of qualifications, by learning outcomes facilitates more transparency and 'readability'; while the use of levels allows comparison across different qualifications systems, especially where these are compatible in terms of structure or links to a common international framework such as the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

Greater transparency and comparability will support greater portability and make it easier for individuals, employers and institutions to understand and compare qualifications. NQFs frequently co-exist with other recognition arrangements such as bilateral or multilateral agreements on the recognition of university diplomas or others. NQFs can also be used as gatekeeping instruments, however, as receiving countries may sometimes use these to exclude potential migrants not deemed sufficiently 'qualified'.

An estimated 155 countries worldwide are developing NQFs (ETF 2012b; ETF et al 2013) but most are not sufficiently advanced in their development to provide any hard evidence of facilitating migration. Qualifications frameworks should, however, make it easier for both individuals and employers to understand a variety of qualifications and the prerequisites for entering different labour markets. In the long term, this would support migration by facilitating labour mobility between countries and regions. Frameworks will contribute to the transparency of and trust in qualifications but will not necessarily give qualifications a higher value in the labour market. The expected added value will lie in the enhanced transparency and comparability achieved through the development of a common language in which to describe content across the various countries. Additionally, the NQFs will form the basis for the recognition of qualifications and the validation of prior learning. Developing a fully operational NQF does, however, take time, so this approach is unlikely to offer a quick-fix solution for migrants.

As listed in the second concept (or bullet point), systems to enhance skills visibility are also important in facilitating mobility and skills portability. In this respect, two distinct but quite complementary instruments are the recognition of qualifications and the validation of prior learning. The terms 'formal recognition' and 'assessment of foreign education' are alternative terms used for the 'recognition of qualifications', while the term 'validation of non-formal and informal learning' (VNFIL) is typically used to refer to the validation of prior learning within the EU. The recognition of qualifications is quite distinct from the validation of prior learning. Strictly speaking, the recognition of qualifications means the assessment of a document (qualification, diploma, certificate, etc.) received after the successful completion of a formal education, whereas the validation of prior learning implies assessment of the real skills, competences and experiences acquired by an individual before the time of assessment.

Prior learning covers both non-formal and informal learning¹⁷, with the skills valued independently of the situation in which the learning occurred. Recognition, accreditation or validation of non-formal and

¹⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/qualifications/policy_developments/legislation/index_en.htm

¹⁷ Non-formal learning takes place outside educational institutions (schools, colleges, training centres and universities), often at work; it is organised but does not lead to formal certification. Informal learning is part of everyday life and is not necessarily planned. Non-formal and informal settings are credible environments where learning takes place and migration and working abroad are important life experiences in which many things are learnt in non-formal and informal ways.

informal learning is a process whereby an individual's learning achievements are compared with a national standard or qualification. By its nature, this instrument can provide more opportunities to the individuals who are low- to medium-qualified but highly skilled. The development of job profiles and/or occupational standards facilitates permeability between formal, non-formal and informal learning achievements. Both recognition of qualifications and the validation of prior learning are important tools in ensuring faster access to host country labour markets and also in guaranteeing use of new skills and experiences gained abroad on return.

The necessity and usefulness of recognition and validation instruments will vary according to the individual, but in most situations both are necessary and complementary to each other. Since the outcome of a recognition and/or validation procedure will often result in partial recognition and a partial qualification, the individual may need complementary training before they can obtain the full qualification. One of the major benefits of recognition and validation is that it rationalises, shortens and individualises training for migrants and returnees and so minimises brain drain and brain waste, while maximising the brain gain effect. Cedefop (2010) provides a number of examples showing how validation can facilitate migrants' access to education, employment or training at a level commensurate with their skills or qualifications.

Qualifications frameworks, recognition of qualifications and validation of prior learning are all important tools that are useful for all citizens and residents (not only for migrants/ returnees) in a given country. In addition, they can be also used in developing migrant support measures aimed at facilitating skills and qualifications transfer, both at the individual and system levels. All three instruments are complementary to each other and are not mutually exclusive. Therefore, they should be considered in parallel in order to realise their full potential, given that the synergy effect can be prominent. For example: a starting point for assessment can be more easily identified when assessing a VET qualification from another country where this qualification is referenced to a specific level on an NQF and where this is, in turn, aligned with a transnational framework (i.e. EQF), thereby promoting a more efficient recognition process.

Other transparency tools for migrants could also be used to further enhance the effect, e.g. Europass, and the 'certificate supplement' designed specifically for VET within the EU. The certificate supplement is particularly useful as it provides additional information for official certificates and diplomas that can enhance understanding of the skills acquired by the holder for audiences such as employers abroad. Europass and its related documents can be used as a starting point for the recognition of qualifications and the validation of prior learning. It is recommended that Partner Countries include the validation of prior learning as a possible pathway to a qualification within their NQF, develop systems for the recognition of qualifications, and embed skills recognition and validation in the wider context of education and training reform so as to avoid the creation of parallel systems that serve only migrants.

There is some degree of risk implicit in the lengthy development timeframe and the complexities inherent to the process of developing qualifications frameworks and recognition and validation systems. Developing such systems can take many long years and costly process of education and training reforms in countries. This has led some experts to argue for a more pragmatic approach; e.g. developing specific job profiles or occupational standards alongside modular training programmes for low or medium skills, only in economic sectors where labour migrants are most needed today. This brings us to the third concept (or bullet point) listed in the beginning: partial development of specific job descriptions for low and medium-skilled migrants in highly demanded sectors such as construction or tourism, and their inclusion in bilateral and/or multilateral labour agreements for an easier and quicker skills-matching between potential migrants and foreign employers.

Indeed, few such international qualifications (covering both profiles and skills) already exist for jobs that require cross-national performance such as seafarers, train operators, welders, information and communication technology specialists in corporations such as IBM and CISCO. Most of these qualifications, however, were developed out of necessity, i.e. on the basis of safety criteria rather than specifically to facilitate mobility and labour migration. Similar measures are also in place for the seven professions covered by the EU sectoral directives (doctor, nurse, dentist, midwife, pharmacist, veterinary surgeon and architect), through approximation/ harmonisation of curriculums for an automatic recognition across the EU. However, the need for rapid-response partial solutions is dependent upon the extent of labour migration and should be based on agreements between the home and host countries wherever they are implemented.

List of abbreviations and acronyms

EASO	European Asylum Support Office
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
ECVET	European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training
EQAVET Training	European Quality Assurance Reference Framework in Vocational Education and Training
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
ETF	European Training Foundation
EU	European Union
EUI	European University Institute
EURES	European Job Mobility Portal
EUROPOL	European Union Law Enforcement Agency
FRONTEX Borders	European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders
GAMM	Global Approach to Migration and Mobility
GFMD	Global Forum on Migration and Development
ICMPD	International Centre for Migration Policy Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MIEUX	Migration EU Expertise
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
TAIEX	Technical Assistance and Information Exchange
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VNFIL	Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning
WTO	World Trade Organisation

References

- Alqu  zar Sabadie J., Avato J., Bardak U., Panzica F. and Popova N., *Migration and skills: the experience of migrant workers from Albania, Egypt, Moldova, and Tunisia*, World Bank and European Training Foundation, Washington DC, 2010. Available at: <http://issuu.com/world.bank.publications/docs/9780821380796> (accessed 10 December 2013).
- Adams W., *The brain drain*, New York, Macmillan, 1968.
- Bardak U., 'Brain circulation and knowledge society in the Mediterranean region', in *Mediterranean Yearbook 2007* (ed.), IEMed and CIDOB, Barcelona, 2007.
- Cedefop, *Skill needs in Europe - Focus on 2020*, Luxembourg, 2008. Available at: http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/Files/5191_EN.PDF
- Cedefop, *European Inventory on Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning 2010, Thematic Report – Validation for Specific Target Groups*. 2010. Available at: <http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2011/77651.pdf>
- Cedefop, *Future skills supply and demand in Europe, Forecast 2012*, Research Paper No.26, 2012. Available at: http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/5526_en.pdf
- Docquier F. and Rapoport H., *Skilled migration: the perspective of developing countries*, IZA Discussion Paper No. 2873, Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA), Bonn, June 2007.
- European Commission, *Migration and development: Some concrete orientations*, COM(2005) 390 final, Brussels, 2005.
- European Commission, *On circular migration and mobility partnerships between the EU and third countries*, COM(2007) 248 final, Brussels, 2007.
- European Commission, *Staff Working Document on Mobility Partnerships as a tool for the Global Approach to Migration*, SEC (2009) 1240, Brussels, 2009.
- European Commission, *Communication on Migration*, COM(2011) 248 final, Brussels, 2011a.
- European Commission, *The Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM)*, COM(2011) 743 final, Brussels, 2011b.
- European Commission, *Staff Working Paper on Migration and Development*, SEC(2011) 1353 final, Brussels, 2011c.
- European Commission, *Third Annual Report on Immigration and Asylum (2011)*, COM(2012) 250 final, Brussels, 2012.
- European Commission, *Maximising the Development Impact of Migration. The EU contribution for the UN High-level Dialogue and next steps towards broadening the development-migration nexus*, COM(2013) 292 final, Brussels, 2013.
- European Commission, *Report on the implementation of the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility 2012-2013*, COM(2014) 96 final, Brussels, 2014.
- European Council, Joint Declaration on a Mobility Partnership between the European Union and the Republic of Moldova, 9460/08 ADD1, 21 May 2008.

European Council, Joint Declaration on a Mobility Partnership between the European Union and Georgia, 2979th Justice and Home Affairs Council Meeting, 30 November 2009.

European Council, Joint Declaration on a Mobility Partnership between the European Union and Armenia, 3121th Justice and Home Affairs Council Meeting, 28 October 2011.

European Council, Joint Declaration Establishing a Mobility Partnership between the Kingdom of Morocco and the European Union and its Member States, Justice and Home Affairs Council Meeting, 6139/13 ADD 1, 3 June 2013.

ETF (European Training Foundation), *Country migration reports: Albania, Moldova, Ukraine, Egypt and Tunisia*, 2008. Available at:

http://www.etf.europa.eu/web.nsf/pages/The_Contribution_of_Human_Resources_Development_to_Migration_Policy_in_Albania

http://www.etf.europa.eu/web.nsf/pages/The_Contribution_of_Human_Resources_Development_to_Migration_Policy_in_Egypt

http://www.etf.europa.eu/web.nsf/pages/The_contribution_of_human_resources_development_to_migration_policy_in_Moldova

http://www.etf.europa.eu/web.nsf/pages/The_contribution_of_human_resources_development_to_migration_policy_in_Tunisia

http://www.etf.europa.eu/web.nsf/pages/The_contribution_of_human_resources_development_to_migration_policy_in_Ukraine

ETF (European Training Foundation), 'Legal migration and its skills dimension', *Inform Policy Briefing*, No 5, by U. Bardak, May 2010, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2010a. Available at:

[http://www.etf.europa.eu/pubmgmt.nsf/%28getAttachment%29/BD4BDAD8B27E87C6C1257730002C6D2D/\\$File/NOTE85UBH8.pdf](http://www.etf.europa.eu/pubmgmt.nsf/%28getAttachment%29/BD4BDAD8B27E87C6C1257730002C6D2D/$File/NOTE85UBH8.pdf)

ETF (European Training Foundation), *Skills matching for legal migration in Egypt*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2010b. Available at:

[http://www.etf.europa.eu/webatt.nsf/0/1BE8B869C71550D1C12578E10034BE46/\\$file/Skills%20matching%20for%20legal%20migration%20in%20Egypt.pdf](http://www.etf.europa.eu/webatt.nsf/0/1BE8B869C71550D1C12578E10034BE46/$file/Skills%20matching%20for%20legal%20migration%20in%20Egypt.pdf)

ETF (European Training Foundation), *Labour markets and employability: trends and challenges in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine*, ed. U. Bardak, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2011. Available at:

[http://www.etf.europa.eu/webatt.nsf/0/01507285AD527498C125797D0052AD32/\\$file/Labour%20markets%20&%20employability.pdf](http://www.etf.europa.eu/webatt.nsf/0/01507285AD527498C125797D0052AD32/$file/Labour%20markets%20&%20employability.pdf)

ETF (European Training Foundation), *Union for the Mediterranean: Regional Employability Review*, by I. Martín and U. Bardak, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2012a. Available at:

http://www.etf.europa.eu/web.nsf/pages/UfM_regional_employability_review

ETF (European Training Foundation), *Qualifications frameworks: from concepts to implementation*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2012b. Available at:

[http://www.etf.europa.eu/webatt.nsf/0/A2033205B419F36FC1257A09002FE49E/\\$file/Qualifications%20frameworks.pdf](http://www.etf.europa.eu/webatt.nsf/0/A2033205B419F36FC1257A09002FE49E/$file/Qualifications%20frameworks.pdf)

ETF-CEDEFOP-UNESCO, *Global National Qualifications Framework Inventory*, 2013. Available at: http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/2211_en.pdf

ETF (European Training Foundation), *Migration and Skills in Armenia*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2013a. Available at: http://www.etf.europa.eu/web.nsf/pages/Migration_and_skills_Armenia

ETF (European Training Foundation), *Migration and Skills in Georgia*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2013b. Available at: http://www.etf.europa.eu/web.nsf/pages/Migration_and_skills_Georgia

ETF (European Training Foundation), *Migration et compétences au Maroc*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2013c. Available at: www.etf.europa.eu/web.nsf/pages/Migration_and_skills_Morocco

ETF (European Training Foundation), 'Understanding the dynamics between migration and human capital'. Paper submitted to the UNFPA/OECD Conference on Mobilising Migrants Skills for Development in the Arab Region, by U. Bardak and E. Jansova, 13-14 May 2013, Tunis, 2013d.

ETF (European Training Foundation), *Migration and skills in Armenia, Georgia and Morocco: Comparing the survey results*, by M. Collyer, U. Bardak, E. Jansova and O. Karkkainen, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2013e. Available at: www.etf.europa.eu/web.nsf/pages/Migration_and_skills_Armenia_Georgia_Morocco

Georges A., Amuedo-Dorantes C. and Pozo S., 'Migration, remittances and children's schooling in Haiti', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 630(1), 2010, pp. 224-244.

IOM (International Organisation for Migration), 'Recognition of qualifications and competences of migrants,' Independent Network of Labour Migration and Integration Experts (A. Schuster, M. Vincenza Desiderio, G. Urso, eds), 2013. Available at: <http://www.labourmigration.eu/research/report/20-recognition-of-qualifications-and-competences-of-migrants>

Lowell L. and Findlay A., 'Migration of highly skilled persons from developing countries: Impact and policy responses'. A project report for ILO and UK DFID, 2002.

Martin P. L. and J. E. Taylor, 'The anatomy of a migration hump' in J. E. Taylor (ed), *Development strategy, employment, and migration: Insights from models*, OECD-Development Centre, Paris, 1996, pp. 43-62.

Mattoo A., Neagu I.C. and Ozden C., 'Brain waste? Educated immigrants in the US labour market', World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 3581, World Bank Washington D.C., 2005.

MPI (Migration Policy Institute), Tackling brain waste: strategies to improve the recognition of immigrants' foreign qualifications (by Madeleine Sumption), 2013. Available at: <http://www.emnbelgium.be/fr/node/2156>

Osorio, R., 'Migration, remittances and schooling in Nicaragua: disentangling the effects of education'. Paper presented at the Northeast Universities Development Consortium Conference, MIT 6-7 November 2010. Available at: http://mitsloan.mit.edu/neudc/papers/paper_117.pdf (accessed 13 November 2012).

Ozden C. and Schiff M., *International Migration, Remittances and the Brain Drain*, World Bank, Washington D.C., 2005.

Skeldon, Ron (2005); *Globalisation, skilled migration and poverty alleviation: brain drains in context*, Working paper T15, Sussex Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalisation and Poverty

Stark O., Helmenstein, C. and Prskawetz, 'A brain gain with a brain drain,' *Economics Letters* 55(2), 1998, pp. 227-234.

World Bank, *Striving for better jobs: the challenge of informality in the Middle East and North Africa* R. Gatti, D.A.Urdinola, J.Silva, A.Bodor), World Bank, Washington D.C., 2011a.

World Bank, *Migration and Remittances Factbook 2011*, World Bank, Washington D.C., 2011b.
Available at: www.worldbank.org/prospects/migrationandremittances

World Bank, Press Release 11 April 2014, "Remittances to developing countries to stay robust this year, despite increased deportations of migrant workers", 2014

Available at: <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2014/04/11/remittances-developing-countries-deportations-migrant-workers-wb>

