

INVENTORY OF MIGRANT SUPPORT MEASURES FROM AN EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS PERSPECTIVE (MISMES)

PROJECT NOTE

Background

Recent ETF surveys in Armenia, Georgia and Morocco not only provided evidence on the specific skill profile of migrants and how those skills are under-utilised abroad and upon return, but also indicated the need for specific policy measures to support migrants for more efficient job and skills-matching process.¹ The analysis based on the survey results indicates that in order to reduce negative effects and increase the benefits from migration, more policy actions are needed in the field of employment, skills and labour market integration of migrants, in particular to support legal circular migration.

Migration and development can be mutually supportive and well-designed policy measures may reinforce this link. Knowing that skills are an important factor in migration and development, the ETF together with the Migration Policy Centre at the European University Institute (EUI) have launched the project *Inventory of migrant support measures from an employment and skills perspective* (also referred to as MISMES). The project will comprise of a critical inventory and review of existing and implemented policy measures worldwide to facilitate labour mobility and increase developmental effect of migration, their impact on the migration outcome through identifying key success/ failure factors and criteria for cost-effectiveness, and five specific country case studies based on the findings of the inventory.

Objective

The objective of the project is to provide policy advice regarding the skills and employment dimension of migration management, building on evidence. It is expected that this approach will be useful for partner countries' migration policies, in particular those that entered, or are preparing for, a Mobility Partnership agreement with the EU. In order to achieve that objective, a double focus is required: a global focus to review the migrant support measures implemented throughout the world from an employment and skills perspective and to assess them in terms of cost-effectiveness and the outcome of the migration process; and a country focus to take stock and inform policy decisions in that field in the framework of EU-partner countries dialogue on migration and Mobility Partnerships.

Project description

The project was launched in November 2013 and will continue throughout 2014. As mentioned above the project has a dual focus and is divided in two phases:

- Phase one is the general critical inventory of migrant support measures from an employment and skills perspective that are implemented in (or by) migrant-sending countries. This global inventory will identify the range of migrant support measures from an employment and skills perspective

¹ For more information, please see ETF (2013), *Migration and skills in Armenia, Georgia and Morocco: Comparing the survey results*, available at: www.etf.europa.eu/web.nsf/pages/Migration_and_skills_Armenia_Georgia_Morocco

with the aim of assessing 1) their cost-effectiveness and 2) their impact on labour migration process outcomes. On the basis of the information collected, factors of success and common denominators will be identified, as well as the challenges in implementing each category of migrant support measures.

- Phase two will be based on the findings of the inventory of support measures and will consist of a mapping of existing policy measures in five partner countries who have migration and mobility dialogue and/or cooperation with the EU; namely Armenia, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova in the Eastern Neighbourhood and Kingdom of Morocco and Tunisia in the Southern Neighbourhood.

Migrant support measures are, within this project, defined as policy interventions aimed to improve labour market integration of migrant workers/returnees and to reduce the underutilisation of skills of migrant workers before, during and after migration. This includes all possible institutional arrangements: measures implemented in the framework of conventional frameworks (bilateral or multilateral labour or skills recognition agreements, for instance); project-based measures; and general policy measures. In order to systematise the analysis, these migrant support measures can be divided into the following categories:

1. Migrant support measures from an employment perspective:
 - a. International job matching measures (including job search, job counselling and recruitment services for potential migrants);
 - b. Pre-departure information, orientation and/or training schemes, including measures aimed at testing the language proficiency, skills or qualifications of potential migrants and at protecting migrant workers' rights (such as support in the conclusion of contracts);
 - c. Protection of rights and labour market integration measures in destination countries, including access to information on support services and migrants' rights and obligations, social security schemes and medical insurance;
 - d. Support to return migrants, including active labour market policies to support the labour market reintegration of returnees;
 - e. Targeted entrepreneurship and business start-up support for returnees
- 2) Migrant support measures from a skills perspective:
 - a. Enhancing migrant workers' skills prior to migration, during migration or upon their return (including specific skills development mechanisms to match demand in receiving countries, such as targeted human capital formation, and promoting the use of acquired skills);
 - b. Assessment, certification, validation and the recognition of migrants' skills and qualifications, including the evaluation and formal recognition of foreign qualifications, both in sending and receiving countries (including the experience of returnees abroad);
 - c. Improving the use of migrant workers' skills;
 - d. Programmes for capitalizing on skills across borders (including diaspora).

The inventory in phase one and the five country case studies in phase two will combine a rights-based approach (i.e. focus on measures to protect the rights of migrant workers) and an efficiency-based approach (i.e. measures to improve the matching of labour supply in countries of origin and labour demand in countries of destination and the optimal matching and use of skills and qualifications in destination countries be it through skills recognition or skills development measures). The focus will be on migrant support measures implemented in the countries of origin, regardless of the funding entity, national governments in countries of origin or governments in countries of destination.

During the implementation of the project, the ETF and EUI will contact many countries of origin and destination authorities as well as the relevant international organisations such as ILO and IOM to collect information on existing migrant support measures. Information collection tools will include a questionnaire on MISMES addressed to practitioners and implementing agencies, bilateral meetings, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and desk review of the assessment reports of relevant projects. The collaboration of the countries in relation to the MISMES project will be crucial for successful results that can contribute to more beneficial migration policies for all. The preliminary findings and lessons will be available at relevant exchange platforms including Mobility Partnership meetings in the second half of the year, while final results would be presented at the end of 2014 or early 2015.