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Forecasting and meeting future demand for migrant labor

(Improving skills recognition, matching and development for migrant workers)

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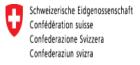
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Abstract

Labour migration policies in destination countries frequently consider and facilitate the immigration of highly skilled workers. Low-skilled migrant workers may experience greater challenges in labour market integration, including during the COVID-19 pandemic. A greater need for coherence among labour migration, employment and education and training policies has been identified as a critical factor for improving labour migration governance and skills portability. The active engagement of employers' and workers' organizations, along with governments, in labour migration policy design and implementation may ensure more effective and coordinated policy approaches to address future skills demand and supply for migrant labour. The concrete measures for forecasting and meeting future demand for migrant labour will depend on the specific country context, institutional capacities and policy attention, as well as the effective collaboration of governments and social partners.

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Abbreviations

BLMA	Bilateral Labour Migration Agreement
CAMES	Conseil Africain et Malgache pour l'Enseignement Superieur
CAWI	Computer aided web interview
CCES	Economic and Social Advisory Council
CEDEFOP	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
CGE	Computable general equilibrium
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EPA	Economic Partnership Agreement
GSPM	Global Skills Partnership for Migration
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOE	International Organisation of Employers
ITUC	International Trade Unions Confederation
KILM	ILO Key Indicators of the Labour Market
KNOMAD	Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development
IMIS	Integrated Migration Information System
INA	National Institute of Apprenticeship
INEC	Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISCO	International Standard Classification of Occupations
ISTAT	Italian National Institute of Statistics
JICWELS	Japan International Corporation of Welfare Services
MRA	Mutual Recognition Agreement
MoC	Memorandum of Cooperation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAQAAE	National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Egypt
NBE	National Board Examination
NGOs	Non-governmental Organizations
NQF	National Qualification Framework
PES	Public Employment Service
PrEA	Private Employment Agency

RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SICA	Central American Integration System
SICO	Small Industry and Community Organizations
SISTAN	National Integrated Information System of Professions
STED	Skills for Trade and Economic Diversification
THAMM	Toward a Holistic Approach to Labour Migration Governance and Labour Mobility in North Africa
TTMRA	Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Arrangement between Australia and New Zealand.
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
VAR	Vector Autoregressive model

Executive summary

The parallel analysis of the case studies of Italy and Costa Rica on future skills demand and supply for migrant labour offers valuable policy indications on labour migration governance in different contexts. Both countries have migration and integration policies, and their labour market entry mechanism is demand driven. The research confirms the central role of skills in labour migration, and the importance of skills anticipation. It provides a basis for broader policy analysis on the importance of skills forecasting for migration at national and sector levels.

The modalities of cooperation on skills and labour migration could be assessed along specific migration corridors, where migrant workers encounter different challenges, related to their skills and qualifications. In this regard, there are different mechanisms of international collaboration: mutual recognition agreements (MRAs), bilateral labour migration agreements or memoranda of understanding (BLMAs or MoUs), skills mobility partnerships, accreditation accords, etc.

Labour migration policies in destination countries frequently consider and facilitate the immigration of highly skilled workers. Low-skilled migrant workers may experience greater challenges in labour market integration, including during the COVID19 pandemic.

While in many high-income countries, skills and qualifications are obtained within the formal education and training systems, this is often not the case in many origin countries, with large informal economies. In these countries, the informal apprenticeship is a traditional way of learning skills, which is not recognised.

New forces of change are transforming labour markets around the globe and are also impacting labour migration trends and skills needs. Technological advances, the greening of economies and demographic developments have been identified among the main elements of change, in addition to traditional push and pull factors for labour migration. A greater need for coherence among labour migration, employment and education and training policies has been identified as a critical factor for improving labour migration governance and skills portability. The active engagement of employers' and workers' organizations, along with governments, in labour migration policy design and implementation may ensure more effective and coordinated policy approaches to address future skills demand and supply for migrant labour. The concrete measures on forecasting and meeting future demand for migrant labour will depend on the specific country context, institutional capacities and policy attention, as well as the effective collaboration of governments and social partners.

Introduction

The ILO has estimated that there 169 million international migrant workers worldwide. This represents the 4.9 per cent of all workers. More than two-thirds of international migrant workers are concentrated in high-income countries (113.9 million). [1] There is fragmented information on the skill levels of migrant workers[2]. One of the main challenges in labour migration remains the effective skills matching with labour demand in destination countries due to the lack of accurate skills anticipation mechanisms. To contribute to the identification of appropriate policy solutions to the above challenges, the World Bank Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development (KNOMAD) has promoted research on forecasting future demand for migrant labour in one industrialised country (Italy) and in one middle-income country (Costa Rica)[3]. The findings of the two research papers are used for drafting this KNOMAD policy document, as a basis for policy analyses and recommendations in a broader geographical context, taking into consideration different modalities of labour migration governance. In terms of methodological and policy approaches, the present KNOMAD policy paper is integrated by a review of experiences and lessons learned on skills anticipation, matching, recognition and development. Having institutionalised approaches to skills and qualifications portability will contribute to better labour market outcomes and enhanced protection for migrant workers.

This policy paper contains eight chapters, in addition to the introduction. Chapter 1 analyses the policy lessons from the Costa Rica and Italy case studies, draws lessons on skills and qualifications anticipation, matching, development, and recognition, pointing to specific policy challenges and their possible solutions. Chapter 2 provides an overview of the existing generic skills forecasting methodologies and illustrates specific methods/tools.[4] Chapter 3 describes the existing international skills standards and guidelines. In chapter 4 lists the existing international cooperation tools on skills. Chapter 5 summarises the existing skills financing mechanisms. Chapter 6 focuses on critical policy issues for low- and medium-skilled migrant workers. Chapter 7 describes the forces of change, which are currently transforming labour markets and impacting labour migration trends and policies. Chapter 8 provides policy conclusions and recommendations.

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[1] https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/@publ/documents/publication/wcms_808935.pdf

[2] **See: World Indicators of Skills for Employment (WISE) database. https://www.oecd.org/employment/skills-for-employment-indicators.htm**

[3] https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/costarica/overview

[4] *Kyrgyzstan – Russia; Italy – Egypt; Costa Rica – Nicaragua; Ethiopia – United Arab Emirates; India – Japan*

Chapter 1. Policy lessons from Costa Rica and Italy case studies

The policy lessons from the case studies of Italy and Costa Rica are summarised below. Subsequently, the policy issues identified in the country case studies are discussed in the broader labour migration governance context of how skills recognition, matching and development for migrant workers could be enhanced.

1.1 Labour migration policy

Migration policies in Italy combine aspects of promoting regular migration, and integration of migrant workers and their families. The Italian Migration Act was issued through the legislative Decree No.286 of 25 July 1998 and has been continuously updated[5]. The labour market entry mechanism for migrant workers is demand-driven and based on the yearly identification of labour market needs (quota system by economic sector). In Costa Rica, a comprehensive migration policy has been issued for the period 2013-2023, including detailed objectives and strategies along three axes: i) migratory services; ii) integration and development; and 3) protection of human rights and vulnerable groups. Labour migration is a clear policy priority in both countries. For Italy, integration issues are among the key pillars of the migration policy.

1.2 Evidence-based labour migration governance and skills

In Italy, migration is under the responsibility of many public institutions. The coordination and cooperation among them are ensured by an operational group, chaired by the Ministry of Interiors. The group also includes relevant line ministries, local authorities, social partners, and other national and international organisations, as appropriate.

The information on the labour market and migration that is necessary for evidence-based policymaking, is provided by the Italian National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT). It hosts the National Integrated Information System of Professions (SISTAN) to ensure a coherent approach and a wide information sharing of the short-term survey results on labour demand and skills needs, carried out by different organisations[6]. SISTAN provides general information on skill needs and is not specifically focusing on labour migration.

In Costa Rica, the main responsible institution in the field of migration is the Ministry of the Interior and Police (Ministerio de Gobernación y Policía), through its General Directorate of Migration and Aliens (Dirección General de Migración y Extranjería, DGME). The National Migration Council (Consejo Nacional de Migración, CNM) is an inter-institutional advisory body and responsible for providing policy advice to the Ministry of Interior[7]. The National Institute of Statistics and Census (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos) provides migration data.

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[5] ttps://www.altalex.com/documents/codici-altalex/2014/04/09/testo-unico-sull-immigrazione

[6] The system includes line ministries (e.g. Education, University, Labour, Health), social security institutions, research centres, see: https://www.sistan.it/index.php?id=228

[7] The National Migration Council is made of representatives of the following institutions: Ministry of the Interior and Police, Ministry of Labor and Social Security, Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Public Education, General Directorate of Migration and Foreigners, Costa Rican Tourism Institute, Costa Rican Social Security Fund and two representatives of civil society. https://saludymigracion.org/es/politica-migratoria-integral-para-costa-rica-consejo-nacional-de-migracion

In terms of governance, the two countries have a similar distribution of competencies on labour migration. Compared to Italy, Costa Rica needs a more structured system for skills anticipation for migrant labour.

1.3 Migrant workers skills profiles

In both countries, a large share of migrants is employed as manual workers. Few of them are employed in management roles. In Italy, based on the data of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies (MLSP), in 2018, migrant workers were mainly employed in jobs with low- and medium-skilled levels (e.g., crop farm labourers, waiters, domestic workers, luggage porters, construction workers), and often in the informal economy.

In Costa Rica, according to data of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MTSS), in 2013, migrant workers predominantly found work in low-and medium-skilled jobs, with high incidence of informality. 46.9 per cent of migrant workers were employed in medium-skilled level jobs, and 37.4 per cent in elementary occupations. In both countries, informal employment remains an issue for migrant workers and could present multiple vulnerabilities.

1.4 Labour migration and skills anticipation mechanisms in the short-term

In Italy, a regular survey is carried out every month by the Excelsior system[8], through a detailed compulsory questionnaire, aimed at collecting information on occupational needs, recruitment channels, hard to fill vacancies, demand for migrant workers, etc. The survey is based upon the CAWI methodology (Computer Aided Web Interviewing) and allows for having an estimation of labour demand for the following quarter. The result of this continuous survey allows to derive yearly estimations. In general, the system is efficient because it is based upon the obligatory response from the enterprises, registered in the chamber of commerce. The limit is that the survey does not include agriculture and the care economy, and the quality and relevance of companies' responses could vary.

In Costa Rica, on yearly basis, the MTSS carries out labour market analysis, used for ensuring complementarity of skills between migrant and national workers. Based on this, the quota of work permits is determined, per each economic sector.

At sector level, some companies in construction and agriculture make their own short-term future labour demand forecasts, such as the Costa Rican Coffee Institute (ICAFE). In general, short-term skills anticipation is present in both countries, however the actual use of this information for labour migration policy development and implementation seems limited.

1.5 Labour migration and skills anticipation mechanisms in the medium- and long- terms

In Italy, there are two providers of skills anticipation for the medium to long-term. The first provider is the Unioncamere Excelsior System that makes a forecast, over the next five years. The forecasting methodology is based upon a Vector Autoregressive model (VAR) and considers possible scenarios, linked to the economic development strategies in the country. The estimations are based upon the Excelsior historical series of annual forecasts, combined with statistical data from ISTAT. The replicability of this method requires the availability of

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[8] The Excelsior is a labour market information system, created by the Union of the Chambers of Commerce. Given that all private enterprises should be registered at the Chamber of Commerce, the Excelsior system can rely upon a large network of data sources: in 2019, 1.297.000 enterprises, representing a total of 12.640.000 workers.

demographic, economic and social data series and a committed organization, equipped with the necessary technical skills and financial resources for developing the adequate econometric models.

The second provider is the CEDEFOP[9] forecast, which is currently up to 2030 and uses an E3ME type of model, and harmonised EU data. The CEDEFOP does both EU and national level skill anticipation. As of now, the CEDEFOP model has not included yet the impact of COVID-19 crisis. To replicate it outside of the EU, this anticipation model requires that demographic, employment, education and economic data series are available, and regularly updated. The existence of a regional organisation, managing the process and the collaboration of the countries involved are key elements to ensure regional level forecasting. At national level, in the absence of long-term data series and skills information, the forecasting can be replicated through active involvement of key experts through a Delphi like approach[10].

In Costa Rica, there is no structured system for medium- to long-term skill anticipation for migrant labour. Future labour demand is assessed on ad-hoc basis. The KNOMAD Costa Rica report includes an autoregressive–moving-average (ARIMA) model to do skills anticipation. It is based on time series data of total employment, total population and Gross Domestic Product. This type of model requires solid historical data series.

1.6 Qualification and skills recognition

In Italy, the evaluation of higher education qualifications obtained abroad, is done on a case-by-case basis. Considering that each university is an autonomous institution, they may give a different evaluation of the same foreign degree.

The recognition of skills, earned in technical and vocational education and training (TVET) systems, is even more challenging - and almost impossible for migrant workers from outside the EU. Differences in the education and training systems, the lack of common quality assurance criteria, and the differences in content of occupational standards make very complex the establishment of equivalence of skills and qualifications for migrant workers.

In Costa Rica, certifications of technical titles obtained in a foreign country can be recognized by the National Institute of Apprenticeship (INA). However, most migrants do not access the validation process for technical and vocational skills because they consider it complex, expensive, and time consuming. No programme or tool seems to be available for the validation of TVET skills. For higher education, the University of Costa Rica (UCR) has agreements with over 50 universities in 35 different countries to facilitate the procedure of recognition and validation of degrees.

In both countries, the existing recognition mechanisms focus on tertiary education, and therefore do not apply to most migrant workers, who are mainly in low- or medium-skilled jobs (e.g., only 6 per cent of migrants in Costa Rica have higher education).

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[9] The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) is an EU Agency, which provides support to the EU Commission and to the Member States in issues linked to education and training.

[10] The Delphi is a qualitative forecasting method that aims at involving a group of experts in finding an agreement on future labour market needs, starting from some hypotheses and discussing until they reach a consensus.

1.7 Skills matching

In Italy, the job mediation for nationals and migrant workers is carried out mainly by Public Employment Services (PES) and Private Employment Agencies (PrEAs).

According to data from the Italian Ministry of Labour, in 2018, there was a significant skills mismatch, with 69.3 per cent of migrant workers performing jobs below their level of education, while the corresponding mismatch was 32.2 per cent for national workers. One of the main reasons for the large number of overqualified migrant workers may be attributed to the fact that their competences cannot be recognized because the existing normative framework is too complex and costly for them to access. Another key issue is the nature of labour demand, which often covers low-skilled occupations, for which there are few regular labour migration arrangements.

In Costa Rica, the National Employment and Production Strategy (2015-18) included a priority to address skill mismatch. The objective is to achieve better skills needs anticipation, more effective employment services, and training, aligned with labour demand, in emerging industries and sectors (MTSS; MEIC, 2014). Skill mismatch has been identified as a policy challenge, however there is little evidence on concrete follow-up initiatives.

1.8 Skills development

In Italy, skills development is included both in the Consolidated Immigration Act [11], as well as in many BLMAs. As a result, the Italian authorities organize training courses in origin countries. The courses include Italian language, information on the Italian labour market and vocational training for specific occupational profiles, on demand in Italy. Another important initiative for skills development is offered by the apprenticeship programmes:[12] in 2020, 25,366 migrants were enrolled as apprentices out of a total of 277,561 national participants (MoLSP 2021). No specific initiative has been reported for skills development for migrant workers in Costa Rica. It would be important to note that skills development requires both human and financial resources, and allowing access for migrant workers to already existing programmes may require administrative reforms.

1.9 Role of social partners in labour migration, with a specific reference to qualifications and skills

In Italy, social partners are consulted by the Government before adopting decisions that can have impact on the labour market: e.g. in the identification of needs for foreign manpower for the Italian labour market or in preparation of the COVID-19 policy measures in the field of labour. In Costa Rica, with the support of the EU, it has recently been created a forum for social dialogue and consensus building -- the Economic and Social Advisory Council (CCES). The Council, which includes Employers' and Workers' Organizations, takes benefit from the experience of the Economic and Social Councils of European countries. It is expected to play an important role in contributing to addressing the economic and social crisis that the country is experiencing due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Council is responsible for skills development and migration issues, among others. In both countries, the active engagement of the social partners in labour

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[11] ttps://www.altalex.com/documents/codici-altalex/2014/04/09/testo-unico-sull-immigrazione

[12] Italian apprenticeship programme for nationals and migrants, aged from 15 to 25 years, offers a permanent employment contract, aimed at facilitating the integration of young people into the labour market by developing their skills through training in a company, while earning a regular salary. Companies that hire apprentices, benefit from the reduction of social security contributions. Legislative Decree no. 81/2015.

migration policy design, implementation and monitoring is key for ensuring adequate skills matching and access to skills recognition and development processes.

1.10 Regional skills portability

The Italian Qualification Framework is aligned with the European Qualification Framework (EQF), therefore allowing for the portability of qualifications earned in EU setting (general education, tertiary education or vocational education and training). The system also includes qualifications, acquired after the assessment of non-formal and/or informal learning outcomes.

Costa Rica is part of the Central American Integration System (SICA), however this organisation does not cover yet skills and qualification issues, and promotes cooperation among education institutions.[13]

In order to have skills and qualifications portability at a regional level, there is a need to have an agreed system in place. Building regional qualification systems require time and resources, as well as the active participation of the social partners, along with Ministries of Labour and Education. Harmonization of occupational profiles between countries and the conclusion of bilateral labour migration agreements may provide the possibility for recognition of skills for specific occupations, in absence of regional qualification frameworks.

1.11 Skills modules in bilateral labour migration agreements (BLMAs)

Italy has signed Bilateral Labour Agreements with Egypt (2005), Morocco (2005), Albania (2008), the Republic of Moldova (2011), Sri Lanka (2011), and Mauritius (2012). All these agreements include provisions for skills portability. The implementation of these agreements has proved to present challenges due to the quota mechanisms[14] and the time necessary to obtain visa and labour permits.

The Binational Agreement between Nicaragua and Costa Rica, concluded in 2007, aims at regulating recruitment of temporary migrants, and formalizing Nicaraguan workers' integration in different sectors, especially agriculture. No other agreements have been signed by Costa Rica, allowing for skills recognition, portability of social benefits, etc.

For BLMAs to be effective, there is a need to have in place implementation mechanisms, which could be periodically reviewed. The BLMAs should cover up-to-date labour market needs and address existing skill gaps. In Italy and Costa Rica, it would be important to put in place monitoring of the agreements to ensure their effectiveness.

1.12 Informality and skills

Informality rates are higher in both countries among migrant workers. In some sectors, such as agriculture and constructions, informality can be associated with recruitment modalities, done throughout intermediaries, which could result in cases of severe exploitation, forced labour and human trafficking. Regular opportunities for labour migration for low-skilled migrants are usually limited. In Italy, according to ISTAT, in 2017 the highest incidence of informal work was observed in agriculture (18.4 per cent), services (16.8 per cent), construction (17.0 per cent) and trade, transport, hotel and restaurant (15.8 percent). Data on migrant workers, at sector level, in the informal economy are not available. In 2010, Costa Rica, 50 per cent of migrant workers were in

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[13] See: https://www.sica.int/consulta/entidad.aspx?IdEnt=14&Idm=1&IdmStyle=2

[14] In Italy, the Law 39/1990 established a mechanism for the yearly identification of the labour market needs that could be addressed by a certain number (quota) of migrant workers.

the informal economy (Voorend and Robles, 2011).

1.13 Labour market integration of migrant workers

In Italy, there are structured policies that facilitate the integration of regular migrant workers and their families in the hosting society, including labour market (e.g. citizenship, access to education, health, social security). It is important to note that the attention devoted to language training to facilitate integration is a key feature of the integration process. Costa Rica tries to provide universal education and social protection services for all, however migrants do not seem to equally benefit from these services as the native-born population[15]. Italy has a well-established integration policy, which in the case irregular migrants, covers medical assistance and access to education for migrant children. In Costa Rica, there is also integration policy and there is a need to focus on implementation.

1.14 COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on skills demand and supply for migrant workers

In Italy, the COVID-19 has had a much stronger impact on migrant workers due to their large participation in sectors, hit by the pandemic, such as tourism, restaurants and catering, domestic work. Many jobs held by migrant workers could not be carried out remotely or were of temporary nature.

In Costa Rica, the restrictions on cross-border labour mobility determined a sudden decrease in migrant labour supply. As a result, at least for the harvest of coffee, the skills shortage was filled by national workers. This happened also partially in Italy for seasonal jobs in agriculture.

In both Italy and Costa Rica, there is no evidence for changes in the wage levels. At this stage, the exact impact of the pandemic is still being assessed.

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[15] https://www.oecd.org/countries/costarica/costa-rica-stands-benefit-from-integrating-migration-further-into-sectoral-national-development-strategies.htm

Chapter 2. Skills anticipation

The ILO Human Resources Development Recommendation No.195 encourages Member States to "identifying, measuring and forecasting the trends in supply and demand for competencies and qualifications in the labour market…" Skill anticipation relies on various methods that summarize labour market information to assess skill shortages and labour market imbalances. Forecasting mainly refers to quantitative methods through macroeconomic modelling[16].

2.1 Skills anticipation methodologies

The analysis of information provided by the two country reports in the previous chapter, confirms the centrality of skills in labour migration, both for ensuring decent jobs and for the protection of migrant workers' rights. In Italy, there is a variety of short-term forecast studies, carried out by different public and private actors, while medium- and long-term projections are provided by the CEDEFOP and by the Excelsior system. In Costa Rica, there is no established system for skills anticipation. Medium- to long-term skills anticipation tools are mainly present in high-income countries (e.g. the USA, Canada, Australia, the EU Member States) due to data availability, human and financial resources.

If reliable historical data (demographic, employment and economic) are available, quantitative anticipation methods can be used. The most frequently used tools are the vector autoregressive (VAR) models, the energy environment economy macroeconomic - E3ME-model and the computable general equilibrium - CGE model (see box 1). One of the possible constraints in developing quantitative anticipation methods is the presence of a large informal economy.

Box 1. Main quantitative skills anticipation methods

As illustrated in the previous chapter, the skills projections of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) are driven by the E3ME model, a computer-based model that allows for detailed analysis in terms of sectors, and labour supply.

The Energy-Environment-Economy Global Macro-Economic (E3ME) is a macro-econometric model, designed to assess global policy challenges. It is the most advanced econometric model and is widely used for policy assessment, anticipation and research purposes . E3ME integrates a range of social and environmental processes. The two-way linkages between the economy, wider society and the environment are a key feature of the model. This model is used by the CEDEFOP for its long-term projections for the European Union.

The Vector Auto Regression (VAR) model is a multivariate time series anticipation algorithm. It is used in scenarios, where anticipation with two or more time-series influence each other. The ARIMA model, that was applied to Costa Rica, provides another approach to time series anticipation. The Computable general equilibrium (CGE) are economic models that use current economic data to estimate how an economy might react to policy and technology changes or to other external factors.

Source: Authors elaboration upon inputs from CEDEFOP – ETF – ILO, 2016.

Examples of qualitative forecasting methods include scenario planning and Delphi method (see box 2).

Box 2. Qualitative forecasting methods

The Delphi method can be used to build up forecasts through discussion and agreement of a panel of experts, and is frequently used in association with scenario planning (e.g. in Japan). This is a technique that allows to formulate future provisions, considering different contexts (macroeconomic, political, technological, etc.)

Source: Authors' elaboration upon inputs from CEDEFOP- ETF-ILO, 2016.

According to the scope of the skills anticipation, the time span and the methods can be different. Short-to-medium term projections are used for identifying skills gaps, hard to fill vacancies and design appropriate training programmes. To identify current or short-term skills requirements, a possible tool could be offered the Establishment/Employer survey. In addition to the already quoted continuous survey, carried out by the Excelsior System in Italy, another example is offered by the National Employer Skills Survey in the UK. The survey is conducted by the Department of Education every two-years (the latest was in 2019) and is based on over 80,000 telephone interviews with employers in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The survey collects information on the skills challenges met by the employers within their existing workforces and the relationship between skills challenges, training activity and business strategies[17].

A medium-term forecasting example (two-to-five years) is offered by Australia's employment education projections.[18] Each year, the Department of Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business produces employment projections by industry, occupation, skill level and region for the following five-year period.

Long-term forecasts (five-to-ten years) are important for education systems that need a long period of time to adapt the delivery process for qualifications. Examples of long-term skills projections are offered by the USA, Canada and Germany (see box 3).

Box 3. Long-term skills projections

In the **United States**, the Bureau of Labour Statistics (BLS) carries out every 2 years a national Employment Projections (EP) programme[19], developing 10-year forecasts of industry and occupational employment, covering 334 occupational profiles, which represent approximately 84 per cent of available jobs in the United States. The projections focus on demand side and do not include supply side estimations.

The Employment and Social Development **Canada** (ESDC) uses the models of the Canadian Occupational Projection System (COPS)[20] to develop projections of future trends in the major sources of job openings (expansion demand and replacement demand) and job seekers (school leavers and

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[17] http://www.skillssurvey.co.uk/
[18] See: http://lmip.gov.au/default.aspx?LMIP/GainInsights/EmploymentProjections.
[19] See: https://www.bls.gov/emp/.
[20]Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) is the department of the Government of Canada responsible for developing, managing and delivering social programs and services. http://occupations.esdc.gc.ca/sppc-cops/w.2lc.4m.2@-eng.jsp;jsessionid=TCnoHg8DzJs2xSwgssGlwdkk2_rkceUuXfwgil4TW2OnwYwIHWsa!-1896150393

new immigrants) by occupation. The system analyses the prospective changes in both the demand and supply sides of the labour market, identifying occupations, where potential labour market imbalances can be present.

In **Germany,** the QuBe project[21] provides a long-term overview (up to 2040) of the possible development of labour demand and supply for 141 occupational groups, including health sector profiles. The forecast is updated every two years and is integrated by sector research and employment/establishment surveys. Projections are presented according to different economic development scenarios. The detailed projection results of the sixth updating exercise (2020) can be viewed on the QuBe Data Portal[22].

Source: Authors' elaboration.

Long-term skill needs projections can contribute to evidence-based policy making in the field of labour migration. An example is offered by the policy decisions adopted in Germany for the health sector (see box 4).

Box 4. Health sector forecasts in Germany

In addition to the QuBe projections, the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB) estimates that the demand for nursing and healthcare professions in the country will overcome the supply by around 270,000 persons by the year 2035. To contribute to addressing the imbalance between demand and supply of health care workers, the German Federal Government launched in 2019 a Concerted Action on Nursing (KAP). One of the actions included the so-called "Nursing Staff from Abroad". The implementation of the action was committed to the German Agency for Health and Nursing Professions (DeFa)[23]. The agency facilitates the connection of the applicants and employers, ensuring adherence to social standards and supports the smooth integration of health care personnel in Germany.

Source: DeFa website.

Quantitative and qualitative methods are used jointly, whenever necessary. To enhance the effectiveness of the projections, the results may be checked against administrative data, e.g., data collected through the continuous survey by the Excelsior system in Italy are confronted with the monthly compulsory declarations that the employers have to present to the National Social Security Institute (INPS).

The anticipation methods listed above are utilised mostly in high income countries since their implementation require considerable resources. A possible solution could be offered by qualitative methods, also with the involvement of the social partners, in low- and medium-income countries. There is no systemic link between skills anticipation and labour migration policies in many countries, regardless of their income level. This is partially explained by fact that forecasting could serve different policy purposes, e.g. update of the national education and training system, economic development plans, etc. Technology solutions could be

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[21] Managed by the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB) and the Institute for Labour Market and Career Research (IAB) in collaboration with the Institute of Economic Structures Research (GWS); see: www.QuBe-Projekt.de.
[22] https://www.bibb.de/en/qube_datenportal_ergebnisse.php?lang%3DEN%26view%3DZR%26bc%3D%26dv%3Dvalue-orig%26icode%3DBE-000%26betyp%3DBHFBF%26co%3D2Ctrue%2C%2C%2Ctrue%2Ctrue%2C%2C%2C%2C%26gr%3D%26FILE%3Dbasis%26AB%3D01%2C02%26PST%3D01%26BE%3D000%26REGIO%3D00%26JAHR%3D15%2C20%2C25%2C30%2C35%2C40
[23] https://www.defa-agentur.de/en/background/

considered not only for lowering costs but also for facilitating the data collection for skills anticipation.

More recently, there have been pilot experiences with Big Data to come up with skills anticipation information, especially using on-line vacancies. The Big Data analysis of vacancies can provide policymakers, providers of education and training, and industry with detailed information, user friendly, and easy to access in real time. This innovative approach requires a screening of the information, posted in electronic employment platforms to ensure accuracy and effectiveness. A possible limitation could be that some skills are not listed in the vacancies, as probably considered implicitly included in the vacancies' requirements (ILO, 2019c; ILO, 2020c). This method may have limited applications in countries, where connectivity is reduced and there is large informal economy.

2.2 Skills anticipation at sector and occupational level

Anticipation of skill needs may take many forms: at country level, covering the entire economy or articulated at sector level. The skills anticipation at sector level highlights the specificities of the economic area covered and allows answering two main questions: how many workers by occupation will be demanded in the near future and the changes to the occupational profiles that will be required in terms of knowledge, skills and abilities. For instance, a global approach to sector-based studies was developed in 2008 by the EU Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (DG-EMPL) providing a detailed analysis of a number of key sectors in Europe.

In countries, such as Brazil, the sectoral approach was adopted by SENAI[24] for the lack of data that precludes the use of quantitative, model-based methods. A leading group, made of SENAI experts, academia, and business representatives, collects quantitative and qualitative data, which are analysed in a specific workshop. The group formulates recommendations on the technical and vocational training, and technological services that will be needed for each of the analysed sector (OECD/ILO, 2018 b).

In low- and middle-income countries, sector studies may be conducted on ad-hoc basis. This could still be useful, however the risk is that such studies have limited follow-up, if any, and therefore their benefits would have a partial impact only. An important contribution to the sector approach to skills anticipation is offered by the ILO STED Programe (see box 5).

Box 5. **The ILO STED Programe – Skills for Trade and Economic Diversification**

The programme aims at providing technical assistance for the identification and implementation of skills development strategies that are necessary for the growth and creation of decent employment in different sectors, through increasing exports and economic diversification. The programme operates in close cooperation with national and sector partners to identify the development challenges, facing each targeted sector, and the contribution that skills can make to addressing them.

The STED programme uses a qualitative approach to skills anticipation at sector level. Since its launch, in 2010, it has been applied in over 20 countries and 40 sectors.

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[24] SENAI is Technical and Vocational Education Training Institution that provides vocational training and technological services for industry. http://www.portaldaindustria.com.br/senai/

The programme provides training to national and sector partners to enhance their capacity to analyse specific sectors' development and growth opportunities and anticipate the skills that are needed for enhancing international trade.

Source: WTO/ILO 2017

One of the economic sectors, in which there is a significant demand for migrant workers is health. At occupation level, the most required profiles are those of nurses and caregivers. There is also an increasing demand for medical doctors.

Due to the importance and relevance of the health sector, many countries undertake planning of future needs of their health workforce. The planning can be done on multiple sectors simultaneously, including health, or specifically targeting only the health sector. An example of the multi-sector approach is offered by Finland[25]. The country undertakes a multi-sector forecast on future workforce needs for 28 industries and occupational groups (including health workforce) and related educational needs. The labour needs are forecasted using the VATTAGE model, a dynamic CGE-model. The forecasts are updated every five years, each time looking ahead with a fifteen-year horizon. The model is applied by the VATT Institute of Economic Research. The forecasts are run by the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Health sector specific forecasts are carried out in countries, such as Australia and the Netherlands (see box 6).

Box 6. Skills forecasts in health sector

Australia

Long-term national workforce projections up to 2030 are included in the Australia's Future Health Workforce plan, covering medical specialties, nursing and midwifery, oral health. The principal method used to develop the nursing workforce projections is mathematical simulation modelling, using the National Health Workforce Tool. It considers both supply and demand projections and presents them in a range of alternative scenarios.

The Netherlands

The national health workforce planning system is based on a supply-and-demand forecasting model. The planning is developed by the Advisory Committee for Medical Manpower Planning (ACMMP), involving representatives from health-insurance, training institutes and occupational organisations . The projections, with a horizon of 12 to 15 years, are articulated in two most likely scenarios and updated every three years.

Source: Authors' elaboration

The analysis of the projection methods, applied in many countries, shows that the estimations are produced directly by the Ministry of Health or committed to the National Statistical Office (e.g. Norway) or to specific agencies (e.g. Australia, Germany), national board of health (e.g. Belgium, the Netherlands) or health observatories (e.g. France). In the health sector, often being publicly managed, and presenting significand labour shortages, there is a greater interest in skills anticipation.

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[25] http://healthworkforce.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/1324_FLY_SEPEN_FINLAND.pdf

Not addressing adequately labour market demands for all levels of skills, is likely to be costly for employers because it will require re-training and could also result in the waste of much needed public funds for education and training. Further, the lack of regular skills anticipation could contribute to increasing the precariousness in the labour market since the unrecognised demand for low- and medium-skilled jobs often results in being filled with short-term national contract workers and agency workers, and irregular migrant workers. This also increases the likelihood of workers moving to the informal economy. The structural nature of such skills-shortages and the growing concentration of migrant labour in certain economic sectors (e.g. agriculture, construction, manufacturing sector, etc.) suggests that these jobs are not always necessarily of temporary nature.

Chapter 3. International standards and guidance, facilitating the skills recognition, matching and development for migrant workers

The main sources of guiding principles on qualifications and skills can be derived from international labour standards. They could be important guiding tools for enhancing the existing systems for forecasting demand for migrant labour.

3.1 Qualifications and skills recognition

The ILO Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143) specifies in Article 14(b) that a country may, following previous consultation with employers' and workers' organizations, adopt regulations for the recognition of occupational qualifications held by migrant workers and acquired abroad, including certificates and diplomas.

The ILO Human Resources Development Recommendation, 2004 (No. 195) indicates in Part VI, para. 12 that "*Special provisions should be designed to ensure recognition and certification of skills and qualifications for migrant workers.*" The same Recommendation at para. 21 (f) pledges that international cooperation should "*promote recognition and portability of skills, competencies and qualifications nationally and internationally*".

The ILO *General principles and operational guidelines for fair recruitment* (ILO, 2019) indicate that: *Recruitment should take into account policies and practices that promote efficiency, transparency and protection for workers in the process, such as mutual recognition of skills and qualifications* (General Principle 4) and that: *Governments should also consider adopting mutual recognition agreements to facilitate recognition of foreign qualifications in order to address brain waste and de-skilling* (Operational Principle 4.4).

Concerning the mobility of nurses, the ILO Nursing Personnel Recommendation, 1977 (No. 157) indicates that: "*Foreign nursing personnel should have qualifications recognised by the competent authority as appropriate for the posts to be filled and satisfy all other conditions for the practice of the profession in the country of employment; foreign personnel participating in organised exchange programmes may be exempted from the latter requirement*" and that "*Foreign nursing personnel with equivalent qualifications should have conditions of employment which are as favourable as those of national personnel in posts involving the same duties and responsibilities*" *(*paragraph 66).

As for the domestic workers it is suggested that: "*Members should, in consultation with the most representative organizations of employers and workers and, where they exist, with organizations representative of domestic workers and those representative of employers of domestic workers, establish policies and programmes, so as to … encourage the continuing development of the competencies and qualifications of domestic workers, including literacy training as appropriate, in order to enhance their professional development and employment opportunities*" (Domestic Workers Recommendation, 2011 (No. 201), para. 25).

The ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration (ILO, 2006) contains non-binding principles and guidelines for a rights-based approach to labour migration and includes references to skills-related issues. In particular:

Guideline 12.6: "*promoting the recognition and accreditation of migrant workers' skills and qualifications and, where that is not possible, providing a means to have their skills and qualifications recognized;*"

Guideline 15.7: "*adopting measures to mitigate the loss of workers with critical skills, including by establishing guidelines for ethical recruitment;*"

Guideline 15.9*: "facilitating the transfer of capital, skills and technology by migrant workers, including through providing incentives to them; …"*

The General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) of the World Trade Organization (WTO GATS Mode 4) indicates the need to allow temporary movement of service providers, especially highly skilled workers (managers, executives, specialists), with the possibility for the recognition of their qualifications. The GATS Article VII encourages bilateral or multilateral agreements on qualification recognition and asks that the WTO be notified of such agreements in order for other Member States to negotiate similar arrangements.[26] Specifically the point 5 of Article VII states that:

Wherever appropriate, recognition should be based on multilaterally agreed criteria. In appropriate cases, Members shall work in cooperation with relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations towards the establishment and adoption of common international standards and criteria for recognition and common international standards for the practice of relevant services trades and professions.

The UNESCO Convention on Higher Education provides general principles for recognition of higher education qualifications and prior learning. In addition, it facilitates the recognition of refugees' qualifications, including where documentary evidence is lacking.[27]

3.2 Skills development
Article 1 of the ILO Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 (No. 142) promotes in (1), the design and implementation of *comprehensive and co-ordinated policies and programmes of vocational guidance and vocational training, closely linked with employment, through public employment service*s.

The Employment Policy (Supplementary Provisions) Recommendation, 1984 (No. 169) indicates in para. 42 that: *developing emigration countries, in order to facilitate the voluntary return of their nationals who possess scarce skills, should (a) provide the necessary incentives; and (b) enlist the co-operation of the countries employing their nationals as well as of the International Labour Office and other international or regional bodies concerned with the matter.*

In the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204), the ILO recommends "*labour migration policies that take into account labour market needs and promote decent work and the rights of migrant workers*" (Part IV, para. 15 (e)), and that "*education and skills development policies that support lifelong learning, respond to the evolving needs of the labour market and to new technologies, and recognize prior learning such as through informal apprenticeship systems, thereby broadening options for formal employment*" (para. 15 (f)).

3.3 Pre-departure and post-arrival training
The results of skills forecasts should influence pre-departure and post-arrival training. According to Article 9 of the Model Agreement annexed to the Migration for Employment Recommendation (Revised), 1949, No. 86*: "the parties shall co-ordinate their activities concerning the organisation of educational courses for migrants, which shall include general*

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[26] http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/serv_e/gatsintr_e.htm.

[27] https://www.unesco.org/en/higher-education/global-convention#:~:text=The%20Global%20Convention%20establishes%20universal,for%20further%20study%20and%20employment

information on the country of immigration, instruction in the language of that country, and vocational training".

Some countries of origin organise specific pre-departure orientation and training for migrant workers. An example is offered by the courses, offered by the Overseas Workers Welfare Organisation in the Philippines (see box 7).

Box 7. Pre-departure education programme in the Philippines

The programme contains two different courses:

a. Country-Specific Pre-Departure Orientation Seminar (PDOS)– A one-day compulsory orientation, consisting of modules on employment contract, cultural orientation, health and safety, financial literacy, travel information, and government programmes and services. The programme is attended by all workers (at all skill levels) prior to their departure abroad.

b. Comprehensive Pre-Departure Education Programme (CPDEP) – A four or six-day orientation seminar attended by domestic workers, consisting of language training, culture, and stress management.

Source: https://owwa.gov.ph/index.php/programmes-services/education-training

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Chapter 4. International cooperation tools for skills matching, recognition and development

At the international level, there are different tools (multilateral and bilateral agreements) that could be used to facilitate skills matching, recognition and development. The agreements can provide indications on procedures, responsible institutions, comparability of quality assured qualifications and skills, and financial responsibilities of the partner countries. The success of such tools depends on many factors: coherence between labour migration and employment policies, effective implementation of existing multilateral or bilateral arrangements for free mobility, etc.

4.1 Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRA)

The mutual recognition agreement (MRA) is an instrument that can be used at regional and bilateral levels. It allows the negotiating countries to consider the skills and qualifications issued by one country as being valid in the others. An example of a regional MRA is offered by one established among the ASEAN countries[28]. The ASEAN agreement allows the mutual recognition of eight professional categories: engineers, nurses, surveying service providers, architects, accounting service providers, medical practitioners, dental practitioners, and tourism professionals. The recognition is not automatic as professionals need to hold skills and experiences that are detailed by committees established for each profession, in each country. The recognition is not sufficient for implementing effective mobility due to the need to have a work permit, and other technical and administrative requirements.

The ASEAN MRA targets specific occupations, most of which relate to registered professions. A more general approach is provided by the Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Arrangement between Australia and New Zealand (TTMRA)[29]. Entered into force in 1998, it is referred to as an "arrangement" for its non-treaty character: in fact, it requires that all the ten signatory parties[30] adopt a specific implementing legislation.   The objective of the arrangement is to enhance mobility of goods and labour around Australia and across Tasmania.

A person registered to practise an occupation in Australia is entitled to exercise an equivalent occupation in New Zealand without the need to undergo further testing or examination, and vice-versa. In reality, it appears that the free circulation of goods is more effective than the circulation of occupations. A review of the arrangement in 2009 underlined that: "…*a lack of awareness of mutual recognition means that businesses, individuals and regulators do not always use the schemes fully or appropriately[31]*."

As the mutual recognition is subject to decision of the competent national authorities, individuals should apply for recognition of their existing registration or license and pay the applicable fees. The registration authority in the destination country/territory can grant or refuse the registration. It can also place conditions on issuing the license[32]. In 2014, under the TTMRA, more than 15,000 made use of mutual recognition: more than half were health professionals,

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[28] Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam.
[29] See: https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1997/0060/latest/DLM410793.html
[30] The Agreement was signed by: Commonwealth of Australia, New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia, Tasmania, Australian Capital Territory, Northern Territory, New Zealand
[31] https://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/mutual-recognition-schemes-2009/report
[32] https://www.dese.gov.au/skills-support-individuals/mutual-recognition

while trades like electricians and plumbers made a share of near 15 per cent of the registrations in that year (ADB, 2017).

MRA could be included in a multilateral agreement, which is most often used at regional level to provide member states with common positions on different issues, including skills and qualifications. Some examples of regional mechanisms in the field of qualification and skills recognition are:

➢ The European Qualifications Framework (EQF). The EQF is a common reference framework that links EU countries' qualifications systems. Its main objectives are to promote mobility between countries and to facilitate lifelong learning. It can also contribute to facilitating mobility among different educational, training and learning systems at national or sector level.

➢ The ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework (AQRF) allows qualifications to be compared across the ASEAN Member States. The AQRF is designed in a way to make possible in the future linkages with other regional and international qualifications systems. However, it should be noted that, as with the ASEAN MRAs, the ASEAN system is not coupled (such as the EQF) by a free mobility agreement.

➢ The Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ), to ensure standard and uniform delivery of competence based TVET within the Member States. The approach is based on workplace-oriented and performance-based modules or units of competence that can be accumulated to obtain a vocational qualification. The CVQ is coupled with limited free mobility in the CARICOM context.[33]

➢ The Pacific Qualifications Framework (PQF). The reference system allows Pacific Island countries to compare their national qualifications frameworks in order to determine equivalences and possibly mutual recognition[34].

➢ The African and Malagasy Council for Higher Education (CAMES) allows for diplomas issued in each of the 19 French-speaking Member States[35] to be recognized in the other countries. The equivalency is established through a specific programme (PRED)[36], which also focuses on quality assurance.

MRA can also be activated at bilateral level, but a necessary precondition is that the signatory countries have similar education and quality assurance systems. Lacking a common reference, such as a regional qualification framework, countries can create specific technical working groups, tasked with assessing the equivalence of the targeted qualifications.

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[33] Art 32 of the CARICOM Treaty allows for free establishment for employers and self-employed citizens. Article 46 of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas to seek work and/or engage in gainful employment in any of the participating CSME Member States, without the need to obtain a work permit in the Member State in which he/she wishes to work. This applies only for:
1. University Graduates
1.   Artistes
2.   Musicians
3.   Media Workers
4.   Sportspersons
If a CARICOM national does not fall in any of the above-mentioned categories, then he/she must apply for a Work Permit from the receiving Member State. See: https://caricom.org/treaties/revised-treaty-of-chaguaramas-establishing-the-caricom-including-csme/
[34] https://www.spc.int/taxonomy/term/1511
[35] https://www.lecames.org/pays-membres/
[36] https://www.lecames.org/programmemes/pred/

MRAs are importance in assuring migrant workers' skills portability and matching. Depending on the region, there have been different levels of effective implementation. For instance, MRAs have been mainly used for specific occupational profiles (e. g. in the ASEAN). There is the potential to use them for different skills levels, depending on labour demand in concrete migration corridors.

4.2 Skill mobility partnerships

Skills Mobility Partnerships are bilateral or multilateral agreements, aimed at facilitating the collaboration of signatory countries in promoting skills development with an expected triple win impact on both origin and destination countries and migrant workers themselves. Therefore, skills mobility partnership can be found at bilateral, regional and global levels.

An example of bilateral skill mobility partnership is included in the MoU between the Republic of India and the Kingdom of Denmark of September 29, 2009 (see box 8. The agreement is based upon the mutual benefits of promoting orderly migration of workers from India to meet the growing labour demand in the Danish economy. The objectives are: i) preventing irregular migration and smuggling of people, while ii) ensuring the welfare and social protection of Indian migrant workers. The main scope of the partnership, which is still operational, was to open up opportunities for Indian skilled workers, including doctors and nurses, to work in Denmark, filling up the labour market demand for skilled workers. No monitoring or evaluation report of the MoU is publicly available.

Box 8. Labour Mobility Partnership between the Republic of India and the Kingdom of Denmark of September 29, 2009 (extracts)

Article 13

Both states agree to cooperate in the fields of vocational training, standardize testing and certification especially training programmes, methodology, studies and research, systems of measuring skill- level, and their methods of application in accordance with the requirements of the job market in both countries, aimed at enhancing labour productivity. The Governments also agree to cooperate in mutually sourcing technically skilled personnel and benefiting from the training facilities available in both countries.

Source: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---migrant/documents/legaldocument/wcms_379032.pdf

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Even if not always specifically targeting skills, an interesting application of the principle of partnerships can be found in the Mobility Partnerships[37] that were implemented by the European Union for combating irregular migration and human trafficking and strengthening the nexus between migration and development. The partnerships that are still active include Armenia (2011), Azerbaijan (2011), Belarus (2014), Cabo Verde (2008), Georgia (2011), and Moldova (2009). It is important to note that the Mobility Partnerships were linked to the signature of a Readmission Agreement and that only one part of the Member States took part in the implementation of concrete partnership initiatives.

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[37] A cooperation arrangement, on the basis of political declarations, that provides the bilateral framework for dialogue and practical cooperation to address relevant migration and mobility issues of mutual concern primarily with EU neighbourhood countries, including short and long-term mobility, on a voluntary basis. Source: Council Conclusions (No 42) on the Global Approach of Migration and Mobility of 29 May 2012

Skills mobility partnerships are the core of the initiatives, launched by the European Union within the New Pact on Migration and Asylum[38]. To reinforce bilateral cooperation with origin countries such as Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, and Tunisia, the EU Mobility Partnership Facility[39] has financed different pilot initiatives. An example is offered by the Belgian-Tunisian Skills Mobility Partnership (see box 9).

Box 9. Skills Mobility Partnership Belgium-Tunisia

Skills mobility partnership could be one way to anticipate future labour demand in both origin and destination countries. Financed by the Belgian Government and implemented by the IOM, the project had a 22-month duration. It provided 31 Tunisian students and university graduates with theoretical and practical training, aimed at increasing their employability by enhancing their skills. The scope of the project was to address the high unemployment rate among young Tunisians and thus preventing irregular migration.

Participants were selected in collaboration with ANETI (Tunisian public employment services) and took part in a six-month internship in 12 companies in Belgium. Upon return to Tunisia, they received support in job seeking in Tunisia and got additional training to further enhance their occupational skills.

All participants found jobs in Tunisia, after their internship in Belgium. Even if in a small scale, the project offered valuable policy indications on how to offer concrete opportunities for skills mobility to third country nationals, upon their return back home.

Source: M. Di Salvo and N. Mallè Ndoye, 2020

At sub-regional level, an on-going project (2019-2022), called "Towards a Holistic Approach to Labour Migration Governance and Labour Mobility in North Africa" (THAMM), operates in building effective migration partnerships between Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia and EU countries, in particular with Germany (see box 10).

Box 10. The Holistic Approach to Labour Migration Governance and Labour Mobility in North Africa (THAMM)

Financed by the European Union through the "Emergency Trust Fund for Stability and Addressing the Root Causes of Irregular Migration and Displaced Persons in Africa" and the German Federal Ministry for Development (BMZ), the project is implemented by the ILO, IOM and GIZ, and targets mainly Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia.

The project's main expected results include:

- Improved or strengthened policy, legislative, institutional and regulatory frameworks, aimed at enhancing the protection of migrant workers;

- Facilitated and effective recognition of qualifications and competences for migrant workers;

- Establish mobility schemes;

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[38] https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/promoting-our-european-way-life/new-pact-migration-and-asylum_en
[39] https://www.migrationpartnershipfacility.eu/about/what-is-mpf

- Support partners in developing instruments to protect the rights of migrant workers and to monitor the impact of labour migration on the local labour market.

Source: https://www.ilo.org/africa/technical-cooperation/WCMS_741974/lang--en/index.htm

In parallel to the Mobility Partnerships Facility, at the level of regional coordination, a new instrument was launched by the EU, in June 2021, called Talent Partnerships Policy Framework[40]. It aims at combining mobility schemes for work or training, with investments in the origin countries in vocational education and training, diaspora engagement, labour market analysis, and reintegration of return migrants. The Framework covers all levels of skills and qualifications.

At global level, five organizations -- ILO, together with IOM, UNESCO, IOE and ITUC launched the Global Skills Partnership for Migration (GSPM). The GSPM "…aims to mobilize technical expertise of the three organizations towards supporting governments, employers, workers and their organizations, educational institutions and training providers, and other stakeholders to develop and recognize the skills of migrant workers with a particular focus on women and youth."[41] The Global Partnership would like to pilot initiatives, and use its expertise, at the national and regional levels to come up with sustainable solutions, which could be scaled up, to address skills and labour migration issues. It would also like to foster global debate on this issue.

Even though skills partnerships are presented as innovative solutions by some, in reality they are not a new form of international collaboration. They could be either specific project, or bilateral/multilateral agreements. The results from the skill partnership pilot projects needs to be further analysed in order to address labour market skills shortages, while strengthening mutually-beneficial arrangements with the origin countries, in a more systemic way. In particular, it is important to take care of all skills levels and not only of highly skilled migrant workers. Bilateral and multilateral partnerships should be designed, implemented and monitored with the active involvement of all relevant stakeholders, including the social partners.

An organisation, promoting Global Skill Partnerships (GSP),[42] is the Centre for Global Development. It has created a partnership model, called "dual track". Potential migrants are trained in the countries of origin in skills that are on demand in the destination countries. The training initiatives are financed by the countries of destination and extended to non-migrants with the objective to increase human capital also for the domestic labour markets. The model is currently under piloting in different countries, e.g. Germany-Kosovo, Belgium-Morocco, etc. To share the results of the pilot initiatives, a specific Portal has been created.[43]

Skills Mobility Partnerships can offer valid solutions to skills development and recognition for migrant workers. For a skills partnership to be effective, it is necessary that the mobility is organised within established regular migration channels, considers the specificities of both origin and destination countries and is not focusing only on highly skilled workers. Skill shortages at low- and medium-skill levels should also be considered in order to address labour market demand and offer opportunities for regular migration and formal employment for these groups of migrant workers.

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[40] https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/policies/migration-and-asylum/legal-migration-and-integration/talent-partnerships_en
[41] https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---ifp_skills/documents/publication/wcms_653993.pdf
[42] https://gsp.cgdev.org/gsps-in-action/
[43] https://www.cgdev.org/blog/introducing-global-skill-partnership-portal

4.3 Accreditation Accords

Accreditation is "the process by which a non-governmental or private body evaluates the quality of a higher education institution as a whole or of a specific educational programme in order to formally recognize it as having met certain pre-determined criteria or standards"[44].

The first Accreditation Accord was the Washington Accord in 1989. It was promoted by the International Engineering Alliance (IEA)[45] with the aim to enhance global mobility within the engineering profession. The basis for the mobility agreement is the mutual recognition of accredited engineering programmes, that have been externally peer evaluated, based on predefined standards.[46]

The accreditation can be voluntary, like in the United States, Belgium, Canada, the Philippines, etc.[47] or required by law. Accreditation is temporary as it needs to be renewed periodically to ensure that quality is maintained. The accreditation mechanism allows for comparison of education programmes in different countries, provided that the accreditation bodies agreed on mutual recognition throughout an accreditation accord.

There are several existing accords, many of them in the field of engineering (see box 11).

Box 11. International accreditation accords

Bilateral agreements

JAS-ANZ – 1991

Australia and New Zealand established, since 1991 , a Joint Accreditation System (JAS-ANZ). Both countries mutually recognize all registered trades – not just engineering – based on agreed criteria and mutual trust.

Multilateral agreements

Dublin Accord - 2002

The Dublin Accord is an agreement for the international recognition of engineering technician qualifications. Nine national engineering universities from the following countries are part in this accord: Australia, Canada, Ireland, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, South Africa, United Kingdom, USA.

EUR-ACE Accord, 2014

13 authorised agencies (Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, and the United Kingdom) signed in 2014 a Mutual Recognition Agreement. The signatory members decided to accept each other's accreditation decisions in respect of bachelor's and master's degree programmes in engineering.

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[44] UNESCO, 2007 Quality Assurance and Accreditation: A Glossary of Basic Terms and Definitions. compiled by Lazăr VLĂSCEANU, Laura GRÜNBERG, and Dan PÂRLEA

[45] https://www.ieagreements.org/

[46] BEM, Engineering Programmeme Accreditation Standard. Available at: https://www.eac.org.my/web/document/EAC%20Standard%202002020_approved%20BEM19April2020%20uploa d%2015June2020.pdf, May 12, 2020.

[47] https://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/1729/Accreditation-in-an-International-Context-Higher-Education.html

Lima Accord, 2016

It is a multilateral agreement amongst Latin American and Caribbean accrediting organizations that are responsible for the voluntary accreditation of undergraduate engineering programmes

Seoul Accord, 2008.

The accord aims at establishing mutual recognition of graduates of educational programmes in the Computing and IT-related disciplines among the eight signatories (Organisations from: Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, UK, USA) and six organizations holding a provisional status (Organisations from: Ireland, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Philippines, Sri Lanka

Washington Accord, 1989

The accord, signed by twenty countries, plus seven holding a temporary status, sets the accreditation terms for mutual recognition of engineering qualifications. These qualifications are recognized by all the signatory parties as equivalent to those accredited in their countries.

Sydney Accord 2001

The accord intends to complement the Washington Accord extends the benefits of mutual recognition to engineering technology academic programmes. The Accord was signed by eleven countries, plus two with a temporary status.

The Accreditation Accords offer an important methodological approach to the mobility of skilled professionals, and there has been a proliferation of such arrangements in the field of engineering. This approach might be extended to other occupational profiles, and this approach is very much sector driven. The application of the Accords needs to be coherent with labour migration policies to ensure effective mobility of these professionals and address brain drain issues.

4.4 Bilateral agreements

Bilateral cooperation can provide effective services for supporting migrant workers in skills recognition, matching and developing.

4.4.1 Qualifications and skills recognition

The recognition of qualifications is usually subject to the rules established by the destination countries for assessing the equivalence to the national qualifications. The same applies to skills acquired through non-formal and informal learning. A BLMA may include indications on procedures to facilitate the recognition of qualifications and skills of migrant workers, including financial responsibilities.

An example of a general provision for the recognition of qualifications can be found in the Agreement between France and Quebec (Canada), (see box 12).

Box 12. Agreement between the Government of the French Republic and the Government of Quebec on Occupational Mobility and the Integration of Migrants, 26 November 2010 (extracts)

Article 7

Guidance and occupational integration

To improve their employability, beneficiaries admitted for residence and employment in France or Quebec as part of this Agreement have access to host systems and support existing on the territory of the receiving Party.

The Parties shall endeavour to support them in their efforts closer to their needs in accordance with established procedures and to those provided in Application Protocol in regard to:

i) the reception and settlement in the territory of the other Party;
ii)   access to recognition of degrees, diplomas, skills and qualifications, including in the context of arrangements on mutual recognition of professional qualifications;
iii)   access to public services, employment, internships or employment opportunities that meet the profile of the beneficiaries;
iv)   access to appropriate measures of learning the French language, including professional aim.

Source: https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/labour-migration/policy-areas/measuring-impact/agreements/lang--en/index.htm

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4.4.2 Skills development

Countries of origin and destination can include in BLMAs provisions to finance skills development. The destination countries can focus on initiatives, aimed at training, prior to migration, for potential migrant workers in countries of origin. The country of destination provides technical assistance and finance the training, while the country of origin agrees to provide the logistics and organization.

An example of providing skills, relevant for both origin and destination countries, is the implementation protocol of the agreement between Italy and Moldova (see box 13).

Box 13. Implementation Protocol of the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Moldova and the Government of the Italian Republic in the Field of Labour Migration, 5 July 2011 (extracts)

Article 4

The Contracting Parties shall encourage the organization of vocational training and Italian language courses, organised by Italian institutions. The courses will be organized on the Moldovan territory in compliance with the conditions agreed by the two Parties and on the basis of the following provisions:

 i)The training programme will be communicated   by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies of Italy to the Moldovan Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family;

ii)the training programmes shall be organized and implemented in compliance with the Moldovan legislation.

The above-mentioned programmes aim at:

i)train workers to be placed in Italian companies located in Italy;

ii) train workers to be placed in Italian productive sectors operating in Moldova.

iii) train workers to develop self-employment and entrepreneurial activities in the Republic of Moldova.

Source: https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/labour-migration/policy-areas/measuring-impact/agreements/WCMS_382449/lang--en/index.htm

Another option for skills development is that for specific occupational profiles, important for migration but also for the domestic labour market, their validity holds in both origin and destination countries. Examples of such approaches are offered by the German Moroccan educational partnership[48] and Egypt-Italy bilateral agreement[49] (see box 14).

Box 14. Partnership initiatives providing qualifications valid in both county of origin and destination

a) Germany-Morocco

In 2011, the project, funded by the World Bank as part of the assistance package to Morocco, allowed young Moroccans trained in the hotel/restaurant/catering or food service industry (HORECA) to integrate their skills with a working experience in Germany. As a result, the qualifications acquired by the participants were fully recognized in both countries. There were 110 apprentices in the project.

b) The Philippines - Italy

The BLMA between the Philippines and Italy was developed, including all relevant Philippine agencies. In particular, the Philippines' Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) was also involved and the training-of-trainer (ToT) approach was adopted for occupation-related training in Italian language. The BLMA also envisages the possibility to follow the implementation, together with the partners involved.

Source: Authors' elaboration, based on project's data and the Philippines - Italy BLMA.

The BLMA can indicate the institutions or agencies in charge for job and skills matching, such as public and private employment services. They can assist migrant workers in identifying and addressing possible skill gaps and helping in finding a job. It is also important to define procedures and financial responsibilities between the two countries on who will cover these costs, and make sure that migrant workers are not charged with these expenses[50]**.** An example

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48 https://www.oecd.org/mena/governance/deauville-partnership-mena-transition-fund-project.htm

49 http://sitiarcheologici.lavoro.gov.it/AreaSociale/Immigrazione/flussi_migratori/Pages/default.aspx

50 The terms 'recruitment fees' or 'related costs' refer to any fees or costs incurred in the recruitment process in order for workers to secure employment or placement, regardless of the manner, timing or location of their imposition or collection. (ILO Tripartite Meeting of Experts on Defining Recruitment Fees and Related Costs). https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/labour-migration/events-training/WCMS_675962/lang--en/index.htm).
The following non-exhaustive list indicates which costs should be considered related to the recruitment process: i) Medical costs**:** including medical examinations, tests or vaccinations; ii). Insurance costs**:** iii) Costs for skills and qualification **tests** to verify workers' language proficiency and level of skills and qualifications;

of provision of services by implementing agencies in both origin and destination countries is in the Agreement between Colombia and Peru in 2012 (see box 15).

Box 15. Framework Agreement for Assistance and Cooperation in Immigration Matters between Colombia and Peru, 6 March 2012 (extracts)

Article 2

1. The Ministry of Labour and Employment Promotion of Peru, through the REVALORA PERU Programme, within the framework of its competences, will provide training services and certification of acquired labour competencies for Colombian nationals who are employed or self-employed in Peru.

2. The Colombian Ministry of Labour, through the National Apprenticeship Service (SENA), within the framework of its competences, will provide professional training actions and certification of acquired labour competencies for Peruvian nationals who work for others or their own account in Colombia.

Source: Unofficial translation from the original Spanish, see: https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/labour-migration/policy-areas/measuring-impact/agreements/WCMS_382453/lang--en/index.htm

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4.5 Illustrations of how skills issues are covered in selected migration corridors

Along specific migration corridors, migrant workers encounter different challenges related to their skills and qualifications matching, recognition and development. The targeted corridors have been identified, based on the different models of labour migration governance they present: free mobility protocols, occupation and sector specific migration, intercontinental and cross-border movements). The findings can allow to formulate appropriate policy advice and recommendations. The migration corridors include:

➢ *Kyrgyzstan – Russia (labour migration in the context of an economic union)*
➢ *Italy – Egypt (intercontinental bilateral migration corridor)*
➢ *Costa Rica – Nicaragua (cross-border labour migration)*
➢ *Ethiopia – United Arab Emirates (occupation specific migration corridor, with focus on domestic work)*
➢ *India – Japan (health sector migration)*

4.5.1   Kyrgyzstan – Russia

The migration corridor Kyrgyzstan – Russia has been selected to analyze how labour migration has been considered in the context of the Eurasian Economic Union, which was created in 2015. The mobility of persons has been only partially allowed:

1) Nationals of the Union's Member States can enter the territory of another member country for 30 days without the obligation of registering. For longer periods, migrants and their families should register, according to the legislation of the hosting country;

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iv).Expenses for required trainings, including pre-departure or post-arrival orientation; v) Costs for tools, uniforms, safety gear, and other equipment needed to perform assigned work safely and effectively; vi) vi. Expenses incurred for travel, lodging and subsistence within or across national borders in the recruitment process, including for training, interviews, consular appointments, relocation, and return or repatriation;; vii). Administrative costs. (https://www.ilo.org/rome/pubblicazioni/WCMS_536755/lang--en/index.htm)

2) A worker of a Member State can engage in professional activities in accordance with their specialization and qualifications specified in their certificates or scientific and/or academic degree, to be recognized in accordance with the legislation of the destination country;
3) Migrant workers of the Member States and their family can benefit from social security measures (except pensions) at the same conditions of nationals.
4) Migrant workers from Member State shall be entitled to join trade unions, such as the nationals of the destination country.
5) Employers shall provide, at no charge, migrant workers with a certificate of specialization, qualifications and occupations, the period of employment and wages, according to the legislation of the destination countries.

As already mentioned, the Economic Union has not yet adopted initiatives, aimed at facilitating the mobility of workers within the Member States, therefore there are no measures for skills matching, recognition, and development.

Concerning labour migration from the Kyrgyz Republic to Russia, this has increased after the adhesion to the Union and, in 2017, there were 665,000 Kyrgyz migrant workers. Almost 40 per cent are women, working primarily in the service sector, catering, or as domestic workers, and in textiles[51]. Men migrants in Russia work mainly in construction, trade, transportation, and home repair.

Only 52 per cent of Kyrgyz citizens, working in the Russian Federation, are fluent in Russian language. The remaining 48 per cent face difficulties in finding jobs, including due to the lack of language skills. In 2018, workers' remittances represented 35 per cent of the Kyrgyz GDP.

At the moment, skills and qualifications recognition have not been addressed in the Union, and they remain exclusive competency of the Member States. This presents challenges, when it comes to labour migration and adequate skill matching.

4.5.2   Italy – Egypt

Egypt's migration policy is based on the following guidelines: i) promotion of skills development for potential migrants; ii) creation of an information system, aimed at facilitating the recruitment of Egyptian workers by international employers (see box 4); iii) negotiation of job opportunities abroad by the Egyptian Government; iv) mitigation of risks, linked to irregular migration. The Italian migration policy has been guided by the need to ensure human resources, demanded by the domestic labour market, and security issues, linked to the large inflow of irregular migrants. On these conflicting bases, the two countries agreed to collaborate in addressing irregular migration from Egypt, with a possibility to have an annual quota of regular migration. A Bilateral Labour Migration Agreement (BLMA) was signed in 2005 and integrated by an MoU, focusing on implementation issues.

Box 16. The Integrated Migration Information System (IMIS) project in Egypt

The IMIS was financed by the Italian Government and implemented by the Egyptian Ministry of Manpower and Emigration, in cooperation with the IOM.

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[51] https://kyrgyzstan.iom.int/news/current-migration-situation-and-trends-kyrgyzstan

Initiated in June 2001, IMIS was a technical tool and capacity-building mechanism that supported the Emigration Sector of the Egyptian Ministry of Manpower and Migration.

A website for matching potential migrants and employers for job vacancies abroad and the creation of a portal for Egyptian expatriates represented the main outputs of the project. The structure of the IMIS was very detailed with seven electronic sheets that participants should have completed. In particular, the sections referring to the skills of the potential migrant are based on the ISCO 88 classification of occupational profiles.

This tool was experiencing two main difficulties regarding its implementation: a) the high number of registered jobseekers (data available in July 2009 indicated that the IMIS included 233, 712 CVs, and b) the quality of information on skills that might not correspond to the effective competence of the candidates.

Source: Authors' elaboration, based on ETF, 2010 and World Bank, 2012.

For many reasons, the quota system did not work and few Egyptian migrant workers benefitted from it. As a result, the unused quotas were offered for the regularisation of migrant workers, not necessarily Egyptian, already present in Italy.

Neither the BLMA, nor the MoU included specific clauses on skills recognition. Therefore, this aspect has been regulated by the national legislation of the two countries. However, there were different attempts to facilitate collaboration on skills, including IMIS.

The construction sector was identified as a priority one since it was experiencing high levels of labour demand in Italy. The challenge was that the Egyptian vocational training system could not respond to the Italian skills demands as the Egyptian occupational profiles were not harmonized with Italian occupational demand. Another difficulty was the incomparability of the skills required -- the issue was not only terminological, but also related to the methods of performing the operations/processes, required for each occupation involved. To address this incompatibility in occupational profiles, the selected candidates received language and occupation specific training and cultural orientation at the Don Bosco training centre in Cairo.

The Italy-Egypt experience shows the importance of aligning occupational profiles in selected economic sectors. A lesson learned is the need for skill clauses in bilateral labour migration agreements to be concrete and provide a pathway for skills recognition and matching. The Italian Government has also been using the opportunity for organizing training courses in the countries of origin for potential migrants. The courses are to cover Italian language, information about the Italian labour market, and specific vocational skills, for which migrants might be hired in Italy. The skills, on which potential migrants will be trained, are indicated by the organizers: employers' and workers' organizations, public and international institutions, and NGOs that have been operating for at least three years in the field of migrant protection. The eligible countries are those having BLMAs with Italy (e.g. Albania, Republic of Moldova, Sri Lanka) or a readmission agreement (e.g. Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt, Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria, Philippines, Senegal, Tunisia) (ILO 2020 a).

4.5.3   Costa Rica- Nicaragua

As indicated in Chapter 1 of the current study, Costa Rica labour market highly rely on the contribution of migrant workers, the majority coming from the neighbouring Nicaragua. Therefore, this corridor can offer indications on challenges present in   South-South migration context, characterised by cross-border mobility.

More than 300,000 Nicaraguan migrant workers were present in Costa Rica in 2018 (6.7 per cent of the Costa Rican population). Women migrant workers represented 54.2 per cent. Most migrant workers have a low level of education: 78.6 percent with lower secondary or less; 19.3 per cent with secondary and only 2.2 percent with tertiary education (OECD/ILO. 2018). In 2019, 50.2 percent of Nicaraguans were employed in elementary occupations vs 23.4 percent of Costa Ricans (Blyde J. et al., 2020). Skills mismatch appears to be more relevant among Nicaraguan skilled, e.g. many Nicaraguan women doctors, nurses, teachers, in Costa Rica end up doing domestic work. This is an example of migrant workers in Costa Rica tending to end up in low-skilled jobs, regardless of their qualification levels. In addition, the protection of their rights could be at risk since at least the 60 percent of Nicaraguan migrant workers are in the informal economy in Costa Rica (in 2020).

The overall situation of Nicaraguan migrant workers has been worsening during the Covid -19 pandemic: those who attempted to come back to the country of origin remained blocked due to the entry ban. Those remaining in Costa Rica faced other challenges due to the lack of health services for many of them and for the enhanced risk of contagion as many migrants were in crowded housing.

No process seems to be in place for the recognition of non- formal and informal learning. In the construction sector, the employers test the knowledge and competences of the workers through a practical test, on the work site, before hiring him/her. Thus, there is no system in place. This situation may result time-consuming and costly, unless streamlined in a national skills recognition system.

4.5.4   Ethiopia – United Arab Emirates

Domestic workers are among the most vulnerable groups on the labour market among migrant workers. The private nature of the working place reduces the possibility of effective labour inspection.

Since in the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, there is high demand for migrant domestic workers, the migration corridor Ethiopia – United Arab Emirates was chosen to provide useful information on skills issues and this category of migrant workers.

Since 2016, the Overseas Employment Proclamation No. 923/2016[52] prevents workers from leaving for a country with whom Ethiopia does not have a Labour Exchange Agreement (Bilateral Labour Migration Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding), except for highly-skilled workers,[53] and requires them to meet certain criteria in terms of knowledge, skill and language

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[52] Amended by the Proclamation No. 1246-2021. https://chilot.me/2021/07/22/ethiopians-overseas-employment-amendment-proclamation-no-1246-2021/

[53] For skilled workers only, the modified Proclamation foresees that: if "an agency managed to get job opportunity for skilled manpower, the government shall give permission to undertake an agreement to do so with receiving country's company upon ascertainment of the right and safety of the employees shall be respected."

of the country of destination before allowing them to leave. Potential migrant workers should possess a certificate of competence in the area in which they will be employed (housekeeping, care services, etc.). To date, Ethiopia has signed Labour Exchange Agreements with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), Lebanon and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Kuwait, Qatar, Jordan and Yemen.

In Ethiopia, the implementation of BLMA is mainly committed to Private Employment Agencies (PrEAs) that will provide advice on how to access job opportunities that could be available for the jobseekers in the international labour market; help them in the identification of skills and competences; assist foreign employers in the selection of potential migrants as; and organise pre-departure language training and cultural orientation. The provisions of the Overseas Employment Proclamation applies also to employment relations abroad of Ethiopians, managed by public employment services, and by them directly.

An important role in labour migration process is played by NGOs operating in the field of migration: some of them provide pre-departure training to migrant workers. They can also provide occupation-specific training, as requested by Proclamation N. 923/2016, which should include a final exam and the issue of a Certificate of Competence (CoC).

Many low-skilled Ethiopian migrant workers prefer to go to countries in the Middle East. This migration route is dominated by women migrants. Men migrants constitute only 6 percent of the total migrants in the Middle East.

To address some of the challenges that migrant domestic workers could face, the Labour Exchange Agreement between UAE and Ethiopia does not include specific provisions for skills and qualifications recognition. However, it does include some references to skills matching, in particular that Ethiopia shall facilitate training programme for the workers prior to their departure to work in the United Arab Emirates and provide them with a certificate.

Given the nature of domestic work, which takes place inside private households, there is a need to identify the right legal channels to prevent and address abuse. The regulatory frameworks vary by country and, as a consequence, the effective means to monitor the implementation of BLMA on domestic work (UN Network on Migration, 2022). Further, possibilities for upskilling for this group of migrant workers are limited, which in turn could also present challenges for labour market reintegration once back home.

4.5.5   India – Japan

The international labour migration of health workers has received a greater attention due to multiplied needs of medical staff during the Covid-19 pandemic. This corridor has been chosen to provide indications on how a destination country (Japan) attracts skilled health migrant workers and the response of an origin country (India), also in terms of reducing brain drain. India is, together with the Philippines, the larger provider of health workers for the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries. This is due to the high quality of education and training for health professionals and physicians (Wickramasekara, 2014).

Japan needs at least 30,000 nurses by 2025. Nursing shortages are especially severe in rural Japan (Hirano, 2020). To mitigate the needs, the Japanese government has launched an Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), opening the doors to foreign nurses. The Agreement was signed with the Philippines (in 2006), Indonesia (in 2007), and Vietnam (in 2008). It should be noted that the EPA never uses the term migration. Under the objective of EPA, the scope is to train and then keep the trainees working in Japan. The Japanese health enterprises in charge of training the applicants and benefitting from it, have to pay: i) fixed fees to Japan International

Corporation of Welfare Services (JICWELS), the official agency for recruiting EPA nurses; ii) Indian recruitment agency fees in the origin countries of the nurses; and iii) the cost for the Japanese language training.

Upon entry into Japan, EPA nurses are provided with a "Nurse Candidate" visa, renewable for up to 3 years. After they pass the National Board Examination (NBE), they are entitled to the "Registered Nurse" visa, which can be extended indefinitely.

Compared with the country needs, the EPA initiative has had limited impact: as of January 2019, only 136 foreign registered nurses remained in Japan out of the 1300 EPA nurse candidates who entered since 2008 (Hirano 2020). Language and type of work were the main issues.

The EPA concluded in 2011 between Japan and India does not include the recruitment of nurses. In 2017, the "Technical Intern Training Programme" agreement was signed, which allows Indian youth to benefit from internships in Japan across diverse economic sectors, including healthcare. So far, no impact studies have been released.

In January 2021, the two countries signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC)[54], covering 14 categories of skilled workers from India who, once meeting the skills requirement and passing the Japanese language tests, could be employed in Japan. The list also includes the nursing. The Agreement has a double scope: i) providing the Japanese labour market with skilled workers, and ii) equipping these workers with new skills that will be useful when they will return home. A Joint Working Group, comprising officials from both countries, will define the operational details and monitor the implementation of the Agreement.

There is a high demand for migrant health workers; however, obstacles like fluency in the national language and modalities of work often prevent migrants from remaining in the country, despite availability of regular channels for labour migration and opportunities for up-skilling and re-skilling. An significant lesson is that opportunities for up-skilling remain important for countries of destination, and language training and cultural orientation should not be underestimated.

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[54] https://www.mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/33394/Signing_of_the_IndiaJapan_Memorandum_of_Cooperation_on_Specified_Skilled_Workers

Chapter 5. Financing of skills matching, recognition and development for migrant workers

Skills development, in line with the labour market demand, requires adequate funding. One of the most important source of funds is through the public budget. Public–private partnerships are another way to mobilize resources for TVET. To address the scarcity of funds, skills development is often financed through co-financing arrangements, including employee contributions, income-generating activities and external assistance (ILO 2021).

Public funds are mostly focused on initial VET, covering basic running costs, but do not finance entirely the investment for adult training and life-long learning. Therefore, the contribution from economic sectors could be key in strengthening the relevance of qualifications and skills delivery, reflecting in a timely manner labour market needs.

5.1 Training Funds

One possible arrangement to channel financial resources into the education and training systems is through specifically designated funds. The contribution from the enterprises is provided through voluntary or compulsory levy systems on company payrolls. The training funds are also important for skills development of migrant workers, provided that they have a regular status and are employed in formal sectors. Some countries, e.g. Italy make a specific reference to the access of migrant workers to initiatives, financed by the sector training funds.

Training funds[55] can be created at economic sector or national levels. Sectoral training funds are present in several European countries, including Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. In Latin America, the Peru has two funds. South Africa has over 20 sectoral training funds (Palmer, 2020). Migrants, working regularly in their destination country, could benefit from such funds.

An example of sector voluntary levy is offered by the Netherlands (see box 17).

Box 17. Sector training funds in the Netherlands

In some industrial sectors or branches, trade unions and employers' organizations have joined efforts through collective bargaining, and established training and development funds (Onderwijs en Ontwikkeling- *O&O-fondsen*) to support educational opportunities for employees, which could also be regular migrant workers.

The funds are private initiatives managed by sectoral organisations and social partners. In 2020, according to some organisations there were around 60 O&O funds. Other organisations count 140 funds, probably made by several smaller, sub-sector funds that are then grouped in the already mentioned 60 funds.

Around 40 per cent of all workers are covered by a training fund. The strength of the O&O funds is their collective financing nature as companies and their employees are involved. A weakness of these funds is that not all companies benefit from training activities to the same

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[55] "A 'training fund' is a dedicated stock or flow of financing outside normal government budgetary channels for the purpose of developing productive skills for work". R. Johanson, 2009.

degree. Especially small and medium enterprises have less access to funding opportunities for training as they have difficulties in replacing the staff during their training.

Source: https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/observatories/emcc/erm/support-instrument/sectoral-training-and-development-funds

An example of compulsory levy is offered by South Africa (see box 18).

Box 18. Skills Development Levy in South Africa

A levy of 1 per cent is applied on the total amount of salaries paid by employers. The money is collected by the South African Revenue Services (SARS) and used to finance the skills development of workers. 80 per cent of the financing collected goes to the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) and the remaining 20 per cent is used by the National Skills Fund. SETA finances the Work Skills Plans prepared by the employers, while the National Skills Fund[56] supports skills development projects that do not fall under the SETAs, such as: training needs of the unemployed, non-levy-paying cooperatives, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), vulnerable groups, etc.

Source: https://www.westerncape.gov.za/service/sector-education-and-training-authorities-setas-and-skills-levy

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At the national level, training levies are organized to support the training needs of all sectors. These levies are found particularly in the Asia and Pacific region (e.g. in Malaysia, Korea, Singapore and Thailand), in the Arab States, including Algeria, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia, and in almost all sub-Saharan African countries. An example of national training fund is the one of Mauritius (see box 19).

Box 19. The National Training Fund in Mauritius

In Mauritius, a training fund has been established with the scope of providing "*training incentives … to employers in order to allow them to meet part of the training cost of their employees and to support other training initiatives both at enterprise and national levels*"[57]. All employers from the private sector should pay a levy of 1.5 per cent of the total basic wages of its employees. Since 2004, the fund has been managed by the Human Resource Development Council (HRDC), which provides training incentives to employer but it is not involved in the delivery of training. 1 per cent of the levy revenues is transferred to the HRDC, while 0.5 per cent is transferred to the Workfare Programme Fund, managed by the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations, Employment and Training, that is used for the unemployment benefit for workers in the private sector in case of unemployment. A total of 1,600 employers participate in the fund. It seems that, in the period 2014-2018, only an average of 38 per cent of levy revenues was spent on reimbursing industry training fees.

Source: R. Palmer 2020

Training funds are increasingly used to mobilize financing for skills development; however, they do not always function well due to weak governance, low transparency on how funds are spent

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[56] The National Skills Fund (NSF) is a public entity reporting to the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation. https://nationalgovernment.co.za/units/view/259/national-skills-fund-nsf
[57] www.hrdc.mu.

and insufficiently targeted training programmes. It should be noted that the levy system is hardly applicable in countries, where there is a large informal economy and social partnership should be further strengthened.

Training funds could play an important role in updating and adapting skills to current labour market needs, including for migrant workers. In this context, different options could be considered: BLMAs may refer to such funds when it comes to post-arrival occupation-related training, specific skills partnership arrangements or simply extend it to migrant workers. Training, especially at the national level, could also facilitate the transition from informal to formal employment by proving up-to-date training and facilitating labour market reintegration.

5.2 Financing options for skills development of migrant workers in bilateral labour migration agreements

Skills development is one of the key factors for migrant workers' integration in both destination and origin labour markets, yet the cost implications are rarely considered. To address these challenges, a BLMA could consider different scenarios:

a) The origin country provides training for potential migrants and funds it. One example is offered by the current skills development policy for migrant workers in Ethiopia. Migrant workers are forbidden to migrate if they do not have a certificate of competence in the area, in which they will be employed in the destination country. Training focuses on household management, but includes also life skills training (conflict management, communication, negotiating with employers) and financial competences (remittances, savings).

b) Joint collaboration efforts between countries of origin and destination. If not otherwise defined in the BLMA, the costs for the implementation of the agreements, are usually shared by the two countries involved. Accordingly, the origin country is deemed to bear the costs for the activities before departure of the migrant workers, and the destination country will take on board the costs for post arrival training and courses necessary for matching the skills of migrant workers with the job requirements.

c) Financing for training of migrant workers is provided by employers in the destination countries. The BLMA can envisage that all costs related to the migration process are fully covered by the employers of the destination country benefitting from it. An example is offered by the BLMA between Germany and the Philippines for the migration of nurses (see box 20).

Box 20. Agreement of the Philippines and the Federal Republic of Germany concerning the placement of Filipino health professionals in employment positions in the Federal Republic of Germany, signed on 19 March 2013 (extracts)

Article I. General Principles
C. Responsibilities of the Parties:
The Parties shall have the following obligations:
1. Ensure that the recruitment and deployment of Filipino health professionals under this Agreement shall be in accordance with the existing laws, procedures, guidelines and regulations of each country.

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2. Ensure that the Filipino health professionals to be deployed are in possession of appropriate employment contract (Attachment 3)[58] duly signed by both the health professionals and employer concerned prior to their departure from the Philippines.

3. Ensure that the health professionals are provided with proper briefing/orientation prior to their departure on relevant laws, regulations, policies, procedures, norms, cultures and practices in both countries of origin and destination relative to their deployment.

The implementation of the Agreement is delegated to the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration and for Germany, to the Federal Employment Agency (BA). Monitoring of the Agreement is committed to a Joint Committee, which included a Trade Union representative from Philippines and Germany, respectively.

Before leaving the Philippines, the selected nurses undergo a language preparation up to B1 certificate in German language and a 4- day professional and orientation course, including information on processes and requirements for getting their qualifications recognized in Germany. They are individually supported in the preparation and submission of documents for recognition to the relevant German authorities before departure. Nurses receive the working permits and entry visas before departure from the Philippines.

The implementation of the Agreement is financially supported by the German employers who cover the costs of services provided to the nurses in the origin country (e.g. language and occupation-related training), travel and qualification recognition and further language training in Germany.

Source: Authors' elaboration, based on the text of the Agreement and GIZ project information[59]

As part of the BLMA design and negotiation process, cost implications for skills matching, recognition and development should be carefully considered and feasible solutions identified. In cases, where there are existing arrangements in origin and destination countries for addressing skills issues, the BLMA could draw on them, rather than creating parallel systems, resulting in duplications, waste of resources and little sustainability.

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[58] The Agreement holds in an Annex a model employment contract, which is not appended to the present document.
[59] *https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/41533.html.*

Chapter 6. Critical policy issues for low- and medium-skilled migrant workers

6.1 Skills matching, recognition and development for low- and medium-skilled migrant workers

Migration policies in destination countries frequently consider and facilitate the immigration of highly skilled workers. Labour migration is frequently presented as a temporary phenomenon. This poses important policy questions in terms of ensuring the protection of migrant workers' rights, such as the ability to change employers, access to training opportunities, enjoyment of freedom of association and collective bargaining, social protection, the ability of family members to join the migrant worker, etc.

Further, the strong policy attention on the temporary nature of labour migration could result in unfair differentiation among different skill levels of migrant workers, offering more migration opportunities and protections to those better qualified. Yet, such policy approaches do not take into account real labour market needs for low- and medium-skilled migrant workers.

Low-skilled workers may experience greater challenges in labour market integration, compared to skilled workers, especially in the context of an economic crisis, or other emergency situations, like the COVID19 pandemic. Integration is also a key factor in improving economic productivity and social cohesion (OECD/ILO, 2018a).

There is a need for stronger dialogue on appropriate governance mechanisms between countries of origin and destination, with inputs from representative workers' and employers' organizations, to anticipate skill shortages and address them in a timely manner. Bilateral agreements or Memoranda of Understanding could be an effective tool in this regard, and should be built on labour market needs' assessments with a view to contribute to sound and evidence-based policies that bring coherence between employment and labour migration. For example, the ILO has conducted research in both origin countries (e.g. Moldova and Ukraine) and at the level of the EU and its Member States to identify the skill needs and mechanisms for filling vacancies for job seekers (ILO, 2014)[60].

The growing impact of migration on the world of work requires better coherence between employment, education/training and migration policies. Yet, migration policies have not been always designed on the basis of labour market needs or impacts. Many labour migration programmes cannot address the permanent/structural demand for migrant labour, especially with regard to ageing workforces in destination countries.

Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and need for ensuring resilience of the provisions of essential goods and services (EUI, 2020) demonstrated the key role played by low- and medium-skilled migrant workers. Certain jobs were declared 'essential' and the tasks were performed by "key workers". For instance, in the EU, on average 13 per cent of key workers were migrants, including those typically considered 'low-skilled' workers such as crop pickers, food processors, care assistants, and cleaners in hospitals. In some occupations - e.g. cleaners and helpers and workers in mining and construction - up to a third of key workers are foreign born (Fasani and Mazza 2020).

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[60] https://www.ilo.org/budapest/what-we-do/publications/WCMS_244717/lang--en/index.htm

Policy makers, in collaboration with social partners, in developing their national labour migration policies may consider taking on board all skill levels and promote a viable cooperation among origin and destination countries. Migrant workers' voice should also be considered in all phases of the labour migration policy cycle. Potential areas of intervention for enhancing employability of low- and medium-skilled migrant workers include accurate labour market needs assessment and skills anticipation, also for this group, and facilitating access to education and training opportunities.

6.2 Migrant workers and informal economy

According to the ILO Recommendation R204, the term informal economy: "*(a) refers to all economic activities by workers and economic units that are – in law or in practice – not covered or insufficiently covered by formal arrangements; and (b) does not cover illicit activities, in particular the provision of services or the production, sale, possession or use of goods forbidden by law, including the illicit production and trafficking of drugs, the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, trafficking in persons, and money laundering, as defined in the relevant international treaties*[61]".

The extent of informal economy varies by countries: 61.2 per cent (58.1 per cent women; 63.0 per cent men) of the global workforce (population aged 15 and over) is reported to work informally. The highest rates of informal employment are found in Africa (85.8 per cent), and in some parts of the continent the situation is particularly acute (see box 21) The Asia and Pacific region have 68.2 per cent and the Arab States 68.6 per cent. In the Americas, informality amounts to 40.0 per cent, and 25.1 per cent in Europe and central Asia (ILO, 2018).

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[61] Article 1.2 of the Recommendation R204 - Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy, 2015 (No. 204). https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:R204

Box 21. Informal employment and labour migration in the member states of the ECOWAS Regional Economic Community

Country	Share of informal employment in total employment (%)			Share of non-agricultural informal employment (%)		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Benin	94.5	91.6	97.2	90.6	83.4	95.8
Burkina Faso	94.6	91.3	97.6	88.4	82.7	93.8
Cabo Verde	46.5	49.1	43.8	46.8	48.1	45.5
Côte d'Ivoire	92.8	90.7	95.9	87.7	82.4	93.8
The Gambia	76.7	70.4	84.7	68.4	62.4	77.7
Ghana	90.1	86.0	94.0	82.6	73.7	89.9
Guinea	N/A					
Guinea-Bissau	N/A					
Liberia	86.8	81.5	92.0	77.5	68.6	86.5
Mali	92.7	90.8	95.0	86.4	82.8	90.7
Niger	91.3	87.4	95.9	85.1	74.7	94.2
Nigeria	92.9	90.8	95.1	89.0	83.5	93.2
Senegal	91.2	89.5	93.7	87.0	83.9	91.3
Sierra Leone	92.5	92.9	92.1	86.0	86.4	85.7
Togo	92.8	90.3	95.2	90.0	85.8	93.6

The ECOWAS subregion also has the highest concentration of intra-regional labour migration. Most of migration flows (84 per cent) in the ECOWAS are towards another country in the subregion. These movements are facilitated by the ECOWAS Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons, Residence and Establishment (1979) that sets out the right of Community citizens to enter, reside and establish themselves in the territories of Member States (Art. 2(1)). The estimates are around 7.5 million intra-regional migrants (Devillard, Bacchi and Noack, 2015). Intra-regional migration is mostly work-related and can be temporary, seasonal, or permanent, as well as short-term cross-border movements. In the majority of cases, migrants are engaged in low-skilled work in the informal sector, while highly-skilled migrants from ECOWAS move predominantly to high-income countries.

Migrants in the ECOWAS countries work mostly in trade and agriculture sectors (Devillard, Bacchi and Noack, 2015).

Source: ILO, 2018a.

Informality has far-reaching impacts on the labour market, including access to skills recognition and training opportunities. Identifying financial resources for training can be a challenge in contexts, characterised by high prevalence of informality, but different policy options could be identified. An example is offered by the Industrial Training Fund in Nigeria (see box 22).

Box 22. The Industrial Training Fund in Nigeria

The Industrial Training Fund (ITF) was established by Decree No. 47 of 8 October 1971 and encompasses government funds and employers' contribution. Employers with five or more employees, as well as those having fewer than five employees but with a turnover of 50 million Naira (NGN) and above per annum, have the obligation to contribute to the Fund. The levy is 1 per cent of annual payroll. The ITF organises directly vocational and apprentice training, and reimburses its cost up to 50 percent of the contribution, paid by employers.

Source: https://www.itf.gov.ng/

While in many high-income countries, skills and qualifications are obtained within the formal education and training systems, this is often not the case in countries with formal education systems, still in the process of development, and a large informal economy.

In many origin countries, the informal apprenticeship is a traditional way for learning skills, which is not recognised. Therefore, these skills are not documented and could create obstacles for obtaining formal employment domestically and internationally. However, in many contexts, informal apprenticeship remains among the main sources of skills development and there is a need to identify ways to improve the system, and promote transition to formality.[62]

To enhance the effectiveness of the informal apprenticeship and facilitate the process of formalisation, some countries (e.g. Bangladesh, Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Togo) have introduced a dual apprenticeship system. It consists of linking informal apprenticeship with formal training provision, incorporating elements of theory, reflection and modern technologies. In these schemes, apprentices spend part of their training (15–40 per cent) in a training centre or vocational school[63].

The ILO Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204) provides important indications on reducing informality. Related to labour migration, para. 15 recommends that: "*Members should promote the implementation of a comprehensive employment policy framework, based on tripartite consultations, that may include the following elements: (e) labour migration policies that take into account labour market needs and promote decent work and the rights of migrant workers*". The transition implies that the non-formal and informal learning is recognised and become part of skills portfolio that workers can use in both origin and destination countries. It should be noted that skills policies per se cannot address

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[62] Upgrading informal apprenticeship. A resource guide for Africa, see: https://www.ilo.org/skills/projects/WCMS_158771/lang--en/index.htm
[63] https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---ifp_skills/documents/publication/wcms_167162.pdf

informality but should be coupled with economic development measures, such as creating conducive environment for small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs), among others.

There are some arrangements that might help workers in the informal economy to pledge for the formal recognition of their skills (see box 23). The recognition can facilitate skills matching process both at domestic and international levels, and transition to formal employment.

Box 23. Recognition arrangements for skills earned in the informal economy

In Tanzania, there is a possibility for apprentices to receive a certificate through a skills test, issued by the Vocational Educational and Training Authority (VETA). The impact seems to be limited for the moment, probably due to the reduced coverage of trades and scarce capacity to assess the skills, the cost of the preparatory courses, the time necessary and language barriers (tests are usually in English).

Other practices exist that can demonstrate that skills acquired in the informal economy can be assessed. For this scope, the ILO has analysed nine cases of skills assessment, conducted by the Small Industry and Community Organizations (SICO) in Africa, Asia and Latin America[64] (ILO 2015 b). The cases cover different target groups (apprentices, master craft persons, workers) and different levels of organizations involved (federations, single and multi-trade business associations, and a trade union). Based upon the analyses of the above-mentioned case studies, the ILO has issued a resource guide for assessing skills in the informal economy (ILO, 2015a).

Sources: Authors' elaboration, based on ILO, 2015a, ILO, 2015b and VETA website (https://www.veta.go.tz/)

At the national level, the Recognition of Prior learning (RPL systems could address the issue of informally acquired skills, however they need to be designed and effectively implemented, which requires both human and financial resources, and political will. At international level, without occupational standards harmonization, the skills recognised by the RPL system at national level, will have little value. In this context, BLMAs could be an important tool to address such challenges (see box 24).

Box 24. Guidelines for skills modules in bilateral labour migration agreements

Bilateral labour migration agreements (BLMAs) are important tools for facilitating the governance of labour migration. They are frequently used for addressing skills shortages and gaps in both origin and destination countries. The guidelines offer a systematized knowledge base on BLMAs, together with examples of different approaches towards skills and qualifications in existing agreements. The guidelines refer to the skills possessed by migrant workers that need to be recognized, matched and further developed, as appropriate. In addition, they shed light on funding mechanisms. The document analyses the different aspects of skills, and offers to policy-makers, social partners and development practitioners' useful guidance on how to address skills issues in BLMAs in all sectors, while strengthening the protection of migrant workers.

Source: https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/labour-migration/publications/WCMS_748723/lang--en/index.htm

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[64] The countries covered include Benin, Ruanda, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Cameroon, Colombia, Bangladesh, India.

Chapter 7. Forces of changes, affecting labour market demand for migrant workers

New forces of changes are transforming labour markets around the globe and are also impacting on labour migration trends and developments, and skills needs. Technological advances, greening of economies and changes in demographics have been identified by the Global Commission on the Future of Work as main elements of change, in addition to traditional drivers and structural factors of migration.[65] The COVID-19 pandemic has determined changes in the labour market, especially on the way jobs are performed, including an extensive use of teleworking in many professions. These changes will probably last even after the pandemic crisis is over and their impact on labour migration trends and skills needs is still to be assessed.

7.1 Technological changes

Technological advances, including also the impact of digitalization on labour markets and migration, could improve the governance of labour migration, e.g. on-line training, electronic employment matching platforms, labour migration information portals, digitalization of credentials, etc. An example of digital tools that can facilitate labour migration by establishing global standards on skills expressed in terms of learning outcomes is offered by World Reference Levels (WRL)[66], developed by UNESCO. It aims at facilitating international comparison of learning outcomes. It helps authorities, institutions, employers and individuals to understand, compare and recognize skills, qualifications, credentials and learning achievements.

The COVID19 pandemic intensified the process of digitalization, however migration governance systems have not been fully prepared. In particular, it does not appear that digitization is part of a unique government strategy for migration, in both countries of origin and destination, but it is covered by different policies and regulatory frameworks. It could play an important role in labour migration if adequate governance mechanisms are put in place, and digital literacy skills are adequately developed. In the perspective of improving labour market intelligence and allowing for better skills matching, digital platforms are increasingly used (see box 25). Better skills matching and forecast can influence labour migration modalities.

Box 25. Regional skills platforms in Sweden

In each of the 21 regions in Sweden, the Agency for Economic and Regional Growth has developed platforms, aimed at collecting and analysing data on skills matching for today and future labour markets.

It involves structured and focused work to improve skills supply and increase collaboration between employers, education providers and authorities.
The scope of the instrument is to: i) match and improve skills of the unemployed, youth and older workers; ii) address skill shortages; and iii) facilitate job/career transitions.

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[65] https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---cabinet/documents/publication/wcms_662410.pdf
[66] https://worldreferencelevels.org/overview/

> The platforms involve many stakeholders: public and private training providers; chambers of commerce and industry; employers' federations; central and regional government institutions; career-guidance counsellors; research centres and universities; and social partners.
>
> *Source: https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/matching-skills/all-instruments/regional-skills-platforms*

The digitalization can present risks and challenges that need to be managed. One aspect is the cost linked to communication. Another aspect is linked digital literacy. In both cases, specific attention should be devoted to low-skilled migrant worker, to allow equitable access and benefits from digitalization. This requires targeted policy interventions of improving digital skills.

The information posted online needs to be reliable and accurate. In this regard, it is also urgent to develop and implement new rules on the collection, use, and storage of migrant workers' personal and biometric data, preventing abuses. This should also be considered, when developing labour migration governance tools, e.g. BLMAs, and raising awareness among migrant workers at all skill levels.

7.2 Demographic changes

Frequently limited to the phenomenon of ageing population, demographic changes should also include the growing number of youth. The young dependency ratio is higher in low-income countries (e.g. across Sub-Saharan Africa). The number of new entrants into the labour market has been growing, but this trend has not been accompanied by sufficient job creation domestically. This has resulted in creating pushing factors for labour migration. The share of youth (15 – 24) among international migrant workers has increased over time, from 8.3 per cent in 2017 to 10.0 per cent in 2019.[67] At the same time, destination countries have been experiencing ageing populations and shrinking national labour forces, which has been pull factor for migrant workers.

The above demographic trends have impact on education and training policies, in terms of preparing young people both for the domestic and international labour markers. For origin countries, on one hand, there will be impact on public funding for education and on the other, it may result in brain drain and resources lost. For destination countries, there is a need to address skill gaps and shortages, which may require re-skilling and up-skilling. These labour market dynamics require much closer cooperation between origin and destination countries, which could be facilitated by BLMAs or effective implementation of protocols of free mobility, where existing. There is further the need for effective coherence among labour migration, employment and education and training policies.

7.3 Greening economy

Greening economies require new jobs and related new skills. In many sectors (e.g. renewable energy, energy and resource efficiency, renovation of buildings, construction, environmental services, manufacturing[68]) there is the need for right skills to make the transition toward cleaner and sustainable technologies. Changing skills will also affect sectors in which migrant workers are frequently employed, such as agriculture, construction, and tourism. An example of green skills development is offered by the MOVE_GREEN project between Spain and Morocco (see box 26).

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[67] https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_808935.pdf
[68] https://www.ilo.org/skills/projects/WCMS_115959/lang--en/index.htm

Box 26. (E)Co-development for innovation and employment in green and circular economy between Andalusia and Morocco (MOVE_GREEN)

Financed by the EU Mobility Partnership Facility, and implemented by ICMPD, Move Green is a circular mobility scheme aimed at offering professional qualification to Moroccan talents seeking to work in the renewable energy and green economy sector, which has been identified as skills priority for the future. The project started in September 2021 will last 36 months. A minimum of 36 Moroccan young graduates have been selected to participate in the project. Before the departure, they undergo training to improve their skills related to renewable energy and green economy. Training includes Spanish language and socio-cultural orientation. A four-month training programme will take place in Spain and include exchanges and visits to Andalusian companies and entrepreneurs in the field. Last phase will support the young graduates reintegrate into the Moroccan labour market, either through support in job placement or in the development of their own business activity.

Source: https://www.migrationpartnershipfacility.eu/what-we-do/actions-pilot-projects/e-co-development-for-innovation-and-employment-in-green-and-circular-economy-between-andalusia-and-morocco-move_green

Labour market information for anticipating and monitoring skill needs for green jobs is a precondition for effective education and training, and employment policies. This helps governments and businesses to anticipate changes in the labour market, assess the impact on skill requirements, update training programmes and, when needed, design new ones.

The ILO country analyses (experiences from 21 developed and developing countries) indicate that good practices include effective coordination among line ministries and social partners, through setting up of designated working groups for skills anticipation and development for a greening economy, or by mainstreaming them into institutionalised fora, e.g. a council for environmental development (ILO, 2011). In this context, decentralized approaches can contribute to policy coherence implementation, by involving sector and local level stakeholders in skills anticipation and development, including the social partners.

The greening of the economy has an affect at systemic level on skills anticipation and development processes. In summary, three main types of skill changes could be anticipated -- resulting from employment shifts within and across economic sectors due to green restructuring, new occupational skills, and changes in the skills content of existing occupations. As a result, the entire training system will be affected (ILO, 2011), including training programmes specifically targeting migrant workers. This will also require enhanced coordination among labour migration, economic development, employment and education and training policies.

Chapter 8. Policy conclusions and recommendations

Policy recommendations on skills anticipation are formulated for the short-, medium- and long-term, as appropriate. Indications for strengthening policy learning are provided for different regional, national, and economic contexts. The paper discusses skills anticipation in the broader context of skills recognition, matching and development for migrant workers to contribute to comprehensive policy solutions. It should be noted that it has been increasingly difficult to classify countries just as origin and destination. More and more countries are becoming both home and host of migrant workers, and they can be either low-, medium- or high-income. In this sense, labour migration policies need to cover multiple aspects and interests. The policy conclusions and recommendations below are intended for policy makes and other stakeholders, including the social partners, to contribute to enhancing labour migration governance.

8.1 Data availability for skills anticipation

Skills anticipation is a challenging task, due to technological progress, globalization and rapidly evolving labour demand. Given the objective difficulties to anticipate skills demands in many countries, there is a need for coordinated attempts to quantify skills needs in the short- and medium-term perspectives. This requires collaboration among employers, national statistical offices, Ministries of Labour and other stakeholders. This type of collaboration could be mandated by law, and the obligatory registration of companies with chambers of commerce, facilitates the identification of a representative sample in terms of company size and economic sector. Data, derived from interviews with employers, could be compared with figures from other sources, i.e. social insurance registry, in order to reduce the risk of inconsistencies.

The data should not only be collected due to compliance with the legal requirement but should also be effectively used for policy design and implementation in the areas of education, employment, labour migration, etc. In cases, where no sufficient resources are available for carrying out regular surveys, qualitative approaches, like Delphi and scenario-planning, could be adopted. It is key to identify a leading organization, responsible for the data collection exercise, which also disseminates the results.

The data collection should cover all economic sectors. In some cases, sectors, important for labour migration policies, such as agriculture and care, are not included (e.g. Italy). It would be important for surveys for anticipation of skill needs to reflect demand both for national and migrant labour, and cover all skill levels.

New technological developments could allow for lowering cost of data collection and making it user-friendly, drawing on a variety of sources, which have previously not been used for labour migration, e.g. vacancy analysis. This could result in cheaper and more frequently available skills anticipation information, also covering labour migration demand.

8.2 Skills anticipation results and dissemination

Skills anticipation is an important planning tool for both the national and international labour markets. Short-term skills anticipation may be particularly useful for employment agencies and workers to orient their activities and job search. For instance, both Costa Rica and Italy prepare short-term skills anticipation, however without or with little reference to migrant labour. Medium-term forecast could inform policy making for adoption of new policies or adaptation of existing ones, covering also labour migration. Long-term anticipation may be of particular relevance to the education and training systems to inform curricula development for future labour markets.

For ensuring that the results of the forecasting are continuously being used for labour migration in terms of policy design and implementation modalities, e.g. in agreements, quotas, etc., they could be made public by the responsible institutions.

8.3 Linking skills anticipation producers and users

There is often a disconnect between skill forecasting and labour migration policies. Bilateral labour migration agreements are frequently based on ad-hoc demands or other considerations, and do not reflect real labour market needs. Such situations result in little implementation and could contribute to irregular migration. Having a clear articulation of skills needs and gaps could improve considerably policy making and contribute to the predictability of labour market demand, which could be adequately planned for.

The migration corridor and MRA analysis point to the need to link skills anticipation and development to Regional Economic Communities' protocols of free mobility or bilateral agreements. Otherwise, the effective implementation of existing labour migration governance tools remains limited.

8.4 Using skills anticipation in policy design and implementation

There is a need to address the existing disconnect among different policy domains, related to labour migration (e.g. employment, education and training). The ILO defines policy coherence on migration as "ensuring that policies and programmes regarding migration and other areas do not conflict with each other, either directly or intentionally" (ILO, 2010, p. 146). Furthermore, the ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration, 2006, emphasizes the importance of ensuring "coherence between labour migration, employment and other national policies, in recognition of the wide social and economic implications of labour migration and in order to promote decent work for all and full, productive and freely chosen employment" (Guideline 4.2).

Coherence in the field of migration policy may be described by a dual approach: (a) internal coherence between policies, impacting on different dimensions of migration, such as migration for employment, migration for development, etc.; and (b) external coherence between migration policies and policies of other relevant domains (which are affected by migration), in particular, employment and education/training policies (ILO, 2017a). Both approaches need up-to-date and reliable data, and information on future skills demands in origin and destination countries, to address brain drain and brain waste concerns, among others.

8.5 Enhanced capacity of institutions, tasked with skills anticipation and analyses

There is a need for enhanced capacity of institutions, involved in skills anticipation and analysis. Stakeholders should have a clear idea of their needs and benefits from skills anticipation, which may motivate their engagement, the setting up of priorities, and define the data collection technique, and analysis.

Skills anticipation has been frequently carried out on ad-hoc or project basis, which jeopardizes sustainability. That is why, having an institutionalised approach to skills anticipation is key for its successful integration into the policy making process, and for ensuring its replicability over time.

8.6 Skills anticipation and transition to formality

In many origin countries, skills acquisition could take place in the informal economy. There is a need to ensure that these skills are valorised and certified, in order to be recognised domestically and internationally. This will also allow to link skills, which have been informally

acquired, to current and future skills demands. Further, this will facilitate access to formal employment.

8.7 Enhanced international collaboration for addressing issues, linked to skills matching, development and recognition for migrant workers

The MRAs have a big potential for enhancing skills mobility, especially at regional level, provided that the mechanisms for the equivalence of the qualifications are simple and clear, and free mobility is effectively implemented. While at present, MRAs are used mainly for licensed professions, the agreements may be extended to other non-registered professions.

At bilateral level, BLMAs and MoUs, will be the appropriate tool for addressing issues linked to skills matching, development and recognition. Their implementation could be facilitated by pre-departure and post-arrival training provisions for migrant workers. The inclusion of specific skill clauses in BLMAs and MoUs could provide a pathway for skills recognition and matching, where other arrangements are not available.

Skills mobility partnerships may be more frequently used and extended to more countries and economic sectors, covering skills development and preventing brain drain. Even if the current approach is a balance of interest of both origin and destination countries, the focus seems to be more on the skills that are on demand in the destination countries and, therefore, more often concentrated on highly skilled workers. It would be important that the partnerships could be extended to low and medium skilled workers too, reflecting also the labour demand for these skill levels. In addition, mobility partnerships may cover higher number of migrant workers and more active involvement of the private sector.

Currently, skills mobility partnerships have been implemented mostly on pilot basis, and there is a need to translate these experiences in systemic solutions for labour migration governance. One key factor for identifying such solutions would be to link these partnerships with the existing policy priorities in employment and education, both in origin and destination countries.

8.8 Quality assured qualifications to facilitate skills portability

When the qualifications issued in different countries are certified as equivalent, the recognition is automatic. This can happen either through a regional agreement, such as the African and Malagasy Council for Higher Education (CAMES), which allows for diplomas issued in each of the 19 French-speaking Member States[69] to be recognized in the other countries, or through accords, signed by accreditation bodies. These types of arrangements for qualifications and skills portability could be extended to more parties and cover a higher number of occupational profiles. That is why, having functioning accreditation bodies could make the portability effective, even in absence of national and regional qualification frameworks. These accreditation bodies will carry out a complementary function, while qualification frameworks are in the process of development, and ensure the comparability of the occupational profiles. It order to have effective harmonization of quality assured qualifications, the recognition process should remain clear and simple to follow for all parties involved. Harmonization of skills and qualifications may take place within regions and across specific migration corridors. Quality assurance could be embedded into national education and training systems, and will cover both national and migrant workers.

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[69] https://www.lecames.org/pays-membres/

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