



International
Labour
Organization

► The role of social partners in skills development, recognition and matching for migrant workers

A contribution to the
Global Skills Partnership

Workshop paper

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A contribution to the Global Skills Partnership**

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List of abbreviations

ACT/EMP	ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities
ACTRAV	ILO Bureau for Workers' Activities
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ALMP	active labour market programme
ANETI	Tunisian Agency for Employment and Self-Employment
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ATCT	Agency for Technical Cooperation
BLMA	bilateral labour migration agreement
BWI	Building and Wood Workers International
CAMES	Conseil Africain et Malgache pour l'Enseignement Supérieur
CARICOM	Caribbean Community and Common Market
CEDEFOP	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
CGIL	Italian Confederation of Workers
CISL	Italian Confederation of Workers' Unions
CVQ	Caribbean Vocational Qualifications
EAC	East African Community
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EPC	European Professional Card
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
EU	European Union
GATS	General Agreement on Trade in Services
GCM	Global Compact on Migration
GEFONT	General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions
GFMD	Global Forum on Migration and Development
GIZ	German Corporation for International Cooperation

GSP	Global Skills Partnership on Migration
GUF	global union federation
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ILO	International Labour Organization/Office
IOE	International Organisation of Employers
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISCO	International Standard Classification of Occupations
ISC	Industry Skills Council
ITUC	International Trade Unions Confederation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRA	mutual recognition agreement
NQF	national qualification framework
<i>O&O-fondsen</i>	training and development funds
ONM	National Observatory for Migration
OTE	Office for Tunisians Abroad
PQF	Pacific Qualifications Framework
PSI	Public Services International
RPL	recognition of prior learning
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SSC	sector skill council
TITP	Technical Intern Training Programme
UGTT	Tunisian General Labour Union
UIL	Italian Union of Workers
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UTICA	Union Tunisienne de l'Industrie, du Commerce et de l'Artisanat
WTO	World Trade Organization

Introduction

This document was originally prepared as a background paper for the ILO Workshop on the role of social partners in skills development, recognition and matching for migrant workers: A contribution to the Global Skills Partnership. The objective of the event was to discuss the role of social partners in supporting skills partnerships and programmes for facilitating skills development, recognition and matching. The paper was intended to foster debate, which would feed into developing viable approaches and policy options on how to address these issues in concrete terms through the strong involvement of the social partners. It was also an opportunity to discuss how the Global Skills Partnership on Migration (GSP), forged among the ILO, IOM, UNESCO, IOE and ITUC, could support this process. Following the Workshop, the paper was updated, taking on board the discussions that took place during the event, as well as all comments and inputs received from the participants.

Guiding questions for discussion

How can social dialogue contribute to national skills development and cross-border platforms for dialogue on skills?

How can the ILO and the UN partners support employers' and workers' organizations in skills development, recognition and matching for migrant workers within the GSP?

How can the GSP be modelled to different regional perspectives and contexts?

Background

The establishment of labour migration policies are the realm of responsibility of government institutions such as ministries of labour, foreign affairs, interior, etc., depending on the specific national context and arrangements. The involvement of key actors in the real economy, namely employers' and workers' organizations, is essential for ensuring that these policies promote and protect the rights of migrant and local workers, that they respond to labour market needs, and that effective implementation is carried out. The role of social dialogue in designing and implementing labour migration policy is embedded in several ILO instruments, such as the Migrant Workers

(Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143),¹ the Migration for Employment Recommendation, 1949 (No. 86),² and the ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration.³

Employers' and workers' organizations are interested in having effective arrangements for skills development and recognition of migrant workers, given that this facilitates job matching, enhances productivity and reduces the risk of abuse and exploitation, including addressing brain drain. In origin countries, they can contribute to establishing a sound employment policy, taking on board labour demands and skills gaps, and attracting back and reintegrating return migrants into the national labour market. In both origin and destination countries, they can cooperate with governments on negotiations of bilateral labour migration agreements (BLMAs), to raise awareness on labour demands and needs for migrant labour at sector and national levels to fill existing skills gaps and to facilitate the fair recruitment of migrant workers.

Employers' organizations also engage at policy and strategy level, are involved in sector-level bodies, provide critical information on skill needs, contribute to the design of occupational, training and assessment standards, and to skills delivery through apprenticeships, traineeships, internships and other forms of work-based training. The type of employer engagement in skills development mechanisms and coordination bodies can vary from an advisory role (e.g. in Antigua and Barbuda, Mozambique), to being co-responsible for occupational standard development (e.g. in Bangladesh), playing a role in accreditation, certification and assessment (e.g. the island economies in the Pacific region), managing supply (e.g. Botswana, India, Jamaica, Kenya, South Africa). In some countries, skills bodies with strong employer engagement also influence skills demand in the workplace in addition to the former functions, such as through high-performance working practices (e.g. Singapore, Canada), often referred to as a demand-led approach to sector skills development (Powell, 2016; Chapman, 2018).

Workers' organizations organize both migrant and national workers, and promote compliance with national labour laws and safe and dignified conditions of work. They are involved at sectoral level. They can contribute, in origin countries, with provision of information on safe labour migration and pre-employment orientation, as well as organization of pre-departure training of migrant workers on technical competences, language and cultural aspects of countries of destination. Further, they can promote union-to-union cooperation between origin and destination countries to

¹ See in particular Articles 4, 7 and 12 (e).

² See in particular Part II, para. 4 (2); and Part VI, para. 19.

³ See in particular principles 6 and 7, which underline the role of social dialogue.

ensure enhanced protection of migrant workers' rights. In order to strengthen their international network, workers' organizations can sign agreements with sister organizations in destination countries, e.g. Moldavian and Ukrainian trade unions with the Italian General Confederation of Labour (CGIL), Labour Union (UIL) and Confederation of Workers' Trade Unions (CISL).⁴ Another example is the General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions (GEFONT) and Bahraini trade unions. In the destination countries, they can contribute to raising awareness on migrant workers' rights. According to the provisions of ILO Convention No. 143, the basic human rights of migrant workers should be respected, including the right to organize and freedom of association, regardless of their migration status. The right of freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining are fundamental principles and rights at work. The right to join and form trade unions/workers' organizations is enshrined in international human rights law (ICCPR and ICESCR, as well as the 1990 Migrant Workers Convention) and in the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), Article 2: "Workers and employers, without distinction whatsoever, shall have the right to establish and, subject only to the rules of the organisation concerned, to join organisations of their own choosing without previous authorisation."

Workers and their organizations can benefit through productivity gains and better working conditions through increasing the bargaining power of worker representatives in companies and sectors, as well as in collective bargaining and wage negotiations at the national level. Workers' organizations can also gain new members by providing relevant information, defending the rights of apprentices and workers and representing apprentices in negotiations. They also benefit and contribute to an improved learning culture and investment in skills by successfully demonstrating the effects of training (OIT/Cinterfor, 2017). In a number of countries, workers' organizations support skills development by advising on skills anticipation as well as on training standards, curricula, training programmes and assessment procedures; negotiating pay rates, paid time off and entitlement for training; supporting links with local training providers, including trade union training centres; and supporting recruitment to training (TUAC, 2016; ILO, 2019).

⁴ The ILO ACTRAV model agreement could be used for this purpose. The Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV) is the main link between the International Labour Office and the world of work through one of its constituents: workers' organizations (see <http://www.ilo.org/actrav/about/lang-en/index.htm>). The ACTRAV template is available at: <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/migpractice/docs/208/Model.pdf>.

The Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) is an informal, non-binding, voluntary and government-led process that looks for multilateral approaches to migration and development. The GFMD Business Mechanism was created as a platform for businesses to engage with governments and other stakeholders on migration issues, and to strengthen dialogue on skills mobility, matching and recognition, fair recruitment and decent work, etc.⁵ GFMD Civil Society, together with trade unions and other stakeholders, debates how to advance the agenda for the protection of migrants' rights and human development, and to formulate action plans and recommendations for governments to follow up on.⁶

Sound labour migration policy, based on social dialogue, is vital for the prevention of tensions with the working population and enhancing positive public attitudes towards labour migration. Building the capacity of employers' and workers' organizations and engaging them in labour migration policy formulation and discussions will contribute to the legitimacy of adopted labour migration policies and to building public confidence in them. It is a shared responsibility of all constituents to fight against stigmatization and false myths around labour migration. Capacity building is also key to ensuring that social partners play their effective role in supporting skills development and recognition, which can help reduce or prevent tensions.

Social partners in labour migration policy

The governance of labour migration requires coordination among the many different actors and the reconciliation of competing interests. There are various options among countries on the distribution of competencies on labour migration. In some countries there is a specialized ministry (for instance, the Ministry of Migration Policy in Greece, Ministry of Migration and Displacement in Iraq or Ministry of Expatriates Welfare and Foreign Employment in Bangladesh) or a specific body to govern the migration process (such as the State Migration Service in Ukraine, the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, or the National Body for the Placement and Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers).

The ILO Constitution promotes principles of social justice and protects persons in their working environment including those "employed in a country other than their own". In formulating national laws and policies concerning the protection of migrant

⁵ <https://gfmdbusinessmechanism.org/>.

⁶ <http://www.madenetwork.org/gfmd>.

workers, governments should be guided by the underlying principles of the Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97), the Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143), and their accompanying Recommendations Nos. 86 and 151, as well as the fundamental principles and rights at work.⁷ These instruments provide a robust framework for equality of treatment of migrant workers with nationals, and a rights-based approach to labour migration. The ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration mentioned above also contains guidance and examples of good practice.

An increasing number of countries have been developing specific labour migration policies, e.g. in accordance with regional commitments, such as in the South African Development Community (SADC). In other cases, labour migration policies may not exist at all, are part of broader policies on migration, or are included in other policies such as employment, social inclusion or poverty reduction, among others. Given the many different situations involved, labour migration policies are designed, implemented, monitored and evaluated in a variety of ways. This complexity depends on the country's public policy landscape, the role of labour market institutions, the presence of social dialogue and respect for international obligations (e.g. implementation of relevant ratified UN and ILO Conventions, including the instruments on migrant workers, and other agreements on labour migration). All the above factors condition the social partners' involvement in labour migration policy.

Migration policies, including policies relating to labour migration, have tended to be designed from a security perspective rather than from evidence of labour market needs or impacts (ILO, 2017a). In many countries, labour ministries and employers' and workers' organizations are often not provided a role to engage in migration dialogue processes, even in the specific case of labour migration. The participation of these stakeholders, however, is critical for bringing legitimacy and effectiveness to this policy field through a tripartite approach (see for example the case of Tunisia in box 1). However, the situation is not uniform, and in countries in South-East Asia and South Asia (such as Nepal), the Ministry of Labour is involved in labour migration issues.

A global mapping conducted by the ILO (Popova and Panzica, 2017) shows that policy coherence in areas linked to labour migration is often weak or absent. This could be attributed to the specific policy arrangements at the national or regional levels, and to the scarce involvement of the social partners. While policy coherence is important in all phases of the policy cycle,⁸ it is far more challenging to foster it during the process of implementation. While in many instances labour migration policy documents may

⁷ <https://www.ilo.org/global/standards/introduction-to-international-labour-standards/conventions-and-recommendations/lang--en/index.htm>.

⁸ The policy cycle consists of policy design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

be consistent with the international labour standards, the way they have been implemented may often not demonstrate effective measurable results.

Box 1. National migration policy in Tunisia

A National Strategy on Migration (NSM) was introduced in 2012 and revised in 2015 and 2017 through broad national consultations, including with the social partners. The strategy focuses on five objectives:

1. Strengthening the governance of migration management;
2. Protecting the rights and interests of Tunisian migrants and strengthening ties between them and Tunisia;
3. Strengthening the contribution of migration to socio-economic development at local, regional and national levels;
4. Promoting regular migration of Tunisians and preventing irregular migration;
5. Protecting the rights of migrants, including asylum seekers and refugees in Tunisia.

The implementation of the strategy is the responsibility of a) the Ministry of Social Affairs¹ with the dependent Office for Tunisians Abroad (OTE)² and the National Observatory for Migration (ONM)³; b) the Ministry of Development and International Cooperation with its implementing Agency for Technical Cooperation (ATCT);⁴ and c) the Ministry of Vocational Training and Employment⁵ with its implementing body the Agency for Employment and Self-Employment (ANETI) which includes an international employment department.

A National Employment Strategy, based upon a tripartite approach to governance involving the Tunisian General Labour Union (UGTT) and the Union Tunisienne de l'Industrie, du Commerce et de l'Artisanat (UTICA) is under advanced development with technical support from the ILO. The European Union has been funding capacity building for the tripartite constituents in order to strengthen the effective implementation of the migration policy and ensure a sustainable approach in the future, ensuring the active involvement of all relevant stakeholders.

Notes: ¹<http://www.social.tn/index.php?id=3&L=0>; ²<http://ote.nat.tn/>;

³<http://www.migration.net.tn/fr/>; ⁴<https://www.actc.tn/en/>; ⁵<http://www.emploi.gov.tn/fr>.

Source: Ministry of Social Affairs, NSM, July 2017.

Social partners in skills and lifelong learning policies

The involvement of social partners in the governance, design, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of skills policies and systems is of critical importance to ensure their effectiveness, relevance and quality.

Accordingly, the ILO Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 (No. 142) supports the involvement of social partners in the development of vocational guidance and training (Article 5). This can take the form of collective bargaining at national, regional, sector or company level; of consultation in decision-making on training, as part of companies' training plans and strategies, for example; and partnerships such as joint governance of training funds or other skills bodies, joint development of training programmes and curricula, joint management of resources, coordination with training institutes and policy development.

In many if not all countries, bargaining at sectoral and enterprise level is conducted by sectoral unions. In some cases there are also sectoral employer organizations that bargain. In many countries, it is also sectoral organizations and employers who are responsible for skills training, including apprenticeships and working with government skills training programmes. That is also the case at the international level where sector work is done by global union federations (GUF).

Box 2. Cooperation of workers' organizations in skills development

India and Nepal. In 2017, the Building and Wood Workers' International (BWI) in cooperation with the DGB-Bezirk Baden-Württemberg (DGB-BW) entered into a two-year project intervention: Skills Development and Employment Generation for Women Workers in Construction Industry in four Indian states (Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Bihar and Delhi). The programme targets women workers including many internal migrant women workers. To date 428 women construction workers have received skills training in masonry and painting under the DGB-BWI project.

Qatar. BWI has set up and delivered training for workers' representatives in the Workers Welfare Committee established by the QDVC (a private Qatari shareholding company). The objective of the training was to build the competencies of the workers' representatives to help them represent and effectively solve the complaints of their co-workers. The training consists of four modules including leadership development, communication skills, and basic awareness training on Qatari labour laws and other regulatory frameworks.

As part of the Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2016 with the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy which is responsible for the 2022 World Cup stadiums, similar trainings were implemented for workers' representatives in the Workers Welfare Forum.

Switzerland. UNIA¹ is part of a parity programme existing since 1985, where Portuguese and Spanish construction workers working in Switzerland can take courses while they are home during the months of January and February, when there is limited work. The workers are paid by the construction parity fund.²

In another initiative, the UNIA in cooperation with the Etablissement Cantonal d'Assurance et de Prévention (ECAP) has started professional training for Portuguese women in cleaning, sales and restaurant work. At the end the women obtain a Swiss vocational training certificate. These courses started in Vaud but now exist in other cantons as well.³ Again in collaboration with ECAP, UNIA has launched a programme in the catering sector, called Integresso.⁴ The objectives are to give untrained workers, including migrant workers, basic skills in the field.

Notes:¹ Unia is the largest trade union in Switzerland; see <https://www.unia.swiss/about-unia>.

²<http://www.baumeister.ch/fr/formation-carriere/formation-continue-et-cours/cours-de-formation-espagne-et-portugal>. ³ Etablissement Cantonal d'Assurance et de Prévention.

⁴<http://progreDir.ch/fr/contexte>. ⁵<https://www.integresso.ch/>.

The areas in which social partners can engage in formulating, applying and reviewing national human resources development, education training and lifelong learning policies are detailed in the ILO Human Resources Development Recommendation, 2004 (No. 195).⁹ These include contributing to the development of National Qualification Frameworks (NQFs) that are often used to initiate skills policy reforms in a range of key policy areas.

A qualifications framework is an instrument for the development, classification and recognition of skills, knowledge and competencies along a continuum of agreed levels (Tuck, 2007). Countries may implement an NQF for any one of several reasons: to lend coherence to a fragmented qualifications system; to correct the mismatch between qualifications and actual skills needed in the labour market; to heighten the credibility and quality of existing qualifications and training programmes; or for

⁹ See Part II: Development and implementation of education and training policies, para.5; Part IV: Development of competencies, para. 9; Part V: Training for decent work and social inclusion, para. 10; Part VII: Training providers, para. 13 on diversity of training provision; Part VIII: Career guidance and training support services, para. 15; Part IX: Research in human resources development, education, training and lifelong learning, para. 17.

purposes of recognition of prior learning (RPL),¹⁰ thereby facilitating integration into the formal education system.

Every country will have some existing framework within which all formal qualifications and levels of learning in an education and training system are positioned. This in essence is a qualifications framework and there is often no compelling reason for a country to launch a process of reform to introduce a new NQF. Regardless, while there might be different approaches in different countries and regions, both the education system and the labour market need to have qualifications based upon learning outcomes and quality assessment, which, de facto, implies the creation of national or sector-specific qualifications systems. Qualifications frameworks are complex concepts and national experiences vary, depending on the institutional settings, the capacities of stakeholders involved and the resources available. In order for skills matching and recognition to take place in labour migration, it does not require that NQFs exist in each of the countries along the migration corridors involved. The important element to have is the comparability of occupational profiles and skills levels (Werquin and Panzica, 2018).

In recent years, NQFs have been introduced for a wide range of reasons, often being seen as an instrument for harmonizing highly heterogeneous skills development systems, as well as a tool for facilitating educational mobility across the entire education and training system. Like only a few other approaches in the field of skills development, the NQF model has diffused at an enormous pace across the globe, particularly among transition and developing countries with currently more than 150 countries considering NQF models (CEDEFOP et al., 2017). However, implementation experiences have been varied.

The ILO advises first a careful assessment of NQF. ILO research (Allais, 2010, 2017) demonstrates mixed international experience on the impact of NQFs, particularly in relation to labour market impact. Other research highlighting the supply side benefits have identified the value of substantial and ongoing engagement with social partners during the process (see for example EC, 2018). However, national authorities often underestimate the cost and complexity of implementing comprehensive NQFs, and frequently the degree of employers' and workers' involvement in their development – an essential factor for the well-functioning of NQFs – is low. The ILO research shows that where social dialogue was not a strong feature

¹⁰ "A process of identifying, documenting, assessing and certifying formal, non-formal and/or informal learning against standards used in formal education and training. Thus, RPL provides an opportunity to people to acquire qualification or credits for a qualification or exemptions (of all or part of the curriculum, or even exemption of academic pre-requisite to enter a formal study programme) without going through a formal education or training programme" (ILO, 2018).

of the design, implementation and evaluation of an NQF, implementation challenges were more substantial (Allais, 2010).

Another key mechanism for social partners to become engaged in skills and lifelong learning policies is through engagement at the sectoral level. This is often facilitated by sectoral committees or councils which are established to provide a coordination mechanism for skills development in key economic sectors (see box 3). The industry coverage of these different bodies varies by country. Transversal councils are considered similar to sector councils, but cover trends and developments in two or more sectors (ECORYS, 2010). The role of sector skill bodies or councils (SSCs) is usually to make training more relevant to meet the needs of the labour market by contributing to skills needs analysis and the development of occupational or qualification standards or profiles. There is no unique model: in some cases they are bipartite, in others tripartite in yet others multi-partite. Whether confederal employers' and/or workers' organizations (or both) have responsibility for sectoral issues and skills training in countries should be taken into account. For example, social partners' representatives from sectors lead the sectoral committee structures in Bangladesh, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, New Zealand, Romania, South Africa and Spain. However, in this context, it should be noted that recent joint ILO research by EMP/SKILLS and ACT/EMP shows that the participation of employers' organizations in skills councils has been mixed (Chapman, forthcoming 2019). Hence, this "solution" is conditional on the support from governments, the roles and responsibilities these bodies are given, the capacity of the social partners to undertake these roles and the institutional arrangements in place around them.

Further, SSCs are often employer-led institutions with the aim of building employer-driven skills systems, so care and attention does need to be paid to ensure that they are a vehicle for real social dialogue and co-decision-making (see for example the UK model v. the Nordic plus model).

SSCs have evolved over time. In Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and other countries with traditional involvement of the social partners in skills development, SSCs no longer receive public funding as not-for-profit service organizations. This has resulted in the closure of the majority of these organizations and to the diversification of the sources of funding for their activities. In countries such as Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Senegal and Viet Nam, with limited experience in social partners' engagement in skills-related issues, SSCs are a growing reality and an important factor in national skills reform.

Box 3. Tripartite skills bodies and funds

A new ILO study on the SADC region, assessing the skills development levy systems in eight countries, notes that training funds can be financed by employer levies, public subsidies, donor financing or a combination of these sources. The majority of

training levies in the selected SADC countries (Botswana, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe) are based on payroll, averaging 1 per cent, with Tanzania being an exception at 4.5 per cent. The national revenue authority is responsible for levy collection in most countries. However, whilst the funds provide much-needed resources for skills development in their countries, many employers' and workers' organizations in the selected SADC countries perceive the training levy as just another form of taxation, especially among small firms, particularly where enterprises have only limited opportunities to receive grants for training from the levies they have paid (ILO, forthcoming).

In **South Africa**, there are currently 21 sector education and training authorities (SETAs) covering all economic sectors. They develop and periodically update sector skills plans (SSPs), aiming to ensure the correspondence between the skills on demand and delivered. They also provide the appropriate inputs to the skills recognition system.

A tripartite approach can also be seen in **Bangladesh**, where employers, workers and government representatives work together in Industry Skills Councils (ISCs) on skills development in each specific economic and labour market sector (ILO, 2013).

In **the Netherlands**, some industrial branches, trade unions and employers' organizations have combined their efforts through sectoral collective bargaining, and established training and development funds (*O&O-fondsen*) to support educational initiatives for employees. These funds are also used for the evaluation of employees' personal competences. There are 140 O&O funds relating to 116 different sectors which cover 5.9 million employees, accounting for some 85 per cent of Dutch employees. One of the main O&O funds is the Foundation for Education and Development Fund in vocational freight transport.

In **Italy** there is a fund established, based upon collective bargaining, that enables services to be offered to enterprises and workers. Currently there are similar funds for the construction, agriculture and tourism sectors. The funds, including vocational training centres (e.g. in Pomezia for the construction sector), are managed by both employers' and workers' organizations. Skills needs analysis and training for skills development and matching are conducted and financed by these funds. Regular migrant workers are eligible to participate in the training initiatives.

Sources: <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/observatories/emcc/erm/support-instrument/sector-skills-councils>.

<https://nationalgovernment.co.za/units/type/8/seta>.

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

Specific attention should be devoted to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) since they are a major employment creator for national and migrant workers, being responsible for more than two-thirds of all jobs worldwide.¹¹ Yet they have significantly lower levels of productivity than large enterprises, and widespread informal employment. Among other factors, this is linked to skill shortages at both managerial and workforce levels, and difficulties in identifying and communicating their skill needs to the education and training systems. The possibility to offer to SMEs skills assessment options will facilitate the integration of both national and migrant workers in the labour market, and ultimately reduce informality, social exclusion and public tension (ILO, 2015).

In terms of labour migration, in origin countries there is a need for a serious consideration of policy priorities, as well as their coherence and the timing of their introduction. The countries that have been most successful are those which have linked reforms to make their skills development system more inclusive as complementary to wider reform priorities related to the quality and relevance of training, and which have improved institutional capability in education and training across the board.

The role of social partners in the recognition of skills and qualifications

Matching of jobs and skills is an important factor shaping labour market outcomes, and analysing skills mismatches is key to informing labour market policy development, including labour migration and integration policies. For example, the level of skills mismatch is considerable in Europe: from 2002 to 2014, the average incidence of ISCO-based overeducation increased from 7.6 per cent to 11.0 per cent of the employed while the average incidence of ISCO-based undereducation dropped from 35.9 per cent to 25.9 per cent of the employed (Sparreboom and Tarvid, 2017, p. 7).

Further, in line with growing migrant and refugee populations, and the potential labour and skill shortages in some destination countries in Europe, the Americas, Asia and Africa, there is a search for mechanisms and policy options for effective skills recognition in the context of the recruitment of migrant workers at all skill levels. For the recognition of foreign qualifications and skills, detailed knowledge on education and training systems in both origin and destination countries is needed, including levels, content and quality; while tools for transparency and recognition of

¹¹ <https://www.ilo.org/infostories/en-GB/Stories/Employment/SMEs#intro>.

qualifications are becoming an important policy issue for both origin and destination countries. For the recognition of prior learning, countries are also starting to invest in systems that allow for validation, assessment and recognition of informally and non-formally acquired skills.

Recognition of qualifications and skills: Basic definitions

The recognition of qualifications and skills covers two main areas: academic and professional. Academic recognition allows for the continuation of studies at the appropriate level, as well as facilitating access to an appropriate job. Professional recognition provides the opportunity to practise professional skills acquired abroad.

Professional recognition covers both regulated and non-regulated professions. Regulated professions are usually governed by legal acts requiring registration, certification or licensing. Non-regulated professions do not imply any specific process, as the employer assesses qualifications and professional competency.

Prior learning covers both non-formal and informal learning. Non-formal learning usually takes place outside formal educational institutions (schools, colleges, training centres and universities) and does not lead to any nationally recognized certificates. Informal learning, on the other hand, is part of everyday life, taking place at the workplace, in the family or community, and is not necessarily intentional. Skills acquired informally or non-formally can, however, be highly valuable for professional competence. This type of learning could be of particular value to return migrant workers who have acquired new skills abroad but have no certificate to facilitate their labour market reintegration when back home.

Skills recognition may be conducted in a number of ways, usually by measuring skills against agreed occupational standards. The following factors are key to implementing effective skills recognition (see Hofmann and Kirsch, 2020, forthcoming):

- Needs assessment
- Regulatory framework, hence the presence of qualifications against which the competences of both female and male migrant workers can be assessed and a skill certificate issued
- Financing, usually through shared responsibility
- Institutional arrangements, roles, responsibilities and capacities of institutions involved
- Quality assurance
- Social partner involvement at all stages of the process

Box 4. Women and skills in the ASEAN Community

Approximately 65 per cent of women workers are engaged in vulnerable employment. Women migrant workers from Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Viet Nam are more likely to work in low-skilled employment due to their limited access to vocational training, primary education, literacy training, skill recognition, and financial and information resources.

Women migrant workers within the ASEAN region are employed in domestic work, agriculture, export-oriented manufacturing, construction, entertainment, and hospitality. In **Indonesia**, enrolment for girls in lower secondary school has been encouraged through measures such as scholarships, food programmes and transportation. The country has also introduced a programme for skills development for returning women migrant workers. The **Republic of Korea** supports the return of women migrant workers by providing access to job opportunities and facilitating skills training and business training to enhance the chances of employment.

Sources: ADB and ILO, 2014; ILO and ADB, 2011; ILO and UN Women, 2015; UN Women, 2013. See also Happy Return Program, at: https://www.eps.go.kr/en/supp/supp_02.jsp.

Mechanisms for bilateral and multilateral cooperation

Skills recognition at country level can be facilitated by instruments available at international level or negotiated at bilateral, regional, or multilateral levels.

At international level the following instruments exist:

- *ILO Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143)*. Article 14(b) specifically refers to the recognition of occupational qualifications acquired abroad, including certificates and diplomas.¹²
- *ILO Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 (No. 142)*, which promotes the adoption and development of “comprehensive and co-ordinated policies and programmes of vocational guidance and vocational training, closely linked with employment, in particular through public employment services”.¹³

¹² https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C143.

¹³ https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C142.

- *ILO Human Resources Development Recommendation, 2004 (No. 195)*. Part VI, paragraph 12 indicates that “Special provisions should be designed to ensure recognition and certification of skills and qualifications for migrant workers.”¹⁴
- *UNESCO Conventions*.¹⁵ Under the aegis of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), five regional Conventions and one inter-regional convention for recognition of higher education studies and qualifications have been adopted. Under the Council of Europe/UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region, 1997¹⁶ national information centres were established as part of the European Network of Information Centres (ENIC) on academic mobility and recognition.¹⁷ To date, UNESCO is working on the establishment of a Global Convention on the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications.¹⁸
- *WTO GATS Mode 4*.¹⁹ The General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) of the World Trade Organization (WTO) covers, among other topics, the temporary movement of service providers. This implies the ability to have access to the labour markets of other countries, thus requiring recognition of qualifications. The GATS encourages bilateral or multilateral agreements on qualification recognition. Any new recognition agreements should be notified to the WTO Council on Trade in Services, so that other Member States can negotiate similar arrangements.

Social partners are also engaged in tripartite processes at the sub-regional level such as the SADC²⁰ or ECOWAS,²¹ and this can provide opportunities for engagement in dialogue around skills. Regional Economic Communities have also established legal frameworks that can facilitate skills portability among participating countries, either

¹⁴ https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312533.

¹⁵ http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.phpURL_ID=22124&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html.

¹⁶ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/165>

¹⁷ <http://www.enic-naric.net/>.

¹⁸ <https://en.unesco.org/themes/higher-education/recognition-qualifications/global-convention>.

¹⁹ http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/serv_e/gatsintr_e.htm.

²⁰ The Southern African Development Community (SADC) has 15 Member States: Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

²¹ The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has 15 Member States (eight French-speaking, five English-speaking and two Portuguese-speaking): Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d’Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Senegal and Togo.

recognizing qualifications or/and aligning them with agreed international standards, e.g. the European Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), etc. A list of examples of regional mechanisms is included in the Annex.

Mutual recognition agreements

A mutual recognition agreement (MRA) is an agreement between two or more countries to consider qualifications issued by one country as being valid in the other(s). In the ASEAN countries,²² an MRA exists for eight professional categories: engineers, nurses, surveying service providers, architects, accounting service providers, medical practitioners, dental practitioners and tourism professionals. The first seven relate to professions that are regulated in most countries. Implementation of mutual recognition agreements has not been without its challenges, mainly because of different education and testing requirements throughout the region (ADB and ILO, 2014). Further, in the ASEAN context, the main problem for skills recognition at the job-matching stage remains the separation between skills policies and admission policies (and recruitment practices): for example, MRAs are not backed by mobility systems, and admission policies often do not cover all skills profiles, but only the low-skilled (general workers and domestic workers) and high-skilled (expatriates).

In the Eastern African Community (EAC) countries,²³ MRAs exist for three professions (accountants, architects and engineers), and there are plans to extend the agreement to other professions such as veterinary services, land surveyors, pharmacists and advocates.

The EU Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications²⁴ covers all regulated professions, except those for which the recognition of professional qualifications is governed by specific legal provisions (e.g. seafarers, statutory auditors, insurance intermediaries, air traffic controllers, etc.). The list of regulated professions in each EU country²⁵ is included in the regulated professions database at

²² Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam.

²³ Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda.

²⁴ The Directive was amended by Directive 2013/55/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 November 2013. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=celex%3A32013L0055>.

²⁵ <https://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/regprof/index.cfm?action=regprofs>.

the website of the EU Single Market. As part of the EU procedures for designing new or updating existing directives, the social partners are consulted.²⁶

Pursuant to the Professional Qualifications Directive, on 24 June 2015 the European Commission adopted the Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/983 on the procedure for issuance of the European Professional Card (EPC).²⁷ This electronic procedure allows nurses responsible for general care, pharmacists, physiotherapists, real estate agents and mountain guides to apply online for recognition of their qualifications in other EU countries. In the future, this system may be extended to other professions.

Bilateral labour migration agreements

Bilateral labour migration agreements (BLMAs)²⁸ are increasingly used to govern the labour migration process, to protect the rights of migrant workers and to ensure adequate skills and job matching. BLMAs require careful management to guarantee their effective implementation – including the recruitment, testing and certification of migrant workers, and timely data and information sharing between countries of origin and destination. For many of these agreements, implementation and monitoring mechanisms tend to be ineffective, often focusing more on recruitment procedures and less on welfare and protection. However, as can be seen from table 1, BLMAs rarely cover skills-related issues (ILO and IOM, 2019). Here, it should be noted that a number

²⁶ Article 154 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) embodies the principle of social subsidiarity, and envisages that the European social partners be consulted on any new social European initiative. This process enables the European social partners to directly influence the drafting of social proposals.

²⁷ https://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/work/professional-qualifications/european-professional-card/index_en.htm.

²⁸ BLMA is an overarching term which covers all types of agreements between two countries regulating labour migration. More specifically (see ILO, 2017a) this term is used to cover the following types of agreements:

- a. Bilateral labour agreements which create legally binding rights and obligations, governed by international law and are usually more specific and action-oriented.
- b. Memoranda of Understanding, non-binding agreements, which set out a broad framework of cooperation to address common concerns.
- c. Other agreements, which can include specific bilateral agreements between government ministries or agencies in destination and origin countries, dealing with different aspects of labour migration.
- d. Framework agreements or cooperation agreements that include labour migration along with other migration topics such as irregular migration, readmission, and migration and development are also included in BLMAs.

of countries prefer MoUs over BLMAs since they allow for a more flexible approach, or are the only viable solution for an agreement.

Table 1. Including and effectively implementing skills recognition in bilateral or regional labour agreements

Good practice description	Africa No. of agreements	% of total (n=32)	Asia No. of agreements	% of total (n=65)	Europe and America No. of agreements	% of total (n=47)	Total No. of agreements	% of total (n=147)
Provision for recognition of skills and qualifications in the destination country	0	0	6	9	4	9	10	7

Source: Wickramasekara, 2015, p. 57.

There is no need for the BLMA to be too detailed or overly prescriptive when it comes to skills recognition issues; it depends on the level of development of the national qualification systems. It is sufficient to establish a link with the existing skills arrangements under the respective qualification systems. This should apply also for the access of migrant workers to training opportunities addressing skill gaps identified in the recognition process, according to the destination country's requirements.

ILO research demonstrates that social dialogue is often not present during the design phases of a BLMA (Wickramasekara, 2015; Popova and Panzica, 2019). Preparatory phases often do not include thorough consultations with key stakeholders, in particular the social partners, nor preliminary analyses of potential labour market needs and implications. Second, while political will is often present, the negotiation phase illustrates a lack of focus on important features of the BLMA's content, such as recruitment procedures, specific measures for protection of migrant workers, gender equality (see box 5), skill recognition mechanisms and matching, among others.

Box 5. Gender dimension in the BLMAs

Women migrant workers often face multiple forms of discrimination and vulnerability. During every stage of their migration experience, they tend to be more exposed to human and labour rights violations compared to their male counterparts.

Labour markets and occupations in countries of origin and destination remain largely segregated by sex, with fewer job choices for women as compared to men. Women are typically concentrated in a few low-paid feminized jobs. For example,

domestic and care work are performed within the private sphere of the home where abuse and poor labour practices are hidden and the support of peers is largely unavailable. A key source of vulnerability of women migrant workers is that their jobs are informal and they often lack labour and social protection.

The objective of gender equality and non-discrimination should be included in a BLMA. Guideline 4.5 of the ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration calls on States to ensure that “labour migration policies are gender-sensitive and address the problems and particular abuses women often face in the migration process”.

Good practices on gender issues in BLMAs (No. of agreements)

Description	Africa	Asia	Europe & Americas
Specific reference to equal treatment of migrant workers, non-discrimination and/or protection of migrant rights	17	14	36
Provisions to protect migrant workers from recruitment malpractices at both origin and destination	30	44	16
Address gender concerns and concerns of vulnerable migrant workers, particularly those not covered by labour laws in destination countries	0	3	0

Source: Wickramasekara, 2015.

Sources: ILO, 2016; Popova and Panzica, 2019.

For the successful implementation of a BLMA, the ILO findings suggest a more proactive involvement for social partners that should be coordinated by governments. Public employment services should be given a mandate to implement such agreements, as well as ensure a better linkage of private employment agencies with organizations in the countries of destination for offering adequate skill matching and recognition (ILO and IOM, 2019).

One type of bilateral initiative is the work training programme providing employment opportunities for foreign nationals in Japan (see box 6). It is managed by the Japan International Training Cooperation Organization (JITCO).²⁹

Box 6. Technical Intern Training Programme (TITP), India-Japan

As part of the Technical Intern Training Programme (TITP), the Governments of India and Japan signed a Memorandum of Cooperation on 17 October 2017. The TITP programme is an on-the-job-training programme providing employer

²⁹ <https://www.jitco.or.jp/en/regulation/index.html>.

engagement opportunities spread over a variety of occupations/trades for foreign nationals in Japan.

Under the programme selected candidates undergo three to five years of on-the-job training, after which they are required to return to their home countries and utilize the skills acquired by them in Japan. 112 candidates from India have already started the programme in Japan in diverse job categories such as machine maintenance work, electrical and electronic assembly, machining centre operation, metal press operation, plastic moulding, automobile repair and maintenance, among others.

Presently, India is competing with other nations participating in the TITP, including Indonesia, the Philippines and Viet Nam, all of which have long experience as part of the TITP.

According to ILO research findings (Wickramasekara, 2015), joint monitoring committees could be an effective tool for BLMA monitoring and evaluation. However, in practice, the BLMAs often do not clearly indicate which party should initiate the monitoring process and who will cover the expenses for it. This translates into no party feeling responsible for starting the monitoring. The ILO recommendation is to establish joint tripartite committees to provide continuous guidance and reflect the real labour market situation and needs on the ground, and to effectively cover protection issues.

When the joint monitoring committee involves other stakeholders such as civil society organizations in addition to the signatory parties, the responsibility for monitoring is even further diffused. In order to enhance the accountability of these partners, they should be involved from the very beginning of the BLMA process; this applies also to the social partners. Their involvement from the very beginning will also enhance the legitimacy of the BLMA.

Brain drain vs. brain gain

Brain drain has an important impact on the sustainable development of origin countries. It depends on the conditions of work, quality of the education and training systems, the sectors and occupations concerned, and the characteristics of migration (temporary, permanent or circular) (Lowell and Findlay, 2002). The ILO research points out that one of the pragmatic strategies to address the issue of brain drain is based on the concept of circulation of skills, which requires improved cooperation between origin and destination countries, and could benefit both (Wickramasekara, 2003). For instance, the Health Services Workers Union (HSWU) of Ghana-TUC has included a “reintegration clause” in their collective agreement in order for nurses to be able to

come back to their post after a leave of absence due to temporary migration. The effective implementation of such a clause could be crucial for addressing brain drain in key sectors such as health.

It should be noted that the migration of not only high-skilled but also low- and medium-skilled workers can result in labour market imbalances. The lack of proper skills matching can contribute to increasing informality in the labour market since the unrecognized demand for low- and medium-skilled jobs, at times, can end up being partially filled by irregular migrant workers.

Skill passports

Skill passports have been a growing phenomenon. It should be noted that they are useful to communicate the skills possessed in a context of highly homogeneous education and training systems, e.g. the EU. They explain to which level of the European Qualification Framework (EQF) the skills correspond, regardless of how they have been acquired and where. It should also be acknowledged that there are different skill passports, e.g. the Ontario skill passport,³⁰ the Australia Electricity Supply Industry skill passport,³¹ among others. Other countries such as Sri Lanka plan to introduce this concept.

The UNESCO Qualifications Passport is specifically designed to support refugees and vulnerable migrants, applying for higher education. It is a standardized document describing the highest achieved qualification(s), subject field, other relevant qualifications, as well as relevant job experience and language proficiency (in cases where it is possible to substantiate it and it might have relevance). It has a validity of five years from the date of issue. The main scope of the passport is to provide access and opportunities for refugees and vulnerable migrants to improve their language skills and carry out further studies, which could facilitate their labour market entry or enable them to access formal qualification/skill recognition.³²

Box 7. Bilateral labour migration agreement, Germany–Philippines

A bilateral agreement with a strong skills focus concerns the Programme “Sustainable recruitment of nurses (Triple Win)”, funded by Germany, aimed at the recruitment of nurses from Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Philippines, Serbia and

³⁰ <http://www.skills.edu.gov.on.ca/OSP2Web/EDU/Welcome.xhtml>.

³¹ <http://www.esipassport.com.au/>.

³² <https://en.unesco.org/news/what-you-need-know-about-unesco-qualifications-passport-refugees-and-vulnerable-migrants>.

Tunisia. Expert estimates foresee that the nursing sector in Germany will need 150,000 new nurses by 2025. By contrast, in the participating origin countries there is a surplus of qualified nurses that cannot be absorbed by the local labour markets, which could result in their unemployment or underemployment. Thus, addressing to some extent brain drain concerns, the agreement includes a provision on human resources development with a view to exploring projects to sustain and promote human resource development in the Philippines. Moreover, recruitment is implemented with the support of the public employment agencies in respective origin countries. It is important to note that the agreement between the Philippines and Germany includes the recognition and participation of trade unions, i.e. Public Services International (PSI) unions, in implementing and monitoring the agreement. The German union Ver.di and the Philippine union PSLINK are part of the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) that meets once a year, alternating between Germany and the Philippines, to monitor the implementation of the agreement. In light of the continuing growth in health sector employment and of international recruitment driven by the global shortage of health workers, PSI has commissioned a policy study on the issue of global skills partnerships in the health sector (Pas and Mans, 2018). A strong involvement of social partners in any discussion of skills partnership will help ensure social protection, labour rights and equitable health systems development for both origin and destination countries.

Sources: <https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/41533.html>; https://refugeesmigrants.un.org › files › psi_ts3_p3; https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo-dhaka/documents/publication/wcms_683740.pdf.
<https://publicservices.international/>.

Financing

Recognition of foreign qualifications, validation of prior learning and skills development are key to migrant workers' integration in the labour market, yet their cost implications are often overlooked, or not considered at all. To address this deficiency, there could be different scenarios:

- a. Anticipating the recognition process can be carried out through mechanisms such as pre-departure training organized in the origin countries on occupational profiles in demand in the destination countries. Another possibility is to design curricula leading to certification valid in both origin and destination countries.

Some examples are offered by the Training Centre "Don Bosco" in Cairo, which issues competence certificates valid in both Egypt and Italy. Another example is offered by the German-Moroccan educational partnership set up in

2011 in the context of the “Deauville Partnership”. This project is targeted at integrating the skills of young Moroccans trained in the hotel/restaurant/catering or food service industry (HORECA) sectors with working experience in Germany. The professional apprenticeship carried out in German companies ensures that the competences of the workers concerned are fully recognized in both origin and destination countries. The Moroccan employment agency ANAPEC (*Agence Nationale de Promotion de l'Emploi et des Competences*) is in charge of pre-selecting the candidates, in cooperation with the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ).

The same logic is present in a similar initiative put in place by the Italian Government aimed at aligning the skills possessed by migrant workers with Italian labour market requirements through specific training experience within Italian enterprises. Foreign citizens who have started training in their country of origin may participate in such initiatives in Italy, thereby gaining practical experience. The visa for study-related purposes in this case provides the migrant with the opportunity of being employed during the period of practical training. The sponsors are local authorities (regions and provinces), which are responsible for providing a detailed training plan for each individual. The apprenticeship has to last between three and 12 months.

Similarly, the Italian Government is providing for the organization of training courses in the countries of origin of potential migrants. The courses are to include Italian language, information on the Italian labour market, and specific vocational training on skills for which migrants might be hired in Italy. The skills on which potential migrants will be trained are identified by the main promoters, which are: employers' and workers' organizations, public and international institutions, and NGOs that have been operating for at least three years in the area 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).

By anticipating the recognition and training in the origin country, with financial support from or cost-sharing with the destination country, skills-related issues are already addressed and paid for before departure. Thus, additional financial resources are not required upon arrival and migrant workers are ready to start their new jobs, using their skills or qualifications.

- b. Job matching is one of the main functions of the public employment services (PES). In cases where skill supply and demand are not aligned, PES can offer support through specific active labour market programmes (ALMP) (see ILO, 2017b). In some countries, private employment services do play important roles for labour migration, which needs to be recognised. Moreover, online job

vacancy platforms are becoming increasingly important tools for job matching, in certain cases complementing traditional PES institutions.

Although PES are not directly involved in skills recognition, they can play an active role in supporting migrant workers, for example with self-assessment of their competences, identification of gaps and suggesting the training courses necessary for filling these gaps, as well as with advice about procedures for the tests and the issue of certification (see box 4).

In general, these services should be designed for all workers, but could include migrant workers, if eligible for such measures, especially if this has been negotiated through a BLMA. PES could also be tasked with supporting return migrant workers in their reinsertion in the labour market, making use of the new skills acquired while abroad (recognition of foreign qualifications or of prior learning), or, as appropriate, offering them re-skilling or skills upgrading. The decision to provide access to ALMPs to migrant workers should either be part of international obligations (bilateral or multi-lateral) or a political decision at the national level to invest in labour market integration. Such approach could be particularly advantageous for returning skilled migrant workers, e.g. health workers, in order to support their re-employment and the reintegration of their skills back into the public health services.

Box 8. Support for skills recognition and training in Germany

In Germany, the unemployed and jobseekers may receive financial support from the PES. This applies both to skills recognition (especially in the case of recognition of foreign qualifications) and to subsequent training, should this be recommended. The Government also supports young people from other EU Member States who want to have their TVET skills recognized in Germany. The funding covers the cost of a recognition procedure (up to €1,000, including translations and certifications), and the financing of German language courses in both the home country and Germany.

Source: The Recognition Act website, available at: <http://www.anerkennung-in-deutschland.de/html/de/faq.php>.

- c. Special funds could be available to enterprises in the countries of destination for skills development and other services for migrant workers. In some cases, these funds are created through collective bargaining and the resources are jointly managed by workers and employers.

Employers also often contribute to the financing of skills and lifelong learning in a country. This takes place through tax contributions and/or training funds usually based on payroll levies. Management of these funds is also often tripartite (Ziderman, 2018). Different types of public private partnerships also

facilitate the sharing of investments in training at local level, for example through contributions to existing training providers, or the establishment of new training providers, and the provision of training at the workplace.

Conclusion

Given the growing importance of labour migration and mobility to sustainable economic development in countries of both origin and destination, labour ministries in collaboration with other relevant government agencies, workers' and employers' organizations can and should play a larger role in labour migration, skills and lifelong learning policy reforms. They are crucial not only to identifying labour market needs and trends, but to ensuring productivity, inclusive economic growth and improved conditions of work. Bringing them into labour migration policy dialogue from the beginning, and supporting them to enhance their capacity to actively engage in it, will enable more effective and durable policy design, legitimacy and sustainability, and a wider set of possible policy solutions. Their participation can also help to ease public tensions related to labour migration. Therefore, the ILO together with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Employers Organization (IOE), and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) are joining forces to forge a Global Skills Partnership. The ILO is ready to play its role in fostering broader social dialogue on these issues. Skills partnerships should cover both national and international labour markets, and should be balanced and mutually beneficial for both origin and destination countries, and for the migrant workers themselves. Ensuring sustainability and equity in human resources for all countries, in all sectors involved, should be a priority for the Skills Partnership.

ANNEX I: Examples of regional mechanisms to facilitate mutual skills recognition

Bologna Process. The Bologna Declaration was signed in June 1999, aimed at harmonizing degree structures and quality assurance procedures across higher education systems, forming the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). Currently, the membership has grown beyond the geographic borders of Europe to include a total of 46 nations.³³

Although further expansion of the EHEA is unlikely in the near future, cooperation beyond borders is now very much part of the Bologna agenda. One of the examples of the impact Bologna is having beyond the borders of the EHEA is in the French-speaking countries of the Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia). With higher education modelled on the French system, all three countries are adapting their higher education systems to the Bologna-inspired French qualifications framework.

Copenhagen Process. The Copenhagen Declaration was signed in 2002 to enhance cooperation in European vocational education and training. Under the Declaration, the Member States, the European Economic Area (EEA) countries, the social partners and the European Commission have been cooperating on several specific instruments, including agreements on standards, guidance and validation, quality assurance mechanisms and the development of a European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET), a system of accumulation and transfer of credits designed for vocational education and training in Europe. The geographical coverage of the Copenhagen Process includes the EU candidate countries (the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Turkey).³⁴

European Qualifications Framework (EQF).³⁵ The EQF is a common European reference framework which links countries' qualifications systems together, acting as a translation tool to make qualifications more transparent. It has two principal aims: to promote mobility between countries and to facilitate lifelong learning. The EQF

³³ See http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/bologna/bologna_en.html. Member States of the Bologna Process include Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Holy See, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Malta, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and United Kingdom.

³⁴ See http://ec.europa.eu/education/copenhagen/index_en.html.

³⁵ See http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/eqf/index_en.html.

describes the expected results of learning as “learning outcomes”, i.e., what a person knows, understands and is able to do, rather than time spent studying.

The EQF is intended to facilitate comparison of qualifications and qualification levels among the European countries (course certificates, professional certificates, etc.) in order to promote geographical and labour market mobility as well as lifelong learning. It is divided into eight reference levels, where level one corresponds to completion of obligatory school and level eight to a PhD degree. As such, it will also help reduce the barriers between different educational, training and learning systems at national or sector level.

The EQF is a qualifications and not a competences framework; it is therefore not intended for use in the classification of individual competences. Other tools exist for competences, such those included in the European Skills Passport.³⁶ Also known as Europass, the European Skills Passport was designed to help citizens communicate their skills and qualifications effectively and employers understand the skills and qualifications of the workforce; and education and training authorities to define the content of curricula.

European Council Recommendation of 20 December 2012 on the validation of non-formal and informal learning (2012/C 398/01). In order to enhance the employability and mobility of workers, the Recommendation proposed that Member States adopt by 2018 appropriate measures for the validation of knowledge, skills and competences acquired through non-formal and informal learning.³⁷ In order to provide Member States and stakeholders with practical advice on the implementation of the Recommendation, the *European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning* have been issued in several languages (see for example CEDEFOP, 2015).

ASEAN Qualification Framework. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was established on 8 August 1967, while the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), was created in 2015 (see ASEAN, 2015). The ASEAN has developed the ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework (AQRF), which will enable qualifications to be compared across Member States while providing a coherent benchmark for current national qualifications frameworks, supporting and enhancing each country’s NQF or system (these are currently at varying levels of development, scope and implementation). The AQRF has been designed in such a way as to establish linkages with other regional and international qualifications systems in the future. However, it should be noted that the ASEAN system is not backed by a mobility arrangement.

³⁶ <https://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/documents/european-skills-passport>

³⁷ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32012H1222%2801%29>.

Admission is employer-led, and requires a job offer and work visa processed by the employer.

Caribbean Vocational Qualifications (CVQ). The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) was established by the Treaty of Chaguaramas on 1 August 1973. It currently has 15 Member States³⁸ and five Associate Members.³⁹ The creation in 2008 of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy brought to light the need to facilitate labour mobility and skills matching. Priority was given to developing coordinated TVET systems by adopting specific coordination and reference mechanisms. CARICOM entrusted the development of those tools to the Caribbean Association of National Training Agencies.

Since its establishment in 2003, the Association's key objective has been to implement and manage a regional training and certification system, called the Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ), to ensure standard and uniform delivery of competence-based TVET within the Single Market and Economy. The CVQ system follows the competence-based education and training approach, which consists of workplace-oriented and performance-based modules or units of competence that can be accumulated to obtain a vocational qualification.

CAMES Diploma Recognition and Equivalency Program (PRED). The African and Malagasy Council for Higher Education (CAMES) came into being in 1972 through the Lomé Convention. Diplomas issued in each of the 19 Member States are recognized through the PRED, which also focuses on quality assurance.⁴⁰

Pacific Qualifications Framework (PQF). The 15 countries of the Pacific Island Forum⁴¹ have adopted the Pacific Qualifications Framework (PQF), a transposition device that is similar, in terms of functionality, to the EQF, in order to facilitate the comparability and recognition of Pacific qualifications in terms of other regional and international qualifications systems.

³⁸ Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

³⁹ Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Turks and Caicos Islands.

⁴⁰ See <https://www.lecomes.org/> and [pred/comes/online](https://www.pred/comes/online). Member States: Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal and Togo.

⁴¹ Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Marshall Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu, and Tokelau.

The PQF has ten levels. Each level is defined by generic outcome descriptors that reflect the degree of complexity of knowledge and skills, application and autonomy. The generic level descriptors are used broadly to determine the outcomes of a qualification or a component thereof (see SPC, 2011).

ANNEX II: List of participants of the workshop

**Workshop on the role of social partners
in skills development, recognition and matching for migrant workers:
A contribution to the Global Skills Partnership
28 November 2019**

	Name	Organization
1	Manuela Tomei	ILO WORKQUALITY
2	Sangheon Lee	ILO EMPLOYMENT
3	Michelle Leighton	ILO MIGRANT
4	Srinivas B Reddy	ILO SKILLS
5	Ryszard Cholewinski	ILO Beirut
6	Francesco Carella	ILO San José
7	Nilim Baruah	ILO Bangkok
8	Theodoor Sparreboom	ILO Pretoria
9	Max Tunon	ILO Doha
10	Natalia Popova	ILO MIGRANT
11	Iskandar Kholov	ILO MIGRANT
12	Christine Hofmann	ILO SKILLS
13	Henri Ebelin	ILO SKILLS
14	Victor Hugo Ricco	ILO ACTRAV
15	Michael Watt	ILO ACTRAV
16	Pelin Sekerler Richiardi	ILO RESEARCH
17	Vassiliy Yuzhanin	IOM
18	Sophie Auger	IOM
19	Katerina Ananiadou	UNESCO - Skype
20	Gayatri KANTH	IOE
21	Stéphanie Winet	IOE
22	Kanishka Weerasinghe	Employers Federation of Ceylon, Sri Lanka - Skype
23	Enrique de Cuba	ATIA, Aruba - Skype
24	Steven Mac Andrew	Surinam Trade and Industry Association
25	El Sayed Torky	Federation of Egyptian Industries
26	Carolina Mejía Micolta	Asociación Nacional de Empresarios de Colombia - Skype
27	Raquel Gonzalez	ITUC
28	Genevieve Gencianos	PSI
29	Alex Hogback	UNI
30	Jin Sook Lee	BWI

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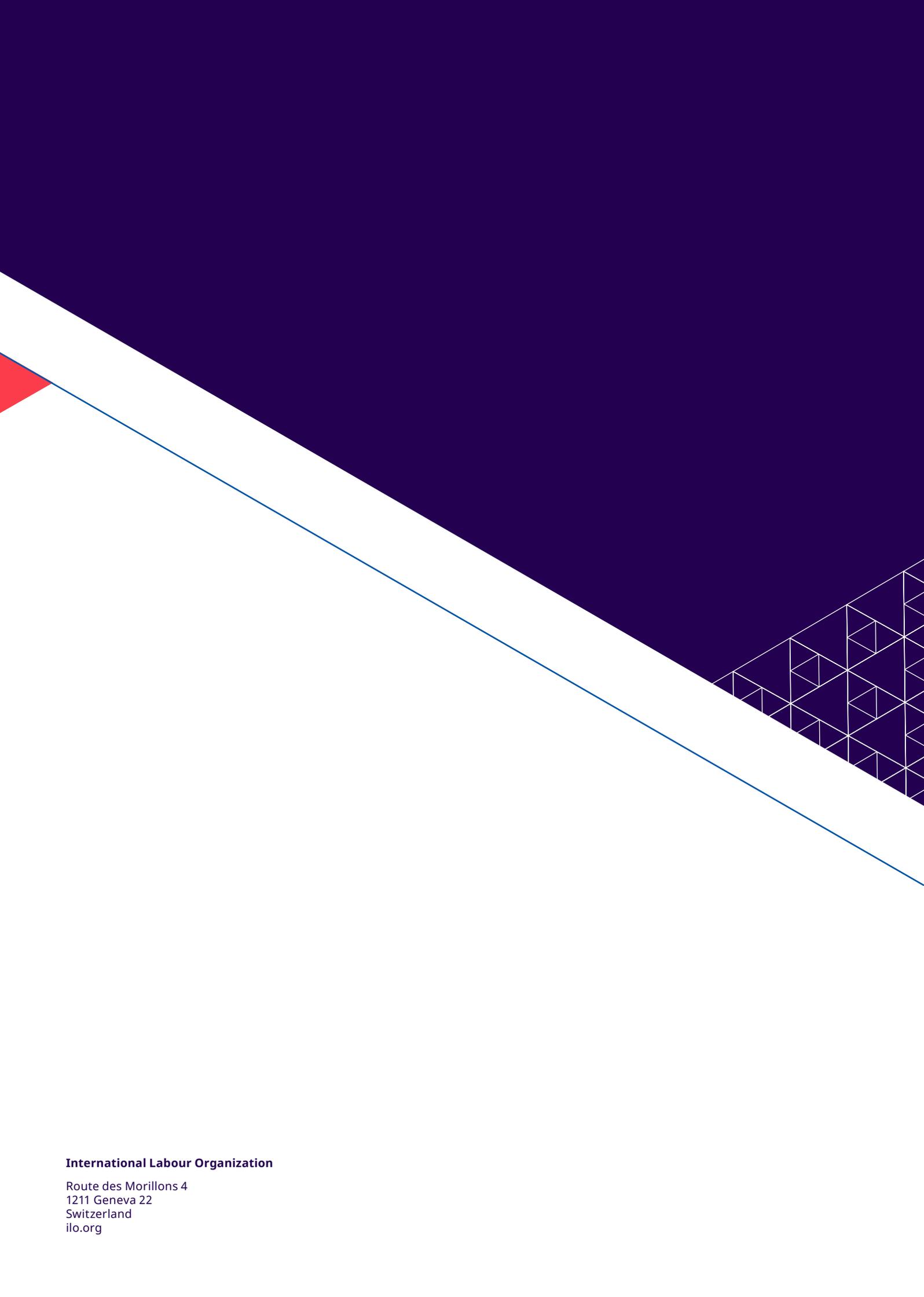
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International Labour Organization

Route des Morillons 4
1211 Geneva 22
Switzerland
ilo.org