

Background Paper¹

Roundtable 3: Migration and Development: Finding strategies beyond the State

Roundtable Session 3.1

Raising the Global Talent Pool – Harnessing the Potential of the Private Sector for Global Skills Partnerships

The objective of this paper is to share positive examples and experiences of skills development and skill mobility as well as identifying aspects of initiatives that may be suitable for possible designs of global skill partnerships.

1. Introduction

A. Skills development and mobility in the global economy (benefits and challenges)

The mobility of skilled persons is an important feature of the global economy and makes a significant contribution to the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. Building on existing, and developing new opportunities, for safe, regular, and orderly migration – whether temporary, cyclical or permanent – can further raise the global talent pool, bringing benefits to source and host countries. As can leveraging the potential of the private sector to strengthen collaboration and develop new ways to forge partnerships with and between governments.

For countries of origin, skilled workers' emigration can bring in new skills, knowledge, culture, and experience from abroad ("brain gain" upon migrants' permanent, temporary or virtual return), as well as remittances, which can potentially have long-term positive development impacts. On the other hand, skilled emigration can reduce the number of skilled workers in the country of origin, affecting productivity and the country's economic growth. For destination countries, skilled workers

What is a global skills partnership? It is the process by which destination countries contribute to skills creation among potential migrants at the origin, whereby destinations can create the skills they need while building, rather than reducing, skills at the origin.
(Clemens, M. et al. 2014)

Note that skills acquisition and training can also happen in destination countries.

¹ This paper has been elaborated by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), in collaboration with International Labour Organization (ILO) and International Organisation of Employers (IOE) and based on inputs by the RT 3.1 co-chairs Australia and Philippines and other RT Government Team members. Though all attempts have been made to make sure that the information provided is accurate, the authors do not accept any liability or give any guarantee for the validity, accuracy and completeness of the information in this paper, which is intended to solely inform and stimulate discussion of Roundtable session 3.1 during the GFMD Summit meeting in June 2017. It is not exhaustive in its treatment of the session 3.1 theme and does not necessarily reflect the views of the authors, the GFMD organizers or the governments or international organizations involved in the GFMD process.

immigration fills gaps in the labour market, introduces innovation, enhances productive capacity and increases total GDP. Migrant workers play an important role in the labour markets of countries of destination, often filling not only lower skilled and temporary jobs, but also semi-skilled, highly-skilled and permanent jobs.

With the aim of exploring initiatives for enhancing skills development and skills mobility to facilitate labour mobility, **the objective of this paper is to** identify aspects of these initiatives that may be useful for possible designs of global skill partnerships. The outcomes of this roundtable discussion are also meant to flow into the recommendations proposed by the German-Moroccan co-chairs of the GFMD to the Global Compact on Migration (GCM). For the purpose of this paper, skilled migration is not defined into categories of high or low skills, but instead the paper considers the entire range of skills.

B. Matching the skills migrants have to the skills countries need

Skills mismatch can represent a serious obstacle to productivity and economic growth. Skills mismatch refers to the mismatch between a worker's educational attainment and the requirements of the job occupied².

Comparative research of skills mismatch among immigrants and native workers often shows relatively high levels of over-qualification of migrant workers. An average of 35% of highly educated immigrants in employment are overqualified OECD-wide, compared to one native-born in four in 2012-13.³ With few exceptions, the incidence of over-education for migrant workers at the national level was found to exceed the level of native workers⁴. These differences may be due to several reasons, including lack of recognition of qualifications due to barriers in transferability, insufficient mastery of the language in the destination country, and insufficient alignment between education in the origin country and the country of employment

In skilled immigration praxis and policy debates, there is a significant disagreement over what constitutes "skill". It can vary from focusing on skill as tantamount to tertiary education while others may define it as a standard for certain vocational qualifications.

Effective labour market integration measures may be called for where labour market outcomes of migrant workers lag far behind those of native workers. These may include, for example access to jobs, recognition of foreign credentials and countering discriminatory practices. Better labour market integration raises the potential economic contribution immigrants can make to host countries. Migrant workers are one of the largest groups of workers having more problems in proving and using their skills since the skills previously gained in formal, non-formal and informal learning go generally unrecognized. Closer coordination between public employment services (PES), career guidance services, and technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions, among others, can help countries better match labour market supply and demand.

Recognising skills prior to migration can improve skills matching and outcomes. Skills recognition usually includes the recognition of formal qualifications acquired in the origin country before departure. Other forms of assessment include checking of individual evidence (outcomes of informal and non-formal learning – occupational experience and continuing training); and competence-assessment procedures (testing). In addition, an automated recognition process may be established –

² Galgóczi, B. & Leschke, J. 2016. *EU Labour Migration in Troubled Times: Skills Mismatch, Return and Policy Responses*. Routledge.

³ OECD (2015), Indicators of Immigrant Integration 2015: Settling In.

⁴ Ibid.

on the basis of an agreement reached between the countries involved. Supporting measures – such as guidance and recommendations for skills upgrading - is of a critical importance⁵.

Regardless of the type of skills assessment, it is important to start the recognition procedure before migrants arrive in the destination country, so that the skill base can be developed and migrant skills can be put to use immediately. For example, Australia has a points-based system where migrants have their overseas qualifications, skills or experience assessed by a relevant assessing authority. This three-month assessment must be done before Australian immigration authorities consider immigrants' applications for permanent settlement.

C. *Role of the private sector and public-private partnerships between governments and employers*

According to the 2016-2017 Talent Shortage Survey by the ManpowerGroup, 40% of employers world-wide report they are having difficulty filling positions due to lack of available talent. These shortages are particularly strong in skilled trades, IT staff, sales representatives, and engineers. 36% of surveyed companies have already begun to look beyond their immediately available talent pool to other sources, including global talent.⁶ A report by the Boston Consulting Group estimates that between 2020-2030, there will be \$10 trillion in losses in GDP due to labour-force shortfalls⁷.

To address these labour market gaps and enhance skills mobility, the private sector can help by collaborating with governments and other stakeholders to assess potential labour shortfalls and private sector hiring needs. This can help governments strengthen the link between their training and visa processes and their economic needs. Consideration of suitable mechanisms that can help businesses address their immediate hiring needs, including with international talent when those skills are clearly not available at the local level, is important⁸⁹. Migration policies that aim to build and deploy skills mobility and skill development without private sector buy-in risk poor outcomes.

Public-private partnerships in skills development can also contribute to develop and facilitate skills recognition.¹⁰ Partnerships can be built, for example, in planning and delivering specific training programs; managing training institutions; analysing current or future skills demands; or developing skills/competency standards, qualifications or training materials/programs. One example is Korea's temporary work programme, which provides training in conjunction with employer associations and public training structures. Another example is the upcoming PROMISE project of IOM, funded by SDC, which has a component on private sector engagement, to establish dialogue and partnerships between employers in Thailand and Skills Development Partners (SDPs) from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Viet Nam and Thailand. This component aims to address market-demand and skills gaps related to migrant workers¹¹.

A report by the Boston Consulting Group estimates that between 2020-2030, there will be \$10 trillion in losses in GDP due to labor-force shortfalls.

⁵ Branka, Jiri: *Understanding the potential impact of Skills Recognition Systems on Labour Markets*: Research Report, Skills and Employability Branch, International Labour Organization, 2016, p.50.

⁶ http://www.manpowergroup.com/wps/wcm/connect/389b7a9d-cfe2-4b22-bd61-f0febc709cd6/2016_TSS_Global_Infographic+++Final.pdf?MOD=AJPERES

⁷ https://www.bcgperspectives.com/content/articles/management_two_speed_economy_public_sector_global_workforce_crisis/?chapter=4

⁸ For principles of fair recruitment and acknowledgment of recruitment standards, see for example ILO's international labour standards and initiatives in the area of migration and fair recruitment.

⁹ For example, Malaysia's new ePPAX system accelerates checks for shortages and legitimacy of employer requests prior to authorizing international recruitment.

¹⁰ See for example the Groningen Declaration, which seeks to contribute to the 'free movement of students and skilled workers on a global scale', which includes both private and public signatories – <http://www.groningendeclaration.org/>

¹¹ <https://www.iom.int/news/iom-launch-elderly-caregiving-training-migrants-thailand>

2. Successful approaches to skills mobility

A. *Creating regular pathways: policy choices and considerations*¹²

a) **Identifying national skills requirements and labour market needs**

The OECD has concluded that skills shortages are major drivers for support for labour immigration in developed countries. Lists of shortages in skills are used in a number of OECD countries to determine eligibility for migration or to facilitate international recruitment for certain occupations. The methodologies for determining shortage lists vary, but generally include consideration of a number of labour market indicators such as registered unemployment, vacancy rates and duration, and consideration of qualitative factors such as stakeholder testimony or negotiation with employers' and workers' representatives (OECD, 2014)¹³. Two examples are South Africa's Critical Skill List, drawn up for its Critical Skills Visa, and the Shortage Occupation List drawn up by the United Kingdom's Migration Advisory Committee.

Assessing the skills possessed by migrant workers with the skills needed in countries of destination's labour markets requires collecting and analysing labour force survey data, administrative records and employment service data, as well as surveys of educational systems, and surveys of migrant workers themselves. Various sets of indicators can be used to assess labour market integration of migrants.¹⁴

b) **Leveraging immigration and emigration:**

Globally, there are a variety of pathways for temporary and permanent labour migration, both intra-regionally and inter-regionally. These admission channels may be fit for purpose to meet a plurality of labour market needs for workers at all skill levels, including seasonal or temporary vacancies, as well as long-term and endemic labour market shortages.

Successful labour mobility programmes are labour market responsive and meet skills gaps through temporary and long-term legal pathways for workers with different skill profiles. As there is no "one size fits all" solution, consideration may be given to implementing a variety of programmes that are fit for purpose.

Key considerations in the design and implementation of such mobility programmes would include: regional and bilateral collaborations in line with international labour standards related to recruitment; setting up of transparent and effective migration governance frameworks; ensuring decent work for migrant workers; and ensuring mainstreaming migration into government policies. Consistent with IOM's Migration Governance Framework (MiGOF), well-functioning labour migration policies require a 'whole of government' approach, ensuring horizontal and vertical integration throughout national and subnational administrations and departments.

Skills certification and qualification recognition: Employers are key users of skills recognition systems and so there are benefits from involving them in the design of the skills certification and skills recognition systems, assessment methods and implementation. Employers may provide services for the assessment itself¹⁵. However, the awareness rate of recognition systems' value decreases with the size of the establishment, and a lot of work is needed to involve and convince Small and Medium Enterprises' (SMEs) employers about the importance of skills recognition¹⁶.

One of the examples is ILO's project FOIL (Strengthening of Integrated Systems of Training, Orientation and Labour Insertion), which was conducted in Central America and the Dominican

¹² See for example the recent report by SRSG Sutherland (A/71/728), which includes recommendations to build opportunities for labour and skills mobility.

¹³ OECD (2014) 'Managing labour migration: Smart policies to support economic growth', in *International Migration Outlook 2014*; OECD (2016) *Getting Skills Right: Assessing and Anticipating Changing Skill Needs*, p.75.

¹⁴ See for example Huddleston, T.; Niessen, J.; Dag Tjaden, J. 2013. Using EU Indicators of Immigrant Integration. Final Report for Directorate-General for Home Affairs. European Services Network (ESN) and the Migration Policy Group (MPG) on behalf of the European Commission, Brussels.

¹⁵ Strengthening Skills Recognition Systems, Op.cit. p. 23.

¹⁶ *Understanding the potential impact of Skills Recognition Systems on Labour Markets*, p.58.

Republic, from 2009 to 2013 with Public Employment Services and Vocational Training Institutions establishing joint networks to develop standardize Regional Labour Competency Technical Standards and Curriculum Design with the purpose of generating minimum shared quality standards for mutual recognition of certified training provided by the network's different institutions. This recognition is an important step for the regional mobility of skilled workers and, consequently, regional integration.

Opportunities exist to build long-term genuine strategic partnerships with the countries of origin on joint skill development and harmonization of educational standards. The experience of the Bologna Process between the many member States of the Council of Europe provides a good practice and source for inspiration in improving comparability of academic degrees. States could also benefit from implementing streamlined, transparent and time-efficient systems for the recognition and accreditation of foreign qualifications and validation of competences, possibly already at the pre-departure stage. Efforts could be made to improve the relevance of the recognition process to the needs of various sectors, and the overall awareness raising and building trust of the employers in the outcomes of such assessments. Given the growing recognition of the importance of student mobility to labour migration management, further links could be explored with educational exchange programmes and opportunities for traineeships and apprenticeships.

B. Bringing in the private sector

Employers are best positioned to determine the skills and business models necessary to effectively achieve their business objectives. Consulting employers when undertaking reforms may prove useful to achieve well-functioning migration systems. According to a survey conducted by the GFMD Business Mechanism in 2016, multinational organisations, as well as small and medium-sized enterprises, overwhelmingly seek predictability and efficiency in immigration processes and systems.¹⁷

Skills development and skill recognition strategies agreed between government representatives, and employers and workers' organisations through social dialogue aim at improving labour market outcomes not only benefiting highly-skilled migrant workers, but also semi- and low-skilled migrant workers who aspire at being able to choose their job, obtaining a better paid job and better contract, utilize their skills, optimize training plans, and advance in career development.

While it is the responsibility of States to create legal labour migration frameworks for admission, private sector actors have a significant role to play in migration governance.¹⁸ Employers, employer federations and chambers of commerce contribute to the evidence base in identifying and forecasting shortages, when they participate in tripartite Skills Councils, as in Finland or the United Kingdom, or industry skills councils as in Bangladesh. They also have responsibilities vis-à-vis programme integrity, to mitigate the risk of labour violations and other forms of exploitation and abuse, including forced labour or 'modern slavery'. Multinational enterprises in multiple jurisdictions have been particularly instrumental in levelling the playing field of corporate responsibility in accordance with international norms and instruments where adoption and ratification has been inconsistent.

Other private sector entities provide services to migrants, employers and governments in relation to the recruitment and deployment of migrant workers. These include but are not limited to labour recruiters; immigration consultants for-profit medical clinics; private universities and colleges; skills training and assessment institutions; travel agencies; resettlement and other on-boarding service providers; insurance companies; banks and other lending institutions; and remittance transfer operators.

Stronger employer involvement in migrant integration could be beneficial in targeted workplace orientation and language training, as well as job-related training and validation of worker

¹⁷ Austin Fragomen, The Business case for migration, December 2016, p.9

¹⁸ See GFMD Business Mechanism as an example of public-private dialogue for discussions on migration policy.

competences and learning in the workplace.¹⁹ Public-private partnerships at the local level could further underpin support in non-work areas, such as housing, health and education. Integration support programmes provided by state and non-state actors could benefit from closer involvement of employers in their design and implementation.

3. Survey of best practices and initiatives that harness the private sector

A. Demand-driven immigration systems

Employer sponsorship schemes usually entail an employer securing a specific job for an immigrant before he or she is allowed to enter the country. This is a demand-driven system which relies on employers to choose workers based on firms' actual or perceived labour needs or may be dependent on the shortage occupation lists drawn up by the government. Several countries including Germany, Spain, Italy, Greece, Sweden, Australia and others offer such schemes. Similarly, a visa class for intracompany transfers, present in countries including South Africa, Canada, and Ireland, allows companies to move needed managerial talent on a temporary basis to improve efficiency and enhance employee skills. Companies surveyed by the GFMD Business Mechanism expressed the need for these visa categories to be defined clearly, with objective eligibility criteria, an exemption from labour market impact tests and expedited processing²⁰. "Trusted Employer" Programmes may be another approach to streamline migration processes for employers with strong records of compliance and allow for movement of critical talent.

B. Human-capital approach: supply and hybrid systems

Some countries allow recruitment without a job offer, by selecting economic migrants based on their characteristics, on the assumption that their skills will allow them to quickly find employment. The principal means to achieve this, the points based systems, is in place in several OECD countries such as Australia, Canada and New Zealand, the Netherlands, Japan and Turkey. This is a supply-driven system, whereby governments may devise a list of desirable characteristics (such as education, age, language, work experience) for potential immigrants who are selected by points. For example, Australia has a points-based system where migrants get their overseas qualifications, skills or experience assessed by the relevant assessing authority. This must be done before Australian immigration authorities consider immigrants' applications for permanent settlement, and the assessment takes three months.

One emerging model for matching skill profiles to the immediate and longer-term needs of destination countries is the Expression of Interest system, which creates a pool of applicants from which the government can draw migrants according to points selection. This model was pioneered in New Zealand,²¹ but has been adopted in Australia and Canada as well. Private sector involvement is important through employer use of the pool to identify candidates and to accelerate recruitment.

C. Seasonal worker initiatives

In this programme, skilled workers are hired for seasonal jobs, for example in agriculture sector or in the accommodation and tourism sectors of host countries. For example, Recognized Seasonal Employer (RSE) programme in New Zealand and Australia's Seasonal Worker Programme are seasonal worker initiatives that have been successful in promoting temporary and circular skills mobility. World Bank evaluation of these programmes show very large financial benefits, and improvement in a range of human development indicators, for participating migrants and their

¹⁹ See for example OCED (2012), *Jobs for Immigrants (Vol 3): Labour Market Integration in Austria, Norway and Switzerland*; OECD (2007), *Jobs for Immigrants (Vol 1): Labour Market Integration in Australia, Denmark, Germany and Sweden*.

²⁰ Austin Fragomen, *The Business case for migration*, December 2016, p.12

²¹ OECD (2014), *Recruiting Immigrant Workers: New Zealand 2014*.

families in their countries of origin.²² More broadly, states can ensure that seasonal workers have access to regular status, providing them and their employers with additional protection. For example, Mexico issues temporary workers from Guatemala permits to work in border regions, providing legal access to cross-border employment opportunities. France and Italy have both begun to offer multi-year permits to seasonal workers to facilitate circular migration.

D. Bilateral/Multilateral agreements on skills recognition and mobility provisions

In the case of international - bilateral or mutual - skills recognition systems, the quality and reliability of the assessment has an added challenge, i.e. the necessity to map and bridge differences in curricula across countries, particularly formal recognition of qualifications of migrants²³. Provisions in bilateral and multilateral trade agreement can facilitate the movement of workers among signatories and are essential to accommodate trade partnership and regional relationships. Mobility provisions are particularly appropriate in treaties because they support the trade activities by such agreements. They can also facilitate the recognition of skills and credential between countries.

For example, CARICOM has adopted over 100 occupational standards as a basis for a regional qualifications framework. The Caribbean Community Free Movement of Persons Act (2006) provides for the free movement of certain categories of skilled labour through the Certificate of Recognition of CARICOM Skills Qualifications which grants a CARICOM national a definite entry for a period of six months, if he/she enters a Member State with a Certificate issued by his/her home country or a Member State other than the receiving country. During this time period his/her qualifications are reviewed by the receiving country and once that Member State is satisfied that his/her qualifications meet standards, he/she will be granted indefinite entry.

Art. 35 of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas (2001) covers the issue of acceptance of Diplomas, Certificates, and other Evidence of Qualifications among CARICOM countries. It mentions that Member States shall establish or employ, as the case may be, appropriate mechanisms to establish common standards to determine equivalency or accord accreditation to diplomas, certificates and other evidence of qualifications secured by nationals of other Member States.

At the same time, the Caribbean Association of Training Agencies (CANTA) was created to establish and govern a Regional Training and Certification System to harmonize national TVET systems and develop regional standards in training and establish a system for assessment, certification and recognition of skills. All certification in the region comes under the CARICOM Vocational Qualification (CVQ) framework.

Other examples include the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) agreement in Bali in October 2003, to develop mutual recognition agreements for accountants, architects, engineers and medical practitioners (including nurses and dentists). Asia-Pacific countries are working with the ILO in Guidelines for the Development of Regional Model Competency Standards (RMCS), and a Process to develop Skills Recognition Systems to harmonise training and skills accreditation systems. However, up till now Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) have only involved highly-skilled occupations.

MERCOSUR (The Common Market of the Southern Cone) has adopted a resolution allowing for the reciprocal recognition of skills between professional bodies. Again, it also only covers the following highly-skilled professions: agriculture, agronomy, geology and engineering.

E. Global skills partnerships

²² For more details, refer to http://siteresources.worldbank.org/DEC/Resources/RSE_Impact_RESTAT_Final_Revision_Jan_2013.pdf and http://siteresources.worldbank.org/DEC/Resources/Australia_Pacific_Seasonal_Worker_Pilot_Scheme.pdf

²³ Strengthening Skills Recognition Systems Op.cit. p. 27.

Countries of destination can design ways to participate in financing skilled emigrants' training before they migrate, thereby linking skill creation and skill mobility. One example is the Australian-aid funded Australia-Pacific Technical College (APTC)²⁴, which finances and conducts vocational training in five Pacific island developing countries for thousands of workers with the objective of providing them with opportunities to find employment at home and abroad, including in Australia.

Other examples of global skills partnership include the projects implemented by the German development cooperation (through the German development agency Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, GIZ). In the Triple Win project, GIZ and the Federal Employment Agency's (BA) International Placement Services (ZAV), recruited nurses from Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Philippines and Tunisia for the German labour market. This benefitted the health care facilities in Germany, the nurses themselves and their countries of origin. GIZ and the employers in Germany supported the immigration process and helped them settle in. Prior to departure the nurses underwent language and nursing-related training to prepare for their work and their life in Germany. GIZ also partnered with employers of geriatric nurses in Germany to finance language and nursing training for local Vietnamese nurses. The nurses then complete an abbreviated apprenticeship in Germany, and work in Germany. The model continues today, undertaken by different agencies.²⁵

Other examples include the training of migrant seafarers supported in the Philippines and Kiribati by shipping firms and donor-country aid agencies. Technical training for Yemeni migrants to Qatar is supported in Yemen by the Qatari firm Silatech. In a study conducted to analyse a pilot project aimed at evaluating the impact of a training program instituted by the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization (MOHRE) of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), preliminary findings suggested that the acquisition of new skills through the training program has a positive impact on the expected performance during the assessment phase of low-skilled workers; meaning a worker is expected to perform better at the assessment if he has received training previously²⁶.

In March 2017, the federal government in Canada launched a pilot project to address labour shortages in certain industries in Nova Scotia. With an unemployment rate of 8%, there is paradoxically an acute labour shortage in certain industries in the region, including Nova Scotia fish plants.

This innovative program, called the *Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program*, will be a three-year pilot, which will allow employers to offer a job and a direct path to permanent resident status to skilled, semi-skilled and international graduates.

There must be no qualified Canadian candidates available and a mandatory settlement plan for each applicant in place. In 2017, a total of 2,000 applications — which include the worker and any accompanying family members — will be accepted.

Porsche Training and Recruitment Center Asia is another example. This is a CSR programme that is designed for young, underprivileged Filipinos who want to become Porsche Service Mechatronics specialists. During the 19-month programme, participants first receive a 10-month vocational training at the Don Bosco Technical Institute in Manila. Then the best 120 students are selected to proceed to a 9-month training taught by Porsche specialists and which also includes English classes.

F. Other initiatives

a. Upskilling initiatives

²⁴ Clemens, M. et al. 2014. "Skill Development and Regional Mobility: Lessons from the Australia-Pacific Technical College", CGD Working Paper 370. Washington, DC: Center for Global Development.

²⁵ "Vietnam expands nursing labour export to Germany," *Communist Party of Vietnam Online Newspaper*, Dec 26, 2016, Accessed Mar 8, 2017, <http://en.dangcongsan.vn/social-affairs/vietnam-expands-nursing-labour-export-to-germany-421463.html>.

²⁶ For more details, refer to *Pilot Project on Skills Development, Certification, and Recognition*, Progress Report, Abu Dhabi Dialogue

The private sector regularly contributes to the upskilling and training of migrant and non-migrant populations. The 2016 ManpowerGroup’s Talent Shortage Survey noted that because of skill gaps, 53% of their surveyed employers are offering development and training opportunities to their employees, up nearly 30% from previous survey years.²⁷ Many civil society and government-supported groups are supporting the private sector in upskilling initiatives working to address labour shortages. Some aim to better utilize local talent and include specific programmes to bring women, marginalized populations, and youth into the labour force.²⁸ Others work to integrate in-country migrant and refugee populations into domestic workforces. Upskilling programmes that involve global mobility for training²⁹ might especially benefit from additional collaboration between the private sector and governments.³⁰

b. Foreign credential recognition initiatives

Since recognition of foreign qualifications is a complex procedure, collaboration and orientation are important. In Canada, for example, an Alliance of Credential Evaluation Services of Canada was formed so that provincial-level evaluation and assessment services of credentials for skilled immigrants are standardized. More broadly, Canada applies gender-based analysis (GBA) to policy domains including immigration and accords attention to gender differences in issues related to recognition of skills of immigrants.

In Germany, a new website, “Recognition in Germany”, has been developed in order to provide a one-stop-shop information centre, focusing mainly on individual users - but also on employers and stakeholders likely to influence the system. For individual users, it provides information that can help them to understand the recognition process and to orientate themselves. Currently the website is available in nine languages, and also in a simpler German language for those who have some – but limited – knowledge of German. The website provides guidance related to working in Germany, indicating ways of how to find counselling providers, information on legal matters and on the recognition procedure itself, and, most importantly, information on occupations covered and on authorities that may provide the skills assessment.

4. Looking ahead – Challenges and opportunities

There are several opportunities to harness the potential of the private sector, especially to promote skills mobility partnerships, skills training (both in country of origin as well as destination) as well as promoting the rights of migrant workers (through voluntary accreditation frameworks, such as IRIS³¹, or through regular CSR reporting). It also could be interesting to consider the pros and cons of extending skills recognition systems to semi-skilled and low-skilled occupations. States could look at ways to improve employers’ and workers’ confidence in, and buy-in of, skills development and recognition policies by proving that they can enhance the employability of workers and the productivity and competitiveness of enterprises.

²⁷ http://www.manpowergroup.com/wps/wcm/connect/389b7a9d-cfe2-4b22-bd61-f0feb709cd6/2016_TSS_Global_Infographic+-+Final.pdf?MOD=AJPERES; Germany’s “We Together” Campaign represents

dozens of companies who have made public their commitment to integrating refugees into the German workforce through such training: <http://www.wir-zusammen.de/home>.

²⁸ Employing underrepresented groups is addressed within the B20 Germany Employment and Education Task Force, <https://www.b20germany.org/priorities/employment-education/>; Canadian industry associations such as the Information Communication Technology Council and the British Columbia Construction Association have training and recruitment programmes to incorporate women, first nation peoples, local migrant populations, and youth into the workforce.

²⁹ One example is Japan’s bilateral programme for nurses and institutional care-givers, who are recruited from Indonesia and the Philippines. Their training is on-the-job and subsidised by the Japanese authorities and they have three years to prepare for the licensing test.

³⁰ See example of Siemens megaproject in Egypt, where 600+ Egyptian engineers and technicians are receiving training in Germany on maintenance and operation provisions for a new Egyptian power plant project: http://www.middleeast.siemens.com/eg/en/news_press/press_releases/first-batch-of-600-egyptian-trainees-return-from-germany-commence-work-at-mega-power-plants.htm.

³¹ For more details, refer : <https://iris.iom.int/>

At the GFMD platform, the GFMD Business Mechanism is a good example of public-private dialogue, which was launched at the 2015 GFMD Summit in Istanbul to enhance public-private dialogue and deepen the engagement of international companies in the development of migration policy. It promotes more transparent, effective, predictable, and humane migration policies, taking into account labour market needs and economic perspectives. It focuses on strategies for partnering with governments to advance skills mobility and partnerships, and developing a stronger narrative on the benefits of skills mobility.

There are many other innovations which provide the opportunity for the private sector to more effectively identify and match its needs to a growing global talent pool. Emerging technologies have the potential to transform several facets of the building and deployment of skills globally. Online education, job posting and matching sites, and digital skills assessment tools can transform how companies identify and train global talent. The Canadian government, in participation with provincial programmes and industry associations like the Information and Communications Technology Council (ICTC) and the Construction Foundation of British Columbia (CFBC), provide industry specific online trainings and orientations prior to arrival in Canada³²

In terms of challenges, lack of sufficient resources, as well as **lack of sufficient data**, remain prominent. The absence of detailed and high quality data is one of the main obstacles to quantify the extent of skill mobility across the world. The paucity of immigration and emigration flow data by skill level, also militate against some countries' abilities to assess their net human capital situation and thus the effectiveness of their immigration, education and labour market policies³³. Other challenges include **preventing exploitative practices and ensuring protection of migrant rights**. Existing international conventions and legal frameworks are available to guide stakeholders to ensure that human rights of migrant workers are protected and policies are implemented in a way that prevents exploitation of migrant workers. The role of business enterprises to respect human rights are framed within the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights that advise on appropriate methods to be used (including human rights due diligence), and recognize the specific challenges faced by migrant workers and their families. **Combatting actors wishing to fraudulently exploit such programmes** is important. Fraudulent exploitation of these programmes undermines public confidence, hampers the ability to fully realise programme objectives, and can have a range of additional financial and social costs³⁴.

5. Guiding Questions

The guiding questions will be added to the background paper and circulated later.

³²<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/newcomers/before-services.asp>; see <https://migranhire.com/> for an innovative approach to job matching; see <https://codility.com/> for an example of online skills verification.

³³ Artuc, E. et al. A Global Assessment of Human Capital Mobility: The Role of Non-OECD Destinations, World Development Vol. 65, pp. 6-26, 2015.

³⁴ Some of the themes and initiatives discussed in this paper may also be of relevance to refugees.