

Strengthening National Capacities in Applying International Standards to Improve Labour Migration Management in the MENA Region

Study Visit Summative Report

24-25 February 2020

Introduction

Under the scope of “Strengthening National Capacities in Applying International Standards to Improve Labour Migration Management in the MENA Region” project, with the overall objective “contribute to the development and implementation of labour migration/human mobility policies that meet international standards in Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia”, the country office of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in cooperation with IOM Berlin facilitated a two-day study visit to a number of German government and non-government entities working on labour migration. The meetings took place on 24-25 February 2020, organized for a delegation comprised seven officials from: the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Ministry of State for Emigration and Egyptian Expatriates’ Affairs (MoSEEA), Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research(MOHER), Ministry of Man Power (MOM), Central Agency for Public Mobilization And Statistics (CAPMAS), accompanied by IOM Egypt the Head of Labour Mobility and Human Development (LHD) , Labour Mobility Programme Manager, and the Programme Assistant

From IOM Berlin’s side, the Chief of Mission, Monica Goracci, led several discussions accompanied by the Head of Programs/Liasion, and Liaison Assistants, leading the overall coordination of the visit as well as the communication between Egypt’s side and the German government.



Objective(s) of the Visit:

The programme of the visit was designed to support activities of the aforementioned project, and in anticipation of “Towards a Holistic Approach to Labour Migration Governance and Labour Mobility in North Africa” (THAMM) regional programme. A regional programme to foster legal migration and mobility for North Africa countries including Egypt.

The specific objectives of the study were as follows:

- Explore how each counterpart is governing migration, especially in view of the newly introduced Skilled Immigration Act, to ensure effective synergies between the two countries.
- Discuss potential mobility schemes between Egypt and Germany.
- Discuss means through which IOM can support equal gains for both countries of origin and destination, while maintaining the wellbeing of migrant workers.

The Skilled Immigration Act **“Skilled Workers are Welcomed to Stay”**

Given the changing demographics of Germany, many specializations lack qualified calibers to fill in labour market shortages. An average of 1.2 million vacant positions currently remains unfilled.

The Skilled Immigration Act was drafted to enable skilled workers access the German labour market. For the first time, qualified professionals¹ with a university degree or vocational training qualification can join the labour market along with academics. Job seekers can work in the country, if they have an adequate level of German, and managed to get a job offer.

Unlike the preceding laws on labour migration, it is a direct channel between the employees and the employers based on actual market needs, with no priority checks conducted by the government. Graduates of German educational institutions have an advantage, where they can go to Germany to study and later join the workforce as a trainee or an employee. (Deutschland.de, 2020)

The Skilled Immigration Act allows workers to apply for any job, not only occupations with structured labour market shortage. Furthermore, job seekers can obtain up to a six-month residence permit and qualify for other types of residence as his/her stay is prolonged, including a permanent settlement permit, where possible. The main two prerequisites would be an adequate level of German language (Level A2) and recognition of qualifications prior to arrival in Germany. (Make-it-to-Germany, 2020)

The law entered into force on 21 March 2020, it reflects a skilled-labour strategy that aims at:

- a. Strengthening domestic market, ensuring a supply of skilled labour, making certain professions more attractive i.e. nursing sector, and
- b. Attracting non-skilled labour from third country nationals.

¹ A qualified professional: “a person with a tertiary education degree or a vocational training qualification following a training course lasting at least two years”. (Make-it-to-Germany, 2020)

Day 1: Monday, 24 February

Meeting at the German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO)

The first meeting was led by Kurt Stöckl-Stillfried, Director of Legal and Consular Affairs, Legal Migration and Return Issues (5-B-2) and acting Commissioner for Refugees and Migration, and Ambassador Wael Hamed, Head of the Egyptian Delegation. Both sides elaborated on several aspects related on their national contexts, especially on key labour market indicators as well as educational outcomes.

The GFFO representatives emphasized how Egypt is considered as a key partner for German development cooperation, as both countries enjoy intensive economic and trade relations. Furthermore, Germany is Egypt's second-largest trading partner behind China, which says a lot about the importance of the role of both countries.

I. The Egyptian Context

Representatives of the Government of Egypt (GoE) provided their German counterparts an overview of the employment situation in Egypt, which is characterized by a sore percent of unemployment rising to 22 % amongst university graduates, including engineering, medicine, agriculture, and pharmaceuticals. Nevertheless, the main priority of the country is to restructure its higher education system to build skilled calibers, as per actual market needs. Also, job creation is one of the means through which Egypt curb irregular migration, the government has been collaborating with IOM Egypt to raise awareness on risks associated with irregular routes and to provide safer alternatives.

The situation for women in the Working Age Population (WAP) is rather specific, where women rarely opt for irregular migration. Despite, the higher enrollment rates of women in Egyptian universities, they occupy a lower share in the labour market that needs to accommodate for around 28 million persons in WAP.

In addition to the labour market overview representatives discussed the readiness of institutions to support mobility. In 2019, the German International University for Applied Sciences (GIU AS)² in Egypt established with the Presidential Decree No. 55 in light of the signed agreement in Berlin 29/10/2018, is designed along the lines of the German model for Hochschule (institutions of higher education). It offers both degrees (bachelor's and all postgraduate degrees) based on the German curricula, academic standards, as well as study rules and regulations.

Further labour market insights in Egypt can be supported by CAPMAS, especially the Labour Force Survey Unit as well as the Migration Data Analysis Unit. Moreover, the Employment Promotion Project (EPP) with its five observatories for skills commissioned by German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) can provide further support in the governorates they are located in.

² Established in accordance with the Cultural Agreement concluded between the GoE and the government of Germany (GOG) on October 16, 1960 and based on the Cultural Agreement of July 1984.

MoSEEA added that the Egyptian German Center for reintegration established as part of an initiative towards achieving the global "Migration for Development" project with the German Development Cooperation Agency (GIZ) has been endorsed by the Egyptian parliament, which can support the process.

Egypt Labour Market Report

Demographic Trends, Labour Market Evolution and Scenarios for the Period 2015-2030³

In 2018, CAPMAS in collaboration with IOM Egypt published Egypt's First Labour Market Report co-authored by Michele Bruni, labour Market Expert and the team of the Migration Data Analysis Unit (MDAU). It is the first report that analyses the demographic trends, labour market evolution and project labour market scenarios for the period (2015–2030) in Egypt in addition to four European Union countries, namely France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom.

It relies on a methodology developed to enable countries to interpret and efficiently govern migration flows, the study analyses stock-flow trends in labour markets, in order to build labour market and demographic scenarios and conclude with evidence-based policy recommendations that shall foster labour mobility among the two shores of the Mediterranean.

The paper provides strong statistical evidence that in Egypt for at least 30 years, the rate of economic growth requested to absorb the generations that will exit the education and vocational training system hard to attain. At the same time, an increasing number of countries in Europe, Asia, North America and South America will be characterized by an increasing structural shortage of labour supply that for its nature and dimension cannot be solved by market mechanisms, by active labour policies, or by presidential decrees.

The conclusion is that Egypt (as well as other developing countries) and European Union countries have a common interest to join forces, although for differing motives, in co-organizing and co-managing migration flows, in the amount and typology needed.

Between 2015 and 2030, the Egyptian WAP is projected to increase by 19 million (even if the rate of economic activities increased steadily with 1 percentage point each year, which is a very optimistic scenario). In the absence of immigration, the WAP of France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom combined will decline by more than 15 million, which would translate into an immigration balance of around 20 million, where Germany is projected to have the largest share (53%).

³ Accessible on: https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/egypt_labour_market_report.pdf

II. The German Context

The demographic transition in Germany is evident and it is essential that policy makers use labour migration/mobility as a policy tool. Due to the lack of skilled workers, many positions in Germany remain unoccupied. As such, the federal government aims to attract qualified/skilled workers from non-EU countries through creating a framework for long term needs-based immigration of skilled workers.

The immigration share of the German labour market is not a new phenomenon, where representatives stated that two-third of foreign labour usually came from EU countries, yet, it is reducing to one third from the EU countries. Nevertheless, the government is determined to attract workers from third country nationals as well.

The statistics of labour shortages vary between 200 and 250 workers/occupations each year. The figures represent the minimum level of skilled labour needed. If compared, 3.5 million persons in Germany require health care and old age care, and only 60,000 health care jobs are currently vacant, expected to reach 400,000 jobs. The proportion means a shortage in labour supply versus the growing demand, thus, Bilateral Labour Migration Agreements (BLMAs) in the nursing sector have been concluded with four countries including Morocco and Tunisia and will be expanded under the new law.

Similarly, the IT sector is expected to attract qualified third country nationals; it is the only field where jobseekers can come to Germany with only a three-year proof of experience.

The Administration of the Skilled Immigration Act

- The Federal Foreign Office (FFO) is the primary point of reference for the newly introduced law. It is responsible for directing the call to individuals and employers. Skilled labour are encouraged to come work in Germany with their families (spouse and children).
- The Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) oversee vocational schools abroad, such institutions prepare a caliber that is almost ready to join the german labour marker
- An online portal "Make-it-in-Germany" has been created to serve as a single point of reference for workers who are seeking employment opportunities in Germany. It is the official government portal for announcing vacancies for those interested in moving to Germany, while providing procedural information starting from steps that should be taken in home countries, to their first steps in Germany and other relevant information to residence and employment.
- Regarding recognition, the procedures are decentralized. It is carried out through 1000+ agencies on the States level. The Central Office for Foreign Education "*Zentralstelle für ausländisches Bildungswesen*" (ZAB), is the sole authority for evaluating/comparing German and non-German educational systems/qualifications. ZAB has its own database called ANABIN, in which ZAB lists foreign degrees and higher education qualifications in relation to German diplomas and degrees, and publishes information on the evaluation of educational certificates from more than 180 countries, in an attempt to support authorities, employers and private individuals in classifying foreign qualifications in the German education system. ZAB has now decision-making power; it helps regulating the state led recognition process.

Elaboration on the Skilled Immigration Act

- Prior to the Act, restriction on hiring migrant workers for certain occupations existed; the new Act opens up the opportunity to any profession, and the recognition process is completed in Germany. The full recognition remains hard to obtain; however, the process was made easier.
- The Skilled Immigration Act does not discriminate based on nationality, the focus is fully on the individual and the employer. Nevertheless, there is a necessity to focus on certain countries whose education system deem closer to the German one such as Egypt.
- A comprehensive communication strategy will be deployed in potential countries of origin through German embassies, including Egypt, to promote for the Portal "Make-it-in- Germany".
- The Federal Employment Agency analyzes labour market indicators and educational outputs of almost 20 countries (Egypt is on this list), to identify countries with high potential for cooperation on labour migration/mobility. The agency selects at least ten countries and publish this list on their website each year.

Linguistic Skills

- The language training is key for accessing the labour market; level B1 would be a good base to start a life in Germany. However, language requirements vary according to the individual and the contract. Ideally, the training should start in the country of origin and resumes post arrival. Goethe institute is a main counterpart, where the Government of Germany is working on strengthening its capacity in Egypt.
- It is important that the private sector takes part in designing the language training programmes to ensure that minimum standards of working language proficiency are met. Recruiting companies often cooperate with Goethe Institute for designing the courses. Nevertheless, there's a shortage in the numbers of qualified German teachers.
- A considerable number of educational entities are established in Egypt in accordance to the German schooling system, that includes seven undergrad schools.
- There are 26 "Partners for the Future (PASCH⁴)" schools in Egypt, whose alumni are a target group for the new Act. The communication/information campaigns will at reaching out to them informed them of the opportunities for work and studying as well as apprenticeship in Germany.

⁴ The PASCH initiative, launched in 2008, with the aim to create a global network of now more than 1800 partner schools worldwide with special links to Germany and German language. The initiative is run by the FFO and the central administration of German schools abroad (ZFA) the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK) and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) (Goethe Institute, 2020)

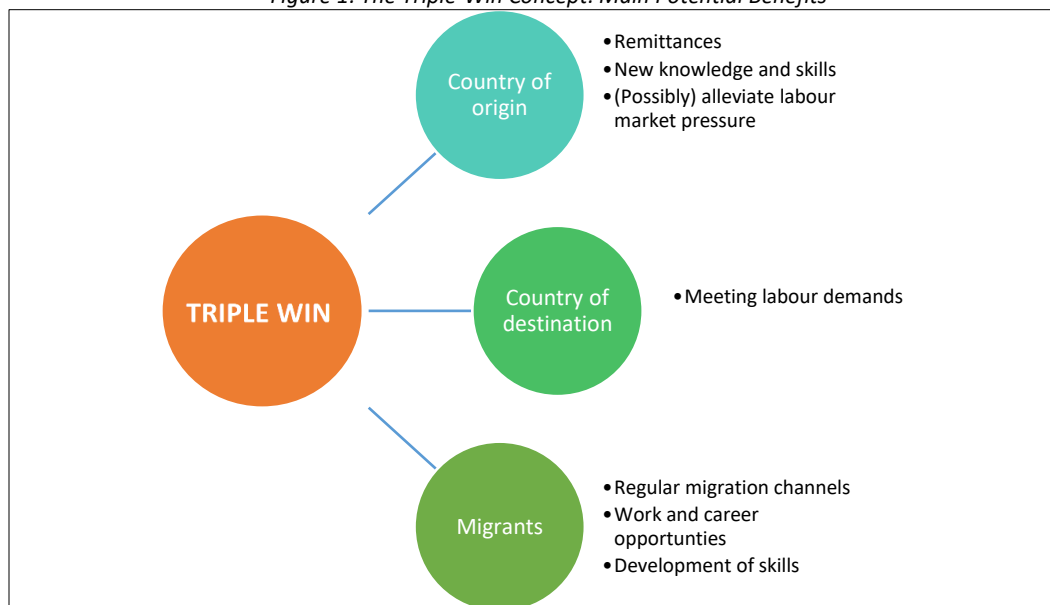
Meeting with Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs – Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales (BMAS)

The meeting was with Division IIa (Foreign Workers Employment and Unemployment Insurance): Stefan Marx, Deputy Head of Division; Division IIa4 (Basic Issues of Policy on Refugees, Law on Foreigners, and Employment of Foreign Workers): Thomas Keyzers, Deputy Head of Division.

Representatives of the BMAS stressed the importance of developing a national strategy for facilitated migration and labour mobility, and they expressed appreciation for Egypt's initiative understand the procedural aspects related to the new Skilled Immigration Act. There are two sides to understand the Act: the first, migrant workers coming to Germany, where the gap of qualifications represent an issue. And the second, the role of employment agencies overseeing the employment process, starting from identification of opportunities and matches to placement agreements.

BMAS is building up experience in the placement and employment phase with few programs in place i.e. the triple win programs (Illustrated below in Figure 1), and another with the Philippines. Furthermore, the government need to make certain sectors attractive for the job seekers, facilitate matching of employers and job seekers and manage the stakeholder's expectation regarding benefits including protection. Representatives of the BMAS stated that employment is not guaranteed; according to the German law, it is up to the private sector to decide. To protect workers, the BMAS agrees to the ethical and fair recruitment principles advocated for by international organizations, including IOM. Thus, the employers share part of the recruitment cost.

Figure 1: The Triple-Win Concept: Main Potential Benefits



Source: K. Marchand and S.Youssef, 2020, *Circular Migration and Development of Skills*, IOM Research on the Means to Improve Human Mobility Channels.

In addition, integration is taken into consideration; there are some projects in the pipeline to help ensure that integration measures are followed. BMAS follows up with the Employment Agency, and no major exploitation cases were detected through labour inspection. This approach aims to ensure quality of treatment with German workers, and it will include migrant workers as well.

The leading agency when it comes to the implementation of the Skilled Immigration Act will be the Federal Employment Agency "Bundesagentur für Arbeit (BA)". It is mandated by the German government to start negotiating with potential countries of origin, and support companies with significant labour shortage, where some companies are unable to cater for their labour, unlike big companies like Siemens. BA will be supported by embassies overseas to disseminate information and facilitate workers' visas. Complementing the process, recognition and evaluation of foreign educational certificates will be done through the central government "Anerkennung und Bewertung ausländischer Bildungsnachweise".

Finally, BMAS representatives mentioned that a copy of the law can be shared, or at least a fact sheet English.

Meeting with Expert Council of German Foundations – Sachverständigenrat Deutscher Stiftungen (SVR)

The SVR GmbH is an initiative of the Stiftung Mercator, a private and independent foundation, recognized by Berlin tax authorities as a non-profit organization with the purpose of promoting science and research. It is one of the most renowned research entities that is highly recognized by the Government of Germany for providing research-based and actionable policy advice, actively shaping the public debate on integration and migration in Germany and beyond.

The meeting was led by Dr Jan Schneider, Head of SVR's Research Unit, who emphasized the importance of taking the strategic level of planning into consideration. Policy makers are often accused of being shortsighted, focusing only on immediate short-term goals. The emphasis on the necessity of more strategic course of action stems from the European Union Labour Mobility requirements that are usually focused on minimum standards, and the need for creating a broad framework for mobility. However, the specific labour market requirements are set by the market dynamics on the short to medium run, meaning that a significant room of action remains to be done at the national level. Policy makers here are challenged to balance between setting a strategic partnership and achieving short to medium term balance for labour markets.

In Germany, labour market policies are set strategically on the federal level, while the actual labour market needs are articulated on the state "Bundes" level. The federal employment agency is doing the federal analysis of needs; they are only valid for a short term of 2-3 years, then discussions must be renewed to reflect the changing nature of labour markets.

Participants discussed how the administrative agreements are arranged and asked if there are any quotas in place. Dr Schneider stated that above 2000 people have been benefiting from programs and projects designed around quotas. For instance, Italy and France have always had quotas, however, they have never been fulfilled, which indicates the importance of reconsidering and reclassifying the current laws regarding quotas in order to make it more balanced and avoid waste of resources.

Finally, it was highlighted that higher involvement and dialogue with the government of Germany is needed including the private sector representatives, for further cooperation between both countries, which is welcomed by both sides.

Circular and Temporary Migration

Empirical Evidence, Current Policy Practice, and Future Options in Germany

SVR commissioned this study in 2011 on circular migration, defining it as multiple migration, which means that a person is considered a circular migrant when he/she enters the destination country at least once, or is born there, then he/she move to the country of origin/nationality or even a third country, then returns back to the destination country. Such definition taking into consideration the time-based dimension as short stays (few months stays) are excluded.

The continued validity of residence titles following departure from Germany (destination country), the option of introducing multiple immigration visas, or multiple residence titles, as well as the expansion of mobility partnerships and bilateral agreements with third countries are all considered to be strategic developmental perspectives and factors that facilitate circular migration based on analysis and similar experiences in other EU countries. The enactment of the Immigration Act on 01 January 2005, provides four residence purposes for immigrants from third countries:

- Education
- Economic activity
- Stays on ground relating to international law or stays for humanitarian or political reasons
- Stays for family reasons

In May 2007, the EU commission launched a communication on “Circular Migration and Mobility Partnerships Between the EU and Third Countries” which was the first time for concrete potential steps of promoting circular migration to be outlined.

The German government mentioned that the return of circular migrants should be secured in cooperation with the countries of origin in order to underpin the development objective. An example of such agreements was the partnership between the EU commission and the republic of Moldova & Cape Verde in June 2008, where Germany along with 14 other EU member states were part of the partnership with Moldova, while four EU countries were involved with the other partnership with Cape Verde. On 30 November 2009, another mobility partnership was established with Georgia, where Germany also took part along with other EU members.

Day 2: Tuesday, 25 February

Meeting with Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

The meeting took place with the team of Division 220 (Policy Issues of Displacement and Migration), headed by Gundula Weitz, Head of Division 300 in charge of Policy Issues of Development Cooperation with the Middle East, along with Bernd Dunnzlaff, Head of Division 224 for Return, Reintegration, and responsible for the Centre for International Migration and Development (CIM), and Dr. Moira Feil, Deputy Head Division 224.

Mr Weitz explained how BMZ aims to: improve access to education for all; help create an inclusive health system in the developing world; promote rural development and food security, and promote good governance and sustainable economic development on a global scale through effective multinational agreements and partnerships with NGOs.

On enhancing education systems, the Egyptian delegation briefed participants about Egypt's technical reform plan, transforming the education sector, referred to as Education 2.0 "EDU 2.0", which encompasses bold interventions to modernize the education system and gear education outcomes toward achieving the targets of Egypt Vision 2030. Representative of MOHER stated that there is an action plan to reform 80 % of the curricula in Egypt to have workers fit in the global markets.

One of the points raised by the Egyptian delegation was the declaration of intent regarding the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Reform Programme (TVET) initiative in Egypt, which is a nationwide initiative co-funded by the GoE and the EU. Operating across Egypt's 27 governorates with the mandate of enhancing Egypt's socio-economic environment through the reform and development of Egypt's most valuable resource-human capital.

It was highlighted by BMZ is willing to support Egypt on upgrading curricula, to be as compatible to the German requirements as possible, so, the gap in graduates' qualifications would be minimal. This comes in the broader initiative of supporting 27 Centers nationwide (including one in Hurghada, Aswan and Assiut), modernize 20 TVET schools following the dual system for implementation, establishing an academy for TVET personnel training, setting up independent national accreditation academy by 2030). In other words, the focus of the bilateral cooperation remains strengthening the TVET system in Egypt, which will support greater cooperation with the Skilled Immigration Act.

Migration advisory centres were also mentioned by BMZ, as part of their own experience with centres in countries like Tunisia and Senegal, which focus on reintegration, and matching applicants and job seekers with training places and jobs in the local market, mainly for returnees. It has proven that such centres offer returnees practical services to open genuine prospects and empower them in their own country, while encouraging business start-ups. All in the effort to curb irregular migration.

BMZ referred to how their approach is based on the Global Compact on Migration GCM, as they strongly believe that by adopting the United Nations New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants in September 2016, the international community reaffirmed its commitment to shoulder responsibility for

refugees and migrants worldwide. Furthermore, they highlighted the importance of pushing for the ethical recruitment of workers as one of their main principles and part of their mandate, along with the protection of workers' rights; an approach that IOM is strongly promoting. IOM has put together a tool to identify ethical and fair recruiters, to ensure that the recruitment process takes place in a manner that is fair for the worker, fair for the employer, and fair for the recruitment agency. Through its voluntarily certification scheme developed as part of the "International Recruitment Integrity System (IRIS)", IOM provides mean for governments to identify partners who adhere to the international principles of fair and ethical recruitment.

Meeting with the Federal Employment Agency - Bundesagentur für Arbeit (BA)

The meeting took place with Alexander Wilhelm, Managing Director of International Relations at ZAV, who elaborated on the mandate of the Bundesagentur für Arbeit (BA) in managing job centres across Germany and administering unemployment benefits. By law the BA is obliged to consider the needs of developing countries and international organizations in its placement work, which the core function of the International Placement Service (ZAV), a department within BA.

With over 35 years of experience in the field of international recruitment, ZAV advises employees and employers in many different sectors of the economy. Its services are targeted at specific groups and cover the recruitment of international personnel, managers and artists. It helps employers all over Germany to find the right caliber for their vacancies, and helps employees integrate into the German labour market.

A presentation was delivered by the Dr Wilhelm (Annexed) covering the following key points:

- BA is an independent entity under the area of responsibility of the Federal Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs. It is a public entity; however, it is not policy based. It invests in bilateral cooperation with public recruitment agencies and conducting labour market assessments.
- The agency has a two-step approach; first: gathering basic information and list of occupations via a questionnaire; second, elaborating on a potential general MoU, followed by placement agreements. The Egyptian delegation expressed interest in the questionnaire and highlighted three sectors for potential cooperation: namely IT, electrical engineering and hotel management.
- The process of the recognition of qualifications can commence in Germany with a grace period of 3 years.
- ZAV is specialized in initiating and recognizing skills required in the German labour market.
- It is crucial to focus on ethical recruitment and avoid brain drain in countries of origin, due to the movement of skilled workers.
- The BA does not work with private recruiters as they tend to charge recruitment fees, which is against their principles. This is aligned IOM's endeavors to promote the principle of Employer Pays, which entails that no worker should pay for a job, the costs of recruitment should be borne not by the worker but by the employer.
- In Egypt's case, recruitment must be through MoM, or agencies approved by the ministry and certified by the International Recruitment Integrity System (IRIS).

Meeting with The Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community (BMI) and Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWi)

The meeting took place with Dr. Ulrike Hornung, Head of Unit “Immigration Law; Humanitarian Admission” at BMI, and Dr. Charlotte Lauer, Head of Division “Skilled professionals, training for refugees, digital skills” at BMWi.

The BMI and its executive agencies in Germany cover a large scale of tasks and activities, extending from civil protection, integration and sport funding to security. While, the BMWi’s policy is guided by the principles of the social market economy, with the main objective to address issues such as globalization, digitization, demographic change, recent developments within the EU, and the energy transition.

BMI – Visa and other Labour Migration Procedures

Germany started recruiting foreign workers from southern Europe and the Mediterranean region in 1955 after concluding an agreement with Italy. Later, the government signed recruitment agreements with Spain, Greece (1960), Turkey (1961), Morocco (1963), Portugal (1964), Tunisia (1965) and Yugoslavia (1968).

As a result of the economic slowdown, the Federal Cabinet ordered a stop to further recruitment of foreign labour in November 1973. Few exceptions were made to this ban on recruitment, and few foreign workers were admitted to Germany.

Changes to the relevant laws gradually expanded the possibilities for foreign workers to move to Germany such as the introduction of the EU Blue Card on 1 August 2012, which made it easier for skilled workers from non-EU countries to work in the EU.

Representatives highlighted that the Act is axed around) formal and recognized qualification, and German language skills. Embassies run checks if the applicant has the necessary qualifications and the language level. If a person is eligible and has the necessary qualifications, then there is no need to formalize the language skills before departure, the minimum level of A-level will be sufficient. Nevertheless, it is vital to have a proven mean of financial support for the permitted period, which is six months.

For those who have contracts with employers already before coming it to Germany, the issuance of a work visa may take up to four months. The main variable would be whether the person has a recognized degree or not, which affects the duration of the visa issuance. furthermore, representatives indicated the option of a fast-tracked procedures, which allows for a 12-month residence permit to be provided.

To ensure that the issued contracts are real, BMAS will continue supervising the employers and investigate implausible employers, in case contracts are not enforced or broken after a suspicious short period of time.

BMWi stressed on the importance of organizing business forums and partnerships with the private sector i.e. Association of German Chambers of Industry and Commerce “*Deutscher Industrie- und Handelskammertag*” (DIHK), which is a German chamber with significant influence in the labour market.

Recommendations and Way Forward

The insights provided by Egyptian and German counterparts were very beneficial to draw policy makers attention to critical dimensions of establishing a migration corridor to Germany -as well as other main countries of destination- that is aligned with the triple win approach. Despite that some operational aspects related to the Skilled Immigration Act remain undecided, the German government representatives indicated **a whole of government approach** to governing labour migration/mobility in a manner that is impactful and does not jeopardize workers' rights.

Accordingly, IOM is often keen on creating **space for dialogue** on various governance areas that are interrelated and affected by migration and other sectoral policies and provide policy makers with evidence-based research and policy tools to rely on.

The German model of governing labour migration highlights the imperative role for **coordinated planning and action** on the national level, which includes relevant stakeholders from the various government institutions, led by the private sector needs and inputs, and backed by **action-oriented research**⁵ to ensure that the development impact of labour migration is attained. It is vital to consider the full cycle of labour migration including return whether physical or virtual, temporary or permanent, integration and re-integration (in the case of circular migration). Migrant workers could be catalyst for positive developments provided that they are protected, and the well-being of their families is taken into consideration.

In view of the above, it is recommended that:

- The GoE further explore the Egyptian market indicators on the occupational level, which needs to be regularly updates. Therefore, mechanisms for surveying labour markets can be further strengthened and updates in collaboration with the BA. Labour market assessment on the occupational level require employers' inputs; CAPMAS and the MoM can create a group of private sector stakeholders representing different industries to support such exercise.
- Egypt can develop labour migration action plan that includes avenues for circular migration with Germany as well as other countries, which can support skills development in priority areas of the economy and avoid brain drain.
- IOM to support the GoE on replicating successful programmes for the Return of Qualifies Nationals, to avoid the risk of brain drain and maintain the link with Egyptians abroad.
- Similarly, efforts to reach out to Egyptian expat communities is vital given the large population of migrants in Germany, Italy, UK and France. Not only for maintaining a link with the Egyptian citizens abroad, but also for capitalizing on how expat networks affect labour migration trends in the countries of destination (evident in the case of Italy).
- Twinning and cooperation programmes in fields of education, training and higher education can reinforce paths for labour migration and student mobility. Egypt and Germany have strong basis for expanding in such field. The first priority could be investing in a stronger cadre of German Language teachers, in parallel with programmes aiming at enhancing education outcomes in Egypt and supports the national plans.

⁵ Research annexes reflect on some of the points discussed during the visit.

Annex I: Members of the Delegation

Name	Surname	Position
Wael	Hamed	Ambassador, MOFA
Saber	Soliman	Assistant to Minister, MOSEEA
Neveen	Elhusseiny	Minister Plenipotentiary, MOFA
Mayada	Belal	Head of Department, MOHER
Karim	Awad	Second Secretary MOFA
Ibrahem	Ahmed	Deputy Director of Financial Affairs MOM
Taher	Saleh	Head of Department CAPMAS
Hugo	Tavares	Head of Department IOM
Marwa	Mostafa	National Programme Officer IOM
Monira	Kamal	Programme Assistant IOM

Annex II: University College of Dublin (UCD) and IOM Research Brief on Labour Migration/Mobility

IOM Egypt commissioned a team of researchers and professors at the University College of Dublin to carry out a series of research papers on different aspects related to labour migration/mobility including circular migration, labour market analysis, as well as legislative and governing frameworks to labour migration in Egypt as a country of origin and main European countries of destination countries to Egyptian workers. The papers are currently reviewed by IOM, some preliminary findings are summarized as follows

I. Understanding the Labour Markets of Key EU Destination Countries **Prepared by Dr. Michaela Vanore and Dr. Katrin Marchand**

- The main research question is how Egyptian youth at risk of migrating irregularly to the European Union (EU) can be better protected, including through the promotion of regular, high-quality labour channels.
- Germany hosts the fifth largest Egyptian population in Europe, the first largest group is in Italy.
- Indicators signal that Egyptian migrants in OECD countries may not access decent employment that matches their skill level and that is accompanied by appropriate social protection and fair wages.
- Based on current labour market gaps & forecasts: destination countries will need workers across the skills spectrum for specific types of occupations
- More than half of job openings between 2016-2030 will be medium-skilled occupations. UK has a significant need for high-skilled workers, whereas Germany & Italy both require blue collars. Sectors with particularly high demand:
 - High-skilled, All countries: business and administration
 - Low-skilled, Germany: personal service workers

- Low-skilled, UK: mining, construction, transport, and manufacturing
- Low-skilled, Italy: cleaners and helpers
- Most prevalent occupations of Egyptians in the OECD countries: professional functions, service and sales jobs, in addition to elementary occupations e.g. unskilled agricultural work, cleaning...etc.
- There is a need for more nuanced info to guide design of policy support systems such as skill-sensitive, bilateral labour migration agreements or programmes.

Common threads for all destination countries

- In all focus countries (Egypt, UK, Germany and Italy) VET systems do not fully align with labour market needs; VET systems are found to be particularly uncalibrated to the needs of regional labour markets and do not train sufficient workers to meet demand, leading to the employment of under-skilled workers.
- All key destination countries (Italy, Germany and the UK) experience critical labour shortages in the computers & electronics and clerical work sectors.
- A critical shortage of basic and professional skills is also noted among the domestic workforces in all focus countries. More specifically, there is a critical shortage of verbal reasoning and quantitative skills, and a surplus of workers offering physical abilities.

Implications for the Egyptian VET System

- The skills and supply mismatches provide opportunities and risks for Egyptian workers seeking employment abroad. For instance, the system notes a surplus of engineer graduates, whilst Italy faces a shortage of engineers. However, the recognition of qualifications obtained by Egyptian TVET graduates is not guaranteed.
- The system must strengthen its ability to explicitly train students in basic and professional skills as well as technical ones. Work-based learning is found to consolidate skills learned in the classroom, increase professional skills and ease school-to-work transitions.
- Finally, procedures to validate Egyptian VET credentials abroad are highly valuable in facilitating employment abroad.

Remarks on the German VET system

- Germany has a fully dual-track system: combination of vocational schools and apprenticeships, coordinated by government bodies in collaboration with businesses and social partners.
- VET programmes are offered at secondary, post-secondary and tertiary levels of education.
- There are several hurdles to obtaining an apprenticeship, however, it is noteworthy that non-nationals may also apply for financial support once the apprenticeship has been secured.

Remarks on the Italian VET System:

- National and regional bodies are involved in implementing VET.
- Programmes between 3-5 years are offered with different levels of qualifications achievable: upper-secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary. The different levels are associated with different kinds of institutions. Learning is primarily classroom based
- Despite significant regional labour market differences, programmes at professional institutes were previously standardised, and therefore, not calibrated to regional labour market needs
- Regional VET programmes have always been more attuned to regional labour market needs

- Skill mismatches persist, under-skilled workers in the south and over-skilled workers in the north. Also, surpluses are found in certain sectors i.e. construction, food production and transportation.

Remarks on the UK VET System

- Governance of education in the UK has been devolved to the countries within England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.
- School and apprenticeship-based VET programmes are mostly delivered at secondary and tertiary levels.
- The duration of VET programmes ranges between one to four years, depending on the occupation and level of study.
- The system is characterized by limited flexibility and opportunity for lateral movement from VET to general education.
- The apprenticeship system is growing; in 2020 a new system will be introduced which would be a dual system approach.
- Aside from labour force shortages, there is a mild shortage in the communications and media, telecommunications, and building/construction sectors. On the other hand, sectors such as sales, marketing, food production and mechanical work have surpluses.
- The recognition of skills attained abroad is currently limited.

II. *Mobility Support Schemes Between Egypt and the European Union* ***Prepared by Dr. Michaela Vanore***

Historically, Egyptian labour migrants have been mostly concentrated in countries of the GCC, Jordan and Libya. The Government of Egypt (GoE) has adopted twelve Bilateral Labour Migration Agreements (BLMAs) with different Arab countries as a result; in order to maintain and facilitate the on-going south to south mobility. The GoE and the EU countries have been investing in setting appropriate migration agreements and legislations to ensure the safety of migrants against smuggling and trafficking, establish safe and regular migration channels and to address root causes of emigration. The context of the cooperation on migration between the GoE and the EU can be grouped under three levels: African Union-EU, Egypt-EU and Egypt BLMAs with EU member states.

First: AU-EU Level Agreements

2007 Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES)

The JAES contains four main objectives. 1) Reinforcing and elevating the Africa-EU political partnership; 2) explicitly addressing migration and development as an area of mutual concern; 3) fostering effective multilateralism, and; 4) explicitly identify cooperation on migration as a common challenge that Africa and the EU should jointly address.

Abidjan Declaration

During the 5th AU-EU summit in 2017, the Abidjan Declaration was announced Identifying four joint priorities for cooperation: 1) investing in people; 2) strengthening resilience, peace, security, and

governance; 3) migration and mobility, and; 4) mobilizing investments for African structural sustainable transformation.

Egypt chose to reserve its position on this declaration.

Africa-EU Migration and Mobility Dialogue (MMD)

MDD fosters partnerships on joint migration issues and represent a significant step to institutionalising regional cooperation on migration issues. It incorporates three frameworks: The Rabat Process, The Khartoum Process and the Continental Dialogue.

The Joint Valletta Action Plan (JVAP)

The JVAP was agreed in November 2015 at an Africa-European Summit on Migration and became the regional framework within which migration policy should be constructed. The action plan identifies five domains (action areas) to support better migration governance between Africa and Europe. Relating to: 1) the development benefits of migration and addressing root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement; 2) legal migration and mobility; 3) protection and asylum; 4) prevention of and fight against irregular migration, migrant smuggling, and trafficking in human beings; 5) return, readmission and reintegration.

EU Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa

The EUTF for Africa is intended to complement the Africa-EU partnership by supporting political dialogue between countries and pooling funding and expertise from different agencies. Improved migration management was considered the main priority area for the North of Africa region. Activities in this domain include improving migration governance frameworks, supporting labour migration and mobility, and supporting voluntary return and reintegration efforts, among others.

As of October 2019, 7 projects and €60 million in financing had been committed by the EUTF for Africa, specifically to Egypt. In contrast to other recipients of funding under the EUTF for Africa, the number of interventions supported in Egypt is relatively small.

One cross-country initiative is of particular importance: the “Towards a Holistic Approach to Labour Migration Governance and Labour Mobility in North Africa (THAMM) Programme. It directly addresses the second objective of the EU Trust Fund for Africa; namely, to foster mutually beneficial migration and mobility. The project would involve the range of activities needed to enable a mobility support scheme to operate, including:

- Capacity-building for partner countries in the area of migration governance.
- Support for trainings and workshops to ensure labour migration policy coherence.
- Improvement of mechanisms for skill and qualification assessment, certification, and validation.
- Provision of labour market analysis to support job matching.
- Pre-departure orientation for prospective migrants, including job matching and career counselling.
- Creation of mobility schemes with relevant member states.

Second Level: Egypt-EU Level

Egypt- EU level includes the 2001 Association Agreement between the EU and Egypt, and the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP).

Third Level : Egypt's Bilateral Labour Migration Agreements

Partner country	Name of agreement	Brief description
Bulgaria	Egypt-Bulgaria Agreement of 1972	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 articles • Focuses on ensuring equal standards of living for labour migrants • Emphasises the regulation of labour migration through information exchange between country authorities
Italy	Agreement of Cooperation in the Field of Labour Migration of 28 November 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 articles • Emphasises the regulation of labour migration through information exchange between country authorities; emphasizes matching of Italian labour demand with supply of workers from Egypt • Emphasises Egypt's responsibility to ensure that labour migrants don't constitute a threat to security or public order
	Protocol on the Implementation of the Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Labour Migration of 12 May 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specifies executive procedures of implementation for the Agreement • Emphasises requirements Egyptian migrants should meet to be employed in Italy • Emphasises consistent and transparent exchange of information between countries regarding the migrant labour supply in Egypt and labour demand in Italy • Identifies that migrant workers should enjoy the same rights and protections as Italian workers, including related to social security provisions • Requires authorities of Egypt and Italy to compile a list of available job opportunities and their requirements plus the potential supply of workers and their qualifications, which should be publicly shared
Greece	Agreement on the Strengthening the Cooperation in Relation to Employment of 18 April 1981	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasises the regulation of labour migration through information exchange between country authorities • Focuses on employment rights

Source: UCD compilation from ILO (2017)

EU Mobility Support schemes for Egyptian Students and Researchers

Country	Number of schemes	Focus areas/support mechanisms ¹
Belgium	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholarships for post-graduate studies or research • Scholarships for French-language study
Finland	2	Scholarships for Egyptian researchers in Finnish institutions
France	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholarships for Egyptian students enrolled in master's education in France • Grants for PhD students to conduct part of their research in a French institution • Grant for post-doctoral researchers to complete additional training in France • Support for further training of medical students and researchers in a French university hospital • Support for 5-day scientific visits to a laboratory in France for conferences of project planning • Support for post-doctoral and senior Egyptian researchers to work with public-sector research labs in Paris
Germany	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for scholars to spend extended time in German institutions to work on research projects • Scholarships for youth to study in German higher-education institutions and research institutes • Grants to support cooperation between Egyptian and German researchers working in the fields of renewable energy, material sciences, medical sciences, agriculture, and industry • Scholarships for Egyptian doctoral candidates to follow doctoral programmes in German institutions for up to 42 months • Scholarships for short research stays of 3-6 months for Egyptian master, doctoral, and post-doctoral researchers in German institutions • Support for staff exchanges for German and Egyptian institutions working on collaborative science and technology-focused projects • Support for joint master programmes and research partnerships between German and Egyptian institutions • Scholarships for Egyptian students to complete post-graduate courses on development at a German institute • Scholarships for "future leaders" to complete a master's degree in a German institution related to public policy and good governance • Stipends for alumni of German institutions who completed their education with a German state-sponsored scholarship to return to a German institution to complete research or a project • Support for scientists to engage in bilateral exchange programs to explore areas of scientific collaboration and complete joint research programmes
Hungary	1	Scholarships for partial stays for undergraduate students and research stays at graduate and post-graduate level

Italy²	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stipends to support the mobility of researchers engaged in joint research projects • Grants for joint research activities
Poland	1	Stipends for Egyptian students to complete research internships at a Polish institution
Romania	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholarships for students at bachelor, graduate and doctoral level to follow education in Romania • Support for exchange of professors and specialists between Romanian and Egyptian institutions
Sweden	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholarships for doctoral and post-doctoral education in Swedish institutions • Scholarships for African researchers who focus on social science topics in Africa • Support for exchange of teachers and students between Egyptian and Swedish institutions
United Kingdom	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholarships for "future leaders, decision-makers and opinion-formers" to complete a post-graduate study in a UK higher-education institution • Scholarship for high-performing students to complete specific courses at the University of Cambridge • Support for mobility of researchers between Egyptian and UK institutions to work on joint projects

III. Expatriate Networks and Organizations

Prepared by Prof. Liam Kennedy, Lorenzo Coslovi and Mattia Giampaolo

The study provides a detailed snapshot of migrant networks and organisations and their activities relating to labour mobility and inclusion. Italy has by far the largest community of Egyptians in Europe, very diversified in terms of socio-economic backgrounds and occupations, and including young and irregular migrants. Germany receives smaller through growing numbers of migrants from Egypt, the majority of which are well-educated and include a large student contingent. The high education rate among emigrants in Europe also reflects the oversupply of highly educated workers in Egypt.

In terms of numbers, Italy and Germany have been the favoured destinations for Egyptians migrants this century, with the numbers migrating to Italy (110,398) almost doubling between 2000-17 and more than tripling in Germany (23, 428) (UNDESA, 2017).

The Egyptian community in Europe has a relatively high educational profile, with the percentage of Egyptians with a tertiary education (university or graduate degree) estimated to be 85%. Nevertheless, clusters in particular sectors and activities formal and informal exist, due to historical patterns of migration and settlement as well as developed areas of labour opportunity and intensity. In Milan, for example, Egyptian workers are concentrated in the building, cleaning, retail trade and catering sectors, while in Berlin, there are significant clusters in ICT. Generally, the older, more established generations of Egyptian migrants and their offspring are more likely to be involved in educated and professional

sectors. The less well educated and irregular migrants are more likely to be involved in sectors that are more informal and often precarious. Taking jobs not relevant to their skill levels is often a necessity but can lead to instabilities and precarity, with migrants changing jobs due to harsh conditions of work - amongst informal job fields where no or few qualifications are sought this is a common phenomenon.

Migrants establish networks through kinship and other ties to support many aspects of migration and life in the emigrant communities. Migrant networks are defined as “sets of interpersonal ties that link migrants, former migrants and non-migrants in origin and destination areas through the bonds of kinship, friendship and shared community origin.” (Massey 1988). They operate at different scales, from familial and other personal ties to broader patterns of social linkages that constitute “migration channels”.

Egyptian Expatriates in the German Labour Market

Germany has small but well-established communities of Egyptian expatriates, with relatively high levels of education, employment and integration. The historical relationship between the two countries evolved strong connections in research and education and the tradition of student migration has continued to the present, feeding an educated professional workforce and leading roles in representative organisations and in German business and politics. The numbers of Egyptian nationals in Germany has steadily risen, from 14,025 in 2000 to 32,505 in 2018. Of that total figure, 67.49 percent are men and 32.51 are women. The average duration of the stay of Egyptians in Germany in 2018 was 6.6 years for men and 5.8 years for women. Almost 20% of Egyptians are aged between 25-30-year-old, of which 47.9 percent are single, 39 percent married, and 3.8 percent are divorced. The largest concentrations of Egyptians in Germany are in the state of North Rhine Westphalia, especially in the cities of Frankfurt and Cologne, and there is also a large community in Berlin since the 1950s.

A significant share of the Egyptian population in Germany are students owing to the strong ties between the educational exchange institutions of both countries. Data on the occupations and employment status of Egyptians in Germany is limited. A 2011 study by the Centre for International Migration and Development (CIM) found that just under 40 percent of the most populous “jobs among employed Egyptians” were in five occupations: chefs/cooks, waiters, cleaners, office administrator, storekeeper and transport worker. Higher skilled professions – doctors, pharmacists, teachers, lecturers and engineers – made up 11.3%. The same study found that 69.4% of unemployed Egyptians had not completed either a degree or vocational education. (CIM 2011)

A 2015 study, based on CIM data, posited is 22 percent of the total population of Egyptians in Germany are employed, and only 6.6 percent are unemployed, and the rest were either job seekers, or marginally employed. (Weisskoppel 2015) The unemployment rate is lower than the average for foreign-born workers in Germany, which was 8.5 percent in 2014.

The diversity and dispersion of the Egyptian expat communities in Europe makes for a fragmented organizational landscape, with socio-cultural dynamics and differences shaping emigrant engagement - education, class, gender, generation and religion are key factors. In Germany, this was very evident in the varied compositions, agendas and activities of the more formal associations and networks.

Online expatriates' networks are the closest to organized network of migrants in view of the large number of Egyptians in the IT sector, particularly in Berlin. Facebook pages and groups have emerged

to reach out to Egyptians in this sector. An example is “Egyptian Techies in Germany”, a Facebook group created in March 2016, which currently has 1,887 members.

Such form of networking is becoming more and more common among migrants and especially highly skilled migrants from many countries, with “tech diasporas” an increasingly common phenomenon. In Germany as elsewhere, enterprises are emerging to facilitate the training and job mobility of migrant techies, where Egyptian entrepreneurial agents have been gaining grounds within a globalized knowledge economy.

However, informal recruitment of co-nationals remains common in the informal economy; there are benefits both for the employers and migrant employees but also trade-offs in the co-national relationship: the ethnic bond offers solidarity and trust but also compliance and the possibility of exploitation.

Egyptian Expatriates in the Italian Labour Market

The migratory chains connecting Egypt and Italy display strong local-local dimensions. Previous researches found specific trans-local networks between the small rural area around Banha and the Municipalities of Milan’s metropolitan area: from Kafr Sa’ad towards Sesto San Giovanni, from Kafr el Gamal towards Cinisello, Abbiate Grasso and Trevigliano, from Batta towards Trevigliano and Milan. (Stocchiero 2005). Similar chains were identified, by recent researches, between a specific quarter of Milan and the area of al-Fayoum (Giangrande and Piscitelli 2013). Such strong trans-local migratory chain depends on family and neighborhood networks, as well as on an emulative process that encourages migratory desires in these areas. At the same time, one cannot underestimate the role of the illegal migration networks in prompting and assuring migration. According to some key witnesses, there is a flourishing market for seasonal employment contracts that link Rome to the Gharbiyya region.

Data from 2018 shows that 59.2% of Egyptians between 15-64 years old in Italy are regularly employed, while the rate of inactive Egyptians reached 32.4% of the total, and the rate of unemployment was 12.8%. Egyptians within the labour market are often characterized by a medium-high level of education. As for labour sector distribution of Egyptians in Italy, the majority of the community is concentrated in restaurants and business (44%), construction (21.6%), industry (26%) and transport and company services (20%). The high level of unskilled jobs is due to two main factors: education degrees are only partly recognized by the Italian system and linguistic difficulties. (Attanasio et al 2014)

In analyzing migrant social networks among Egyptians in Italy, informal co-national networks are particularly important in the development of entrepreneurship. In this sense, the Egyptian entrepreneurs work as a gravity center in providing job opportunities as well as sponsoring and managing the careers of co-national migrants in Italy. Furthermore, the model of the autonomous worker seems to be a positive one within the community, so new generation seeks to create their own businesses in order to emancipate themselves from more subjugated positions of employment in informal sectors.

The Egyptian associations seem to have numerous fault lines depending on differences of socio-economic background, migratory seniority, place of origin, and confessional affiliation of migrants.

IV. Circular Migration and Development of Skills

Prepared by Dr. Katrin Marchand with support from Soha Youssef

Circular migration trends between Egypt and other European countries, as knowledge and practices in such area are still at a relatively early stage, therefore, available data on the impact of such schemes remain minimal.

On the other hand, although the Triple Win Concept indicates the significant gains that will be made for development of countries of origin, labour markets in the country of destination and benefits for the migrants themselves, yet, empirical evidence highlights the challenges faced by temporary migrants, including those taking part in circular migration.

One of the most important issues to take into consideration while promoting circular migration is for destination countries and employers not to ignore the social side of migration, which entails the fact that migrants are people at the end of the day may – in some cases- contradict the focus of destination countries to bring in 'labour' but not 'people'".

Managing circular migration should avoid the promotion of selective and temporary labour mobility rather than fluid circular movements catering for actual needs. This is to give migrants a choice; while many move abroad temporarily just to reach a specific goal, others have no clear strategy and usually opt for countries where they have the chance for permanent stay, if possible.

At this stage there is a lack of systematic evaluation of designing effective policies and programmes for circular migration that understands what works in this context and what does not. As such, future projects should include research components on both process and impact, both are necessary to understand how different initiatives and their components work or do not work.

In the specific context of circular movements between Egypt and the EU as well as more generally, the aspect of collecting and analyzing data is crucial to understand the role of these movements in overall global migration patterns and trends. Furthermore, in order to facilitate circular migration, it is important to find a way to combine interests of different stakeholders, as only by fully understanding the actual effects on countries of origin, countries of destination and the migrants, will it be possible to develop circular migration schemes in a way that they indeed benefit all involved parties.