

Vitalie VARZARI  
Gabriela TEJADA  
Sergiu PORCESCU  
Jean-Claude BOLAY (Eds.)

## **SKILLED MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES: REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA AND THE COUNTRIES OF SOUTH EAST EUROPE**





Vitalie VARZARI  
Gabriela TEJADA  
Sergiu PORCESCU  
Jean-Claude BOLAY (Eds.)

# **SKILLED MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES: REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA AND THE COUNTRIES OF SOUTH EAST EUROPE**



This publication has been produced within the framework of the research project “Connecting the scientific diaspora of the Republic of Moldova to the scientific and socioeconomic development of the home country” which was implemented by the Department for Foreign Affairs of the Academy of Sciences of Moldova (ASM) in collaboration with the Cooperation and Development Center (CODEV) at the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL). The project was financed by the SCOPES Programme of the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNF) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

The contents of the individual chapters are the sole responsibility of their authors and they do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the ASM, EPFL, SNF or SDC.

**Volume coordinated by:**

Dr. Vitalie Varzari, Dr. Gabriela Tejada, Sergiu Porcescu, Prof. Jean-Claude Bolay

**English proofreading:**

Malachy McCoy

**Cover design:**

Promo Art Com S.R.L.

CIP Description of the National Book Chamber

Skilled Migration and Development Practices: Republic of Moldova and the Countries of South East Europe / Vitalie Varzari, Gabriela Tejada, Sergiu Porcescu, Jean-Claude Bolay (Eds.) – Ch: Impressum S.R.L., 2013 - 151 p.

ISBN 978-9975-4215-8-4  
314.15(478+4-11/-13)  
S62

© Vitalie Varzari, Gabriela Tejada, Sergiu Porcescu, Jean-Claude Bolay

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### ➤ PART I: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

*Foreword* 5  
*Jean-Claude BOLAY*

*Chapter 1* 7  
 Skilled migration and development in South East Europe: an introduction.  
*Sergiu PORCESCU, Vitalie VARZARI, Gabriela TEJADA*

### ➤ PART II: SKILLED MIGRATION AND DIASPORA POLICIES IN SELECTED COUNTRIES OF SOUTH EAST EUROPE

*Chapter 2* 18  
 EU policies and initiatives on migration and development towards Eastern Partnership Countries: the implications for skilled mobility from Armenia, Georgia and Moldova.  
*Oleg CHIRITA*

*Chapter 3* 35  
 Moldova's diaspora policies: the path from moderate partnership to an active engagement.  
*Sergiu PORCESCU*

*Chapter 4* 45  
 National brain gain policies in case country examples of the Western Balkans.  
*Tanja PAVLOV, Bernard ZENELI*

*Chapter 5* 65  
 Ukrainian highly skilled migrants: characteristics of the community and schemes of cooperation with Ukraine.  
*Antonina RISHKO*

*Chapter 6* 80  
 Skilled mobility as a challenge for Croatian diaspora and migration policies.  
*Caroline HORNSTEIN TOMIĆ, Borna PLESE*

➤ **PART III: EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FROM THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA: FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT “CONNECTING THE SCIENTIFIC DIASPORA OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA TO THE SCIENTIFIC AND SOCIOECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE HOME COUNTRY”**

*Chapter 7* *96*

Skilled migration, transnational cooperation and contributions to development: evidence from the Moldovan scientific diaspora.

*Gabriela TEJADA*

*Chapter 8* *123*

The scientific community of the Republic of Moldova: an empirical analysis of cooperation prospects with the Moldovan scientific diaspora.

*Vitalie VARZARI*

➤ **PART IV: SUCCESS STORIES CONNECTING SKILLED MIGRATION TO DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH EAST EUROPE**

*Synopsis* *140*

Success stories from Moldova, Croatia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Serbia including Kosovo and Montenegro.

*Vitalie VARZARI, Tanja PAVLOV, Caroline HORNSTEIN TOMIĆ*

**FOREWORD**

Skilled migration, which today tends to extend from Eastern Europe in the practice that will be examined in this work, and everywhere else in the world as well, represents a highly characteristic pattern of changes that do, undo and redo contemporary societies. Indeed, over the past thirty years, with the need to revitalize the global economy, two megatrends have contributed to enabling the entry into the era of globalization: largely inspired by a liberal ideology, international and national policies implemented since the 1980s have largely weakened trade barriers to exports and imports of goods and services in all countries of the world. Furthermore, a technological revolution, internet, and all wireless communication, have overturned the exchange of data and fostered exponential growth of information and immediate and massive transmission of the latter.

These two striking developments of our modern age, political and technological, have been and remain the elements that determine an international globalization of trade: goods, whether material goods produced and consumed on the entire planet, no longer with any restriction; services available instantly, everywhere and for everyone, as long as one has internet access, but also the information provided by media that is increasingly diverse and attentive to everything that happens everywhere; human beings who, voluntarily or through incentives, migrate often in search of gainful employment, a professional opportunity, or to seek better living conditions in the medium and long term.

This combination of factors, constantly evolving and far from being unequivocal is fraught with contradictions, ambiguities, conflicts and power struggles. It remains however impossible to understand the basis of each of these dynamics, without at the same time considering all of the interactions, their foundations and the logic behind them.

High skilled migration fits perfectly into this understanding of the current world; and European countries, the fruit of their individual histories, are now at times in competition, or in collaboration and cooperation. Internally, on the basis of two major events that reconstruct the continent: the construction of the European Union and the demise of the Soviet bloc. Externally, with the emergence of large countries that are very active on an international scale, China, India, Russia, and Brazil, to mention only the most notable, and also facing the conquering power of large industrial groups, in constant movement, global in scope, taking advantage of economic and political liberalism to tackle all existing or future markets.

These population movements are not new to the modern era of the globalization of trade, as we know them today. From time immemorial man has moved around the world individually, or in a more organized manner, sometimes due to military conquests, often to political colonization, almost always due to economic domination. Modern

technological means nevertheless provided additional strength to these migrations and question their contribution to global development, which one wishes to be sustainable, respectful of the environment, and socially equitable. Unfortunately, this is not the case. These economic changes have certainly greatly increased material and financial wealth on the planet. Resulting migration enabled those who took the risk to improve their living conditions. This has not significantly changed the balance of power either within or between countries; socio-economic disparities have widened. And the accelerated deterioration of natural resources and climate change challenge the balance between human activities and environmental acceptability.

While military power has long been the decisive weapon in the conquest of the world, it is now knowledge that is the lethal weapon that directs the changes we have observed over the past few decades. Indeed, the scientific and technological capacities now allow individuals, as well as society to be more competitive, better able to defend one's interests, and better able to gain market shares. Scientific and intellectual elites play a major role. Wealth - and hence poverty - of nations depends more and more on their ability to take advantage of this knowledge and these skills.

Highly skilled migrants are sought everywhere, regardless of their origin, their sex, or their age. According to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, international migration in 2013 amounted to some 232 million people worldwide, nearly 3.2% of the world population. It is clear that migration of scientific and intellectual elites is only a small part of these population flows. They remain, however, iconic, since they are a major development challenge. First for individuals who know they possess a resource with unmatched value at the universal level, then for public institutions, universities and companies that hire them and can enhance their knowledge in a very profitable manner, and finally for the countries that will benefit from their production capacity.

Returning to the issues of sustainable development, of global balance and of equity, the question inevitably arises for all countries of origin of the immigrants to know how in turn to benefit from their expatriate elites to stimulate their national economies and, more specifically, the producing institutions to know, for example the universities. The equation is not easy to solve, balancing the obvious need for brainpower of the countries which the highly skilled migrants have left, and the individual choices that have motivated the emigration of their elites.

The various contributions to this work will allow us to monitor the forms adopted to overcome a situation which, if it might appear difficult in many of the Eastern European countries, is far from definitive, aiming to find, through new forms of scientific cooperation and public policies best suited to these challenges, a dynamic social and economic progress in which the high skilled migrants have a role to play.

*Prof. Jean-Claude BOLAY,  
Cooperation and Development Center,  
École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne,  
Lausanne, Switzerland*

## *Chapter 1:*

# **Skilled migration and development in South East Europe: an introduction**

***Sergiu PORCESCU***<sup>1</sup>

*Institute of Legal and Political Research, Academy of Sciences of Moldova,  
Chisinau, Republic of Moldova*

***Dr. Vitalie VARZAR***<sup>2</sup>

*Department for Foreign Affairs, Academy of Sciences of Moldova,  
Chisinau, Republic of Moldova*

***Dr. Gabriela TEJADA***<sup>3</sup>

*Cooperation and Development Center, École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne,  
Lausanne, Switzerland*

## **Linking skilled migration to home country development**

According to data from the UN, 232 million people, equivalent to 3.2 per cent of the world's population, were international migrants in 2013, compared with 175 million in 2000 and 154 million in 1990 (UN 2013). Among the issues linked to international human mobility, skilled migration is one of the most discussed of the ones related to the development of countries of origin and countries of destination. Over the past 20 years, this phenomenon has become both a threat and an opportunity for the general process of development in some regions of the world, and South East Europe is one such region. In recent decades, the countries generically included within this region have experienced a period of far-reaching transition as they have strived to become consolidated democracies and establish themselves as functioning market economies and efficient democratic states. New states started to appear in the region with the union of some states, the dissolution of others and a number of revolutions of a more or less peaceful nature, and these changes brought new political regimes, new economic paradigms and new social constructions. Countries followed their own paths to democracy and the market economy, undertaking reforms either through the medium of shock therapy policies or more moderate transitions. These processes were accompanied by the emigration of large sections of the population and this brought additional social and economic costs for the countries in question.

More recently, and as a consequence of positive development trends in the region, states have started to shift their policies from a position of resilient disability to a more proactive approach, as they attempt to link the migrant communities of their

---

<sup>1</sup>sergiu\_porcescu@yahoo.com

<sup>2</sup>vitalievar@gmail.com

<sup>3</sup>gabriela.tejada@epfl.ch

foreign-based nationals to the modernisation processes that are taking place in the homelands. For obvious reasons, which are related to the imperatives of increasingly knowledge-based economies and societies, skilled migration has been easily identified as a priority area for policymakers and the civil society as well as for researchers in the South Eastern region of Europe.

Qualified migrants certainly bring an added value to the countries of destination. According to an OECD analysis, there is empirical evidence to show that highly skilled migrants bring higher productivity, more entrepreneurial assets and greater trading opportunities to the host regions (confirmation of this can be seen in the changes made to migration policies to favour the admission of highly qualified workers) (OECD 2010). A further example is the contribution that foreign-born scientists make to science advancement in the host countries, which can be clearly seen from the fact that 32% of Nobel prizes are awarded to US-based researchers of foreign origin (Brunner 2011).

The question that arises here is how to share these benefits with the countries of origin and to create the most suitable enabling conditions for a process of brain circulation, so as to make sure that there are no skills shortages in the emerging economies and societies. By creating greater opportunities for cross-border connections between individuals, communities and societies, the current framework of transnationalism, in which diasporas act as bridges between the home and the host countries, gets policymakers to look far beyond their national borders when analysing the impact of their policies (Meyer 2001; Agunias and Newland 2012).

### **Recent developments in brain drain/brain gain approaches**

Over the last number of decades, globalisation processes have significantly accelerated international migration streams and the mobility of highly-educated people who go abroad in search of better personal and professional opportunities to satisfy their growing expectations regarding the quality of work and living conditions. This increased emigration of scientific and professional elites from developing or transition countries to industrialized economies, has been traditionally seen as a net loss for the countries of origin and a gain for the richer destinations.

However, one of the main advances in migration and development thinking and practice in recent years has been the shift from a position that emphasises the negative impact of skilled migration to one that recognises the potentially positive effects that the international mobility of scientists and skilled professionals can have on home country development. This is the result of a currently common approach, which considers international migration through the prism of the migration and development nexus, highlighting the emergence of new social actors of influence as part of the global social and political transformations. This approach sees migrants, diasporas or transnational communities (Wickramasekara 2010) as valuable resources circulating between countries. The search for alternative ways of addressing the emigration of the skilled individuals and reversing brain drain, by harnessing their

accumulated overseas experience, knowledge and skills for the benefit of the home country, has increased the interest expressed by academics and policymakers alike in the role and the value of scientific diasporas. Scientific diasporas consist of groups, networks or associations of emigrated scientists and skilled professionals, who are engaged in producing and circulating knowledge and creating transnational cooperation relations with their home country (Barré et al. 2003; Tejada and Bolay 2010).

Accordingly, migrants' groups or diasporas emerge as actors that promote the transfer of knowledge and skills through decentralized forms of cooperation that span borders (Tejada 2012). In shaping the processes related to the harnessing of diaspora resources, political and economic factors in both the countries of origin and the countries of destination and the individual profiles and behaviours of migrants have a significant role to play. Accordingly, a multi-level analysis of the study of skilled migration and its diverse impacts should be adopted to identify the main factors at both an individual and a country level that are associated with the positive contributions to home country development (de Haas 2008, 2012).

While diasporas can influence socioeconomic development in their home countries in various ways, diverse institutional mechanisms and strategies need to be put in place to ensure enabling environments that can promote the potential benefits of skilled migration. The existing literature and current policies related to skilled migration and skilled labour mobility are centred on two interconnected issues. The first of these is the brain drain vs. brain gain debate and the challenge of promoting the return of the emigrated human capital and of retaining it in the home country. The second issue is concerned with the contributions that diasporas make through the transfer of knowledge, skills and other valuable resources. Both the framework of diaspora contributions and return channels have acquired importance in the study of skilled migration within the migration and development nexus at the same time as several developing and transition countries are making an effort to establish durable links with their diasporas while simultaneously promoting retention and return schemes for their scientists and skilled professionals (Agunias and Newland 2012).

The capitalization of diaspora resources can take diverse forms. The empirical evidence of various case studies shows different levels of success, which depend both on the individual profiles and experiences of migrants and the contexts in the home and the host countries concerned. There are numerous world cases of transnational initiatives and institutional programmes tapping into and mobilising the expertise and resources of overseas-based skilled professionals and scientists. Some cases such as Korea and China provide evidence of several institutional initiatives that encourage the return of their skilled personnel. Both cases have shown how the returned skilled personnel can raise productivity and contribute to economic development in their home countries (Saxenian 2005; Yoon 1992; Song 1992). Other countries have directed their efforts towards the engagement of their diasporas at a distance, as a definitive return is not always feasible. During the 1990s, Colombia and South Africa created innovative scientific diaspora networks to capitalise on the interconnection

potential of information and communication technologies and social networks, and to try and get their skilled nationals abroad engaged in the enhancement of their national systems of science and technology. In both cases institutional support and intervention was determining but ephemeral, and therefore the success of these examples was limited (Tejada 2012).

Various experiences also show that in many cases the local society in the home countries does not benefit from the brain gain practices. Furthermore, the potential of having a positive impact at the different levels of development is not the same for all countries, but rather these depend on the context of the country in question. This is why a particular pro-diaspora strategy may work in one country but not in another. Therefore, in order to explore the viability of harnessing the potential of diasporas, it is imperative to take a context-specific approach that should start by advancing knowledge on the respective diasporas and the specific factors that influence their engagement. Research should be encouraged in order to provide an insight into the personal and professional experiences of diasporas in the main destination countries, labour migration policies and structural settings in those countries, as well as the national systems of science and technology and the various institutional initiatives at a national and regional level that are related to migration and development.

For the countries of South East Europe, which have faced great challenges as market economies in transition and due to the hard-hitting impact of the mass emigration of their scientific human capital, the academic and practical dimension of engaging the scientific diaspora has recently been recognised as being of a great importance. Some strategies have been put in place, although the majority of these are still inefficient. This inefficiency can be explained mainly by the tough economic, social and political structural conditions in the home countries and by the poor administrative capacities for their implementation.

The various countries in the region have had quite different experiences. Whereas the creation of the Romanian Ad-Astra Network offers an example of a bottom-up diaspora initiative that has managed to impact the reform of the research sector in Romania at a distance and become a valuable alternative to institutional retention and return schemes (Nedelcu 2008), the cases of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Republic of Moldova, Macedonia, Serbia and Ukraine mainly show top-down pro-diaspora policies headed by the governments with the support of international organisations and development cooperation agencies.

### **The Republic of Moldova as a case in point**

This volume pays particular attention to the Republic of Moldova, for which these issues are of vital importance given the fact that it has one of world's highest emigration rates. It is estimated that 25 per cent of the country's labour force is living abroad (IOM 2012) and the country was particularly hard-hit by the exodus of scientists, researchers and skilled professionals during the first years of independence in the early 1990s. It is estimated that the scientific potential of the country fell by 83

per cent in just a decade and a half, with the absolute number of scientific researchers dropping from a total of 30,000 in the early 1990s to less than 5,000 in 2004 (ASM 1990-2009).

In 2008, the government of the Republic of Moldova launched a focused approach through the Academy of Sciences of Moldova (ASM), which was concretely aimed at addressing skilled migration and fostering cooperation with foreign-based Moldovan scientists and skilled professionals. As we discuss elsewhere, Moldova's determined support to enhance linkages with the scientific diaspora is mainly based on two issues. The first is an acknowledgment of the potential benefits that the country can obtain from collaborating with Moldovan scientists and skilled professionals abroad. The second is the belief that the Moldovan national system of science, research and innovation is adequately suited to accommodating diaspora initiatives and taking advantage of transnational cooperation (Tejada et al 2013a). This was quite an innovative approach within the region, making Moldova a leader in the implementation of pro-diaspora policies aimed at curtailing brain drain. However, a low level of development and deficient structural conditions have limited the expected positive outcomes, and while skilled Moldovans abroad are motivated to contribute to home country development, more often than not, their potential brain gain actions are hindered by factors associated with the home country context.

Two initiatives were recently implemented as part of this institutional brain gain approach. The first is the programme for the temporary return of Moldovan scientists and young researchers put in place by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the ASM under the EU-Moldova Mobility Partnership scheme. The other initiative is the implementation of a research project conducted by the ASM in collaboration with the Cooperation and Development Center of the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (CODEV-EPFL). The aim of the project "Connecting the scientific diaspora of the Republic of Moldova to the scientific and socioeconomic development of the home country" was to provide empirical evidence on Moldovan scientists and skilled professionals abroad and to offer empirical-based policy recommendations to engage them in cooperation activities with the home country<sup>4</sup>.

The research draws on two complementary survey questionnaires supplemented by follow-up in depth interviews. On the one hand, we examined the Moldovan scientific diaspora made up of scientists, skilled professionals and postgraduate students living abroad, while on the other we studied scientists and skilled professionals based in Moldova. The two-fold approach employed - countries of destination and country of origin - in one single study allowed us to simultaneously observe the situation and experiences of skilled Moldovans in the destination countries and the conditions of the scientific community based in Moldova, and the perceptions of both regarding their propensity to establish cooperation links between

---

<sup>4</sup>The project ran from January 2010 to December 2012 and was funded by the SCOPES Programme of the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNF) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

both groups. The study advances knowledge of their professional and academic experiences and prospects, migratory projects and opinions regarding the role of the diaspora in home country development.

By offering new empirical evidence on skilled migration from the Republic of Moldova, this study helps to fill an important gap in the literature, given the fact that research on skilled migration from Moldova is practically inexistent. There is also a lack of evidence on the extent to which the cooperation links between the members of the scientific community, and those of the diaspora of the Republic of Moldova are established, and the ways that these connections could be encouraged for the benefit of both sides.

From the perspective of the destination countries, the study outlines the parameters of the Moldovan scientific diaspora and it captures the main determinants of their transnational cooperation actions with their colleagues based in the home country, as well as the factors associated with their potential return. Although skilled Moldovans do feel positive about their study and work experiences abroad, and notwithstanding the fact that they are appreciated human resources in the destination countries, they are also keen to help in the development of Moldova. This is based on their belief that they can create benefits through their accumulated knowledge and expertise and their professional experience abroad. They see themselves contributing through specific actions involving knowledge transfer, joint publications, scientific collaborations and facilitating the transfer of skills and knowledge. They also feel that they can help to inspire a work culture that is suited to innovation and development.

The study points to the fact that the transnational cooperation projects in which skilled Moldovans abroad have already been engaged are mostly sporadic and carried out on an individual basis, grounded on a personal interest rather than a collective one. However, there are some initial signs of informal networks and associative initiatives evolving towards more structured communitarian-based actions, which are considered vital in terms of increasing the scale and impact of transnational cooperation. Some of the obstacles that limit actions which were mentioned by the skilled Moldovans abroad include a lack of sufficient recognition of their development role among the community that is left behind, local resistance to change, as well as insufficient institutional support for their engagement.

The observations of the findings indicate that the mobilization of the resources of skilled migrants and their mobility plans hinge on the environment they are exposed to, and the opportunities on offer in both the host and the home countries. Even though emigration of skilled Moldovans may endure, return plans – involving students for the most part – are apparent but they will only become real actions if they see that available opportunities, incentives and enabling environments are provided in Moldova. Indeed, an enabling socioeconomic environment with adequate career prospects is a decisive factor that influences mobility decisions. As such, if economic and political conditions in Moldova remain unclear, skilled Moldovans may decide to settle abroad permanently.

The findings from the country of origin show that the scientific community based in Moldova recognizes the potential role that their colleagues from the diaspora could play in the scientific, economic and political development of the country, and they believe in the benefits of collaboration between both groups. However, the majority do not maintain permanent professional relations with their colleagues based abroad due to lost contacts and a lack of institutional support facilitating this endeavour. From our study we observed that even though there are high expectations of the contribution that the diaspora can make to home country development, the members of the Moldovan scientific community feel that the scientific diaspora is not visible enough, not mobilized enough and the specificities of their skills and expertise are unknown to the local community.

The findings suggest that the contributions of the scientific diaspora are conditioned by existing opportunities for the transfer and absorption of their overseas-accumulated skills and knowledge to the local context. While some supporting mechanisms provided by Moldovan institutions do already exist, we observed that these have not been properly disseminated among the scientific community, because its members are barely aware of them and make hardly any use of their potential benefits. Some additional mechanisms that Moldovan scientists believe could encourage the collaboration between the diaspora and the scientific community include: the establishment of a diaspora network platform, temporary return through short-term assignments on specific missions and involvement in joint targeted activities from a distance. The research concludes that apart from establishing or reinforcing formal channels of interaction to stimulate joint activities of knowledge transfer on a systematic manner, there is a need to improve the local structural situation in Moldova.

## **Objectives and content of this volume**

This volume entitled “Skilled migration and development practices: Republic of Moldova and the countries of South East Europe” tries to reveal the link between the two subjects - skilled migration and development practices - in a very innovative manner: by presenting national practices in a broader regional or even European context. Having the empirical evidence of Moldovan case as one of its core parts, the work concludes with a compendium of regional good practices at the level of national programmes and projects. The final task of the editors was to combine the results of a scientific investigation with practical case studies in order to identify the potential for a regional approach in this area. Because of the need for a common understanding on this point, there should be agreement among all the stakeholders involved – countries of origin, countries of destination, migrants and the society in the homeland, as well as international organisations and donors working in the region. In this regard, the authors conducted an analysis of the current situation within the area of skilled migration management in the region and they established the outlines for the new framework for action.

The introduction of Part I of the volume establishes the scene of skilled migration and development in South East Europe. Part II, “Skilled migration and diaspora policies in selected countries of South East Europe”, starts with a chapter on EU policies and initiatives on migration and development towards Eastern Partnership Countries: the implications for skilled mobility from Armenia, Georgia and Moldova, Oleg Chirita offers an analysis of several EU policies and legal tools used to address the mobility of highly skilled persons, looking at their intended objectives and implementation. The specific initiatives developed under the Mobility Partnership signed between EU and Moldova, Georgia, and Armenia would seem to be very relevant for the overall goal of the volume. These address the issue of highly skilled workers from the angle of return, reintegration and the prevention of ‘brain drain’. As the author concludes, there is a need to strengthen the external dimension of EU immigration policy in order to respond to the opportunities and challenges faced by the EU in the field of migration, and to help partner countries address their migration and mobility priorities.

The subsequent chapter of Part II looks at the evolution of diaspora policies in the Republic of Moldova, as a result of the persistent character of Moldovan migration and the shift in state policies targeting the diaspora. According to the author, the voice of Moldovan communities abroad is now being heard more and more. Even though the lobbying and the advocacy activities of Moldovan migrant communities are still at a nascent stage, they can already be felt in the different areas related to homeland development.

In the next chapter, Tanja Pavlov and Bernard Zeneli encourage discussion of the mechanisms to develop brain gain policies in order to engage highly skilled migrants in the socioeconomic and democratic development of the home countries. The authors present some very inspiring national policies and practices and they identify the difficult socioeconomic circumstances, and the way in which these policies are developed and implemented, as bottlenecks that obstruct their development. The authors advocate a strategic approach to development and migration in the region.

Starting from the challenge as to how to define highly skilled migration and how to calculate it statistically in the case of Ukraine, Antonina Rishko analyses the main research gaps as well as further opportunities and requirements for future studies in this area, assessing the main causes for the failures and achievements of Ukrainian policies in managing highly skilled migration. Her main conclusion is that occasional collaborations should be replaced by a well-designed and well-implemented state policy, with a single coordination body. Basing themselves on the example of Croatia, Caroline Hornstein Tomić and Borna Pleše look at a new perspective in the region – the need to attract foreign workers – particularly those with high educational profiles, while taking into consideration the condition of Croatia as an aging society and a new Member State of the European Union. The example of the Unity through Knowledge Fund (UKF) as an instrument for the further development of research infrastructure and connecting scientists and professionals as a means of enhancing international cooperation, and the competitiveness of domestic knowledge

production could act as an inspiration for the other countries in the region and for the donor community.

Part III of the volume is dedicated to the findings of the research project “Connecting the scientific diaspora of the Republic of Moldova to the scientific and socioeconomic development of the home country”. It presents new empirical evidence on skilled migration from the Republic of Moldova in two separate chapters. The first chapter is dedicated to the evidence on skilled Moldovans abroad while the second chapter focuses on the experiences of the scientific community based in Moldova. Both evidence-based analysis discuss the scientific diaspora option for Moldova within the links between migration and development with complementing perspectives of the country of origin and the countries of destination. The promising existing situation and the opportunities for cooperation between the scientific diaspora and the home country identified throughout the project encourage further work towards a regional policy within the area of skilled migration and development. Yet, considerable improvements to the local structural situation are necessary.

Part IV of the volume presents success stories from Moldova, Croatia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Serbia including Kosovo and Montenegro, which are the result of the mapping exercise carried out during the regional workshop “The highly-skilled mobility and the development of the research and innovation sector of the Republic of Moldova: the need for a structured vision”, organized on October 12 2012 in Chisinau, Republic of Moldova, which sought to identify available national and regional practices, useful instruments and strategies for capitalizing the knowledge and expertise of the members of the highly skilled diaspora in order to strengthen the research and innovation sector in the home countries of South Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans. These examples serve as proof of the current attempts undertaken by the national authorities as well as the community of donors to turn the brain drain phenomena into brain circulation.

As national experiences frequently show, skilled migrants move mainly in response to economic opportunities abroad, which are better than those available at home, but also in response to specially designed migration policies in the host countries. In the case of researchers and scientists, the conditions for research and development related activities in the host countries can also be an important pull factor.

In order to enhance the benefits for the countries of origin, the countries of South East Europe need to develop adequate scientific, technological and business environments that can offer enough rewarding opportunities for their skilled citizens who have developed their skills abroad and who want to return, and also to encourage those based in the home countries to stay. As the contributions in this volume show, possible policy instruments range from repatriation schemes for post-doctoral fellows and scientists to schemes that leverage diaspora networks. Other alternative options may provide skilled migrants with suitable platforms to transfer the expertise and skills they have accumulated overseas to the homeland, without any

need for a permanent physical return to the home country, thereby providing their colleagues back home with access to the knowledge networks in which they are involved in the host countries.

If the knowledge and examples included in this volume can help policy makers in the countries of South East Europe to formulate an effective skilled migration policy that will create enabling environments to benefit all the parties concerned, then we will have achieved our objective.

## References

1. Academy of Sciences of Moldova (ASM). (1990-2009). Annual reports on the activities of the Academy of Sciences of Moldova: Years 1990-2009. Chisinau, ASM Printing House.
2. Agunias D. R. and Newland K. (eds.) (2012). Developing a road map for engaging diasporas in development. A handbook for policy makers and practitioners in home and host countries. International Organization for Migration, Migration Policy Institute (publishers).
3. Barré, R., Hernández, V., Meyer, J-B. and Vinck, D. (2003). *Diasporas scientifiques. Comment les pays en développement peuvent-ils tirer parti de leurs chercheurs et de leurs ingénieurs expatriés?* Paris, Institute de la Recherche pour le Développement.
4. Bruner J. (2011). American Leadership in Science, Measured in Nobel Prizes. In: Forbes Magazin. [Online]. <http://www.forbes.com/sites/jonbruner/2011/10/05/nobel-prizes-and-american-leadership-in-science-infographic/>. [Accessed: 10.11.2013].
5. Cvetičanin, P., Petrović, M. (2013). Capacities, Practices and Problems of Scientific-Research Community in Serbia, In: Social Science Research Sector in Serbia: An Overview of the Current Situation, Main Challenges and Policy Recommendations. I.Stošić, B.Radovanović, M.Đukić (ed.). Belgrade, Institute of Economic Sciences. [in Serbian].
6. de Haas, H. (2008). Migration and development. A theoretical perspective. In: Working Paper 9. Oxford: University of Oxford, International Migration Institute.
7. de Haas, H. (2012). The migration and development pendulum: A critical view on research and policy. In: International Migration 5(3): 8-25.
8. Gaugas, P. (2004). Labour migration in Moldova: Contexts and controls. Higher education in Europe 29, no. 3: 343-52.
9. Germenji, E., Milo, L. (2009). Return and labour status at home: evidence from returnees in Albania. Journal of Southeast European and Black Sea Studies 9 (4): 497-517.
10. International Organization for Migration. (2012). Extended migration profile of the Republic of Moldova. Chisinau: IOM.
11. Kilic, T., Carletto, G., Davis, B., Zezza, A. (2007). Investing Back Home: Return Migration and Business Ownership in Albania. Washington, World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 4366.
12. Mai, N. (2011). Reluctant Circularities: the interplay between integration, return and circular migration within the Albanian migration to Italy. Italy, METOIKOS project, European University Institute.

13. Meyer, J.-B. (2001). Network Approach versus Brain Drain: Lessons from the Diaspora. In: *International Migration* 39(5): 91-110.
14. Mroukis, T., Gemi, E. (2011). Circular Migration Between Albania and Greece: A Case Study. Italy, METOIKOS project, European University Institute.
15. Nedelcu, M. 2008. Internet diaspora: How Romanian scholars abroad connect home. In: Working Paper 17. Florence: European University Institute, Research Network 1989.
16. OECD (2010). Entrepreneurship and Migrants. In: Report by the OECD Working Party on SMEs and Entrepreneurship, OECD.
17. Saxenian, A. (2005). From brain drain to brain circulation: transnational communities and regional upgrading in India and China. In: *Studies in Comparative International Development* 40(2): 35-61.
18. Song, H. (1992). From brain drain to reverse brain drain: three decades of Korean experience. In: *Science, Technology and Society*, 2(2): 317-45.
19. Tejada, G. (2012). Mobility, knowledge and cooperation: scientific diasporas as agents of development. In: *Migration and Development*, 10(18): 59-92.
20. Tejada, G. and Bolay, J.C. (2010). Scientific Diasporas as Development Partners: Skilled Migrants from Colombia, India and South Africa in Switzerland: Empirical Evidence and Policy Responses. Bern, Peter Lang.
21. Tejada, G., Varzari, V. and Protescu, S. (2013). Scientific diasporas, transnationalism and home-country development: Evidence from a study of skilled Moldovans abroad. In: *Journal of South East European and Black Sea Studies* 13, no. 2: 157-173.
22. UN (2013). Press release on High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development. [Online]. [http://www.un.org/en/ga/68/meetings/migration/pdf/UN%20press%20release\\_International%20Migration%20Figures.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/ga/68/meetings/migration/pdf/UN%20press%20release_International%20Migration%20Figures.pdf). [Accessed: 21.10.2013].
23. Wickramasekara, P. (2010). Transnational communities: Reflections on definitions, measurement and contributions. Tejada, G. and Bolay, J-C. (Eds.). In: *Scientific diasporas as development partners: Skilled migrants from Colombia, India and South Africa in Switzerland. Empirical evidence and policy responses*. Bern: Peter Lang: 137-178.
24. Yoon, B.S. (1992). Reverse brain drain in South Korea: state-led model. In: *Studies in Comparative International Development* 17(1): 4-26.

*Chapter 2:***EU policies and initiatives on migration and development towards Eastern Partnership Countries: the implications for skilled mobility from Armenia, Georgia and Moldova***Oleg CHIRITA<sup>1</sup>**International Centre for Migration Policy Development,  
Brussels, Belgium***Abstract**

In recent years, the EU has embarked on a process of crafting a more consistent policy for the admission of skilled migrants into its territory as part of its quest to become “the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world”, while boosting its position as an “international centre for research” and responding to the “strong competition for talent” within the global labour market.

This paper offers an overview and an analysis of several policies and legal tools that the EU uses to address the mobility of highly skilled persons. It looks at the parallels between the intended policy objectives and the implementation of the relevant policy instruments by highlighting a set of opportunities and challenges and their relevance to selected Eastern Partnership<sup>2</sup> countries (Armenia, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova).

The article also examines the EU external dimension of immigration policy from the perspective of the most advanced mechanism of recent years, the Mobility Partnership (MP). This tool has been developed and implemented as part of the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility. Since the pilot MP was signed between EU and Moldova (2008), two more Eastern Partnership countries followed suit: Georgia (2009) and Armenia (2011). The MPs address the issue of highly skilled workers from the angle of return, reintegration and the prevention of ‘brain drain’. Therefore, this paper analyses the scope of the various initiatives presented under the MPs with a view to grasping their impact and their implications on ‘brain drain’, the return of the highly qualified and on facilitating mobility and academic exchanges.

The article concludes that the MP interventions, targeting migrant workers in general and skilled migrants in particular, have been marginal and have received scant attention

---

<sup>1</sup>Oleg.Chirita@icmpd.org. Disclaimer: The content of this article is the sole responsibility of the author and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of ICMPD.

<sup>2</sup>The Eastern Partnership Initiative targets Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

compared to the various security-related actions. Consequently, a more coherent approach should be deployed for the next phase of the MPs, given the fact that the potential to meet expectations and to align the policy orientations of the three Eastern Partners and the EU with their (joint) interests and objectives has not yet been fully explored. Ultimately, the MPs need to adopt an enhanced migrant-centred approach.

**Keywords:** EU Immigration Policy, skilled migration, Blue Card, Mobility Partnership, Eastern Partners.

### **The context: why to take part in the ‘global competition for talent’?**

On 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2007, the European Commission (EC) adopted the Directive on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of highly qualified employment (‘the Blue Card’ Directive). At a press conference, Vice-President Franco Frattini, the Commissioner responsible for Freedom, Security and Justice, stated that:

Europe's ability to attract highly skilled migrants is a measure of its international strength. We want Europe to become at least as attractive as favourite migration destinations such as Australia, Canada and the USA. We have to make highly skilled workers change their perception of Europe's labour market, governed as they are by inconsistent admission procedures.

Only a few days before this event, the same Commissioner had revealed that globally 85% of unskilled labour goes to the EU with only 5% going to the USA, whereas 55% of skilled labour goes to the USA with only 5% heading to the EU. His declaration was a straightforward one: “We have to reverse these figures with a new vision, and that calls for new tools”<sup>3</sup>.

Concretely, *the Europe 2020 Strategy*<sup>4</sup> urges a special effort to attract highly skilled migrants in order to ensure the vitality and competitiveness of the EU. Furthermore, *the Agenda for new skills and jobs*<sup>5</sup> estimates that there will be a shortage of about one million professionals in the health sector by 2020, and this figure rises to two million if we also take ancillary healthcare professionals into account. By 2015, the shortage of ICT practitioners will be between 384,000 and 700,000 jobs<sup>6</sup>. The EU will also require a very large increase in the number of researchers, including those from third countries, if the economy is to become as sufficiently dynamic and innovative to remain competitive globally.

The OECD signals that the international competition for talent will increase. If immigration remains at current levels, by 2015 it will not be sufficient to maintain

---

<sup>3</sup>Reference: SPEECH/07/526: [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_SPEECH-07-526\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-07-526_en.htm)

<sup>4</sup>COM(2010) 2020 final, 3.3.2010

<sup>5</sup>COM(2010) 682, 23.11.2010

<sup>6</sup>Monitoring e-Skills demand and supply in Europe – current situation, scenarios and future development forecasts until 2015, DG ECFIN

the working-age population in many OECD countries, particularly in the EU. At a press conference in Brussels to launch the Report (June 2012), the Commissioner for Home Affairs, Cecilia Malmström, stated that “we are extremely concerned about demographic trends in Europe”, pointing out that the Blue Card system “is fairly limited”. The Employment Commissioner László Andor noted that highly qualified migrants had become a “strategic resource” for the EU in the North because of the ageing population, and in the South because of weak education and training systems.

### **The ‘Europeanisation’ of the admission policies of Third Country Nationals (TCNs) for employment reasons**

The EU’s evolving policies and legislation on labour migration reflect the changes in the perception of the costs or benefits resulting from immigration (Chalmers et al. 2006). A retrospective analysis of policy and law-making processes shows the admission of TCNs for employment purposes is an area where EU Member States (EU MS) have been reluctant to harmonise rules and delegate increased competencies to the EU. The EU Member States have traditionally considered that this particular migration policy falls under their sovereignty and their exclusive rights, and therefore they have preserved their powers to decide who is entitled to enter their territory, and they have preferred to “make labour market regulations a manifestation of the application of the principle of subsidiarity” (Carrera et al. 2011). Indeed, the national self-interests of Member States continue to dominate the immigration policy in Europe.

With the *Amsterdam Treaty* (1999) entering into force, the regulation of the entry and residence conditions and the rights of TCNs with regard to employment was transferred to the shared competencies of the EU. This was further stipulated in the *Tampere Programme* (October 1999), which sought to develop a “common policy on asylum and immigration”, taking into account the principle of fair treatment of legally-residing TCNs and long-term residents. Importantly, the Programme’s Conclusions ascertain that the European Council acknowledges the need for an *approximation of national legislations* on the admission and residence conditions for TCNs, based on a shared assessment of economic and demographic developments within the EU, as well as the situation in the countries of origin.

In 2000, the EC presented the *Communication on a Community Immigration Policy*<sup>7</sup> and urged the opening up of immigration channels for economic purposes as a means of meeting urgent needs for both skilled and unskilled workers. As a result, the EC tabled a proposal in 2001 for a directive on “the conditions of entry and residence of third country nationals for the purpose of paid employment and self-employed activities” and it laid down the entry and residence conditions for all TCNs exercising paid and self-employed activities, the aim being to ensure a horizontal approximation of these rules. The reaction of the EU Member States was far from enthusiastic and the draft did not garner much support.

---

<sup>7</sup>COM(2000) 757 final

The 2004 *Hague Programme*<sup>8</sup> also acknowledged the need for a “comprehensive approach” with regard to (...) entry and admission policies (...) and it gave a greater impetus to developments within the area of legal migration. In pursuing the *Policy Plan on Legal Migration*<sup>9</sup>(2005), the EC drafted four directives: (i) “on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of highly qualified employment”; (ii) “on the conditions of entry and residence of seasonal workers” (iii) “on the procedures regulating the entry into, the temporary stay and residence of Intra-Corporate Transferees (ICT)”; and (iv) “on the conditions of entry and residence of remunerated trainees”. Although the EC acknowledged the added value of a horizontal framework, it had to follow a ‘piece-meal’ approach promoted and supported by Member States.

In *the European Pact on Immigration and Asylum* (2008), the Council made “five basic commitments”, including “organising legal immigration to take account of the priorities, needs and reception capacities determined by each MS (...)”. To that end, the Council agreed to increase the attractiveness of the EU for highly qualified workers and to take measures to further facilitate the arrival of students and researchers and their movement within the EU.

The *Lisbon Treaty* (December 2009) brought a number of significant transformations to the decision-making process and it further harmonised the entry and residence conditions for TCNs. Fundamentally, for the first time the Treaty incorporated a special provision peculiar to labour immigration policy and it ‘ironed out’ a controversial issue raised by EU Member States concerning the legal basis enabling the EU to legislate in the area of labour migration.

The ‘internal’ developments on EU immigration policy were accompanied by efforts to establish a framework to manage migration through political dialogue and practical cooperation with third countries. Consequently, the adoption of the “*EU Global Approach to Migration*” (GAM) in 2005 marked the reinforcement of the ‘external dimension’ of EU immigration policy, with the Council underlining the need for a “balanced, global and coherent approach, covering policies to combat illegal immigration and, in cooperation with third countries, harnessing the benefits of legal migration”. The GAM was renewed in 2011, becoming “*the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility*” (GAMM) to make it “more strategic and more efficient, with stronger links and alignment between relevant EU policy areas and between the external and internal dimensions of those policies”. The GAMM is based on four pillars, which correspond to the following policy areas (i) legal migration and mobility; (ii) irregular migration and trafficking in human beings; (iii) international protection and asylum; and (iv) migration and development. In more practical terms, the GAMM identifies a set of priorities, including mobility for students, researchers and academics, twinning between higher education and training institutions, recognition of qualifications etc.

---

<sup>8</sup>The Hague Programme: Strengthening Freedom, Security and Justice in the European Union, (2005/C 53/01)  
<sup>9</sup>COM(2005) 669 final, Brussels, 21.12.2005

Although the need for certain categories of migrants and their contribution is widely acknowledged across the EU, labour migration remains a controversial issue and “the frequent gap between rhetoric and practice in this area is the endemic problem of conflicting interests between those with a stake in policy” (Boswell and Geddes 2011). As a result, the EU’s framework on legal migration has developed only gradually. Since 1999, the EU has intended to craft a “common immigration policy”, a process accompanied by the development and adoption of legal instruments targeting specific categories of TCNs and policy tools (re)confirming a wide set of policy options and priorities, which have not yet been fully realised. Despite the efforts to harmonise practices across the EU, labour immigration policy is still dispersed, mainly due to the ‘protective’ stance of the EU MS in this area. At the same time, the immigration policy is increasingly reflected in the EU’s external relations as an incentive (or compensation mechanism) for transferring the EU’s irregular immigration policies to third countries (Carrera et al. 2011).

### **The global competition for the ‘best and brightest’: EU legal instruments for the admission of highly skilled TCNs**

On the day the EC unveiled the ‘Blue Card’ Directive proposal, the Commission President José Manuel Barroso, stated that “*With today’s proposal for an EU Blue Card we send a clear signal: highly skilled migrants are welcome in the EU*”. The Directive on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of highly qualified employment was adopted by the Council on 25th May 2009. Its adoption was regarded as a triumph of marketing over substantive policy-making (Cerna 2010), considering the EU MS’ dominant role over EU immigration policy. The Directive is a horizontal legal instrument instituting a ‘one-stop-shop’ fast-track procedure for the admission of highly qualified workers from third countries, based on a common definition (article 2) and common criteria for admission (article 5). The Directive constitutes the first harmonising instrument in the area of highly skilled recruitment and employment at an EU level.

The purpose of this Directive is to determine: (a) the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for more than three months in the territory of the Member States for the purpose of highly qualified employment as EU Blue Card holders, and of their family members; and (b) the conditions for entry and residence of third-country nationals and of their family members under point (a) in Member States other than the first Member State.

The admission of highly qualified third-country workers is based on common criteria (article 5), which include, *inter alia*, a valid work contract, relevant professional qualifications and a minimum salary level, which must be at least 1.5 times the average gross annual salary in the MS concerned. The application for a Blue Card should be examined either when the TCN concerned is residing outside the territory of the MS to which he wishes to be admitted, or when he is already residing in that MS as a holder of a valid residence permit or national long-stay visa. The Directive does not create the right of admission. As such, the issuance of cards remains subject to a “positive decision” taken by the competent authorities of the MS, should the

applicant fulfil the necessary requirements. In addition to the established criteria, the decision may be also based on the application of national quotas and labour market tests. The admitted workers will receive a permit ('the EU Blue Card'), enabling them to work and reside in the territory of a MS.

For the first two years of legal employment, the Blue Card holders' access to the labour market shall be restricted to the exercise of paid employment activities that meet the conditions for admission. After these first two years, Member States may grant the persons concerned equal treatment to that of nationals with regard to access to highly qualified employment. The Blue Card holders enjoy the same treatment as the nationals of the EU MS with regard to working conditions; freedom of association; education and vocational training; recognition of diplomas, certificates and other professional qualifications; social security, free access to the entire territory of the Member State concerned etc. The Blue Card holders also enjoy favourable conditions for family reunification and the right to move to another Member State for employment purposes. Applications for long-term residence also receive more favourable treatment than other categories of TCNs.

After eighteen months of legal residence as a Blue Card holder in the first Member State, the person concerned and his family members may move to another Member State for the purpose of highly qualified employment. However, the worker must satisfy the same conditions again (job offer, qualification, salary etc.), in accordance with specific criteria established by the second EU MS. Therefore, the main question under these circumstances is related to the second MS recognising the same qualifications. In fact, a degree that one MS recognises as qualifying for a Blue Card may be refused by another MS.

The Directive has a number of shortcomings. Firstly, the EU Member States maintain the right to determine the volume of immigrant workers that can be admitted on their labour markets, thereby limiting the 'open door policy' and not leading to harmonisation (Collet 2008). Secondly, the Directive does not shed light on the recognition of qualifications. In 2012, the Commissioner for Home Affairs stated that the Blue Card system "is fairly limited". Europe has to improve the recognition of qualifications, but here "the political climate is difficult". As such, the Directive does not deal (procedurally) with the recognition of the qualifications and skills of TCNs, leaving the EU MS to decide how to recognise formal skills. This indicates that EU MS labour markets are still too different to manage fully-fledged common immigration policies (Collett 2009). Thirdly, the Directive does not address a number of 'structural barriers to mobility' (Collett 2008), such as portable social security contributions, including pension schemes, health insurance, taxes and other elements, which will still remain different among Member States, and as such will impose restraints upon the TCNs.

Finally, the Directive does not replace the existing national schemes, which are sometimes more favourable, therefore preventing high-skilled workers from being admitted under the 'Blue Card Directive' rules and perpetuating the competition among EU MS. Furthermore, the national systems are diverse and based on different

criteria. For example, the *Austrian* Red-White-Red Card point system is based on personal and labour-market related criteria. Under the *Belgian* system, a work permit is issued to highly skilled workers without the need for prior labour market analysis. A highly skilled worker is a person earning a gross annual salary of at least €37,721. To qualify for a Blue Card, in addition to other criteria, the candidates must submit a contract of undetermined duration or one for at least one year with an annual gross salary of at least €49,995. The *Finnish* national scheme for specialists requires a gross salary of at least €3,000 per month approximately, while a Blue Card applicant should receive a gross minimum salary of €4,667. The *Dutch* national system targets two categories of TCNs. Under the “Highly Skilled Migrant Scheme”, candidates should present a contract guaranteeing an independent sustainable income of between €38,141 (in 2013) per year (for persons under 30) and €52,010 (in 2013) a year (for persons aged 30 and above). The “Admission scheme for highly educated persons” is aimed at TCNs who have obtained a Master’s or PhD degree from a recognised Dutch higher education institution or from a foreign university listed in the top 150 of the 2007 edition of the ranking published in the Times Higher Education Supplement or by Jiao Tong Shanghai University. Persons eligible under this scheme are entitled to stay for a period of up to 12 months to find a job as a highly skilled migrant or to set up an innovative company. Applicants for a Blue Card must present a contract for highly qualified employment for at least one year and earn at least €60,952 gross (in 2013).

In addition to the ‘Blue Card’ Directive, further relevant EU legislation targeting highly skilled TCNs includes the *Directive 2005/71 (12.10.2005) on a specific procedure for admitting third-country nationals for the purposes of scientific research*<sup>10</sup> (‘The Researchers’ Directive’). The rationale for adopting this legislative tool derived from the need to consolidate the European research policy and to establish the European Research Area. In March 2000, the Lisbon European Council set the objective of the EU becoming the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world by 2010. Therefore, the Directive aims to contribute to making the EU more attractive to researchers from around the world and to boost its position as an international centre for research.

Since researchers play an essential role in driving EU growth and competitiveness, the Directive provides a fast-track procedure for the admission of non-EU researchers for stays of more than three months if the researcher has a “hosting agreement” with a research organisation. The researcher undertakes to complete the research project, while the organisation hosts the researcher for that purpose. A TCN may apply for a resident permit on the basis of such an agreement. The overall aim of this Directive is to reduce the obstacles to entry and residence in the EU for TCN researchers and to grant them intra-EU mobility rights.

The Directive establishes important rights to which researchers are entitled and these include teaching, equal treatment with respect to the recognition of diplomas,

---

<sup>10</sup>The Directive does not apply to the United Kingdom and Denmark

certificates and other professional qualifications in accordance with the relevant national procedures; working conditions; social security branches; tax benefits; access to goods and services; and mobility between MS.

*The EC Report on the application of the Researchers' Directive*<sup>11</sup> (2011) concludes that the Member States have “transposed most of the key elements of the Directive” and suggests a number of improvements concerning the further implementation of the Directive, in particular with regard to clear and unambiguous definitions of researchers' rights. According to the findings of the Study on the implementation and the impact of the Directive<sup>12</sup>, a majority of TCN researchers did not encounter any disadvantages or discrimination in their host country or at their host organisation. Nevertheless, some comments by TCN researchers imply that they still encounter difficulties with authorities, the bureaucracy at their host organisations, at their workplace, or in their daily lives. These difficulties are linked to their residence status, or to the fact that they are not EU citizens<sup>13</sup>.

The adoption of the ‘Blue Card’ Directive and the Researchers' Directive could be regarded as a step further in the development of the EU's immigration policy, and it shows the interest in promoting the immigration of brains as a competing strategy on the international market. It is still early to evaluate the impact of the Blue Card Directive due to the fact that the transposition took place at a very slow pace in a large number of cases and the timeframe established to report on its implementation. Although the Directive remains a good tool to reduce differences at an EU level with regard to the admission of highly skilled immigrants, important procedural shortcomings create restraints during implementation and in attracting migrants. The evaluation of the implementation of the Researchers Directive revealed a number of unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles, which have been addressed in a new Proposal for a Directive on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of research, studies, pupil exchange, remunerated and unremunerated training, voluntary service and au pairing, presented by the Commission on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2013.

### **Brain drain – brain gain: attempts to address the development-migration dilemma**

The adoption of the ‘Blue Card’ Directive was accompanied by criticism of the risks of causing brain drain in less developed third countries. According to a study (D'artis Kancs and Pavel Ciaian 2010), the Blue Card is expected to reduce human capital in third countries and it will also have a negative impact on knowledge capital. The authors concluded that “without appropriate policy responses, the adopted Directive makes developing country growth prospects rather bleak than blue”. The EU policy option to attract highly skilled workers has questioned the relevance of the EU development policy and some authors have argued that migration and development

<sup>11</sup>COM (2011) 901 final, 20.12.2011

<sup>12</sup>Commissioned by EC and carried out by ICMPD, 2011

<sup>13</sup>ICMPD Policy Brief, Implementation and Impact of the Researchers' Directive, March 2012

policies may actually have “conflicting objectives” (Nyberg-Sorensen et al. 2002). The debate was equally linked to the Millennium Development Goals as the lack of specialists in key development sectors hampers the achievement of these goals.

The Assessment<sup>14</sup> of the impact of the Directive considers this concern and proposes a number of initiatives to prevent the negative effects of brain drain. The EC identifies measures targeting both third countries and TCNs. In the first case, the “preferred option” is the promotion of circular migration, before and after the EU long-term residence has been acquired; while in the case of TCNs, the preferred option is mainly connected to the right of family members to follow the mobile high-skilled worker. In implementing the Directive, the EU MS should refrain from pursuing active recruitment in developing countries in sectors that are suffering from a lack of personnel. In this regard, the Directive (notably its Recital) lays down a number of measures which could be undertaken by MS, including the development of ethical recruitment policies and principles applicable to key sectors (e.g. the health sector). The measures should be strengthened by the development and application of mechanisms, guidelines and other tools to facilitate, as appropriate, circular and temporary migration, as well as other measures that would minimise the negative impacts and maximise the positive impacts that highly skilled immigration has on developing countries in order to turn ‘brain drain’ into ‘brain gain’. In addition, absences from EU territory without interrupting the period of legal and continuous residence necessary to be eligible for EU long-term resident status should be allowed in order to foster the mobility of highly qualified workers between the EU MS and their countries of origin (circular migration).

In the same vein, the Researchers’ Directive underlines that its implementation “should not encourage a brain drain from emerging or developing countries”. Furthermore, the Directive urges MS to take back-up measures to support the reintegration of researchers into their countries of origin in addition to backing the movement of researchers. Even though the Directive places an emphasis on the necessity for partnerships with the countries of origin for the purpose of undertaking practical measures, it does not provide further indications as to what such initiatives might include.

In spite of the stated policy measures, neither Directive contains sufficient safeguards to mitigate brain drain from third countries. For instance, the ‘Blue Card’ Directive references to circular migration are very limited and contradicted by the provisions encouraging highly skilled workers to reside permanently in the EU (Sjodin 2011). The effectiveness of measures encouraging MS to develop and apply ethical recruitment policies is questionable since such tools should be adopted outside the scope of this legal instrument. Furthermore, the Directive leaves it to the discretion of the MS (optional clause) to reject an application for an EU Blue Card in order to ensure ethical recruitment in sectors that suffer from a lack of qualified workers in the countries of origin. As such, this does not entail an obligation to pursue ethical

---

<sup>14</sup>SEC (2007) 1403, Brussels, 23.10.2007

recruitment. All in all, the reference to refraining from active recruitment in sectors suffering from a lack of personnel is laid down in the Recital, while this obligation is omitted in the actual provisions of the Directive.

### **‘Externalisation’ of the admission policy: the case of Mobility Partnerships between the EU - Armenia, Georgia and Moldova**

Labour migration is a significant phenomenon in Armenia, Georgia and Moldova to varying degrees. Among the six Eastern Partnership countries, these three States register the highest migration by percentage of total population: Armenia (28.2%), Georgia (25.1%) and Moldova (21.5%). In general, migrant workers from the Eastern Partners tend to have relatively higher educational levels than those from other developing countries. In spite of this, the vast majority of migrants work in unskilled jobs or outside their area of expertise.

The Migration Profile of Armenia indicates that 15.5 per cent of male emigrants and 21.6 per cent of female emigrants have a higher level of education and that the average age of emigrants is 36 for male and 31 for women. An ETF Report on Eastern Partners indicates that over 44 per cent of Georgian emigrants have a university degree. The Extended Migration Profile of Georgia finds that the two largest professional categories of migrants workers are teachers (18%) and doctors or nurses (11%), followed by scientists, economists, engineers, architects and lawyers. The average age of Moldovan emigrants is 35 (Ganta 2012). In a study, ETF indicates that in Moldova there is a slight tendency to indicate that well-educated people move abroad more often (from around 8 per cent (2000) to 12 per cent (2008) of all migrants). The findings of another ETF study (2007) show that a high share of migrants expected to work as casual workers and perform unskilled work. It is important to note that almost a third of those who worked in skilled jobs in their country expected to work abroad as unskilled workers. The proportion of people with high levels of education expecting to take such jobs was quite high, varying from 23 per cent for casual work to 46 per cent for unskilled work. A study on the occupational choices of return migrants in Moldova (Borodak and Piracha 2010) finds that better educated Moldovans are more likely to migrate and less likely to go into wage employment on their return to the home country. This is probably because of the tax structure, which results in people working in the informal sector to avoid paying certain taxes. Internal migration policies in these countries are largely based on the assumption that migration has been accompanied by a set of negative consequences. As such, in Armenia, the “overall migration situation does not remain constructive”<sup>15</sup>; whilst in Moldova, migration is viewed as an “adaptation strategy” and one “of the main challenges” given its scope and negative effects<sup>16</sup>. Externally, the Governments of Armenia, Georgia and Moldova have embarked on an innovative cooperation framework with the EU within the area of migration – Mobility

---

<sup>15</sup>Concept for the Policy of the State Regulation of Migration in the Republic of Armenia, Protocol Decision no. 51, Government of Armenia, 30.12.2010.

<sup>16</sup>The National Strategy on Migration and Asylum (2011 – 2020) adopted on 08.09.2011

Partnership (MP). As one of the most important tools of the GAMM, the MP is a non-binding and flexible instrument and it represents a ‘sophisticated’ (SEC(2009) 1240 final) framework for cooperation based on mutual offers of project initiatives and commitments.

*The Joint Declaration of the Mobility Partnership*<sup>17</sup> between the EU and the Republic of Moldova was signed on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2008<sup>18</sup> (15 EU MS joined it); the Joint Declaration with Georgia was signed on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2009<sup>19</sup> (16 EU MS); and the one with Armenia followed on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2011 (10 EU MS).

The priorities of all three MPs are: (1) mobility, legal migration and integration; (2) migration and development; (3) border management and the fight against illegal migration and trafficking of human beings; and (4) asylum-related issues. Overall, the MPs are tailor-made instruments, laying down country-specific objectives and initiatives. More specifically, the objectives in the area of Migration and Development, which are quite similar in all three Joint Declarations, have the following aims:

- to promote and support the voluntary return, sustainable reintegration of returning migrants through the implementation of specific joint programmes offering training, possibilities to improve migrants' employment qualifications and assistance in finding jobs, and tailored circular migration schemes; to inform citizens abroad about the labour market situation and work opportunities in their home countries, as well as return possibilities; to build up cooperation on the training of returning migrant workers and to promote the transfer of social security benefits; to develop entrepreneurship and build a legal framework in the field of small and medium enterprises; and to address the social dimension of migration in the country of origin;
- to prevent, reduce and counteract the negative effects of the brain drain and brain waste, including through return policies targeting specific categories of migrants and through the adoption of codes of ethical recruitment, and through the promotion of the return and temporary migration of highly skilled migrants; to facilitate the recognition of skills and qualifications, exchanges of students, researchers and specialists, training and temporary exchanges and work programmes, including the assistance of the ETF, to develop a labour-matching tool.

The materialisation of these objectives is performed through various initiatives implemented and funded by the signatories and partners of the MPs. So far, 59 projects have been completed and 29 are being implemented in Moldova. In Georgia, 3 initiatives have ended and 29 are currently being implemented. The MP

---

<sup>17</sup>Council of the European Union: <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/08/st09/st09460-ad01.en08.pdf>

<sup>18</sup>Council of the European Union:

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/en/er/100941.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/er/100941.pdf).

<sup>19</sup>Council of the European Union: <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/09/st16/st16396-ad01.en09.pdf>

with Armenia is supported by 11 projects. All in all, both the completed and ongoing projects have touched upon a wide spectrum of policy making, institutional developments, practical ways of cooperation and have largely targeted various public authorities (horizontal support), while migrants (including the high skilled) have been covered to a moderate extent.

The most notable initiatives on highly skilled migrants within the framework of the EU – Moldova MP have aimed at: (i) promoting the voluntary return of migrants, notably highly skilled migrants, in order to counteract the brain drain; (ii) instituting a special leave for extended absences for Moldovan residents without the loss of rights of residence, thereby stimulating their return for a certain period in order to contribute to development with their knowledge (five experts returned to Moldova); (iii) promoting the temporary return of representatives of the Moldovan Scientific Diaspora (MSD) (support to over 30 MSD members for short-term visits in Moldova to carry out research activities) and promoting the return of Moldovan overseas graduates; (iv) better managing the mobility of health professionals; (v) developing the labour market through interventions targeting the recognition of skills and qualifications, developing the Guide on Quality in Education and facilitating the participation of citizens in mobility programmes (higher education, doctoral studies, research etc.).

The focus of the very few projects on highly qualified migrants carried out under the EU – Georgia MP has been on: (i) data collection through surveys of migrants' skills and qualifications; (ii) enhancing the circular mobility of students for professional development and that of young professionals for exchange programmes; (iii) providing information and financial support, as well as job-finding support for highly skilled migrants willing to return to Georgia; and (iv) offering extended absences to Georgians to return home without losing the right of residence in EU. The two actions targeting highly skilled migrants under the EU–Armenia MP relate to: (i) the promotion of student and professional exchanges by offering scholarships for Master's and Doctoral studies; and (ii) the recognition of academic and professional qualifications by investigating the links between migration and skills.

The MPs are regarded as a success by both the EU and the MPs countries. The interventions of the MPs have assisted the partners in addressing relevant issues and priorities related to migration and mobility, strengthening cooperation at both a national and bi-lateral level, facilitating the exchange of various practices and developing joint policy measures. The MPs continue to be an obvious 'capacity building facility' for national authorities with regard to policymaking, the regulatory framework and institutional capacities to manage migration.

The MP initiatives have a significant impact on security-related policy areas, such as readmission, border security and management, document security, anti-trafficking measures etc. Consequently, certain scholars have argued that the MP could be regarded as a 'Security partnership' for the EU MS or as 'Insecurity' partnerships for the coherency and legitimacy of the EU's labour immigration policy, as well as the liberty and security of the third-country workers (Carrera et al. 2009).

In contrast, certain areas (e.g. priority 1 of the MPs) have been ‘side-lined’ or they have not received the desired attention as the number of projects and the scope of intervention is very modest. As a result, there are very few initiatives to foster circular labour migration, in general (let alone schemes targeting high-skilled migrants) and they are limited to small-scale, bilateral pilot schemes.

Actions aimed at facilitating return and preventing brain drain have been marginal under all three MPs. For instance, the Evaluation Report of the EU–Moldova MP 2008-2011<sup>20</sup> acknowledges that the impact of the projects on brain drain remains rather limited. It further explains that “the measures addressing brain drain go far beyond the area of migration policy, relying mainly on the need to foster investment and the growth of the Moldovan economy”. In the case of Moldova, it seems that the growing number of academic exchange students and researchers between Moldova and the EU MS is not necessarily due to the interventions of the MP, but rather because of the existing bilateral framework, which falls outside its scope. The number of projects fostering academic exchange is very limited under all the MPs.

## Conclusions

It is obvious that the EU needs to attract high-skilled workers and researchers who can contribute to its growth with their knowledge and skills, as it seeks to meet the strong competition for talent world-wide and become a more dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy. In spite of this very evident need and ambition, the development of common admission rules has proved to be a tedious process, meeting resistance from MS, in particular because of national social conditions and labour structures, trends and market needs, different admission policies and legislation for certain categories of TCNs (i.e. labour demand-driven approach, points-based system, quotas etc.), economic interest groups (Caviedes 2006), varying preferences for certain categories of migrants, coalition influences (Cerna 2010), heterogenous welfare interests and demographic forecasts.

If a sectoral policy approach is followed, the adoption of the ‘Blue Card’ and the Researchers’ Directives may be regarded as an achievement towards the development of the EU’s immigration policy, especially with the increasing attention that the EU and the EU MS attach to the need to promote the immigration of ‘brains’ as a competing strategy on the international market. After more than five years since its transposition, the Researchers’ Directive was recently amended by the EC with the aim of removing difficulties encountered by those targeted by its scope. It is still soon to judge the impact of the ‘Blue Card’ Directive, given the reporting conditions and the transposition timeframe. However, its evident shortfalls could be detrimental to the objective of attracting highly qualified migrants.

Both pieces of legislation raise the dilemma of finding a balance between the EU’s economic needs and the development needs of third countries. Addressing this does

---

<sup>20</sup>Based on a questionnaire answered by 11 EU MS, various Moldovan institutions, EU institutions, implementing partners, academia

not seem to be an easy task since it requires coherence between the EU immigration and development policies and the elaboration of policy measures whose implementation would be efficient in practice. Neither Directive provides sufficient safeguards to mitigate brain drain from third countries. Although the legal texts of both instruments refer to a number of policy options, such as circular migration schemes, cooperation with third countries and ethical recruitment etc., these measures should be mainly adopted outside the scope of these Directives, while many references are optional. Therefore, a real brain gain for the countries of origin seems disputable.

Consequently, the strengthening of the external dimension of the EU immigration policy is essential in order to respond to the opportunities and challenges faced by EU in the field of migration and to support partner countries in addressing their migration and mobility priorities. GAMM, as the overarching framework of EU external migration policy, is expected to be more complementary with EU development policies, so that a balance can be provided between the needs of the EU and those of the partner countries. As the “main strategic comprehensive and long-term cooperation framework for migration management with third countries” (SEC(2009) 1240 final), the MP may offer a favourable venue for meeting expectations and addressing the priorities of both sides, if the advantages of its potential are better absorbed. Furthermore, the four strategies applied in ‘talent competition’ – immigration policy, return policy, circulation policy, and diaspora policy (Reiner 2010) - could be pursued further for mutual benefits, under the MP’s initiatives.

Since the Partnership bears the ‘label’ of ‘Mobility’, an analysis of the initiatives under MP’s point to the fact that the actions implying opportunities for highly skilled migrants and academic exchanges have been very few, and have targeted a very limited number of persons so far. In fact, the activities developed within the framework of the various projects give the impression that public servants were rather more keenly targeted (through capacity building) than migrants were. It might be implied, therefore, that the ‘mobility’ label is analogous to the ‘transfer’ of know-how, good practices and experience from EU MS to the practitioners and policymakers of partner countries. The relevance of this question is mainly related to the expected added value and innovation of MP’s in comparison to other existing migration-related cooperation frameworks.

It is evident that more consistent and determined efforts are required within the areas targeting migrant workers. As far as high-skilled workers are concerned, the partners of the MP’s could consider various avenues and options, such as the development and application of mechanisms, guidelines and other means to facilitate circular and temporary migration; the elaboration and application of tools (agreements, registers of skills etc.) concerning ethical recruitment; or to develop specific reporting mechanisms with a view to identifying and possibly counteracting the possible impacts in terms of ‘brain drain’, and avoiding ‘brain waste’. Additionally, practical efforts towards the recognition of skills and qualifications, the portability of social benefits, tax payments etc. could be undertaken, given the fact that these rights are

granted under the 'Blue Card' Directive, but the means of implementation are left to the discretion of the EU MS. The partners could show more creativity and test various alternatives, since the MP could be equally regarded as a 'laboratory' for pilot-projects and innovative migration policies (i.e. grouping EU MS to develop circular migration schemes for high-qualified migrants etc.).

In more practical terms, the policymakers from the EU and Armenia, Georgia and Moldova may consider redefining the scope of the MPs and grounding them more coherently in their strategic objectives, by gradually shifting the emphasis towards policy areas that need more structural interventions and which have been 'marginalised' over the last few years. The MPs certainly need an enhanced migrant-centred and migrant-oriented approach and their existing potential needs to be better explored, utilised and capitalised upon.

## References

1. Angenendt, S. and Parkes, R. (2010). The Blue Card Impasse: Three Options for EU Policy on Highly Qualified Immigrants. German Institute for International and Security Affairs Comments.
2. Boeles P., Den Heijer M., Loddler G., Wouters K. (2009). European Migration Law, Intersentia.
3. Borg Albersten, K. (2012). Europeanising labour migration policies and pursuing national objectives. DIIS Policy Brief.
4. Borodak, D., Piracha M. (2010). Occupational choice of return migrants in Moldova. IZA DP No. 5207.
5. Boswell, C. (2003). The "external dimension" of EU immigration and asylum policy, *International Affairs*, 79 (3): 619-638.
6. Boswell, C., Geddes, A. (2011). *Migration and Mobility in the European Union*. Palgrave Macmillan.
7. Calleman, C. (2001). The Blue Card Directive and its safeguards against Brain Drain. Örebro Universitet.
8. Carrera, S., Faure Atger, A., Guild E., Kostakopoulou, D. (2011). Labour Immigration Policy in the EU: A Renewed Agenda for Europe 2020. CEPS Policy Brief.
9. Carrera, S., Hernández i Sagrera, R. (2009). The Externalisation of the EU's Labour Immigration Policy Towards Mobility or Insecurity Partnerships? CEPS Working Document No. 321/October 2009.
10. Caviedes, A. (2006), Cracks in the Fortress Europe? How Sectoral Needs Shape Labour Migration Policy, Department of Political Science, University of Wisconsin-Madison.
11. Cerna, L. (2007) The Varieties of High-Skilled Immigration Policies: Sectoral Coalitions and Outcomes in Advanced Industrial Countries. Paper presented at the European Union Studies Association Conference, Montreal, Canada, 17-19 May 2007.
12. Cerna, L. (2008). Towards an EU Blue Card? The delegation of national high skilled immigration policies to the EU level. ESRC Centre on Migration, Policy and Society, Working paper no. 65, University of Oxford.
13. Cerna, L. (2010). The EU Blue Card: A Bridge Too Far? Paper presented at ECPR Pan-European Conference on EU Politics, Porto, Portugal, 23-26 June 2010.

14. Chalmers D., Hadjiemmanuil C., Monti G., Tomkins A. (2006) *European Union Law: Text and Materials*. Cambridge University Press.
15. Collet, E. (2008). *The proposed European Blue Card System: Arming for the Global War for Talent?* EPC.
16. Collet, E. (2009). *Blue Card and the 'global battle for talent'*, commentary, EPC.
17. Commission (2007). *On Circular Migration and Mobility Partnerships between the European*.
18. European Commission (1994). *Immigration and Asylum Policies*, COM (94) 23.
19. European Commission (2000). *A Community Immigration Policy*, COM (2000) 757.
20. European Commission (2001). *On a Common Policy on Illegal Immigration*, COM (2002) 672.
21. European Commission (2002). *Integrating Migration Issues in the European Union's Relations with Third Countries*, COM (2002) 703.
22. European Commission (2005). *Migration and Development: Some Concrete Orientations*, COM (2005) 390.
23. European Commission (2005). *Policy Coherence for Development. Accelerating progress towards Attaining the Millennium Development Goals*, COM (2005) 134.
24. European Commission (2005). *Policy Plan on Legal Migration*, COM (2005) 669.
25. European Commission (2007) *Commission Staff Working Document: Accompanying document to the Proposal for a Council Directive on the conditions of entry and residence of third country nationals for the purpose of highly qualified employment, Impact Assessment*. SEC (2007) 1403.
26. European Commission (2008). *Eastern Partnership*, COM (2008) 823.
27. European Commission (2009) *Mobility partnerships as a tool of the Global Approach to Migration*; SEC (2009) 1240 final.
28. European Commission (2010). *A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth*, COM (2010) 2020.
29. European Commission. (2007) *Attractive conditions for the admission and residence of highly qualified immigrants*. Press releases RAPID, MEMO/07/423, 23 October 2007.
30. European Commission. (2007) *Making Europe more attractive to highly skilled migrants and increasing the protection of lawfully residing and working migrants*. Press releases RAPID, IP/07/1575, 23 October 2007.
31. European Council (1999). *Tampere European Council 15 and 16 October 1999 – Presidency Conclusions*.
32. European Council (2004). *The Hague Programme: Strengthening Freedom, Security and Justice in the European Union*. 16054/04.
33. European Council (2008). *Joint Declaration on a Mobility Partnership between the European Union and the Republic of Moldova*. 9460/08 ADD 1.
34. European Council (2009). *Joint Declaration on a Mobility Partnership between the European Union and Georgia*. 16396/09. ADD 1.
35. European Council (2011). *Joint Declaration on a Mobility Partnership between the European Union and Armenia*. 14963/11. ADD 1.
36. European Migration Network (2011). *Satisfying labour demand through migration*.
37. European Training Foundation (2007). *The contribution of Human Resources development to migration policy in Moldova*.

38. European Training Foundation (2011), Labour markets and employability: trends and challenges in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.
39. European Training Foundation (2011). HCD Review, Relationship between Human Capital Development and Equity in the Republic of Moldova.
40. Ganta, V. (2012). The impact of international labour migration on the Republic of Moldova, CARIM-EAST Research Report 2012/32.
41. Guild, E. (2007). EU Policy on Labour Migration: A First Look at the Commission's Blue Card Initiative. In: CEPS Policy Brief no. 145, November 2007.
42. Hugo, G. (2003). Circular Migration: Keeping Development Rolling? In: Migration Information Source, June 2003.
43. Kancs, D., and Ciaian P. (2010), The Impact of the EU Blue Card Policy on Economic Growth in the African Sending Countries, EERI.
44. Mosneaga, S. Building a more attractive Europe. The Blue Card Experience. Europeans in-between: Identities in a (trans-) cultural space: 167-187.
45. Nyberg-Sørensen, N., Van Hear, N. and Engberg-Pedersen, P. (2002). The Migration Development Nexus. Evidence and Policy Options State-of-the-Art Overview. In: International Migration, 40 (5): 3-47.
46. OECD (2012). International Migration Report.
47. Parkes, R. (2009). Mobility Partnerships: Valuable Addition to the ENP Repertoire? Working Paper FG 1, 2009/03. Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik.
48. Peers, S. (2011). EU Justice and Home Affairs. Oxford EU Law Library.
49. Reiner, C. (2010). Which policy options for Europe in the global competition for talent. Brain competition policy as a new breed of locational policy with positive externalities. Working paper. Vienna University of Economics and Business.
50. Reslow, N. (2010) Migration and Development? An Assessment of Recent EU Policy Initiatives, Maastricht University.
51. Sjödin, E. (2011). The Blue Card Directive and its safeguards against Brain Drain – a study of the Directive's inherent contradictions. Örebro universitet.
52. The European Union-Republic of Moldova Mobility Partnership 2008-2011: Evaluation Report (2012).
53. Union and Third Countries, COM (2007) 248.
54. Wets, J. (2004). Some Thoughts about Migration and Development. In: Migration and Development: Myths and Facts, EPC Issue Paper 11. Brussels: European Policy Centre: 20-39.
55. Zimmermann, Klaus F., and Martin K. (2010) High-Skilled Immigration Policy in Europe. Institute for the Study of Labour Discussion Paper No. 5399.

## Chapter 3:

# Moldova's diaspora policies: the path from moderate partnership to active engagement

*Sergiu PORCESCU<sup>1</sup>*

*Institute of Legal and Political Research, Academy of Sciences of Moldova,  
Chisinau, Republic of Moldova*

### Abstract

This chapter examines the evolution of diaspora policies in the case of the Republic of Moldova. It follows the institutionalization of diaspora organizations as a result of the persistent character of Moldovan migration and the shift in state policies targeting the diaspora. With up to one million citizens residing abroad out of a population of 3.6m (we have no official data on the magnitude of the phenomena), the Republic of Moldova is in a position to learn about diaspora policies; governmental institutions and civil society actors as well as diaspora organizations are assisted by international partners in numerous projects that target a variety of aspects including capacity building on both sides (government and the diaspora), proper communication mechanisms and the involvement of diaspora members in the decision making process back home. However, there are still some questions that need to be dealt with: how to assure the sustainability of this partnership and connect the diaspora to the processes that take place in the homeland while protecting their rights abroad; how to foster a sense of belonging, especially among second-generation diaspora members; is there a consensus among Moldovan political actors with regard to the inclusion of the diaspora as a distinct actor in the political system of the homeland etc.

**Keywords:** diaspora engagement policy, Moldovan communities abroad, diaspora congresses, government programs.

### Diaspora engagement policies

Current human mobility processes, which are no less important than the various historical circumstances in the past, have resulted in large sections of the population living outside the home country. The classical definition of the term diaspora has undergone a metamorphosis in recent decades as it has tried to incorporate modern features of the phenomenon, and there have also been different approaches to the diaspora-home country relationship (Reis 2004). On the other hand, in its attempt to explain the cross-border movement of people, the transnationalism stream has blurred the equilibrium of the classical *homeland-diaspora-host country* chain. Taking new realities into consideration, the main sending countries as well as some countries with lesser migration flows have been developing policies (obviously with different degrees of complexity) that target their diasporas and migrant communities abroad. The term "diaspora engagement policy" is being used increasingly in strategic policy

---

<sup>1</sup>sergiu\_porcescu@yahoo.com

documents; it refers primarily to trans-local, bottom-up activities that are initiated by migrants and their associations, but it also defines the initiatives undertaken by international development agencies to encourage such commitments, and more importantly to boost the policies that the countries of origin have for dealing with their diasporas.

As a result, the rationale and principles of such policies, and their outcomes, have been studied within a wide range of scientific disciplines (political sciences, sociology, economics to name just a few). Based on the concept of “governability”, Gamlen launched the term “transnationalization of governability”, highlighting three types of diaspora engagement in relation to the homeland: (1) capacity building policies - aimed at developing a transnational society based on the national state, with its corresponding institutions (controlling policies) (2) communication policies – building a system of symbols and signs to create a feeling of loyalty towards the home country (identity) (3) the creation of transnational citizens – extending rights and obligations in order to include the diaspora (Dijkink and Welle 2009: 625). The opinion that the emergence of state strategies facilitating the diaspora represent an imaginary political, economical and geographical area that seeks to include the population located abroad as a subject and object of governance (Mullings 2012: 409) also seems reasonable in this regard. The 4Cs proposed by Najam (Najam 2000) correspond to four types of relationships between the diaspora and the country of origin: cooperation, where the government and the diaspora share similar goals and means; confrontation, where the goals and means of actors are both different; complementarity, where the goals are the same but the means are different; and finally, co-option, where the means are similar but the actors have different goals (Najam 2000). In any case, for reality purposes, it is best to move from an equation with two unknowns to one with three, and to add the host country’s interest in the diaspora to the mix. The actions that the home country undertakes with the diaspora should not exceed the general framework of cooperation with the host country.

Countries of origin may: (1) try to change the policy of the host country through diplomatic means or through treaties, (2) finance diaspora organizations, create educational, cultural, political and business institutions, (3) provide complete or limited forms of political citizenship, such as voting rights, special forms of representation, dual nationality, (4) provide full or limited forms of social protection (5) extend cultural and symbolic benefits through ethnic identity cards and cross-border cultural exchanges (Waterbury 2010: 142). We should mention here that everyday realities show that the type of the host society and the place of diaspora organizations within it exercise a significant influence on the ability of individuals and diaspora organizations to influence the country of origin (Sorensen, 2007, p.5). The question of the propensity of such an influence in a democratic rather than an authoritarian society means that there is even more in favour of a case-by-case approach.

Looking at things in a broader sense, Robert C. Smith (2000) claims that relations between diasporas and countries of origin evolve through the change of their relationship with the global system, their internal policies and the ability of migrants

to act politically towards the homeland. The public sphere of transnational diasporas represents an expanded political system in which diaspora members act within or outside the country of origin. The new public sphere creates, and it also limits, the opportunities for migrants and it fosters new forms of political participation for the diaspora and the home country.

Because of the presence of the diaspora within these two spaces (origin and host), it could be said that people, institutions and strong diaspora networks enjoy relative autonomy vis-à-vis their homeland, regardless of the desire of the country of origin to control and rule its population abroad. This autonomy depends on the ability to obtain resources from alternative sources and to maintain legal status in another state that prevents their unwanted return or institutional isolation (Koinova 2012: 100). Are these conditions the only ones necessary to be fulfilled for diaspora autonomy? In this regard, Bruneau uses the concept of iconography - a diaspora organization tends to be a socially autonomous institution, independent of the institutions of the country of origin and the host country, due to its professional, cultural, religious and political associations, which enable it to focus on creating its own iconography. The symbols that make up the iconography refer to three main areas: religion, the political past (memory) and social organization. It should be mentioned that the introduction of national iconography within the public consciousness is achieved at a very early stage through family and school (Bruneau 2010: 38).

Practices in the field show that an increasing commitment to diaspora policies and further engagement is determined by the interests and perceptions of political elites in the country of origin. The reasons for such decisions can be grouped into three main sets of interests: obtaining material resources and economic benefits, the creation or maintenance of internal and external political legitimacy, and using those residing abroad as a cultural-linguistic resource to define the borders of national identity (Waterbury 2010:136). Nevertheless, the home country should ensure that proper enabling conditions exist back home for such interaction. For example, in a study of the contribution of skilled migrants from the diaspora from Afghanistan, China and the Philippines, the respondents in all three countries indicated that democracy and development within the home country were the main conditions for their predisposition, not just to return but to contribute from abroad as well (Wescott and Brinkerhoff 2006: 11-12). In this regard, we can speak about specific structures for creating opportunities. According to Esman (2009), these structures may be present in both the country of origin and the country of destination, or at an international level, and they include: the availability of economic resources; a neutral attitude at least towards the activities of the diaspora in general; access to the required infrastructure (political, technological, informational); proactive support from the host government and its willingness to involve the diaspora in promoting foreign policy priorities towards the country of origin; a government in the country of origin that requires the involvement of diaspora or which is at least impartial to this process; private sector actors that recognize the business opportunities for both countries in the markets represented by the diaspora.

## **The Moldovan diaspora: an emerging partner?**

Recent emigration among the Moldovan population has favoured the emergence of a large number of Moldovan communities abroad. We should also note the existence of the diaspora “old guard” - composed of individuals originating from the present territory of the Republic of Moldova, who are residing in Israel, the CIS, the Baltic States and Germany (mostly ethnic emigrants or else people who emigrated to follow a professional pathway and who remained in those States).

Following an analysis of the phenomenon of the Moldovan diaspora in the main host countries, Raviv Schwartz advances the argument that the term communities of Moldovans abroad is more applicable to the Moldovan case, due to the relatively recent history of migration and the lack of institutional mechanisms to co-opt and mobilise migrants. However, the author agrees that the term “diaspora” is suggestive for the Moldovan experience and it should not be perceived as a different phenomenon as communities of Moldovans, but rather the two should be viewed as two sides of the same phenomenon (Scwartz 2007: 9).

The recent civic positions of representatives of Moldovan communities abroad (e.g. civic position regarding the 2009-2010 elections, adoption of the anti-discrimination law, the creation of a Ministry of Diaspora, etc.) shows that they have reached a new level of influence with regard to the state of origin. This is due to a whole range of circumstances, among which we should mention the length of stay in the destination country (which allows them to meet, at least partially, the financial and economic goals linked to migration and become more familiar with the practices of operational institutions in the host societies), legal residency, citizenship of the host state, family reunification, all of which has lent importance to new ways of influence, including host country institutions (e.g. human rights NGOs), improved social status thanks to increased skills levels, recognition of study diplomas, integration in the host societies and a larger proportion of people residing abroad for study or family reunification purposes. As earlier practices of central European countries have shown, the interaction with the values and functioning mechanisms and principles (mobility, tolerance, freedom of expression, etc.) of the EU-area helps to turn diasporas residing within the EU Member States into promoters of European integration. The hypothesis that the Moldovan diaspora is still going through the early phases of development is confirmed by the various results of surveys carried out among migrants and people with migrant experiences. Such studies show that informal groups of people involved in solving the problems of migrants, especially those related to legalising the stay and to accommodation, are only occasionally referred to by emigrants when they are asked about diaspora organizations in their host countries. For example, a majority of the CIVIS-survey respondents said that they thought that the contribution of officially recognized overseas organizations to the strengthening and mobilizing of Moldovan communities was rather small/insignificant (CIVIS 2010: 24).

As an example of the activities performed by Moldovan diaspora organizations, we will use the results of the Diaspora Small Grants Mechanism competition implemented by the IOM Mission to Moldova in cooperation with the Government

as part of the project “Supporting the implementation of the migration and development component of the EU-Moldova Mobility Partnership”, which was funded by the European Union. A total of 35 organizations applied to the project and 10 associations were selected, and the main activities supported were the publication of magazines and brochures, the making of TV shows, the organisation of a festival, the design of the association’s web page and the supply of teaching materials (UN 2011: 13).

Despite developments since 2000 and qualitative improvements to the content in recent years, it is still impossible to consider that the institutional and regulatory framework for cooperation between diaspora organizations originating from the Republic of Moldova and the homeland corresponds to the extent of the phenomenon, the needs of communities abroad and development opportunities for the country of origin.

Accordingly, Government Decision Number 1322 of 29<sup>th</sup> December 2000, introducing some support measures for people originating from Moldova and residing abroad, approved the main guidelines (classified into 4 areas: human rights, culture, education and training, social protection) to support people from Moldova residing abroad and it established the Coordinating Council for sustaining Moldovans residing abroad on a voluntary basis.

In 2005, the government set up the Executive Coordinating Council of peoples originating from the Republic of Moldova who are residing abroad, consisting of 13 people; 3 representing the government, a presidential adviser and 9 representatives from the diaspora. In November 2011, the title of the 2005 Government Decision was amended and the phrase “Coordinating Council of peoples originating from the Republic of Moldova and residing abroad” was substituted by “Coordinating Council of peoples originating from the Republic of Moldova and residing abroad - Moldovan Diaspora”. An important addition was also included: the Coordinating Council acts as an advisory body for coordinating links between Moldovan diaspora associations and the public authorities of the Republic of Moldova to protect the rights and interests of the Moldovan Diaspora in accordance with international human rights standards. At the present time, the Council includes 52 people and the government is represented at Prime Minister level.

At the same time, the actions of the authorities were envisaged within the Action Programme supporting people originating from Moldova and who are residing abroad (Moldovan diaspora) for the 2006-2009 period, which contains a number of actions to be carried out by ministries and other authorities in the following areas: protecting the rights of individuals from the Republic of Moldova who are residing abroad within international and bilateral relations, education and teacher training, maintaining and promoting the culture, language and traditions of Moldovan ethno-cultural organizations that support persons from Moldova residing abroad, social protection and sustaining trade, economic, informational and media activities. However, financial support for the actions of this programme would come from and within the limits of the budgets of the bodies in charge (a vulnerable element of that programme).

As the implementation period of the plan expired, the Bureau for Interethnic Relations (the governmental body in charge of diaspora issues at that time) proposed a draft programme for the 2012-2014 period. According to the authors, the new Action Plan, which was widely discussed, was based on a new concept supporting the Moldovan diaspora, namely boosting mutual cooperation in three main directions: Moldova-diaspora, diaspora-diaspora, diaspora-Republic of Moldova. The actions of plan are grouped into six sections:

- Protecting the rights of people from Moldova residing abroad – the Moldovan diaspora;
- Strengthening Moldovan diaspora associations and supporting their national-cultural activity;
- Developing cultural, scientific, economic and touristic cooperation;
- Supporting young members of the Moldovan diaspora;
- Social protection;
- Information assistance.

Here, the organisation of the so-called Congresses of people originating from Moldova residing abroad-Moldovan Diaspora is worthy of mention. The first of these congresses was held in Chisinau from 7-9 October 2004. The Second Congress took place in Chisinau from 12-14 October 2006 and it was considered in the context of the action programme supporting Moldovans residing abroad for the period 2006-2009. Delegates at the event discussed a number of proposals about extending diplomatic contacts with the countries of residence of the Moldovan Diaspora (opening consulates, initiating the opening of Moldovan diplomatic missions in countries where communities have been formed as a result of labour migration and the opening of diplomatic missions of these countries in Moldova (e.g. Italy at that time), education, social protection, culture.

The third edition of the Congress was organized from 12-14 October 2008 and it was devoted to the celebration of the 650 years since the foundation of the Moldovan state. The problems mentioned by the representatives of diaspora organizations were oriented towards *support of Moldovan statehood and strengthening relations with the Moldovan Diaspora*, (the items considered included the possibility of creating a special fund to support the education and culture of the Republic of Moldova with Moldovan diaspora sources, opening a museum of the Moldovan diaspora etc.); expanding cooperation with the countries of residence of the Moldovan Diaspora (issues related to a diplomatic and consular presence, attracting potential diaspora representatives for the development of economic relations between Moldova and foreign countries, expanding the export of Moldovan goods to the countries of residence of the Moldovan Diaspora); education and culture; informational support (widening the area for disseminating periodicals, development of an accessible phone network); social protection; documentation of the population.

The fourth and the fifth editions of the Congress were held on 12-14 October 2010 and 11-13 October 2012 respectively, and they marked a real qualitative shift in the activity of this platform for dialogue between the Moldovan authorities and the diaspora. For the first time, the authorities proposed establishing mechanisms to

increase the involvement of diaspora associations in decision-making processes related to the economic, social, cultural and scientific development of the country. For example, the resolution of the fourth Congress includes recognition of the important role that the diaspora has to play in the economic development of Moldova, but it also states that the mass return of nationals residing abroad can only occur if Moldova evolves democratically through reforms for the European integration of the country.

While we can identify the continuity of certain topics on the diaspora agenda/home country authorities dialogue (such as honorary consuls or publications based on this issue), we can also see an evolution of the diaspora message, thanks to the level of maturity of diaspora organizations and political developments in Moldova.

On the subject of state policies regarding diasporas, it is worth mentioning the presence of Migration and Diaspora topics on the working agenda of the government.

The Government Action Programme for 2005-2009 “*Modernization of the country - the welfare of the people*” (13, p. 36) has the following relevant objectives:

- Creating conditions to use the income of citizens obtained from their labour abroad for the development of the economy; facilitating money transfers;
- Regulation of migration flows;
- Border security;
- Preventing and combating illegal migration and human trafficking;
- Social protection, solving the social and educational issues of migrant families;
- Creating conditions for returning migrants.

The chapter on *Entrepreneurship development* in the Government Programme for the period 2008-2009 - "Progress and Integration" encourages the use of remittances to open and expand businesses through innovative mechanisms that are compatible with market principles.

The Government Programme for the 2009-2013 period “European Integration: Liberty, Democracy, Welfare”<sup>2</sup> has an entire chapter on *Migration and employment*, with the following objectives and actions:

#### **Government objectives:**

1. Create new jobs and improve mobility in the labour market.
2. Develop a training system oriented to current labour market needs.
3. Support and defend the rights of co-nationals living abroad.
4. Reduce unemployment and help returned migrants to integrate into the labour market.

---

<sup>2</sup>Program of Government Activity for the 2005-2009 years (2005): “Modernization of the country –welfare of the people. Chisinau, Government of the Republic of Moldova.

**Actions:**

- Promoting policies to regulate migration flows through negotiation, and by concluding bilateral agreements to simplify the rules and procedures applied to Moldovan citizens for legal employment in the labour market of other countries, and informing migrants and potential migrants about how to defend their rights abroad;
- Effective protection of Moldovan citizens and assuring the portability of social rights through the negotiation and conclusion of agreements on the social protection of migrant workers with the main countries of destination;
- Support and reintegration of migrant workers returning from abroad. by offering advice on employment opportunities and funding programs for opening the business.

The Government Programme (2011-2014) *European Integration: Freedom, Democracy, and Welfare* (15, p. 60, 67) specifies and extends the provisions of the previous programme and it has the following objectives:

- Chapter on initial and continuous vocational training of human resources - Recognition of prior learning and qualifications obtained abroad by migrants; determination of the authorities responsible for this process;
- Chapter on Work, employment and labour migration: governance objectives - strengthening the national system of migration management, ensuring the conditions for legal migration and improving the social status of migrant workers. Facilitating the reintegration of migrant workers who have returned home.

In the context of the need for a vision of long-term cooperation with the diaspora, we should mention the presence of this topic in the main strategic planning document of the state for the forthcoming years - Strategy “*Moldova 2020*”. Besides the important provisions related to social protection and the portability of migrants’ rights, migration is treated as a phenomenon with implications for the development process, thanks to the leveraging of remittances and the capital obtained abroad.

The voice of Moldovan communities abroad is now being heard more and more. The diaspora has advanced from the organisation of conferences every two years to expressing its position on topics that are of current interest for the society of origin. One of the latest examples relates to the adoption of the Law on Equal Opportunities (non-discrimination), when a number of diaspora organizations displayed their support for this law, offering hesitant politicians an argument to adopt the law in the context of a traditional and conservative society. Accordingly, migrants have clearly shown that they are in favour of the existing European values of tolerance and non-discrimination that they have seen in their countries of residence. Of course, in this case we cannot deny the influence of a more pragmatic factor – the visa liberalization

regime with the EU. The aforementioned law is one of the conditions agreed upon in the dialogue with the EU - a process that directly affects diaspora members living abroad and the families they have left behind.

Although the lobbying and the advocacy activity of Moldovan migrants communities is still at a nascent stage, it is already felt in different areas related to homeland development: the April 2009 election campaign (e.g. *"Hora Schimbării"* in Brussels), economic institutions (liberalization of airline tickets prices, the tariff policy on fixed telephone lines), foreign policy and European integration (protests against the armed forces deployed by the Russian Federation in the Transdniestrian region, the European Parliament hearing on the case of youth abuse after the protests of April 7 2009), the electoral system (promoting electronic voting), national values and collective memory (petition for the Romanian language, actions commemorating the 200th anniversary of the annexation of Bessarabia) institutional reform (creation of a ministry of Diaspora) etc.

As Schwartz (2007: 3-4) states, the strengths of the diaspora originating from Moldova are the high number and concentration in certain urban centres, the reputation of Moldovans as reliable, motivated and adaptable workers, organic links to the homeland, the existence of voluntary initiatives by individuals/collectives to improve the situation, the active role of the church. At the same time, weaknesses include the illegal status and uncertainty caused by the relatively low level of social cohesion between senior members of the diaspora and more recent migrants, an insufficient diplomatic presence, limited use of remittances, a lack of standing and trusted channels through which migrants can receive information from home. Among the threats to the efforts for strengthening relations between the Moldovan communities abroad and the home country we find the ambiguity of the legal frameworks of the host countries with regard to migration (some of them), a linguistic-cultural cleavage among communities that affects the essence of a "Moldovan national identity", a weak link between third and second generation migrants and the country of origin.

As a conclusion, we can mention a qualitative shift within the diaspora policy promoted by the Moldovan governmental authorities. This process is determined both by the pressure of increasingly stronger diasporas organizations and by an awareness among the political elites of the role migrant communities play in the country's development. Nevertheless, due to its recent nature, it is still early to assess the effectiveness and sustainability of current governmental initiatives.

## References

1. Bruneau, M. (2010). Diasporas, transnational spaces and communities. In: *Diaspora and Transnationalism. Concepts, Theories and Methods*. R. Baubock, Th. Faist (eds.). Amsterdam University Press 2010.
2. CIVIS/IASCI Report (2010). *Strengthening the link between migration and development in Moldova*. Chisinau, CIVIS/IASCI. [in Romanian].

3. Dijkink, G. J., Van der Welle, I. (2009). Diaspora and Sovereignty: Three Cases of Public Alarm in the Netherlands. In: *Tijdschrift voor economische en sociale geografie (Journal of Economic & Social Geography)*, Volume 100, Issue 5, December:623-634.
4. Koinova, M. (2012). Autonomy and Positionality in Diaspora Politics. In: *Issue International Political Sociology. International Political Sociology*. March 2012. Volume 6, Issue 1: 99–103.
5. Mullings, B. (2012). Governmentality, Diaspora Assemblages and the Ongoing Challenge of “Development”. In: *Antipode*, March 2012, Volume 44, Issue 2: 406–427.
6. Najam, A. (2000). The Four C’s of Third Sector-Government Relations: Cooperation, Confrontation, Complementarity, and Co-optation. In: *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, 10(4): 375-396.
7. Nyberg Sørensen, N. (Ed) (2007). *Living Across Worlds: Diaspora, Development and Transnational Engagement*. IOM.
8. Program of Government Activity “European Integration: Liberty, Democracy, Welfare”. 2009-2013: Chisinau, Government of the Republic of Moldova.[in Romanian].
9. Program of Government Activity for the 2005-2009 years (2005): “Modernization of the country –welfare of the people. Chisinau, Government of the Republic of Moldova.[in Romanian].
10. Program of the Republic of Moldova Government Activity “European Integration: Freedom, Democracy, Welfare (2011-2014)”. Chisinau, Government of the Republic of Moldova. [in Romanian].
11. Reis, M. (2004) Theorizing Diaspora: Perspectives on “Classical” and “Contemporary” Diaspora. In: *International Migration Vol. 42 (2) 2004: 41-58*.
12. Schwartz, R. (2007). Exploring the Link between Moldovan Communities Abroad (MCA) and Moldova.
13. Smith, R. C. (2000). How Durable and New Is Transnational Life?: Historical Retrieval through Local Comparison. In: *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 9.2 (2000): 203-233.
14. Project MUSE. Web. 17 Oct. 2013. [Online]. <http://muse.jhu.edu/>.
15. The UN in Moldova (2011). October - December 2011, No 4 (49) (Activity Report on 2011). [Online]. [http://www.un.md/key\\_doc\\_pub/un\\_magazines/2011/ONU\\_4\(49\).pdf](http://www.un.md/key_doc_pub/un_magazines/2011/ONU_4(49).pdf). Accesed on: 11.05.2013].
16. Waterbury, M. A. (2010). Bridging the divide. Towards a comparative framework for understanding kin state and migrant-sending state diaspora politics. In: *Diaspora and Transnationalism: Concepts, Theories and Methods*. R.Bauböck, Th. Faist (eds.).Amsterdam University Press, 2010: 131-148.
17. Wescott, C., Brinkerhoff, J. (ed). (2006). Converting Migration Drains into Gains: Harnessing the Resources of Overseas Professionals. In: *Asian Development Bank*.

## Chapter 4:

# National brain gain policies in case country examples of the Western Balkans

*Dr. Tanja PAVLOV<sup>1</sup>*

*Centre for Migration, Group 484, Belgrade, Serbia*

*Bernard ZENELI<sup>2</sup>*

*UNDP, Tirana, Albania*

### Abstract

The development potential of migration, especially the migration of highly skilled persons, has finally been recognised in the countries of the Western Balkans. This can be seen in the creation of a number of strategies. Unfortunately, these strategies are mostly ineffective although some good practice examples do exist. Brain drain is still prevalent in the region and brain circulation and brain gain are difficult to attain. There are two main reasons for the ineffectiveness of these strategies, and both of these reasons lie at a macro system level – difficult socio-economic circumstances and the way in which these policies are developed and implemented. The aim of this paper is to encourage discussion as to how brain gain policies can be developed in order to engage highly skilled migrants in the socioeconomic and democratic development of our countries and thus use their potential to aid country progress and further stimulate brain circulation and brain gain.

**Keywords:** brain drain and brain gain; brain circulation; brain gain policies; Western Balkans; development.

### Introduction

The brain drain phenomenon, defined as an irreversible departure of highly skilled persons from a country, which consequently suffers “on a scale threatening the needs of national development in the long term” (Jalowiecki, Gorzelak 2004: 299), is a challenge for the whole of Europe as well as the USA and other developed countries. However, developed countries have created migration policies to attract highly skilled persons from developing countries. On the other hand, developing countries find it difficult to develop migration policies of this type because of their socioeconomic circumstances but they can create an institutional framework to deal with the challenge of brain drain and transform it into brain circulation and brain gain. The aim of this paper is to promote a discussion about how brain gain policies should be developed in order to engage highly skilled migrants in the socioeconomic and democratic development of developing countries, and thus use their potential to help their countries progress and further stimulate brain circulation and brain gain.

Before starting our discussion, we need to define the terms used in the paper. The first question concerns what is meant by ‘brains’. We define brains as highly

---

<sup>1</sup>tp@grupa484.org.rs

<sup>2</sup>bzeneli@gmail.com

skilled persons –intellectuals (including students), scientists and technicians, but also people without a university degree who are doing jobs that require highly developed skills, such as business people, entrepreneurs, specialist workers, artists, athletes, etc. ‘Brain gain’ refers to the investment of their potential in the development and progress of the country of origin. Brain gain can be achieved by encouraging the mobility of the highly skilled rather than their emigration, by improving working conditions in the country of origin and by introducing well structured mobility programmes that can ensure cooperation with them while they are abroad and which encourage their temporary or permanent return. This can also be achieved by developing cooperation and attracting foreign highly skilled persons, but given the lack of incentives for them in the WB region, our focus will be on migrants – citizens of the WB countries, and on how their outflow can be transformed into an influx of their knowledge into the countries of the WB. We would also like to point out that brain gain should represent a deliberate and designed effort by the government and various state institutions. ‘Brain circulation’ as “the two way flow of skilled workers between home and host countries” (Daugeliene and Marcinkeviciene 2009: 50) can be a channel for achieving brain gain as well as for transnational brain-gain activities that involve professional cooperation among highly skilled migrants and their colleagues in the home country. Transnationalism is “the process by which transmigrants, through their daily activities, forge and sustain multi-stranded social, economic, and political relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement, and through which they create transnational social fields that cross national borders” (Basch et al. 1994: 6).

This paper presents brain gain policies and practices in the Western Balkan countries. Today the Western Balkans is more of a political than a geographic definition for the region of Southeast Europe that is outside the European Union. It refers to Albania and the countries of the former Yugoslavia –Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia<sup>3</sup>. Brain gain policies and practice are also important in the region because they can accelerate integration into the European Union and a market that requires a competitive workforce.

The paper consists of three parts. In the first part, we present the brain drain/brain gain scenario in the Western Balkans. The second part analyses the content, form and implementation of brain gain policies in the region. The final section of the paper provides conclusions and recommendations for further research within this field and the development of effective brain gain policies.

## **State of brain drain/brain gain in the Western Balkans**

### *Scope and structure of highly skilled migrants*

The countries of the Western Balkans have recognised the brain drain challenge and the possibility of transforming it into brain circulation and brain gain. Nevertheless, most countries (except for Albania) lack reliable data and research on the extent and

---

<sup>3</sup>Our analysis did not include Kosovo and Metohija because we lacked insights into their policies.

characteristics of the phenomenon. The scope of this phenomenon is mainly presented by World Bank data for 2000, and even that institution's publication *Migration and Remittances Factbook*, published in 2011, uses data from 2000 (Table 1). This fact is the first indication of how difficult it is to track and monitor migration of this type, especially in countries where there is no well-developed statistical system for monitoring migration.

**Table 1: Number and percentage of emigrants, including tertiary-educated emigrants from the Western Balkan countries**

Countries	Number of emigrants (2010)	% emigrants in relation to the overall population (2010)	% emigrants with tertiary education (2000)
Albania	1.438.300	45.4%	9%
BiH	1.461.000	38.9%	23.9%
Macedonia	447.100	21.9%	29.1%
Serbia and Montenegro <sup>4</sup>	2.298.352	21.9%	17.4%

Source: World Bank, *Migration and Remittances Factbook*, 2011

Table 1 shows the percentage of emigrants in relation to the overall population, ranging from 22 per cent in Serbia and Montenegro and Macedonia to 45 per cent in Albania. With regard to the percentage of third-level educated emigrants, Macedonia occupies first place with 29 per cent, followed by BiH with 24 per cent, Serbia and Montenegro with 17 per cent and finally Albania with 9 per cent. The mass migration of highly qualified people from the WB countries began in the 1990s as a result of the severe political and socio-economic circumstances that followed the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the socialist system in Eastern Europe.

In Albania, which has been called “a migration laboratory” (King 2005) and “a country on the move” (Carletto et al. 2006), the migration of highly qualified people has been researched more than in other countries. However, even though the World Bank has indicated that only 9 per cent of people with a third-level education have left Albania, the research findings point to the seriousness of this phenomenon in this country. During the period 1991-2005, more than 50 per cent of lecturers and researchers working in universities and research institutes emigrated (Gedeshi and Black 2006: 6-7). It is estimated that every year 2,000 to 4,000 young people leave to study abroad, mainly in Italy, France, Germany, England, Greece and the U.S. (Gedeshi and Black 2006: 8), and many studies have shown that there is a high probability that these students will become economic migrants and settle permanently in the given country (Salt 1997, Vertovec 2002). Albania is

<sup>4</sup>Serbia and Montenegro, World Bank, *Migration and Remittances Factbook*, 2008. No separate data are available for Serbia and Montenegro even though they have been separate countries since June 2006.

characterised by three major waves of migration in the 1990s: 1) *embassy migration*, during the period 1990-1993, when the authorities started issuing passports after a 45-year ban, and this continued during the unrest that surrounded the first democratic elections in March 1991, 2) *pyramid crisis migration* in the period 1997-1999, caused by the collapse of pyramid investment schemes and major economic losses, which led to civil war in some parts of the country, and 3) in 1999, fuelled by the war in the former Yugoslavia and the arrival of 500,000 refugees from Kosovo, partly because of the difficult economic situation, and partly because of opportunities to seek asylum in Western European countries as refugees from Kosovo (King 2005: 137-8). These waves of migration were accompanied by three different groups of highly qualified migrants (Germenji and Gedshi 2008: 11). The first group was made up of highly qualified migrants, most of whom had emigrated illegally during the first two waves. Their motivation for migration did not differ from the motives of other migrants, which was a desire for economic and physical survival (Trimčev 2005:14). The second group consisted of scientists, researchers and technicians who had emigrated during the second wave, but had done so mainly due to economic reasons and the reduction in science and research funding, politicisation and the failure of the scientific community to adapt to the new system. Most went abroad legally with their families and with the idea of staying there permanently. The third group is composed of teachers and technicians who wished to improve their knowledge and acquire further training, and the youth of the post-1990 generation who wanted to study abroad but without any motive to leave the country permanently. This group appeared as a result of improved socioeconomic conditions in the country and migration policies in the countries of destination aimed at attracting highly educated people. Most highly skilled migrants are aged 25-34 (Gedeshi and Black 2006:7).

There were also three migration waves during the nineties in the countries of the former Yugoslavia<sup>5</sup>. During the period 1960-1990, economic migration to Western Europe was predominant (Germany, Austria and Switzerland). From 1990 to 1995, migratory movements increased due to war-related events. Since 1996, post-war migration has been caused by the poor political and socioeconomic situation.

During a recent workshop on migration from Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), the Assistant Minister of the Diaspora Department of the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina<sup>6</sup> emphasised that emigration from Bosnia and Herzegovina is mostly composed of the most economically active part of the population. The average age of emigrants from BiH is about 30 in the USA, 41.5 in Europe and about 38 in the countries of the former Yugoslavia. The Assistant Minister also pointed out that emigrants from BiH are better educated on average than the general BiH population and she provided data to confirm this. About 35 per cent of all emigrants from BiH in the U.S. have a tertiary education and the figure in the Scandinavian countries is about 25 per cent, while the percentage of emigrants from BiH with a tertiary education is lowest in Slovenia, Germany, Austria and Switzerland (up to 5 per cent). According to the UNESCO report

---

<sup>5</sup>Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia.

<sup>6</sup>Ruzmira Tihic-Kadrić, Research Workshop on Migration from BiH, Sarajevo, September 10-11, 2012.

“Science, Technology and Economic Development in South-eastern Europe”, during the period 1995-2005, 79 per cent of researchers left Bosnia and Herzegovina and 81 per cent of these had a Master's degree while 75 per cent were holders of PhDs (Uvalić 2005). By analysing the existing data on the scientific and professional diaspora of BiH, Nikolic et al. (2011) have observed that the greatest number of diaspora members currently resides in the US, followed by Austria, Sweden and Germany. In terms of educational background, the great majority holds PhDs (86 per cent), and their professional backgrounds are almost equally distributed between the social sciences, medical and pharmaceutical sciences and computing and technology. Their departure was largely motivated by push factors since most of them left between 1992 and 1995. The main reason for leaving the country was war, followed by political instability and general insecurity. Among those who reported pull factors, the leading reasons were the possibility of professional or academic development and a positive socioeconomic environment.

In another study on Macedonia, Janeska (Janeska 2003) estimates that 15 per cent of all Macedonian citizens with a university education left Macedonia in the 1990s. She describes them as young couples, persons with a tertiary education in the field of technical and natural sciences as well as young teaching and research staff from particular faculties. Their destinations were usually the US, Canada, Australia, the UK, Germany, France, Switzerland, Italy and the Netherlands. She also believes that among the large number of highly skilled persons from Macedonia living abroad there is a certain number of highly skilled who work in prestigious universities and scientific institutions. According to UNESCO, the number of scientists and engineers employed in R&D in Macedonia fell by over 70 per cent (from 1,333 per million inhabitants to just 387) between 1995 and 2000. The qualitative research of Vangeli (Vangeli 2011: 102) shows that the motives for their departure were “structural problems such as substandard economic conditions, the questionable rule of law, the lack of meritocratic values and the uncompetitive science and research industries as well as the better quality of life in more developed countries” which “are the major factors that make the idea of pursuing a career abroad more appealing than the one to stay at home”.

In the case of Montenegro,<sup>7</sup> 55,723 of the country's citizens were working abroad temporarily (8.1 per cent of the total population of Montenegro) according to the 2003 census. In terms of age, 26.1 per cent are aged 19 and under, 37.8 per cent are in the 20-39 age group, 19.9 per cent between 40 and 64, 1.9 per cent over 65, while the age is unknown for 14.3 per cent. The most important destination countries are the US, Germany, Switzerland, Luxembourg, Sweden, France and Italy. Among the population of working age (15 and over) about 6.2 per cent (2,605) have a university education. The US has absorbed the largest number of these migrants - about one-third (32.6 per cent) - while Germany has attracted 10.9 per cent, Canada 5.1 per cent and the United Kingdom 4.1 per cent. However, the census coverage of emigrants is always lower as their registration is carried out through their families in the country and families that have left are not included. Mr

---

<sup>7</sup>Statistical Office of Montenegro – MONSTAT (2008). Demographic Trends in Montenegro since the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century and perspectives until 2050, Podgorica.

Sreten Sekuletić, the Project coordinator and national coordinator for cooperation with UNESCO in Montenegro,<sup>8</sup> said in 2004 that the brain drain of highly educated and highly qualified people had been a serious problem for the previous 15 years. He added that about 100 young experts had left the University of Montenegro between 1990 and 1998 in search of better career opportunities abroad, a figure that accounted for almost 20% of the University staff at that time.

With regard to highly skilled migration in Serbia, there is only a consensus as to the severity of the brain drain phenomenon but not as to its scope. The *Strategy of Scientific and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia 2010-2015* states that 19,000 highly educated people have left Serbia since 1990. On the other hand, Docquier and Rapoport (Docquier and Rapoport 2011: 7) have presented data for 2000 showing that the then Serbia and Montenegro with 161,885 highly educated emigrants was among the top 30 countries of the world. This finding is more in line with the OECD data (OECD 2008: 87) showing about 11.5 per cent or 120,060 tertiary educated among the 1,044,000 foreign-born people from Serbia and Montenegro living in OECD countries. According to the Strategy, these come primarily from engineering and technology and the natural sciences. They are aged between 30 and 36 (Grečić and Lopušina 1994: 121). Highly skilled migrants can be divided into two groups according to their motives for migration; those who left before, and those who left after 2000, the year of political change in the country (Pavlov 2011). In the period 1990-2000, migration was prompted by the idea of saving lives, primarily from the painful and bloody civil wars that took place in the former Yugoslavia, international isolation and NATO bombing, and the difficult economic situation. It was a time of mass departure for young and educated people under the generally accepted slogan “to graduate and then to emigrate”. Since 2000, the migration of highly skilled people for reasons other than economic ones has been motivated by the opportunities for career development and professional training abroad, and the main destination countries are the US, the UK, Germany, Canada, Sweden, Switzerland and France (Grečić 2010).

In conclusion, our first finding is that there is a lack of updated and accurate data on highly skilled migration from the WB region and that the system for tracking and monitoring this type of migration should be improved. Existing data show that the outflow of highly skilled persons from the WB is rather high. The migrants are of working age and come mainly from engineering and technology and the natural sciences, which are usually high priority areas for science and technological development in many countries<sup>9</sup>. Therefore, their irreversible departure from their respective countries, without the development of any cooperation with them while they are abroad, can endanger national and regional development in the long run.

### **Research on highly skilled migration**

The presence of the brain drain phenomenon in the Western Balkans is not only

---

<sup>8</sup>[http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.phpRL\\_ID=19387&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html#fulltext](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.phpRL_ID=19387&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html#fulltext). [Accessed: 02.01.2013].

<sup>9</sup>Strategy of Scientific and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia 2010-2015 (2010: 24).

found in estimates of the scope of the outflow of highly skilled persons but it is also confirmed by research findings showing that the level of brain circulation is low. The mobility of the highly skilled rather than their irreversible departure, as well as professional cooperation between these highly skilled migrants from the WB and their colleagues in the home country during their time abroad, could be indicators of brain gain.

Research from the Institute for Social Research (2011: 11) on a representative sample of 1,530 youths in Serbia aged between 15 and 29 shows that only 3.27 per cent of young people have attended a foreign school or college. Research on the capacities of the scientific research community in the field of social sciences and humanities in Serbia (Cvetičanin and Petrović 2013) within the Regional Research Promotion Programme in the Western Balkans<sup>10</sup>, using a sample of 672 respondents, shows only 1 per cent of respondents graduating abroad with 5.3 per cent receiving their MA and 4 per cent their PhD overseas. Bearing in mind the estimate that 20,000 doctors from Serbia are dispersed around the world (Filipović 2012), these findings could indicate that a small number of highly skilled migrants return to the home country.

Research on returnees (Germenji and Milo 2009, Kilic et al. 2007) and circular migration (Mai 2011, Mroukis and Gemi 2011) in Albania shows that it is mostly less educated citizens who return and circulate, and this is mainly due to failure in the labour market, contracts expiring and an inability to ensure legal residence. The survey on the return of Albanian lecturers and researchers who emigrated after 1990 shows that less than 10 per cent had returned to the country by 2005 (Gedeshi and Black 2006: 25). In BiH, a representative of the scientific diaspora described existing cooperation with diaspora in the following words: “The BiH scientific diaspora presents a great scientific and professional potential, crucial for BiH, but presently not utilized”. (Nikolić et al. 2011: 48). A representative of the Serbian scientific diaspora used almost the same words: “Our country doesn’t use the potential of our people abroad at all, that is, in percents it would be zero” (Pavlović and Džinović 2011: 201). Vangeli (Vangeli 2011) described attempts at cooperation to link up with the diaspora for the purposes of achieving brain gain in Macedonia as “ineffective”.

Research into highly skilled migration has shown that there is a lack of interest among the academic community in the WB (except Albania) to research this type of migration. Furthermore, research of highly skilled migration is carried out mostly within the framework of Lee's push-pull theory, and it examines the motivation for leaving the country of origin and the reasons for choosing the country of destination or return. Researching migration as a system and focusing on the dynamic aspects, the formation of networks and transfer of knowledge and other resources through them, would give a better insight into the development of transnational activities and the possibilities of achieving brain circulation and brain gain. More specifically, this research would primarily include researching professional networks formed by highly skilled migrants between the country of origin and the country of destination.

---

<sup>10</sup><http://www.rppp-westernbalkans.net/en.html>. [Accessed on 02.01.2013].

It would look at how they were established, the impact of the macro and micro level of their formation and their characteristics – density, width and strength, as well as their productivity and the professional activities developed through the networks and the transfer of knowledge, skills and contacts they engender. Research into other forms of their transnational activities – social, cultural and political – would offer important insights into their contribution to overall social development, including the democratisation process in certain countries and the region of the Western Balkans.

### **Brain Gain Policies in the Western Balkans**

There are two basic reasons for the prevalence of brain drain in South East Europe and both of these lie at a macro-systemic level. The first reason is related to the difficult socioeconomic circumstances, including a value system that supports corruption, nepotism and patricianism, making these countries unattractive for living and working in but also undermining any efforts to develop any professional transnational activities. The second reason is an insufficiently or inadequately developed migration policy in this more inferior part of the transnational space compared to the developed part of the transnational space that has efficient policies to attract highly educated migrants.

Migration policies in the main destination countries for highly skilled migrants from the Western Balkans are like the recruitment programmes for ‘guest workers’ in the countries of Western Europe during the period 1945-1974, except that they target the highly skilled rather than low-skilled workers (Castles 2006). These primarily refer to the “Blue Card Directive”<sup>11</sup>; “Students Directive”<sup>12</sup>, “Researchers Directive”<sup>13</sup> and the prioritisation policy for highly qualified personnel in the USA. Procedures are simplified and the conditions for entry and for renewing licenses are facilitated for highly skilled personnel. A series of post-study ‘job search’ schemes to keep students have been developed, thereby simplifying the process for obtaining student visas and reducing the limitations related to working during and after the study. Access to the labour market is also facilitated by reductions in the minimum income requirements and the waiving of labour market tests as well as amendments of their naturalisation and permanent residency, etc. These migration policies, together with the existence of professional and private social networks in these countries, are a strong pull factor for highly skilled migrants.

On the other hand, the Western Balkan countries lack such developed “recruitment programmes” for foreign highly skilled migrants for obvious reasons – a difficult socioeconomic situation and a lack of incentives for migrants. However, these countries invest more or less effort in the creation of an institutional framework to

---

<sup>11</sup>Directive 2009/50/EC, See in: *Mobile Talent?, The Staying Intentions of International Students in Five EU Countries*, Migration Policy Group and German Foundations on Integration and Migration, 2011.

<sup>12</sup>Council Directive 2004/114, See in: *Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the Application of Directive 2004/114/EC on the conditions of admission of third country nationals for the purposes of studies, pupil exchange, unremunerated training or voluntary service*, EC, Brussels, 28.9.2011.

<sup>13</sup>Council Directive 2005/71 on a specific procedure for the purpose of scientific research.

deal with the challenge of brain drain and its transformation into brain circulation and brain gain (Table 2).

Migration policies aimed at highly skilled migrants can be analysed in terms of their form, content and manner of implementation.

**Table 2: Brain Gain Policies in the Western Balkans**

Country	Policy	Measure	Responsible body
Albania	The Brain Gain Programme (from 2006 to present) was preceded by the National Migration Strategy (2004)	To engage highly skilled migrants in the economic and democratic development of the country by involving them in the development of public administration, institutions of higher education or research, and the business sector;  A comprehensive approach has been developed to encourage their return; this ranges from establishing a strategy and legal framework to developing specific incentives for returnees.	Council of Ministers
Serbia	Migration Management Strategy (written in 2009)  The Law on Migration Management (2012)	To develop projects for the “temporary return of a highly educated workforce that has left the Republic of Serbia”, “the use of their knowledge and skills at a distance”, but also for their permanent return and active participation in the labour market.	Commissariat for Refugees and Migration
	Strategy to Preserve and Strengthen the Relationship between the Homeland and the Diaspora, as well as the Homeland of the Serbs in the Region (2011)	To encourage the country’s development through economic, scientific, technological, cultural, educational and sports cooperation with the diaspora; but also for the diaspora to assist in the process of integration into the EU and the promotion of the reputation of the Republic of Serbia throughout the world.	Office for Cooperation with the Diaspora and Serbs in the Region

Country	Policy	Measure	Responsible body
<b>Serbia</b>	Strategy of Scientific and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia 2010-2015	To make “better use” of the diaspora, first by identifying its members and their resources (database creation), and then by developing various forms of cooperation and return programmes.	Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development
	National Youth Strategy	To prevent the permanent departure of youth from the country and encourage youth mobility and international cooperation.	Ministry of Youth and Sports
	National Strategy for the Economic Development of the Republic of Serbia from 2006 to 2012	To support mobility, inclusion in the single European educational space and investment in an efficient scientific research structure.	Ministry of Finance and Economy
	National Sustainable Development Strategy 2007-2017	To develop programmes for the most talented young scientists in the country, promote the mobility of our researchers at home and abroad, establish links with the academic diaspora, as well as “the development of an adequate policy of return and employment”.	Council for European Integration
	The Regional Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2007 to 2012	To attract professional and financial resources of the diaspora for the country's economic development, but also for the creation of conditions for the professional engagement of returnees.	Ministry of Regional Development and Local Self-Government
<b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>	Strategy in the Area of Migration and Asylum, and Action Plan for the period 2012-2015	“Strengthen the institutional capacities of Bosnia and Herzegovina aimed at linking migration to development” (pp. 49)	Sector for Immigration of Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Country	Policy	Measure	Responsible body
<b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>	EU Integration Strategy for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2006	The diaspora is important for the promotion of BiH abroad.	Directorate for European Integration
	Strategy for the Development of Science in BiH 2010-2015	To create legal and other requirements for the unobstructed transfer of knowledge and technologies and the inclusion of foreign scientists and BiH scientists from abroad in the country's scientific projects and to ensure that BiH institutions grant scientific advisor status to scientists from the diaspora.	Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Department of Science and Culture
	Strategy for scientific research and Research and Development activities in the Federation for the period 2012-2022	To include the diaspora in researching projects and mentoring young scientists and researchers.	Federal Ministry of Education and Science
	Strategy of Scientific and Technological Development of the Republic of Srpska 2012-2016	The diaspora is important in terms of achieving objectives related to scientific-research cooperation and mobility.	Ministry of Science and Technology of the Republic of Srpska
	Development Strategy of FBiH 2010-2020	The resources of the BiH scientific diaspora will be used in the development of human resource competences through return programmes, the circulation and networking of scientists and professionals.	The Federal Institute for Development Programming
	Development Strategy of BiH (not adopted)	To encourage the transfer and investment of the capital, knowledge and technology of the diaspora and the strengthening of its impact on economic growth and development, as well as the circular migration of scientists and professionals.	Directorate for Economic Planning BiH
	BiH Social Inclusion Strategy 2008-2013 (not adopted)	To enhance the capacity of the educational system through the transfer of knowledge and experience from abroad.	Directorate for Economic Planning BiH

Country	Policy	Measure	Responsible body
Macedonia	Resolution on Migration Policy of the Republic of Macedonia 2009-2014	Measures for mapping and creating a scientific and professional diaspora database, support for temporary emigration and circulation of the workforce to facilitate their return, including virtual return programmes, reduction of brain drain and its negative effects and encouragement of brain gain.	Emigration Agency of the Republic of Macedonia
	Stop Brain Drain Strategy 2013-2020	Currently under preparation.	Ministry of Education and Science
Montenegro	Strategy for Cooperation with the Diaspora for the period 2011-2014	Mapping of scientific and professional diaspora, developing cooperation with them through scientific-research institutions and programmes and the transfer of knowledge to launch small and medium-sized businesses in the areas of cutting-edge technologies and encouragement of student mobility.	Centre for Emigrants from Montenegro which should become the Office/Agency for the Diaspora

### Form of brain gain policies

With regard to *form*, these migration policies vary from the focused brain gain policy of Albania and its Brain Gain Programme, through the existence of broader migration policies that include measures aimed at highly skilled migrants in Macedonia and Montenegro, to broader development strategies that include brain gain measures as in the case of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (Table 2). With its Brain Gain Programme, Albania is the only country in the region that has developed a systemic state response to the brain drain phenomenon. Three key characteristics of the Programme should be emphasised. Firstly, its goal is to engage highly skilled migrants in the economic and democratic development of the country by involving them in the development of public administration, higher education or research institutions and the business sector. Secondly, a comprehensive approach has been developed to encourage return and it covers aspects ranging from the establishment of a strategic and legal framework to developing concrete incentives for returnees. Thirdly, a body has been established to implement the programme. This is the Council of Ministers made up of representatives from the Ministry of

Education and Science, the Department of Public Administration and the Diaspora Institute.

The advantages of a single brain gain strategy are that the brain gain measures are in one place and are clearly operational, and that there is a budget and a body responsible for its implementation. It is also important for highly skilled migrants to have a point of reference and to see that the government is supporting their return. However, a disadvantage of this approach lies in the possibility of the brain gain strategy being separated from other development strategies, policies and actors, and thus failing to achieve the overarching developmental impact. Zeneli (2012: 5) stressed that disadvantage in the implementation of the Brain Gain Programme (BGP):

...the role of the BGP in the near future would be to tackle the problem of a better synergy among its actual and potential stakeholders and partners, national and international...Many others should also contribute to this improvement, such as Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and some key Government Departments like DSDC (Department of Strategy and Donor Coordination), as well as the Ministry of Interior and DOPA (Department of Public Administration), already involved.

On the other hand, brain gain measures in Serbia are an integral part of migration and development strategies. The *Migration Management Strategy* is an umbrella strategy that integrates measures from the other strategies presented in Table 2. Its development was followed by the establishment of a coordination body for monitoring and managing migration as well as the Migration Management Law. The coordinating body is composed of almost all the ministers whose ministries are responsible for a specific part of the migration flows. It also has an operational body comprised of middle managers from the same ministries and this entity is coordinated by the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration. Local councils for migration have also been established at a local level.

Such a model for an institutional brain gain mechanism is good for several reasons; first, because it links the migration strategy and the development strategies; second, a coordination mechanism for all stakeholders involved in migration and development is developed; third, the coordination mechanism also includes the local level and it allows highly skilled migrants to contribute to the balanced regional development of the country. What this mechanism lacks is a single brain gain strategy, which would clearly define brain gain measures and the budget allocated to them, as well as the responsibility of all the actors for its implementation. *Migration Management Strategy* includes measures for all kinds of migration including forced, irregular and illegal migration, which always takes priority, especially during the process for accession to the EU. The development strategies also include various measures that have a higher priority for the ministries that implement them than the measures aimed at highly skilled migrants. Additionally, the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration is responsible for coordinating all migration flows into the country. It would be good if a single body was responsible for coordinating brain gain measures. Furthermore, in all the aforementioned strategies in Serbia, the development of brain gain measures did not start out as a mainstreaming process in which all important stakeholders in the field of migration participated with their knowledge of migration and the

intention to formulate brain gain policies. Each ministry included some measures in its strategy because brain drain had been identified as a challenge during their own process for planning and analysing strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats (SWOT).

The consequences of the brain gain measures developed in this way are that the brain gain activities of the respective actors are rare, and if they do exist, they are mostly of the project type. It means that they are short-term activities and that there is no cooperation between the actors in their implementation. Moreover, their effects are not monitored and the lessons learned are not identified and used to develop and improve brain gain policies and programmes.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has been developing brain gain policies as well as a coordination body<sup>14</sup> similar to that of Serbia, but due to the complex nature of government<sup>15</sup>, the situation regarding its implementation and coordination is even more complex. “The number of institutions that need to be coordinated for effective migration policy and, in turn, effective policy for Diaspora, can cause dizziness” (Ćosić and Džebo 2012: 8). For example, there are fourteen ministries of education in BiH. Therefore, the situation of the current legal framework raises questions regarding the implementation and coordination of all brain gain policies at the different levels.

In Macedonia and Montenegro, the measures aimed at highly skilled migrants are within the migration strategies. Agencies with responsibility for the diaspora have also been established – the Emigration Agency of the Republic of Macedonia and the Centre for Emigrants from Montenegro, which should become the Office/Agency for the Diaspora. However, the implementation of the brain gain measures is expected to be supported by other ministries as well. In Macedonia, these are the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Economy. In Montenegro they are the Directorate for Diaspora (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration), the Ministry of Education and Science, the University of Montenegro and the Ministry of Economy. However, the challenge of including brain gain measures in migration strategies is concerned with how to prevent these measures being ignored as a result of the urgency to regulate other migration flows (and pressure from the EU that they should be primarily regulated) and prevent them being separated from the development strategies and objectives.

Therefore, a win-win combination would be to have a single brain gain strategy that is evidence-based and developed in cooperation with all stakeholders in the field of

---

<sup>14</sup>The Coordination Body for Monitoring Implementation of the 2008-2011 Strategy and Action Plan on Immigration and Asylum.

<sup>15</sup>There are two entities – the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (51% of the territory) and the Republika Srpska (49% of the territory), as well as Brcko District. The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina consists of ten cantons which, in administrative terms are further split into communes. Republika Srpska is administratively split into five regions, which are further subdivided into communes.

[http://www.mfa.ba/dobro\\_dosli\\_u\\_bih/drzavno\\_uredjenje/administrativno\\_teritorijalno\\_uredjenje/?id=267](http://www.mfa.ba/dobro_dosli_u_bih/drzavno_uredjenje/administrativno_teritorijalno_uredjenje/?id=267).

[Accessed: 03.05.2013].

migration and development, including the highly skilled migrants. At the same time, these measures should be included in the development strategies. This means that the brain gain strategy should be an umbrella strategy that gathers all brain gain measures from the migration and development strategies. A body should be established to take charge of the implementation of the strategy and to monitor the effects, and a budget should be allocated to strategy implementation. It is equally important that these measures reach the local level and adapt themselves to needs on the ground and thereby ensure that highly skilled migrants contribute to the balanced development of all the regions in the home country.

### **Content of brain gain policies**

The *content* of brain gain policies in the WB region includes measures for all stages of the migration cycle – improving the living and working conditions of scientists and professionals in the country, encouraging their mobility, developing cooperation with the scientific and professional diaspora and facilitating their return. However, these measures are scattered across several strategies and their coordination and synergy effects have not been conceived. Besides, they are not operationalised in terms of the contribution of highly skilled migrants to certain development priorities, such as, for example, tourism or nanotechnology, etc. So, therefore, mobility programmes for students, researchers and scientists are not planned in accordance with the priorities of a country's science industry or a specific institution, but according to personal preferences. Incoherent content and an insufficient operationalisation of brain gain policies in addressing the country's priority socio-economic problems contribute to their lack of success. The second obstacle to creating adequate content for the brain gain policies is the one we mentioned at the beginning of the paper – the lack of data and findings on highly skilled migration. The migration strategies and the few existing studies (Nikolić et al. 2011; Vangeli 2011; Pavlov and Rakić 2011) point to a lack of data on highly skilled migration and the need for the academic community to get involved in its research. Clarification of this phenomenon would facilitate the formulation of efficient policies.

### **Manner of implementing brain gain policies**

With regard to the *manner of implementing* brain gain policies, it is necessary to ensure the sustainability of brain gain initiatives and their influence on structural changes in the country. Kuznetsov (2011) pointed to the importance of a proper match of bottom-up and top-down approaches. “Guided serendipity” is his term for the successful match of these two approaches, where he stresses the importance of recognising and supporting diaspora initiatives, without too much centralisation. According to Kuznetsov, “hit the wall” initiatives are useful but they are not far-reaching diaspora initiatives because of their limited scope and duration without the support of the state. Government initiatives that are too centralised and which stifle diaspora initiatives or which fail to take them as a basis for the creation of government policies and programmes, are referred to as “living dead” initiatives. “Heroic success” refers to those rare diaspora initiatives that have important positive effects on the institutional development and reform agenda, albeit without the state support.

The Western Balkan region is dominated by ‘hit the wall’ and ‘living dead’ initiatives, partly due to a lack of knowledge about highly skilled migration, partly because of antagonism within society, and partly because all the actors, including the state, work within projects and the initiatives and funding end after the project is completed, regardless of whether they achieve good results or not. Examples of “living dead” initiatives are attempts by the states to map the scientific and professional diaspora. The BiH Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees prepared a publication *Who is Who in the BiH Diaspora* for PhDs and research workers (there are 249 resumes in the 2009 and 2010 editions) and for writers. In Serbia, the Ministry of Education created a web portal “Serbian Scientists Abroad”, containing the contact details of 586 scientists. In Macedonia, the Emigration Agency website contains a section called “Prominent emigrants”, which comprises 8 categories, including only 20 scientists, and in 2012 contacts were established with 83 foreign-based scientists through the project “Mapping the scientific diaspora from the Republic of Macedonia”<sup>16</sup>, implemented by the Institute of Economics of the “Ss. Cyril and Methodius” University. Unfortunately, and notwithstanding the usefulness of these contacts, the number of persons included in the database shows that these are ‘living dead’ initiatives or they are likely to end up as such. Mapping the diaspora should obviously be linked to other specific cooperation initiatives so that the scientific and professional diaspora can see the purpose of having their contacts in the database.

It is a particularly sad that ‘hit the wall’ initiatives are the initiatives developed by international organisations because the government has failed to institutionalise them. One of the examples is the Brain Gain Programme of the World University Service Austria (WUS)<sup>17</sup>, which lasted ten years in the region. This programme ensured that university lecturers originating from the region would have lectures at universities in the region for a period of several days to three weeks, and they would be present for an entire semester during the last phase. Apart from lecturing they provided mentoring and research support. About 70-100 lecturers participated in each country. This programme gave students an opportunity to hear lectures from around the world and to learn about global trends within their fields. The courses were also improved – in terms of content and methodology – and new courses were introduced and tailored to the needs of the local labour market, and institutional cooperation was established between the hosting institution (local university) and guest lecturers at the home institutions. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) also implemented similar projects of virtual and temporary return (TOKTEN – Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals, TRQN – Temporary Return of Qualified Nationals, TVR – Temporary and Virtual Return) as well as permanent return (RQN – Return of Qualified Nationals) in the region. They included highly educated migrants from different professions and enabled knowledge transfer in public institutions, organisations and companies. These initiatives ended with the completion of the project and funding from international

---

<sup>16</sup>“Best practices in professional and socio-economic reintegration of skilled migrants”, Roundtable report, Skopje, June 7, 2012

<sup>17</sup><http://www.wus-austria.org/project/0/67.html>. [Accessed: 02.01.2013].

organisations, instead of being institutionalised and becoming a part of the brain gain programme of ministries and/or universities, public administration and companies.

Some initiatives seem like ‘guided serendipity’ and they usually involve various encounters with the scientific diaspora. We find a good example of one of these in the seminars of the *Bosnian-Herzegovinian American Academy of Arts and Sciences* (BHAAAS)<sup>18</sup>, the association of scientists and professionals from the US and Canada, which has taken place for four consecutive years under the auspices of the BiH Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees. They include medical, IT-technological, educational and law symposiums, as well as cultural and artistic activities. They facilitate the exchange of knowledge, the initiation of joint projects, mentoring, scholarships and the procurement of equipment. Another example of ‘guided serendipity’ is the *Business Technology Incubator of Technical Faculties in Belgrade*<sup>19</sup>, established as a partnership between four technical universities in Belgrade, a Belgrade municipality and citizen associations, with the support of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The incubator provides safe conditions in which to plant the seeds of the innovative ideas of scientists and professionals from the diaspora by covering part of the costs and by providing administrative support and business consulting. This is also “fertile ground” since most diaspora professionals are from technical colleges, and at the same time these colleges train enthusiastic, educated and creative young people and this means their cooperation produces innovative export-oriented businesses.

However, initiatives of these types are not enough to bring about institutional changes in the region. Such changes require a much deeper and a more comprehensive intervention in the form of state programmes that directly involve highly skilled migrants in the economic and democratic development of the country. The programme should be based on the priorities of the states and it should rely on the expertise of the diaspora. This type of initiative could be called “deliberate guidance”.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

The fact that brain drain and the difficulty of transforming it into brain gain and brain circulation in the Western Balkans is primarily determined by structural social disruptions is quite discouraging. On the other hand, the solution to both problems (brain drain and social disruptions) lies in their interconnection; it is necessary to find suitable ways to include highly skilled migrants in the economic and democratic development of the region and to accelerate the region’s inclusion in global practices. Encouraging development will encourage brain circulation in turn, and brain circulation will further contribute to development. For this self-sustaining mechanism to start, it is necessary to develop a strategic approach to development and migration.

---

<sup>18</sup> [www.bhaaas.org](http://www.bhaaas.org). [Accessed: 02.01.2013].

<sup>19</sup> [www.bitf.rs](http://www.bitf.rs). [Accessed: 02.01.2013].

The first step is to understand the two processes, their interconnection and interaction, including the activation of research and an academic community. The heterogeneity of highly skilled migration should be researched in relation to the time of departure, the duration, motivation and direction of migration, socio-demographic characteristics and the needs of the migrants. It is necessary to research their transnational networks and activities, particularly in terms of the implementation of knowledge, skills and contacts acquired abroad throughout the transnational space, for economic and democratic development. It is also important to research the mobility of students, scientists and researchers, especially the effects of European policies and programmes for encouraging mobility, as these represent an opportunity to achieve brain gain. The theoretical framework should adopt a systemic approach since it departs from the static perception of migration as a one-way and final process from A to B, and stresses interdependence and reciprocity (Papademetriou, 1988). The systemic approach perceives migration as a process, and it analyses the macro, meso and micro levels and their interaction in the transnational space. The inclusion of academics from the diaspora has proved to be a good practice in terms of encouraging research of these migratory movements<sup>20</sup>.

On the basis of better insights into the dynamics of the migratory movement of highly skilled migrants and development, it will be possible to implement the second step – the development of evidence-based policies. It is important that brain gain measures be integrated in development policies, but they should also be gathered under the Brain Gain Strategy umbrella so that their implementation can be certain and easily monitored. The development of brain gain measures should involve all the stakeholders that are important for development and migration, including highly skilled migrants. These measures should be coherent with the migration and development policies of the EU and its Member States. It is important that the inputs for their creation should also come from an evaluation of the implementation of existing policies and practices in the transnational space of the WB countries and the destination countries, especially the EU. It is necessary to consider the practices of all stakeholders – government bodies and institutions, international organisations, civil society organisations and the migrants themselves. It is also important to have these measures included in local policies and practices. Brain gain measures should seek to improve conditions in the country, encourage mobility, develop cooperation with the diaspora and facilitate return, and be operationalised in specific projects in line with the development priorities of the country, community and institutions.

The third step is the establishment of a coordination mechanism or body with responsibility for implementing and monitoring the implementation of the Strategy and for the allocation of relevant financial resources. Together with representatives from state institutions, this mechanism should involve all other actors who are active in this field at a national and local level. This will ensure a synergised effect, and regular monitoring and evaluation of the strategy implementation will allow it to be revised and improved.

---

<sup>20</sup>Research Workshop on Migration from BiH, Sarajevo, September 10-11, 2012, <http://www.mhrr.gov.ba/iseljenistvo/aktuelnosti/?id=3127>. [Accessed: 02.01.2013].

These steps can be facilitated and accelerated by regional cooperation, both in the realisation of comparative research and in exchanging experiences and good practices, as well as in a regional approach to developing transnational migration policies that will respect the needs of the entire transnational space, including the countries of origin and the countries of destination.

## References

1. Basch, L.G., Glick-Schiller, N., Blanc-Szanton C. (1994). Nations unbound: transnational projects, post-colonial predicaments, and deterritorialized nation-states. Langhorne, PA: Gordon and Breach.
2. Carletto, G., Davis, B., Stampini, M., Zezza, A. (2006). A Country on the Move: International Migration in the Post-Communist Albania. In: *International Migration Review* 40 (4): 767–85.
3. Castles, S. (2006). Guestworkers in Europe: A Resurrection? *International Migration Review* 40 (4): 741–766.
4. Ćosić, E., Džebo, A. (2012). Brain Gain or Brain Waist: BiH Diaspora & Development, Sarajevo, Academia.
5. Cvetičanin, P., Petrović, M. (2013). Capacities, Practices and Problems of Scientific-Research Community in Serbia, In: *Social Science Research Sector in Serbia: An Overview of the Current Situation, Main Challenges and Policy Recommendations*. I.Stošić, B.Radovanović, M.Đukić (ed.). Belgrade, Institute of Economic Sciences. [in Serbian].
6. Daugeliene, R., Marcinkeviciene, R. (2009). Brain Circulation: Theoretical Considerations. *Inzinerine Ekonomika-Engineering Economics* 3.
7. Docquier, F., Rapoport, H. (2011). Globalization, Brain Drain and Development. Discussion Paper No. 5590, Bonn, Institute for the Study of Labor.
8. Filipović, J. (2012). Management of a Diaspora Virtual University as a Complex Organization. Germany, Lambert Academic Publishing.
9. Gëdeshi, I., Black, R. (2006). From Brain Drain to Brain Gain: Mobilising Albania's Skilled Diaspora. Tirana, UNDP Albania.
10. Germenji, E., Gedshi, I. (2008). Highly Skilled Migration from Albania: An Assessment of Current Trends and the Ways Ahead. Working Paper T-25, Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalisation and Poverty, Brighton, University of Sussex.
11. Germenji, E., Milo, L. (2009). Return and labour status at home: evidence from returnees in Albania. *Journal of Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 9 (4): 497-517.
12. Government of the Republic Serbia (2010). Strategy of Scientific and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia 2010-2015.
13. Grečić, V. (2010). Serbian Scientific Diaspora. Beograd, Institute of International Politics and Economics. [in Serbian].
14. Grečić, V., Lopusina, M. (1994). All Serbs of the World, Beograd, Princip. [in Serbian].
15. Institute for Social Research (2011). Research on the Youth Mobility in Serbia, Belgrade, Ministry of Youth and Sport.
16. Jalowiecki, B., Gorzelak, J.G. (2004). Brain Drain, Brain Gain, and Mobility: Theories and Prospective Methods. *Higher Education in Europe* 29(3): 299-308.

17. Janeska, V. (2003). Migration of Highly Educated and Skilled Persons from the Republic of Macedonia. Skopje, Institute of Economics, at Skopje's University Ss. Cyril and Methodius.
18. Kilic, T., Carletto, G., Davis, B., Zezza, A. (2007). Investing Back Home: Return Migration and Business Ownership in Albania. Washington, World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 4366.
19. King, R. (2005). Albania as a laboratory for the study of migration and development, *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, 7(2): 133-56.
20. Kuznetsov, Y. (2011). How Can Countries' Talent Abroad Help Transform Institutions at Home? Ireland, *Diaspora Matters*, World Bank.
21. Mai, N. (2011). Reluctant Circularities: the interplay between integration, return and circular migration within the Albanian migration to Italy. Italy, METOIKOS project, European University Institute.
22. MONSTAT (2008). Demographic Trends in Montenegro since the middle of 20 century and perspectives until 2050), Podgorica. [in Montenegrin].
23. Mroukis, T., Gemi, E. (2011). Circular Migration Between Albania and Greece: A Case Study. Italy, METOIKOS project, European University Institute.
24. Nikolić, S., Mraović, B., Čosić, E. (2011). The Brain Gain Potential of the Scientific Diaspora: Exploring the Case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo, Association Alumni of the Center for Interdisciplinary Postgraduate Studies (ACIPS).
25. OECD (2008). A Profile of Immigrant Populations in the 21st Century.
26. Papademetriou, D. (1988). International Migration in a Changing World, In: *International Migration Today*. C.W. Stahl. Vol.2: Emerging Issues. Paris, UNESCO.
27. Pavlov, T. (2011). The motivation for migration of highly qualified people in Serbia. In: *Mobility and Emigration of Experts: Personal and Social Gains and Losses*. N. Polovina, and T. Pavlov. Belgrade, Group 484: 149-163.
28. Pavlov, T., Rakić, D. (2011). Developing Brain Gain Policies in Serbia. Policy Paper, Belgrade, Group 484.
29. Pavlović, J., Džinović, V. (2011). From Potentials to Agents of Change in Society: The Positions of Key Actors in Brain Drain. In: *Mobility and Emigration of Experts: Personal and Social Gains and Losses*. N. Polovina, and T. Pavlov. Belgrade, Group 484: 194-209.
30. Salt, J. (1997). *International Movements of the Highly Skilled*. Paris, OECD.
31. Trimçev, E. (2005). *Albanian Brain Drain: Turning the Tide*. Tirana: Albanian Institute for International Studies (AIIS).
32. Uvalic, M. (2005). Science, technology and economic development in South Eastern Europe. Science Policy. Series N1, Venice, UNESCO.
33. Vangeli, A. (2011). No Country for Highly Skilled Returnees: The Brain Gain Challenge for Macedonian Policy Makers. In: *Mobility and Emigration of Experts: Personal and Social Gains and Losses*. N. Polovina, and T. Pavlov. Belgrade, Group 484: 81-105.
34. Vertovec, S. (2002). Transnational Networks and Skilled Labour Migration. In: Working paper for the conference: *Ladenburger Diskurs "Migration"*.
35. World Bank (2008). *Migration and Remittances Factbook*.
36. World Bank (2011). *Migration and Remittances Factbook*.
37. Zaneli, B. (2012). Brain Gain Programme in Albania Case Study and Policy Guide for Policy Makers in Southeast Europe. Tirana, Brain Gain Programme.

## Chapter 5:

# Ukrainian highly skilled migrants: characteristics of the community, schemes of cooperation with Ukraine

*Antonina RISHKO*<sup>1</sup>

*PhD student, Institute of Sociology, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Ukraine, Kiev*

### Abstract

The chapter investigates the history of highly skilled migration in Ukrainian national policies and current tendencies for its management. A long history of emigration has resulted in the formation of a large group of Ukrainians abroad. Researchers have estimated that between 12 and 20 million Ukrainians live abroad on a permanent basis. Despite being a popular subject in political debates, highly skilled migration has not been researched in depth by scientists. One of the main challenges of the subject is how to define highly skilled migration and how to calculate it statistically. There are very few publications on the subject in Ukraine.

Ukraine has some experience of institutional policies for cooperating with its diaspora. However, such collaborations are usually initiated by diaspora organizations rather than governmental institutions. Despite several government programmes and initiatives that have appeared from time to time over the last twenty years, the interaction between the diaspora and citizens within Ukraine's borders remains ineffective. Taking into consideration the experience of previous research on migration from Ukraine and brain drain/gain investigation in particular, the author analyses the main research gaps as well as further opportunities and requirements for future studies. Consequently, the chapter attempts to ascertain the main causes for the failures and triumphs of Ukrainian policies to manage highly skilled migration and it also offers some recommendations to ensure improved and fruitful cooperation.

**Keywords:** highly skilled migrants, diaspora contributions, cooperation between diaspora and country of origin, Ukraine.

### Introduction

The subject of migration is widely represented in the Ukrainian scientific discourse. Scholars usually focus their attention on investigations of labour migration from Ukraine and analyses of formed diaspora. The Ukrainian diaspora is regarded as a subsystem of Ukrainian ethnicity and a part of international communication that can help Ukrainians promote themselves in the world (Chernova 2007). First of all, such a promotion presents peculiarities within the sphere of culture and language because of self-organizing activities among the Ukrainian diaspora. In the last decade, considerations of the contributions made to the development of Ukraine have been a popular subject in the analysis of the diaspora and highly skilled migration (Dybchuk

---

<sup>1</sup>antonina.rishko@gmail.com

2006, Sovinska 2002). Scientists have concluded that the activity of the diaspora has made a vital contribution to the first decade of the transformation of the independent Ukrainian state.

It should be noted that researchers consider the migratory process of high-qualified workers as a complex aspect of the demographical crisis in Ukraine (Shulga 2004). Furthermore, they analyse the potential of the return of migrants to the homeland (Kupets 2011) and the economic losses resulting from such migration (Zhylnikova 2009). There have also been investigations of virtual high-qualified migration (Orlovska and Relina 2011).

The consideration of diaspora activism is closely related to a focus on the theme of highly-skilled migration. The subject of highly-skilled migration is not new in the Ukrainian scientific field, but greater consideration is given to the negative aspects, taking into account such complex problems as increasing emigration from Ukraine and the development of the diaspora. However, there is still a lack of work on the role of the diaspora, its connections with Ukraine and a future cooperation strategy.

The main aim of this article is to analyse the main characteristics of Ukrainian highly skilled migrants and to investigate the main schemes for cooperation with Ukrainian society. The article consists of four sections. The first section offers a general description of the Ukrainian migration process during the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and it illustrates the main organizational activities in the host countries. The following part focuses on contradictory definitions of highly skilled migration as well as contradictions in determining the consequences of such migration. The third section is organized according to the spheres of cooperation that migrants have with Ukraine at the level of civic society organization and scientific institutions. The next section presents the main aspects of official Ukrainian policy for cooperation with highly skilled migrants. We finish by offering some conclusions and some brief policy recommendations for the local and national levels.

### **Ukrainian migration: periods, destinations, main organizational activities in host countries**

Researchers divide the Ukrainian foreign community into three groups: descendants (third-fourth generation) of Ukrainian migrants, who have integrated into the social life of the countries they live in; the autochthonal Ukrainian population in neighbouring territories; Ukrainian citizens, who live abroad permanently (Gorelov 2009). Autochthonal Ukrainians abroad are those who live permanently in a territory close to the borders of modern Ukraine, but who have become citizens of another state because of the historical delineation of the frontiers. Accordingly, this group has become a diaspora without any migration as such taking place. Such Ukrainian “autochthonal diasporas” exist in Poland, Moldova, Russia, Belarus, Romania and Hungary. In turn, there are national minorities from those nations in Ukraine. Other groups of Ukrainians abroad migrated from Ukraine during the last century and they currently live permanently outside the Ukrainian territory.

Ukraine has a long history of emigration and this has resulted in the formation of numerous groups of Ukrainians abroad. Researchers have calculated that there are between 12 and 20 million Ukrainians abroad (Kliuchkovska 2008: 17). However, it is difficult to verify this number correctly. Scholars refer to four waves of Ukrainian emigration: from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to 1914; 1914-1945; 1945-1990; 1991–today. The largest groups of the Ukrainian diaspora are in Canada, USA, Russia as well as Brazil, Argentina, Kazakhstan, Poland, Belarus, Romania, France, Great Britain, etc.

During the first wave of emigration, Ukrainians mostly resettled on the American continent. The first countries of destination were the USA, Canada, Brazil and Argentina and subsequently Venezuela, Paraguay and Chile (Popok 2007). Migrants from the first wave were the core communities that founded diaspora organizations, mostly within the cultural, educational and economic spheres. Emigrants also moved to the East and for the most part they spread out across the territory of the Russian Empire.

The countries of Europe were the main destinations during the second interwar wave of migration: The principal destinations were Poland, Germany, Czechoslovakia, France, Austria, and to a lesser extent Britain, Bulgaria, Greece and Italy. The third period of emigration was to countries that were new destinations for migration: Australia, New Zealand, Bolivia, Colombia, Peru, etc. The fourth wave was even more widespread than the previous ones. The economic labour migration of the 1990s saw Ukrainian migrants move to 17 countries (in 1994) and 26 countries were established as migration destinations in 2002 (Jevtuh et al. 2005). The most popular countries were Turkey, Germany, Portugal, Italy and Greece, and Ukrainians also migrated to Japan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Iran, Iraq, etc.

Consequently, Ukrainians currently live in more than 100 countries around the world. The Ukrainian overseas community is heterogeneous and highly organized. It should be pointed out that the diaspora in general, and diaspora organizations in particular, mostly exist in democratic societies with a highly developed civil society. Only in such societies can migrants show their identities and carry on self-organized activities. In addition to a national idea, religion and historical memory need to be maintained. In undemocratic countries, the authorities strictly regulate the activities of organizations and see diaspora activities as a threat to the political regime. Therefore, if a host society cannot ensure the freedom of ethnic self-expression, migrants must be integrated into the host society (Gorelov 2009).

Researchers have noted that the Ukrainian diaspora has a very large number of organizations (more than three thousand). In every country of settlement, it accounts for 20-30 per cent of all representatives of the Ukrainian community, and 60-70 per cent of these are involved in working towards solving national and cultural problems (Gorelov 2009: 54). Diaspora organizations focus on preserving and promoting Ukrainian culture and they also support initiatives for the development of the civil society in Ukraine and provide assistance within the different spheres of the social life of the Ukrainian community in the host countries and in Ukraine.

Besides, there are scientific institutions for Ukrainians, whether located abroad or in the homeland, that focus on cooperation with the Ukrainian scientific community worldwide. There is stable support for scientific libraries and for some institutions. The cooperation is conducted within both spheres: the humanities, particularly history, and science. In recent years various internet platforms have been created for scientific cooperation. The most popular sites are the Internet social network “Ukrainian Scientists Worldwide”, “Ukrainian scientific internet society” and “Scientific social community”. These networks were formed as platforms for scientific discussions to search for co-authors, etc. These sites have also become a source of information with announcements of international conferences and publications. Although these platforms do help to overcome Ukraine’s scientific isolation (when scholars are not involved in worldwide scientific processes), they are still not particularly popular and they do not have any appropriate financial support. Most of these resources are created with the scientists’ own initiatives and resources and without any institutional support.

In spite of being a highly organized diaspora, Ukrainians abroad are highly heterogeneous in terms of religion, political thought, socioeconomic situation, etc. In addition, diaspora organizations do not cooperate intensively among themselves at a global and regional level. Indeed, there are contradictions and competition between organizations in the USA, Canada, and Britain. Furthermore, membership numbers are continuously decreasing as the senior members get older and young members become less involved (Satzewich 2002). Besides, the migrants of the last 20 years do not get actively engaged in cooperation activities with previously formed diaspora organizations. This situation exists partly because of the economic features of the migration of the last decade and partly because migrants avoid contact with the Ukrainian community in the host country; in turn, the organizations make no attempt to attract new members from among the Ukrainian newcomers.

In such an unstable diaspora situation, Ukraine can support organizations and unite them towards a common goal – the development of Ukraine. Unfortunately, the Ukrainian authorities have got used to receiving support from the diaspora without giving anything in return.

### **Defining highly skilled migration and its main consequences**

An investigation of highly skilled migration faces several obstacles. One significant barrier is the difficulty to statistically calculate such migrants. Besides, there is no single definition regarding who should be considered as a highly skilled migrant. Some scholars say these are migrants with a higher education (Salt 1992) while others admit a broader scope – those with valuable skills (for example, Williams 2007). The half-way definition between these describes highly skilled migrants as people with a higher education or considerable experience in some qualification (Iredale 2000). Even if we take the latter as a basic definition, there is still the problem of measuring qualification and its application in a host country. For example, whether or not migrants with a higher education but who are working in low-qualified jobs abroad should be classified as highly skilled migrants is still somewhat controversial.

T. Bogdan offers the results of research into migrants from West Ukraine in which 46 per cent of respondents had a higher education but only 8 per cent worked abroad as specialists (Bogdan 2011: 124). Consequently, the scholar concluded that one consequence of labour migration is the loss of professional skills and a decrease in qualification levels. 72 per cent of respondents changed their professional level during their work experience abroad (Bogdan 2011: 124).

Students who start their education abroad are another controversial group difficult to classify. Accordingly, a person graduating from a secondary school in the home country has no qualification in the home country. When a person is educated or gains experience abroad, this raises the question about whether or not he/she should be classified as a highly skilled migrant and about how to measure that highly skill potential, etc. Researchers indicate the attraction of foreign talented youngsters as one major channel of “brain drain”. At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century 1.7 million students studied abroad, with the majority (82 per cent) concentrated in the USA, Great Britain, Germany, France and Australia (Hlushchenko 2005:192).

Consequently, the problem of defining highly skilled migrants is quite controversial. Moreover, researchers are not all of the one opinion as to the consequences of high-qualified migration. Such migration is explained as a process of “brain drain”, “brain circulation” or “brain gain”. Correctly defining the processes is not an aim of this article although the consequences of migration for both the country of origin and the host country should be noted.

The impact of highly skilled migration on Ukraine is often seen as a vast loss and an unavoidable problem given that Ukraine is classified as a country with a huge scientific potential (5.3 scientific and technical workers for every 100 economically active people), which is being wasted (Zhylnikova 2009). Besides, such migration is qualified as “brain escape”, namely the one-sided migration of scientists from developing to developed countries due to both economic causes and the possibility of better self-realization (Orlovska and Relina 2011).

In Ukraine, the emigration of highly skilled workers is a permanent ongoing process. Ukrainian science lost 525 doctors of sciences and 1026 PhD holders to emigration between 1991 and 2005 (Zhylnikova 2009). However, this figure is lower than the real figure because of difficulties in statistical calculations. In general, researchers noted several significant effects on the host country. Firstly, there is the attraction of having skilled labour without the need to invest in their education. Host countries do not spend resources on migrants’ education; they attract prepared specialists from poorer countries with fewer possibilities for professional realization. In addition, foreign specialists are often cheaper for an employer than native ones because frequently they do not claim social benefits. Secondly, foreign workers often come to unfilled niches within the labour market of the host country, where demand exceeds supply (Romashchenko 2008). Besides, developed countries are currently experiencing a demographical crisis and an aging population, which is forcing them to search for new human resources. From this perspective, attracting highly skilled migrants is one of the best ways to stabilise population loss. One of biggest negative

consequences for a host country is the competition between foreign and native workers, which sometimes leads to an increase in the unemployment levels of the country.

However, migration influences both countries, and the impacts on the country of origin could be estimated as being even more significant than in the host country. The positive effects include remittances, which are often mentioned as one of most important aspects for the country of origin. Indeed, the amount of bank transfers is increasing. In Ukraine, remittances account for almost 5.2 billion of dollars per year (IOM 2011). However, it should be pointed out that highly-qualified migrants transfer money to their families in the home country less often than their low-qualified countrymen do, but they often express support through organizations or institutions (Gorelov 2009). Highly-qualified migration is also occasionally interpreted as support for developing countries insofar as it results in a decrease in the level of unemployment. On the one hand, as many highly-skilled workers in developing countries become unemployed due to economic reorganization and company decline, they have to retrain or look for new opportunities abroad. On the other hand, many thousands of graduates enter the Ukrainian labour market each year but there is no demand for so many graduates. The difference between the demand for specialists and the supply of higher educational institutions results in young educated people becoming unemployed or leads them to look for other opportunities, particularly abroad (Zhylnikova 2009; Kupets 2011).

Another aspect of highly skilled migration considers the circulation of highly qualified migrants from developed to developing countries. This process can be a part of circulation involving representatives of international companies. However, the amount of foreign workers in developing countries is less than the number in developed countries, and such mobile workers often migrate for a few years only, whereas highly skilled workers from developing countries often try to stay in the developed host countries (Kupets 2011: 52).

Kupets argues that migrant return to the homeland is seen as an effective strategy for converting “brain drain” to “brain gain” and it partly compensates the home country for the negative consequences of highly-qualified emigration (Kupets 2011). Scholars have noted three possible positive consequences of labour migration for the donor-country: remittances, the return of migrants to the homeland and the transfer of new knowledge and skills. However, more educated migrants are less likely to return to their home country than their lesser educated co-nationals. Furthermore, after returning to Ukraine, migrants are more likely to work in an unofficial sector of the labour market, which could be interpreted as a negative influence of foreign experience on employment in Ukraine (Kupets 2011).

The negative consequences of high qualified migrants for the donor country should also be noted. First of all, the loss of qualified specialists results in a shortage of highly skilled workers, who are important for the development of a country. Bogdan argues that the “circle of poverty” appears because of the migration of high-qualified workers: a lack of workers and an underdeveloped infrastructure prevents private

capital from being attracted to poor regions and this causes low levels of economic activity which in turn causes a lack of jobs and this forces people to migrate. Other negative consequences include a loss of the money that the state has spent on educating the specialists who migrate. Moreover, in the case of Ukraine, where there is a serious demographical crisis, the permanent population loss affects national development (Bogdan 2011).

Interestingly enough, highly-skilled migration can also be of a virtual nature. Researchers have mentioned a global outsourcing phenomenon, which has characterized many jobs in Ukraine (Orlovska and Relina 2011).

In summary, there are several controversial problems concerning highly skilled migration. Researchers are not in agreement as to the definition of highly skilled migrants; there are different versions of the characteristics of such migration, and furthermore there are different views of the consequences of highly qualified migration for both the countries of origin and the host country.

### **Cooperation between the highly skilled diaspora and their fellow countrymen in Ukraine**

The cooperation between highly skilled diaspora and their co-nationals in Ukraine has a long history as a process of Ukrainian migration. In general, collaboration between the diaspora and Ukrainians from Ukraine occurs mostly at three levels: at the level of civil society organizations; between different higher educational and scientific institutions; at the level of the governmental institutions that provide such cooperation. This division is a simplification because each level interacts with others, and separating cooperation activities is sometimes a difficult task. However, it does help to analyse the main schemes of a process.

The first level of cooperation that we can emphasise is at the level of civil society organizations. The process of establishing cooperation between Ukraine and Ukrainians abroad is currently at a stabilizing stage, but there are still some gaps. There were two waves of cooperation activity: one in 1991 and the other in 2004-2005. The first coincided with independence; the second with the events known as the "Orange revolution". Both waves illustrate the democratic changes in society, which were supported by diaspora organizations.

In general, diaspora influence on the development of a civil society in Ukraine can be evaluated in positive terms. However, Udoenko, a former Ukraine Foreign Affairs Minister, noted a decline in cooperation between Ukraine and Ukrainians abroad and he added that the Ukrainian diaspora has lost interest in cooperating with Ukraine, which had been typical in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Udoenko 2006: 17).

Diaspora activity varies in its dependence on the host country. The effectiveness of the diaspora in self-organizing and representing ethnic identity is mostly based on two sets of factors: a degree of diaspora organization in addition to the characteristics

of the political system of the host country, and degree of political, economic and social freedom in a society that accepts migrants (Gorelov 2011).

Therefore, the Ukrainian diaspora – especially in Western countries – began to get actively involved in the internal processes of Ukraine from the time of Ukrainian independence, when cooperation organizations were initiated. The Ukrainian World Coordinating Congress was founded in 1992 with the aim of satisfying and protecting the national, cultural, linguistic, educational, artistic, social, economic and other interests of Ukrainians. It brings together Ukrainian NGOs in Ukraine and abroad. Based on the results of the 5<sup>th</sup> Congress forum, it has more than 382 member organizations. Another organization for effective cooperation, the Association of Relations with Ukrainians outside Ukraine “Ukraine-World”, was founded in 1992, the same year as the Congress. The main aim of this organization is to transfer information and coordinate different activities from Ukraine to Ukrainians abroad and vice versa. The association has departments in all the administrative districts of Ukraine. These two organizations should play the role of coordinating the centre.

There are other organizations abroad that are popular among Ukrainians including the International Organization of Ukrainian Communities “Fourth Wave”, the World Federation of Ukrainian Women’s Organizations and the Ukrainian European Congress, which are all actively involved in the development of Ukrainian society. Besides, there are also organizations with direct connections to organizations of Ukrainians abroad.

The intensity level of the cooperation process is not always the same. It depends on the diaspora’s understanding of the current Ukrainian situation, the capabilities of diaspora organizations and Ukrainian state policy for cooperating with the diaspora, etc. Diaspora services, which play a crucial role for Ukrainian society and which are mostly located in the West, are also worthy of mention. In the early years after Ukrainian independence, the diaspora offered free spaces for embassies and cultural centres (Sovinska 2002). Besides, representatives of the Ukrainian diaspora established various foundations and organizations, which provide financial, material and humanitarian support for state development in general, and needy groups in society in particular. For example, during 1992-1993 the Foundation “Let’s support Ukraine” (“Допомагаймо Україні”) spent one million dollars on Chernobyl victims, while Social Services of Ukrainians in Canada raised more than 500 million karbovanets to purchase medicine for Chernobyl invalids. Furthermore, the Organization of Canada provided more than 15 million dollars to support the state development of the Ukrainian state while the World Foundation of Ukrainian Medical Associations supplied humanitarian support during 1995-1997 to the sum of more than 400 thousand dollars, which was for Ukrainian medical and cultural-educational institutions (Gorelov 2011).

These are only some examples of diaspora support but there were many more similar initiatives. Ukrainian diaspora organizations made significant contributions to support Ukrainian society. The Ukrainian diaspora has resources to support civil society building in Ukraine, but these resources are used marginally. On the one

hand, diaspora representatives have financial resources and experience of civil society and therefore they can help create and support the complex transformation of Ukrainian society. On the other hand, because of ineffective cooperation and communication between the sides, diaspora potential is used in various scattered initiatives, without achieving any complex impact on society.

However, researchers have noted that some attempts at active support have been ruined because of misunderstandings between the diaspora and Ukrainian citizens. When the opportunity arose to participate in the building of a Ukrainian independent state, the diaspora was not quite ready for the reality of post-Soviet social life in Ukraine. The main misunderstanding was due to non-perception on both sides. The Diaspora did not grasp the Soviet reality of Ukrainian society while most people in Ukraine had little or no initiative and were even scared to show interest in some civil activities. Besides, a strict hierarchy existed in all social structures, and people had got used to maintaining the previous social system. On the other hand, Ukrainian citizens did not readily accept the western values taught through mentoring when representatives of diaspora organizations tried to show them better administration and social management strategies. Moreover, intellectuals in Ukraine understood that simply applying a western pattern would not work appropriately, and that perhaps it might prove impossible to apply to Ukrainian society (Gorelov 2011).

However, in general terms, the influence of the diaspora on building a civil society in Ukraine should be regarded in positive light. Organizations provide significant support for society and they help in the development of many NGOs in Ukraine and their initiatives by providing both financial support and information.

Another aspect of cooperation between the diaspora and their countrymen in Ukraine is at the level of educational and scientific institutions. Several scientific institutions for diaspora cooperation have been formed in Ukraine over the last 20 years. The most famous of these are the Institute for Ukrainian Diaspora Studies (National University "Ostroh Academy", Ostroh, Ukraine) and the International Institute of Education, Culture and Relations with the Diaspora (National University "Lviv Polytechnic", Lviv, Ukraine). The aim of both institutes is to maintain relations with the diaspora and to conduct research on this subject.

On the side of the Ukrainians abroad, various Ukrainian scientific institutions have been founded during the long history of emigration. The following are some of the most famous: World Council of Shevchenko Scientific Societies, Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute (HURI) (USA); Cambridge Ukrainian Studies (Great Britain); Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, University of Alberta (Canada); Ukrainian Studies at University of Toronto (Canada); Ukrainian Free University (Munich, Germany), etc. On the one hand, these institutions carry out activities for the investigation and popularization of Ukrainian history, language, and culture, while on the other, they build bridges with Ukrainian scientific institutions.

One of the directions of the Ukrainian diaspora's activity is to help with books and periodicals. The collections of capital, regional and municipal libraries were replenished thanks to such efforts. 106,476 units of scientific values (7,174 works - from Europe) were transferred to Ukraine during the period 1993-1998 with the assistance of the Ukrainian diaspora (Dybuchuk 2006). Such support has helped libraries to form collections of Ukrainian writers-migrants and writers who were forbidden during the Soviet period. Moreover, each year diaspora organizations send works to different collections of historical and ethnographical museums, art galleries, libraries, etc. At the end of 1992, the Ukrainian government decided to organize a specialist state body - the National Commission, whose aim is to facilitate the return of the cultural heritage to its historical homeland. The main aspect of its activity is cooperation with the Ukrainian diaspora (Sovinska 2002).

There are also other diaspora initiatives that support particular scientific institutions with materials and other resources. For example, each year the Society of United Ukrainian Canadians helps to supply the Institute of Experimental Pathology, Oncology and Radiobiology, NAS of Ukraine with reagents for experiments (Gorelov 2011). Such cooperation is widespread in Ukrainian scientific institutions because of their poor financing situation.

Even though cooperation between Ukrainian scientists from all over the world and Ukrainian scientific groups in Ukraine is quite popular at the level of particular projects or grant realizations, analysing these activities is difficult. There is no monitoring of the level of participation of diaspora scientists in Ukrainian scientific life. Scholars participate in projects and research as a part of the foreign institutions to which they belong. Future research should be conducted on this subject and it should involve all scientific institutions in Ukraine (there are 122 institutions of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, almost 100 other scientific institutions as well as approximately 800 institutes with different levels of higher education) (Ukrstat 2012). However, the best-known cooperation projects involving Ukraine scientists from abroad and from Ukraine falls under international projects such as CRDF, DAAD, "INCO-Copernicus", Fulbright and the various programs of the European Commission, etc.

Consequently, cooperation between scientific institutions is quite widespread but support and assistance is mostly unilateral from the diaspora organizations. Thanks to diaspora assistance, many research institutes and museums can offer some activities despite poor state funding which does not provide enough resources to let them work effectively.

### **Official Ukrainian policy on cooperation with migrants**

As we have already mentioned, several scientific institutes and organizations of Ukrainians abroad were founded during the 20<sup>th</sup> century and at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century for the purpose of supporting Ukrainian state development. The largest coordination centre, the Ukrainian World Congress, brings together Ukrainian organization from 33 countries (its main offices are in Toronto, Canada). On the one

hand, the Congress coordinates the activities of the Ukrainian diaspora and represents the interests of the Ukrainian community abroad, while on the other hand, it offers its opinions on the process in Ukraine by writing letters to the Ukrainian parliament and providing analytic support to the Ukrainian government. Experts from the diaspora occasionally consult officials from the different spheres of official state institutions.

Many Ukrainian governmental structures are involved in cooperating with the diaspora, and these include the central executive authorities, the various services of these and local governments, etc. It should be pointed out that during different periods various bodies in Ukraine have been in charge of managing relations with the diaspora. These include the State Committee of Ukraine on Nationalities and Migration (1996 - 2001), which was transformed into the State Committee of Ukraine on Nationalities and Religions (2001 - 2010), with a greater focus on the diversity of migrants within Ukraine's borders. Generally speaking, different institutions were involved in cooperation with the diaspora during independence. These were the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a Committee in parliament, the Interdepartmental Coordinating Council, the National Commission on Foreign Ukrainians, the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Culture, and the State Committee on Minorities, Religion and Other Institutions.

Meanwhile, the government has recently revised its migration policy. The State Migration Service of Ukraine, SMS, (established by Presidential Decree of 6.04.2011) was formed as the central body of executive power. It is directed by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine through the Ukrainian Minister of Internal Affairs. The SMS of Ukraine is part of the executive branch and it implements state policy in the field of migration (immigration and emigration), including activities concerned with illegal migration, citizenship, the registration of persons, refugees and other categories of migrants (Presidential Decree 2011).

The Concept of State Migration Policy<sup>2</sup> (Strategic management of Ukraine's migration policy and mechanisms for its implementation) was also established by Presidential Decree in 2011. One point (Point 12) in the realization plan of the concept seeks to increase the involvement of the diaspora in solving the problems associated with Ukrainian state development. Responsibility lies with several central bodies including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the State Migration Service, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Social Policy. On the one hand, one concept of policy was created to coordinate activities related to migration in general and cooperation with the diaspora in particular; on the other hand, responsibility was divided into several areas among different bodies, which has resulted it being quite scattered.

In addition to the previously mentioned bodies, there is also the Interdepartmental Coordinating Council for Development of Relations with Foreign Ukrainians

---

<sup>2</sup><http://zakon2.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/622/2011>

formed in 2008 as a consultative and advisory body to assist the central and local executive entities in the implementation of government programs aimed at developing relations with foreign Ukrainians. The Cabinet of Ministers introduced an initiative in 2006 to create a united department to work with the diaspora as the state executive institution for the diaspora, but this was never created.

Accordingly, there is no united body for cooperation with the diaspora today. These responsibilities are divided thematically between the different bodies of the executive power. The latest step to review migration policy at a national level, the Concept of State Migration Policy and its statement on cooperation with Ukrainians abroad, shows the intention to activate collaboration with the Ukrainian diaspora. However in practice, there is still no single coordinating body for diaspora relations. Therefore, different structures of power use migration laws and policy concepts in different ways. Furthermore, there is a lack of appropriate practical government programmes for collaboration with the diaspora and there is no appropriate financial support.

### **Conclusions and recommendations**

The subject of migration is a popular theme in the investigations of Ukrainian researchers. The focus is on two subjects: labour emigration from Ukraine and the formed diaspora. In practice however, no strict distinction is made between the highly skilled diaspora and the general Ukrainian diaspora. The subject is partly touched upon in general considerations of the international labour market and the role Ukrainians play in it, and partly in diaspora contributions to Ukrainian development.

Research into highly skilled diaspora faces many obstacles. These include defining high qualified migrants, statistically calculating migration of this type and the characteristics of the migratory process. In addition, controversy surrounds statements on both types of countries: recipients and donors. Some researchers see an excessive loss for donor countries and Ukraine in particular as a country with great scientific potential. Others emphasise the positive effects of such migration, which brings opportunities to attract new financial and informational resources.

Because of the long history of emigration, numerous diasporas have been formed and these cover several generations of Ukrainians abroad. There were four main waves of emigration from Ukraine and consequently there are Ukrainians in about 100 countries around the world. In spite of its highly organized characteristics, the diaspora is highly heterogeneous in terms of socioeconomic, religious and cultural characteristics. Consequently, the numerous organizations hardly cooperate with one another and all of them seek to be dominant. Furthermore, it is difficult to attract younger people and newcomers to the organizations.

Cooperation between diaspora representatives and their fellow countrymen has a long history of ups and downs. Generally, cooperation occurs at three levels: civil society organizations, educational and scientific institutions and governmental institutions. Some researchers have noted decreasing cooperation and support since Ukrainian

independence, while others have mentioned increased diaspora assistance in the last 20 years. Two periods of collaboration: (1991 and 2004-2005) characterized the increased democratization of Ukrainian society.

The diaspora made significant contributions to the development of the Ukrainian civil society through the provision of financial, material and informational resources to NGOs and through civil initiatives. However, the support was mostly unilateral as Ukrainian society received support as a consumer, while diaspora organizations expected more fruitful collaboration and reverse contributions with Ukraine for the development of independent Ukraine.

On the part of the Ukrainian authorities, there were several misunderstandings regarding laws and the bodies that were responsible for regulating cooperation with the diaspora. Unfortunately, the Ukrainian government is unable to fully use the potential of the Ukrainian diaspora in general and the highly skilled diaspora in particular. However, the current positive and significant transformation deserves some mention. It is a fact that contributions to establishing cooperation with the Ukrainian diaspora are made at a state level; the State migration service of Ukraine was created as the body responsible for implementing national migration policy and declaring “stimulation of the return of Ukrainians from abroad and supporting them in their reintegration into Ukrainian society” (as a concept of Ukraine’s state migration policy). However, the process for establishing cooperation is still in its infancy. Moreover, most particular statements of the concept of Ukraine’s state migration policy have been of an entirely declarative nature without any practical implementation in terms of state programs or financial support.

Several recommendations could be made with regard to managing the highly skilled diaspora. On the one hand, activities should be suggested to decrease highly skilled migration by providing support for scientific institutions and increasing prestige and salaries in the budget sector. Besides, actions should be taken to encourage the return of highly skilled workers and use their potential for the development of Ukraine.

From the perspective of cooperation with the diaspora, the government should concentrate responsibilities in one single body in order to ensure better coordination. In addition, the initiatives established for the concept of state migration policy should be continued and appropriate financial support should be provided. Diaspora representatives should become involved with a view to supporting and discussing active contributions. Dialogue should be established between the authorities and the diaspora to produce a common future strategy. Other funds, including international organization and private sponsors, should also become involved.

The Ukrainian government should also propose initiatives for diaspora consolidation and it could support their cultural, political, informational, – and whenever possible – material needs. Furthermore, the potential of the Ukrainian highly skilled diaspora should be engaged, by getting prominent scholars, businessmen and politicians involved with authorities at both a central and a regional level. Such initiatives for

diaspora involvement should also be widely provided for in scientific and educational institutions to allow experience exchanges.

In summary, the Ukrainian highly skilled diaspora has some experience collaborating with Ukrainians in the homeland and it has even greater potential. However, most previous collaborations have been of an occasional nature, often because of informal networks. A common coordination centre should be created and a single controlling body established to ensure more fruitful cooperation in the future. Different programs should be introduced to get Ukrainian highly skilled migrants involved in Ukrainian social life in general and scientific life in particular. Furthermore, diaspora representatives should get involved in consultations at all levels of authority in order to experience exchanges in educational and scientific institutions. However, the Ukrainian authorities need to take several steps to provide better cooperation. Firstly, laws should be reviewed and simplified and cooperation with foreign Ukrainians abroad should be encouraged, especially in science and education. Secondly, a statute declaration should be implemented for specific programmes and to bring plans into effect. Thirdly, a monitoring and evaluation system needs to be created for the work of bodies and programmes. Finally, the Ukrainian government should provide support to satisfy the cultural and informational needs of the diaspora and to implement programmes to unite the Ukrainian community abroad.

## References

1. Bogdan, T. (2011). Socio-economic consequences of labor emigration and direction of state policy of stimulating migrants' return. In: Socio-economic and ethno-cultural consequences of migration for Ukraine. O. Malinovska(ed.). National institute of strategic research. Kyiv: 122-130. [in Ukrainian].
2. Chernova, K. (2007). Ukrainian diaspora as a socio-cultural system. Kyiv, Taras Shevchenko National University. [in Ukrainian].
3. Drobko, E. (2006). Labour migration and Ukrainian diaspora abroad. *Kmelnytskyi. University's notes.* 2(18): 302-309. [in Ukrainian].
4. Dybchuk, L. (2006). Contribution of Ukrainian diaspora from Canada and Latin America countries in development of economics and culture of Ukraine (1991–2005). In: Thesis. National pedagogical university. T. Dragomanov. [in Ukrainian].
5. Gorelov, D. (2009). Institutional integration of the Ukrainian diaspora in civil society in countries of settlement. *Kyiv. Strategical priorities.* 3(12): 50-58.
6. Gorelov, D. (2011). The influence of organizations of Ukrainian diaspora on civic society development in Ukraine. *Kyiv. Strategic priorities.* 3: 32-39. [in Ukrainian].
7. Hlushchenko, H. (2005). The impact of the migration of skilled workers to world economic development. In: *Society and economics.* 3 : 174-207.
8. International Organization for Migration (2011). *Migration in Ukraine. Facts & Figures.*
9. Iredale, R. (2000). Migration Policies for the Highly Skilled in the Asia-Pacific Region. *International Migration Review.* 34(3): 882-906.
10. Jevtuh, V., Popok, A., Troshchynskij, V. (2005). *Foreign Ukrainian community.* Kyiv, Taras Shevchenko national university. [in Ukrainian].
11. Jevtuh, V., Troshchynskij, V., Popok, A., Shvachka, O. (2003). *Ukrainian diaspora. Sociological and historical studies.* Kyiv. Taras Shevchenko National University.

12. Kliuchkovska, I. (2008) State – diaspora in world's realities. Scientific notes of National University "Ostroh academy". In: Historical arts. 11: 8-20. [in Ukrainian].
13. Kupets, O. (2011). Brain Gain or Brain Waste? The Performance of Return Labor Migrants in the Ukrainian Labor Market. Kyiv. EERC.
14. Kupets, O. (2011). Migration and economic development of Ukraine: is the potential of migrants, who return to home country, used? In: Socio-economic and ethno-cultural consequences of migration for Ukraine. Kyiv. National institute of strategic research: 50-61.
15. Malynovska, O. (2011). Labor migration: social consequences and ways of reacting. Kyiv. HICД. [in Ukrainian].
16. Malynovska, O. (2012). Diversifying the population of Ukraine under the influence of international migration: the challenges and ways to respond. Kyiv. HICД. [in Ukrainian].
17. Orlovska, J. (2011). Peculiarities of categorization "Migration highly skilled labor force." In: Problems and prospects of cooperation between the countries of South-Eastern Europe under the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, and GUAM. Collection of scientific papers. Vol. 2: 565-570.
18. Popok, A. (2007). Ukrainians abroad as an object of state policy. Kiev. Alterpress.
19. Pozniak, O. (2004). Group migrations in Ukraine: current state, problems, perspectives. In: Economic journal. No. 2: 34-48. [in Ukrainian].
20. President's decree from 6.04.2011 (2011).[Online] <http://www.president.gov.ua/documents/13340.html>.
21. Prybytkova, I. (2011). Actual migration processes in Ukraine In: Documents' Security and Migration Policy: Assessments and Recommendations of the International Working Groups for Ukraine: 9-28.
22. Romashchenko, T. (2008). Peculiarities of international migration of highly-qualified workers in conditions of globalization In: Problems and perspectives of cooperation among countries of South-Eastern Europe within BSEC and GUAM. No. 1: 339-344.
23. Salt, J. (1992). Migration Processes among the Highly Skilled in Europe. In: International Migration Review. No 26(2): 484-505.
24. Sazewich, V. (2002). The Ukrainian Diaspora. London. Routledge.
25. Saxenian, A. (2005). From Brain Drain to Brain Circulation: Transnational Communities and Regional Upgrading in India and China, In: Comparative International Development.
26. Shulga, M. (2004). Migratory threats of demographical reduction in Ukraine. In: Ukrainian society 1994-2004. Monitoring of social changes. Kyiv, Institute of sociology NASU: 302-313. [in Ukrainian].
27. Sovinska, N. (2002). The contribution of Ukrainian diaspora from Western Europe countries to a development of economics and culture of independent Ukraine (1991-2001): Summary of thesis. Chernivtsi, Fedkovych National University. [in Ukrainian].
28. Udovenko, N. (2006). For sake of Ukraine: let us build Ukrainian state in Ukraine. In: Diaspora as a factor of Ukrainian state strengthening in international community: The first international scientific conference. Lviv. [in Ukrainian].
29. Ukrstat (2012). Statistical information. Higher educational institution. [Online] <http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/>.
30. Williams, A. (2007). International Labor Migration and Tacit Knowledge Transactions: A Multi-level Perspective. In: Global Networks. 7(1): 29-50.
31. Zhylnikova, N. (2009). The problem of emigration of highly skilled workers. In: Human rights in current conditions of state creation: theoretical and practical aspects. Sumy. International scientific conference: 233-235. [in Ukrainian].

## Chapter 6:

# Skilled mobility as a challenge for Croatian diaspora and migration policies

*Dr. Caroline HORNSTEIN TOMIĆ<sup>1</sup>*

*Institute of Social Sciences Ivo Pilar,*

*Zagreb, Croatia*

*Borna PLEŠE<sup>2</sup>*

*Zagreb, Croatia*

### Abstract

This paper looks at the development of the scholarly debate on brain drain/gain/circulation in Croatia over the past two decades. It describes how the debate has reflected the impact of domestic socioeconomic and political dynamics on skilled mobility and diaspora politics within the context of the Croatian post-socialist transition and the ethno-national state-building process that followed the dissolution of the Yugoslav Federation. We critically review empirical research on the interconnections between knowledge and development as well as migration patterns in, to, and from Croatia. The local media and social network discourse is also reviewed in order to contextualize the scholarly debate and the production of social knowledge. We furthermore assess the development of migration policies and the corresponding institutional policies as well as the successes and failures in implementing these and we provide examples of good practices in tackling skilled mobility, taking general migration patterns into account. The paper looks at the strategies and instruments that neighbouring countries have used to deal with brain drain/gain/circulation and concludes with some recommendations for further research. We also recommend some policies that are required to respond to current dynamics. Accordingly, the paper seeks to highlight the linkage between future migration trends and the human resources needs of Croatia as an aging society and new member state of the European Union.

**Keywords:** skilled mobility, diaspora politics, post-socialist transition, ethno-national, state-building.

### Introduction

Countering brain-drain dynamics, coping with global competition for skilled labour and developing brain-gain incentives have all been important concerns for stakeholders in Croatian politics, the business community and the civil society for quite some time. The demand for young talent and professionals and demographic development require policies that will make Croatia an attractive destination for so-called knowledge workers and migrants. However, immigration in general and brain

---

<sup>1</sup>Caroline.Hornstein-Tomic@pilar.hr

<sup>2</sup>borna.plese@gmail.com

gain in particular are topics that are still much less discussed than brain drain. Croatia has traditionally been a country of emigration and only recently has it begun to embrace the idea of having to become a country of immigration, even though, aside from temporary labour migration, it has already seen considerable co-ethnic and return migration from the diaspora since the early 1990s. However, these post-socialist migration dynamics involving skilled migrants, the re-integration experiences of former emigrants and their “returning” offspring, examples of knowledge transfer and assessments of the socio-cultural impact of remigration from diasporas all over the world, have so far mostly remained unreported<sup>3</sup> (see Čapo Žmegač 2010a, 2010b; for the Croatian-German migration context, see Čapo Žmegač 2012; Hornstein Tomić 2011; Hornstein Tomić and Ivanda Jurčević 2012).<sup>4</sup>In order to address the skilled potential of the Croatian diaspora, we must first understand the processes that have contributed to the current situation. With this in mind, (1) we shall briefly sketch the key features of Croatian diaspora politics and migration dynamics since the collapse of socialism in general. We consider this to be necessary background knowledge for (2) our contextualization of the research and reports on brain drain/gain in Croatia that have been published since then. Furthermore, (3) we shall point out the correspondences between institutional policies, such as the Unity through Knowledge Fund, which will be introduced as an example of a good practice, and general developments in current migration, diaspora, and innovation politics in Croatia. Finally, (4) we conclude with some suggestions about how to manage skilled mobility more effectively and enhance Croatia's attractiveness to highly skilled migrants.

### **Key features of Croatian diaspora politics and migration dynamics**

Even as far back as the late 1980s, Franjo Tuđman, who would soon become the first President of an independent Croatia, had a good appreciation of the role that the Croatian diaspora could play as a positive resource on which to capitalize. During the preparations for the political transition from socialism and the first multi-party elections, Tuđman visited diaspora organizations and representatives in Europe and beyond to introduce his ideas about Croatia's future and the mission of his party, the Croatian Democratic Union / Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica (HDZ). He was determined to bridge the gap between former partisans and nationalists, representatives of the communist regime and their opponents, and to unify all Croats under the umbrella of the Croat cause. In order to gain credibility amongst political emigrants, he broadened their perspectives of any possible involvement they might

---

<sup>3</sup>The project “Remigrations and transformations in post-socialist European regions” is currently establishing a discursive platform about remigration and its impact on the post-socialist transition process. Integration/participation, culture/knowledge transfers, and identity/ethnicity are researched in cross-national and interdisciplinary perspective by linking empirical case studies and related studies, diaspora outreach policies, and artistic representations of (re-)migrant mobility ([www.remigrations.pilar.hr](http://www.remigrations.pilar.hr)). The project is led by Caroline Hornstein Tomić (Pilar Institute, Zagreb) together with Sarah Scholl-Schneider (Mainz) and Robert Pichler (Graz), and it is funded by the ERSTE Foundation (Vienna).

<sup>4</sup>A first monography about return migration to Croatia is currently in preparation (editors: Jasna Čapo, Katica Ivanda, and Caroline Hornstein Tomić).

have in the building of the Croatian state. Indeed, diaspora representatives and organisations were already involved in political lobbying back then and they would subsequently play a crucial role in collecting financial means and weapons for the “Homeland War” (see Hockenos 2003; Božić 2005; Winland 2005; Ragazzi 2009). Tuđman’s public statements reveal that it was also his intention to attract the Croatian business community abroad for the purpose of homeland investment and to prepare their prospective return. However, such ideas were never translated into official policies. To this day, the Croatian public has viewed its diaspora mostly through the prism of politics. While some take pride in the diaspora as an exemplary thriving expatriate community, others tend to demonize it as an excessively political and regressive force. Both positions have been criticized as public misperceptions; however, they are influential factors with respect to return migration and diaspora politics (Perica 2011; Skoko 2013).

Migration to Croatia since 1990 - disregarding temporary labour migration - has in fact been primarily co-ethnic, homeland, and return migration (Čapo Žmegač 2005). The immigrants of the 1990s arrived alongside war refugees and displaced persons, many of whom came from neighbouring Bosnia and Herzegovina and other parts of the Former Yugoslavia, while some came via other states in Western Europe. These immigrants included former guest workers returning after retirement as well as former emigrants who were returning to Croatia to take part in the democratisation process. There was a notable influx not only of first-generation but second-generation co-ethnic migrants as well, who saw the political changes as an incentive for homeland return. Like political emigrants and returning business elites, the “returning” offspring of former emigrant generations were often skilled or knowledge migrants who had a tertiary education, and they were willing to take risks and were motivated to contribute to, have an impact on, and/or take advantage of political changes and economic transformation. These potential or actual agents of change represent a part of the post-socialist transition process in countries such as Croatia (Barbić 2008: 7; Hornstein Tomić 2011: 13-15). That this co-ethnic skilled migration has not received much attention to this day is noteworthy to say the least, especially if we consider the fact that Croatian diaspora politics rely not only on economic and political capital, but on the potential human capital resources available among its large diaspora as well.

Even though official statistics tried to take records of in- and out-migration throughout the 1990s, no clear distinction was made between immigration and war-related migratory movements or between the various migrant types (Lajić 2004). For example, registered immigration totalled 45,967 persons between 1990 and 1998, differentiated only by the original country of residence (Vidak 1998: 58).<sup>5</sup> There are no accounts of how many return migrants have come and actually stayed or of those

---

<sup>5</sup>These data do not include refugees from Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia (later Serbia, Kosovo, and Montenegro), Slovenia, or Macedonia. What the data do show, for example, is a peak of return and immigration to Croatia in 1992; about 50% of those immigrants actually came from Germany. Due to double residency or commuting practices, it is impossible to assess how many of these have left again in the meantime.

who have returned to their original countries of residence. For example, estimates of (re-)migration to Croatia in this period ranged from 5,000 to 55,000 (Barbić 2008: 7). Skilled migrants as a group and category in their own right were neither registered nor particularly considered in spite of concerns about skilled labour being lost through emigration. Since 2000, declining immigration and temporarily stagnating emigration rates have been recorded. However, these have been on the rise again since 2009, leading to continuous net negative migration and contributing to population-shrinking processes. The 2011 census shows a population decrease of more than 150,000 people (3.43 per cent of the total population) over one decade.<sup>6</sup> The year 2011 showed the most pronounced migration dynamics of the past decade, with 12,699 registered departures and 8,534 arrivals. The most intensive flows (both in and out) were registered between Croatia and some of its neighbouring countries, especially Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia. Also in 2011, more than 2,500 people left Croatia for European Union countries. Forecasts show that the largest migration flows will continue to be registered within the immediate region. The largest age cohorts of emigrants are between 20 and 44 years of age.<sup>7</sup>

Compared to its precursors, the current Law on Relations of the Republic of Croatia with Croats outside the Republic of Croatia regulates the relationship between the Croatian state and its diaspora in a more specific way.<sup>8</sup> It also facilitates integration and access to Croatian citizenship, and introduces a new category of “Croat without Croatian citizenship”, targeting non-Croats, partners of Croats and family members. A “Welcome Office” within the newly-formed governmental office dealing with Croats abroad is meant to ease return by providing information about legal rights and obligations.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, advisors to Croatian returnees inform them about customs regulations, special tax benefits, social services, employment or business opportunities and “integration into Croatian society”. The law also specifically focuses on the offspring of former emigrants, i.e., students (mentioning scholarship offers, etc.). In general terms, the law is seen as a significant step forward towards developing migration policies.<sup>10</sup>

## Research on brain drain and skilled mobility in Croatia

The brain drain phenomenon, which is a major concern in contemporary Croatian public discourse, took its time in becoming a topic of academic research, notwithstanding the fact that it has had a public presence since the early transition period. A survey conducted amongst research personnel at Zagreb University a

---

<sup>6</sup>Croatian Bureau of Statistics 2012a.

<sup>7</sup>Croatian Bureau of Statistics 2012b.

<sup>8</sup>It focuses on three basic groups: Croats in Bosnia-Herzegovina, (approximately 400,000; in 1991: 760,852); Croatian minorities in 12 European (not specified whether EU) countries (350,000 approx.); Croatian diaspora in overseas and European countries (3 million approx.). Croatia considers its diaspora much larger than international agencies such as the World Bank do (Croatian diaspora worldwide: 753,900, just over 17% of the total Croatian population (Ratha et al. 2011)).

<sup>9</sup>Article 57, Law on Relations ...

<sup>10</sup>See articles 60 and 61.

decade ago offered the first signs that thinking about and discussing knowledge migration was disproportionately more frequent than its actual realization (Adamović and Mežnarić 2003). The study showed that the percentage of young scientists who had decided to leave the country in search for work and professional advancement had dropped from 11.7 per cent to 2.4 per cent between 1990 and 2000. However, the authors also emphasised the fact that large numbers of young scientists were seriously considering departure at the beginning of the millennium. In order to assess the actual reasons why they were thinking about moving abroad, the authors inquired about aspects of their professional satisfaction (work conditions, workplace atmosphere, salary, advancement opportunities, self-realization in respective academic fields, etc.) as well as their general life satisfaction (quality of life, secured accommodation, cultural life, personal relationships, etc.) because migration motives are usually the result of a multitude of factors. The responses showed that professional satisfaction criteria were given priority. On the other hand, factors contributing to the decision to remain in Croatia were mostly related to general life satisfaction. Finally and importantly, the decisive factor in the decision of the young scientists to leave Croatia were specific offers for further professionalization or work engagements, especially at reputable institutions abroad (Adamović and Mežnarić 2003). An interview-based empirical study from the same period found that a significantly high number of young scientists chose to switch professional fields and enter the private sector and work in knowledge industries rather than go abroad. The author suggested treating this as local brain waste and to regard it as something much more severe than international knowledge mobility. The brain drain discourse and limited professional prospects within Croatia's scientific community were also criticized for reproducing negative stereotypes (Golub 2003). Research conducted in 2005 also showed that both students and junior employees in academia were positively disposed to moving abroad to search for better career opportunities (Šverko 2005). It was argued that "psychological" variables such as self-actualization as well as social capital and personal connections in destination countries had the most crucial influence on emigration decisions. Another expert report on brain drain based its arguments on evaluations of statistical data from the 2001 Croatian census (Bjelajac 2007). The author found that among people temporarily employed abroad (then 6.9 per cent of the domestic population), the percentage of people who were highly educated (12.38 per cent) was significantly higher than the percentage of the highly educated among the total Croatian population (8.01 per cent). One seventh of the country's scientists were working abroad because of better working conditions, higher wages and smaller study groups. Brain drain widened development gaps and further reduced Croatia's competitiveness. This tendency has intensified according to more recent data from the World Bank. In 2011 it was estimated that over a quarter of the current Croatian diaspora has some form of tertiary education (Ratha et al. 2011). However, research on migration to and from Croatia has only barely and marginally touched upon the category of skilled migration. Some articles dealing with past and current features of migration from Croatia to Germany as well as predicted trends look into temporary and circular migration, "homeland return" and transnational modes of living with respect to the first and second migrant generations (Čapo Žmegač 2012; Hornstein Tomić and Ivanda Jurčević 2012). Based on qualitative

research (surveys and interviews), the latter describe such dynamics as the predominant pattern of skilled labour mobility, which reflects general mobility trends in Europe. Structural incentives, historical socioeconomic and political developments, expectations and images regarding both the home and the host environment are all being discussed as driving forces of migrant activity. Transfers of knowledge, culture, and experience that are associated with migration activities are pointed to as aspects with a potential (unfortunately often undisclosed) for innovation and development and for international (bi- and multilateral) cooperation. According to the research-based 2012 EUROSTUDENT report for Croatia, published by the Institute for the Development of Education (Institut za razvoj obrazovanja), a majority of university students in Croatia have foreign language skills and would consider studying abroad were it not for the financial constraints; only 2 per cent had any foreign study experience (Cvitan et al. 2012). According to a UNESCO report on student mobility, 4.6 per cent of Croatian students are currently studying abroad (UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2012). The unquestionable rise in student mobility and the current context of global integration dynamics show a move from a brain-drain concept to one of brain-circulation (Hornstein Tomić and Ivanda Jurčević 2012; Ivošević and Ščukanec 2012). The mobility of young professionals should be supported both by public and private stakeholders and “value-oriented” policies that approve and encourage mobility as an opportunity rather than a negative trend.

Opinion polls today suggest that up to 85 per cent of young people in Croatia would be prepared to leave the country. With nearly 20 per cent of all registered unemployed individuals under the age of 25,<sup>11</sup> the link between brain drain and youth unemployment is evident, even though such statements ignore patterns of circular migration and the aforementioned discrepancy between intentions and realization. The Facebook group “Mladi napustimo Hrvatsku” (Young people, let’s leave Croatia), which provides support and information about the work-permit and visa policies of destination countries, reflects the same problem. One favourite destination is Canada, which, according to newspaper reports, issued 275 visas for working holidays, young professionals and internships in a record time of 45 minutes in February 2013.<sup>12</sup> Like Facebook, classical media also report on the widespread pessimism and general dissatisfaction with domestic economic and political conditions that have fuelled the discourse about leaving the country.

At a conference earlier this year,<sup>13</sup> it was claimed that between 60,000 and 70,000 people had left Croatia over the past three years, most of them from the more developed regions and the capital, Zagreb. The conference, which was primarily concerned with future demographic developments, stressed the importance of

---

<sup>11</sup>Croatian Employment Service 2013.

<sup>12</sup>See, for example, Večernji List, 24 February 2013.

<sup>13</sup>The conference Nacionalni Forum (National Forum) was organized at the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Zagreb on 26 February 2013 by the association of the same name, and was devoted to the topic “Demografija – Uvjet Hrvatske Budućnosti” (Demography – precondition of Croatia’s future).

diaspora outreach in tracking migration outflows, keeping contact with emigrants and engaging diaspora capital (economic, social, and cultural) for homeland development and policymaking. Improvements in political and economic conditions at home, investment aimed at strengthening and incentivizing entrepreneurship and home ownership support for young people were equally emphasized as measures that are needed to counter permanent emigration.

### **Institutional policies / good practices: limits and challenges**

Croatia's neighbours Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia have similar brain-drain experiences and youth unemployment rates and their discussions about the lack of employment and the unsatisfactory working conditions for the highly skilled are also similar. Return migration of young professionals and reintegration support may relieve some of the problems (Božić 2012), but they could arguably make others more severe. Between 2002 and 2011, World University Service (WUS) Austria implemented the so-called *Brain Gain Plus* programme in Bosnia-Herzegovina in collaboration with relevant local partners and stakeholders and support from the Austrian Development Agency. As a means of "regaining brains" to network and transfer knowledge, the programme funded the short-term return and employment of approximately 100 experts mainly – but not exclusively – from the diaspora. Similarly, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation funded 160 internships to help young skilled workers return from abroad (Pozzi 2011) in order to help improve research and development (R&D), the educational sector and the private entrepreneurial sector. The partners involved in the programmes stressed the effectiveness and sustainability of the return of these workers - albeit on a temporary basis - by pointing to the success in establishing long-term international cooperation. However, no impact evaluation has been carried out so far. Other programmes such as the *Youth Employability and Retention Programme* have been aimed at training and retaining young professionals at home. Local officials praised this programme, which apparently succeeded in training ten thousand and employing four hundred young professionals (Southeast European Times 2012). In Serbia, private companies such as *Coca-Cola Hellenic* ran similar programmes and highlighted the potential and the benefits of public-private partnerships.

In Croatia, concerns about brain drain have also contributed to a systematic rethinking of diaspora outreach strategies in general and to the targeting of the skilled diaspora in particular, while at the same time a knowledge-based development strategy has been seen as visionary for a country that is poor in natural resources and industrial capacity. The buzzword 'knowledge society' has been excessively employed as a key reference in the Croatian public discourse for a decade and even more so in the expert discourse (Švarc et al. 2004; Švarc 2009; Afrić et al. (eds.) 2011), but its local meaning has remained vague. That it succeeded in achieving a considerable legitimacy in the academic, scientific, and educational sphere is mainly due to three factors: (a) Croatia's integration into the Bologna system; (b) the adoption of the *acquis communautaire* in preparation for EU accession; and (c) the process of deindustrialisation. The restructuring of the economic system and the privatisation of

state-owned companies in the past two decades brought with it the closure of internal research units which were once key production centres for knowledge and technological innovation. The research and development units of former state-owned companies such as PLIVA (pharmaceutics, now Israeli-owned), INA (Croatian Oil Company (whose main shareholder is Hungarian), and TELEKOM (German-owned) are now closed and their activities have been outsourced to the countries of the new owners. Universities and research institutes have taken over as centres of knowledge production and innovation and the industrial sector has been de-skilled.<sup>14</sup> While the functions and functioning of the educational system and the objectives of education in general are being debated (Pilić et al. (eds.) 2008) a National Innovation System is checking the usefulness and adaptability of the knowledge produced in the educational system for economic development (Švarc 2009). The aim of the “Entrepreneurial University” is to increase the commercial benefits of academic (scientific) research activities (Švarc 2009; Lažnjak and Švarc in Afrić et al. (eds.) 2011). Critics in the humanities and social sciences are concerned about the commoditisation of knowledge, while some foundations and civil initiatives engage in raising awareness of the need to reform the educational system, and state that academic life should not be detached from market interests and requirements, not only with regard to the natural and technical sciences but the social sciences and humanities as well. As the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation “Horizon 2020” has pointed out, they are considered as equally important fields of knowledge production and are crucial for innovation and for helping to solve social problems.

The founding of the Unity through Knowledge Fund (UKF) in 2007 should be seen in the context of the debates on knowledge-based development and innovation policies.<sup>15</sup> The UKF is meant to serve as an instrument for the further development of research infrastructure and a knowledge-based society as outlined in the Croatian Scientific and Technological Policy. Seeking to connect scientists and professionals in Croatia with those located abroad in order to enhance international cooperation and the competitiveness of domestic knowledge production, the UKF has so far addressed its programmes specifically to those foreign-based scientists who form part of the Croatian diaspora. Prior to its establishment, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports organized two conferences for Croatian scientists working abroad. The first of these was held in Vukovar in 2004 and the second in Split in 2007. Since then, the Ministry has set up two complementary databases with contacts in order to facilitate connections and cooperation with foreign partners. The Fund encourages approaches and projects that connect leading international scientific institutions to Croatian universities, research institutes and small and medium-sized businesses, offering the potential to strengthen the local economy and thereby support creative and

---

<sup>14</sup>We owe thanks to Vjekoslav Afrić and Kresimir Zazar who shared their knowledge and insights into the concepts and debates about Croatia as a knowledge society.

<sup>15</sup>The following descriptions of the mission, its programmes, principles and operational successes are based on self-presentations of the UKF. We are particularly grateful to Alessia Pozzi, the Programme Manager, who generously shared her experiences and insight with us.

innovative responses to the present and future challenges faced by Croatian society. It provides financial support for the development of innovations, patents, commercial and other applications based on scientific results and it matches funds with investments for scientific projects undertaken by the business sector. It offers specific support to projects committed to excellence and young talent and the inclusion of this talent in international projects led by members of the scientific diaspora, as well as those aimed at integrating them into local industry as a counterbalance to brain drain and the search for adequate or better employment abroad.

So far, UKF operations have been made possible by a World Bank loan, which has covered 80 per cent of the costs with 20 per cent coming from the Croatian state budget. The first UKF programme cycle lasted from December 2007 until 2012 and included three programmes: 1. Cooperability; 2. Connectivity; 3. Young researchers. The Cooperability programme (1) was focused on medium-scale collaborative projects, which usually involved between three and four partners. For a period of up to three years, it financed the research, equipment, travel/mobility and employment of participating researchers to the sum of €200,000. A total of 26 projects were funded. The programme also helped facilitate the return of diaspora scientists by paying project salaries within domestic institutions, which were then obliged to open up permanent positions after two years. Nine such projects were funded in all. However, as UKF staff point out, the nine returning scientists - young and advanced researchers - were already in the process of return before the projects were realised. The Connectivity Programme (2) supported short-term mobility: researchers from Croatia received support of up to €10,000 to work in foreign institutions for up to 6 months; diaspora scientists were also eligible to apply for short-term visits to Croatia. The Young Researchers Programme (3) was focused on supporting young PhD-level scientists to conduct their own projects independent of their mentors. It also targeted young researchers who intended to return to Croatia after receiving their PhD abroad, and provided assistance for their reintegration into the domestic scientific or business world.

The UKF issued three calls for Cooperability (1<sup>st</sup> round: three years; 2<sup>nd</sup> round: two years; 3<sup>rd</sup> round: 2 years – these projects ended in 2012) and two calls for Young Researchers, while calls for Connectivity remained open throughout the first cycle. Peer reviews (local and foreign initially but only foreign peer reviewers in later calls) safeguarded the objectivity, neutrality and transparency of the evaluation process, and the quality of the projects was the key evaluation criterion. For the Cooperability Programme, 23 per cent of all applications were accepted; 15 per cent were funded in the Young Researchers Programme; and 59 per cent were approved in the Connectivity Programme with a wide range of activities eligible for funding: apart from research, applications could be made for funding to cover international mobility, conference participation and networking activity, equipment and research infrastructure. However, consulting services/external administration (finances, legal issues, intellectual property, Public Relations) for project management were also eligible to receive support, particularly if they were provided by diaspora members. Post-doctoral projects enabling the transfer of knowledge and investments were

intended to serve as vehicles to foster brain gain if young researchers with PhDs from abroad were participating in, and subsequently integrated into, the industrial sector or at universities in Croatia.

A total of 91 scientific and technological research projects received support during the first programme cycle. Projects from institutions and companies in Croatia were conducted in collaboration with Croatian scientists working at international institutions such as Yale University, Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich (ETH) and the Royal Institute of Technology in Sweden (KTH). Of the 560 scientists and experts participating in UKF-funded projects, 180 were at foreign institutions, 110 were PhD students and 32 were postdoctoral scholars. UKF financing allowed 42 young scientists from Croatia to visit research and development facilities abroad and 20 were able to lead research programmes on their own for the first time.

A total of €7.8 million has been invested in the activities of the Fund. The Ministry of Science, Education and Sports (through the World Bank loan and the State budget) guaranteed nearly €5.1 million representing 65 per cent of the total value necessary for project implementation, while the remaining funds were provided by international scientific/research institutions (€1.2 million), the private sector (€756,526.43) and Croatian public scientific/research institutions (€845,750.54). Networking with internationally prestigious research institutions and newly-acquired skills and knowledge provided UKF scientist groups with a far more competitive approach and the capacity to attract European and other international funding sources, especially within the Seventh Framework Program of the European Union for research and technological development (€9.03 million from FP7).

The UKF was presented as a success story in “developing human capital and managing migration for more competitive European regions” at the European Regional Economic Forum in 2009. The same year, the UKF was chosen by the International Labor Organization (ILO) as an example of a good practice for promoting linkages between migration and development. The UKF evaluated its first operation cycle by stressing the comparatively high publication rates and the high rate of success in attracting international funding, especially within EU FP7. Its contribution to the strengthening of international cooperation is considered significant, helping to give an important impulse to the transfer of knowledge and technologies to the Croatian scientific sector and building increased capacity for the development of local research infrastructure. By encouraging collaboration between sectors, the UKF has contributed to strengthening connections between universities and research institutions and the private sector and its innovation demands. UKF management considers the Cooperability Programme to have been a real success and it is equally positive about the Connectivity Programme. That the UKF operates in close contact with its beneficiaries is seen as a great advantage. The Young Researchers Programme is also considered successful, especially with regard to fostering the professional advancement of young researchers (at a doctoral and postdoctoral level). The less successful part of both the Cooperability and the Young Researchers Programmes is that fostering homeward mobility and return is seen as

somewhat pointless and even outdated, as more than ever international mobility has become an essential practice for scientists in search of academic institutions of greater prestige. The low interest of the private sector to get involved in UKF programmes may be partly due to a lack of networking. However, its involvement in R&D, which has largely been outsourced (see above), is generally limited, with the interest focussed on connecting with high-level foreign research institutions. The connections between the UKF and Croatia's Science Technology Policy are cited as an advantage and an additional reason for its success and the same applies to the high quality and the transparent selection procedure.

The Ministry of Science, Education and Sports has committed itself to continuing UKF activities for another cycle from 2013 until 2017, once again through matching World Bank /state budget funding. The previous €5.1 million budget will be reduced to €4.3 million and €3 million of this will be reserved for Cooperability (one or two calls; two calls for Young Researchers; continuously open calls for Connectivity). In general, the programmes remain unchanged except for minor operational, technical adjustments and the governance structure (management; steering committee; advisory board) is also unchanged. The UKF management has succeeded in acquiring FP7 funding for an adjoined New Fellowship programme (NEWFELPRO), which (1) gives grants to foreign researchers with or without a Croatian background, who intend to spend two years at Croatian research institutions. No staying conditions are attached to this grant. (2) Croatian scientists will also receive support to spend two years at foreign research institutions. (3) The reintegration of young Croatian scientists with foreign PhDs will be supported by project funding/salaries corresponding to foreign salaries for transition periods, while domestic host institutions are expected to provide infrastructure and equipment. Fostering return has been dropped as a UKF target.

## **Conclusions and recommendations**

In two decades of post-socialist transition, Croatia has been trying to compensate for its lack of marketable natural resources and industrial capacity by following a knowledge-based development strategy. However, expenditure on research and development has shown a worrying decrease over the past ten years, culminating in a record low of 0.73 per cent of GDP in 2010 (UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2010). The strategy is likely to fail at existing state budget distributions (Kurelić in Afrić et al. (eds.) 2011) and equally low private sector investment in research and development (Švarc 2011). The knowledge society will remain a hollow concept if it is not linked to sustainable development strategies (Afrić in Višković (ed.) 2008; Afrić in Leburić et al. 2009). The general economic and labour market situation and the vitality of the economic and educational sectors are of primary importance to Croatia's ranking amongst international destinations for highly skilled workers. However, apart from this, it is the educational environment and research infrastructure that - besides funding - needs orientation and direction if the country is to become more attractive, relevant and competitive.

Croatia mirrors the Europe-wide trend of societal aging and birth rates have been lower than mortality rates since the 1980s. That immigration and skilled immigration in particular, is necessary for reasons of social, economic and demographic sustainability and to allow a better management of economic restructuring to prevent economic growth stagnation is not yet shared common knowledge. The interconnectedness of population dynamics, ageing processes, labour-market requirements and the sustainability of social welfare systems with immigration has not been considered so far, either systematically or coherently, and migration has been dealt with primarily as a matter of population development<sup>16</sup> but not as a significant economic factor (Barbić 2008). Croatian immigration policies have a strong ethnic bias, and like diaspora politics, they are pigeon-holed into the issue of demographics and ethnic nation-state building. Forecasts indicate that the Croatian labour pool will shrink steadily and the highest deficit will continue to be among scientists and highly qualified personnel.<sup>17</sup> With rising living standards, seasonal and low-skilled labour out-migration should decline further; however, brain drain and emigration by skilled professionals for educational purposes is expected to continue.<sup>18</sup> With Croatia's accession to the EU in July 2013 the supranational coordination of asylum policies, the country's integration into transnational labour markets and the harmonizing of national immigration and naturalization laws with EU policies mean that Croatia will open up further to immigration in general (Mežnarić 2008). The new migration policy currently in progress suggests that for the first time incentives will be there to give an impulse to supporting the circular migration patterns that follow the dynamics of supply and demand (Migration Policy Framework 2013 - 2015).<sup>19</sup> Diaspora outreach strategies and recruiting and networking practices - most prominently those of the Unity through Knowledge Fund - have concentrated on qualified personnel from the diasporas. This strategy alone will probably be untenable in the future, as the UKF has already discovered. It is notable that the UKF has not been coordinated with Croatia's official general diaspora approaches and policies and no synergies have been disclosed either.

- Demographic trends as well as labour market developments need to attract foreign workers – particularly those with high educational profiles - irrespective of nationality or ethnic belonging, and also primarily those who are not from Croatia's neighbouring countries.

---

<sup>16</sup>Council Population Policy of the Government of the Republic of Croatia 2006.

<sup>17</sup>One suggestion has been to develop an immigration policy oriented towards attracting people from neighbouring countries to work in the most needed areas of the economy, to foster economic growth and spur demand-driven labour circulation (Crnković-Pozaić 2008). Indeed, the most significant numbers of immigrants and labour migrants continue to be expected from the neighbouring countries of the former Yugoslavia.

<sup>18</sup>In the domestic debate, the case of Poland is often referred to as a warning example since de-skilling of migrating high-skilled labour migrants has been observed there as a consequence of temporarily saturated foreign labour markets.

<sup>19</sup>In the Migration Policy Framework 2013-2015, the government foresees the introduction of a population register (and other measures) to keep track of actual migration dynamics.

- Diaspora and migration policy should consider cross-sector concerns, which requires coordination and the exchange of information; a skilled-mobility strategy should also be included.
- Internationalisation may not be prevented but it should be embraced and the mobility of both students and skilled workers facilitated. There is a need for a paradigm shift from brain-drain prevention to an adequate management of “brain circulation”.
- Educational reforms and policies need to focus more on market affinity. Tertiary-educated personnel should be better equipped with skills that correspond to actual market needs. Communication between educational and economic sectors needs strengthening in order to regularly assess the knowledge and skills needed for innovation and development.
- The skilled/scientific diaspora should be understood as a strategic partner for international networking and a potential assistant for local development; UKF experiences could be used widely. Diaspora mapping and case studies investigating transnational cooperation, existing networks and knowledge transfers could provide insights, and highlight successes and failures/lessons learned.

## References

1. Adamović, M., Mežnarić, S. (2003). The potential and real “drain” of the scientific youth of Croatia: an empirical study. *Revija za sociologiju*, Vol XXXIV. No 3-4: 143-160. [in Croatian].
2. Afrić, V., Bakić-Tomić, Lj., Polšek, D. & Žažar, K. (eds.) (2011). *Social Preconditions of Knowledge Society*. Zagreb: Filozofski fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu / Institut društvenih znanosti Ivo Pilar / Učiteljski fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu. [in Croatian].
3. Barbić, A. (2008). Immigration policies of the Republic of Croatia. In: *Immigration policy in the service of the development of the Croatian economy*. Zagreb, Croatian Chamber of Commerce: 7-12. [in Croatian].
4. Bjelajac, S. (2007). Croatian “brain-drain”. *Informatologija*, Vol. 40, No. 4: 314-316.
5. Božić, A. (2012). *A Two Way Ticket: return migration of tertiary (post) graduates as a potential channel of the brain gain process in Bosnia and Hercegovina*. ERSTE Foundation Fellowship for Social Research Report. [Online]. <http://www.erstestiftung.org/social-research/publication/a-two-way-ticket-return-migration-of-tertiary-post-graduates-as-a-potential-channel-of-the-brain-gain-process-in-bosnia-and-hercegovina/>. [Accessed: 03.04.2013].
6. Božić, S. (2005). From Diaspora to Transnation and Back: Croatian migrant institutions and the re(making) of Croatia. In: *Beyond the Territory, within the Nation. Diasporic Nation Building in South Eastern Europe*. H. Riegler (ed.). Baden-Baden, Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft: 33-57.
7. Čapo Žmegač, J. (2005). Ethnically Privileged Migrants in Their new Homeland. *Journal of Refugee Studies* 18, 2: 199-215.

8. Čapo Žmegač, J. (2010a). Introduction: Co-ethnic Migrations compared. J. Čapo Žmegač, C. Voss and K. Roth (eds.). *Co-ethnic Migrations compared. Central and Eastern European Contexts*. München, Sagner Verlag: 9-36.
9. Čapo Žmegač, J. (2010b). Return Migration: The Changing Faces and Challenging Facets of a Field of Study. *Ethnologica Balkanica* 14: 227-245.
10. Čapo, J. (2012). Zweidaheimlichkeit. Kroatische Gastarbeiter – Migration – eine zwischenräumliche Erfahrung. In: *Gastarbeit (Guestwork)*. A. Welebil and J. Nuber (eds.). Wien/St. Wolfgang, Edition Art Science: 129-157. [in German].
11. Crnković-Pozaić, S. (2008). Future needs in the labour market: can we make do without immigration. In: *Immigration policy in the service of the development of the Croatian economy*. Zagreb, Croatian Chamber of Commerce: 21-28. [in Croatian].
12. Croatian Bureau of Statistics (2012a). Stanovništvo prema starosti i spolu, popisi 1953-2011. (Population according to age and sex, censuses 1953-2011). [Online]. [http://www.dzs.hr/Hrv/censuses/census2011/results/graphs/usp\\_G1\\_HR.pdf](http://www.dzs.hr/Hrv/censuses/census2011/results/graphs/usp_G1_HR.pdf). [Accessed: 27.02. 2012].
13. Croatian Bureau of Statistics (2012b). Migration of population of Republic of Croatia. [Online]. [http://www.dzs.hr/Hrv\\_Eng/publication/2012/07-01-02\\_01\\_2012.htm](http://www.dzs.hr/Hrv_Eng/publication/2012/07-01-02_01_2012.htm). [Accessed: 10.12.2012].
14. Croatian Employment Service (2013.) January, 2013 unemployment statistics. [Online]. <http://www.hzz.hr>. [Accessed: 27.02.2013].
15. Croatian Science Foundation (2006). Natječaj: Potpora znanstvenicima - povratnicima i znanstvenicima iz inozemstva. (Tender: Support for Scientists- returnees and scientists from abroad) [Online] [http://www.hrzz.hr/doc/program/povratnik/povratnik \\_natjecaj.pdf](http://www.hrzz.hr/doc/program/povratnik/povratnik_natjecaj.pdf). [Accessed: 18.05.2012].
16. Cvitan, M., Doolan, K., Farnell, T. & Matković, T. (2012). *Social and Economic Conditions of Student Life in Croatia: National Eurostudent Survey Report for Croatia*. Zagreb: Institute for the Development of Education.
17. Golub, B. (2003). Zašto odlazimo (Why are we leaving). *Društvena istraživanja* god. 12, br. 1-2 (63-64): 115-140.
18. Government of the Republic of Croatia (2013). Nacrt prijedloga migracijske politike Republike Hrvatske za razdoblje 2013.-2015. (Outline of the migration policy proposal for the period 2013-2015). [Online] <http://www.vlada.hr/hr/content/download/242728/3559216/file/74.%20-%2010.pdf>. [Accessed: 26.02.2013].
19. Hockenos, P. (2003). *Homeland Calling: exile patriotism and the Balkan wars*. Ithaca/London: Cornell University Press.
20. Hornstein Tomić, C. (2011). The image of Germany from Croatian immigrants. In: *The image of Germany in countries of origin*. H. Reifeld (ed.) Konrad Adenauer Foundation, Sankt Augustin. ISBN 978-3-942775-08-3: 9-16. [in German].
21. Hornstein Tomić, C., Ivanda Jurčević, K. (2012). Temporary Guests – border-crossers – transcultural mediators: processes of identity construction in migration. In: *Guestwork*. A. Welebil and J. Nuber (eds.). Wien/St. Wolfgang, Edition Art Science: 173-222. [in German].
22. Ivošević, V., Šćukanec, N. (2012). Does academic mobility lead to brain-drain? [Online] [www.iro.hr/hr/javne-politike-visokog-obrazovanja/kolumna/vodi-li-akademaska-mobilnost-k-odljevu-mozgova/](http://www.iro.hr/hr/javne-politike-visokog-obrazovanja/kolumna/vodi-li-akademaska-mobilnost-k-odljevu-mozgova/) [Accessed: 24.01.2013].

23. Kelo, M., Wächter, B. (2005): Brain Drain and Brain Gain. Migration in the European Union after Enlargement. A study by the Academic Cooperation Association. [Online][http://www.aca-secretariat.be/fileadmin/aca\\_docs/documents/reports/Migration.pdf](http://www.aca-secretariat.be/fileadmin/aca_docs/documents/reports/Migration.pdf). [Accessed: 02.04. 2013].
24. King, R., Christou, A. (2010). Diaspora, migration and transnationalism: Insights from the study of second-generation 'returnees'. In: *Diaspora and Transnationalism*. R. Bauböck and T. Faist (eds.). Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press: 167-183.
25. Lajić, I. (2004). Newer developments in the population of Croatia – regular and irregular population changes. *Migracijske i etničke teme* 20, 2-3: 171-185. [in Croatian].
26. Leburic, A., Afrić, V. & Šuljug Vučica, Z. (2009). *Human Capital as Development Factor*. Split: Redak.
27. Mežnarić, S. (2008). Migration in Croatia: what to expect. In: *Immigration policy in the service of the development of the Croatian economy*. Zagreb, Croatian Chamber of Commerce: 53-64. [in Croatian].
28. Narodne novine (2011). Law on relations of the Republic of Croatia with Croats outside of the Republic of Croatia. Zagreb: Narodne novine 124/11, 16/12. [in Croatian].
29. Perica, V. (2011). The diaspora myth in the construction of new Croatianhood and Serbianhood. *Politička misao*, god. 48, br. 4: 113-132. [in Croatian].
30. Povrzanović Frykman, M. Why is the Transnational Paradigm Useful? Considerations Based on Ethnographic Research among the Croats in Sweden. [Online] [http://www.formig.net/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=194%3Aworkshop-paper-von-maja-povrzanovi-frykman-why-is-the-transnational-paradigm-useful&catid=43%3Apublikationen&Itemid=96&lang=DE](http://www.formig.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=194%3Aworkshop-paper-von-maja-povrzanovi-frykman-why-is-the-transnational-paradigm-useful&catid=43%3Apublikationen&Itemid=96&lang=DE)[Accessed: 26.02.2013].
31. Pozzi, A. (2011). The Development Potential of BiH Diaspora, Report of Program recruitment and retention of youth, UNDP and Ministry of Refugees and Displaced Persons BiH. Sarajevo: BiH.
32. Ragazzi, F. (2009). The Croatian 'Diaspora Politics' of the 1990s: Nationalism Unbound? U. Brunnbauer (ed.). *Transnational Societies, Transterritorial Politics: Migrations in the (Post-) Yugoslav Region, 19th-21st Century*. München, Oldenbourg Verlag: 145-167.
33. Ratha, D., Mohapatra, S., Siwal, A. (2011). *The Migration and Remittances Factbook*. Washington: The World Bank.
34. Council for population policy of the Government of the Republic of Croatia (2006). In Outline of the national population policy proposal. [Online] <http://www.vlada.hr/hr/content/download/5221/43421/file/186-01.pdf>[Accessed: 26.02.2013].
35. Skoko, B. (2013). Who used Croatia and how: diaspora sends more than 100 billion euros, six national budgets in 20 years. *Obzor*, 2nd March 2013: 17. [in Croatian].
36. Southeast European Times (2012). Programmes aim to reverse brain drain: Government, NGOs and businesses offer programmes to train and employ young people. 24th February 2013. [Online]. [http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en\\_GB/features/setimes/features/2012/10/29/feature-04](http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en_GB/features/setimes/features/2012/10/29/feature-04). [Accessed: 25.03.2013].
37. Švarc, J. (2009). *Croatia in a Knowledge Society: Controversies and Perspectives of Innovation Policy*. Zagreb: Školska knjiga/Institut društvenih znanosti Ivo Pilar. [in

- Croatian].
38. Švarc, J., Lažnjak, J. Šporer, Ž. & Polšek, D. (2004). Transition Countries in the Knowledge Societies. Zagreb: Institute of Social Sciences Ivo Pilar.
  39. Šverko, I. (2005). Student intentions for leaving abroad: the size of potential “brain-drain” and its determinants in 1995, 1997 and 2004. *Društvena Istraživanja* god. 14, br. 6 (80): 1149-1174. [in Croatian].
  40. UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2010). Science profile - Croatia.[Online]. [http://stats.uis.unesco.org/unesco/TableViewer/document.aspx?ReportId=3587&IF\\_Language=eng&BR\\_Country=1020&BR\\_Region=40530](http://stats.uis.unesco.org/unesco/TableViewer/document.aspx?ReportId=3587&IF_Language=eng&BR_Country=1020&BR_Region=40530) [Accessed:24.01.2013].
  41. UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2012). Global Flow of Tertiary-Level Students. [Online] <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Pages/international-student-flow-viz.aspx> [Accessed: 24.01.2013].
  42. Večernji List (2013). Flight abroad: Canadian work visas snapped up in 60 minutes. *Večernji List*, 24th February 2013. [Online].<http://www.vecernji.hr/vijesti/bijeg-inozemstvo-za-60-minuta-planule-radne-vize-kanadu-clanak-515248>. [Accessed: 25.03.2013].
  43. Vidak, N. (1998). The Policy of Immigration in Croatia. *Politička misao* Vol. XXXV, No. 5: 57-75.
  44. Višković, A. (ed.) (2008). *Wise Community: Social Responsibility for Living Environment*. Zagreb: Hrvatsko društvo za sustave. [in Croatian].
  45. Winland, D. (2005). Nation-Building, Nation-Bonding: Croatian Diaspora and the Homeland. In: *Beyond the Territory, within the Nation. Diasporic Nation Building in South Eastern Europe*. H. Riegler (ed.). Baden-Baden, Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft: 59-68.

**PART III****EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FROM THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA: FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT “CONNECTING THE SCIENTIFIC DIASPORA OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA TO THE SCIENTIFIC AND SOCIOECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE HOME COUNTRY”***Chapter 7:***Skilled migration, transnational cooperation and contributions to development: evidence from the Moldovan scientific diaspora***Dr. Gabriela TEJADA<sup>1</sup>**Cooperation and Development Center, École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, Lausanne, Switzerland***Abstract**

This chapter examines the scientific diaspora option within the migration and development nexus in the context of skilled migration from the Republic of Moldova. Migration has been a significant component of the transition process in Eastern Europe and Moldova is one of the countries that has been most affected by the emigration of its labour force as a consequence of economic crisis and political uncertainties. The country has suffered particularly from the large-scale emigration of scientists and skilled professionals, who are an appreciated human resource in the countries of destination. Based on primary information collected through an on-line survey and complementary interviews, this chapter offers an empirical analysis of skilled Moldovans abroad and the determinants of their engagement in transnational cooperation and their potential return to the home country. The discussion shows how mobilising the resources of skilled migrants and their mobility plans depend on the environment to which they are exposed in the host countries, and on the opportunities that the home country has to offer. While skilled Moldovans see their experience abroad in a positive light and appreciate the opportunities for advancement and growth at both a personal and a professional level, they maintain strong links with Moldova and are interested in engaging in development activities there. Activities related to the transfer of knowledge and skills, academic exchanges, joint research, investment links and physical return are some of the ways through which they see themselves making a contribution. Even though skilled Moldovans may continue to emigrate, there are signs of intentions to return, especially among students. However, potential returnees are sceptical about Moldova being able to provide a trustworthy and reliable environment that can offer them specific professional career opportunities and future prospects. The policy options for Moldova show that there is a need to provide systematic institutional support in

---

<sup>1</sup>gabriela.tejada@epfl.ch

order to encourage skilled migrants to engage in transnational cooperation, as well as a need for considerable improvements to local conditions and the structural situation to ensure benefits.

**Keywords:** scientific diasporas, skilled migration, transnationalism, development, Moldova.

## Introduction

The emigration of scientists and skilled professionals from developing and transition countries who leave in search of better professional and career prospects and an improved quality of life is a major concern for the countries of origin. However, the discourse on skilled migration has recently shifted from a view that considers it a development hindrance to one that sees it as a potential force for development. Recent research and practical examples both show the possible benefits that skilled migration can provide through diaspora interconnections and transnational cooperation that enable the transfer of skills and knowledge, business and entrepreneurial investment, and temporary or permanent return to the home country (Kuznetsov 2006; Agunias and Newland 2012). In recent years, this has led to an increase in the interest among the countries of origin about how they can benefit from their human capital abroad and use it to the advantage of their developing and transition processes.

For the countries in Eastern Europe, the effects of skilled migration on development and the role played by diasporas are two issues that have recently entered the public agenda. Migration has been a significant component of the transition process in Eastern Europe and it is still relevant two decades after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Political and especially economic factors are the main drivers of migration, and the Republic of Moldova is one of the countries that has been most affected by the emigration of its labour force. This emigration includes large-scale flows of scientists and skilled professionals and it has become a major concern for the country mainly in the last five years.

Located in South Eastern Europe, the Republic of Moldova is a small landlocked country situated between Ukraine and Romania. Like other Eastern European countries, in the 1990s Moldova suffered significant pressure during its transition to a democracy and market economy after its independence in 1991. The country witnessed an important decline of its economic and social indicators, restricted access to basic public services and the impoverishment of a large segment of the population. While emigration is a relatively recent phenomenon in Moldova, today, the country has one of the world's highest emigration rates. During the years that followed independence in 1991, and despite the prolonged recession in the economy, there was hardly any emigration from the country until 1998 and 1999 when the collapse of the Russian economy as a consequence of the regional financial crisis resulted in the failure of the Moldovan economy. This total economic breakdown was due to the fact that Moldova was more dependent on the Russian economy than the other former Soviet Republics were. Because of the drastic reduction in agricultural exports to Russia, large numbers of Moldovan workers – many of them employed in

agriculture and related sectors – were forced to emigrate on a temporary or permanent basis to search for better employment and income prospects and a better quality of life abroad. Emigration increased progressively and represented a considerable proportion of the population compared to the situation at the turn of the century. Emigration rose from slightly fewer than 100,000 migrants in 1999 to more than 400,000 by the end of 2005 (Lücke, Mahmoud and Pinger 2007). While the first migration flows mostly involved less skilled labour workers, this trend subsequently changed and there were increased flows of scientists, skilled professionals and students.

In the first decade after independence, a severe economic crisis and a long political transition resulted in science and technology and research and innovation being neglected as national priorities, and public investment in this sector felt dramatically from 0.73 per cent of GDP in 1990 to a mere 0.18 per cent in 2000 (ASM 1990-2009). In overall terms, activities related to science, research and innovation were drastically degraded because of insufficient funding, inadequate salaries and deficient infrastructure, while the methods for managing science remained conservative and the legislative framework was more regressive than motivating. This resulted in scientists and skilled professionals emigrating in large numbers. As a result, the scientific potential of the country fell by 83 per cent in just a decade and a half, and the number of scientific researchers dropped from a total of 30,000 in the early 1990s to less than 5,000 in 2004 (ASM 1990-2009). According to the National Statistics Office, Moldova had only 5,216 employees registered in research and development activities in 1 January 2011<sup>2</sup>.

The skills mismatch in the local job market was another important factor driving young skilled Moldovans toward migration. The disconnection between the educational system and the labour market fuelled an increase in the competition for scarce job positions among higher education graduates and this was another significant and additional cause for the more recent migration of skilled Moldovans, especially younger ones (Gaugas 2004; IOM 2012). The IOM's recently completed Extended Migration Profile of Moldova (2012) indicates that Moldovans working abroad on a temporary or permanent basis now account for at least 25 per cent of the total economically active population<sup>3</sup>. The data series for the reference period 2005-2012 analysed by the IOM shows a high and steady annual migration outflow of Moldovans, indicating that an estimated 25-30 per cent of the population of working age were engaged in a migration project at any given time during this period. Furthermore, there is evidence to indicate that emigration from Moldova will continue in the years to come. This was suggested by a recent OECD study (2012) which showed that 37 per cent of Moldovans with a third level education and 56 per cent of people in the 15-24 age group would emigrate permanently if given the opportunity.

---

<sup>2</sup><http://www.statistica.md/newsview.php?l=ro&idc=168&id=3744>. [Accessed: 10.08.2013].

<sup>3</sup>Based on data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) of the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) from the Republic of Moldova.

When discussing the challenges related to the emigration of skilled people and the policy options for the home country, there are some socioeconomic and political aspects that make Moldova stand out from the other countries in Eastern Europe, and these must be taken into consideration. Firstly, political instability in Moldova and a lack of full control over the entire territory at the time of its self-declared *de facto* independence from the region of Transnistria help to highlight how imperative political problems are. Secondly, the country's multi-ethnic populations, its numerous minority groups and historical frictions together with opposing political positions of those who are nostalgic about communist times and those who yearn for change, have resulted in a continuous rift in the political discourse between pro-Russian and pro-Western forces, and this makes it difficult to establish a strong cohesive national identity among the population<sup>4</sup>. Thirdly, today, Moldova is the poorest country in the region and in all of Europe. With a GDP per capita of US\$3,300 and with 65 per cent of the population living below the poverty line, the country ranked 113 worldwide among the 187 countries included in the 2012 UNDP Human Development Index (UNDP 2013). The country's modest economic growth was unable to check the decline in the employment rate during the last decade and the National Human Development Report (UNDP 2011) showed employment falling from 55 per cent in 2000 to 40 per cent in 2009. Fourthly, the country has one of the world's highest rates of remittance inflows in relation to GDP. These inflows account for 23 per cent of Moldova's GDP (World Bank 2011). Since the recipients, who represent 26 per cent of Moldovan households, depend on this money to meet their basic everyday consumption needs, the contributions that these remittances make to improving the deficient structural conditions are quite scant (Lücke, Mahmoud and Pinger 2007; Orozco 2008). Nonetheless, Moldovan emigrants are an essential source of financial inflows and these inflows exercise a considerable economic and social effect on the country (IOM 2009). Fifthly, the reputation of Moldova's science schools and the renowned scientific excellence and skilled quality of its highly educated people and scientists are exceptional. However, this has not prevented many of them from emigrating in search of better prospects abroad while others have left the national research system to take up other activities in Moldova, for which they are mostly over-qualified.

Because of the particular complexity of Moldova's situation, the Moldovan case-study offers a unique example that illustrates the challenges faced by a country going through a transitional stage and the policy alternatives it can use to link scientists and skilled professionals abroad to national strategies for socioeconomic progress. Given that emigration flows are of the highest concern for the Republic of Moldova, the country has implemented some concrete strategies and mechanisms to help retain scientists and skilled professionals in Moldova and to eventually promote the return of those who are abroad. An important first step was taken in this regard in 2004 with the launch of a national strategy aimed at guaranteeing systematic support for

---

<sup>4</sup> Considering the fact that Moldovans emigrate to more democratic Western European countries as well as to less democratic Russia, Mahmoud et al. (2012) illustrate the influence that emigration has on the political behaviour of the people who are left behind and they show how the diaspora has influenced political change in Moldova.

science and research-related activities and offering improved conditions and prospects to Moldovan scientists. The ratification of the Code on Science and Innovation by the Parliament, the adoption of the Partnership Agreement between the government and the Academy of Sciences of Moldova (ASM), and a commitment to systematically increase investment in science and technology in the following years were the three core elements of this new strategy. Furthermore, a concrete plan was put in place to establish and reinforce linkages with the diaspora.

In 2008 the government launched an ASM-led focused approach that was specifically aimed at addressing skilled migration, and this approach sought to foster cooperation with the Moldovan scientific diaspora. As we argue elsewhere, Moldova's committed support to boosting linkages with the scientific diaspora is based on two complementary facts (Tejada et al. 2013). The first is an acknowledgment of the possible benefits that the home country can obtain from collaborating with Moldovan scientists and skilled professionals abroad. The second is the conviction that the Moldovan national system of science, research and innovation is sufficiently suited to hosting diaspora initiatives and taking advantage of transnational cooperation. Two initiatives have recently been put in place as part of this approach. The first is the programme for the temporary return of Moldovan scientists and young researchers implemented by the IOM and the ASM under the EU-Moldova Mobility Partnership scheme. IOM Moldova has been a key actor in enhancing the migration and development discussion in the country and in pushing the diaspora issue on the policy agenda. The other initiative is the research project conducted by the ASM in collaboration with the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) and its goal is to "connect the scientific diaspora of the Republic of Moldova to the scientific and socioeconomic development of the home country". This aim of the study was to provide empirical evidence on Moldovan scientists and skilled professionals abroad and to suggest concrete policy recommendations to engage them in cooperation activities with the home country.

This chapter has three main aims. First of all, it seeks to promote the scientific diaspora option in the discussion of links between migration and development in the Moldovan context. Second, it provides an empirical-based analysis of various determinants of transnational cooperation involving skilled Moldovans located abroad. Third, it offers specific policy options that may help Moldova.

The content of this chapter is organised as follows. This first part offers an introduction to the socioeconomic and political context of Moldova and to the challenges and opportunities associated with the emigration of skilled human capital. The second part looks at the conceptualization and definition of scientific diasporas and their transnational practices in the migration and development nexus. The third part provides an empirical analysis of skilled Moldovans abroad and it discusses the causes for their emigration and looks at their living conditions in the host countries and the determinants of their transnational cooperation links and potential return to their home country. The conclusions in the final part discuss specific policy options for Moldova and there are also some suggestions regarding areas for further research.

## The conceptualization of scientific diasporas and their transnational practices

The continuous rise in international migration and skilled migration in particular over the last few decades (Özden et al. 2011) has stimulated discussions of new policy options about how to promote, regulate and exploit this migration. This has been encouraged by increasing academic interest in studies of the magnitude, characteristics and effects of skilled migration, which is an important part of the significant efforts to adapt conceptual frameworks to the interpretation of this complex phenomenon. This evolution responds to an intensification not just of the scale and scope of international migration but of its complexity as well (Castles and Miller 2009).

The brain-drain/brain-gain debate of the 1960s was the traditional paradigm for interpreting the process of skilled migration, and it considered migration from a nationalist perspective, seeing it as an obstacle to the development of the countries of origin because of the significant loss of human capital. The critiques of the limitations of this view mostly stress the fact that the affiliations of skilled migrants are not necessarily linked to a particular territory and that they are in fact capable of maintaining multiple identities and simultaneous connections with their country of origin and their country of destination. This has generated diverse and alternative ways of understanding and assessing international skilled migration.

A new perspective came to the fore during the 1990s and it saw skilled migrants not so much as a loss but as a potentially beneficial resource for the countries of origin. This internationalist vision is based on the idea that skilled migrants tend to establish links with their home countries and they can use these links to make contributions in the form of knowledge transfers, investment links and diaspora networks. This view, as mentioned by Meyer (2010), “replaced the traditional emphasis on permanent loss or unlikely repatriation by a workable hypothesis of long distance association and multiple connections” (p. XV). Under this new perspective, two concepts gained importance and evolved within the academic discussion on international migration and its linkages to development: diasporas and transnationalism. Both concepts are based on processes and their related activities that transcend borders, and their interrelation has been extensively revealed in the literature as part of the *diaspora option*. At a policy level in the diaspora option, establishing linkages with the diaspora is the alternative to physical return. Accordingly, skilled migrants are no longer viewed just as holders of valuable human capital that needs to be repatriated, but they are also and mostly seen as “accessible mediators of social capital with the potential to be mobilized in benefit of the country of origin” (Luchilo 2011: 14).

Diasporas consist of communities that have been established in various places outside the country of origin and which maintain a certain level of autonomy as a group in the host country and create networks and connections with their fellow nationals located in the home country as well as in other parts of the world (Butler 2001). The actions of diasporas are the result of communitarian practices, and therefore, they should be regarded as owners of a collective identity (Faist 2010). The concept of *scientific diasporas* was first used as part of this understanding to refer to groups,

networks or associations of emigrated scientists, engineers and skilled professionals, who are engaged in producing and circulating new knowledge and creating cooperation links with their countries of origin (Barré et al. 2003; Tejada and Bolay 2010). Under this perspective, scientific diasporas can be seen as *knowledge communities* (Foray 2004) since they seek to encourage the impulse given to research and strengthen the critical mass in the country of origin through diverse forms of cooperation. Under the diaspora option, when skilled migrants mobilize as a group and advance knowledge and research together, they facilitate a collective impact in the country of origin and become development actors (Tejada 2012). *Diaspora knowledge networks (DKN)* are a related concept and these are created with a view to capitalizing on the resources and networks of skilled migrants for the benefit of the home country and making intensive use of information and communication technologies as tools for the collective transmission of knowledge, following the logic of connectivity and based on the multiplier influence of the individual interest to join a community action and boost collective influence (Meyer 2001). As Meyer (2007) suggests, DKNs provide new alternatives within three policy areas: innovation and science and technology, migration and development, and international cooperation.

Transnationalism sees individuals simultaneously belonging to several places while establishing and promoting cross-border links (Portes 2001; Vertovec 2004; Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004). Whereas studies on transnationalism were initially mostly concerned with the carriers of the links across borders (i.e. the migrants), in more recent times they have increasingly addressed migrants' experiences abroad and their interventions in their home countries in the form of transnational practices and cooperation (Faist 2010).

The literature emphasizes some concrete determinants of transnational practices, including migration motives, migrants' socio-demographic profiles, their main activity in the destination country and the length of their stay abroad. The conditions and environments that migrants are exposed to and the opportunities offered in both the host and home countries are also shown to be important factors of influence. Furthermore, as we argue elsewhere, the concrete country setting in which migration occurs has an influence on the propensity of the development impact, and various cases illustrate how benefitting from the transnational practices of scientific diasporas is only possible when adequate scientific and technological infrastructure are provided (Tejada et al. 2013).

In the following sections of this chapter, we try to shed light on the main determinants of the transnational cooperation of the Moldovan scientific diaspora, using the perspective of the diaspora option as an analytical framework.

### **Research methods and description of the sample**

The empirical data presented here was collected between 2011 and 2012 using a primary on-line survey applied to a target group defined as "members of the Moldovan scientific diaspora", which included Moldovan scientists, researchers and skilled professionals living abroad as well as postgraduate students (MA or PhD

students) from any academic discipline, professional area or sector of expertise<sup>5</sup>. The sample included scientists who “originated from Moldova”, including some who left before the creation of the state as well as others who left afterwards. Respondents were asked about their reasons for emigrating, their experiences in the host countries, their networks and connections with Moldova, their future plans including their migration projects and their perceptions of their role in home country development. The survey was answered by a total of 197 members of the Moldovan scientific diaspora. In addition, 27 qualitative face-to-face interviews were held with a selection of skilled Moldovans from the same group.

Since it is impossible to precisely calculate the entire population of (skilled) Moldovans abroad because of the absence of any accurate list, the purposive sampling technique was used to collect data. Both formal and informal channels were used to reach the target population and recruit the sample. Email invitations were sent to people on ASM lists, ASM newsletters subscribers, diaspora associations and organizations, departments of international relations at academic institutions in Moldova as well as Moldovan embassies and consulates. Potential respondents were also contacted through informal channels such as social networks and using the snowball principle. As we initially had a lower response rate than we expected, further dissemination was boosted through a subsequent round of email messages after four months<sup>6</sup>.

The general characteristics of the 197 Moldovans surveyed are as follows. Most Moldovans (70%) were 35 years old or younger, confirming not only that the young are the most mobile group, but also that skilled emigration from Moldova mostly affects the younger cohorts. Most of the respondents are female (58%); half of them are married and less than half have children. For 92 per cent, their partners live in the same place as themselves; and for 96 per cent their children live in the same place as they do. Regarding academic level, the sample in the survey shows that around 50 per cent hold a Master’s degree, and half have either a PhD or a Bachelor’s degree. Most

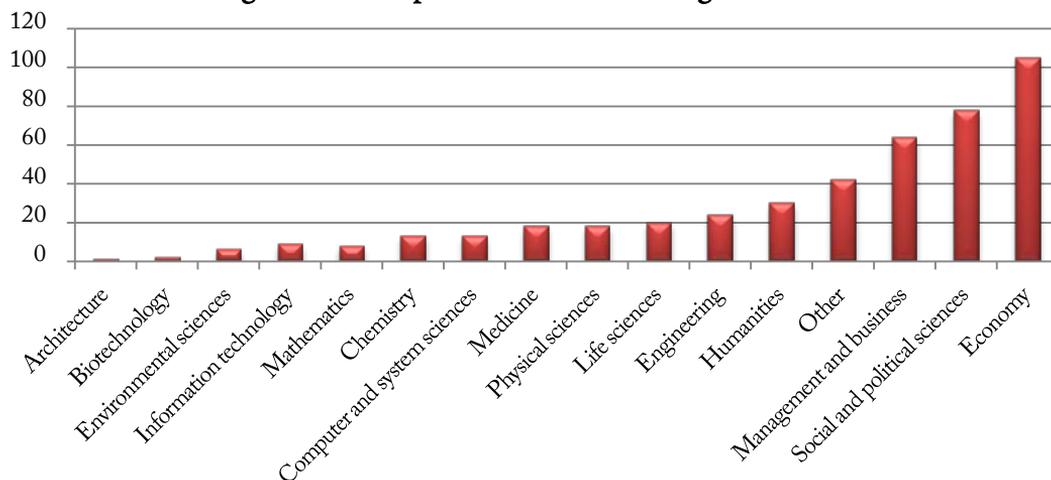
---

<sup>5</sup>There are two important reasons for including students as part of skilled migrants. First of all, more and more international students are entering the national labour markets of the destination countries after completing their studies (Kuptsch 2006; King and Findlay 2012). Second, there is an increasing trend that sees international students settling in the destination countries, making them part of the diaspora (Tejada et al. 2014). While international students continue to be an underrepresented component on the new map of global migration (King and Findlay 2012), recent theoretical advancements on international student mobility suggest a parallel that sees international student migration as a movement of a particular kind and as part of other migration and mobility flows that intersect with each other (Mosneaga forthcoming).

<sup>6</sup>The application of the purposive sampling method and the lower than expected response rate indicate a response bias influencing the findings, such as an underrepresentation of respondents with weaker links with Moldova and fewer interests there, or of those who are not as professionally established abroad. Accordingly, the possible positive migration impact of skilled Moldovans may be overstated. Despite these limitations, it should be recognized that this is a first attempt to outline the parameters of the Moldovan scientific diaspora and its current and potential future transnational activities will help to extract general trends and open new avenues for further research.

skilled Moldovans hold academic degrees in the following disciplines: economics, social and political sciences and management and business (Fig.1).

**Figure 1: Disciplines of academic degrees held**

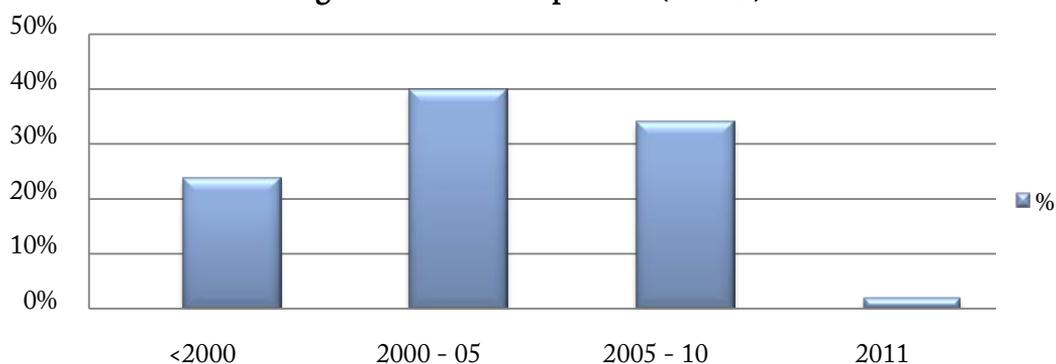


*Note: The graph includes fields for up to 5 academic degrees held by respondents.*

*Source: Field survey (2011-2012)*

In the last decade, increasing flows of young scientists and students have left the country in search of better prospects abroad because of a lack of job opportunities, inadequate wages, and poor scientific and professional prospects. The year of departure for the surveyed population shows the majority (55%) leaving Moldova before 2005, with one third departing between 2000 and 2004 (Fig. 2).

**Figure 2: Year of departure (n=193)**

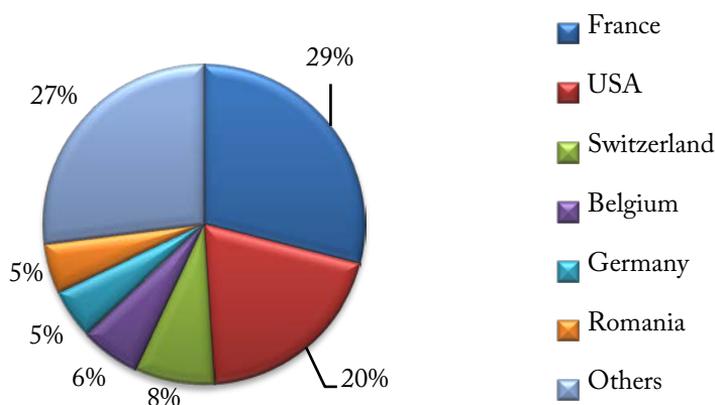


*Source: Field survey (2011-2012)*

The main countries of residence of the respondents surveyed are in Western Europe (mostly France, Germany, Belgium and Switzerland, and to a lesser extent Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, the UK, Sweden, Denmark and Norway), North America (the USA and Canada) and the Commonwealth of Independent States and

neighbouring countries (Russia, Romania and Ukraine). We observed that skilled Moldovans in our sample chose their destinations mainly because of the opportunities on offer, and less because of a shared language, cultural or geographical proximity (Fig. 3)<sup>7</sup>. Their choice was also based on the contacts they had already established with other Moldovans in the destination countries.

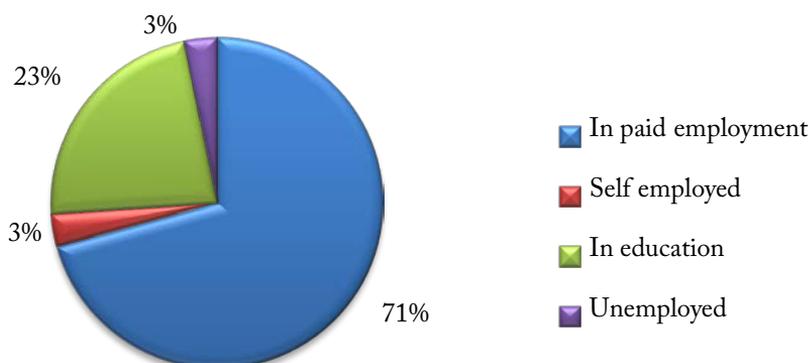
**Figure 3: Country of residence (n=194)**



*Source: Field survey (2011-2012)*

Our definition of the Moldovan scientific diaspora includes students, who represented 23 per cent of our sample. 71 per cent of respondents cited paid employment as their main activity at the time of the survey and 3 per cent were self-employed while a few respondents (3%) were unemployed (Fig. 4).

**Figure 4: Main activity in the host country (n=188)**



*Source: Field survey (2011-2012)*

<sup>7</sup>As we can see in Figure 3, a comparatively large number of respondents had France as their country of destination. This is mainly due to the fact that a Moldovan consultant who was hired for the project and who helped us to promote the survey among skilled Moldovans was based in France, and the project was able to benefit from her networks of contacts there. This should be taken into account when interpreting the results.

While a majority of the survey respondents stated that they had temporary residence status (55%), 23 per cent said they were holders of permanent residence status and 22 per cent had citizenship of their country of residence. The predominance of temporary residence permits can be partially explained by the recent nature of emigration from Moldova, and therefore an important share of the respondents had a short length of stay in the destination country at the time of the survey; these were mostly students and younger respondents. However, this situation could also be linked to the fact that the requirements to obtain permanent residence and citizenship status are strict in the destination countries.

Based on the data collected, the rest of this chapter draws on an analysis of the experiences of skilled Moldovans in destination countries and it mainly seeks to understand three principle issues: migration drivers, living experiences and conditions in host countries; transnational cooperation links with Moldova and contributions to development; and perceptions of the environment and opportunities in Moldova as well as return plans. The subsequent sections show some of the qualitative observations of the survey, which are supplemented by extracts of the testimonies of the Moldovans interviewed.

### **Migration drivers and living experiences in the host countries**

The opportunities offered in the destination countries are what mostly guide the decisions of skilled Moldovans when they are choosing their destinations and these decisions are less influenced by a shared language or cultural and geographical proximity. We observed that the decision to migrate is an exercise of choice that responds to job and academic opportunities, and accordingly, the chance for professional and personal growth rather than settlement in a specific geographical location is what spurs their migration plans. Only a few of the respondents chose their host country to follow family members.

We observed two main migration determinants according to the activity profile of skilled Moldovans: Professionals and scientists are mostly motivated by the importance that international exposure has for their scientific and professional careers while students are encouraged by the prospects of further training abroad. Only a few Moldovans had other motivations for emigrating. This corresponds to the best known determinants of international skilled migration in which the mobility of skilled people is mostly associated with choice, professional career and educational opportunities (Favell, Feldblum and Smith 2007). What is particular in the Moldovan case is that, beyond the search for better career prospects and scientific progression or the pursuit of further education abroad, the main migration driver is economic: a lack of professional prospects, inadequate employment opportunities and low salaries, poor quality of life and deficient living conditions are major push factors in Moldova. The testimonies of Moldovans show their mixed motivations for emigrating. One respondent said: *“I left to pursue my studies because of the weak career perspectives and my concerns about the future of my children”*. Another respondent mentioned: *“Moving abroad was the only way to avoid brain waste at home. It is better*

*to go to a new country to operate in the field of specialization instead of staying at home to lose the competencies”.*

The IOM (2012) shows that within recent emigration from Moldova, there is a significant group represented by young Moldovans aged between 25 and 34 years with higher education, who did not take up work after graduation because they lacked the necessary work experience, experienced a skills mismatch or had reservations about salaries. While higher living standards and employment prospects abroad may in turn act as significant pull factors, the home-country context is the main catalyst behind the decision of skilled Moldovans to emigrate, and therefore we can see that push factors in Moldova are stronger than pull factors in the destination countries.

Many see migration as an opportunity to move to a different professional context that can offer them improved rewards for labour and an environment with fairer competition, which they think are lacking in Moldova. One respondent referred to this saying: *“In France it is possible to attain fixed objectives, which is not the case in Moldova where only the network can help, not competences or knowledge. Here people with a high-level education have their place in society, but those holding a PhD there have no consideration from society”.* Another respondent said: *“After a working period in Moldova, I was disappointed with the working conditions and the rewards; this situation motivated me to move abroad for better career perspectives and a better-paid job”.*

Moldovans feel their migration project will offer them overseas experience and valuable exposure that will be prized in their home country and they believe they will have the chance to use their acquired knowledge and network of contacts for the benefit of Moldova. Personal motivation is what guides the decision of skilled Moldovans to emigrate in the first place, as indicated by 80 per cent of the respondents surveyed; the influence of family, colleagues and friends on their decision is less significant. Skilled migration from Moldova may be seen as the outcome of individual strategies aimed at improving personal conditions at both a professional and a private level. Their families back in Moldova see their emigration process as an achievement and parents prefer to see their children leave and succeed abroad rather than stay at home in frustration under precarious conditions. They experience the departure and overseas exposure of their children and relatives with a sense of pride at seeing them accomplish their professional and educational projects abroad. The recognition of the value of their experience by their families and the local community fuels their feeling of patriotism and their impetus to give something back to Moldova.

It is necessary to examine the situation and living experiences of skilled migrants in the host countries in order to understand their possibilities to contribute to their home country and to implement transnational cooperation activities. Our interest in their experiences and living conditions abroad stems from the hypothesis that the mobilization of migrants’ resources depends on the environment they are exposed to in the host countries and on the opportunities that both the host and the home country have to offer. When asked about the environment provided by host

countries, most skilled Moldovans have a positive overall perception of the qualities offered, particularly with regard to employment and career opportunities, wage levels, the level of scientific research and infrastructure, living environment and amenities (housing and transport facilities) and the social welfare system (schooling, health care, child care, etc.). Even though they feel it is difficult to do business and carry out entrepreneurial activities and hard to obtain a residence and working permit in the host country, the negative perceptions are below average.

Furthermore, skilled Moldovans highly rate the possibility of integrating in the local society and on the opportunities to communicate with local people. A good knowledge of the host country's language is a crucial element for social and cultural integration and facilitating social contacts and it helps to diminish the distance between immigrant communities and the local society. The majority of Moldovans believe they are socially well integrated in the host countries thanks to their proficiency in the local languages (78 per cent believe they speak and understand the local language very well and 16 per cent say they do so reasonably well). One respondent said: *“Due to the advantages we have such as strong motivation, mastering a few foreign languages and open-mindedness, the local population admires us and is more open to accept us”*.

Skilled Moldovans also believe that their integration in the local society is constructed around the fact that they connect with the local society and their affiliation and participation in local associations and organisations. They have two main kinds of affiliations with professional associations and networks established abroad. The first are associations or professional networks that are focused on a specific discipline or area. While these are open to members of any nationality, they remain rather exclusive because of their limited scope based on the specialized field concerned. The participation of skilled Moldovans in these associations enables them to establish transnational contacts with scientists from around the world and this provides access to international collaboration opportunities, which other Moldovan scientists – those abroad as well as those in the home country – can benefit from as they allow them to strengthen their research profile and critical mass. The second kind of affiliation involves associations that bring Moldovans abroad together for the purpose of socializing, exchanging experiences and implementing collective initiatives for the benefit of the home country. These are less exclusive than the first type beyond the need to be a Moldovan, and they have important implications, mainly due to their capacity to promote collective action and forge links among the diaspora. Nevertheless, their actions, which are mostly focused on promoting social and cultural activities, are somewhat irregular and their impact in the home country remains uncertain.

Other than these two kinds of affiliation and apart from some incipient and exceptional cases, there is no exclusive formal collective structure for Moldovan scientists and skilled professionals in the form of a specialized scientific diaspora network or association which could encourage the scale and influence of diaspora knowledge transfers through collective transnationalism. Our interest in examining the collective associative actions of Moldovans is based on the assumption that the

value of collective mobilization and structures in the form of networks and associations is considered to be a necessary condition for the promotion of the collective transnationalism of the diasporas (Tejada 2012). The organized actions and networks of scientific diasporas are based on the logic of connectivity and the multiplier effect of the individual interest to participate in a community project that benefits the country of origin (Meyer 2001; Meyer 2007). As argued by Foray (2004), collective work in organized systems, such as scientific networks or communities, enables the production of knowledge through decentralized cooperation mechanisms and it encourages the exploitation of its benefits, facilitating collective influence in the home country. Such connections are based on the common international exposure of migrants and their shared cultural and further collective identity links. In the case of Moldova, we can see that there is a lack of a strong collective identity within the Moldovan diaspora and this is mainly due to two things; firstly, the fact that mass emigration is still a recent phenomenon in Moldova; and secondly because of the constraint of the prevailing national identity that hinders any type of collective diaspora transnationalism. However, as Buga (2011) has said, the scattered individual efforts of Moldovans abroad, their dispersed associative activities and their informal networks are evolving towards more structured communitarian-based initiatives that benefit Moldova, and this has resulted in Moldovans being seen as an “*emerging diaspora*” gathering “*a desire to affirm themselves as a group*” (p. 331).

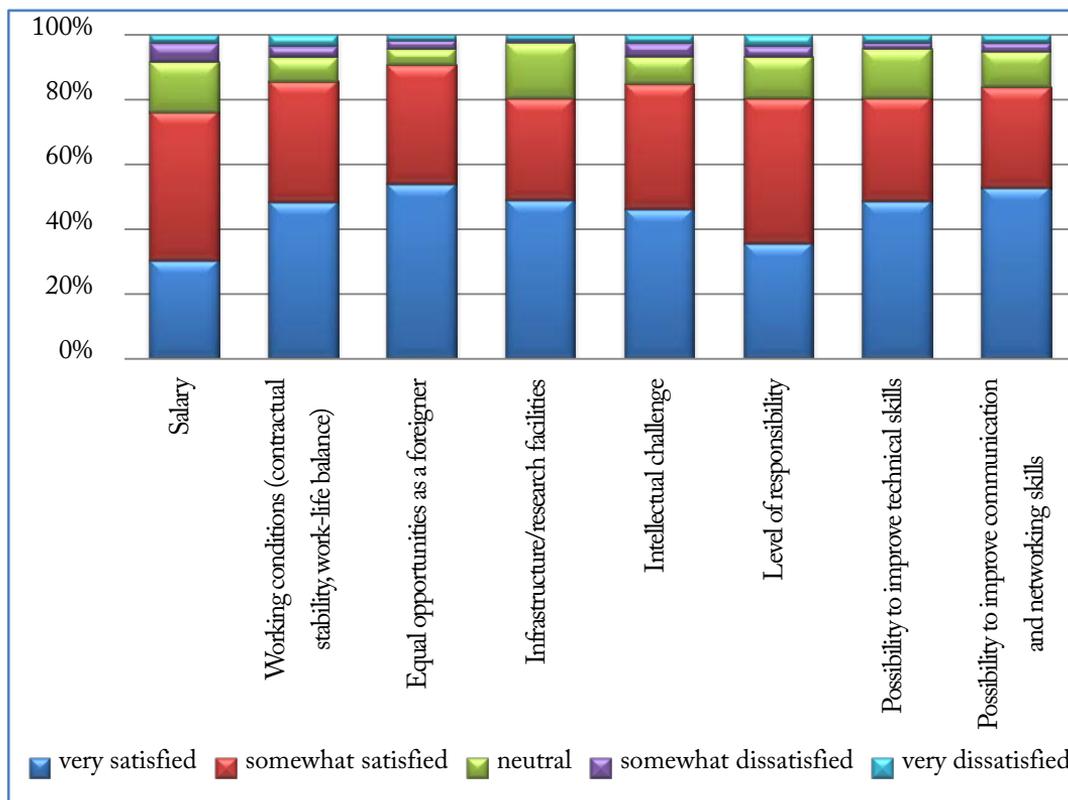
Skilled Moldovans in paid employment were asked to rank different aspects of their job on a five-point Likert scale, indicating the level of satisfaction they ascribe to each aspect. Observing their evaluations for each aspect, we can see that they are more satisfied with equal opportunities at work as a foreigner, working conditions (contractual stability, flexibility, work-family balance), the possibility to improve their communication and networking skills, and the intellectual challenge of their jobs, than with the salary level and the level of responsibility, the possibility to improve technical skills and the infrastructure and research facilities offered (Fig. 5). A majority of Moldovans in paid employment believe they are well established professionally and are satisfied with their job situation and position in the host country. They believe their stay abroad has helped them increase their skills level and improve their technical and scientific competences. Most respondents are working within their field of specialization and they feel their position corresponds to their qualifications.

With regard to Moldovan students, we can see that they select their destinations for two main reasons: the prestige of the institutions or academic programmes and because they were granted a scholarship.

A further important reason behind the selection of their destination is based on their expectations of employment opportunities after graduation and their perceptions of

the policies in destination countries to facilitate their migration projects<sup>8</sup> (Fig. 6). One respondent referred to this categorically: “*My objective on leaving Moldova was to obtain a diploma in France and to then get a permanent job and settle definitively there*”.

**Figure 5: Employees’ satisfaction with their job (n=120)**



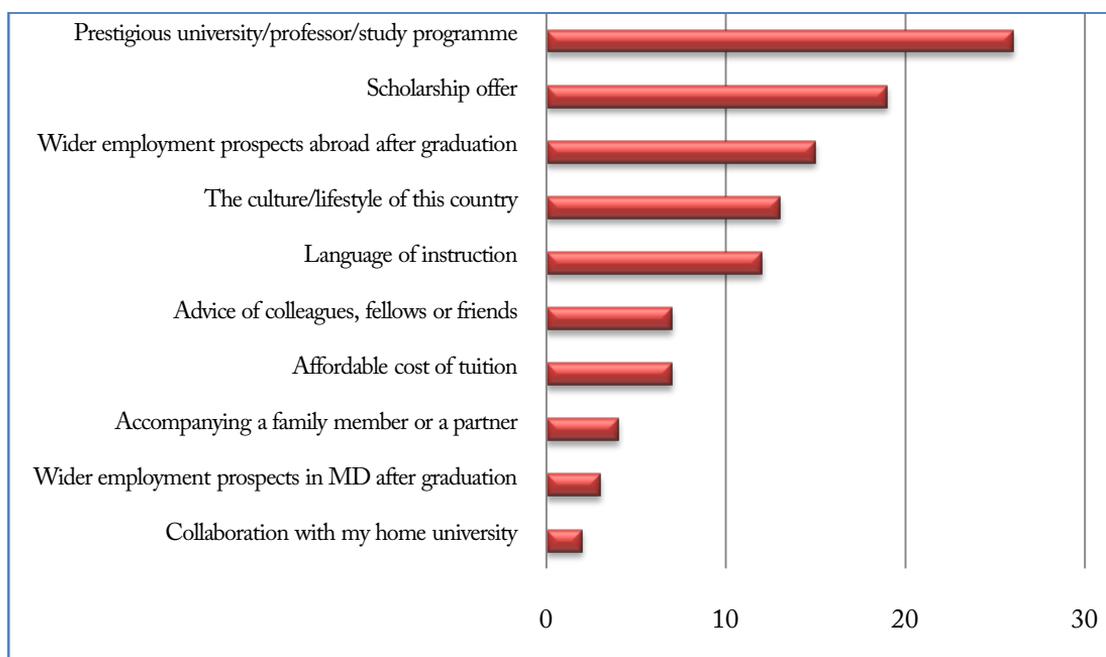
Source: Field survey (2011-2012)

Within the context of skilled migration, this illustrates how student mobility is frequently a precursor to labour migration (Kuptsch 2006; Abella 2006; Castles and Miller 2009). We can see that Moldovans usually complete a Master’s degree in their host country as a main path for entering the local labour market although some decide to pursue a PhD. This shows that *probationary immigration* (Kuptsch 2006) by Moldovan students usually leads to labour migration, thereby stimulating the transformation of students into skilled employees. Furthermore and as a general

<sup>8</sup>The adaptation of policies in destination countries, mostly in Western Europe and North America, aimed at attracting skilled human capital and increasingly enabling international students to become members of the local labour force is a current global trend. It should also be pointed out that the intensification of the competition to attract foreign talent between developed countries has also encouraged the internationalisation of academic research and higher education (Tremblay 2005; (Mosneaga forthcoming). Further research should specifically examine if and how Moldovan students have been part of this trend.

trend, we observe that Moldovans, including those who emigrated for professional reasons in the first place, end up completing their studies or pursuing further education in the host countries in order to adapt their qualifications to the requirements of the local labour market as a necessary step towards accessing better employment opportunities.

**Figure 6: Students' reasons for choosing their study destination**



*Note: The graph is based on respondents' three top reasons for choosing the study destination.*

*Source: Field survey (2011-2012)*

In overall terms, skilled Moldovans rate their experience abroad as positive and they appreciate the opportunity for advancement and growth at both a personal and a professional level. One respondent said: *"I obtained a scholarship after the completion of my studies in French at the State University of Moldova. In France I was able to obtain studies of a very good quality and acquire a very rich professional experience"*.

### **Transnational cooperation links and contributions to development**

Moldovans are keen to promote their links with the home country and the majority of them communicate with their relatives, colleagues and acquaintances back home on a regular basis. They usually follow the news about current events in Moldova, and they return there at least once a year, mostly for the purpose of visiting family and friends during holiday periods, and to a lesser extent for scientific or academic exchanges. Only a few are sent on temporary returns by their employers. The majority of respondents (59%) had not sent any financial remittances back to Moldova in the 12 months prior to the survey; however, those who did (41%) mentioned that the main recipients were family members who mainly use the money

received to cover their daily expenses (mostly food and housing). With the aim of identifying the incidence that the main activities of skilled Moldovans in the host countries have on their feelings about contributing to Moldova's development, the respondents to our survey were divided into three different groups according to their activity profile: students – persons in training and education – (36 persons), scientists and researchers employed in research or academic institutions (41 persons) and professionals in paid employment or self-employed (88 persons).

When we spoke to skilled Moldovans about their possible contributions to development, we observed that their main focus was on helping to improve the situation of the families they had left behind and they believe that by doing so they can indirectly contribute to improving the general situation in Moldova. We see a high level of interest in Moldova's development among the three groups of respondents. The majority (86% or 151 persons) think they can play a significant role in the socioeconomic progress of their home country and they believe that they could contribute through their activities abroad, specifically in terms of promoting a better image of Moldova abroad, encouraging investment in Moldova, increasing the pool of better-trained students and improving the quality of science and research.

They consider that they can engage in the development of Moldova through activities related to knowledge transfer and social remittances in the form of ideas, behaviour and social capital transferred to the home country (Levitt 1999). Furthermore, the concrete plan to physically return to the home country is another even more obvious instrument for development imagined by them, especially the students. One respondent said: *"When I return to Moldova during vacation I represent an example for the local population and I observe that I indirectly influence the mentality of my family and relatives."* A student said: *"If return occurs, Moldova can benefit from the exodus of qualified people. Return migrants can play an important role in development through their experience, knowledge and financial resources"*.

Moldovans are keen to get involved in specific projects, such as temporary visits, joint research projects, public policy advice, technology transfer and the promotion of foreign investment. We can see that scientists and researchers feel a strong connection to their home country through science and they feel they can give something back through reverse knowledge transfers within their specific field of study. Students see themselves contributing through the education and skills they have gained overseas, which they believe they can transfer to the home country, while professionals feel they can encourage foreign investment in Moldova. While the majority of skilled Moldovans show a high level of interest in Moldova's regional and national development, we can clearly see that Moldovans in training and education have a higher interest than professionals and scientists and researchers.

An analysis of our observations has led us to consider that the higher interest that students have in home country development is based on two issues. Firstly, the fact that students are still intensely entrenched in their home country for their social and emotional well-being, and their belief that the education and skills gained abroad can have a direct socioeconomic impact on Moldova. Secondly, the students who plan to

physically return to Moldova in the future see their return as an important tool for development. In fact, students' return plans to accomplish their migration project back in their home country arose as a significant motivation for the higher interest in home country development and their positive feelings about their potential contribution. Nonetheless, when students move from imagined plans to real action, they may face more constraints than Moldovans from the other two groups. Even if students are very concerned about Moldova's development, this motivation may not necessarily be translated into real actions because they may not have the support of a social and intellectual network or the financial capital, whereas the motivation of scientists and researchers and professionals can be backed by their resources and allow them to realise their intentions to give something back, and therefore they may have greater possibilities to impact development than students do.

With regard to scientists and researchers in particular, if they have attained a stable position, their international scientific exposure and networks offer them sufficient social capital (Bourdieu 1986) in the form of contacts, social and professional relationships as well as scientific and institutional links and their transnational cooperation actions act as bridges of science and research between scientists based in Moldova and those in the host country, and fostering knowledge-sharing may open collaboration opportunities, scientific exchanges and allow access to international scientific networks that can benefit Moldova, mainly by reinforcing local capacities and providing access to better infrastructure and equipment. Moldovan scientists believe that the home country can absorb direct benefits from their activities, and therefore they address issues of crucial significance for the development of Moldova in their research. One respondent said: *"I believe Moldovan scientists have a great deal to contribute in the form of collaboration projects"*. However, Moldovan scientists believe that implementing cooperation and knowledge transfer activities with Moldova is not an easy task, and this is mainly because of political instability, a lack of funding, scarce acknowledgment of the importance of skilled Moldovans abroad, deficient infrastructure in Moldova to accommodate projects and a lack of time to undertake transnational cooperation. One respondent referred to this last point saying: *"The lack of time is an important obstacle because in the host country, hard work is necessary in order to gain a place in its society"*. Another Moldovan said: *"I think only the scientific knowledge can be applied in Moldova but not the technical skills because Moldovan companies do not have the adequate equipment"*.

When respondents were asked about the transnational cooperation initiatives they have implemented, one aspect that stood out was that knowledge sharing and technology transfer projects, scientific and academic exchange projects and research project in cooperation with Moldovan partners are the most common type of initiatives that respondents have carried out so far. If we look at the responses in terms of profile, we see that students have implemented projects related to knowledge sharing and academic exchange, scientists have carried out research projects in collaboration with Moldovan scientists, and professionals have implemented initiatives related to knowledge sharing, technology transfer as well as investment and business links. We can observe a motivation to create collaboration opportunities and

contribute to Moldova's progress across the three groups although there is a higher incidence of cooperation projects among scientists and researchers than among students and professionals. Table 1 shows examples of transnational cooperation activities by skilled Moldovans and the main obstacles faced during their implementation.

**Table 1: Transnational cooperation activities of skilled Moldovans abroad and the obstacles encountered**

Type of project	Description	Obstacles
<b>Knowledge transfer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Advancing knowledge of Moldova's challenges through the PhD topics chosen</li> <li>○ Publishing scientific work in Moldova</li> <li>○ Participating in seminars and/or international conferences in Moldova</li> </ul>	Lack of funding; deficient infrastructure and equipment; lack of recognition of diasporas; scientific community lacks interest to collaborate with the diaspora.
<b>Academic exchange</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Involvement in teaching activities and lectures</li> <li>○ Temporary visits to academic institutions</li> <li>○ Participating in the creation of academic programmes and syllabus design</li> </ul>	Lack of time; lack of funding.
<b>Joint research</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Involvement of Moldovan partners in international research projects</li> <li>○ Helping Moldovan scientists to submit proposals for international research grants</li> <li>○ Joint publications in collaboration with Moldovan scientists</li> </ul>	Lack of funding; political instability; lack of recognition of diasporas; scientific community lacks interest to collaborate with the diaspora.
<b>Investment &amp; business</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Promotion of foreign investments and business projects</li> </ul>	Lack of trust in Moldovan institutions; political instability.

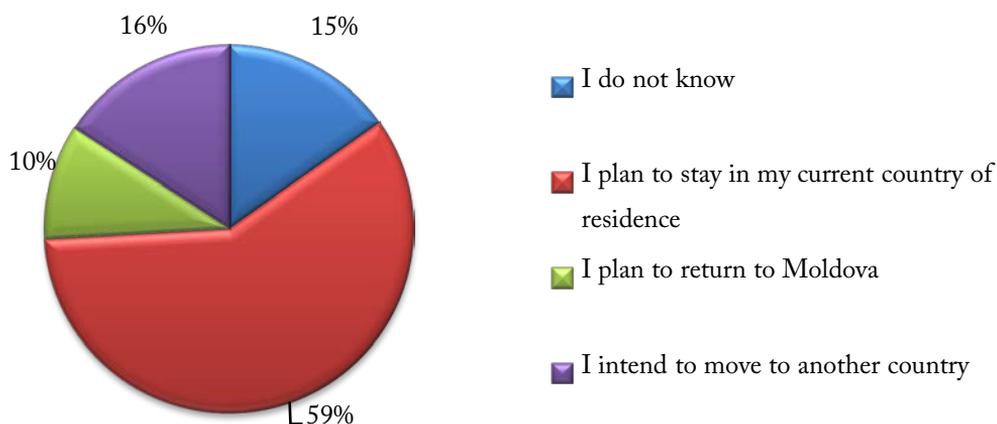
*Source: Field survey (2011-2012)*

### **Perceptions of opportunities and return plans**

Our study considers return migration as an important tool for development and it sheds light on the future return plans of Moldovan migrants. Taking into account that accessible opportunities and perceptions of the country environment influence

migration projects, an analysis of the opinions that Moldovans have of living conditions in their home country can provide insights of their potential to return. Studies have shown that return plans are a response to a positive assessment of the economic and professional prospects that the home country has to offer, as well as a reaction to family ties (Wickramasekara 2003; Cassarino 2004). The return intentions of skilled Moldovans and their actual return may increase if they feel more assured that Moldova can provide them with an enabling environment for employment with concrete career prospects and a stable and trustworthy living environment. Furthermore, return migration in itself does not mean a positive effect on development if access to productive employment and the possibility of validating the accumulated skills gained abroad in the local social context are lacking. Several empirical studies have provided evidence of the obstacles that limit the transfer of migrants' skills and knowledge upon return, suggesting that socioeconomic structures and institutional issues in the home country determine the transmission of migrant's accumulated skills and knowledge (Gmelch 1980; King 1986; Cassarino 2004; Tejada et al. forthcoming). Other studies show the need for a suitable infrastructure and appropriate socioeconomic and political conditions in the home countries (Gow and Iredale 2003; Saxenian 2006). One respondent referred to this point saying: *"It is the lack of possibilities to apply the scientific potential what makes people leave, and return can only be beneficial if migrants can apply their knowledge and skills back in the Moldovan context"*. Another mentioned: *"Improving processes in Moldovan companies will help in transferring new managerial skills and organizational methods"*.

**Figure 7: Reported plans for the next five years (n=158)**



*Source: Field survey (2011-2012)*

Students are more likely to declare return plans and 47% of them say they have plans to return to Moldova some time in the future, and they are followed by scientists and researchers (35%) and finally by professionals (28%). Notwithstanding the fact that their return intentions are linked to their views of the opportunities available in Moldova, the most important reason to plan a return is based on their interest to contribute to the socioeconomic development of the home country, with the will to

be with their family and acquaintances, and a desire to bring their children up in Moldova as the second and third most important reasons respectively. When asked about their future plans for a restricted time span of five years, 59 per cent of respondents said they intend to stay in their current host country, while 16 per cent say they will move to a third country with 10 per cent planning to return to Moldova. A significant share of 15 per cent of the sample does not know their plans yet and they are certainly open to any opportunities that may arise, either in Moldova or in another country (Fig. 7).

When we examine the future plans of skilled Moldovans in greater depth, we see interesting differences in terms of the profile of the respondents. The highest share among respondents planning to return to Moldova is for scientists and researchers (14%), followed by students (12%) and professionals (6%). A majority of scientists and researchers (72%) and professionals (60%) intend to stay in their present host country while only 40 per cent of students plan to do so. We also see that students have a clearly higher level of uncertainty about their short-term future plans in terms of geographical location (30%) than scientists and researchers (12%) and professionals (11%), and therefore they appear to be more open to opportunities. This might be a consequence of the students' younger age, a lack of family responsibilities, and shorter stays and a less stable situation compared to Moldovans in the other two groups. One respondent referred to this point saying: *"It may happen that once Moldovan professionals abroad get a more stable situation, they may want to contribute more to Moldova from abroad without looking to return"*.

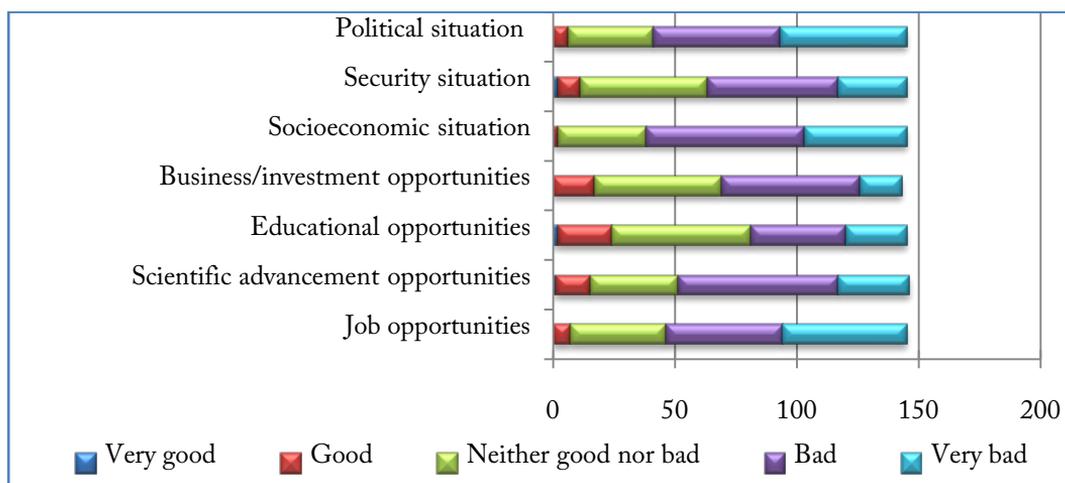
The fact that Moldovan students abroad have not made up their minds about their future plans in terms of geographical location makes us believe that they follow a strategy where their migratory plans are kept flexible and their decisions are left intentionally open as they wait to respond to the best career choice and the new opportunities they are offered. When asked about their priority plans after the completion of their academic degree, 46 per cent of students said they plan to search for paid employment, while 32 per cent plan to pursue further education; 11 per cent of the remainder plan to set up their own company and 11 per cent are undecided.

In overall terms, skilled Moldovans abroad have more negative than positive perceptions of the home country environment, particularly with regard to the socioeconomic situation, job and career opportunities, scientific advancement opportunities and the political situation (Fig. 8).

Interesting differences arose when examining more deeply skilled Moldovans' assessment of the environment in the home country. While we can see that students have fewer negative feelings about job opportunities, scientific advancement and business opportunities offered by Moldova than scientists and researchers and professionals, the discussion of our observations make us think that their feelings may be based on an emotional construct that is strongly grounded on their high interest in home country development as well as their propensity to return, and not necessarily formed on the basis of a factual evaluation of the opportunities available in Moldova. This is also shown by the fact that 17 per cent of students intend to achieve their

priority plan in Moldova. Moldovans who do not have plans to return to their home country are sceptical about Moldova being able to provide a trustworthy environment with concrete professional career prospects and a good quality of life. They think political and socioeconomic instability will not change in the near future and they feel a brighter future awaits them in their current host country or elsewhere, but certainly not in Moldova. The most important reason for not planning to return is their belief that their host country offers better career and employment prospects and their second most important reason is their preference for the lifestyle abroad. This shows that it is difficult to pull Moldovan scientists and professionals with employment experience abroad back to Moldova and away from higher salaries, better work settings, meritocratic principles and other welfare provisions they have in the destination countries. One Moldovan said: *“Once you get accustomed to the new society it is difficult to return. At the moment I don’t plan to return, maybe in the distant future when the situation in Moldova is better and the society has changed its mentality”*.

**Figure 8: Assessment of the environment and situation in Moldova (n=146)**



Source: Field survey (2011-2012)

In overall terms, skilled Moldovans abroad are keen to participate in Moldova’s socioeconomic advancement, but they are discouraged by the resistance of the local community towards acknowledging the value of the resources of skilled Moldovans abroad and by the attitude of the government, which they feel is not sufficiently attentive in terms of engaging them in development efforts. One respondent put it this way: *“It would be good if the government encouraged the participation of Moldovans in the policy-making process, and recognized the role of the diaspora in the development of the country”*. Skilled Moldovans feel that there is a lack of awareness among society of the potential contributions from the diaspora in the form of knowledge and skills transfer. This perception is in line with a recent empirical study carried out by the IOM (2009), which shows that one out of every two Moldovan citizens thinks of migrants’ contributions in terms of financial remittances for their families. One Moldovan mentioned: *“I think the society in Moldova should manifest a greater interest in diaspora proposals and recommendations, not only for its financial resources”*.

As part of the enabling environment, suitable policies are considered crucial for promoting transnational cooperation projects from the diaspora as well as for enabling initiatives that respond to institutional incentive programmes. Half of the respondents were unaware of the institutional programmes that the government has recently put in place to engage Moldovans abroad. There is a high level of reluctance to participate in them among those respondents who knew about such programmes, and this is based on their lack of interest in supporting governmental initiatives and a general feeling of distrust. While the programmes implemented by the government are seen as valuable, they lack acknowledgment and participation from the diaspora. Moldovans see the lack of resources as an important impediment to bringing ongoing initiatives forward. One respondent said: *“Collaboration with the diaspora needs to be institutionalized. There is a need for a better organization of the existing knowledge transfer and financial rewards for short professional visits to Moldova”*.

Respondents are concerned about the emigration of the most qualified persons and the consequences for Moldova, and they think that the authorities need to pay more attention to this issue and make sufficient efforts to revert this trend. One respondent said: *“I think that the possible benefits of skilled migration are less important than the losses. The depletion of human capital led to a shortage of good professors for the education of the new generation”*.

## **Conclusions**

This evidence-based analysis discusses the scientific diaspora option within the links between migration and development to address skilled migration from the Republic of Moldova. It outlines the parameters of the Moldovan scientific diaspora consisting of students, scientists and skilled professionals abroad, and captures the main determinants of their transnational cooperation and their potential return to the home country. The evidence shows that while Moldovan skilled migration is associated with choice, professional career and educational opportunities, it is fundamentally determined by economic factors, limited employment opportunities and career prospects, low income levels and a deficient quality of life. Although higher living standards and employment prospects abroad may act as significant pull factors, the home-country context is the main catalyst behind the decisions of skilled Moldovans to emigrate.

Skilled Moldovans become appreciated human resources in destination countries and they see their experience abroad in positive light because of the chance it offers to advance and grow at a personal and a professional level. They keep in contact with Moldova and are interested in contributing to its development, based on the belief that they can create benefits through their activities abroad and as a result of the skills and knowledge they have accumulated. They imagine themselves contributing through the implementation of activities related to transfers of knowledge and skills, academic exchanges, joint research and investment links. We see that physical return is a specific development tool imagined by skilled Moldovans, and some of them link their development aspirations to their return plans. While some skilled Moldovans have

already been engaged in transnational cooperation projects, these are mostly on a sporadic and individual basis and grounded on personal interest rather than collective organization. Yet, there are initial signs of informal networks and associative initiatives evolving towards more structured communitarian-based actions, which are considered crucial for enhancing the scale and effect of transnational cooperation. However, they feel there is not enough recognition of their capacities and resources among the community left behind and that local resistance to change and a lack of institutional support for their engagement are important obstacles.

The discussion indicates that the mobilization of skilled migrants' resources as well as their mobility plans hinge on the environment they are exposed to, and on the opportunities offered in both the host and the home countries. Although emigration of skilled Moldovans may continue, return intentions - of students, mostly - are apparent, but they have negative perceptions about the socioeconomic situation and job opportunities in Moldova. Available opportunities, incentives and enabling environments are decisive influences on the deliberate hesitation of migrants about their future plans, and the return intentions of Moldovans might increase if there was a belief that Moldova could provide an enabling socioeconomic environment with adequate career prospects. However, if economic and political conditions in Moldova remain unclear, they may decide to settle abroad permanently.

There are some specific policy recommendations deriving from this study. 1) Support for organized collective action by Moldovans abroad needs to be ensured and complemented with institutional policies to engage diasporas. 2) Schemes promoting return should focus on young Moldovans, especially those who have left their country to pursue higher education and who have shorter stays abroad. 3) Policies should ensure appropriate conditions for a satisfactory reintegration of returnees into the labour market in concrete sectors that are useful for the local context. 4) A two-fold strategy needs to be accommodated to ensure the effective use of the knowledge and skills of migrants that are transferred from both returnees and from those who remain abroad, and to generate benefits within the local socioeconomic context. 5) Considerable improvements to the local structural situation are necessary and these include: the creation of conditions to provide good employment opportunities and career prospects; a formal commitment to sustained support for science, research and education; ensuring matches between higher education programmes and labour market needs.

Finally, when analysing the impact that skilled migration from the Republic of Moldova has on the socioeconomic and scientific development capacities of the country, it is crucial to promote further studies that will advance research on some of the main issues that influence its dynamic. These may include: 1) Studies examining further the issue of the lack of national identity hindering diaspora mobilisation, and if and how this element could be replaced by other attachment factors. 2) Studies of skilled Moldovans in concrete destination countries on a comparative basis, examining the influence of policies and institutional settings on transnational cooperation and return intentions. 3) A regional perspective-led comparative study of skilled migration from Moldova with other Eastern European countries, observing similarities and

differences regarding migration characteristics, dimensions and policy options. 4) Studies of the mobility, main destination countries and academic profiles of Moldovan students, and issues that influence their migration projects and future plans. 5) Research into return migration by skilled Moldovans, the different types of institutions to which they return (academic, private, public), in order to gain a better understanding of the issues influencing their decisions, working conditions and living situations, and the effects of their international exposure on the local context.

## References

1. Abella, M. (2006). Global competition for skilled workers and consequences. In Kuptsch, C. and Pang, E.F. (eds.), *Competing for global talent*, IILS/ILO, Geneva, 11-32.
2. Academy of Sciences of Moldova. (1990-2009). *Annual reports on the activities of the Academy of Sciences of Moldova: Years 1990-2009*. Chisinau, ASM Printing House.
3. Agunias, D. R., and Newland, K. (2012). *Developing a road map for engaging diasporas in development. A handbook for policymakers and practitioners in home and host countries*. Geneva and Washington D.C., International Organisation for Migration and Migration Policy Institute.
4. Barré, R., Hernández, V., Meyer, J-B. and Vinck, D. (2003). *Diasporas scientifiques. Comment les pays en développement peuvent-ils tirer parti de leurs chercheurs et de leurs ingénieurs expatriés?* Paris, Institute de la Recherche pour le Développement.
5. Buga, N. (2011). *Les diasporas comme ressources d'intégration dans l'économie mondiale*. PhD diss. Grenoble, Pierre Mendès France University.
6. Butler, K. (2001). Defining diaspora, refining a discourse. *Diaspora A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 10(2), 189-219.
7. Cassarino, J. P. (2004). *Theorising Return Migration: a revisited conceptual approach to return migrants*. EUI Working Papers RSCAS, 2004/02.
8. Castles, S. and Miller, M.J. (2009). *The age of migration*. UK, Palgrave-Macmillan.
9. Faist, T. (2010). *Diaspora and transnationalism: What kind of dance partners?*. In: *Diaspora and transnationalism. Concepts, theories and methods*, Bauböck, R. and Faist, T. (eds.) 9-34. Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press.
10. Favell, A., M. Feldblum, and M. Smith. (2007). *The human face of global mobility: a research agenda*. *Society* 2, no. 44: 15–25.
11. Foray, D. (2004). *Economics of knowledge*. Cambridge, MA, MIT Press.
12. Gaugas, P. (2004). *Labour migration in Moldova: Contexts and controls*. *Higher education in Europe* 29, no. 3: 343-52.
13. Gmelch, G. (1980). *Return migration*. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 9: 135-159.
14. Gow, J. and Iredale, R. (2003). *Socioeconomic impacts of return migration: Developing a comparative framework*, In: *Return migration in the Asia Pacific*, Iredale, R, Guo, F. and Rozario, S. (eds.) 169-180. Cheltenham and Northampton: Edward Elgar Publishing.
15. IOM. (2009). *The socio-economic impact of the economic crisis on migration and remittances in the Republic of Moldova*. Chisinau, IOM.
16. IOM. (2012). *Extended migration profile of the Republic of Moldova*. Chisinau, IOM.

17. Iredale, R., Guo, F. and Rozario, S. (2003). *Return migration in the Asia Pacific*. Cheltenham and Northampton, Edward Elgar Publishing.
18. King, R. (1986). Return migration and regional economic development: An overview. In *Return migration and regional economic problems*. King, R. (ed.) 1-37. London, Croom Helm.
19. King, R. and Findlay, A. (2012). Student migration. In: *An introduction to international migration studies. European perspectives*, Martinello, M. and J. Rath (eds.) 259-280. Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press.
20. Kuptsch, C. (2006). Students and talent flow, the case of Europe: From castle to harbour? In: *Competing for global talent*, Kuptsch, C. and Fong, P.E. (eds.). Geneva International Institute for Labour Studies. 33–61.
21. Kuznetsov, Y. (2006). *Diaspora networks and the international migration of skills: How countries can draw on their talent abroad*. Washington, D.C., The World Bank.
22. Levitt, P. (1999). Social remittances: a local-level, migration-driven form of cultural diffusion. *International Migration Review* 132, no. 32: 26-49.
23. Levitt, P. and Glick Schiller, N. (2004). Conceptualizing simultaneity: A transnational social field perspective on society. *International Migration Review* 38, no. 3: 12-39.
24. Luchilo, L. (2011). Introduction. In: *Beyond brain drain. Mobility, migration and diaspora of skilled Argentines*. L. Luchilo (ed.): 21-67. Buenos Aires, Eudeba. [In Spanis].
25. Lücke, M., Mahmoud, T. and Pinger, P. (2007). *Patterns and trends on migration and remittances in Moldova*. Chisinau, IOM.
26. Mahmoud, O. T., Rapoport, H., Steinmayr, H.R. and Trebesch, Ch. (2012). *Emigration and Political Change*. Mimeo. [On-line].<http://www.eea-esem.com/files/papers/eea-esem/2012/2173/Emigration%20and%20Political%20Change.pdf>. [Accesed: 10.08.2013].
27. Meyer, J.B. (2001). Network approach versus brain drain: Lessons from the diaspora. *International Migration* 39, no. 5: 91–110.
28. Meyer, J.B. (2007). *Building sustainability: The new frontier of diaspora knowledge networks*. Working Paper No. 35. Bielefeld, COMCAD.
29. Meyer, J.B. (2010). Preface. In: *Scientific Diasporas as development partners: Skilled migrants from Colombia, India and South Africa in Switzerland. Empirical evidence and policy responses*. Tejada, G. and Bolay, J-C. (eds.) XV-XVII. Bern, Peter Lang.
30. Mosneaga, A. (forthcoming). Student migration at the global trijuncture of higher education, competition for talent and migration management. In: *Indian skilled migration and development: To Europe and back*. Tejada, U. Bhattacharya, B. Khadria, Ch. Kuptsch, (Eds.) (forthcoming 2014). New Delhi, Springer.
31. OECD. (2012). *Resserrer les liens avec les diasporas. Panorama des compétences des migrants*. Paris: OECD.
32. Orozco, M. (2008). *Looking forward and including migration in development: Remittance leveraging opportunities for Moldova*. Chisinau, IOM.
33. Özden, C., Parsons, Ch., Schiff, M. And Walmsley, T.L. (2011). Where on earth is everybody? The evolution of global bilateral migration 1960-2000. *The World Bank Economic Review* 25(1): 12-56.
34. Portes, A. (1999). The study of transnationalism: Pitfalls and promise of an emergent research field. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 2, no. 22.

35. Portes, A. (2001). The debates and significance of immigrant transnationalism. *Global Networks* 1, no. 3: 181–94.
36. Saxenian, A.L. (2006). *The new Argonauts. Regional advantage in a global economy.* Cambridge, Harvard University Press.
37. Tejada, G. (2012). Mobility, knowledge and cooperation: Scientific diasporas as agents of development. *Migration and Development* 10, no. 18: 59-92.
38. Tejada, G. and Bolay, J-C. (eds.) (2010). *Scientific Diasporas as development partners: Skilled migrants from Colombia, India and South Africa in Switzerland. Empirical evidence and policy responses.* Bern, Peter Lang.
39. Tejada, G., Bhattacharya, U., Khadria, B., Kuptsch, Ch. (eds.) (forthcoming). *Indian skilled migration and development: To Europe and back.* New Delhi: Springer (forthcoming 2014).
40. Tejada, G., Herçog, M., Kuptsch, Ch. and Bolay, J-C. (2014). The link with a home country: A comparative analysis of host country environments for diaspora engagement. In: *Global diasporas and development: Socio-economic, cultural, and policy perspectives*, eds. S. Sahoo and B.K. Pattanaik. New Delhi, Springer.
41. Tejada, G., Varzari, V. and Porcescu, S. (2013). Scientific diasporas, transnationalism and home-country development: Evidence from a study of skilled Moldovans abroad. *Journal of South East European and Black Sea Studies* 13, no. 2: 157-173.
42. Tremblay, Karine (2005) “Academic mobility and immigration”, in: *Journal of Studies in International Education*; Vol. 9. No. 3: 196-228.
43. UNDP. (2011). *National human development report 2010/2011. Republic of Moldova: From social exclusion towards inclusive human development.* Chisinau, UNDP.
44. UNDP. (2013). *Human development report 2013. The rise of the South: human progress in a diverse world.* New York, UNDP.
45. Vertovec, S. (2004). Migrant transnationalism and modes of transformation. *International Migration Review* 38, no. 3: 970–1001.
46. Wickramasekara, P. (2003). *Policy responses to skilled migration: Retention, return and circulation. Perspectives on Labour Migration.* Geneva, International Labour Office.
47. World Bank. (2011). *Migration and remittances factbook 2011.* Washington D.C., World Bank.

## Chapter 8:

# The scientific community of the Republic of Moldova: an empirical analysis of cooperation prospects with the Moldovan scientific diaspora

*Dr. Vitalie VARZAR<sup>1</sup>*

*Department for Foreign Affairs, Academy of Sciences of Moldova,  
Chisinau, Republic of Moldova*

## Abstract

The past few decades have seen an intensification of international migration flows, particularly those involving highly skilled labour. The exodus of scientific elites from developing countries as they search for better personal and professional opportunities abroad has been a major global concern. This was traditionally seen as a net loss for the countries of origin and as a gain only for the richer industrialized countries of destination. However, debates on the subject in more recent times have highlighted that migration can contribute to the socioeconomic development of the home countries if it is managed properly. This chapter discusses how transnational links and the mechanisms for interaction established between highly skilled migrants and their country of origin can effectively leverage the transfer of expertise, knowledge and managerial skills for the benefit of home country development. We show how the transnational activities of the scientific diaspora can help to advance the development of the specific sectors that require external expertise if institutional support is available. The chapter provides first-hand information from the scientific community of Moldova, collected through an on-line survey as part of the recently completed study conducted by the Academy of Sciences of Moldova and the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne<sup>2</sup>. We analyse the determinants of transnational cooperation activities between Moldovan scientists and their foreign-based colleagues by identifying the obstacles that hinder successful cooperation activities based on knowledge transfer. We also provide some concrete policy recommendations and some suggestions for further research.

**Keywords:** Moldovan scientific community, Moldovan scientific diaspora, transnational cooperation, knowledge transfer, development.

## Introduction

Local stakeholders are perhaps the most important actors in the process involving the transfer of skills and knowledge by the highly-educated diaspora to their country of

---

<sup>1</sup>vitalievar@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup>The project entitled “Connecting the scientific diaspora of the Republic of Moldova to the scientific and socioeconomic development of the home country” was implemented between January 2010 and December 2012 with funding from the SCOPES Programme of the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNF) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

origin. In this regard, transnationalism is a key concept for the present study, and we use this concept to emphasise the growing importance of skills, knowledge and competences circulation between the members of the scientific diaspora and their counterparts in the home country. Encouraged by new communication technologies and by the belief that transnational cooperation can contribute to socioeconomic development, highly skilled migrants develop strong transnational ties with institutions in the home country. According to Thomas Faist (2010), while early works on transnationalism largely neglected the role of national actors in this regard, later studies have acknowledged their crucial role in regulating not only international migration, but flows within transnational social formations as well (Faist 2010: 22).

Following the same path, examples from some countries suggest that in order to have a positive impact on the socioeconomic development of the country of origin, the transferred expertise and know-how from skilled people abroad should, first of all, respond to the local needs. Transnational activities that involve diaspora members and their colleagues from the home country should be in line with the strategic priorities of the country and adopt a clear demand-driven approach (IOM, MPI 2012: 177). From this perspective, one of the key roles of the country of origin is to determine the key sectors of development and the needs and specific shortages to be addressed in cooperation with the diaspora with regard to the transfer of knowledge and skills.

Furthermore, the country of origin should provide enabling conditions for interaction and these should include well-established networks for knowledge transfer, adequate facilities and state-of-the-art equipment for their implementation, as well as advanced skills among homeland personnel in order to implement and disseminate the new knowledge, methodology and know-how. Moreover, to ensure the sustainability of the development activities implemented through transnational activities, it is essential for the country of origin to allocate financial resources so as to mobilize the highly skilled diaspora and local communities for joint activities. In this case, the role of the national authorities is that of an intermediary agent between the diaspora and the home country stakeholders, who together might find it appropriate to approach different aspects of cooperation.

As John Salt suggests, migration can be conceptualized as a business with different actors, with each having some influence on the process (Salt 2004: 22). From this perspective, the most relevant actors involved in this “transnational business” are the migrants themselves, their families, the receiving and sending governments, employment institutions, international organizations, non-government organizations and intermediaries such as consultancy agencies, lawyers etc. This is also the case for the high skilled diaspora. All the aforementioned national stakeholders possess important assets that can allow them to approach migration from a development perspective. In order to identify their potential in mainstreaming migration into development, it is important to map all the interested national actors and identify their expectations and needs, as well as the resources they need to get the highly skilled and scientific diaspora involved in the development processes.

In this case, matching the skills of the diaspora with the needs of local actors represents a challenge that should be assumed by the national authorities who can coordinate and support transnational activities involving members from the highly skilled diaspora. The steps highlighted above – mapping and matching needs, offering enabling conditions for knowledge transfer – should be primarily motivated by the fact that the transnational activities may show expertise and knowledge gaps that might hinder the development of the strategic sectors of research, innovation, education, health in the home country.

Based on these reflections, the central aim of this chapter is to determine the level to which the members of scientific community and institutions from the Republic of Moldova are involved with their colleagues from the highly skilled diaspora in transnational activities for development. This chapter also focuses on the main drivers and determinants that would motivate and enable scientists from Moldova to launch or expand their cooperation with their colleagues from abroad. The chapter analyses first-hand data of members of the scientific community in the Republic of Moldova which were collected between 2011 and 2012. We examine their current employment situation, their mobility experiences and plans as well as existing cooperation links with their counterparts from the Moldovan scientific diaspora, and their perceptions of the barriers and supporting mechanisms for launching sustainable S&T cooperation for development. The analysis presented here will enable us to provide some specific policy recommendations and suggestions for further research.

### **The Moldovan socio-economic context and skilled migration**

The economic transition of Moldova after independence caused a drastic and lasting decline in the number of jobs available in the domestic labour market, and as a result at least 60,000 Moldovans had left the country by 2011 (NBS 2012). According to the National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova (NBS), the population of Moldova was approximately 3.6 million in 2011. Out of this total population, 66 per cent were identified as being potentially active economically, 35 per cent were employed in the labour market and 3.5 per cent were registered as officially unemployed persons looking for a job in Moldova. According to unofficial data, 61.5 per cent of those with the potential to become economically active, and who were shown by the NBS to be neither in the employed category nor in the unemployed group, were dispersed among the economically active emigrated human capital, those working without a legal contract in Moldova and unemployed people residing in Moldova who have not registered their unemployment officially at the Employment Agency of the Republic of Moldova. 31 per cent of those employed had a higher education diploma. Young people between the ages of 15 and 35 with a higher education diploma accounted for 13 per cent of the total employed population (NBS 2012). Due to a lack of experience and a mismatch between acquired qualifications and job vacancies, young people in the Republic of Moldova have few prospects of finding employment upon graduation. This suggests that there is an insufficient connection between the labour market and education in Moldova. Consequently, new graduates experience major difficulties in integrating into the national labour

market, and after graduating, many prefer to search for opportunities abroad that can enable them to either continue their studies abroad or get involved in jobs that often do not match their qualifications and expectations. In this sense, it is vital to change the traditional academic approach and adopt a more demand-driven one. Furthermore, institutions from Moldova should provide more information on career opportunities and offer employment guidance to students so that they may be informed of the real employability possibilities offered by the different fields of education. With regard to employability in the S&T sector, we should emphasise the fact that according to the NBS, 1.8 per cent of the active population with a higher education diploma was employed in the research and innovation field in 2011. While expectations regarding improvements to the budgetary allocation for S&T activities were high, one could notice a constant improvement in this field during the period between 2004 and 2007. However, budgetary allocations for the research-innovation field have been in continuous decline since 2008, reaching 0.41 per cent of GDP in 2011 (€21 million). Moreover, only 5 per cent of the amount allocated to research and innovation sector was dedicated to the training and career development of scientific personnel. In the same context, compared to 2010, the average monthly salary of a researcher increased by an average of 9 euros in 2011 (ASM 2011: 7-13), which is a tiny amount compared to the continuous growth in prices for most services and basic products in Moldova during the reported period. According to statistics, the average salary of a young researcher is 93 Euros while the subsistence minimum in 2011 was 98 Euros (NBS 2011). This situation certainly does not make the science and innovation sector in Moldova an attractive option, either for potential researchers who have graduated recently or for advanced researchers, who in this situation, have the strong perception that their internationally recognized research results are not valued in Moldova.

As stated in a recent International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Migration Policy Institute (MPI) study, a country's competitiveness in the global economy, its productivity and growth depend on a workforce whose skills and knowledge are being constantly upgraded. But many countries see their highly skilled workers emigrate to modern innovation hubs, where practitioners, engineers, scientists and inventors come together and work both collaboratively and competitively (IOM, MPI 2012: 159). Given this current structural situation, the migration of the most talented and ambitious researchers from Moldova cannot be stopped in the short term; however, one viable alternative is to connect, or virtually or physically reconnect, emigrated scientists to development activities in Moldova.

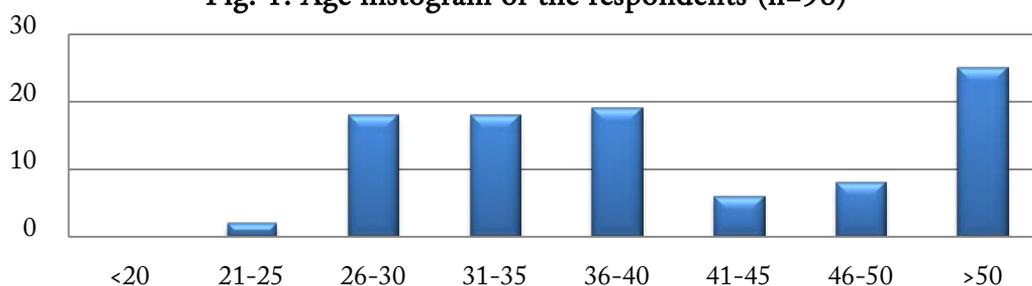
### **Research methods and description of the sample**

First-hand information on members of the scientific community working in Moldova was gathered between January 2011 and February 2012, using a questionnaire that was developed as an on-line survey. The questionnaire comprised closed multiple-choice questions as well as few open questions which focused on key aspects, such as the overview profile of respondents, their employment situation in Moldova, their mobility experience and emigration plans, links and cooperation with colleagues from the diaspora, cooperation opportunities and challenges, and their participation in

pro-diaspora programmes. A total of 101 members from the scientific community of the Republic of Moldova answered the survey. The present study uses the term “Moldovan scientific community” to refer to all persons who are professionally involved in research, innovation and development activities, as well as advanced graduate and postgraduate students (Masters, and PhD students) in any disciplines or sectors in the Republic of Moldova. The survey was disseminated through different formal and informal channels such as the Academy of Sciences of Moldova (ASM) web site, the ASM electronic newsletter, directors and scientific secretaries at research and development institutions, the network of contact points for international scientific relations for research institutes in Moldova (academia, universities and NGOs), the National Contact Points of the FP7 Program of the EU in Moldova and during different scientific and coordination activities in Moldova etc. In this sense, we identified and invited advanced and young scientists involved in S&T activities in Moldova from diverse research and education institutions based in Chisinau, Balti, Cahul and Comrat to answer our electronic survey.

The majority of the respondents to the survey are aged under 50 years (Fig. 1), most of them are female (55 per cent), married (71.3 per cent) and have children (57.4 per cent).

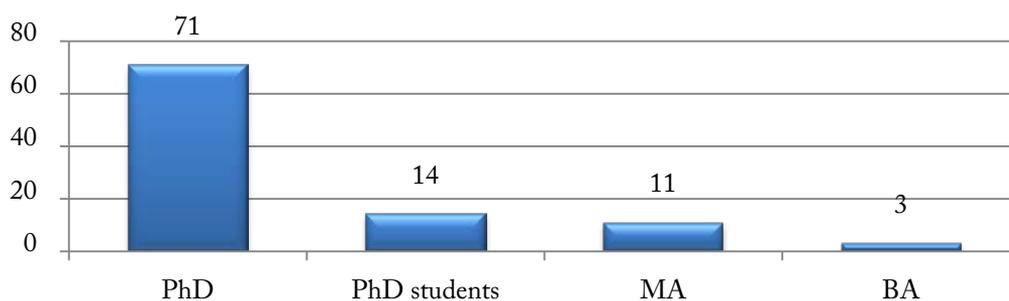
**Fig. 1: Age histogram of the respondents (n=98)**



*Source: Field work in Moldova, 2011-2012.*

A majority of the respondents have a PhD degree (Fig. 2) and are qualified researchers involved in S&T activities who are working within their field of specialization (98 per cent) in the Republic of Moldova.

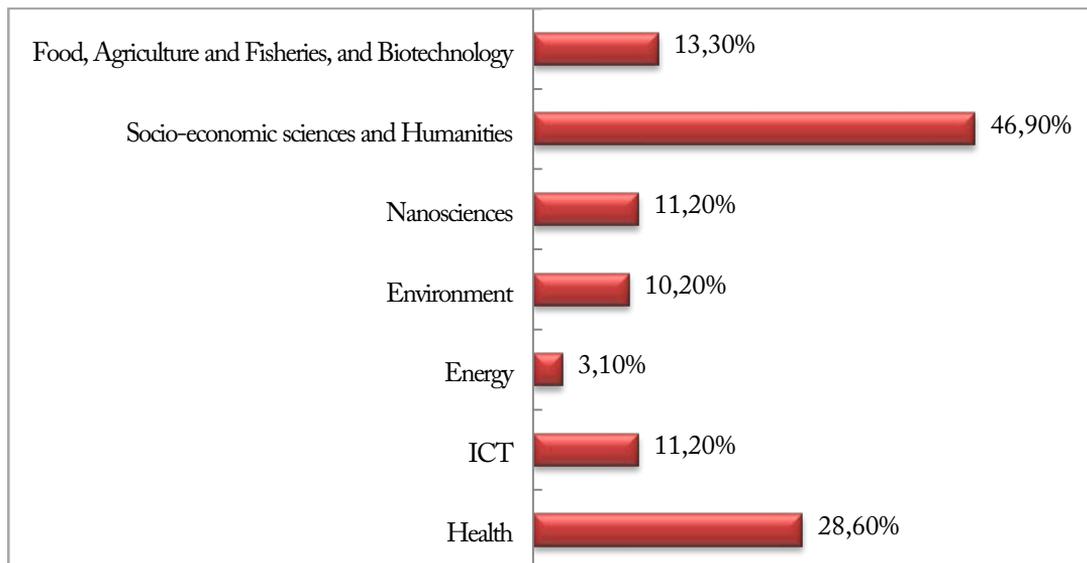
**Fig. 2: Scientific degree of the respondents (n=100)**



*Source: Field work in Moldova, 2011-2012.*

We can observe that a majority are working in the areas of the socioeconomic sciences and humanities (47%) (Fig. 3), while health, food, agriculture, fisheries and biotechnology, ICT, nanotechnology, environment and energy are less represented.

**Fig. 3: Research fields of Moldovan scientists (n=98)**



*Source: Field work in Moldova, 2011-2012.*

The over-representation of the socioeconomic and humanities fields might be explained by the fact that from a scientific point of view this particular group is more familiar with, and far more interested in, international migration and development issues than researchers from the exact and applied sciences, and therefore they were more open to responding to this kind of sociological survey. At the same time, looking at the secondary sources, we can observe that in 2011 the share of Moldovan socio-humanitarian scientists consisted of 21 per cent of the total of 5000 researchers involved in science, innovation and development activities at the accredited Moldovan institutions which perform R&D activities (ASM 2012: 281-282). On the other hand, when we analyse the international aspect of Moldovan research activities, we notice that scientists from the applied and exact fields have a larger participation in international projects, and are more active in launching project-based collaborations with their colleagues from scientific diaspora (ASM 2012: 286-289). In this context and even though we received more answers from social science researchers, official ASM data show that they have less international exposure and collaborate less with the diaspora, and thus we assume that their views are less affected by the tendency to have a prior positive or negative attitude with regard to potential collaboration with members of the scientific diaspora.

### **Employment situation, mobility experience and emigration plans**

We can observe from the responses to our survey that despite the fact that a majority of Moldovan researchers are satisfied with the scientific activity they perform in

Moldova (49 per cent are fairly satisfied, 7 per cent are very satisfied), for most of them the monthly income that researchers receive is a major source of dissatisfaction. Accordingly, we can identify a consistent mainstream that shows the different range of dissatisfaction with the monthly wage (41.6 per cent are dissatisfied, and 17.8 are very dissatisfied) from science and technology activities in Moldova, with only 10.9 per cent fairly satisfied and 2 per cent very satisfied.

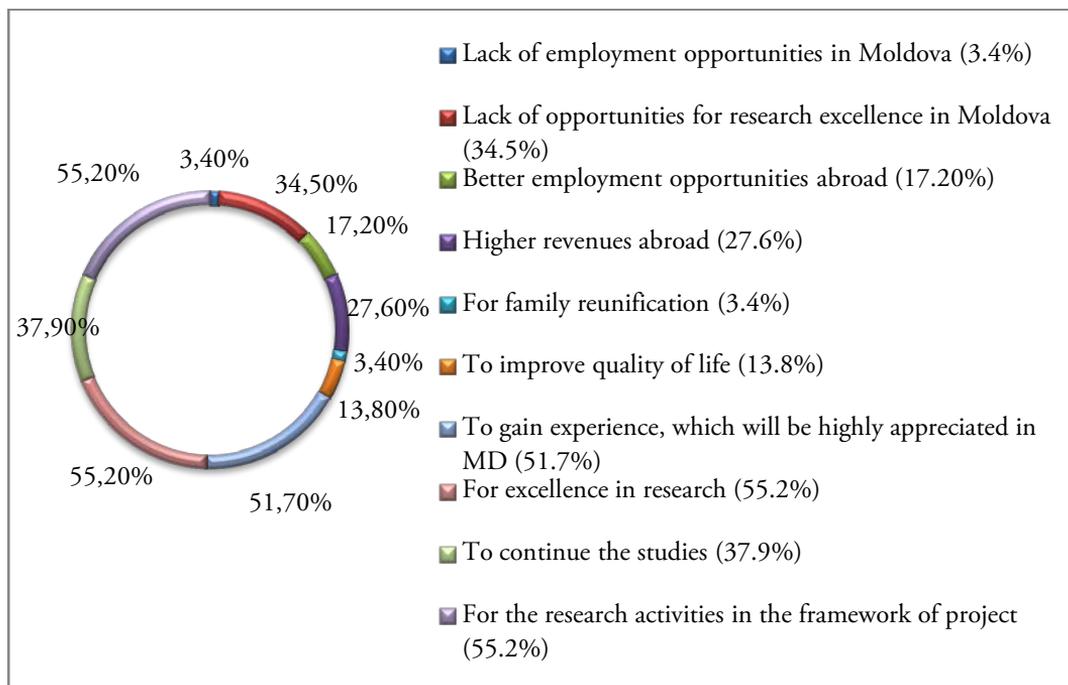
Young researchers are the unhappiest in this regard; this seems obvious if we take into account that their monthly salary barely covers their living expenses in Moldova. This circumstance causes many of them to quit the science sector and to head to other areas that offer more financial opportunities and a chance to cover their living expenses. Moreover, this portion of the population is the most exposed to information about career opportunities abroad insofar as they are flexible and speak foreign languages. For many among the younger population, migration is a way of overcoming economic, social and cultural shortcomings in the home country. However, even though highly qualified graduates leave the country in search of better career opportunities abroad, in many cases their diplomas are not recognized and they are forced by the circumstances to perform unqualified jobs (IOM 2012: 80). Thus, many of the people who have migrated are not employed on the strength of their main specialisation. Medical doctors and teachers have to work as builders and domestic workers. This fact is reconfirmed by European Training Foundation (ETF) survey data showing that 35 per cent of returning migrants with a university education have worked in construction, while 28 per cent have worked as domestic staff (ETF 2007: 7). According to the same study, every year, Moldovan universities produce about 25,000 - 30,000 graduates with diplomas in law and economics who have no employment opportunities in the country. This is why they seriously consider emigrating immediately after graduation. According to national statistics, 32 per cent of the students who were enrolled at Moldovan universities in fields such as economics, business and management indicated that they are planning to emigrate from Moldova "as soon as possible" (Statistica 2011).

At the same time, we should underline the fact that, according to our study, one out of every three respondents has had international exposure because of their experience working in a foreign research institution. They had the opportunity to become involved in academic mobility and left Moldova for a period of time to undertake R&D activities. However, these highly skilled people returned to Moldova with newly-acquired knowledge, methodologies, institutional and research partnerships, internationally-recognized scientific results, and good opportunities to continue their scientific projects from Moldova. This fact influenced the transnational character of their scientific activity as the contacts and networks they had established linked them to the international scientific world and opened up cooperation opportunities which they and their colleagues from Moldova can benefit from. Romania, Russia, Germany, USA and Italy are among the top list of host countries where Moldovan scientists have performed S&T activities (Fig. 4). If we take into consideration that most of them went abroad within the framework of a concrete research project and that they left Moldova with the very specific purpose of undertaking planned scientific activities, we can see that their intention was to return in order to

implement their newly acquired techniques, methodologies and developed competences at their Moldovan R&D institutions.

We can observe that the decisions of Moldovan scientists to temporarily leave Moldova are based on several pull and push factors. The most important is undoubtedly the wish to access professional and training opportunities abroad that are better than those offered in the home country as this will impact their quality of life and that of their families. The majority of the respondents went abroad to undertake research activities within the framework of diverse projects, whereas earlier carrier researchers went to complete their higher education in prestigious universities and also to better their employment prospects. Further push and pull factors include good scientific and research prospects and higher incomes abroad and the lack of infrastructure and equipment in Moldova (Fig. 4). We can see here that the objective of this emigration is not to flee Moldova in order to build a new life elsewhere, but rather to temporarily compensate for the deficiencies of a defective social and economic system, as a strategy to counter the economic depression and the lack of decent living standards and for professional and scientific opportunities. Besides, the majority indicated that this was a good opportunity to gain valuable experience, which would be highly appreciated in Moldova.

**Fig. 4: The reasons behind the temporary emigration of Moldovan scientists (n=29)**



*Source: Field work in Moldova, 2011-2012.*

The majority of those who were exposed to international mobility stayed abroad for more than 4 years. The next largest group stayed in the host country for between 1

and 3 years. The main reasons for returning to the home country include family reunification, the end of their legal contract abroad, an interest in continuing their training and/or research experience in Moldova, as well as being pulled by the opportunity to work and live in their home country close to their colleagues and relatives. Furthermore, Moldovan scientists and skilled professionals believe that this temporary move offered them valuable experience which would be highly appreciated in the home country, and most of them are interested in using the acquired knowledge for the benefit of the Republic of Moldova.

The majority of the respondents, who have experience working abroad, maintain contacts with Moldovan researchers working in their field of specialization at foreign research institutions. Once again, this demonstrates the predisposition of mobile researchers to contact, communicate and initiate valuable international partnerships with their colleagues from around the world. When asked about their perceptions of the main pull and push factors that influence the decision of their colleagues to leave Moldova, Moldovan scientists said that the main migration determinants were the availability of higher earnings, better professional opportunities, excellent research infrastructure abroad and a lack of professional opportunities in Moldova. We can see that these are mostly the same push and pull factors that encouraged our respondents to engage in scientific international mobility activities. This reconfirms the secondary source statements, according to which economic and professional reasons back the decisions of (highly skilled) Moldovans to leave the country. Being pushed by poor economic conditions in the home country and by the poor local employment situation, highly skilled Moldovans are opting for external opportunities and hope to integrate easily, both professionally and socially, and to satisfy their desire for a decent and prosperous life for themselves and their families.

Regarding future mobility plans, our data show that 30 per cent of the Moldovan researchers with international experience surveyed would consider the possibility of emigrating again at some point and some of them even have concrete plans to do so. The main reasons for their emigration plans are the same as those mentioned above: the impetus to have access to better professional or training opportunities abroad and higher incomes that will enable them to improve their quality of life. The USA, Germany, Canada, Belgium, France and Romania are among the most desired destinations for those intending to migrate, who use various available opportunities such as scholarships, mobility grants, joint research projects, and short term institutional assignments in foreign research and development institutions.

The majority of those Moldovans who have specific plans to emigrate intend to do so in the next 3 years. Less than half of the Moldovan scientists interviewed plan to remain in the country of destination for more than 3 years. These observations suggest the need for adequate policies, instruments and structural changes in Moldovan R&D to create an enabling environment to attract, retain, and connect Moldovan scientists to the development processes of their country of origin.

Respondents who are not considering moving abroad support their decision with arguments based on their wish to live together with their families and close to their friends, as well as the fact that they are driven by a firm desire to contribute to the

development of the home country. In addition, some of them believe that if one has a good training and a solid experience and knows exactly what has to be done, there are also good chances of finding a reason to live in Moldova. Others indicated that they have concrete projects and activities which they are implementing, as well as specific future plans in Moldova. Some respondents are still hoping that the socioeconomic situation will change for the better in the near future although they are strongly dissatisfied with the current situation in Moldova. For some, poor health and old age represent serious obstacles for emigration. We can see that, in general terms, personal motives (e.g. family, friends, health etc.), the desire to implement development activities in the home country together with the hope that living conditions and working prospects might change in the near future are the main drivers and motives for their decision to stay in Moldova.

From this perspective, and despite the fact that skilled Moldovans have negative perceptions of the socioeconomic situation and job opportunities in Moldova, some of them have decided to stay in their country of origin. However, this trend is less obvious among younger scientists, as they have more prospects for emigration (more individual grants, scholarships) and they are more mobile by nature (they are more open to new environments, they integrate more easily in new societies, the majority of them do not have children and family obligations yet, they have networks of emigrated colleagues who can provide them with initial support during their accommodation periods in the host country). In this regard, if the Moldovan authorities plan to retain these valuable brains, they should increase R&D investment and provide proper conditions to implement projects and activities that might contribute to Moldova's socioeconomic progress and help maintain the professional interest and satisfaction of the local scientific community.

### **Links and cooperation with the scientific diaspora**

We are interested in the extent to which the cooperation links between the members of the scientific community and those of the diaspora of the Republic of Moldova are developed, and the ways that these connections could be fostered for the benefit of both sides. We can observe that some formal and informal cooperation relations do exist between Moldovan scientists residing abroad and those in Moldova. What we have noticed is that despite this, cooperation and interaction are rather sporadic, and on some particular occasions they occur without any institutional support or any clear mechanisms that could assure the future sustainability of relations of this kind.

We can see that almost all the Moldovan scientists from our study who are based in the home country fully recognize that the scientific diaspora should have an important role in the development process of the Republic of Moldova. They perceive that the diaspora can share its expertise and knowledge with them through the implementation of joint international research projects, participation in joint scientific events in Moldova, participation in the evaluation of research national projects, through a dedicated web portal for on-line interaction, taking part in short-term working visits to R&D institutions in Moldova, participating in joint scientific workshops and annual thematic seminars. According to our respondents, the specific

forms of the expected impact of these activities include knowledge sharing, public policy advice, technology transfer, investments, entrepreneurial activities and philanthropy.

Despite the positive assumptions of the impact of the transnational activities undertaken by the Moldovan diaspora, we can also see that more than half of the Moldova-based scientists who answered our survey do not keep contacts, and consequently, they do not participate in any joint activities with Moldovan scientists and skilled professionals abroad. The reasons for this can be that they do not know any highly skilled Moldovans residing abroad, or perhaps they have lost contact with those they do know, or else they do not have enough resources or time to invest in establishing and keeping such links. In this context, we would like to emphasise that, generally speaking, scientists or highly qualified persons from Moldova are not interested in keeping sustainable contacts with Moldovan scientists residing abroad other than those who are active in the same scientific or professional field as themselves, or with advanced scientists who have concrete collaboration ideas or those who have, or are familiar with, the funding available to back a potential collaboration. Otherwise, the established contacts would be a simple conventionalism for them without any impact on their scientific activities.

We should also underline the fact that less than half of the researchers who maintain some kind of cooperation with their expatriated colleagues, “do this often”, with only few of them developing a “permanent contact”. For these scientists the most common means of contacts are: e-mails, discussions during scientific events in Moldova, instant messaging services, phone calls, and meetings during holidays spent in Moldova or abroad. We can observe that informal means of contact are the most predominant instruments of interaction. This state of things is a common one as indicated in a recent IOM and MPI study, which highlighted the fact that in recent years, governments and international organizations have turned away from “return of talent” programmes towards policies that promote the circulation of highly skilled people between their countries of origin and those of destination, and by engaging in informal networks or organized programmes (IOM, MPI 2012: 13). The study also underlines that there should be a balance of incentives in order to ensure local talent gains from exposure to diaspora networks, rather than feel displaced by them.

Incidentally, we noticed that the established contacts between the Moldovan highly skilled provided some good opportunities to develop specific initiatives that would link the scientific diaspora with the development of Moldova. Among other things, this includes the launching of joint research projects, writing joint scientific publications in top-level scientific journals, participating in scientific events in Moldova and abroad and promoting their scientific achievements within Moldova.

In this regard, some respondents indicated that they participated in cooperation with their colleagues from the diaspora in the ASM – IOM programme, which financed working visits by Moldovan expatriated scientists to Moldova R&D institutions. This is an institutional initiative launched in 2010, which seeks to use migration as a factor for development by helping experienced and young researchers from the diaspora to undertake short term assignments at Moldovan R&D institutions.

Within the framework of this initiative, Moldovan R&D institutions are offered an opportunity to host a Moldovan scientist who resides abroad for a period of up to 11 working days and with concrete cooperation ideas in order to initiate or undertake some sustainable R&D activities that have an impact on the socioeconomic development of the Republic of Moldova (IOM 2012).

While initiatives of this kind have been supported by international agencies and national governments across the globe since the 1960s (IOM, MPI 2012: 159-186), this was a pilot initiative for the Republic of Moldova and had a consistent impact on the development of the national R&D sector. It encouraged Moldovan scientists residing abroad to share their work experience with their home-country colleagues and to approach some important issues in the research and development field that require external expertise. As a result, home-country institutions lowered the costs of acquiring new methodologies and research techniques; they gained access to top-level scientists and world institutions with extensive background and desirable linguistic and cultural competences; it also involved diaspora scientists in long-term transnational activities with Moldova.

Those Moldovan researchers who have not yet developed cooperation initiatives with their counterparts from the diaspora pointed to some of the reasons for this. The most frequent reasons cited are those related to a lack of opportunities to cooperate, a lack of motivation for such activities, a lack of contact details for highly qualified persons in their field of interest or insufficient information about interventions that would connect the transnational activities of the diaspora to the development of the country. Moreover, and despite the fact that researchers from Moldova strongly believe that the scientific and highly skilled diaspora should have a role in development in Moldova, only one of every four respondents are aware of the initiatives that have been promoted so far by their foreign-based colleagues for the benefit of the Republic of Moldova. This reveals that even though there is a desire to engage in transnational activities, and even though some projects are going on in this regard, information about the opportunities and current initiatives is not circulated in a proper manner among all the members of the scientific community. This is why institutions from Moldova as well as diaspora members and their colleagues from Moldova should make use of all available instruments to advertise on-going initiatives and successful projects in order to provide some good examples that can be followed by other researchers and highly skilled people, and also to instil confidence in the notion that joint efforts and activities related to science, innovation and education can bring good results to home country development.

It is interesting to note that a few respondents argued that the cooperation between the members of the scientific diaspora and the institutions from Moldova would not have an impact on development. They pointed out that their colleagues from abroad are focused on solving problems in the country they reside in and they are not interested, or they do not have enough time to connect to the development of Moldova. Others believe that no funds are available to back the initiatives promoted by both sides, while some feel that the government of Moldova does not support this kind of initiative as it is concerned with its own business. In this regard, recognizing the role that the highly skilled diaspora plays in development and maintaining the

link of cooperation through informal channels is not sufficient for launching sustainable projects for development. Moreover, we can assume that if the cooperation is of a temporary nature and is mainly undertaken through informal channels and on an *ad-hoc* basis, there is a high risk that the younger, talented scientists involved in this sporadic cooperation will use such opportunities to migrate abroad without any perspective of return to their home institutions. On the contrary, if the cooperation is supported at an institutional level and has clear prospects of contributing to the development of the local community, younger scientists will be motivated to engage in circular migration schemes and continue working in their home institutions, thereby multiplying and disseminating new knowledge, methodologies, technologies and innovations for the benefit of their home country.

The majority of the respondents believe that different methods should be used to encourage the members of the scientific diaspora to initiate transnational activities for the benefit of their countries of origin. Among other things, these include recognition of their scientific results, equipping laboratories in Moldova with top-level research infrastructure, providing higher salaries for their work, launching open calls for project proposals and other financial mechanisms to support their projects. Others consider that a natural feeling of duty towards the motherland, nostalgia, a desire to cooperate with colleagues from their former Moldovan home institutions, the wish to make a contribution to a country where they still have friends, relatives and parents, their own scientific and professional interests, the satisfaction from being valuable for their country of origin are the main drivers that get the diaspora members to launch R&D collaborations. However, some of our respondents stressed the fact that all these good intentions would be inconsistent unless proper socioeconomic and political conditions are ensured by the competent institutions in the Republic of Moldova. Furthermore, as an IOM study suggests, there are several barriers that limit the contributions of skilled migrants, and the transfer of knowledge impact on the home country development may be limited because of a lack of up-to-date tools to allow them to do their job properly (IOM 2010).

### **Opportunities and challenges: perceptions of obstacles and enabling conditions**

Our observations reveal that the majority of respondents from the scientific community in Moldova are interested in cooperating with the scientific diaspora in different fields and they have positive expectations of the potential results of such collaboration. However, they feel that there is still more room for improvement in this regard and they expect scientists and skilled professionals abroad to be more open to cooperation, more active with regard to promoting young Moldovan researchers in international scientific activities, more insistent in terms of maintaining and expanding connections with colleagues from Moldova, more dynamic in helping Moldovan research groups to engage in international research projects and more persistent in assisting the Moldovan scientific community to promote the development of the R&D sector in Moldova. These opinions unveil the high expectations that the scientists from Moldova have of their diaspora colleagues. Moreover, we notice that some of the scientists from Moldova feel that their counterparts abroad could have done more for the development of their country of

origin. However, a majority of the respondents consider that the failure of diaspora to undertake transnational activities to a greater extent is determined by existing obstacles such as a lack of personal interest, reduced scientific development in Moldova, the focus on short-term and non-productive projects as well as economic and political instability in Moldova, geographical distances, a lack of financial support, personal frustration, bad relations with their former Moldovan managers, different principles for science management and coordination, a lack of interest and motivation on the part of the Moldovan scientific community to develop these relations, bureaucracy, etc.

A few respondents indicated that, in general terms, they do not feel that there are barriers to collaboration. In this respect, one Moldovan researcher indicated that if one is confident enough to contribute to the development of the home country with one's own expertise, there is not a barrier that can stop this.

Despite this, there are respondents who feel that some instruments should be put in place to stimulate the establishment of mutual collaboration. They believe that in order to get the scientific diaspora involved more actively in the development of the home country, the members of scientific diaspora should be encouraged to prepare and implement a national project, and they should be involved in the drafting of public policies in the different strategic fields. At the same time, there are those who believe that offering honorific titles to the scientific diaspora would encourage them to allocate more of their time to the transfer of skills and knowledge. Other instruments that could be used to initiate such transnational activities include the organization of round tables, joint conferences and the identification of strategic fields for cooperation. Some Moldovan researchers have indicated that the highly skilled and scientific diaspora need to be organized, mobilized and visible in Moldova to have a greater impact on home country development, and this is their own responsibility. Furthermore, in order to create enabling conditions for the establishment of a lasting and fruitful collaboration with the scientific diaspora, the respondents mentioned that, among other things, the Moldovan authorities and other relevant institutions in Moldova should attract specialists who have been trained abroad and provide them with jobs in Moldova, finance their repatriation and virtual implication, elaborate sustainable policies to attract the scientific diaspora to the research and innovation field in Moldova, support the initiatives focused on the diaspora that have already been launched, and coordinate constructive initiatives and serve as leaders to these. Our research reveals that the Moldovan scientific community does have concrete ideas for collaboration with their colleagues from the diaspora.

### **Conclusions and policy recommendations**

For small countries with limited resources, the migration of their human capital should be perceived as a phenomenon that offers opportunities as well as challenges, for the sending country, the host country, and for migrants themselves. In our study we noticed that scientists residing in Moldova recognize the potential role that their colleagues from the diaspora could play in the scientific, economic and political

development of the Republic of Moldova. However, we also observed that the majority of scientists who answered our online survey do not maintain permanent professional relations with their diaspora colleagues. As they reported, this is conditioned mainly by the fact that they do not have contact with the colleagues from the diaspora or they have lost contact with them and there is no institutional support to facilitate this endeavour.

Our findings confirm that if the home country wants to involve its scientific diaspora in different development activities and projects – whether virtual or physical – it should provide a series of enabling instruments that can motivate, stimulate and support diaspora ideas, initiatives and projects.

The empirical evidence from the present study demonstrates that the supporting mechanisms provided by Moldovan institutions are not properly disseminated to the scientific community, and therefore, the existing opportunities are not used by all of those who could get involved in joint activities for the development of the Republic of Moldova.

Besides these circumstances, our study shows that there are some Moldovan scientists who maintain contact with their diaspora colleagues on a permanent basis, and who undertake joint research and development activities. These are scientists with experience of international academic mobility who developed a vision that existing instruments and opportunities could foster scientific excellence. They participate together in international scientific events, take part in joint research and development projects, submit research papers in renowned journals, work together to train and supervise young Moldovan researchers and implement new research methodologies in their home country. However, even these scientists who are actively involved in cooperation activities say that their joint work would be much more productive if there were coherent institutional support for their work.

Besides establishing informal channels of interaction to stimulate joint development activities and guarantee the impact from knowledge transfer, it is necessary to improve the structural situation in Moldova. This requires a three-sided policy strategy that can encourage the retention, return and recovery of skilled human capital. The Government should systematically support and invest in the fields of science and education for their sustainable advancement. Good employment opportunities in the S&T and high technology areas should be ensured, especially for the younger generation of scientists, and there should also be better coherence between higher education programmes and labour market needs.

Our research reveals that even though there are high expectations of the contribution the diaspora can make to home country development, members of the Moldovan scientific community feel that the scientific and highly skilled diaspora is not visible enough, not mobilized enough and the specificities of their knowledge and skills are unknown to the local community. Improving access to information on the competences of the Moldovan diaspora, their skills and know-how, and matching these with the local needs of Moldova community is a primary goal of the preparatory phase to get the highly skilled involved in home country development.

The highly skilled diaspora should be perceived by national stakeholders as partners for development who can fill the gaps in skills and knowledge by getting involved physically or virtually (from a distance, using the new information and communication technologies) in the development activities in the home country. For this purpose, a special multi-annual Moldovan Knowledge & Innovation Fund, financed by public money and co-financed by interested aid organizations, should be established in the future to financially support the joint activities, projects, assignments and other knowledge transfer initiatives undertaken by the members of scientific and highly skilled Moldovan diaspora.

If we take the wage differences between the guest and home country, the undeveloped research infrastructure in Moldova, and the instable economic and political environment into consideration, permanent return may seem to be an over-optimistic and non-realistic option to connect the highly skilled Moldovan diaspora to the development processes of Moldova. Therefore, the establishment of a diaspora network platform, temporary return through short-term assignments on specific missions and involvement from a distance in joint targeted activities might be seen as good alternatives for harnessing the knowledge and skills of the diaspora.

The contribution of the highly skilled and scientific diaspora to the development of the home country is conditioned by existing opportunities for the transfer and absorption of skills and knowledge. This is why the institutions in Moldova should invest their efforts in discovering what is needed and finding out what expertise is missing. After doing this, they can provide the diaspora with easily accessible information about the potential sectors in which it can get involved, and thereby help it to cover these shortages from a distance. The efforts to sustain knowledge transfer schemes should be supported equally by all the stakeholders involved in the migration and development process. The institutions from Moldova and Moldovan society do not always understand the added value of diaspora involvement in development projects, whether it be done remotely or physically. This is why local research and development institutions should be informed of the role that transnational activities can have on the development of specific sectors, and why they should be assisted in identifying suitable external partners from the diaspora for the launching of joint collaboration. This is also why they should be provided with complete information on all the potential ways in which they can mainstream international diaspora expertise into development strategies at their institutions.

The research findings presented in this chapter are a first attempt at collecting and analysing empirical evidence on the ways that the scientific community of the Republic of Moldova perceives the manner in which the scientific diaspora can become engaged in the development process of Moldova. Further research on diaspora and development issues is needed in order to elucidate some important aspects from the current debate. These aspects include:

- the potential contribution of the scientific diaspora to public policy formulation and implementation;

- the potential involvement of the scientific diaspora in innovation and technology transfer activities in the home country;
- the role of the institutions in the host and home countries in encouraging transnational diaspora activities;
- the specific scientific diaspora needs and the skills it has developed and the ways to capitalize on these assets;
- the role of diaspora organizations and the mechanisms they can use to mobilise skilled individuals;
- efficient job placement schemes and new ways to facilitate contacts between Moldovan employers and potential employees from the scientific diaspora, to encourage permanent or short-term return;
- the ways to get actors from the private sector involved in activities related to diaspora and development.

## References

1. Academy of Sciences of Moldova. Annual Report of the Academy of Sciences of Moldova for 2011 (2012). Chisinau. ASM Printing House.
2. Agunias D. R. and Newland K. (eds.) (2012). Developing a road map for engaging diasporas in development. A handbook for policy makers and practitioners in home and host countries. International Organization for Migration, Migration Policy Institute (publishers).
3. Faist Th. (2010). Diaspora and transnationalism: What kind of dance patterns? In: Diaspora and Transnationalism. Concepts, theories and methods. Baubock R. and Faist Th. (eds.). Amsterdam University Press. p. 9-34.
4. International Organization for Migration (2010). Mainstreaming migration into development planning. A handbook for policy-makers and practitioners.
5. International Organization for Migration (2012). Extended Migration Profile of the Republic of Moldova.
6. International Organization for Migration, Migration Policy Institute (2012). Developing a road map for engaging diasporas in development. A handbook for policymakers and practitioners in home and host countries.
7. International Organization for Moldova (2012). Success stories: Temporary return of representatives of the Moldovan Scientific Diaspora.
8. Labour Force in the Republic of Moldova in 2007 – 2010 (2011). Statistical compendium. Chisinau. Statistica.
9. National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova (2012). Main indicators on labor force for 2011.
10. Salt J. (2008). Managing new migrations in Europe: Concept and reality in the ICT sector. In: International Migration in Europe. C.Bonifazi, M.Oklski, J.Schoorl, P. Simon. Amsterdam University Press.

## PART IV SUCCESS STORIES CONNECTING SKILLED MIGRATION TO DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH EAST EUROPE

### *Synopsis:*

### **Success stories from Moldova, Croatia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Serbia including Kosovo and Montenegro**

*Dr. Vitalie VARZARI, Dr. Tanja PAVLOV, Dr. Caroline HORNSTEIN TOMIĆ*

This section presents some examples of policies, initiatives and projects implemented in countries from South East Europe which aim at connecting skilled migration to the development processes of the home countries. The cases of Moldova, Croatia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Serbia (including Kosovo), and Montenegro are offered as good practices approaching brain-drain issues in a constructive and systematic way. The examples presented here show that joint efforts to promote brain gain initiatives undertaken by the governments, international donors, business and scientific communities can bring positive results both for countries of origin and for highly skilled migrants alike.

#### **1. Republic of Moldova**

<b>Program</b>	Addressing brain-drain through the temporary return of expatriated Moldovan scientists and young researchers located overseas
<b>Funding scheme / Funding organization(s)</b>	Financed by the European Commission as part of the Moldova–EU Mobility Partnership
<b>Period</b>	2010-2012
<b>Main goal</b>	To use highly skilled mobility as a factor in the development of the research and development sector in the Republic of Moldova
<b>Implementing agency and partners involved</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▸ The Academy of Sciences of Moldova was the agency responsible for implementing the current Program.</li> <li>▸ The International Organization for Migration (IOM) was the main partner for the current Program.</li> </ul>

<b>Beneficiaries</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▸ Members of the scientific diaspora of the Republic of Moldova.</li> <li>▸ The scientific community of the Republic of Moldova involved in research and development activities.</li> <li>▸ Bachelors, Masters and PhD students from Moldovan universities and R&amp;D institutions.</li> </ul>
<b>Area(s) of intervention</b>	Research, innovation and higher education.
<b>Short description of the action</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▸ The pilot program competitively selected 32 members of Moldovan scientific diaspora for the purpose of making short-term visits of 7-14 days to universities and R&amp;D institutions in Moldova.</li> <li>▸ The representatives of the Moldovan scientific diaspora in the USA, Canada, Russia, Belarus, Japan, Israel, Romania, Germany, France, UK, Sweden, Belgium and Austria had an opportunity to undertake different scientific activities in 30 R&amp;D institutions in Moldova.</li> </ul>
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▸ Fostering of cooperation between exceptional members of the Moldovan scientific diaspora and their colleagues at Moldovan institutions.</li> <li>▸ This action encouraged Moldovan scientists residing abroad to share their work experiences with their home country colleagues, and it dealt with some important issues in the research and development field that require external expertise.</li> </ul>
<b>Follow-up activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▸ All the beneficiaries were encouraged and given support to develop further transnational activities aimed at transferring knowledge and skills to strategic fields in the Republic of Moldova where joint interventions are required.</li> <li>▸ Some of the beneficiaries jointly applied to the FP7 projects and they were successful in their endeavor. Some of them continue to provide on-line courses to students and are involved in peer-review process projects, writing joint publications and other R&amp;D activities that benefit the Republic of Moldova.</li> </ul>
<b>Web links for further information</b>	<p><a href="http://international.asm.md/ds/despre-diaspora-stiintifica.html">http://international.asm.md/ds/despre-diaspora-stiintifica.html</a>  <a href="http://iom.md/attachments/110_temp_return_eng.pdf">http://iom.md/attachments/110_temp_return_eng.pdf</a></p>

## 2. Republic of Croatia

<b>Program</b>	Unity Through Knowledge Fund, Ministry of Science, Education and Sport
<b>Funding scheme / Funding organization(s)</b>	Most finance for the program came from a World Bank loan with additional financial support provided by domestic and international scientific-research institutions and private sector investment
<b>Period</b>	2007-2010 (First round) 2011-2013 (Second round)
<b>Main goal</b>	<p>The Fund:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▸ encourages basic and applied scientific research, which creates new knowledge creating the potential to compete at an international level;</li> <li>▸ supports projects that directly and indirectly strengthen the Croatian economy. Finance is provided for the development of innovation, commercial activities and other applications of scientific results. In particular, support is given to investments made by the business sector in scientific projects;</li> <li>▸ supports all initiatives that contribute to the development of the science system in Croatia.</li> </ul>
<b>Implementing agency and partners involved</b>	Croatian Ministry of Science, Education and Sport
<b>Beneficiaries</b>	Researchers from the Croatian scientific diaspora Domestically-based researchers
<b>Area(s) of intervention</b>	Scientific and technological research
<b>Short description of the action</b>	<p>The Unity through Knowledge Fund was set up in 2007 to enable cooperation between the domestic scientific community, the private R&amp;D sector and scientists from the Croatian diaspora. The fund includes 3 main programs: <i>Cooperability</i>, <i>Connectivity</i> and a program that is specifically targeted at <i>Young Researchers and Professionals</i>.</p> <p><b>1. The Cooperability program:</b> focuses on building international scientific cooperation with the Croatian scientific diaspora as well as with foreign scientists.</p>

<p><b>Short description of the action</b></p>	<p><b>2. The Connectivity program:</b> facilitates the mobility of beneficiaries, with an emphasis on short-term grants to allow foreign-based researchers to come and work in Croatia for short periods of time.</p> <p><b>3. The Young Researchers and Professionals program:</b> is focused on the advancement of young researchers, with an emphasis on establishing cooperation with international institutions and the private sector in order to enable them to autonomously lead scientific research i.e. to help prevent brain drain.</p>
<p><b>Outcomes</b></p>	<p>The Fund financed 91 scientific and technological projects from its establishment to May 2011. The main outcomes of the Fund's activities are as follows:</p> <p><b>1. Raising the absorption capacity for EU funds</b> Several projects financed by the Fund made successful applications to calls for proposals within the FP7 program for research and technological development. These projects attracted an additional €9.03 million from the EU funds-FP7 program.</p> <p><b>2. Attracting investment from foreign institutions and from the private sector</b> The Ministry of Science, Education and Sport raised almost €5.1 million, i.e. 65% of the total value necessary for the implementation of the project, with the remaining funds being provided by international scientific research institutions (€1,206,894.03), the private sector (€756,526.43) and Croatian public scientific-research institutions (€845,750.54).</p> <p><b>Scientific output of UKF projects</b></p> <p>Output was measured by the number and quality of peer-reviewed publications. 91 projects produced <b>312 scientific publications, and a significant number of these were in prestigious journals such as Nature and Science.</b></p>
<p><b>Follow-up activities</b></p>	<p>The program was renewed in 2011 and will continue until 2017.</p>
<p><b>Web links for further information</b></p>	<p><a href="http://www.ukf.hr">http://www.ukf.hr</a></p>

### 3. Republic of Albania

<b>Program</b>	Brain Gain Program (BGP)
<b>Funding scheme / Funding organization(s)</b>	UNDP Albania Coherence Fund (within the framework of the “One UN” initiative), Albanian government
<b>Period</b>	2006-2013
<b>Main goal</b>	The objective of the Brain Gain Program is to provide the government with support in establishing elements to provide incentives and policy-making mechanisms aimed at effectively changing the engagement of the Albanian diaspora and highly qualified migrants in the scientific, administrative and economic development of the country.
<b>Implementing agency and partners involved</b>	Government of Albania (Council of Ministers) and UNDP
<b>Beneficiaries</b>	Highly skilled returnees and the diaspora
<b>Area(s) of intervention</b>	Public administration, higher education and the business sector
<b>Short description of the action</b>	The program has a two-fold purpose: while its primary role is to support national policy formulation for the creation of an enabling environment for the return of qualified Albanians abroad, the BGP has also undertaken a number of specific pilot interventions, including attracting and bringing qualified members of the diaspora back to the country to serve in the central public administration and in higher education or research institutions in the capital Tirana and in university towns. By so doing, the BGP has also shown the influence it exercises over capacity development in Albania.
<b>Outcomes</b>	Through its encouragement schemes, the program has managed to bring 140 well-qualified individuals back to the country and it has paved the way for the massive return of highly qualified individuals for employment in various sectors.

<b>Follow-up activities</b>	<p>Evaluation of the implementation of the BGP Action plan to implement the Brain Gain Program 2012-2013 Drafting of the National Strategy on Migration 2013–2018 Cooperation and promotion of conferences that seek to encourage discussion and further improve Brain Gain policies and promote the program in southeastern Europe.</p>
<b>Web links for further information</b>	<p><a href="http://www.undp.org.al/index.php?page=projects/project&amp;id=101">http://www.undp.org.al/index.php?page=projects/project&amp;id=101</a> <a href="http://www.braingain.gov.al/">http://www.braingain.gov.al/</a></p>

#### 4. Bosnia and Herzegovina

<b>Program</b>	Research Workshop on Migration from Bosnia and Herzegovina
<b>Funding scheme / Funding organization(s)</b>	The European Commission's Technical Assistance and Information Exchange Instrument (TAIEX), Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
<b>Period</b>	September 10-11, 2012
<b>Main goal</b>	The goal of the workshop was to share the results of current research on migrants and the diaspora from BH, discuss the need for further research, establish cooperation among researchers, support research into migration in BH and enhance knowledge of migration and research into migration in order to change the current perception of the diaspora and migration in BH.
<b>Implementing agency and partners involved</b>	BH Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees (MHRR), and the Institute for Social Research of the Faculty of Political Science
<b>Beneficiaries</b>	The workshop brought together foreign and Bosnian researchers, representatives of institutions, academia, NGOs and international organisations in BH.
<b>Area(s) of intervention</b>	Scientific cooperation in the field of migration

<b>Short description of the action</b>	The workshop program included three panel discussions: <i>Socio-demographic Features of Migrants from BH – Macro Case Studies</i> , the <i>Integration of Migrants from BH in Host Countries – Focus on Specific Societies</i> , and <i>Links of Migrants from BH with their Homeland and Vice Versa – Current Situation and Perspectives</i> .
<b>Outcomes</b>	The workshop brought more than 70 participants together including: 21 researchers from the EU, the region and BH; as well as representatives of BH institutions, the BH academic sector, international organizations, the non-governmental sector, the private sector and the media. Possibilities for further (joint) research and suggestions for the direction of such research that are important for the policy creation processes that have been identified. A solid basis or framework for interaction which will facilitate the establishment and implementation of further dialogue and research.
<b>Follow-up activities</b>	The MHRR web page includes a space dedicated to subjects related to research into migration issues, including work on migration from BH, a list of researchers, information on conferences, summer schools on migration issues, etc. The MHRR believes that the subject of brain drain/gain could be the focus of the next workshop scheduled to take place in 2 years time within the Strategy of Migration and Asylum of BH 2012-2015. Publication of “Migration from Bosnia and Herzegovina” - a collection of papers from the workshop.
<b>Web links for further information</b>	<a href="http://www.mhrr.gov.ba/iseljenistvo/aktuelnosti/Archive.aspx?langTag=bsBA&amp;template_id=128&amp;pageIndex=1#">http://www.mhrr.gov.ba/iseljenistvo/aktuelnosti/Archive.aspx?langTag=bsBA&amp;template_id=128&amp;pageIndex=1#</a>

## 5. Republic of Macedonia

<b>Program</b>	Resolution on Migration Policy of the Republic of Macedonia 2009-2014
<b>Funding scheme / Funding organization(s)</b>	Government of the Republic of Macedonia
<b>Period</b>	2009

<b>Main goal</b>	The Republic of Macedonia seeks to efficiently manage its migration processes and build an active and consistent migration policy, while taking the national, social, economic and cultural development of the country into account.
<b>Implementing agency and partners involved</b>	Emigration Agency of the Republic of Macedonia in cooperation with: the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Economy
<b>Beneficiaries</b>	Migrants of all types including the scientific diaspora
<b>Area(s) of intervention</b>	Migration policy that includes brain gain measures
<b>Short description of the action</b>	<p>The document is made up of three parts. The introductory part presents the international context in which migration flows take place in the Republic of Macedonia: key postulates, elements, criteria and principles of the migration policy of the Republic of Macedonia.</p> <p>The second part presents an analysis of current migratory flows in the Republic of Macedonia. The third part takes a closer look at the directions and goals of migration policy.</p>
<b>Outcomes</b>	<p>The business address books of Macedonian businessmen abroad, Macedonian investors from the diaspora and returnee entrepreneurs (project implemented by the Emigration Agency of the Republic of Macedonia),</p> <p>Three representatives from the diaspora in the Macedonian Parliament,</p> <p>Project for virtual migration (IOM in cooperation with the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy).</p>
<b>Follow-up activities</b>	<p>Action Plan</p> <p>Stop Brain Drain Strategy 2013-2020</p>
<b>Web links for further information</b>	<a href="http://www.makemigration.com/">http://www.makemigration.com/</a>

## 6. Republic of Serbia (example 1)

<b>Program</b>	Models for cooperation with the diaspora and the development of knowledge networks
<b>Funding scheme / Funding organization(s)</b>	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
<b>Period</b>	2009
<b>Main goal</b>	Provide highly skilled migrants with support in order to help them start businesses in Serbia and transfer their knowledge
<b>Implementing agency and partners involved</b>	Business Technology Incubator of Technical Faculties in Belgrade (Established in partnership with four technical universities in Belgrade, a Belgrade municipality and Citizens' associations with support from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe – OSCE).
<b>Beneficiaries</b>	Professionals from the diaspora who are interested in business start-ups
<b>Area(s) of intervention</b>	Innovation and business
<b>Short description of the action</b>	The incubator provides safe conditions in which professionals from the diaspora can plant the seeds of their innovative ideas. The program covers part of the costs and provides administrative and business consulting support. It also provides “fertile ground” as most professionals from the diaspora are from technical colleges, and at the same time these colleges train educated and creative young people who are full of enthusiasm, and accordingly their cooperation helps to produce innovative export-oriented businesses.
<b>Outcomes</b>	15 professionals from the diaspora have developed their businesses in the Incubator Two firms received awards for their innovation – Teleskin ( <a href="http://www.teleskin.org/?lang=en">http://www.teleskin.org/?lang=en</a> ) and the Technology Partnership ( <a href="http://www.tp.rs/">http://www.tp.rs/</a> ) One highly skilled returnee established the Serbian Business Angels Network ( <a href="http://www.sban.eu/eng/">http://www.sban.eu/eng/</a> )

<b>Follow-up activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▸ Cooperation with professionals from the diaspora is continued</li> <li>▸ Development of new three-year project Export Promotion of Innovative Products supported by the Swiss Government</li> </ul>
<b>Web links for further information</b>	<p>www.bitf.rs</p> <p><a href="http://www.bitf.rs/cms/item/news/en.html?view=news&amp;articleId=235">http://www.bitf.rs/cms/item/news/en.html?view=news&amp;articleId=235</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.bitf.rs/cms/item/news/en.html?view=news&amp;articleId=246">http://www.bitf.rs/cms/item/news/en.html?view=news&amp;articleId=246</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.bitf.rs/cms/item/news/en.html?view=news&amp;articleId=269">http://www.bitf.rs/cms/item/news/en.html?view=news&amp;articleId=269</a></p>

## 7. Republic of Serbia (example 2)

<b>Program</b>	Strategy of Scientific and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia 2010-2015
<b>Funding scheme / Funding organization(s)</b>	Government of the Republic of Serbia
<b>Period</b>	29 <sup>th</sup> June to December 2009
<b>Main goal</b>	Serbia is an innovative country where scientists reach European standards, contribute to the overall knowledge of society and help advance the technological development of the economy.
<b>Implementing agency and partners involved</b>	Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development
<b>Beneficiaries</b>	Scientists and researchers in the country and abroad (scientific diaspora)
<b>Area(s) of intervention</b>	Science and technological development
<b>Short description of the action</b>	The Strategy emphasises the need to make “better use” of the scientific diaspora – first by identifying its members and their potential (creating a database), and then by developing various forms of cooperation, which include getting them involved in the process of reviewing projects and in national projects and offering them employment at institutes and universities. The aim here is to develop return programmes – short and long-term study visits and to provide the necessary funds to form research teams and purchase the equipment necessary for research.

<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▸ Web portal "Serbian Scientists Abroad" with the contact details of 586 scientists</li> <li>▸ A sum of €200 million has been provided for the development of scientific infrastructure through the financial arrangements of the Government of Serbia and the European Investment Bank.</li> <li>▸ Awarding of scholarships to young researchers – PhDs for postdoctoral training abroad.</li> <li>▸ Stimulation of the participation of the scientific diaspora in projects financed by the Ministry.</li> </ul>
<b>Follow-up activities</b>	<p>Project Implementation Unit established. This Unit is responsible for positioning, networking and facilitation among the key stakeholders (Ministry of Science and Technological Development, European Investment Bank, Development Bank of the Council of Europe, the scientific community, business, citizens), providing expert project management services, consulting and technical supervision, thereby creating the additional values that are necessary for the development of scientific infrastructure.</p>
<b>Web links for further information</b>	<p><a href="http://www.mpn.gov.rs/">http://www.mpn.gov.rs/</a>  <a href="http://147.91.185.20/nasiusvetu/index.php?lang=eng">http://147.91.185.20/nasiusvetu/index.php?lang=eng</a>  <a href="http://www.piu.rs/">http://www.piu.rs/</a></p>

## 8. Western Balkan countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia including Kosovo

<b>Program</b>	Brain Gain Program
<b>Funding scheme / Funding organization(s)</b>	Austrian Development Cooperation
<b>Period</b>	2002 – 2011
<b>Main goal</b>	<p>The Brain Gain Program (BGP) is aimed at breaking the academic isolation of the universities, by inviting qualified academics originating from the region to provide lectures in subject areas that are not offered at the SEE university faculties.</p>
<b>Implementing agency and partners involved</b>	World University Service Austria (WUS)

<b>Beneficiaries</b>	Higher education institutions, academics abroad and students in the respective countries
<b>Area(s) of intervention</b>	Higher Education Development
<b>Short description of the action</b>	This program allowed university lecturers who originate from the region to give lectures at universities in the region over a period ranging from several days to three weeks. During the final phase these were provided for the entire semester together with lectures to provide mentoring and support for research.
<b>Outcomes</b>	About 70-100 lecturers participated in each country. The programme offered students an opportunity to hear lectures from around the world and to learn about global trends in their fields, and it also helped to improve the content and methodology of courses, introduce new courses and tailor them to the needs of the local labour market and establish institutional cooperation between the hosting institution (local university) and the home institutions of the guest lecturers.
<b>Follow-up activities</b>	The cooperation established with the lectures has continued on a voluntary basis.
<b>Web links for further information</b>	<a href="http://www.wus-austria.org/project/0/67.html">http://www.wus-austria.org/project/0/67.html</a> <a href="http://www.wus-austria.org/project/0/21.html">http://www.wus-austria.org/project/0/21.html</a>

