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► How to Facilitate the Recognition of Skills of Migrant Workers

Second Edition

Guide for Employment Services Providers



HOW TO FACILITATE THE RECOGNITION OF SKILLS OF MIGRANT WORKERS

Second edition

**GUIDE FOR
EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROVIDERS**

2020

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Foreword

The first edition of this *Guide for employment services providers*, published by ILO MIGRANT and SKILLS in 2017, has proved useful in many different geographical and socio-economic contexts. This second edition includes recent developments in enhancing the migration services offered by various employment services providers. Its purpose is to keep this useful tool up to date and reflect new and emerging needs, as well as good practices, including in the COVID-19 context.

This edition is issued within the framework of the Support to Free Movement of Persons and Migration in West Africa project (FMM), funded by the EU and ECOWAS, and takes on board the efforts made in the ECOWAS subregion to improve labour migration governance and skills portability, in particular skills acquired through non-formal and informal learning, and non-recognized formal qualifications. This is of particular use to potential, current and return migrant workers, as well as to refugees. The guide is of particular relevance to the ECOWAS Member States in contributing to the effective implementation of the ECOWAS Protocol on the Free Movement of People and Goods. It is also part of the overall ILO assistance and collaboration in promoting skills and employability, and protection of migrant workers in Africa.

The guide should be used in conjunction with the *Facilitator's notes*, which contain training material on recognition of prior learning. These notes have also been updated. The guide and notes are also available in the French language.

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Background

Globally, in 2019, there are 272 million international migrants (UN-DESA, 2019). In 2018 the ILO estimated that there were 164 million international migrant workers (ILO, 2018a).¹ Migrants who are fully integrated into the labour market can boost the income per capita of recipient economies by providing the labour and skills needed in critical occupations and sectors. Upon their return home, migrants at all skill levels also have the potential to make a positive contribution to economic development through financial investments, as well as human and social capital acquired abroad, such as new skills, ideas and know-how (ILO, 2017a).

ILO evidence convincingly demonstrates the positive impact of recognition of skills and qualifications to address various labour market challenges and to bring substantial benefits for individuals, employers and national economies (Braňka, 2016).² This is one of the primary reasons why countries are making significant efforts to improve their skills recognition tools and systems.

The importance of skills recognition for migrant workers is stipulated in the ILO's Human Resources Development Recommendation, 2004 (No. 195), Article 12: "Special provisions should be designed to ensure recognition and certification of skills and qualifications for migrant workers."

The importance of skill recognition for migrant and refugee workers was also acknowledged by ILO member States at the 2017 International Labour Conference, with the adoption of the Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205), which states:

Members should include refugees in the actions taken with respect to employment, training and labour market access, as appropriate, and in particular:

(c) facilitate the recognition, certification, accreditation and use of skills and qualifications of refugees through appropriate mechanisms, and provide access to tailored training and retraining opportunities, including intensive language training;

¹ The estimate is based on the UN-DESA 2017 data, reporting 258 million international migrants globally.

² Based on a literature review and case studies covering 78 recognition systems.

(d) enhance the capacity of public employment services and improve cooperation with other providers of services, including private employment agencies, to support the access of refugees to the labour market ...

However, the implementation of recognition systems is challenging:

- Skills certificates are sometimes insufficiently recognized or valued by employers in the labour market.
- Recognition providers do not have the capacity to provide services for a growing number of potential users.
- Skills certificate holders may face difficulties in using them as a springboard to new careers and paths of learning, due to lack of awareness as well as existing labour market structure limitations.
- Potential users (individuals) are often keen to obtain skills certificates but are not aware of these systems or have difficulty accessing them.

This guide seeks to assist employment services providers to address these challenges, given their key role as a bridge between employers and workers, by providing guidance and good practice examples. Employment services providers, who are mandated to open service lines for migrant workers and refugees, can provide labour market services including support for the validation and certification of the competencies and skills acquired formally, non-formally or informally.

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in increased waves of return migration, and the need for effective policy measures for labour market and social reintegration. This guide indicates possible approaches to addressing these issues, with a particular focus on skills recognition.

Orientation for the user

Why a guide on recognition of prior learning of migrant workers?

Employment services providers, especially public employment services with a mandate to work with migrant workers, are tasked with providing the services necessary for labour migration and ensuring that returnees have assistance for labour market reinsertion. Employment services can be offered in countries of origin, transit and destination. This guide has been designed to support staff in employment services, working with migrant and refugee workers, to:

- identify priority support in response to needs;
- provide support in accessing recognition systems, especially for those with low- and medium-level skills;
- put together profiles in order to dedicate more time and energy to those having limited capacity in self-management of information and procedures;
- provide adequate support to employers in filling vacancies by identifying and recruiting suitably skilled workers;
- facilitate skill matching, support reskilling and upskilling, as well as job-search counselling; and
- address the growing need for the labour market reintegration of return migrant workers as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Who is this guide for?

The main users of this guide will be employment services providers such as public employment services (PES) and private employment agencies (PrEA), as well as other organizations at the forefront of requests for support services to migrant workers (potential, current and returning migrant workers) and refugees, who will gain a better understanding of the services available and can inform and refer the target group accordingly.

Migrants themselves will also benefit from a better understanding of the services available, particularly in regard to the recognition of their skills.

How is this guide structured?

The guide consists of four sections:

- Key concepts on migration and recognition of prior learning systems.
- An overview of migration target groups and a basic situation analysis of skills recognition.
- Description of the modalities for recognition of skills and qualifications gained through formal, non-formal or informal learning processes.
- Other labour market services that are available to migrant workers (potential migrant workers, current and returning migrant workers) and refugees, including in the COVID-19 context.

Useful tools are appended to the relevant sections. Users are encouraged to adapt tools and templates in this guide as well as others they may currently use or have available. A glossary of key terms appears in Annex 9. A non-exhaustive list of suggested reading is appended at the end of each section for further information.

Abbreviations

ALMP	active labour market programmes/policies
ANAPEC	<i>Agence Nationale de Promotion de l'Emploi et des Competences</i>
APL	Accreditation of Prior Learning
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BLMA	bilateral labour migration agreement
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CEDEFOP	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
EAC	East African Community
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
EURES	European Employment Services
FMM	Support to Free Movement of Persons and Migration in West Africa project, funded by the EU and ECOWAS
GIZ	German Corporation for International Cooperation
ITC-ILO	International Training Centre of the International Labour organization
ILO	International Labour Office/Organization
ILS	international labour standards
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MDW	migrant domestic workers
MRA	mutual recognition agreement
NGO	non-governmental organization
NQF	national qualifications framework
NQS	national qualifications system
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

PARES	EU Partnership Between Employment Services
PES	public employment services
PLAR	prior learning assessment and recognition
PrEAs	private employment agencies
QF	qualifications framework
RPL	recognition of prior learning
SICO	small industry and community organization
SME	small and medium-sized enterprises
TESDA	Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
TOAP	TESDA Onsite Assessment Program (Philippines)
TVET	technical vocational education and training
UNESCO	United National Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
VETA	Vocational Education and Training Agency (United Republic of Tanzania)

SECTION 1

UNDERSTANDING KEY CONCEPTS

In order to benefit from this guide, a general understanding of key issues and concepts surrounding migration and recognition of prior learning (RPL) is essential. This section provides such information.

1.1 Migration

1.1.1 Definitions of migrant workers

Migration addresses people moving between countries (international migration). People migrate for environmental, economic, cultural and socio-political reasons.

A conventional migration study suggests factors that push and pull individuals in deciding to move abroad:

Pull factors

Conditions in destination countries that attract the individual or group to leave their home, such as better economic and/or education opportunities, more jobs, and the promise of a better life.

Push factors

Situations that force individuals to move and may include: conflicts, human rights violations, discrimination, intolerance, persecution, drought, famine, poor economic activity and lack of job opportunities.

The ILO Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97) defines the term “migrant for employment” as “a person who migrates from one country to another with a view to being employed otherwise than on his own account, and includes any person regularly admitted as a migrant for employment”.

The definition of a migrant worker in ILO international labour standards (ILS) can be traced to the ILO Constitution (1919) calling for the “...protection of the interests of workers when employed in countries other than their own”. Box 1.1 shows other definitions.

Box 1.1. Definitions of migrant workers

A wider framework of migrants than that of the ILO (see above) is provided by the UN International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Their Families, 1990, which entered into force in 2003. It defines a “migrant worker” as a person who is to be engaged, is engaged or has been engaged in a remunerated activity in a State of which he/she is not a national. This broad definition also includes cross-border and seasonal workers, seafarers and fishers, workers on offshore installations, itinerant workers, so-called “project-tied workers” and “specified-employment workers” as well as self-employed workers.

The Guidelines concerning statistics of international labour migration of the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) (ILO, 2018b) define international migrant workers “as all persons of working age present in the country of measurement who are in one of the following two categories:

(a) usual residents: international migrants who, during a specified reference period, were in the labour force of the country of their usual residence, either in employment or in unemployment;

(b) not usual residents, or non-resident foreign workers: persons who, during a specified reference period, were not usual residents of the country but were present in the country and had labour attachment to the country, i.e., were either in employment supplying labour to resident producer units of that country or were seeking employment in that country.”

Further, the ICLS Guidelines indicate that refugees who are working or seeking work are defined as international migrant workers (para. 20, (I)).

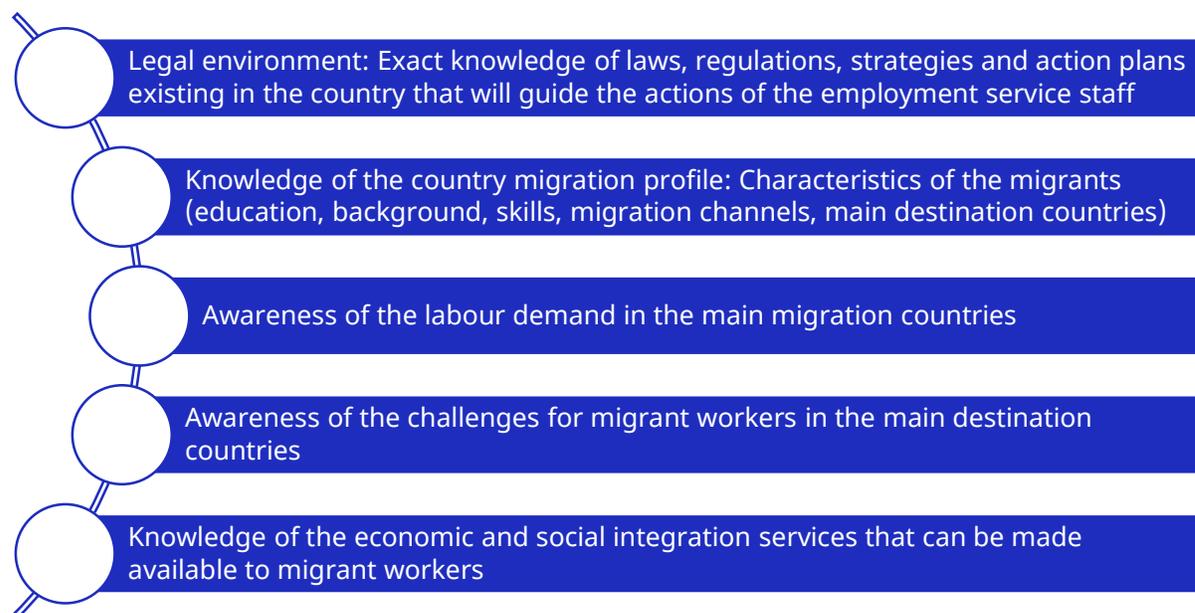
A temporary migrant is a person of foreign nationality who enters a country with a visa or who receives a permit which is either not renewable or only renewable on a limited basis. Temporary migrants include persons with seasonal jobs. A permanent migrant is a person who enters with the right of permanent residence or with a visa or permit which is indefinitely renewable (ILO, 2017a). According to the ICLS Guidelines, temporary for-work international migrants are those entering the country of labour attachment or country of destination with the intention to stay for a limited period of time, which may be less or more than 12 months (pp. 11–12).

As per the UN statistical definition (UN, 1998), returning migrants are persons returning to stay in their own country after having been employed abroad. It is important that only those citizens planning to stay for a year or more in their country of citizenship be included in these migration statistics.

The UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, also known as the 1951 Refugee Convention, defines refugees as those who are unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion. The Convention lays down basic minimum standards for the treatment and rights of refugees, which include access to education and work. While this definition is recognized internationally, there might be some difference in laws declared by a specific country. Here, it should be noted that not all States are parties to the 1951 Convention or have legislation covering refugees. There are also broader categories of persons who could qualify as refugees through regional instruments such as the Cartagena Declaration;³ or the Convention governing the specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa.⁴

1.1.2 Migration management and systems

Migration management and concrete interventions focused on the main migration target groups are heavily conditioned by legal, political, cultural and factual elements. These elements need to be carefully analysed by the users of this guide to determine the enabling conditions for migration services, namely:



³ See: https://www.oas.org/dil/1984_cartagena_declaration_on_refugees.pdf.

⁴ See: https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/36400-treaty-0005_-_oau_convention_governing_the_specific_aspects_of_refugee_problems_in_africa_e.pdf.

Countries controlling migration inflows tend to strictly regulate the conditions of entry, especially of migrant workers. Regular migrants are requested to enter the country holding a visa when prescribed and to request a permit of stay according to national rules. In addition, migrant workers need to request a work permit. Receiving countries try to mitigate concerns about the competition of migrants with national workers and the needs of the domestic labour market, requesting employers to cover hard-to-fill vacancies with the native population wherever possible.

In order to obtain regular status in the receiving countries, migrant workers must comply with the migration system of the country to which they want to move, including specific legal and administrative regulations. There are various systems for regulated migration, with points-based schemes and quota systems being the most common (see box 1.2).

Box 1.2. Migration systems: Some examples

Points-based schemes

These usually assess skilled individuals by having them score points based upon criteria such as age, qualifications and experience, and language skills (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, United Kingdom).

Quota systems

The number of foreign citizens admitted for work purposes is defined every year by entry quotas established by the government of the receiving country (Italy, Spain: both these countries have reformed their quota systems to steer entries mainly towards seasonal work).

Other approaches

European Union: Work permits are issued by 25 EU Member States to highly qualified non-EU citizens under the EU Blue Card Directive. Introduced in 2007, the Directive aims at stimulating economic development by making Europe a desirable destination for qualified workers to practise their professional knowledge and skills, as well as allowing free movement within the European Union for non-EU citizens (see <https://www.eu-bluecard.com/>).

United States: The US Green Card serves as proof of a person's lawful permanent resident status in the United States. There are various ways to qualify for a Green Card, including through the annual USA Diversity Visa Green Card Lottery.

Republic of Korea: The Employment Permit System (EPS) is a temporary migration scheme for low-skilled work which stipulates that the recruitment, selection and placement of workers shall be managed entirely by labour-sending and -receiving countries, based on government-to-government bilateral agreements (Kim, 2015).

1.1.3 Protection of migrant workers

There is a need for state intervention to protect migrant workers in the recruitment stage where deceptive practices could be widespread. The abuses practised in recruitment have been attributed to decent work deficits, inadequate labour migration governance, insufficient inspection and enforcement regimes, and the ineffective application of fundamental principles and rights at work (ILO, 2016a). There is evidence of scams such as obtaining money in exchange for non-existent jobs abroad, false contracts of employment, fake travel tickets, fake visas or other services associated with the migration process. In fact, there is an increasing “migration industry” consisting of unauthorized and illegal intermediaries that “facilitate” labour migration under unregulated conditions. Deceptive recruitment practices tend to manifest in:

Publication and distribution of various forms of misleading propaganda, requesting exorbitant payments for non-existent job offers

Refusal to provide information or providing misinformation about the nature of jobs and conditions of employment

Selecting candidates based on the amount of money they are willing to pay to get work and not on their qualifications

The number of illegal or unlicensed recruiters has increased considerably, and the situation is exacerbated by restrictive, complicated, lengthy and costly legal emigration procedures, as well as weak sanctions for these illegal procedures.

There exist several international instruments to protect migrant workers from such abuses (see box 1.3).

Box 1.3. ILO and UN instruments on migrant workers

The ILO Constitution promotes principles of social justice and protects persons in their working environment including those “employed in a country other than their own”.

There are two ILO instruments on labour migration and protection of migrant workers: the Migration for Employment Convention (No. 97) along with the accompanying Recommendation No. 86; and the Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention (No. 143) with the accompanying Recommendation (No. 151). In formulating national laws and policies concerning the protection of migrant workers, governments should be guided by the underlying principles of these Conventions and Recommendations. Furthermore, the principles contained in the 1990 UN International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families complement those in the two ILO Conventions.

Other ILO instruments of particular relevance here include the Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 (No.142); the Human Resources Development Recommendation, 2004 (No. 195); the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189); and the Forced Labour Recommendation (No. 203). The ILO has also developed a non-binding Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration containing non-binding principles and guidelines for a rights-based approach to labour migration, supported by “best practices” (updated in ILO’s Good Practices Database – Labour migration policies and programmes), which serves as an important tool in assisting ILO constituents to establish smarter and more responsive labour migration policies.

Other relevant instruments include the eight ILO core Conventions on fundamental principles and rights at work pertaining to forced labour, freedom of association, child labour and non-discrimination. Labour standards of particular relevance include the Equality of Treatment (Accident Compensation) Convention, 1925 (No. 19); the Equality of Treatment (Social Security) Convention, 1962 (No. 118); and the Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No.181) as well as the HIV and AIDS Recommendation, 2010 (No. 200) and the Decent Work and Employment for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205).

Fair recruitment practices are key for ensuring effective protection of migrant workers’ rights, reducing labour migration costs as well as improving skills and job matching. In this context, the ILO developed *General principles and operational guidelines for fair recruitment and definition of recruitment fees and related costs* (2019) to inform the work of the ILO and its constituents in promoting and ensuring fair recruitment. These principles and guidelines are based on international labour standards and ILO instruments.

Principle 5 of the *General principles* specifically indicates that: “The competent authorities should take specific measures against abusive and fraudulent recruitment methods, including those that could result in forced labour or trafficking in persons.” This is further

confirmed in Guideline 3 on the reinforcement of the legislation against fraudulent practices in recruitment, Guideline 6 on eliminating the charging of recruitment fees and related costs to workers and jobseekers, and Guideline 8 on the access for workers to grievance and other dispute resolution mechanisms, against abuses and fraudulent practices in recruitment.

1.1.4 Employment services

In an increasing number of countries, one of the main implementing bodies of national labour migration policies is the public employment service (PES), usually decentralized through regional and local branches. The PES collaborates with the Ministry of Labour and social partners in its mediation functions in the labour market.

In many countries, labour market services for jobseekers, including migrant workers, can be offered by a private employment agency (PrEA). These bodies are normally licensed by the government and subject to different modalities of control to prevent abuses.

In assisting migrant workers, public and private employment agencies play different and sometimes complementary roles.

PES can provide services to migrant workers and facilitate their labour market integration (see table 1.1). If foreseen in a bilateral labour migration agreement, PES can also help foreign migrant workers, when it is in their remit of responsibilities, according to national migration and employment policies.

(Potential) migrant workers	Return migrant workers	Nationals working abroad
Advice on job opportunities in the destination countries	Reintegration into the labour market and social environment	Career guidance and counselling and referral to training opportunities and employment promotion measures
Information and training about <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the destination countries' labour market, legislation, rights, language, etc. documents necessary to enter the country 	Support in the recognition of skills acquired abroad	Support in the recognition of their skills and qualifications on the local labour market

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work permits and residence permits • language proficiency certificates – if required • transport • how to enhance CV/interviewing skills • skills recognition procedures in the destination countries and documents to be prepared before departure 		
Pre-departure workshops on different topics	Training opportunities for adapting the skills of returning migrant workers to those on demand in the domestic labour market	
If part of the agreement with the destination countries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection of suitable candidates for vacancies available • Labour contract to be signed before departure 	Offering, if available, self-employment opportunities	

Some private employment agencies (PrEAs), according to the national legislation, can operate only for the domestic labour market, while others, specifically licensed and controlled by the competent authorities, can provide assistance and technical support to migrant workers. The situation is not uniform: in some countries the PES has no role in assisting potential migrant workers (e.g. Ukraine), in others they have a shared competence with PrEAs (e.g. Morocco and Tunisia) and in some countries only PrEAs and the Ministry of Labour have this function (e.g. Ethiopia, see box 1.4).

Box 1.4. Role of PrEAs in Ethiopia

After the Government's ban on labour migration to the Middle East and Arab States of the Persian Gulf in 2013, the House of Peoples' Representatives (HPR) endorsed in January 2016 a new Overseas Employment Proclamation No. 923/2016. With this new proclamation, the Government of Ethiopia seeks to better protect the rights of Ethiopians willing to take overseas employment, as well as to strengthen international cooperation with other countries in order to improve working and living conditions of Ethiopians employed in foreign countries.

The bill forbids employees from leaving for a country with which Ethiopia does not have a labour exchange agreement (bilateral labour agreement) and requires them to meet certain criteria in terms of knowledge, skill and language of the country of destination before allowing them to leave. Interested employees are expected to complete at least education grade 8. They also must possess a certificate of competence in the area in which they will be employed (housekeeping, home care and others). They are also expected to undergo medical check-ups in health facilities selected by the Ministry of Health.

According to the new proclamation, overseas employing agencies are expected to register an initial capital of one million Ethiopian Birr to be eligible to send workers abroad. The proclamation also puts a qualification evaluation on employing agencies to have professional management requiring them to have at least a BA degree and three years of work experience in leadership.

Source: Ethiopian Overseas Employment Proclamation No.923/2016.

The relations between public and private employment agencies can be challenging at times: there may be competition or mistrust, or they may simply ignore each other and work separately. To break this situation and offer to jobseekers more efficient and improved quality services, many public-private partnership (PPP) initiatives have been carried out. One of the most structured approaches has been put in place by the European Union through PARES (Partnership between Employment Services, see box 1.5).

Box 1.5. The EU Partnership between Employment Services (PARES)

This initiative supports EU-level dialogue to promote cooperation between different forms of employment services (public, private and non-profit) and improving the functioning of labour markets in Europe.

Launched in 2011, the PARES issued a set of recommendations for PES in 2013 on drafting a Memorandum of Understanding on a national level. The platform allows the partners to share their good practices through a database which includes also organizational practices, tools and active labour market policies related to service delivery for jobseekers and employers.

Source: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=991>.

Other examples of PPP initiatives linking PES to other partners such as training centres or employers' organizations are present in other continents as well. Some practices specifically targeting the collaboration between public and private employment agencies are included in box 1.6.

Box 1.6. Partnerships between public and private employment agencies: Some examples

New Zealand. Since 2009 there has been a formal partnership between the PES and the peak representative body for PrEAs, the Recruitment and Consulting Services Association. This partnership allowed jobseekers registered with the PES to access an expanded pool of job vacancies that would not otherwise have been available to them, and gave PrEAs access to a broader pool of potential candidates for their employer clients.

Source: www.beehive.govt.nz/release/work-and-income-and-recruitment-agencies-join.

Mali. In January 2016, the *Collectif National des Bureaux de Placement Payants et des Entreprises de Travail Temporaires* (CONABEM) and the *Agence Nationale pour l'Emploi* (ANPE), signed a protocol of cooperation that envisaged the technical support of CONABEM to the institutional activity of the ANPE, such as:

- information on the job placements carried out;
- sharing of statistical data;
- analysis of tensions on the labour market;
- dialogue and mutual information exchange;
- exchanges and training on standards, in particular on trafficking and smuggling of migrants; and
- contribution to the recognition of return migrants' skills.

Source: ANPE and ICMPD, 2019.

1.2 Informal economy and informal jobs

According to international statistical standards (ILO, 2018b), the informal sector consists of units engaged in the production of goods or services with the primary objective of generating employment and incomes to the persons concerned. Informal employment can be in the informal sector, in the formal sector or in the household. Box 1.7 shows the percentages of workers in informal employment worldwide.

Box 1.7. Workers in the informal economy

61.2 per cent (58.1 per cent women; 63.0 per cent men) of the global workforce (population aged 15 and over) works informally. The highest rates of informal employment are found in Africa (85.8 per cent, with 89.7 per cent among women and 82.7 per cent among men). The Asia and the Pacific region with 68.2 per cent and the Arab States with 68.6 per cent

have almost the same level of informality. In the Americas, informality amounts to 40.0 per cent, and 25.1 per cent in Europe and Central Asia. Education is key: when the level of education increases, the level of informality decreases. Those who have completed secondary and tertiary education are less likely to be in informal employment than workers who have either no education or only primary education.

Source: ILO, 2018c.

An apprenticeship is often the main source of skills in the informal economy, but a lack of formal recognition of skills acquired reduces its value in the labour market. Even when there is a possibility, as in the United Republic of Tanzania, to receive a certificate through a skills test offered by the Vocational Educational and Training Authority (VETA),⁵ few apprentices use this opportunity, probably due to the cost of preparatory courses, time and language barriers (tests are usually in English). Even if not systemically organized, there are some good practices that the Small Industry and Community Organization (SICO) has carried out in many countries. Based upon nine case studies (ILO, 2015a), the ILO has issued a resource guide for assessing skills in the informal economy for small industries and community organizations (ILO, 2015b, see box 1.8). The cases presented in the guide cover different target groups (apprentices, master craftspersons, workers) and different levels of SICOs (federations, single and multi-trade business associations, and a trade union).

Box 1.8. Assessing skills in the informal sector

The skills assessment is based upon the following steps:

1. Preparation: Before starting the assessment, it is necessary to define (a) who are the persons to be assessed (apprentice, master-craftsperson or other workers); (b) the skill level (semi-skilled worker, skilled worker, specialist); (c) educational background of the candidates; (d) language spoken by the candidates; (e) selection of appropriate methods of assessment (oral, written, use of language).
2. Identification of the occupational profile and main tasks to be assessed.
3. Definition of the assessment items that can represent the entire profile.
4. Selection of objectively verifiable assessment criteria.
5. Designing theory tests, based upon three levels of complexity.

⁵ See: <https://www.veta.go.tz/>.

6. Setting up the assessment panel, usually composed of members of the association and, to varying degrees, by several other representatives such as line ministries responsible for trade testing, municipalities, local NGOs, or representatives of a training centre.
7. Organization of the assessment, including timing and venue. For apprentices, the assessment takes place at the end of the apprenticeship period. Practical assessments usually take place in a workplace environment to best simulate real work. The theory test may be carried out in a meeting room of the SICO, a room at the municipality or a classroom in a training centre. The duration of assessments differs from one trade to the other.

Source: ILO, 2015c.

1.3 Recognition of prior learning

1.3.1 What is recognition of prior learning?

The concept of recognition of prior learning (RPL) is not new, but the terms used to define the concept differ from country to country and amongst organizations and researchers dealing with this issue. This guide uses the term recognition of prior learning (RPL).⁶

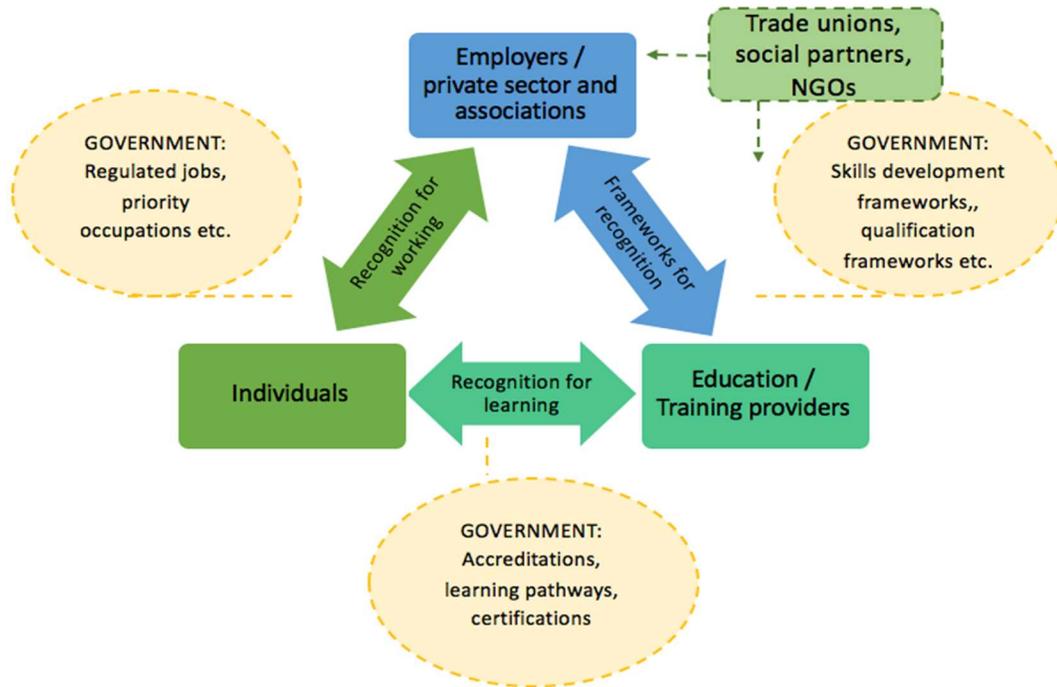
RPL is a process of identifying, documenting, assessing and certifying formal, informal and non-formal learning outcomes against standards used in formal education and training. Thus, RPL provides an opportunity for people to acquire qualification, or credits for a qualification, or exemptions (of all or part of the curriculum, or even exemption of academic pre-requisites to enter a formal study programme) without going through a formal education or training programme, in order to ease their employment pathways with their skills recognized.

Through RPL, competencies and skills earned both inside and outside an applicant's country of origin are assessed and certified. Many RPL systems have established a "recognition authority" that can certify qualifications, provide information or coordinate with other stakeholders involved; they are often a first point of contact for potential applicants.

⁶ A variety of other terms are also used, particularly "accreditation/assessment of prior experiential learning" (APEL) or "validation of non-formal and informal learning" (VNFIL) or "valuation of prior learning" (VPL).

Because of the diverse and complex recognition systems and bodies that exist in any one country (see figure 1.1), it may be difficult for potential users to get a clear grasp of how the system works. According to a study conducted by the OECD in 2014, migrants know about assessment and recognition of skills but perceive the procedure as too burdensome or complex. This guide seeks to address these concerns through building the capacity of employment services providers.

Figure 1.1. Major stakeholders of recognition of prior learning systems



Source: Adapted from Braňka, 2016.

1.3.2 Benefits of RPL

The benefits of RPL are three-fold, depending on the different user groups: individuals (migrant workers in this case), training providers or employers. **RPL has the potential for positive impact on migrant workers by:**

improving employment opportunities for immigrant workers and easing their full integration into the labour market of the receiving country;

reducing costs and time taken for training and certification;

easing the formal path to certification, through credit transfer processes;

planning for an individual's development in a lifelong learning perspective;

increasing migrant workers' self-esteem by recognizing their achievement in learning;

helping drop-outs to re-enter formal education; and

improving the employment opportunities for returning migrants who can formalize competencies acquired abroad.

RPL benefits learning and training providers in a range of ways (SCQF, 2010), for example by:

enabling greater retention of learners;

widening access to a range of learners; and

increasing participation of learners from non-traditional learning backgrounds.

Employers may find RPL useful and effective in addressing employee retention, recruitment and training costs, and fostering better productivity. **RPL can support employers** by:

helping to adequately match jobs and employees;

helping to identify employees' skills effectively;

helping to identify skills gaps in organizations;

helping to identify appropriate training opportunities;

reducing the time required in employee training due to minimized duplication of learning;

increasing motivation and interest in workplace activities on the part of employees/learners; and

generating new ideas and developments for the organization as a result of the employee/learner reflecting on work activities.

1.3.3 RPL process – an overview

In simple terms, the standards for assessment/validation of informal and non-formal learning are the same as those for formal educational and training and occupational standards. Occupational standards are detailed written descriptions of what an employee is expected to know and do in his/her work role. They are national requirements and benchmarks for competent performance in the workplace (see Annex 1 for a specific example).

Learning outcomes are statements that describe the skills and competencies that a person is expected to acquire through an education or training programme. These statements are an elaboration of the information contained in the occupational standard, which is more general. Learning outcomes are a useful guide to inform learners and employers about the education or training programme and ensure consistency of outcomes across modules and subjects. RPL assessment determines the consistency between an applicants' learning outcomes and an occupational standard.

The RPL procedure for migrant workers typically involves the recognition of qualifications which have been acquired in their home country, and includes verification of documents of formal education outcomes: checking of individual evidence (outcomes of informal and non-formal learning – occupational experience and continuing training); and competency-assessment procedures (testing).

For potential migrants, it is important to start the recognition procedure before departure. In addition, an automated recognition process may be established on the basis of an agreement reached between countries. Supporting measures such as guidance and recommendations for skills upgrading is critically important.

The recognition process at the sectoral level is usually managed by its own bodies such as sector skills councils (SSC) or in cooperation with relevant government authorities. The key feature of this approach is its focus on training. While in other systems, skills upgrading is often an option, the RPL process at the sectoral level usually requires – or recommends – additional training in order to obtain formal certification. The type of employers' engagement in skills development and coordination bodies can take different forms – from a consultative role (e.g. in Antigua and Barbuda, Mozambique), to being co-responsible for occupational standard development (e.g. in Bangladesh), taking part in accreditation, certification and assessment (e.g. the island economies in the Pacific region), managing supply (e.g. Botswana, India, Jamaica, Kenya, South Africa).

In fact, many RPL systems are closely linked to the provision of training. If the RPL process identifies gaps that will prevent someone from pursuing his or her desired career or training pathway, the provision of a related skills development programme should logically follow.

With regard to the recognition of qualifications, processes for tertiary level qualifications are most advanced globally. Tertiary (higher) education institutions play a special role as focal points for recognizing foreign qualifications, and in many developing countries universities play a catalytic one. The most important and wide-sweeping international systems for the recognition of foreign qualifications include the Bologna Process; the Lisbon Convention 1997; the Arusha and Addis Ababa Conventions on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees; and the Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in Asia and the Pacific.

As recognition systems and procedures are often considered difficult, complex and expensive, marketing, information support, guidance and other services are essential, and their extent and quality are key to success. Migrants must also understand the value of recognition of their skills. Ways to achieve this include:

Collection and presentation of practical recognition of prior learning examples at all levels: individual, organization and system

Availability of information, websites etc. in multiple languages

Cooperation with organizations that are in touch with migrant groups, such as migration guidance centres, employment services, chambers of commerce, professional associations

Section 3 guides users through the detailed steps in facilitating access to recognition of prior learning processes.

Occupational standards can be established at the regional level, which enable qualifications to be compared across countries. Regional recognition schemes facilitate the mobility of workers within the Member States of regional development organizations through mutual recognition agreements (MRAs, see box 1.9).

Box 1.9. Mutual recognition agreements: Some examples

East African Community (EAC). Established by a treaty that was signed on 30 November 1999, the EAC has six Partner States covering an area of 2.5 million square kilometres and inhabited by 177 million people (2019). For implementing the 2010 Common Market Protocol and fulfilling the Partner States' desire to facilitate free movement of persons and labour, "mutual recognition of academic and professional qualifications" (Arts 5.3 and 11) is relevant. Mutual recognition agreements (MRAs) have been signed for the following professions: accountants, architects, engineers, veterinaries, lawyers. Negotiations for MRAs for other professions (e.g. pharmacists) are in progress.

It should be noted that the mobility of professionals is still limited: for instance, for engineers the MRA has been signed by four Member States and not by Burundi and South Sudan.

ASEAN Community. At the regional level, an important initiative has been carried out by the ASEAN Member States: starting from 2005, mutual recognition agreements (MRAs) have been signed by the Member States. The agreements indicate the skills or experience that professionals need to have certified in order to register and work in another country of the region. The identification of the requirements is carried out by committees established for each profession. MRAs exist for eight professional categories: engineers, nurses, surveying service providers, architects, accounting service providers, medical practitioners, dental

practitioners and tourism professionals. However, implementing the MRAs is difficult, as skills recognition procedures are not linked to work permit schemes, and several technical and political barriers at national and regional levels impede professionals from moving and practising their profession in other ASEAN countries.

CARICOM: While the above examples refer to the mobility of regulated professions – with the exception of tourism workers – there are regional agreements that facilitate the mobility of workers whose competencies have been formally assessed by the National TVET Centre of the Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) (http://ntatvetcentre.org/cvq_overview.aspx). This is a Caribbean Community (CARICOM) award that represents achievement of a set of competencies, which define core work practices of an occupational area, consistent with the levels articulated within the regional qualification framework. The CVQ is based on a competency-based approach to training, assessment and certification of skills and/or competencies in attaining occupational standards that are approved by CARICOM.

1.4 Suggested further reading

- Alquezar, J.; Avato, J.; Bardak, U.; Panzica, F.; Popova, N. 2010. *Migration and skills*, Directions in Development Series (Washington DC, World Bank).
- Andersson, P.; Fejes, A.; Sandberg, F. (eds). 2016. *Recognition of prior learning: Research from around the globe* (London, Routledge).
- Andrees, B.; Nasri, A.; Swiniarski, P. 2015. *Regulating labour recruitment to prevent human trafficking and to foster fair migration: Models, challenges and opportunities* (Geneva, ILO).
- ETF (European Training Centre); CEDEFOP (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training); ILO (International Labour Office) 2014. *Working at sectoral level*, Guide to Anticipating and Matching Skills and Jobs Series, Vol. 3 (Brussels and Geneva).
- —. 2015. *The role of employment service providers*, Guide to Anticipating and Matching Skills and Jobs Series, Vol. 4 (Brussels and Geneva).
- ILO (International Labour Office). 2007. *Guide to private employment agencies: Regulation, monitoring and enforcement* (Geneva).
- —. 2016. *Tripartite Meeting of Experts on Fair Recruitment Principles and Operational Guidelines* (Geneva).
- —. 2018. *Employment services in the evolving world of work* (Geneva).
- —. 2019. *Portfolio of policy guidance notes on the promotion of decent work in the rural economy*, 3rd ed. (Geneva).
- IOE (International Organization of Employers). 2018. *Position paper on labour migration* (Geneva).
- OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development). 2019. *International Migration Outlook 2019* (Paris).

SECTION 2

GETTING TO KNOW YOUR TARGET GROUPS

Employment services that facilitate skills recognition of migrant workers are oriented toward the following five main target groups – employers, migrant workers, potential migrant workers, returning migrant workers and refugees. This section provides a brief overview of these groups with regard to recognition of prior learning (RPL).

2.1 Employers

International employers are those businesses or professional associations based abroad, who are recruiting or are likely to recruit migrant candidates. The services provided to them by the employment agencies of the origin country include helping employers to fill their staff gaps by matching candidate profiles to available job vacancies and, sometimes, offering additional training in order to adapt workers' skills to match employer demand.

Understanding the economic structure of a country may help providers of employment services to better target and focus on what employment services they can offer. For example, for a country where small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) make up a large share of its total economic contributions, it is wiser to invest and make efforts to reach out to these companies. It is often argued that these companies have little information about or access to RPL procedures for their (potential) employees; therefore, creating awareness and promoting relevant employment services will benefit all.

The value of RPL lies with and depends on employers, from the perspective of employment and labour mobility. RPL is only useful when the outcomes of these processes are recognized and accepted by employers. From the employers' point of view, recognizing skills is necessary to improve productivity and the competitiveness of their enterprises; from an occupational point of view, recognition is a tool that improves a worker's status and value in the labour market (Braňka, 2016).

It is noted that the extent to which employers value qualifications and/or outcomes of RPL is often sector-specific. An example from Australia shows divergent views: in the construction and manufacturing sectors, a majority of employers considered formal certificates and

qualifications to be essential and allocated more importance to them than experience during the recruitment process.

In contrast, certificates and qualifications are less valued in service sectors, especially in those where the job turnover is high and there is a large pool of candidates to choose from. This is seen in the case of clerical and administrative jobs, where even formal qualifications as proof of recognized skills are given less importance. As previously mentioned, it is ultimately up to the employer to accept, for non-regulated trades, the outcome of RPL process as “equivalent”. These validation and recognition procedures should therefore involve employers; a feature of many of the most successful measures is precisely a strong level of employer involvement (Werquin, 2010).

Another key mechanism for social partners to become engaged in skills and lifelong learning policies is through engagement at the sectoral level. This is often facilitated by sectoral committees or councils which are established to provide a coordination mechanism for skills development in key economic sectors (see box 2.1).

Box 2.1. Employers’ involvement in skills recognition

In **South Africa**, there are currently 21 sector education and training authorities (SETAs), which cover the entire economy. They manage sector skills plans (SSPs), aiming at ensuring the correspondence between the skills on demand and what has been delivered.

A tripartite approach can also be observed in **Bangladesh**, where employers, workers and government representatives collaborate in Industry Skills Councils (ISCs) on skills development in each economic sector (ILO, 2013).

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

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

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

2.2 Migrant workers

There are various factors that influence the outcomes for migrant workers in the labour markets of countries of destination. Among them, migrant workers' skill levels and education backgrounds play a significant role in determining their migration experience. These, together with other factors such as language barriers and a lack of local work experience, put many jobs out of reach.

An important factor is that, often times, migrant workers are not well informed about the employment services available in countries of origin and are unaware of the local labour market conditions. As a consequence, they may find it difficult to navigate services and the pathways among them and often end up having to rely on social networks, which are less likely to offer access to labour mobility (Benton et al., 2014).

Temporary and circular migrant workers usually arrive in host countries with a pre-arranged work agreement in place and thus may not need specific support with job searching from employment agencies in countries of destination. These migrant workers, however, need assistance in handling legal procedures to enter the countries of destination and to address other grievances they might face while abroad.

Permanent immigrants instead might need support if they:

- become unemployed;
- seek to change jobs, or
- pledge for recognition of skills acquired in the country of origin (through formal, non-formal or informal learning), an important aspect of the social integration of migrants.

As migrant workers may face social and labour market disadvantages, an early identification of risk factors is essential to provide effective employment assistance. Multi-component interventions that combine language training with work experience programmes and job-search assistance, as well as raising awareness among employers that hire them, could be more cost-effective than single measures.

Migrant workers are vulnerable to skills mismatch for several reasons. Some of the skills and knowledge that migrants have may not be recognized in the host country, for example due to barriers in transferability of qualifications. Work experience acquired abroad may be discounted, while limitations in language skills may hamper the full use of other skills. Discrimination may also prevent jobseekers with a migrant background from obtaining

appropriate employment. Furthermore, self-selection of immigrants as well as migration integration policies affect labour market outcomes including matching of jobs and skills (Sparreboom and Tarvid, 2017).

Box 2.2. Skills recognition for effective labour migration governance: Resolution concerning fair and effective labour migration governance, 106th International Labour Conference

In June 2017, during the 106th Session of the International Labour Conference, the Committee for Labour Migration acknowledged certain challenges and adopted a resolution concerning effective labour migration governance.

Among the issues discussed, skills recognition and development for migrant workers was given fair attention, particularly for low-skilled migrant workers who are frequently confronted with limited access to such services as recognition of prior learning. The Committee stressed that when properly regulated, public employment services and private employment agencies can play an important role in providing effective skills recognition programmes for migrant workers.

It was acknowledged that participation of the ILO's tripartite constituents can strengthen the effectiveness and sustainability of labour migration policies, including skills development and recognition of qualifications. This then resulted in the proposal of actions for the ILO to prioritize the provision of support for, among others, the development of skills and of mechanisms for the recognition of skills whether acquired formally or informally, including at the sectoral level.

Source: ILO, 2017b.

A study on labour market integration for medium-skilled migrant workers in Europe suggested that not many PES in European countries, with the exception of Germany and Sweden, highlighted the issue of qualifications as an employment barrier for newly-arrived migrant workers or as a significant part of its integration strategies – suggesting that the systems for recognizing foreign qualifications for these groups have not yet become fully embedded into PES (Benton et al., 2014).

National systems that deal with recognition of informal and non-formal learning also vary between major migration destination countries. Some countries, and migrant workers therein, see these recognition systems as a pathway to achieving formal education certification,

whereas other countries such as the Netherlands and Sweden have stressed a preference for previous employment experience.

Where RPL services are available, several obstacles such as the lack of information, high costs and long and complicated bureaucratic procedures tend to account for and lead to the large proportion of migrant workers who do not have recourse to the opportunity of recognition. **See Section 3.1.1 for more information on how to raise awareness of RPL.**

2.3 Potential migrant workers

Labour demand in destination countries can be managed through the effective implementation of bilateral labour migration agreements, and by identifying the skill needs of the host labour markets and adequately preparing migrants to respond to these requirements. For potential migrants who are preparing to enter the foreign job market, the employment services provided to them fall under employment services mainly in countries of origin. **The role of employment services providers in the provision of services to potential migrants are elaborated in Section 4.2.** For example, a pre-departure training/orientation programme can play an important role in this process of preparation for migration (see box 2.3).

In some cases, though, the country of destination may offer training courses to potential migrant workers in countries of origin prior to departure. This typically happens in those cases where a destination country receives a significant number of migrant workers from a particular geographical region in order to fill the labour gap in a certain sector.

Box 2.3. Facilitating skills matching for migrant workers through preventative actions

Recognition of foreign qualifications, validation of prior learning and skills development are key to migrant workers' integration in the labour market, but these aspects are often overlooked, or not considered at all. One way to address this deficiency is in anticipating the recognition process through mechanisms such as pre-departure training organized in the origin countries on occupational profiles in demand in the destination countries. Another possibility is to design curricula leading to certification valid in both origin and destination countries.

Some examples are offered by the Training Centre "Don Bosco" in Cairo, which issues competence certificates valid in both Egypt and Italy.

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

The same logic is present in a similar initiative put in place by the Italian Government aimed at aligning the skills possessed by migrant workers with Italian labour market requirements through specific training experience within Italian enterprises. Foreign citizens who have started training in their country of origin may participate in such initiatives in Italy, thereby gaining practical experience. The visa for study-related purposes in this case provides the migrant with the opportunity of being employed during the period of practical training. The sponsors are local authorities (regions and provinces), which are responsible for providing a detailed training plan for each individual. The apprenticeship has to last between 3 and 12 months.

Similarly, the Italian Government is providing for the organization of training courses in the countries of origin of potential migrants. The courses are to include Italian language, information on the Italian labour market, and specific vocational training on skills for which migrants might be hired in Italy. The skills on which potential migrants will be trained are identified by the main promoters, which are: employers’ and workers’ organizations, public and international institutions, and NGOs that have been operating for at least three years in the area of migrant protection. The eligible countries are those having bilateral labour migration agreements (BLMAs) with Italy (e.g. Albania, Republic of Moldova, Sri Lanka) or a readmission agreement (e.g. Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt, The Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria, Philippines, Senegal, Tunisia).

Getting skills and competencies recognized before departure is ideal, but many developing countries have weak skills recognition systems in place and lack the relevant authorities to deal with this issue. While qualifications may be readily recognized, recognizing informal and non-formal learning of potential migrant workers is challenging. For low- and medium-skilled migrant workers in particular, the lack of these systems in the country of origin and of access to RPL services in destination countries may deprive them of decent work opportunities.

Nevertheless, **it is important to advise potential migrant workers to take a record of their current skills and qualifications, which may require an assessment.** To facilitate the RPL process of migrant workers if/when they return later to their home countries, collection of evidence of training and work experience is equally important. It encourages the regular collecting of evidence of skill development while overseas so that the material for skills recognition is available when a migrant worker returns (ILO, 2010).

2.4 Returning migrants

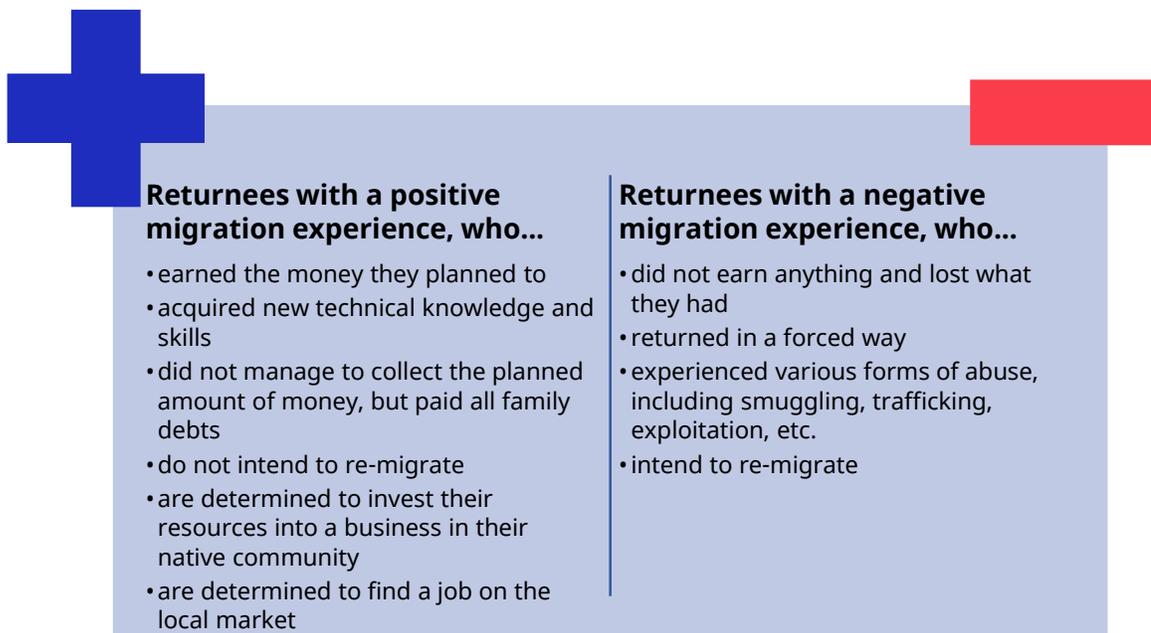
Being a returning migrant does not translate into automatic social and labour market integration, and returnees may need support for the following services:

- career counselling;
- domestic/international labour market information;
- support for self-employment; and
- recognition of skills and competencies acquired through non-formal and informal learning while abroad.

See Section 4.3 for detailed information on labour market services available to this group.

Upon arrival in their countries of origin, some migrants feel empowered, confident and willing to reintegrate into society. Others, however, face problems, which increases their social and economic vulnerability even more than prior to departure. The latter usually happens when the migration experience has been a negative one, associated with financial losses, de-skilling, and sometimes even abuse, fraud, etc. These divisions (positive/negative migration experience, see figure 2.1) can help specialists working with returning migrants to tailor the specific reintegration programmes to match the individual needs of the beneficiary. These categories are not exhaustive and can vary from case to case. Here, it should also be noted that the migration experience has often been a blend of positive and negative occurrences.

Figure 2.1. Returnees with different migration experiences



As migrant workers acquire new skills and knowledge, and gain competencies through their work experience, recognition and validation of informal learning upon their return is a crucial factor to ensuring their reintegration into national and international labour markets, thus ensuring proper skill matching and preventing deskilling and skills waste. Moreover, through RPL, returning migrants can enter a formal training institution to further strengthen their skills and make themselves eligible for more advanced employment.

It is important to provide services for retuning migrants which allows them to (i) assemble data from their overseas employment, including any skills training, into a comprehensive portfolio; (ii) map that data against identified national or international competency standards; (iii) be assessed; and then (iv) achieve formal recognition of their new skills and work experience (ILO, 2010). An example of a successful system is shown in box 2.4.

Box 2.4. Services for returning migrant workers in the Philippines

The Philippines has established a Skills Registration Database for returning migrant workers in Davao province. Six government agencies under the leadership of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) oversee the Permanent Returning Overseas Filipino Workers Network (PeRSON). TESDA maintains the database and, together with the overseas Worker Welfare Agency, links their expertise to prospective employers or other useful services. Local government, industry, and training organizations recognize the workers as “heroes of the modern Philippine economy” and tap their expertise.

The network operates to link returning workers with businesses and other opportunities, with an emphasis on the importance of the skills and work experiences acquired. A detailed analysis of the return and reintegration policies and services can be found in the ILO report: *The Philippines and return migration* (Go, 2012). To support the reintegration of returnees in the health sector, Public Services International and the ILO issued a specific information guide in 2015.

TESDA launched in 2015 the Onsite Assessment Program (TOAP) to provide opportunities for overseas Filipino workers to acquire a certification or recognition of their technical skills and knowledge. The TOAP targets migrant workers in vulnerable occupations, such as domestic workers, and provides migrant workers with the opportunity to undergo an assessment and certification process in the country of destination through TOAP visiting teams. As of December 2018, a total of 2,681 overseas workers had benefited from TOAP (Wickramasekara, 2019).

2.5 Refugees

Refugees differ from other migrant groups in terms of their status – the fact that they are recognized as in need of international protection. In addition, they face greater barriers (including legal ones) than those encountered by other migrants in transitioning into employment. There are also contexts where refugees might receive preferential treatment over other migrants, e.g. in Jordan where the arrival of Syrians in large numbers have moved other migrant groups – e.g. Egyptians – out of work in certain sectors. One of the reasons is that they are often not able to provide proper documentation of their level of education, training or skills. Recognition of prior learning is one way to address these barriers, e.g. due to the COVID-19 situation refugee health workers are now able to practise as medical professionals in their host countries in the European Union and beyond.

Labour market integration is more challenging if refugees lack language skills, or have low levels of educational attainment or transferable job qualifications. An additional burden stems from the length of the asylum procedure, which puts refugees in temporary, insecure residence status. These barriers prevent refugees from quickly and fully participating in the labour market. Here, it should be noted that until they are recognized as refugees, they are considered asylum-seekers, a group often denied access to the labour market. It should also be mentioned that in some countries refugees are not allowed to work. Additional challenges include less developed social networks, housing regulations, health conditions and trauma

during transportation, as well as cultural barriers which are also linked with the labour market outcomes. Refugees face a number of (extra/specific challenges), and in a number of countries the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and the ILO will support their inclusion in the labour market, following the 2016 ILO document *Guiding principles on access of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons to the labour market* (see box 2.5).

Box 2.5. Guiding principles on access of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons to the labour market

The ILO guiding principles (2016b) represent a tool for inclusive job creation and equality of treatment for refugee populations and their host communities. In particular, Guiding Principle 18 on employment strategies stipulates that these should include measures to:

“(a) enhance the capacity of public employment services and improve cooperation with other providers of services, including private employment agencies, to support the access of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons to the labour market, particularly as regards job placements and career counselling;

(b) strengthen specific efforts to support the inclusion in labour markets of youth and women from refugee and other forcibly displaced populations, including through access to education, life-long learning, childcare and after-school programmes;

(c) support recognition and accreditation of acquired skills and competencies by refugees and other forcibly displaced persons through appropriate skills determination tests, if required;

(d) facilitate tailored vocational training, including occupational safety and health training, with a strong on-the-job component (for example, apprenticeships), and intensive language teaching;

(e) strengthen access to skills development and upgrading opportunities, and entrepreneurship and business start-up training for refugees and other forcibly displaced persons; and

(f) facilitate increased access to decent work opportunities for refugees and other forcibly displaced persons and host communities, including by fostering transitions of employment from the informal to formal economy.”

Further, Guiding Principle 19 indicates that:

“Members should take steps to facilitate the portability of work-related entitlements (such as social security benefits, including pensions), skills accreditation and skills recognition of

refugees and other forcibly displaced persons between countries of origin, transit and destination.”

See Section 4.1 for information on labour market services available to refugees.

An increasing number of countries hosting refugees have taken measures to help refugees integrate into the host society. A number of European countries allow those who have been granted a legal residency status to access a wide range of employment services available in the country, including recognition of prior learning services.

The Jordanian case study in box 2.6 serves as a good example of how RPL can help refugees in a fragile environment integrate into formal employment through recognition and certification of their skills.

Box 2.6. The first RPL scheme in Jordan, for both Jordanians and refugees

Following the London Conference on Supporting Syria and the Region in 2016, the Government of Jordan committed itself to the delivery of 200,000 work permits for refugees in return for concessional financing and preferential trade terms with the European Union.

Thus, Jordan became the first country in the region to facilitate Syrian refugees’ access to the labour market. This milestone was achieved through the signing of the Jordan Compact, which reduced barriers to the legal employment of refugees in the kingdom.

The ILO has been providing support to Jordanian nationals and Syrian refugees in accessing job opportunities in Jordan’s labour market through skills development and RPL, leading to a certificate by the Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance (CAQA) and a work permit. It also helps refugee workers with work permit issuance in selected sectors, including through an ILO-developed web-based platform. Until the end of 2019, the ILO helped train and certify over 5,000 Jordanian nationals and Syrian refugee jobseekers, using RPL, in the construction sector.

See: https://www.ilo.org/beirut/projects/WCMS_711512/lang--en/index.htm.

In Turkey and Jordan refugees have been granted temporary work permits and pursue formal employment. Turkey has extended recognition of prior learning services to refugees.

Education institutions, certification authorities and employers of various kinds face at least some uncertainty in attempting to assess and recognize refugees’ qualifications and/or prior learning. One of the biggest barriers is the lack of understanding, among employers and public authorities who deal with this group, of foreign qualifications that refugees have earned

abroad. In addition, more often than not, refugees do not have verifiable documents to prove their experiences and competencies, as a result of conflicts and disasters (see box 2.7).

In some cases, where refugees may not be able to provide official and verifiable qualifications and proof of prior learning there is a possibility to reconstruct a refugee's educational and training background by collecting evidence. Evidence can come from both documented and non-documented sources. The most popular and widely-used methods to collect evidence are: developing a portfolio which contains information on prior learning, including formal, non-formal and/or informal, and on professional background; work observation; and/or practical exams. **See Section 3.1.2 for more information on the methods and tools for use in collecting evidence and preparing for the RPL.**

More detailed information, including examples, on how to facilitate access to recognition of prior learning is explained in **Section 3**. A range of other labour market services available to the target group is elaborated in **Section 4**.

Box 2.7. Skills recognition and development in prevention, recovery, peace and resilience with respect to crisis situations arising from conflicts and disasters

During the 106th Session of the International Labour Conference, member States adopted the Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205). The Recommendation reaffirms the importance of employment and decent work for promoting peace, preventing crisis situations arising from conflicts and disasters, enabling recovery and building resilience. It urges member States to establish public employment services or restore and strengthen existing ones and to ensure the regulation of private employment agencies so as to support the access of refugees to the labour market.

Among the proposed actions, it stresses that it is crucial to facilitate the recognition, certification, accreditation and use of skills and qualifications of refugees through appropriate mechanisms, and also that refugees be provided with access to tailored training and retraining opportunities including intensive language courses.

To organize a coordinated response to the Venezuelan displacement, 12 Latin American governments met on 4 September 2018 in Quito, Ecuador and agreed upon common principles for the management of this humanitarian crisis (Quito Declaration). One aspect that needed to be taken on board was the skills recognition of the Venezuelan refugees and migrants. The implementation of the Quito Declaration was further developed in the meeting of Latin America and the Caribbean countries held in Bogota on 13 November 2019.

The practices illustrated in box 2.8 are good examples of how the integration of Venezuelan refugees and migrants can be facilitated through skills recognition.

Box 2.8. Recognition of prior learning for Venezuelan refugees and migrants in Chile and Colombia

Chile

The recognition of skills for nationals, migrant workers and refugees is carried out by ChileValora (see: <https://www.chilevalora.cl/nosotros/quienes-somos/>).

A public service established in 2008 (Law 20 267), ChileValora is the Commission of the National System of Certification of Labour Competencies. Its main function is to promote lifelong learning and the recognition of job skills, regardless of how people have acquired them, through evaluation and certification processes based on standards defined and validated by the productive sectors

The Board of Directors of ChileValora is tripartite (three representatives of workers, three representatives of employers and three from the public sector (Ministries of Education, Labour and Economy))

Workers who wish to certify their labour competencies should first check in the website of ChileValora if the trade for which he/she will request recognition exists in the catalogue of labour competencies. The web portal also contains information on which evaluation and certification centre, accredited by ChileValora, can be contacted for the recognition process. There are currently 31 accredited assessment centres; 15 are managed by trade associations, ten belong to business associations, seven to universities and one to workers' unions.

Candidates will have a preliminary meeting with the evaluators and will bring available documents. After analysing the portfolio of the workers, the evaluators will carry out on-site observation of the candidates' performance. The centre will then rate the candidates as competent or not yet competent. If the candidates have not been considered sufficiently competent, they may request training to improve their skills and opt for a new evaluation. Those candidates who are considered competent will receive their certificate and will be included in the national registry of people certified by ChileValora. The registry provides useful information for employers, since they can hire certified workers in the occupations they need. The recognition process is financed by the National Training and Employment Service (SENCE) and the private sector.

Source: ChileAtiende. Available at: <https://www.chileatiende.gob.cl/fichas/43958-evaluacion-y-certificacion-de-competencias-laborales-de-trabajadores-chilevalora>.

Colombia

The National Training Service in Colombia (SENA) has been providing skills assessment and certification services to Venezuelan refugees and migrants since 2017. By adopting a tailored approach to recognizing their knowledge, skills and competencies, this practice has become a cornerstone in the national strategy for integrating migrants into the Colombian labour market. The main sectors where Venezuelans seek to have their skills recognized are administration, food processing, personal services, mining, horticulture and tourism. The programme is funded through SENAs regular budget, and access to the skills assessment and certification services is free of charge for Colombians and Venezuelans. In order to better address the refugee and migrant population, SENAs has expanded its services in Cúcuta, at the border, where a high number of Venezuelans stay and transit.

The assessment process consists of two phases: an initial interview, followed by an evaluation of practical skills and technical knowledge. As a result of this initiative, 2,490 Venezuelan migrants had their skills certified between 2017 and 2019, with 3,140 certifications issued in total since the programme started. The employability rate of participants during this period was 67 per cent in 2017, 57 per cent in 2018 and 43 per cent in 2019. This decreasing rate can be explained by the growing number of migrants in the area in recent years as well as the declining availability of jobs in the labour market. Certain factors limiting participation in this programme were identified through regular monitoring and evaluation of the situation of refugees and migrants, such as the lack of economic resources for urban transport, and food.

Source: <http://www.sena.edu.co/es-co/Noticias/Paginas/noticia.aspx?IdNoticia=3602>.

2.6 Suggested further reading

- CEDEFOP (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training). 2014. *Valuing diversity: Guidance for labour market integration of migrants* (Brussels).
- EC (European Commission). 2018. *Peer review on "Integration of refugees into the labour market", Berlin, Germany, 11–12 October 2017, Synthesis Report* (Brussels).
- European Parliament. 2016. *Labour market integration of refugees: Strategies and good practices* (Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union).
- Fasani, F.; Frattini, T.; Minale, L. 2018. *(The struggle for) refugee integration into the labour market: Evidence from Europe*, IZA Discussion Paper 1088 (Bonn, Institute of Labour Economics).
- ILO (International Labour Office). 2011. *A skilled workforce for strong, sustainable and balanced growth: A G20 training strategy* (Geneva).
- —. 2015. *Refugees' integration in the EU labour markets: Seizing the opportunities, tackling the challenges*, Background note (Geneva).
- —. 2016. *Guiding principles on the access of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons to the labour market* (Geneva).
- —. 2018. *Lessons learned and emerging good practices of ILO's Syria Crisis Response in Jordan and Lebanon* (Beirut, ILO Regional Office for Arab States).
- OECD (Organisation for Economic Development and Co-operation); EU (European Union). 2018. *Settling in 2018: Indicators of immigrant integration* (Paris and Brussels).
- OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe). 2018. *Good practices in migrant integration: Trainee's manual* (Vienna).
- —; IOM (International Organization for Migration); ILO (International Labour Office). 2007. *Handbook on establishing effective labour migration policies*, Mediterranean edition (Vienna and Geneva).
- Zetter, R.; Ruaudel, H. 2016. *Refugees' right to work and access to labor markets: An assessment*, KNOMAD Working Paper (Washington DC, World Bank).

SECTION 3

HOW TO FACILITATE ACCESS TO SKILLS RECOGNITION PROCESSES

There are a range of labour market services that might be available to migrant workers. The main focus of this section is on one of those services – how to provide assistance in the recognition of skills and qualifications.

The recognition procedure for migrant workers can include both recognition of qualifications acquired in the country of origin and recognition of informal and non-formal learning outcomes.

Recognition of qualifications for licensed and technical occupations, mostly at degree level and above, is often facilitated by a bilateral agreement reached between the countries involved (see **Section 3.2** below for more information).

The recognition of informal and non-formal learning outcomes is often done through a competency-based assessment procedure (testing, work simulation, work observation, etc.). It can be integrated into existing formal education and training systems, or it can be made part of a parallel system, using educational benchmarks or standards for qualifications.

Different methods and approaches are used to obtain recognition of prior non-formal and/or informal learning for access to further education and training and/or labour mobility within host and/or labour-sending countries. Criteria such as duration of prior experience and how long ago it was acquired, which are usually predetermined by the service providers of host and/or labour-sending countries, are also considered.

The recognition process can be managed by an assessment centre or training organization which conducts assessments in different sectors. In some cases, these assessment centres can be sector-specific, focusing on specific industries such as construction or tourism. This is often the case with occupations requiring licenses to practice. In some cases, the assessment process underpinning RPL can be split between different agencies.

In some industry sectors, there are sector skills recognition processes that have their own specific characteristics and may be available to both nationals and migrants alike. The IT sector

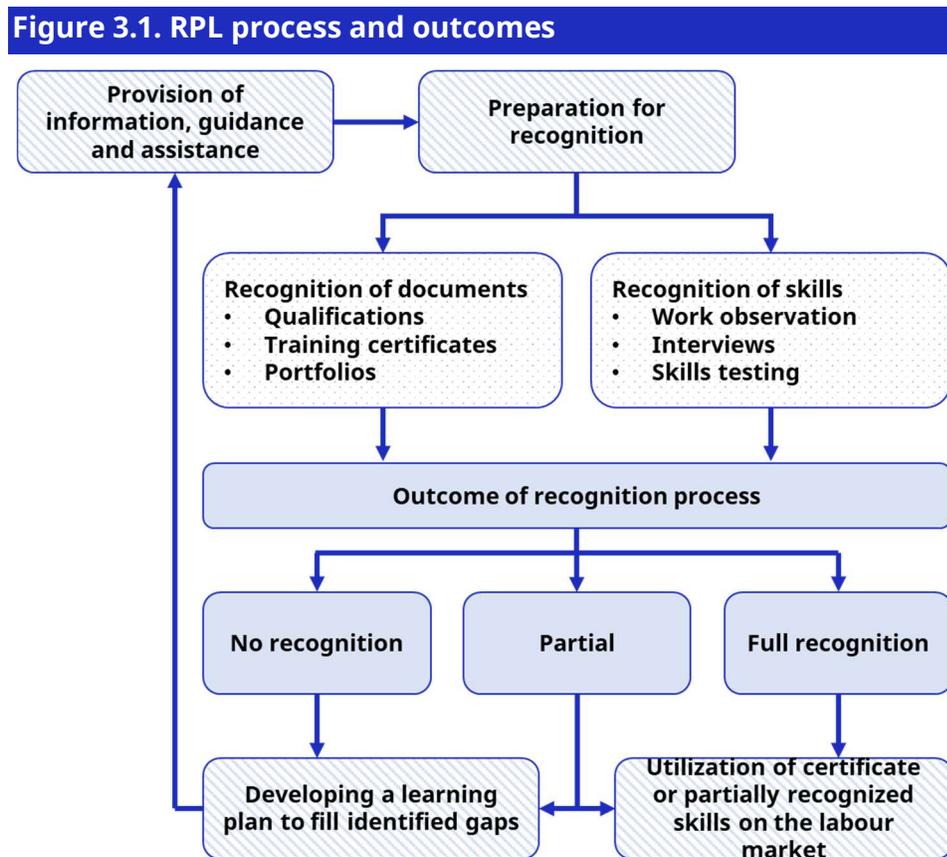
Section 1.2 of this guide provides an overview of RPL systems; re-read as a reminder of key issues and terms.

is one such example, where various certifications offered by vendors offer workers an opportunity to have their work experience and skills directly tested through technology-specific assessments.

3.1 Steps in skills recognition processes for informal and non-formal learning

The principles underpinning the process of recognition and validation of informal and non-formal learning include validity, reliability, confidentiality, transparency, and fitness for purpose (CEDEFOP, 2009). It is important that employment service providers keep this in mind when assisting applicants to access RPL systems.

Figure 3.1 is a schematic diagram of the RPL process and outcomes. The striped boxes reflect the possible roles and responsibilities of employment agencies in the skills recognition process and are elaborated below.



Source: Adapted from Braňka, 2016.

3.1.1 Awareness raising, information, guidance and assistance

One of the key roles for employment agencies and support groups dealing directly with migrant workers and refugees is raising awareness of RPL systems and their potential outcomes (see example in box 3.1). This awareness raising should target potential users: individuals and their employers along with the training/assessment centres and other organizations involved in the process. User awareness and understanding of the process, outcomes and benefits will boost participation.

Box 3.1. A documentary in Italy: *L'esperienza vale* (Experience counts)

During 2015, the Institute for the Development of Vocational Training of Workers (ISFOL) in cooperation with RAI national Italian television, produced a documentary titled [*L'esperienza vale*](#) (Experience counts), to inform target groups about validation of non-formal and informal learning.



A screenshot of the documentary *L'esperienza vale*

It portrays four stories of Italian and foreign nationals: Michelle, Oleg, Carmen and Enrica, who have all found work that satisfies their aspirations, or have returned for training in order to validate and certify their skills.

These stories take us around Italy as well as to France and the Netherlands, and show how the validation of skills works in different contexts and represents a cross-sectional tool of value for both individuals and the systems that use it.

Source: RAI, 2015.

Employers often lack understanding of the benefits of supporting migrant workers through the RPL process or of employing migrants who have had their skills recognized. Marketing and communication activities to promote RPL among employers and engage them in the process need to be proactive.

For individuals, the extent of marketing combined with information, support and guidance will influence take-up. PES should be proactive (see box 3.2) and develop a communication, coordination and collaboration strategy to reach out through:

- Radio/television
- Exhibits/road shows
- Job fairs
- Online – social networks, websites
- Print media/cartoons
- Networks used to advertise jobs and training opportunities

Remember:
communicating in the language of your target group is essential! Use translators and interpreters as necessary.

Box 3.2. Good practices in reaching out to target groups

Belgium

PES are the primary channel for reaching individual users. Jobseekers have been the main target group of the scheme since its inception. Validation centres also provide information to anyone interested in the scheme. Prior to registering for a test, guidance is provided to candidates to assess their chances of success. Other ways to reach potential users include the Consortium website, the diffusion of information material, targeted emails to jobseekers, and media campaigns. As part of the Year of Competencies (*Année des compétences*) in 2013, a number of initiatives promoted the various ways in which citizens could have their competencies recognized. One of the outcomes was the creation of an online portal providing information about all types of validation procedures in French-speaking Belgium (Mathou, 2015).

South Africa

The occupational learning system is a relatively new innovation. A number of marketing and communications activities are being undertaken to keep stakeholders informed about the development of occupational qualifications and assessment processes:

- national road shows are held in all nine provinces;
- a website has been developed providing vital information;

- a management information system has been installed;
- a marketing and communication strategy has been developed; and
- The Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (OCTO) participates in major exhibitions and produces a range of printed materials (Rasool, 2015).

Ghana

Awareness on RPL is supported through meetings, workshops, stakeholder consultations, exhibitions, trade fairs and participation in graduation ceremonies for the recognition of competencies of graduated apprentices (Amankrah, J. 2015).

Reaching out to potential users is the starting point; this needs to be accompanied by user-friendly information as well as guidance and assistance on accessing the RPL system. Focusing on practical skills, examples of recognition (see box 3.3) will inspire migrant workers and boost their understanding, trust and confidence in the process.

Box 3.3. Information portal on recognition in Germany

The website *Recognition in Germany* serves as an information portal of the German Government for the recognition of foreign qualifications or certificates for migrant workers and refugees who wish to take up employment in Germany.

The website has collated relevant information and services that pertain to how professional recognition can be obtained and includes information on, amongst others:

- step-by-step process of recognition for selected occupations which are searchable via a user-friendly “Recognition Finder” function;
- preconditions for skills recognition;
- success stories of skills recognition;
- hotline and counselling information; and
- relevant authorities, institutions and their contact information.

RECOGNITION PROCEDURE

LEGAL BASIS

COMPETENT AUTHORITIES

ACADEMIC / SCHOOL
QUALIFICATIONS

PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION
FOR REFUGEES

INFO LIBRARY

SUCCESS STORIES

> Azem Ceka – Recognition as
Car varnisher

> Jigar Hasso – Recognition as
cook

> Judith Yawa Aggor–Ederh –
Recognition as custom tailor

> Fernando Lluslá de Castro –
Recognition as construction
engineer

> Alaa Kheralah – Recognition as
dental technician

> Ana Poli – Recognition as
registered general nurse

> Fares Schammas – Recognition
as joiner

SUCCESS STORIES



Jigar Hasso
RECOGNITION AS COOK



Alaa Kheralah
RECOGNITION AS DENTAL
TECHNICIAN



Judith Yawa Aggor–Ederh
RECOGNITION AS CUSTOM
TAILOR

Recognition in Germany: Success stories

Users can access this website in eight different languages, including Turkish and Romanian, and the mobile application is available in German and English as well as in the five major languages spoken by refugees: Arabic, Dari, Farsi, Tigrinya and Pashto.

Source: German Federal Government.

It is important to ensure that the information given answers the questions that will arise and indicates the range of support services that can be provided on the journey to achieving recognition of one's skills and competencies. There is a huge range of questions that may be asked and, in most cases, the answers will be specific to the RPL processes in the country, region, or sector the migrant is addressing. **Some typical questions and generic answers can be found in Annex 3** at the end of this guide.

It is important to provide information on the entire RPL process, not just the steps whereby employment agencies play a key role (see figure 3.1. This should cover the screening of applicants, submission of application, initial assessment, identification of gaps (if any), final assessment and granting of certificates if successful (see Aggarwal, 2015 and Braňka, 2016 for further information).

Finally, involving key stakeholders and actors in the design and implementation is crucial to ensure effective collaboration and coordination for raising RPL awareness for migrant workers and other target groups such as employers (see box 3.4 for an example).

Box 3.4. Collaboration and coordination: Raising awareness of RPL among migrant workers in the Sri Lankan construction sector

The RPL process for potential and returning migrants in Sri Lanka leads to a qualification from the National Vocational Qualification Centre. The process is usually conducted by the Department of Technical Education and Training (DTET), National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority (NAITA), Vocational Training Authority (VTA) and other accredited assessment and training centres. The minimum industrial exposure requirement to become eligible for RPL is 18 months for NVQ level 2 and level 3 qualifications, while for level 4 it is 24 months.

A workshop was held to address awareness raising on RPL within the construction sector and a mechanism for each modality taken and relevant body concerned was finalized. The final mechanisms were consulted and agreed upon by the stakeholders. This multi-party collaboration is particularly significant given the wide range of actors involved during design and implementation.

To create awareness and promote RPL for potential and returning migrant workers, relevant governmental authorities have developed simple user-friendly guides which are presented in local languages. These communication materials, in the form of booklets and videos, are distributed at the local administrative unit level as well as abroad by Sri Lankan foreign missions in countries of destination. *Grama Niladhari*, the administrative unit of the local government, for example, is one such organization that plays a vital role in this process with its village outreach programmes and by collecting and certifying evidence for RPL.

Source: ILO, 2017c.

3.1.2 Preparation for recognition

When an individual or group of individuals decides to apply for RPL, employment services providers can play a very important role in preparing them for the process.

An employment counsellor, assigned by employment services providers, may ask an applicant to fill out a self-assessment form in order to profile and identify skills for which the individual wishes to be certified. A sample of a self-assessment form utilized by the Swedish Public Employment Agency is provided in table 3.1. The self-assessment questions are based on the requirements of various professions in the country, and the example is pertinent to construction building works.

If an applicant is unsure of skills and/or competencies possessed, a more generic assessment checklist may be provided. A sample is provided in Annex 2.

Table 3.1. Self-assessment form, Sweden, construction/building workers					
Personal characteristics that are important for the profession	Levels 1-5 (No experience - substantial experience)				
1. I am good at interacting with customers	1	2	3	4	5
2. I can remain calm in a difficult situation	1	2	3	4	5
3. I can work under stress	1	2	3	4	5
4. I know and understand the implications of being in a workplace environment	1	2	3	4	5
5. I can conduct myself according to the rules of a workplace	1	2	3	4	5
6. I keep my workplace clean and tidy	1	2	3	4	5
7. I am used to making decisions independently	1	2	3	4	5
Experience and competencies that are important for the profession	Levels 1-5 (No experience - substantial experience)				
1. I have experience of groundworks for laying water and sanitation pipes	1	2	3	4	5
2. I have experience of groundworks for road construction	1	2	3	4	5
3. I have experience of asphalt surfacing for e.g. roads	1	2	3	4	5
4. I have experience of groundworks for railroad construction	1	2	3	4	5
5. I have experience of groundworks for landscaping	1	2	3	4	5
6. I have experience of laying stone or slabs for pathways	1	2	3	4	5
7. Number of years of experience as a construction/building worker:	___years				

Source: Arbetsförmedlingen (The Swedish Public Employment Agency).

It is important to encourage and help an applicant to collect evidence and prepare relevant documents. Table 3.2 provides some examples of what evidence may be included.

Table 3.2. Examples of evidence to be submitted with an RPL application

Portfolio	Other documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A paper outlining education and career goals • Learning outcomes and competency statements • A chronological record of significant learning experiences • Formal and informal records i.e. certificates of past learning achievements – supplier training courses, in-house courses, workshops, seminars, club course e.g. first aid, surf lifesaving, etc. • Curriculum vitae/resume 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licenses obtained, e.g. forklift, working with children, etc. • Photographs or video recordings of work undertaken • Work samples such as technical drawings or site plans you have worked on with workplace inductions • Membership of relevant associations • Performance appraisals • References or letters from previous employers or supervisors • Any other documentation that may demonstrate industry experience

Here are some tips to help an applicant prepare a portfolio:⁷

- Talk about **the applicant’s work history** particularly if they are not currently employed. Also refer to the details on the RPL applicant form regarding the information about where they have worked, either paid or unpaid, and what tasks they performed there.
- Talk about **the applicant’s current job roles and responsibilities** if they are currently employed.
- Discuss **the opportunity to contact the applicant’s workplace or previous workplace**, if possible, so that their skills can be verified by someone who works or has worked with them.
- Discuss **the possibility of contacting community or other organizations for whom they have done unpaid or volunteer work**.

⁷ Adapted from Charles Darwin University, no date.

- Discuss any opportunities **the applicant has had for in-house training** conducted by staff or suppliers to their industry or service area. If they are issued with **a certificate for their attendance**, ask them to bring it with them for their interview.
- Based on the information collected, assist the applicant to **prepare a portfolio**.

The European Commission has developed a new EU Skills Profile tool for third-country nationals (see box 3.5). The tool, which is free of charge, aims to support early identification of the skills of refugees, migrant workers and other third-country nationals.

Box 3.5. The EU Skills Profile tool for third-country nationals

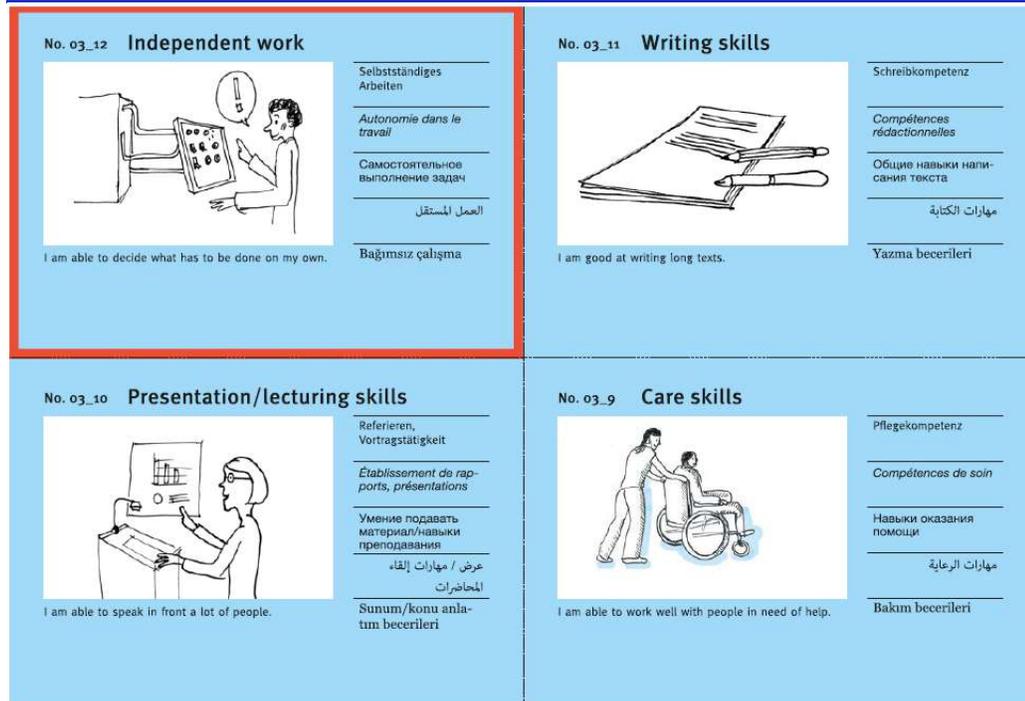
The focus of this tool is to help individuals produce a profile of their skills and to help an adviser identify any recommendations or next steps. It is intended to be used by any service that may offer assistance to third-country nationals and is formatted to be used in an interview situation to get to know individuals, their skills, qualifications and experiences. It is not intended as a recognition or authentication tool, but for skills identification for use as a preparatory tool for RPL. The information collected can be used to:

- support further assessment;
- form a basis for offering guidance;
- identify up-skilling needs; and
- support job-searching and job-matching.

The EU Skills Profile tool will be available in all EU and EEA languages as well as in Arabic, Farsi, Pashto, Sorani, Somali, Tigrinya and Turkish. The Beta version of this tool is currently available on the Internet at: <http://www.efvet.org/2017/06/21/eu-skills-profile-tool-for-3rd-country-nationals/>.

During the course of preparation for RPL, an employment counsellor may use a variety of tools and methods available in order to fully understand the competencies and skills of the applicant. One interesting tool that is developed and utilized in Germany is “competency cards” (see figure 3.2). The cards were specially developed for immigration counselling in order to support analysis of the social abilities and skills of migrants, taking into account informally and non-formally acquired skills. The combination of pictures and text in simple language makes it easier for migrants to access and helps overcome language barriers since the cards are self-explanatory. This tool is particularly useful for low-skilled migrants and refugees who do not possess good language skills.

Figure 3.2. Competency cards: An example from Germany



Source: Bertelsmann, see www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de.

3.1.3 The assessment process

Although employment services providers are not directly involved in the assessment, they can play an active role in supporting applicants, particularly through liaising with the agencies involved, providing translation and interpretation services throughout the process and acting as a mediator between the assessor and the migrant worker seeking RPL.

The first step for an applicant is to complete the RPL application form. Once an applicant has done this and has assembled all the evidence and prepared a portfolio, if required, to present the evidence in an easily accessible way, the whole package is typically reviewed by the assessor. Following an initial assessment, the applicant will usually be interviewed and/or asked to undertake skills testing by the assessor to verify the legitimacy of the applicant's claim.

Professional assessors, competent both in the occupation and in the assessment process, will compare the competencies of the applicant against relevant occupational standards or programme learning outcomes. Usually a mix of methods, which include the portfolio, assessment, criterion-oriented interviews, workspace observation or other forms of testing, is

applied, depending on the aim, the target group and the competencies to be assessed. The assessor will then make a decision on whether the applicant is competent against the units of competency he/she has applied for and informs the applicant of the outcome. Box 3.6 shows a typical procedure used in the Netherlands.

Box 3.6. An RPL procedure in the Netherlands

The procedures of recognition of prior learning (RPL) and accreditation of prior learning (APL) in the Netherlands are as follows:

1. Informing and advising applicants on APL
2. Career counselling on personal goals, choice of methodologies for RPL
3. Collecting work experience and other informal learning in a portfolio
4. Learning outcomes compared with a standard qualification
5. Accreditation: The result of the RPL procedure is written in a report called “certificate of experience”.

Source: Nationaal Kenniscentrum EVC, at: <https://www.nationaal-kenniscentrum-etc.nl>.

If the applicant is successful, he/she is issued a formal certificate or occupational licence. The applicant is thereby eligible for relevant job opportunities or further training and can further use the full services of employment agencies for updating their CV to reflect the outcome of the RPL and applying for jobs with the new qualification. Samples of a full certificate and a partial certificate, in case of partial recognition, can be found in Annexes 4 and 5 (see also Mansfield and Downey, 2013).

If the applicant is deemed not yet competent and/or wants to gain additional skills in some other units of competency, he/she can do so through the regular pathways of institutional or workplace training and assessment. In this case, employment services providers should provide information and support on available learning pathways and options (see Section 3.1.4 below). Also, see Section 4 on the range of other labour market services available to migrant workers.

3.1.4 Filling the skills gaps through a learning plan

Once the RPL assessment has been completed and an outcome decided, assessors will advise applicants on how to fill any competency gaps that may have been identified so that the full qualification can be obtained. Employment counsellors can play an active role in this process, advising on training options and how to use the partially or fully recognized certificate to access

the labour market. The end result of this interaction with the assessor and the employment counsellors should be the development of a learning plan. The learning plan should identify what programmes or activities the individual should engage in and how that will occur.

Evidence shows that employment and training programmes targeted to the needs of specific migrant workers to become job-ready and licensed in their field are more successful than general programmes.

These bridging courses can involve a range of delivery strategies, including training for gaps in competencies through reading, project work, attendance at individual training sessions, attendance at group classes, work placement, or all of the above. When the gap training and related skills development are complete, the applicants should be reassessed against the same units they were previously assessed against.

Each bridge training programme is different and may provide individuals with:



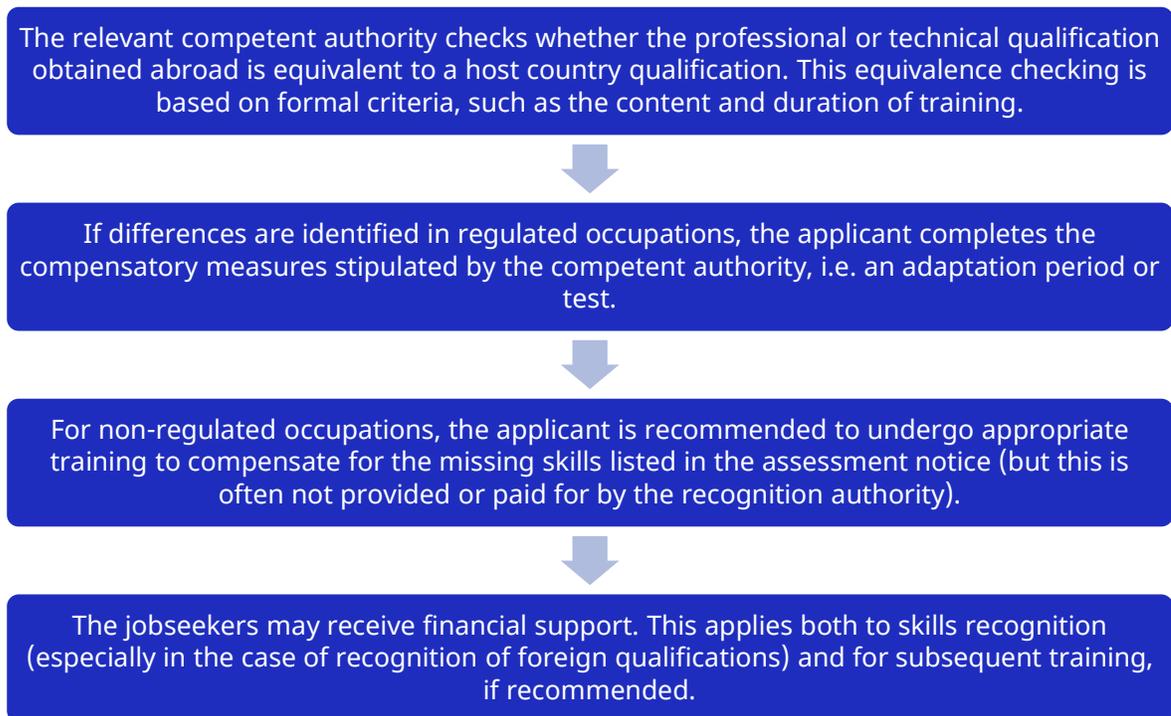
One possibility for applicants with gaps in their educational, competencies or technical skills records is for employers to try provisional employment (Malfroy, 1999); that is, an applicant is hired with the idea that he/she will demonstrate his/her ability to do the job over a defined period of time. On-the-job training, professional development opportunities, accelerated performance reviews, and mentorship under an experienced company can help make the employee's chances of success greater, regardless of whether the employment is conditional or not (Loo, 2016). Employment services may play a facilitating role in this process between respective employers and migrant workers.

As previously stressed, migrant workers as well as refugees often face a degrading of competencies as a result of the recognition process due to lack of linguistic competency –

rather than actual technical competency – and this, consequently, may lead to their limited labour mobility or labour integration into the host countries (IOM, 2013). In this regard, language courses and training need to be provided for migrant workers and refugees in combination with the above-mentioned bridge training programmes.

3.2 Recognition of formal foreign qualifications

An example of a recognition process for formally educated migrant workers can include the following steps:



In general terms, formal recognition of the knowledge and skills of a migrant worker depends on the type of education system in the sending country and how this compares to that of the host country, in terms of both content and quality. Learning outcomes are assessed to determine the issuance of an equivalent diploma or certificate that allows employers to identify the real competencies of the workers they seek to hire.

This is typically initiated by public employment services (PES) upon the approach of potential applicants or from referrals of agencies dealing directly with migrants. PES do not directly assess skills and competencies, but act as a point of referral to official agencies, or assist applicants to prepare an application. In the case of specific requests from a foreign employer,

PES might offer their clients an expert assessment conducted by external suppliers contracted by them.

In other cases, especially when competencies declared by the jobseeker are not certified, employment agencies could support the jobseeker in the recognition process by conducting a direct assessment, if such a process is available in the country.

The typical process in addressing the recognition of the skills acquired through formal education by migrants focuses first on higher level academic qualifications and recognition of other diplomas and certificates.

3.2.1 Recognition of academic qualifications issued by foreign educational institutions

The procedures for recognition and equivalence of qualifications are regulated by international or bilateral agreements between countries.

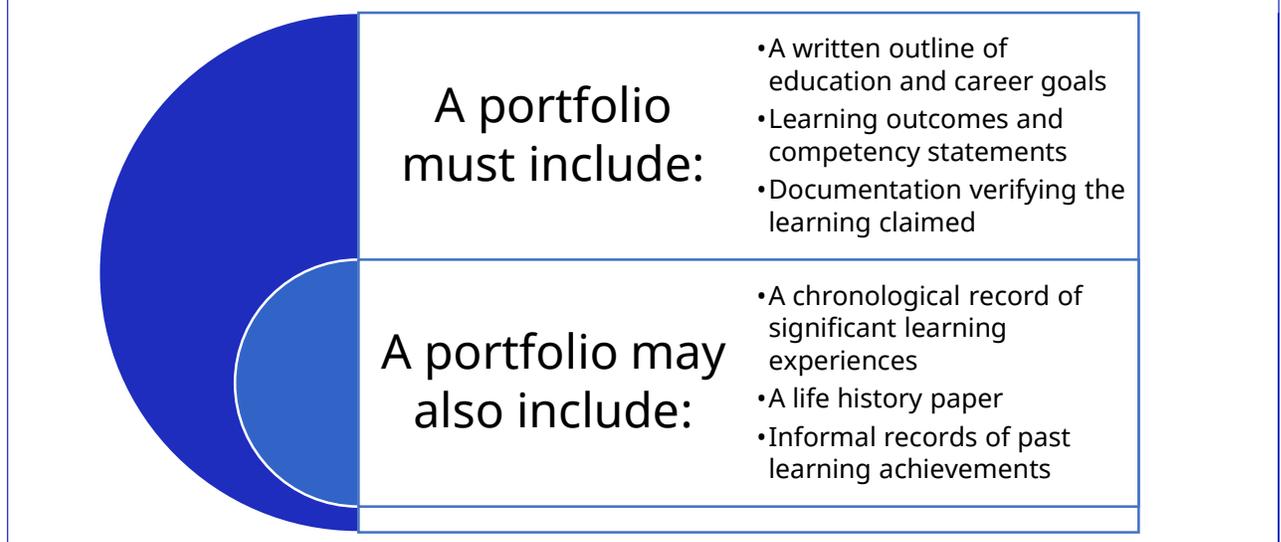
Recognition of a diploma or degree of higher education obtained in a country implies acceptance by the competent authorities of another country and the granting to its holder of rights enjoyed by those of the latter country. These rights extend to either the pursuit of studies or the practice of a profession. Generally, equivalence checking is based on specific criteria such as the content and duration of previous training.

For more information about the recognition of qualifications, it is recommended that potential migrants familiarize themselves with the specific procedures for the equivalence of diplomas in the country to which they plan to move before departure. Box 3.7 describes the role of PES in facilitating the process of recognition, while European information centres are described in box 3.8.

Box 3.7. The role of PES in the process of recognition of academic qualifications

The employment counsellors first ask migrants to submit their academic records, which are then certified by the relevant authority. They may provide a translation service, but the associated cost is usually borne by the migrants. The counsellors may also play a role in providing information on the recognition procedures and relevant authorities that can be contacted for this process.

The employment counsellors assigned by the PES can also help migrants prepare their skills portfolio: an organized collection of materials, which records and verifies learning achievements and relates them to the requirements of the specific education or training programme, occupational standard or technical qualification for which the migrant is seeking to obtain recognition.



Box 3.8. The ENIC–NARIC Information Centres in the European Union

The ENIC (European Network of Information Centres in the European Region)–NARIC (National Academic Recognition Information Centres in the European Union) Network is made up of information centres in 55 countries that provide information on international recognition of national qualifications and related topics to individuals, employers, education institutions and others.

Established by the Parties to the Lisbon Recognition Convention of 1997 and under an initiative of the European Commission in 1994, they typically provide information on:

- recognition of foreign diplomas, degrees and other qualifications;
- education systems in both foreign countries and the centre’s own country; and
- opportunities for studying abroad, including information on equivalence.

Source: <http://www.enic-naric.net>.

3.2.2 Recognition of other diplomas and certificates

Qualifications below degree level are not typically recognized through a formal agreement between countries and thus are often considered as a different form of evidence in the recognition of prior learning process. Therefore, having a certificate issued in the sending country does not have the same potential for equivalency in the destination country. Another possibility is that some academic institutions may recognize such certificates and issue partial credits when used for continuing studies in the receiving country. Procedures for recognizing non-formal and informal learning are described in Section 3.1.

3.3 Suggested further reading

- AUC (African Union Commission). 2018. *Workshop on Reintegration of Returning Migrants into the Labour Market – Scoping the Field: Dakar, Senegal, 22–23 October 2018*, Workshop Summary Report (Addis Ababa).
- Braňka, J. 2016. *Strengthening skills recognition systems: Recommendations for key stakeholders* (Geneva, ILO).
- Desireo, M. F.; Schuster, A. (eds). 2013. *Improving access to labour market information for migrants and employers* (Geneva, International Organization for Migration).
- EC (European Commission). 2017. *Public employment services (PES) initiatives around skills, competencies and qualifications of refugees and asylum seekers*, Thematic Paper (Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union).
- ILO (International Labour Office). 2018. *Recognition of prior learning: A learning package* (Geneva).
- Shah, C.; Long, M.; Windle, J. 2007. *Recognition of skills and qualifications: labour mobility and trade in services* (Melbourne, Monash University).
- UNESCO. 2018. *What a waste: Ensure migrants and refugees' qualifications and prior learning are recognized*, Policy Paper 37 (Paris).
- Werquin, P.; Panzica, F. 2018. *Migrant workers' skills portability in Africa at regional economic community and continental level: Guidance towards an African qualifications framework?* (Geneva, ILO).

SECTION 4

OTHER LABOUR MARKET SERVICES AVAILABLE TO MIGRANT WORKERS

Employment services providers usually offer a wide range of services that migrant workers can benefit from. While the previous section provided detailed information on how to facilitate RPL services for migrant workers, this section will cover other labour market services that are available.

Mediation with the international labour market traditionally falls under the private employment agencies (PrEA), but public employment services (PES) can also play a proactive role in this regard (see box 4.1). Typically, this happens when the government of the sending country has prioritized the prevention of irregular migration and seeks to facilitate adequate job matching. (See Annex 6 for the steps to be undertaken by a PES when it receives a request from a company abroad for the recruitment of migrant workers.)

Box 4.1. The role of public employment services

PES operate as a virtual bridge between the competencies of their national workers and the labour needs in specific areas worldwide. They identify job opportunities abroad and assess information on these opportunities for national migrant workers through:

- organizing job fairs open to international employers; and
- bilateral agreements between countries of origin and destination.

While exploring labour markets abroad, PES can carry out missions that allow it to:

- make contact with potential customers (or retain existing customers); and
- inform potential employers on the services that PES can provide to them and to migrant workers, within existing frameworks.

4.1 Active labour market programmes (ALMP)

Most of the services offered by employment service providers to jobseekers are included under ALMPs (see **Annex 9 for a definition**). Some of these measures, though designed for the native

population, can ideally also be used for immigrants, returnees and, where possible, refugees. They include the following interventions:

Job search assistance

- Counselling and monitoring of job search efforts.
- Training on how to write a CV and cover letter.

Subsidized private sector employment

- Wage subsidies and/or participation in the social security contribution for employers who hire unemployed workers, especially those who are more vulnerable.

Public works

- Usually offering temporary job opportunities, mainly in community services, aimed more at income generation than increasing the employability of jobseekers.

Self-employment incentives

- Technical advice, start-up support, training on business management.

Training

- Aiming to enhance skills needed by jobseekers to increase their employability. On-the-job and/or off-the-job training, a combination of in-company training with subsidies.

There are specific programmes designed mainly for immigrants and, where applicable, refugees:

Language training	Orientation course	Introduction	Ad-hoc programmes for immigrants and refugees
Aims at improving participants' ability to communicate in the main language of the country of destination.	Provides information about history, culture and institutions of the host country.	Provides newly arrived immigrants with customized assistance in job searching, including training, and subsidized employment.	Can include advice and support for the recognition of skills acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning. In case of identification of gaps in competencies, training opportunities might be offered through the available training providers. In some cases this activity could be undertaken directly by the migrant worker benefiting from ad-hoc funds.

An interesting instrument for addressing skills mismatch is the voucher system, as largely used for instance in Latvia,⁸ where jobseekers having the need to enhance their skills to match those on demand in the labour market receive a coupon to spend on qualified training providers. The impact might be very useful, both in terms of the unemployed obtaining new skills and finding a job, and creating positive competition among the training providers, so enhancing the quality of the training delivery.

4.2 Services for potential migrant workers

When potential migrant workers contact employment services providers for the first time, they may not be aware of the options for working abroad. In this case, employment services providers could assess their competencies to help them make informed choices. Typically, the services offered to this group follow the steps below:

Registration

- Registration of all basic information details (name, age, address, education, relevant qualifications and prior working experiences).
- "Diagnosis interview" leads to development of individual action plan (IAP) which is based on needs, strengths and level of autonomy of an individual.

Screening

- Periodic meetings with a jobseeker based on the level of their autonomy.
- Profiling – initial assessment of the skills, abilities and motivation (**see Annex 7 for an example**).

Identification

- Identifying strengths and weaknesses of the jobseeker as well as skills, competences and motivation using a tool such as a self-assessment checklist (**see table 3.1 and Annex 2**).
- Identification documents that can provide evidence of competences.

Decision

- Assessing readiness and analysing options for migration.

⁸ See: <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/matching-skills/all-instruments/vouchers-acquiring-vocational-education-upskilling-and-informal-education-programmes>Active labour market policies.

- Providing necessary information and support.

Preparation for departure

- Language and technical training, pre-departure workshop (information on the destination country including culture, necessary documents, rights and duties of migrant workers, information on work visas, medical examination, etc.).
- Specific information session and guidance on the recognition of nationally acquired skills when abroad and how to collect evidence of foreign employment for the RPL in the case of a return.

Specific information and guidance may be provided, if appropriate, to potential migrants through the following recruitment channels:

- **Private employment agencies.** The current trend shows that more and more migrants are recruited by private employment agencies that provide information on overseas opportunities and personalized services to candidates seeking a job abroad. These services include preparation sessions in the linguistic, social and professional areas of host countries, and also in the final arrangement of an agreement with the recruiting companies on the selection of workers through competition, screening or final selection interviews.
- **Recruitment through public services in destination countries.** Potential migrants may also find jobs abroad by accessing public databases published in many countries by the public employment services. This option often applies to regions with free movement of labour such as the European Union (see box 4.2). An electronic tool for profiling migrant workers and refugees has also been created by the European Union and could be used whenever possible instead of the hard copy.⁹

Box 4.2. EU mobility platforms

The European Employment Services (EURES) is a network aimed at facilitating the free movement of workers within the EU countries plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

⁹ See: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1412&langId=en>.

The network includes public employment services (PES), private employment agencies (PrEAs), trade unions, employers' organizations and other relevant actors in the labour market. EURES provides, among others, the following services to jobseekers and employers:

- matching of job vacancies and CVs on the portal;
- information and guidance and other support services for workers and employers;
- access to information on living and working conditions in the EU Member States, such as taxation, pensions, health insurance and social security; and
- specific support services for frontier workers and employers in cross-border regions.

A second mobility tool is made by EURAXESS, "Researchers in Motion", which provides information and support services to professional researchers on mobility and career development, while enhancing scientific collaboration between Europe and the rest of the world.

Sources: EURES: <https://ec.europa.eu/eures/main.jsp?catId=2547&acro=faq&lang=en>; EURAXESS: <https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/>.

- **Direct recruitment by the employer.** Migrants can also be recruited directly by the foreign employer. The employer can directly contact and select workers, establish conditions of employment including the visa documents for work and travel, and ensure that both the general and special conditions of the contractual relationship between the two parties are respected (see **Annex 6** for steps to be taken by PES upon receipt of a recruitment request from a company).
- **Recruitment through networking.** The role of social networks has become a major factor contributing to the increasing number of migrant workers. Social networks include not only family members but also other relatives and friends.

In addition, standard and relevant information about working conditions and social life in the main destination countries should be prepared by the employment services providers and made available in electronic and hard copy. For those who will embark on their first migration experience, **it is extremely important that they become familiar with the rules, customs and culture of the destination country.** There are many sources for such kinds of information, and from time to time the destination countries or the PES disseminate written materials. In a fluid global environment, the risk of outdated information is very possible, so it is always advisable to periodically consult with reliable information sources managed by public and private organizations in the destination countries.

Finally, it is important to raise awareness among migrant workers on the rules and conditions of a fair contract which will regulate their employment while in the destination country. PES often play a crucial role in this.

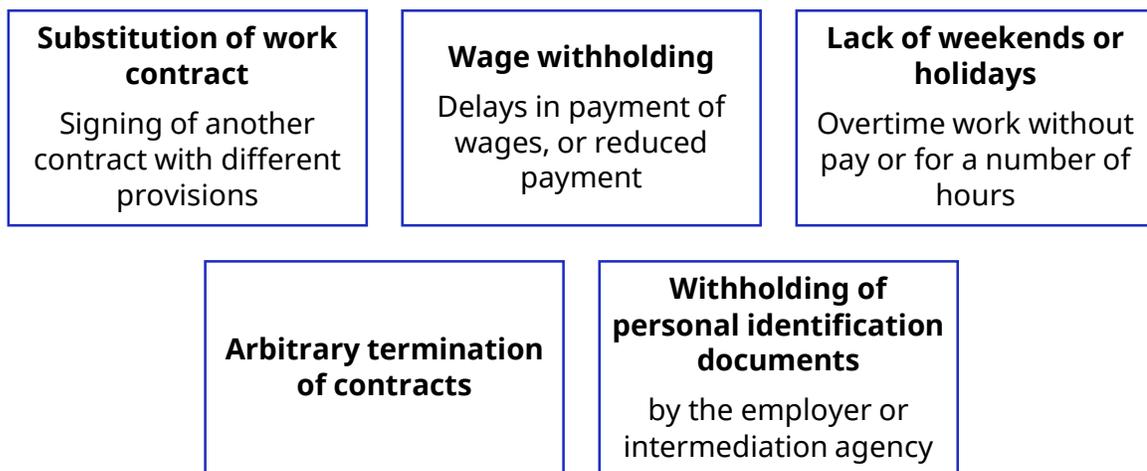
The work conditions of migrant workers are regulated by the employment legislation of each destination country, so there is no standard format.¹⁰ However, a working agreement, formulated in a language that the worker can fully understand, has to include the following clauses:¹¹

- clear identification of the parties to the contract: employer and employee, including information about each party;
- purpose of the contract;
- duties of the worker;
- working time and holidays;
- remuneration of the employee and the equivalence of the remuneration stipulated in one conventional currency; terms and mode of payment of the salary for the work rendered during the working time and for the work delivered overtime, during the night or under unfavourable conditions, and other possible benefits;
- compensation for the work delivered during days off and holidays; annual paid leave, other supplements and indemnities foreseen by the legislation;
- a way of paying for travel expenses from the country of origin to the destination country;
- provision of lodging complying with sanitary requirements, eating conditions;
- health-care insurance (duration, who is paying and on the territory of which country);
- insurance against accidents, compensation for damages and prejudice caused as a consequence of work accidents, transportation of the injured person or the deceased in the country of origin, research on work accidents and cases of occupational disease; and
- procedures for ending the contract.

¹⁰The minimum standards for decent work should comply with the provisions of the ILO Convention on Migration for Employment (revised), 1949 (No. 97); the UN International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (1990); the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979) and other UN core Conventions.

¹¹ These arrangements are often indicated in the case of bilateral labour migration arrangements.

Employment services providers should also consider drafting or checking a work contract in order to prevent abuse of migrant workers, the most common being:



Destination countries have institutions who are in charge of supervising the enforcement of legal provisions regarding work relations. Migrants should be made aware of these authorities, as in case of exploitation they can file a complaint with them.

4.3 Services for returning migrant workers

The return to the country of origin and reintegration into family and society is not always a success story. It depends largely on the presence of labour market opportunities, possibilities for investment of savings, and appropriate services for returning migrant workers and their families. In order to address the challenges of this stage, it is important to understand opportunities for reintegration and the individual peculiarities of returnees. This will reduce the risk of repeated migration and will smooth the reintegration process

The reintegration of migrants into the social and economic life of their community and country is a complex process and depends on the individual needs and capacities of the individual migrant, on one hand, and on the opportunities and support services available, on the other. Box 4.3 discusses the particular problems of migrant domestic workers.

Employment services providers can usually help returnees in their reinsertion in the domestic labour market through the following services:

Job searching

- Job counselling, paying attention to the skills and experience acquired abroad.
- Assistance in developing an individual plan with actions to be undertaken to increase employment possibilities.
- Participation in “job clubs” to learn about changes in the labour market, and how to develop an attractive CV and an application/motivation letter.
- Participation in job fairs, where workers can meet with potential employers and negotiate on possible employment.
- Training opportunities (for qualification, requalification and improvement of skills) to facilitate skill matching, as appropriate.

Self-employment

- Information about business opportunities, possible training on starting a business, access to credit.
- Referral to specialized organizations for consultation and entrepreneurship assistance service.

Recognition of prior learning

- Facilitation of recognition/certification of skills acquired abroad (**see Section 3 for detailed information on how to facilitate the recognition process**).

Box 4.3. Migrant domestic workers: Challenges and a way forward to skills recognition

Domestic work is often perceived as unskilled work; this cripples a worker’s ability to bargain for higher wages and better working conditions. The assumption makes it challenging for migrant domestic workers (MDWs) to have their skills recognized both in destination countries, where their skills may not be certified, and upon return to their home countries, where there are few opportunities for the acknowledgement of their newly acquired skills. It is for this primary reason that labour market services targeting MDWs are focused on skills development through pre-departure programmes.

The absence of regional competency frameworks, as well as mutual recognition agreements for domestic workers, hampers the development potential of both MDWs and the countries of origin and destination. Moreover, mutual recognition agreements/systems for MDWs are hard to establish given the difficulty of demonstrating equivalencies. Nevertheless, there have been some initiatives that address these challenges:

Regional model competency standards for domestic workers in ASEAN were developed in 2014 by the ILO and relevant stakeholders from participating countries. These competency standards are a basis for identifying the skills most needed in the workplace, so that training and assessment resources can then be developed and individuals tested against the standards.

In Sri Lanka, the National Labour Migration Policy, whose main focus is on low-skilled migrant workers, especially female domestic workers who have limited capacity, knowledge and access to information and services, calls for the facilitation of the return and reintegration of migrant workers by creating opportunities for “skill transfer, productive employment and conflict-free social integration”. Under this policy, the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE) facilitates the process by providing services to returning migrants and their family members, including recognition of skills through “Recognition of Prior Learning” and certification.

Source: ILO, 2016a.

4.4 Services for returning migrant workers due to COVID-19

According to the ILO, there are four key pillars to address COVID-19, based on international labour standards (figure 4.1). This section of the guide focuses on return migrants in the context of COVID-19.

Figure 4.1. Four key pillars to address COVID-19

Pillar 1 Stimulating the economy and employment	Pillar 2 Supporting enterprises, jobs and incomes	Pillar 3 Protecting workers in the workplace	Pillar 4 Relying on social dialogue for solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active fiscal policy • Accommodative monetary policy • Lending and financial support to specific sectors, including the health sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide various types of relief, including financial and tax relief, for enterprises • Implement employment retention measures • Extend social protection to everyone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen occupational safety and health measures • Adapt work arrangements (e.g. teleworking) • Prevent discrimination and exclusion • Provide access to health for all • Expand access to paid leave 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the capacity and resilience of employers' and workers' organizations • Strengthen the capacity of governments • Strengthen social dialogue, collective bargaining and labour relations institutions and processes

Source: [https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus/impacts-and-responses/WCMS_739047/lang--en/index.htm?shared_from=shr-tls](https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus/impacts-and-responses/WCMS_739047/lang-en/index.htm?shared_from=shr-tls).

With regard to migrant workers, the following key considerations to ensure rights-based, gender-sensitive policy responses should be considered (see ILO, 2020a):

- migrant workers' inclusion in national COVID-19 responses;
- bilateral cooperation between countries of origin and destination; and

- social dialogue and full involvement of employers' and workers' organizations in the development of COVID-19 responses.

Both the epidemic and the resulting economic difficulties have had an adverse impact of labour migration, with many migrant workers being forced to return to their countries of origin. Given the already existing challenges on many national labour markets, countries should make an effort to include migrant workers in their national COVID-19 policy responses.

To make inclusive policy response a reality, specific and coordinated efforts of many actors are necessary. It is therefore suggested to establish, under the leadership of the Ministry of Labour, a coordinating mechanism such as a joint committee or task force aimed at identifying the needs of the return migrant workers and how their reinsertion can be addressed. The mechanism should include the social partners, line ministries (e.g. Economy, Finance, Health, Education), public employment services and training institutions, among others.

The interventions of the task force should include the following actions:

4.4.1 Assessment of the return migrant target group

Return migrants represent a heterogeneous group in terms of their professional experience, skills and qualifications. They may be categorized into four broad groups:

- Some may need neither skills development nor recognition of prior learning, but only support for reinsertion into the domestic labour market.
- For those who have acquired new skills abroad, the recognition process would help to facilitate their reintegration, reaping the benefits of the skills acquired abroad.
- For others, targeted actions may be needed for skilling according to current labour market demands in specific sectors.
- Some will be interested in self-employment or starting their own business. This group will need different types of policy measures. Once this group has been identified, the relevant institutions could offer any existing measures/packages for self-employment or business support services. The ILO Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) packages could be used.¹²

In order to design effective and timely policy actions, there is a need to collect appropriate information from the return migrants, such as socio-demographic characteristics (age, gender, education level, qualifications and skills, occupations before and during labour migration) and expectations after their return. To collect this information, the task force should authorize the public employment services or other competent body to administer the sample questionnaire shown in table 4.1. This will allow a rapid assessment of the skills and

¹² See: <https://www.ilo.org/empent/areas/start-and-improve-your-business/lang--en/index.htm>.

qualifications of the return migrants to be carried out, as well as any needs for recognition or development of skills for labour market reintegration.

The questionnaire will be filled in by the return migrants on their own, either electronically (e.g. on the website of the PES) or on paper as distributed and collected by PES staff. The pre-screening questions should be answered first. The full questionnaire can then be answered by all return migrant workers who pass the pre-screening.

Table 4.1. Questionnaire for return migrant workers, to be administered in their country of origin

Pre-screening questions:

1. Are you interested in finding a job at home? (If the answer is NO, please stop the assessment.)
2. Do you intend to re-migrate? (If the answer is YES, please stop the assessment.)

Key questions	Answers
3. Name	
4. Age	
5. Gender	
6. Educational attainment (<i>please indicate the highest level obtained</i>)	
7. Are you interested in self-employment or starting your own business? (<i>If the answer is YES, go directly to question 15. If the answer is NO, continue with the questions below.</i>)	
8. Please indicate any training before migration, including whether you received a qualification for it? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • on-the-job • occupation-specific training • apprenticeship • language training • cultural orientation • none 	
9. Please indicate any training abroad and whether you received a qualification/certification for it? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • on-the-job • occupation-specific training • apprenticeship • language training • cultural orientation 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • none 	
10. What kind of job did you have before going abroad?	
11. What was the main job you had while abroad?	
12. Do you have certification of your employment, describing the tasks you performed on your job abroad?	
13. In which sector would you like to work? For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture • Construction • Tourism <i>(The sectors will be based on a feasibility assessment carried out at the country level)</i>	
14. Which occupation would you like to perform? For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pruner • Welder • Waiter <i>(The occupations will be based on a feasibility assessment carried out at the country level)</i>	
15. Do you have any certified skills in the occupation you would like to perform?	
16. Do you need training in financial skills such as budget planning and saving?	
17. Do you need support services to start your own business? If yes, please specify	

4.4.2 Identification of labour demand

The coordinating mechanism could request that the PES or other competent body carry out a rapid assessment on labour demand which could be potentially filled by return migrant workers. In particular, the assessment should provide information on:

- job vacancies by economic sector and occupational profile;
- existing active labour market measures covering different training opportunities, including for self-employment and entrepreneurship;
- financial support measures for job creation and local economic development; and
- mechanisms for the recognition of prior learning.

Given the time constraints, the task force can draw on existing analysis, relevant data and policy reviews conducted by national institutions or/and international organizations prior to COVID-19. This information should be supplemented with available secondary data on the current impact of the crisis on the economy and labour market. This could be done in combination with key informant interviews in the country of origin with relevant government, employer and worker organizations, think tanks and academia, and, when possible, should link to surveys of enterprises/households that are ongoing (ILO, 2020b).¹³ A non-exclusive list of questions is shown in table 4.2; their exact content will depend on the specific country situation and needs.

Another tool that the task force can use is the setting up of sectoral round tables to identify labour demands at occupational level.

Table 4.2. Questions for key informant interviews: Some examples

Information	Sources
Do you have a return and reintegration policy?	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Labour
Are there any measures in main destination countries to assist migrant workers who are returning due to COVID-19? If YES, please explain.	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Labour
Which economic sectors are more conducive to job creation?	Ministry of Labour, PES, statistical service, employer and worker organizations
Which occupational profiles are most in demand in each economic sector?	Ministry of Labour, PES, employer and worker organizations
What training opportunities are available for matching return migrant workers with the current labour demand?	Ministry of Labour, PES, Ministry of Education, employer and worker organizations, training institutions
Are there available mechanisms for the recognition of skills and qualifications?	Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Education, PES, employer and worker organizations, training institutions
What local economic development measures can be activated for promoting additional employment?	Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Finance, employer and worker organizations, local authorities
Are there any public work programmes that can target return migrants?	Ministry of Labour, PES, Ministry of Economy, relevant line ministries such as

¹³ See: https://www.ilo.org/emppolicy/pubs/WCMS_743644/lang--en/index.htm.

	agriculture, employer and worker organizations, local authorities
What microfinance or other financial support programmes for SMEs exist that can be used for job creation?	Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Finance, employer and worker organizations, microcredit institutions
What are the capacity-building needs for the main actors involved in the reintegration of return migrant workers?	Ministry of Labour, line ministries involved, PES, employer and worker organizations, NGOs
Do you foresee social integration services for return migrants?	Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Education, PES, NGOs

4.5 Integration services for migrant workers

Integration of migrant workers and their families into the society of the destination country is a common objective for international organizations and many national governments, but in reality there are cultural, language, economic and social challenges that hinder the integration process. Evidence suggests that integration into the labour market is particularly challenging for migrant workers.

In many European countries, ensuring integration of immigrants into the local labour market is considered a responsibility of the PES. The labour market services, including recognition of prior learning, are, however, fragmented among the PES in European countries which specifically target immigrants. As suggested earlier, the levels of support and services available for migrant workers also vary according to the levels of their education and skills and their migratory status i.e. regular or irregular (**see Section 4.1 for labour market services that migrant workers can benefit from**).

Permanent immigrant workers regularly present in the destination country may receive support in job searching, skills upgrading (especially for matching hard-to-fill vacancies) and advice on and support in protecting their rights at work. They may also benefit from referrals to other public or private institutions dealing with their needs, as well as recognition of their competencies and prior learning.

The PES may also publish awareness-raising materials in target languages in order to inform migrant workers about their services and how to access them. How to facilitate access to RPL

through raising public awareness, marketing and reaching out to this group is explained in **Section 3.1.1**.

4.6 Services for refugees

Pending the recognition of their status as refugees, persons concerned are usually hosted by ad-hoc services. If specific programmes are available, these individuals may attend training courses that would facilitate their integration once the recognition procedures are positively concluded. But this is quite rare. Normally the possibility for training or job searching is available only once refugee status is granted (**see Section 4.1 for labour market services available to refugees**).

Although refugees' labour rights are clearly protected by international law and 147 countries have committed to honouring these rights as parties to the 1951 Refugee Convention, and 162 have committed to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the reality is that many of the world's refugees lack access to safe and lawful employment. Many States parties to the 1951 Convention have expressed reservations when it comes to the right to work of refugees.

It is common practice in some countries to grant refugees the right to work. Yet a gap remains between the legal right of refugees to take up employment and their successful integration into host societies' labour markets. To facilitate this, it is important to reduce legal, administrative and practical barriers to participation in the labour market, such as restrictions on work permits. Integration programmes, including language classes and courses on how to access the labour market, also need to be promoted.

4.7 Suggested further reading

- Butschek, S; Thomas, W. 2014. "What active labour market programmes work for immigrants in Europe? A meta-analysis of the evaluation literature", in *IZA Journal of Development and Migration*, Vol. 3.
- Carcillo, S.; David, G. 2006. *The role of active labour market policies* (Paris, OECD).
- EC (European Commission). 2015. *Identification of latest trends and current developments in methods to profile jobseekers in European public employment services: Final report* (Brussels).
- ILO (International Labour Office). 2016. *The access of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons to the labour market*, Background paper and draft ILO guiding principles for discussion at the ILO Tripartite Technical Meeting on the Access of Refugees and Other Forcibly Displaced Persons to the Labour Market, Geneva, 5–7 July 2016, TMARLM/2016 (Geneva).
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- Noack, M. 2015. *A toolbox for guidance: Identifying competencies in migrants and refugees* (Brussels, BertelsmannStiftung).
- Powers, T. 2017. *Partnerships and contractors in the delivery of employment services and ALMPs: A literature review* (Geneva).
- Spaan, E.; Hillmann, F.; van Naerssen, T.(eds). 2005. *Asian migrants and European labour markets: Patterns and processes of immigrant labour market insertion in Europe* (London, Routledge).

ANNEX 1

Occupational standards for bricklayers and stonemasons

Main duties: lay bricks, concrete blocks, stone, structural tiles and other masonry materials to construct or repair walls, floors, partitions, foundations and other structures, using building materials such as cement, grout, plaster, resins, etc. and products such as sand, gravel, etc.

Working environment: civil and industrial building and construction fields.

Organization context: work under the supervision of a building master.

Modality of the delivery of tasks:

- they may work both outdoors and inside a building site, where they can be subject to noise, dust and bad weather conditions;
- the job requires physical effort, respect for working time. Obligations to use any prescribed equipment for preventing injuries and to follow the proper practices prescribed for the building sites.

Optional requirements: previous working experience in the sector or a certificate issued by a building and construction school will be an asset.

Soft skills:

- Accuracy
- Dexterity
- Resistance to hard work
- Team work and cooperation

Competencies to be able to carry out construction works:

- Be able to read blueprints, with a clear capacity to understand the included symbols.
- Interpret the specific technical project in order to define modalities, shape, dimensions and measures of the building works.
- Plan and benchmark the tasks in compliance with the time schedule of the project.

- Capacity to define the technical characteristics of the building materials and how to use them according to the typology of the works to be done.
- Carry out masonry and plaster work.
- Demolish, open or close partitions.
- Erect simple scaffoldings and mobile platforms.
- Clean up the site from rubble produced.

Knowledge:

- Variety and characteristics of the building materials.
- Environmental regulations at EU, national and regional level on waste management concerning civil and industrial debris.
- Different steps in the building process.
- Basic knowledge of the technology concerning building materials, such as concrete.
- Basic technical drawing.
- Rules on safety in building and construction.

Skills:

- Apply techniques for erecting scaffolding.
- Apply techniques for erecting scaffolding in wood.
- Use tools for construction works (e.g. drills, chisels, pneumatic guns...).
- Use safety equipment for individual protection.
- Apply techniques for inside plaster.
- Apply techniques for preventing walls falling down.
- Apply techniques for finishing the surfaces as required by the project's standards.
- Apply techniques for building works through prefabricated elements, grid and linear structures, tensile structures, walls.
- Capacity to use tools for construction works.
- Apply procedures for the maintenance of equipment and tools for construction and building.
- Apply procedures for the safety of the building sites.

ANNEX 2

Assessment checklist

This checklist showcases some example questions used for the purpose of profiling and identifying the skills of jobseekers, particularly migrant workers. It is adapted from the EU Skills Profile Tool for third country nationals (EC, 2017). See box 3.5 for more information.

Personal information		
General Information	Contact information	Migration information

Skills identification
Languages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is/are your mother tongue(s)? Can you communicate in the host country's language for general purposes? What is your preferred language for communication in a professional context?
Education and training
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have you attended any kind of education and/or training, including primary education and informal training? What was your highest level of education and/or training? Do you have some prior learning recognized?
Professional skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you have any professional/work experience? If yes, for how long? When were you last in a professional/work setting? Please indicate briefly your professional/work experience history. Please add a line for each significant job or professional/work experience you have had. Please describe the nature of your professional/work experience: How long did this experience last? In which country/countries was this experience? Which language(s) did you mainly use?

- Please indicate the occupation that best fits the type of work you carried out.
- Which skills did you need to do your job well?
- What was the size of the organization? (number of people working in the organization)
- What was the size of your workplace? (number of people working at your workplace)
- Do you have any proof of this professional/work experience with you? Yes/No.

Skills acquired outside the workplace

For the following activities that you are familiar with/used to, please indicate for how long or how often you have practised those activities and in what context:

- Caring for children?
- Caring for elderly people?
- Caring for sick or disabled people?
- Making / mending clothing?
- Preparing meals?
- Cultivating crops?
- Taking care of livestock?
- Making pottery?
- Selling or trading products?
- Making furniture?
- House construction?

Other basic and transversal skills

Please select the statements below which best suit your general working style. I am confident to:

- Work independently
- Make decisions independently
- Work in a structured way
- Solve problems
- Work with others / collaborate / network
- Work with people of different cultures / backgrounds
- Work with customers / clients
- Manage projects
- Provide a service to others
- Work in stressful conditions / under time pressure

ANNEX 3

Frequently asked questions and answers

This FAQ is adapted from *Applicant's guide to recognition of prior learning* (Charles Darwin University, n.d.).

1. What is recognition of prior learning (RPL) all about?

Recognition of prior learning is about determining whether the skills, knowledge and experience you've gained in the past partially or completely qualify you for a qualification offered in the host country.

It helps determine if you can perform the skill to the level described by an employer or a training institution. If you feel that your prior experiences already indicate that you possess the skills and knowledge in one or more of the skills units, then an RPL application may be worth your while.

2. What happens if I apply for RPL?

We can provide information on the complete RPL process including how to compile and submit your application for RPL. All the evidence from the activities that have taken place will be submitted to an assessor who will determine if there are any gaps in your knowledge or skills that may have to be filled prior to you achieving the qualification or statement of attainment. The assessor will discuss a range of options to fill these gaps with you. We can support you in the processes.

3. How long do I have to have been working before I can apply for RPL?

There is no set time to have been working prior to applying for RPL but experienced workers have generally applied their knowledge and skills, communicated effectively, understood and applied relevant legislation and solved workplace problems in a range of situations over time to become competent. An RPL self-assessment tool (see table 3.1 and Annex 2 above) will help identify the range of activities that people have been involved in to become competent. Have a read of the self-assessment questions and we can decide together whether you should apply. If you think you have most but not all of the competencies then we can discuss a range of options available to you so that you can take the opportunity to fill the gaps and gain a full qualification.

4. Will any of the previous qualifications that I've gained count in the RPL process?

When you submit your application for RPL include certified copies of any qualifications that you have already obtained. If you do not have copies of the qualifications, we can determine the best way to get them or alternatively, if they are not accessible, we can look at alternatives. An RPL assessor will consider whether any of the units of competency in the course you have completed are the same as in the course you are applying for or approved to be equivalent to the unit/s of competency for the vocational area.

5. I worked for the same organization for a number of years, is this sufficient evidence to gain RPL?

Not necessarily. The length of time in a workplace is not sufficient evidence in itself – you must be able to demonstrate that you have the knowledge and can perform the skills required to the standard expected in the workplace that is detailed in the units of competency in the qualification. Some people may work for many years in one place but still need to develop broader skills and knowledge. Nevertheless, through a self-assessment process, you will be able to determine exactly what skills and knowledge you do have and what gaps may still exist against a particular qualification or set of competencies. If there aren't many gaps, you will receive options on how the gaps can be filled.

6. How is it possible to get a qualification if I have not attended any formal training?

An RPL system can recognize skills and knowledge irrespective of where you learnt those skills. Under these arrangements, you do not have to attend formal training in order to get these skills recognized, as the qualification will be the same as any gained through study anywhere, but that depends on the way the system is designed.

7. I was never too good at doing tests or exams. Will I have to sit for practical and theory tests during my RPL?

The RPL assessment process is one that encourages you to discuss and demonstrate tasks that you do or have done every day at work. It involves an assessor developing a relationship with you and encouraging you to discuss what you have achieved over time as you have gathered the skills, knowledge and experience associated with your specialist area. It's not an assessment that requires you to "state definitions" or "list items" but is more about your practical application associated with real work examples. Testing can be practice-based and

assessed through hands-on demonstration or through work simulation. Questions will also be asked to assess your knowledge.

8. How much documented information do I have to supply before I can go through the RPL process?

People who have been through an RPL are often under the impression that they need to collect and supply a whole range of documents in order to be assessed. Many of the places migrants have worked at in the past no longer exist; people they have worked with have moved on; and in some cases they left employment without any reference. In many cases they didn't always have a documented job description and don't know how to create a CV or resume but they know how to do the job and make the decisions on a daily basis. In these cases, self-assessments give you examples of a range of documents that should be gathered such as any "licenses" you have; but if you can't supply them they are not a barrier to you applying and being interviewed to determine your ability.

9. How much will it cost? And who will pay for it?

This is very much dependent on the system in place. The role of employment agencies is to gather this information and seek out possible funding options available. Often there are circumstances whereby funds are available to cover the costs (full or partial). This is often the most important question for potential applicants.

ANNEX 4

Full certificate (sample)

Certificate of Occupational Competency

This is to Certify that: **NAME**

Has been assessed at the xxxxxxxx Assessment Centre against the occupational profile: **Manufacture and install wooden components into buildings**. The profile is endorsed by (enter appropriate employer association or sector body). **The full profile contains 12 standards.**

Assessment was conducted by trained and qualified assessors.

The Applicant has been assessed as competent in the following standards:

1. Prepare the working area, assemble, secure and dismantle access equipment.
2. Select and prepare materials, tools and equipment.
3. Manufacture wooden components using machine and hand tools.
4. Install structural components.
5. Install frames, linings, windows and doors.
6. Install internal mouldings and fittings.
7. Apply protective finishes to wooden structures and components.
8. Maintain and repair wooden structures and components.
9. Contribute to the organization of the workplace.
10. Establish and maintain effective relationships with customers when working on customers' premises.
11. Maintain the health, safety and hygiene of the working environment.
12. Maintain effective relationships with colleagues and co-workers.

Date

Signatures of Commission

ANNEX 5

Partial certificate (sample)

Certificate of Occupational Competency

This is to Certify that: **NAME**

Has been assessed at the xxxxxxx Assessment Centre against the occupational profile: **Manufacture and install wooden components into buildings**. The profile is endorsed by (enter appropriate employer association or sector body). **The full profile contains 12 standards.**

Assessment was conducted by trained and qualified assessors.

The Applicant has been assessed as competent in the following standards:

1. Select and prepare materials, tools and equipment.
2. Install structural components.
3. Install frames, linings, windows and doors.
4. Install internal mouldings and fittings.
5. Apply protective finishes to wooden structures and components.
6. Maintain and repair wooden structures and components.
7. Contribute to the organization of the workplace.
8. Establish and maintain effective relationships with customers when working on customers' premises.
9. Maintain the health, safety and hygiene of the working environment.
10. Maintain effective relationships with colleagues and co-workers.

Date

Signatures of Commission

ANNEX 6

Steps to be taken by public employment services (PES) upon receipt of a recruitment request from a company

If a PES receives a request from a company abroad, the following steps need to be undertaken:

1. Identification and verification of companies offering deals, to prevent any attempted fraud or scam and ensure reliable jobs to jobseekers. There are many ways and means to make this screening (former experiences with said companies in the past, information provided by the consular services or by consulting international databases). In this process, PES should be guided by the ILO General principles and operational guidelines for fair recruitment.¹⁴
2. Confirmation of the recruitment request. The PES addresses to the company a form to specify in writing its recruitment needs (job description, skills, training, experience, working conditions) and to proceed in a detailed analysis of the position. Information sessions for interested candidates could be offered.
3. Publication of offers on information boards for jobseekers and in employment portals, if they exist. Deadlines for applications must be indicated.
4. Selection of eligible candidates. Pre-screening could be done by an employment counsellor. A Screening Committee is appointed to verify the adequacy of the profile of the offer and that of the candidate, based on supporting documents (CV, diplomas, certificate of employment). If the requested profile requires a specific level in terms of language or technical skills, screening is completed by language or technology assessment tests carried out by a service provider contracted by the PES according to its procurement rules. Then, the Screening Committee consolidates a list of candidates holding the requirements indicated in the offer. The final selection of candidates will be the employer's responsibility only.

¹⁴ See: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---migrant/documents/publication/wcms_536755.pdf.

5. Final selection. Depending on the programme, the PES will organize the final selection through a meeting between the employer and the shortlisted candidates, according to the procedures in force and according to the agreed schedule with the recruiter. The selection (individual or group interview) may be conducted directly or remotely via videoconferencing systems.
6. Support for departure. The PES may incentivize the employer by providing the selected candidates with complementary training on language or gaps in technique.
7. Pre-departure workshop. Before their departure to the host country, selected candidates can be invited to attend an integration workshop aimed at providing hints and suggestions on visa and work permit procedures, documents to be prepared, relevant legislation protecting workers, institutions to contact in case of need, contacts with diaspora organizations in the receiving country, and so on.

ANNEX 7

Profiling and categorization of candidates

Profiles of potential migrants	Indicators of employability	Indicative examples	Services offered
Level 1 Independent candidate in need of general information	Fit for work Active job search Good experience Relevant qualifications for the job market Very motivated	New jobseekers Other jobseekers wishing to change jobs	Advice Basic information via computer or paper Referrals Job matching
Level 2 Candidate in need of general coaching	No professional experience Inadequate qualifications for the job market No job search experience	Redundant workers Women returning to work after a short period of time Graduates upon completion of their studies	Counselling services Jobseeker support ALMP referral
Level 3 Candidate in need of targeted support	Unrealistic expectations (job type, sector of employment, hours, salaries)	Long-term unemployed Unemployed over 50 years of age Women returning to work after a long period of time	Enhanced support Combination of services

Source: Panzica, 2013.

A valuable job-matching service is offered by electronic platforms that many countries have already installed and maintained. Jobseekers can post their CV or respond to the advertised vacancies, so that employers have many potential candidates who can fulfil the requirements for the vacant positions.

By targeting those jobseekers who do not need direct support from job counsellors, the system can allow the employment services to concentrate their efforts on helping those jobseekers more in difficulties in the labour market.

ANNEX 8

Confirmation of the employment offer to be addressed to the company

Public Employment Service (Details)

Company address

City....., date

Dear Manager,

We thank you for choosing our public employment service to assist you in the recruitment of workers for your company.

In accordance with what was agreed with you, a shortlist of candidates will be made by us, based on criteria jointly identified. In order to provide you with the best services for your requirements, we need to receive the following information, for which we thank you in advance.

Sincerely yours

Signature of the Head of PES

COMPANY

Name of the Company:

Activities:

Number of staff:

Address:

Telephone:

Email:

Website:

Person responsible for the recruitment:

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job name:

Job description:

Workplace:

Performance modalities (days, hours):

Number of jobs requested:

WORKING CONDITIONS

Date of start of the contract and its duration:

Temporary or permanent contract:

Probation period and its duration:

Working hours:

Gross annual wage (or salary range):

Wage payment periodicity:

CANDIDATE PROFILE

Training:

desired -

required -

Required knowledge:

Language skills:

desired -

required -

IT knowledge:

desired -

required -

Length of professional experience in the position:

desired -

required -

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Social protection supported by the company:

health insurance -

other -

Source: Panzica, 2013.

ANNEX 9

Glossary of key terms

In this guide the following definitions are used (sources in parentheses).

Employment	
Active labour market programme (ALMP)	ALMPs are the programmes that provide income replacement and labour market integration measures to those looking for jobs, usually the unemployed, but also the underemployed and even the employed who are looking for better jobs. (ILO, 2003)
Employment services providers	The present guide refers to employment services providers in terms of public employment services and private employment agencies whose main task is, among others, to aid job matching.
Private employment agency (PrEA)	<p>According to the ILO Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No. 181), the term private employment agency means any natural or legal person, independent of the public authorities, which provides one or more of the following labour market services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • services for matching offers of and applications for employment, without the private employment agency becoming a party to the employment relationships which may arise therefrom; • services consisting of employing workers with a view to making them available to a third party, who may be a natural or legal person (referred to below as a "user enterprise") which assigns their tasks and supervises the execution of these tasks; • other services relating to job seeking, determined by the competent authority after consulting the most representative employers and workers organizations, such as the provision of information, that do not set out to match specific offers of and applications for employment.
Public employment service (PES)	<p>The core functions of public employment services include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • job search assistance and placement services; • collection, analysis and dissemination of labour market information; • development and implementation of targeted labour market programmes and services;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the administration of unemployment insurance benefits, where applicable; • and other regulatory services such as oversight of private employment agencies. (ILO, 2009)
Migration	
Asylum-seeker	Any person who is seeking international protection. In countries with individualized procedures, an asylum-seeker is someone whose claim has not yet been finally decided on by the country in which the claim is submitted. Not every asylum-seeker will ultimately be recognized as a refugee, but every refugee was initially an asylum-seeker. (UNHCR, 2017)
Domestic worker	<p>Domestic work is considered to be “work performed in or for a household or households”. (ILO Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189), Article 1(a))</p> <p>A domestic worker is “any person engaged in domestic work within an employment relationship”. A person who performs domestic work only occasionally or sporadically and not on an occupational basis is not a domestic worker”. (ILO Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189), Article 1(b), (c))</p>
Highly-skilled worker	<p>ILO Statistics classifies two levels of highly-skilled workers (level 3 and 4), in accordance with ISCO Broad Occupations Groups. These workers include managers, as well as professionals, and are broadly employed as legislators, senior officials, managers, professionals, technicians and associate professionals.</p> <p>According to ISCED 2013, based on the level of education attainment, highly skilled workers are those on:</p> <p>Level 8 Doctoral Level 7 Master Level 6 Bachelor Level 5 Short cycle tertiary education</p>
Low-skilled worker	<p>ILO Statistics classifies low-skilled work as mainly consisting of “simple and routine tasks which require the use of hand-held tools and often some physical effort”. (ISCO-08)</p> <p>According to ISCED 2013, based on the level of education attainment, low-skilled workers are those on:</p> <p>Level 2 Lower secondary level of education Level 1 Primary level of education</p>

Medium-skilled worker	<p>ILO Statistics classifies workers at a medium skill level (level 2) as “skilled manual workers” in accordance with ISCO Broad Occupations Groups. This work is characterized by routine and repetitive tasks in cognitive and production activities. These include workers in occupations such as skilled agriculture and fishery, clerical work, craft and related trades and plant, machine operators and assemblers. (ISCO-08)</p> <p>According to ISCED 2013, based on the level of education attainment, medium-skilled workers are those on:</p> <p>Level 4 Post-secondary, non-tertiary education Level 3 Upper secondary level of education</p>
Migrant for employment/Migrant worker	<p>Migrant for employment. “A person who migrates from one country to another with a view to being employed otherwise than on his own account and includes any person regularly admitted as a migrant for employment.” (ILO Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97), Article 11)</p> <p><i>Other relevant definitions</i></p> <p>Migrant worker. A person who “is to be engaged or has been engaged in a remunerated activity in a state of which he or she is not a national”. (United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, 1990, Article 2(1))</p> <p>Migrant workers. Persons admitted by a country other than their own for the explicit purpose of exercising an economic activity remunerated from within the receiving country. Some countries distinguish several categories of migrant workers, including: (i) seasonal migrant workers; (ii) contract workers; (iii) project-tied workers; and (iv) temporary migrant workers. (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 1998)</p>
Permanent migrant	<p>A person who enters with the right of permanent residence or with a visa or permit which is indefinitely renewable. Permanent immigrants would generally include marriage immigrants, family members of permanent residents, refugees, certain labour migrants, etc. (ILO, 2017a)</p>
Refugee	<p>A refugee is someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war, or violence. A refugee has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. A person is an asylum seeker until they are determined to be a refugee in accordance with national</p>

	and international law. (UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, 28 July 1951; see also ILO, 2016b)
Returning migrant	Persons returning to stay in their own country after having been employed abroad. It is important that only those citizens planning to stay for a year or more in their country of citizenship be included in this migration statistics. (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 1998)
Seasonal worker	A migrant worker “whose work by its character is dependent on seasonal conditions and is performed only during certain part of the year”. (United Nations International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, Article 2(1))
Temporary migrant	A person of foreign nationality who enters a country with a visa or who receives a permit which is either not renewable or only renewable on a limited basis. Temporary immigrants are seasonal workers, international students, service providers, persons on international exchange, etc. (ILO, 2017a)
Labour migration governance	
Bilateral labour migration agreements	Agreements between two entities which create legally binding rights and obligations governed by international law and are usually more specific and action-oriented, non-binding memoranda of understanding (MoU) which set out a broad framework of cooperation to address common concerns, as well as to other arrangements, including between specific government ministries or agencies in destination and origin countries. (ILO, 2017a) The ILO Migration for Employment Recommendation (Revised), 1949, No. 86 contains a Model Agreement on Temporary and Permanent Migration for Employment, including Migration of Refugees and Displaced Persons in its Annex as a benchmarking tool for regional guidelines. (See also ILO, 2017a)
ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration, 2006	A set of non-binding principles and guidelines for a rights-based approach to labour migration, discussed and adopted at a 2005 ILO Tripartite Meeting of Experts and Framework for approved for publication and dissemination by the ILO Labour Migration Governing Body in March 2006. (ILO, 2006)
Labour mobility	Temporary or short-term movements of persons for employment-related purposes, particularly in the context of the free movement of workers in regional economic communities. (ILO, 2017a)

Recruitment	
Labour recruiters	“the term labour recruiter refers to both public employment services and private employment agencies and all other intermediaries or subagents that offer labour recruitment and placement services. Labour recruiters can take many forms, whether for profit or non-profit, or operating within or outside legal and regulatory frameworks.” (ILO General Principles and Operational Guidelines for Fair Recruitment, Section II. Definitions and Terms)
Recruitment	<p>“Recruitment means –</p> <p>(i) the engagement of a person in one territory on behalf of an employer in another territory, or</p> <p>(ii) the giving of an undertaking to a person in one territory to provide him with employment in another territory, together with the making of any arrangements in connection with the operations mentioned in (i) and (ii) including the seeking for and selection of emigrants and the preparation for departure of the emigrants”. (ILO Migration for Employment Recommendation (Revised), 1949 (No. 86), para. 1(b))</p> <p>“the term recruitment includes the advertising, information dissemination, selection, transport, placement into employment and – for migrant workers – return to the country of origin where applicable. This applies to both jobseekers and those in an employment relationship”. (ILO General Principles and Operational Guidelines for Fair Recruitment, II. Definitions and terms)</p>
Recruitment fees or related costs	For the purpose of the ILO General Principles and Operational Guidelines for Fair Recruitment, “the terms recruitment fees or related costs refer to any fees or costs incurred in the recruitment process in order for workers to secure employment or placement, regardless of the manner, timing or location of their imposition or collection.” (ILO General Principles and Operational Guidelines for Fair Recruitment, Section II. Definitions and Terms; see also ILO Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No, 181) Article 7)
Skills	
Certification	Process of issuing a certificate, diploma or title of learning outcomes formally attesting that a set of learning outcomes (knowledge, know-how, skills and/or competences) acquired by an individual have been assessed and validated by a

	competent body against a predefined standard (CEDEFOP, 2011).
Competencies	Knowledge, skills and know-how applied and mastered in a specific context. (ILO Human Resources Development Recommendation, 2004 (No. 195))
Competency/occupational standards	Competency standards are a set of benchmarks that define the skills, knowledge and attributes people need to perform a work role. They are developed in consultation with industry, in order to ensure they reflect the needs of the workplace. These standards are primarily used to develop and implement training, to assess the outcomes of training, and to assess the level of a person's existing skills and competencies. (ILO, 2016c). Some countries use the term "occupational standards", some other countries use the term "competency standards" (Gasskov, 2018).
Employability	Portable competencies and qualifications that increase an individual's capacity to make use of the education and training opportunities available to secure and retain decent work, to progress within the enterprise and between jobs, and to cope with changing technology and labour market conditions. (ILO Human Resources Development Recommendation, 2004 (No. 195))
Formal learning	<p>Learning that occurs in an organized and structured environment (such as in an education or training institution or on the job) and is explicitly designated as learning (in terms of objectives, time or resources). Formal learning is intentional from the learner's point of view. It typically leads to certification (CEDEFOP, 2019)</p> <p>Formal training</p> <p>Instruction given in education and training institutions or specially designed training areas, including in enterprises in formal apprenticeship systems. Training is structured and has precise learning objectives. (Rosas, 2006)</p>
Informal learning	Learning resulting from activities undertaken daily at work, in the family or in leisure activities. (Rosas, 2006)
Learning outcomes	The set of knowledge, skills and/or competencies an individual has acquired and/or is able to demonstrate after completion of a learning process.
Non-formal learning	Learning taking place in activities not exclusively designated as learning activities, but which contain an important learning element.

	<p>Non-formal training</p> <p>Organized and systematic training in an informal setting that can be adapted to individual needs. Non-formal training emphasizes activities directly associated with work and often appeals to workers who have few resources and little opportunities to undergo formal training. (Rosas, 2006)</p>
Qualification	<p>Certification awarded to an individual in recognition of having achieved particular knowledge, skills or competencies. It is also the formal expression of the vocational and professional abilities of a worker that are recognized at international, national or sector levels. (Rosas, 2006)</p>
Recognition of prior learning (RPL)	<p>A process of identifying, documenting, assessing and certifying formal, non-formal and/or informal learning against standards used in formal education and training. Thus, RPL provides an opportunity to people to acquire qualification or credits for a qualification or exemptions (of all or part of the curriculum, or even exemption of academic pre-requisite to enter a formal study programme) without going through a formal education or training programme. (ILO, 2018d)</p>
Skills recognition	<p>The result of the formal assessment of the portfolio of evidence; confirmation that skills acquired internationally correspond fully to specified Regional Model Competency Standards (RMCS) units or national units of competency. (ILO, 2010)</p> <p><i>Other definition</i></p> <p>The evaluation and recognition of credentials and skills earned outside the country of employment (in the case of migrants), or country of origin (in case of returning migrants). Recognition of qualifications covers both academic and professional titles, while professional recognition covers regulated and non-regulated professions. (ILO, 2014)</p>
Validation	<p>The confirmation by a competent body that learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and/or competencies) acquired by an individual in a formal, non-formal or informal setting have been assessed against predefined criteria and are compliant with the requirements of a validation standard. Validation typically leads to certification.</p> <p>Validation of non-/informal learning</p> <p>The process of verifying that the skills and competencies that an individual has learnt in education, at work or in leisure activities meet certain standards. (Rosas, 2006)</p>

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