



# LABOUR MOBILITY SCHEME GUIDE



**KEY STEPS**  
to consider when  
setting up mobility  
schemes

**\*Who is this guide for?**

*This guide is for institutions interested in setting up a labour mobility scheme between EU MS and partner countries. It seeks to provide general guidance based on MPF's experience funding and overseeing pilot projects on legal migration. For specific guidance on MPF grants, please consult the [MPF website](#).*

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## STEP 1: SETTING OUT MOTIVATIONS AND OBJECTIVES

Setting up a labour mobility scheme begins by clearly outlining the intervention’s rationale, scope, and objectives. Understanding destination countries’ labour market challenges and opportunities, migration pathways, institutional, legal and policy frameworks, skills and education levels are essential to evidence the motive and objective.

## STEP 2: CHOOSING A SECTOR AND A COUNTRY

The second step is to select the most relevant sector and a country (or countries) of origin for a scheme. Researching and analysing countries with corresponding labour market and migration characteristics is instrumental when deciding the country(ies) of origin and a target sector, such as their supply of workers, local labour market structures, migration policies (bilateral schemes, etc.), education systems, or skill levels.

## STEP 3: CHOOSING THE DURATION AND TYPE OF MOBILITY

The third step is the selection of the most appropriate time frame and type of mobility for the scheme. Some are more motivated by the need in the labour market, while others are more motivated by the developmental or migration management needs of a country of destination.

	TIME FRAME	TYPE	MOTIVATION	
<b>A</b>		skills, employment (internship, traineeship)	 <p>More developmental / migration management focused</p>	
<b>B</b>	Circular (temporary)	education (postgraduate degree, certification of studies)		
<b>C</b>		exchange (business knowledge exchange, study visit, diaspora)		
<b>D</b>	Meso (mid-long term)	employment (e.g. seasonal)		
<b>E</b>	Permanent	employment (including researcher)		More labour market needs-based
<b>F</b>	Mixed	combine more than one from A, B, C, D, E		

### STEP 4: DESIGNING THE SCHEME

Designing the scheme is a process of forming partnerships, arranging funding mechanisms, drafting activities/methodology, and setting governance structures.



### STEP 5: MONITORING AND EVALUATION.

To monitor each activities' results and evaluate the impact of the overall scheme, it is important to set up a monitoring and evaluation framework with dedicated objectives, baselines, and indicators to measure success. Depending on what it means to each pilot, scaling up is also a step to consider.

# CONTENTS

<b>STEP 1: SETTING OUT MOTIVATIONS AND OBJECTIVES.</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>STEP 2: CHOOSING A SECTOR AND A COUNTRY.</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>STEP 3: CHOOSING THE DURATION AND TYPE OF MOBILITY.</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>STEP 4: DESIGNING THE SCHEME.</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>4.1 Partnerships</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>4.2 Funding</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>4.3 Activities and Methodology</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>4.4 Governance Structure</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>STEP 5: MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M&amp;E).</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Box 1: Researching Existing Mobility Pathways</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Box 2: Gender-Responsive Mobility Schemes</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Box 3: Involvement of the Private Sector</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Box 4: Recognition of Qualifications, Validation of Learning and Identification of Skills</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Box 5: Sustainability and Scaling Up Mobility Schemes</b>	<b>28</b>

# LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>CD</b>	Country of Destination
<b>CO</b>	Country of Origin
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>IO</b>	International Organisation
<b>HR</b>	Human Resources
<b>MNC</b>	Multinational corporation
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>MPF</b>	Migration Partnership Facility
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organisation
<b>PES</b>	Public Employment Service
<b>PPP</b>	Public-Private-Partnership
<b>SME</b>	Small and medium-sized enterprises

# STEP 1

## SETTING OUT MOTIVATIONS AND OBJECTIVES.



Setting up a labour mobility scheme begins by clearly outlining the reasons and objectives for the intervention. In general, understanding CDs' labour market challenges and opportunities, migration policies, skills and education levels is essential to evidence the project's motive and objective (see **Box 1**). These do not have to be directly linked to mobility or labour – mobility schemes' impacts tend to spill over to other policy areas such as economic development, diplomatic relations, historical ties, bilateral agenda and overall cooperation on migration or social inclusion – but it is better to consider and discuss the various objectives from the beginning explicitly. Motivations could be:

- ▶ Verified labour shortages in specific sectors;
- ▶ Surplus capacity in technical education establishments or tertiary education institutions in CD;

- Foreign Direct Investment in a target country being hindered by lack of skills in the local labour market; or
- Need to foster strengthened diplomatic or migration management relations with CO for return & readmission or other migration management issues.

Essentially, the motivation to set up a labour mobility scheme influences the shape, scope and model of what is eventually developed. A labour mobility scheme with a political or developmental imperative may not emphasise real labour market needs in the CD but rather on labour market needs in the CO with less focus on sustainability. A labour mobility scheme that responds to identified labour market shortages in the CD requires private sector engagement, public-private-partnership coordination, and very careful targeting of skills and a relevant CO.

Likewise, if a scheme is being set up to ameliorate a migration management challenge (e.g., irregular entries or overstays) or a political situation, a very different scheme would be designed to that which you would develop to address a major labour shortage in a specific sector that affects GDP, for example. It is vital to assess the exact type of labour profile being targeted and the type of scheme to be offered. The scope of a project may be limited in some countries in terms of scheme design, depending on the legal pathways available or prevailing political contexts of the day. It is thus important to set up a scheme based on the rule of law, with realistic targets in terms of mobilities – especially when testing new sectors or new countries of origin where there may be unforeseen challenges in labour supply or skills recognition.

### **BOX 1** **RESEARCHING EXISTING MOBILITY PATHWAYS**

The starting point for designing a mobility scheme is to understand the status quo of mobility pathways and reflect on necessary improvements from different stakeholders' perspectives. Therefore, gathering and analysing data through preparatory research is crucial to understanding disparate situations and needs in diverse countries and sectors. Research can include mapping existing visas for work or studies, analysing labour stock and demographic challenges/opportunities (Step 1), mapping bilateral mobility schemes, sectors/companies with specific skill demands, and countries with corresponding labour surplus/shortage (Step 2).

However, given the fragmented nature of migration statistics and (sometimes) lack of available labour market information, it may be useful to consider collaborating with specialised research institutions and/or relevant local authorities to gain access

to meaningful and conducive information. As research is often a prerequisite for designing an initiative, it may be necessary to raise separate funding for preparatory research or make optimal use of available research and services provided by specialised facilities (such as the MPF).

## STEP 2 CHOOSING A SECTOR AND A COUNTRY.



The second step is to select the most relevant sector (or sub-sector) and CO for a scheme. Actions that help identify the relevant sector and country include researching countries with the labour supply or training levels needed in CDs or analysing government's structures, migration policies, or skill levels that correspond to CDs'. Such information can be found in the MPF's upcoming Labour Mobility Dashboard. Key information to consider when **deciding a target sector of the respective labour market is:**

### ▾ Existing skill and labour shortages in CD

Which sector experiences an insufficient supply of persons with the appropriate skills (skill shortage)? What sector has a sufficient number of skilled persons but an inadequate number willing to take up employment (labour shortage)? What are the reasons behind such shortages, and to what extent can recruitment from abroad offset such shortages via a labour mobility scheme?

To assess these questions across different sectors of a given labour market, it is crucial to consult administrative data (vacancies, job seekers) and surveys of PES or national occupational forecasts and research on the overall political economy and key sectors of a country.

#### ▼ **Employer demand**

Which sector has existing employer demand to hire migrant workers? If so, are they willing to engage in mobility schemes, or do they prefer to hire through their recruitment procedures? Engagement at this stage with private sector associations, trade guilds, chambers of commerce, or other platforms for direct access to the private sector's voice is vital to understand specific needs, regional differentiations (if any), and soft-skill requirements etc.

#### ▼ **Political will and interest**

Which sector has positive or long-standing relationships with government bodies such as the Ministries of Interior, Social and Economic Affairs, Foreign Affairs, Migration, etc.? Different ministries are likely to have diverging views on migration policies even within the same country. It is important to find those willing to build bridges between divergent ministries and push strongly for labour migration projects. Different actors have different policy mandates, which may often be interpreted as being at odds. A mandate to reduce irregular migration or return those with failed asylum claims can sometimes trump the need to provide access to other migrations following legal channels – especially when it comes to low-wage occupations requiring fewer skills. In these cases, a strong business case with data demonstrating the specific sectoral need is important to build a cooperative approach across ministries for their various roles in the labour scheme – from skills recognition to visas, for example.

#### ▼ **Specialised training requirements**

What sectors have specialised training requirements, such as health care or ICT workers? Are the skills required in one country also recognised in other countries (see **Box 4**)? What is the worker's (or pupils) current achievement level for such training, and is there a gap in local institutions' delivery (regarding quality, duration, coordination, etc.) of such training?

#### ▼ **Potential for skill transfer**

Which sectors have the most potential for reskilling migrants in low-wage occupations due to different qualification standards in the CD? Which sectors tend to transfer the skills most needed in other countries?

## BOX 2 GENDER-RESPONSIVE MOBILITY SCHEMES<sup>1,2</sup>

Gender-responsive schemes respond to the needs, constraints, and opportunities of all migrants, address the structural causes of gender discrimination in migration and transform systems, policies, or norms. Such schemes aim to be in line with the larger framework of gender mainstreaming, which incorporates a gender equality perspective in all policy processes, strategies and interventions, at all levels and all stages by actors involved.

Labour mobility schemes that are gender-responsive would, therefore, further identify aspects such as: what the gender division of labour is in the CO and CD; whether women and men have equal access to resources for employment; household economic arrangements such as gender roles; and whether the time of paid and unpaid labour is adequate across genders. Gender-responsive mobility schemes can also assess the different opportunities and vulnerabilities men and women face during migration, ensuring physical and financial accessibility of activities for women.

The [WAFIRA](#) project, for instance, responds to the needs of female migrants from Morocco who are seasonal workers in Spain, as women in rural communities often face difficulties in becoming financially independent and supporting their livelihoods in a sustainable manner. The project seeks to train the women with the necessary income generating skills to facilitate their financial independence upon returning to Morocco's rural communities.

Elements to consider when **selecting target countries** include:

### ▀ Existing cultural and historical linkages

Are countries closely connected in terms of culture, such as speaking the same language or sharing a common historical experience? Cultural similarities can facilitate training for migrants in the CO or help them better adapt to the CD. Historic ties may also impact similar education systems or administrative structures that can facilitate skills recognition.

1 Gender & Migration Hub, 2021. <https://gendermigrationhub.org/>

2 European Parliament and of the Council on Promoting Gender Equality in Development Co-operation, 2004

### Existing legal migration channels

What existing visa schemes, educational partnerships or other legal migration routes for foreign country nationals can be used as entry points for mobility schemes? Are there countries that have bilateral mobility schemes or agreements that allow the movement of people for work, education or training? Do other institutions such as universities or companies provide such pathways?

### Existing labour supply in CO

What countries have workers (or students) in a specific sector but not enough jobs in a specific field? Or, which country has less sensitivity to emigration and brain drain due to a high number of youth in the population (or a demographic “youth bulge”)?

### Existing migration pressures

What countries are under pressure to reduce irregular migration for safer pathways? Where do such irregular migration pathways begin (i.e. COs)? Are such migration pathways concentrated in certain sectors (e.g. care sector, construction sector, seasonal workers)?

## STEP 3

# CHOOSING THE DURATION AND TYPE OF MOBILITY.



The third step is the selection of the most appropriate time frame and type of mobility for the scheme. Depending on motivations and objectives set out in Step 1, a scheme can be temporary (circular), mid-to-long-term (meso), permanent, or mixed. The type of the scheme depends on the purpose of mobility: whether it is for employment, education, knowledge exchange or a combination of these.

	TIME FRAME	TYPE	MOTIVATION
<b>A</b>		skills, employment (internship, traineeship)	
<b>B</b>	Circular (temporary)	education (postgraduate degree, certification of studies)	
<b>C</b>		exchange (business knowledge exchange, study visit, diaspora)	
<b>D</b>	Meso (mid-long term)	employment (e.g. seasonal)	
<b>E</b>	Permanent	employment (including researcher)	
<b>F</b>	Mixed	combine more than one from A, B, C, D, E	

In addition, some models may be more labour market needs-oriented while others will be more migration management-driven or developmental needs-based. This is not to say that migration management objectives are incompatible with more commercial, labour market-driven schemes, but it is not always the case that the private sector needs align (in terms of time and targeting) with what may be pressing needs in the context of a quid-pro-quo for migration management objectives with a priority partner country. For instance, while a longer-term mobilisation of individuals for a sector with demonstrated labour need would form the basis for a more commercial or sustainable scheme, a short-term circular mobility scheme to boost skills would have a developmental or migration management motivation. Indeed, a mobility scheme can have more than one combination of duration and type. For example, [Digital Explorers](#) was a circular *and* permanent employment mobility scheme where young Nigerians’ employment with Lithuanian companies was temporary for those who returned to Nigeria (model A, B) but long-term for those who remained in Lithuania (model E).

## STEP 4 DESIGNING THE SCHEME.



Designing the scheme is an interactive process of **forming** multi-stakeholder and multi-level **partnerships, arranging funding mechanisms, designing activities/methodology,** and setting a **governance structure.**

### 4.1 PARTNERSHIPS

Forming partnerships with stakeholders is a key step in designing mobility schemes. When finding partners, who you are and what your mandate matters – are you part of a government or do you need a government partner for visa requirements? Do you have a mandate to engage in labour issues of a country or have access to real labour market information, for instance, as a professional association? If not, you may need to partner up to ensure access to various data and relationships. As such, partnerships represent an important prerequisite to building the foundations of a mobility scheme, ensuring sustainability, and planning activities and access to funding opportunities.



Partnerships can be shaped by consulting with e.g. private companies, government ministries, trade unions and communicating with supporting organisations such as NGOs and IOs. As one embarks on forming a consortium of partners for a labour mobility initiative, it is crucial to **understand what drives each stakeholder's motive to join or contribute towards the programme**. These (sometimes diverging) interests need to be kept in mind during the programme design stage and throughout implementation. It can also be important to re-verify assumptions and agreements as implementation progresses, as motivations and interests, markets, and dynamics can change with time and experience gathered.

Lessons from early labour mobility schemes stress the importance of having private sector buy-in and participation in the CD up-front in schemes intended to address labour shortages on scale. Many learned this lesson the hard way when placing candidates without a strong upstream buy-in from employers. Indeed, the aspiration for financially sustainable schemes will ultimately rely on private sector participation. Without inclusion and perception of benefit, the funding of such schemes is likely to remain within the public sector or be pushed towards the migrants themselves. The following section explains how different groups of stakeholders may contribute to mobility schemes in different ways.

#### ▀ Private sector

The private sector can provide training, employment, and potential funding opportunities in mobility schemes. They create demand for labour mobility in the first place (outside of political/development-oriented mobility schemes), and their engagement is important for the scheme's

financial sustainability. Additionally, the private sector can also mobilise resources mobilising migrants and support (re)integration and influence local or national government stakeholders to support labour mobility initiatives and the enabling environment for such schemes.

- Private companies

The difficulty in finding competent workers is often the starting point for companies to access labour migration schemes. Recruiting from abroad through their own means bears heavy bureaucratic burdens and opportunity costs. Other motives include expanding business opportunities, diversifying markets and internationalising their business.

SMEs with little to no experience recruiting foreign nationals find the support for visa applications and skills matching beneficial, which can be a pull factor in bringing them on board. MNCs experienced in international recruiting tend to have in-house legal means to facilitate the hiring of foreign nationals. While this can reduce the burden for coordination, it could also cause a general lack of interest in participating in the scheme.

- Employer's federations

Employers' federations are best positioned to understand the up-to-date skill shortages and training needs of a specific sector in a country. Their interest in creating business-enabling environments aligns with the need to re- or up-skill workers, providing a possible angle for partnerships in mobility schemes.

- Chambers of commerce

Chambers of commerce can be strategic partners to add to a consortium of stakeholders, as they have leverage over business regulations through lobbying. They are knowledgeable of a country's legal context to conduct business and have sectoral expertise. In addition, they understand the challenges members have when it comes to international trade, which can be helpful to advise and consult companies willing to join mobility schemes.

- Private recruitment agencies

Depending on local or national contexts, private recruitment agencies specialised in international recruitment may have extensive knowledge of bureaucratic procedures and legal barriers in migration and employment. They also have insights into the labour market and local and international talent availability and can provide skills assessments or career management services for migrants. Their engagement may also have the potential to boost ethical and fair recruitment practices.

## BOX 3

### INVOLVEMENT OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Engaging the private sector is crucial for the sustainability of labour mobility initiatives. Not only is it the private sector employer who provides job and/or training opportunities, but it is also a key actor that can financially contribute in the medium and long term. It is important to consider that effective private sector engagement requires time and effort. Not all private sector stakeholders are aware and informed of the possibility to join mobility schemes. Diverging standpoints and motivations can lead to practical challenges in identifying, informing, trust-building and onboarding private stakeholders.

Therefore, it is crucial to actively facilitate exchanges with and among companies, public policy, and migration stakeholders to engage the private sector meaningfully. Having a clear understanding of private sector interests is also important: while most companies find the reduced administrative burden for recruiting qualified international staff most attractive, others may see the benefit of re- and up-skilling (potential) migrants in both CO and CD or to expand their business in the CO. Specific ways of private sector engagement include: taking part of a consortium of stakeholders responsible for implementing the project, be part of an advisory board, or be partially or wholly responsible for providing training, research, skills matching or recruitment services.

#### Public actors

Government entities have the power to provide policy frameworks conducive to labour migration. By targeting and involving such actors, initiatives would closely follow, if not influence, the regulatory legal frameworks and practices for labour migration. Besides setting an enabling environment, governments can also provide funding, co-implement projects, and facilitate PPPs, which are crucial for multi-stakeholder coordination.

- **Ministries**  
The involvement of various government ministries is an important building block in forming partnerships. They are often the decision-makers when issuing entry, residence and work permits, assessing and recognising qualifications, providing pre-and post-departure training, and forming political ties between countries. Key ministries often found to lead schemes, or that should be consulted include the Ministry of Interior, Foreign Affairs, Labour and Employment, Justice, Social Affairs, Economy, Education, and Development agencies.

### Public employment services (PES)

PES in CO and CD can provide pre-departure training, key labour market data including unemployment rates or the available pool of talent in specific sectors, matching candidates and receiving institutions (universities, companies, training institutions), or organising job advertisements and recruitment. While PES' capacities and mandates vary across countries, most carry out short or long-term training for nationals and non-nationals, benefiting pre-departure training or reintegration activities in mobility schemes. EU PES may already have ties to or be willing to invest in networks with non-EU PES. Linking up public authorities through a mobility initiative may allow capacity building and adapting practices in both countries of origin and destination, for example, facilitating training and exchanges.

### Trade Unions

Trade unions ensure that working conditions are in line with (inter)national standards and that the rights and well-being of workers are advanced in a particular sector or context. While not all unions include foreign workers in their advocacy, they can be the focal point in mobility schemes to understand migrant workers' conditions and rights in the CD, help establish rules for the portability of social rights, or help guarantee protection for foreign workers.

### Supporting Organisations

- **NGOs**  
NGOs, migrant, and diaspora organisations are partners that can play a wide set of roles in regards to programme or project coordination, service provision, migrant rights protection, and research. They can also accompany and support migrants throughout the recruitment or study and return process, ensuring that their needs are met and that they are professionally and personally well integrated.
- **International Organisations**  
IOs facilitate dialogue across stakeholders through their networks, accompany partners to achieve partnership goals, and provide expertise on labour migration. Their unique intergovernmental position often entails unique access or proximity to government stakeholders in both countries of origin and destination. Along with possible thematic expertise in labour, human rights, migration, etc., IOs' role in labour mobility schemes varies from contact point for activities or service providers to researchers and experts.

## 4.2 FUNDING

In most projects, funding is a critical element if not a prerequisite for mobility schemes. Depending on the composition of partnerships, funding can be arranged publicly or privately through business investment or individual migrant contributions.

Before seeking funding, it is important to have at least an approximate idea of the cost of the whole project. Common costs incurred throughout mobility schemes include staff costs; research costs; mobility costs; living costs (if covered); training costs of participants; institutional and individual capacity building costs, and (re)integration and return costs. Costs vary significantly among mobility schemes, as each has its specificities. For instance, for educational schemes, mobility costs (which often include academic and subsistence fees) can be the highest among all costs. In contrast, the highest cost for professional schemes could be attributed to the training of participants or staff costs for managing the programme (in particular, the coordination of different stakeholders).

- ▼ **Staff costs:** in addition to regular project management tasks, it is important to budget for dedicated HR costs for coordinating multiple stakeholders. This is because mobility schemes are most successfully implemented through a concerted effort among multiple associations, companies, government ministries, universities and migrants, which requires a lot of coordination.
- ▼ **Research costs:** research costs during the design phase can include baseline studies to understand the status quo and set a baseline for the project. Research can also occur throughout and after the programme has been completed to enable reflection on the scheme's results and learn from the experience. This can be done internally or in cooperation with, e.g. local or international research institutions or universities.
- ▼ **Pre-departure costs:** these include fees for recognition of qualifications, obtaining visas, language training, diversity, professional training, and social/cultural training.
- ▼ **Moving costs:** these cover transportation and travel insurance. Expenses can vary greatly depending on the country and the level of contribution of companies (e.g. salaries) or educational institutions (e.g. scholarships).
- ▼ **Living costs:** these mainly include the cost of housing and living (food, health insurance, local transportation etc.) in the CD. As for moving costs, these expenses can vary greatly depending on the country and the potential contributions of companies or educational institutions. Pre-departure costs combined with moving and living costs can be categorised as 'mobility costs'. If the mobility is for long-term employment, this living cost is often not included or is only provided for a few initial months as it is expected that the remuneration would constitute a living wage. For seasonal workers, accommodation/living costs are often provided due to the short-term nature

of the work and the rural setting with limited supply of private accommodation. Depending on the scheme, this cost is sometimes recouped through deductions to the eventual remuneration of the migrant workers. Living costs tend to be highest for circular skills or education schemes as the short-term nature of the accommodation influences the cost.

- ▼ **Training costs:** this cost varies significantly across sectors (agriculture, manufacturing, nursing, ICT, etc.), depending on the duration, intensity and mode (online, in-person, on-the-job) of training. Training may target individuals before, during the mobility phase or upon return but may also involve public authorities where capacity building is envisioned.
  
- ▼ **Institutional capacity building costs:** projects may include dedicated activities to address existing capacity gaps in public authorities' or other project stakeholders' ability to reap the benefits of labour migration. Costs supporting such activities could include strengthening labour market information systems, peer-to-peer exchange, curriculum development, etc.
  
- ▼ **(Re) integration and return costs:** these can include supporting meaningful longer-term integration in the CD or finding a job/launching a business after returning to the CO.

Sample cost ratio in a mobility scheme – an approximate ratio based on MPF pilot projects:

- ▼ Human resources (staff): 30%
- ▼ Travel (staff): 2%
- ▼ Office costs, equipment and supplies: 3%
- ▼ Research costs: 5% (where applicable)
- ▼ Overall mobility cost (pre-departure training, travel, living costs in CD, (re) integration): 45%
- ▼ Institutional Capacity Building: 2% (or higher – depending on project activities)
- ▼ Other (communication & visibility, financial audits etc.): 5%
- ▼ Administrative costs/overheads: 7%
- ▼ Contingency (emergency reserve): 2%

**BOX 4****RECOGNITION OF QUALIFICATIONS, VALIDATION OF LEARNING AND IDENTIFICATION OF SKILLS**

For a migrant professional, apprentice or student seeking to move to the CD, the selection process will likely involve some form of skills recognition. The project design should thus incorporate a way of recognising migrants' skills before departure. Depending on the degree of formality, there can be three main ways of assessing an individual's acquired skills. Though the three are distinct processes, they can be implemented simultaneously for different types of migrant professionals and/ or students.

- ▼ **Recognition of qualifications** is a *formal* process to recognise diplomas or certificates, and a country's public authorities assimilate and accept another country's diploma and certificates as equivalent. It is most commonly applied to highly skilled profiles.
- ▼ **Validation of learning** is to validate one's prior *informal* learning. It is about assessing one's knowledge, skills, and competencies vis-à-vis the expected learning outcomes. For migrants, one can assess which elements they have within a larger set of training or diplomas. The validation is often documented during private recruitment processes and can lead to further CD training for fully recognisable qualifications.
- ▼ **Identification of skills** does not require formal assessment – it is to self-declare one's talents or understand one's skills during interviews, which may not have the same level of formality or accuracy compared to the other two procedures.

**4.3 ACTIVITIES AND METHODOLOGY**

Activities in a mobility scheme can include creating partnerships; research; recruitment of migrants and beneficiaries; pre-departure training; mobility; institutional capacity building; and (re)integration. Deciding which elements to add should be informed by how formal skills will be recognised, how soft skills will be assessed and how, if circular mobility, candidates will be incentivised to return home in the end.

### Pre-recruitment activities

Based on the research carried out during Step 1 (see **Box 1**), activities to be done before recruiting candidates can include: dissemination of project information, deciding recruitment profiles, setting means of application processing (receiving CVs and conducting interviews), etc. This can be combined with other communication activities to promote the project's objectives and ideas to potential candidates.

### Recruitment of migrants and beneficiaries

This may include launching a call for applications, setting selection criteria and relevant selection committees, and selecting candidates from the CO. It is crucial to involve the private sector from the beginning of this stage, as companies are key stakeholders throughout the whole scheme. Recruitment can also occur in cooperation with local or international public and private recruitment agencies, national employment agencies or universities.

Skills recognition and matching (see **Box 4**) is crucial to enable cross-border employment. Recognising qualifications and degrees can be achieved through existing frameworks or by seeking to develop new bi- or multilateral agreements or regulations. In most cases, negotiation and coordination between the two countries is required for an efficient skill matching process.

Matching candidates with employment profiles or educational offers can be undertaken through existing public or private employment services or ICT tools. Nevertheless, resource-intensive selection methods such as face-to-face interviews are usually required to ensure a good match.

### Training

- **Pre-departure and pre-orientation training**  
This type of activity seeks to prepare selected candidates for their work or studies in technical and socio-cultural aspects. Professional training for job placements and language courses are common activities. Information sessions on the CD's culture and rights as foreign workers are also important for the migrants' integration and social protection. Financial literacy courses can also help migrants design and achieve saving plans during the mobility phase.
- **Training in the country of destination**  
Training may be conducted in collaboration with relevant public and private institutions in the CD. Depending on the purpose of the mobility, migrants can engage in on-the-job training, online or in-person training provided by different stakeholders, including VET institutions, universities or external academies. This may take place during pre-departure, in the CD, or upon return, depending on the project's needs.

## ▾ Mobility

To reach the mobility phase, it is key to ensure during the design stage that there is a legal pathway that can be used for training, working or studying purposes. Whether there is an existing visa scheme or a special mobility agreement between the CO and CD, administrative requirements should be met with thorough documentation and follow-up. Once all legal and administrative requirements are met, selected candidates can depart for their work or studies.

During the mobility phase, close monitoring of the migrants and the companies and education institutions is crucial. Setting target outcomes for individual migrants can facilitate their skills enhancement. Arranging networking events that gather relevant stakeholders in the sector can also expand employment opportunities in the CO and CD. Other elements include designating professional (or cultural) mentors so that migrants can have a sustainable support system throughout their daily lives and professional experience in the CD.

## ▾ Institutional capacity building

institutional capacity building aims to enhance key stakeholders' capacity to manage and operate mobility initiatives or improve the overall governance of labour migration. This refers to investment in the infrastructure for labour migration, such as better systems for skills recognition, PES or VET. Capacity building can also take the form of exchanging experiences, sharing lessons learned through meetings, training, and developing common knowledge products. It can come in upgrading IT or labour market information systems to improve data retention and management. Capacity building can also take place for employers on diversity management and cultural learning. This allows for better integration of migrants in the company and the CD. All such capacity building activities can produce information on reliable VET suppliers to governments, key partners to international organisations and NGOs, improved skills recognition measures, ways to access local talent for companies and VET providers.

## ▾ (Re)integration

For circular mobility schemes, activities in the post-return phase mainly seek to integrate returning migrants into the local labour market. These can be career or CV counselling and interview support for young graduates, creating recruitment platforms with limited access for selected candidates, or awards for a successful business or start-up plans through financial or operational support. The key consideration is to tailor reintegration support to the local circumstances of the labour market as well as individual migrants' needs.

For long-term mobility schemes, support for integration into the CD's labour market occurs, which may involve further language training, activities to foster a connection with the host community or support for family (re)unification.

## 4.4 GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

A bespoke governance framework is another crucial element in designing a labour mobility scheme. It outlines the roles of partners, allocates tasks and responsibilities, and sets out rules for coordination and implementation. In the case of [MOVE\\_GREEN](#), despite being a multi-stakeholder project with actors from local and national levels of Spain and Morocco, it managed to design a robust governance structure where key stakeholders, including the private sector, participate in an extended monitoring committee.

Governance structures tend to be more robust when drafted and agreed upon by all stakeholders during the inception of the design through Steering Committee meetings or coordination meetings. When preparing the framework (in whichever desired format – Terms of Reference, Charter, etc.), it is desirable to be flexible in the rules and means of coordination since mobility schemes are likely to require room for change as implementation unfolds.

## STEP 5 MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M&E).



Monitoring each activities' output and evaluating the impact of the overall scheme as the mobility scheme unfolds (as well as after its completion) is extremely important. An M&E framework with dedicated objectives, a baseline for each objective, and SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-Bound) indicators to measure success should be set up for each project. The verification of progress towards these indicators can take the form of external evaluations, in-house reports, cross-project evaluations, or a mix. Regardless of the format, gathering evidence through feedback from employers, employees, students, institutional representatives from both CO and CD is helpful to ensure effective monitoring and evaluation for future scale-up or replicability.

To regularly monitor progress, governance structures such as a Steering Committee are also highly recommended. Such Steering Committees should comprise key stakeholders in the project such as coordinators and partners (including employers,

trade unions, academic institutions etc.) as well as donors. The Steering Committee would typically meet regularly (e.g. every quarter) to assess progress, challenges and the potential need for adjustments to the project.

## BOX 5 SUSTAINABILITY AND SCALING UP MOBILITY SCHEMES

Sustainable mobility schemes are a crucial yet challenging goal to achieve, and it can be beneficial to define what should be sustainable for a project. In other words, does one aim for the sustainability of a scheme (or model) itself via scale-up, or institutional sustainability, or both?

Firstly, upon (or while) implementing a pilot one may wish to continue the scheme for the longer term through scaling it up. Scaling up existing mobility schemes can be considered for several reasons: to increase the number of mobilities, to add new geographies, or to add new public or private partners. Scaling up can also address specific components from a previous pilot and improve certain bottlenecks. [MENTOR II](#), for instance, aims to enhance multi-level institutional governance and cooperation with partner countries, which was the main challenge of its predecessor project [MENTOR I](#).

In addition, one may see the need for institutional sustainability. It can be considered when concrete institutional structures appear or improve during a pilot, and it is deemed most beneficial if the efforts continue. Institutional sustainability can refer to greater coherence within and among national ministries, across countries, or between public and private sectors. It could prolong the governance structures and reinforce the individual and institutional capacities built during the pilot phase.

Sustainability, under both types, requires time and flexibility in forging partnerships and funding. Creating a dedicated and regular space for engagement such as steering committees can build trust and contribute to extending PPPs beyond short-term political cycles. Funding is another key factor for sustainability, which usually requires strong buy-in from the private sector or continuous commitment from one or several governments. Financial sustainability is likely to be better met under schemes that aim to address labour market needs than those with migration management or developmental aims. Though challenging, longer-term contributions and commitment from all stakeholders should be sought through engagement efforts and reflecting diverse needs.

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