

LEGAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

Bridging Pension Gaps for Mobile Migrant Workers by Enhancing Access to and Portability of Pension Rights

About the Project

Temporary or circular international migration – characterised by work abroad for several months to years without permanent settlement – has become increasingly important in global labour markets. While this model supports development through remittances and knowledge transfer, many migrants lose access to pension entitlements due to fragmented systems and the absence of bilateral social security agreements. Improving the understanding of legal, institutional, and practical barriers is essential to promote fair and inclusive mobility partnerships between EU Member States and third countries. In this respect, the project aims at increasing short time mobility and circularity in migration through the development of skills and talent partnerships both at the level of relevant EU institutions and individual Member States. It will do so by providing an overview of the pension systems in EU countries, identifying best and promising practices regarding access to pension benefits and transfer of acquired pension rights, and develop recommendations to improve the existing situation.



Partners

This MPF project is implemented by ICMPD (Austria).



Countries

Country of implementation: Austria

Country of study: Four selected EU Member States (Germany, France, Netherlands, and Sweden) and four Third Countries (India, Tunisia, Nigeria, and the Philippines)



Time frame

September 2025 – August 2026 (12 months)



Budget

EUR 99,740.00

Activities



Mapping & Analysis

Provide a brief overview of relevant EU directives, EU MS policies, bilateral agreements, and other legal instruments concerning pension and pension contribution portability; examine existing analysis, policy reports, and data on pension systems and their effects on third-country nationals with a work history in selected EU countries; collect and analyse the existing social security agreements of the EU case study countries with regard to pension and pension contribution portability, taxation, and other relevant issues.



Case studies

Conduct expert interviews with relevant stakeholders for selected case studies to gather insights into the practical aspects, implementation issues, and experiences related to pension portability from the perspective of the selected EU MS and the selected third countries and analyse the legal and practical barriers faced by TCNs and promising practices in accessing and transferring their pension entitlements and/or pension contributions. Each case study will be a maximum of 10 pages and include promising practices with potential for replicability in other EU Member States.



Final outputs

A comparative 20-page report highlighting trends, similarities, and differences across the EU Member States in terms of access to pensions in case of fulfilment of minimum contribution periods and portability of pension rights in case of non-fulfilment of minimum contribution periods for TCNs for cases with and without a social security agreement also regulating pension issues. This report will include actionable recommendations to policymakers and other relevant stakeholders with a specific focus on realistic practical action to be taken within existing institutional frameworks fostering and implementing talent and migration and mobility partnerships between EU and third countries.

The Migration Partnership Facility



This project is awarded and contracted in the framework of the Migration Partnership Facility (MPF), an EU-funded initiative implemented by ICMPD in support of the external dimension of the EU migration policy. Through its grants, the MPF facilitates the execution of projects to strengthen dialogue and cooperation on migration and mobility between Member States and partner countries outside the EU.

Funded by the European Union



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