



Return Migration

**Background, Practice Examples and Policy Options
for Intra-EU Mobility – Focus on Poland**

October 2019

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International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)

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MAIN FINDINGS



Free mobility of labour within the EU has led to unique opportunities for the exchange of skilled labour and knowledge transfers. Citizens of (mostly post-enlargement) EU Member States like Poland have made use of this opportunity to generate additional or higher income and gain international experience. Nowadays, with a shrinking pool of qualified workers and looming demographic challenges, the consequences of emigration for sending EU Member States have become more evident. In some EU migrant-sending Member States, governments are therefore considering their options to attract back citizens to the country – some more pro-actively than others.

Most EU Member States do not have a stand-alone and comprehensive policy to attract their citizens to return; such elements rather form part of other policies, for example diaspora policies. While diaspora policies generally have a wider scope than emigrant return policies, they overlap in the outreach to (potential) returnees and providing services to actual returnees. Return might be also an aspect of broader migration strategies, talent attraction and development policies.

Not only the goals but also the target groups of the policies are divergent; however, quite often the target groups are limited to individuals that possess citizenship of the country of origin. Specific target groups might include highly skilled emigrants or entrepreneurs that are offered special incentives. At the same time, return measures are usually implemented on a relatively small scale and they are frequently project-based and their scope and outcomes are therefore limited. In general, assessing return policies remains challenging as a systematized evaluation process is lacking.

International examples in the area of **engagement and information strategies** demonstrate new opportunities provided by digital media for the effective targeting of return migrants. Through “digital engagement”, government institutions today can not only provide information to the public, but also have the opportunity to actually communicate with (potential) returnees, answer questions, facilitate the return process and actively guide them along the way. In order to reach the goal of targeting the right emigrants/returnees with the right information and, ideally, facilitating their return, it is crucial to conduct thorough (market) research, which would shed light on the characteristics of the potential target groups and enable selection of the right media channels and tools for engagement. International good practice – especially examples from Latvia – points to the importance of real engagement and individually tailored support implemented together.

Similar conclusions can be drawn from **tailored support measures**, including mentoring, counselling, training and recognition practices. Governments are involved in various ways, be it as a funding body of NGO interventions or a partner in a Public-Private Partnership. There are not that many initiatives tailored specifically for returnees since they are often addressed by mainstream policies and are sometimes implemented in conjunction with policies addressing other migrants facing similar needs.

Language learning in the context of return is relevant especially for spouses who have limited to no language capacity. They can be considered as having similar needs to other immigrants with respect to language learning. Language training courses tailored to sectors, occupational areas, and qualifications are innovative approaches. **Supporting the children** of returning families at school can be considered a crucial reintegration policy area, especially since young families are often a target group of return measures. Relevant considerations for such policies (especially language development) can start even before returnees come back to the country of origin. Once back in the country of origin, school age children may face not only language issues but other challenges as well, including culture shock or challenges at school due to a different school curriculum and school culture, which should be properly addressed.

Finding **appropriate housing** is a key component of the return process, and returnees may face challenges such as a lack of information on current prices on the market, an inability to visit a potential apartment in advance, or a lack of knowledge on their eligibility for social housing. This is especially an issue for returnees who come back to a different region than they originally emigrated from, where they lack social networks for information and support. In general, international practice points towards supporting and counselling returnees in their housing search, including helping them to access social housing if they are eligible. Some countries also offer monetary subsidies to support returnees with housing.

Return policies have become a prominent part of the political agenda of Poland since a wave of emigration that followed Poland's accession to the EU. Since 2007, return migration has been mentioned in several governmental documents as an important topic of state policy. At the same time, regional authorities, non-governmental organizations and private companies have launched several programmes aiming to promote return migration. Most programmes implemented in the past consisted of information campaigns and trainings, with a special focus on entrepreneurship and self-employment. **Similarly to other countries, their impact has been limited because of their relatively short duration.** Given the activities of general scope already established in Poland, such as information campaigns or support for children entering the education system in Poland, there is a growing need for coordinated local actions that integrate returnees on a local level.

It is important to adapt return policies in Poland to the **changing patterns of migration**. The available data on Polish migrants shows a gradual shift towards long-term strategies or settlement abroad. This is visible in all locations where data exists, including those with traditionally large seasonal sectors. As time goes by, migrants get older and set up their families abroad and thus they start to adopt less individualized and more family-focused strategies.

RECAP OF RECOMMENDATIONS



- **Clearly define target groups and their specific needs**, with a special focus on 1) young first and second generation migrants, most preferably highly skilled or with precisely defined professions for whom career opportunities in Poland are the main argument for returning, and 2) young families with children, for whom access to and quality of public services (education, system of welfare benefits) and work opportunities are the main reasons for returning.
- **Initiate measures for another two target groups of returnees:** (3) Elderly persons, not necessarily from EU countries, who might be willing to return to their country of origin out of sentimental reasons, and (4) migrants of working age who face particular difficulties in the labour market and might need professional training aimed at re-skilling and gaining new competencies.
- **Mainstream and return policies should be coherent and compatible in order to form an effective package for returnees** since labour market activation, housing and support at school are crucial for both the return decision and retention of returnees and their families.
- **Identifying and addressing “hard” barriers to return should become a short-term priority** to address legal obstacles that hamper or demotivate the return of emigrants (e.g. inaccessible financial instruments, bureaucratic requirements, unfavourable taxation).
- **Better linking of diaspora policies with return migration policies** in order to utilise the potential of the Polish diaspora abroad. Many Polish emigrants settle permanently abroad; nevertheless, their identities as Polish diaspora may remain. There may be creative policies which could inspire them to continue their political, economic or cultural engagements with Poland, even from the position of remaining physically abroad. This potential should be tapped into.
- **Ensure regional and multi-stakeholder** implementation, keeping in mind that emigrants return to specific places, often cities and places of origin, and that policies at a local level play an important role. Close cooperation between all institutions is crucial for the implementation of effective, coherent and well-coordinated policies.
- **Expand the evidence base as a precondition** to successful and efficient return policies in order to address persisting knowledge gaps and barriers to return.

- **Involve the private and nongovernmental sector actively** in measures related to the labour market by both attracting and retaining returnees. This might include various public-private partnerships and other public initiatives: subcontracting interventions of non-government organizations, aimed at job matching, internships for students and graduates, outreach activities abroad and professional re-skilling in Poland.
- **Address the negative image of return and create a positive feeling of belonging to create a positive environment for return** through the promotion of success stories during promotion campaigns and awareness raising among employers of the advantages and skills that emigration experiences bring to the workplace.
- **Build on and expand existing information services and engagement abroad** and complement them with job fairs and other campaigns promoting return.
- **Establish a network of regional counsellors** ready to inform, advise and deal with the practical problems of individual migrants/migrant families, preferably implemented by municipal authorities working in close cooperation with employment services.
- **Develop tailored support** in professional mentoring, entrepreneurial counselling, training, and re-skilling, preferably implemented by employment services.
- **Establish language and work-related language trainings** in cooperation with public employment services, representatives of the Zielona Linia service and non-governmental organizations through face-to-face training and e-learning methods.
- **Better integrate** activities performed by public schools, Psychological-Pedagogical Centres and the Centre for the Development of Polish Education Abroad (Ośrodek Rozwoju Polskiej Edukacji za Granicą, ORPEG), and strengthen the role of Psychological-Pedagogical Centres (PPC's) in evaluating the integration of (return) migrant children and the role of ORPEG in supporting Polish schools abroad (including associative schools).
- **Provide returnees with information and support regarding housing**, recognising the fact that returnees might come back to a different region than they originally emigrated from, where they lack social networks for information and support.

INTRODUCTION

Return migration constitutes an integral element in the phenomenon of international migration and has been receiving growing attention, especially in countries of origin interested in leveraging return migration to their economic advantage. Realising the potential benefits of return migration (investments as well as transfer of skills and knowledge), many governments have introduced various programmes encouraging return migration. Such programmes, as well as engaging the broader diaspora, are among a range of possible state responses to migration in general (Boros and Hegedüs 2016; Lowell 2001). Other responses include restricting the mobility of citizens (difficult in the context of EU free mobility), retaining potential emigrants through various policies, and recruiting international labour. Returning citizens or members of a broader diaspora are sometimes seen as a preferred policy response because of the perceived advantages and relatively low costs. However, it is clear that the effectiveness of policies aiming to increase the number of returnees is limited, as long as the conditions in the country of origin (which led to the original emigration) remain the same. If someone emigrated because of a detrimental economic situation and this situation has not changed in their country of origin, they are unlikely to return, even if they may want to. That being said, some emigrants do return, due to various and often quite personal reasons.

Since joining the European Union in 2004, Poland has experienced one of the largest emigration flows in its post-war history. According to estimates of the Polish Central Statistical Office, there were more than 2.5 million Poles living abroad in 2017. Despite the fact that some Polish migrants have returned to their home country from Western Europe, the return has not been as extensive as initially anticipated by some policymakers. According to estimates based on census results for return migration in the years 2008-2011, from 23% to 32% (depending on the year) of Polish migrants that had previously resided outside of Poland returned to the country (Anacka and Fihel 2014). In the majority of cases, emigration has an economic character, and includes young people of reproductive age, which often translates into starting families in the country of destination. The above factors pose an additional challenge when taking measures to encourage emigrants to return.

In this report we will discuss in more detail the mechanism of return and possible policy responses, as well as the particular case of Polish returnees. We will start by presenting what is known about returnees, their motivations and the challenges they face during the return process (Chapter 1), followed by a discussion of return policies in the European context (Chapter 2). Chapter 3 presents emigration and return trends and the policy context related to return to Poland. Chapter 4 then provides an in-depth review of selected return policies, including information and reintegration policies, and discusses them in the Polish context. Chapter 5 concludes with recommendations regarding their potential implementation in Poland.

METHODOLOGY AND TERMINOLOGY



This report is based on desk-research and expert interviews conducted in the context of the project “Labour Migration Strategy for Poland”. In November 2018, Polish government stakeholders in the project convened for a workshop on a broad range of return migration instruments. Based on presentations and discussions on existing measures, three instruments were chosen for further in-depth analysis, forming the main chapter of this report. The return measures were further discussed during a second workshop held in May 2019.

There is no consistent, universally accepted **definition of the terms “return migration” and “returnees”**. Migrants may return permanently at certain points during their economically productive life, for retirement, or temporarily before migrating again. Return can constitute an element of complex, individual biographies of mobility, as the last country of residence before return is not necessarily the country of initial emigration. Indeed, this absence of definition creates confusion when assessing needs, possibilities and estimates of the size of returnee populations, and makes it generally challenging to conduct relevant research (Carling et al. 2015). It should also be underlined that there are **few statistics available** that can serve as a basis for comprehensive and accurate information on the return phenomenon. The available estimates are usually based on population registers, labour force surveys, and population censuses, which are all prone to certain methodological challenges (Dumont and Spielvogel 2008). Different surveys work with different definitions of return (especially regarding length of stay abroad), so it is challenging to compare the results. For Poland, there is a particular methodological challenge, as emigrants are not obliged to de-register from the place of permanent residence in Poland when they leave, and therefore cannot be “tracked” as emigrants and/or later as return migrants.

According to the definition offered by the United Nations Statistics Division for collecting data on international migration, returning migrants are *“persons returning to their country of citizenship after having been international migrants (whether short-term or long-term) in another country and who are intending to stay in their own country for at least a year.”* (Anacka and Wójcicka n.d.; United Nations Statistics Division 1998). In general, the **project and the present report follow this definition**, although some policies may also target return migrants that stay for a shorter time, only return periodically, or only stay connected to the country of origin remotely (e.g. through transnational networks, new communications technologies). In the Polish context, there are also other groups that could potentially constitute the target of return policies: firstly, persons who emigrated with their parents as young children and who may not possess a Polish passport; secondly, second generation emigrants, i.e. children of emigrants born abroad; and thirdly, members of Polish minorities abroad.

1. WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT RETURN MIGRATION AND RETURNEES?



1.1 INTRODUCTION

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In an ideal-case scenario, a migrant's return to their country of origin can be a **win-win situation for both the state and the migrant**. The returnee can use their skills and knowledge gained in the country of destination (or transit) to their advantage upon return, and the country of origin can benefit from these inputs, turning "brain drain" into "brain gain" (Martin and Radu 2012). However, while there is some evidence for this ideal scenario in intra-European mobility (ibid), it only accounts for the case of a certain type of successful (return) migrant, and a common challenge of return policies is to account for all types of return. This chapter seeks to outline what is known about the factors that influence the decision to return, how one can understand different types of return, and what possible challenges returnees face when they return to their country of origin.

1.2 FACTORS INFLUENCING RETURN DECISIONS AND THE REASONS FOR RETURN

While many migrants claim that they have return intentions, the number of those that actually return is notoriously lower than those who make such claims. While the return migration potential (those who declare their willingness to return and may be the target groups of return policies) may be significant, actual returnees are usually the minority among emigrants, as most (by their initial design, or unplanned) end up staying in the destination country.

There are some **general characteristics** of return migrants that can cautiously be inferred from existing research about return migration. Regarding the **timeframe**, most return migration occurs within the first two years after arrival in the country of destination and decreases significantly after 5 years of stay (Jolivet et al. 2012). Regarding the **life cycle and age** of return migrants, there seems to be a u-shaped curve, as young and retiring emigrants are more likely to return. The results look similar for **education**, as low and highly skilled emigrants are more likely to return while the semi-skilled return less. However, these results can vary strongly depending on a number of factors, including the country of origin and destination, as well as the admission category (e.g. type of visa) (Dumont and Spielvogel 2008).

While economic theories of migration see return either as a consequence of failed migration or successful migration concluded by return, empirical studies have shown that a multiplicity of factors can play into the return decision and process (Cassarino 2016, 2004). At the same time, return seems to be a highly individual decision with strongly varying motives (Battistella 2018; Constant and Massey 2002). Existing research shows **that reasons for return are not clear-cut**: some emigrants who have successfully integrated into the destination country may still return, while others who are less successful may be expected to return but, nevertheless, remain as migrants in the destination country. Moreover, motivations and goals may shift over time (Dumont and Spielvogel 2008:184). Taking into account the time for return (at the end or before the end of the migration project) and the decision to return (voluntary or involuntary), **four major types of return** are identified by Battistella:

1. **Return of achievement**, occurring voluntarily after the original goal of migration is achieved;
2. **Return of completion**, in which the migrant has completed their contract (or must leave for other reasons), would prefer to stay abroad, but this is not feasible;
3. **Return of setback**, when the migrant returns voluntarily before the end of the migration process for reasons including dissatisfaction with working conditions or for family reasons; and
4. **Return of crisis**, in which the migrant returns due to political upheaval, reasons of security, or through involuntary return (Battistella 2018).

Various typologies also point towards the **role of family** for particular types of return. Return is sometimes connected to certain life stages and associated considerations, e.g. wanting to raise children in the first language of the parents and in a familiar education system triggering a return; spending more time in the country of origin in retirement; or returning because of fears around care in old age (Cerase 1974).

In contrast to this, **economic motives usually play a less significant role than often anticipated**, since the economic environment is usually more attractive in the country of destination. Nevertheless, an attractive work opportunity, or an overall improved situation in the country of origin, can also trigger return. Returnees not only take into account having a job to secure their livelihood, but also pay attention to the work environment, staff-management relationships, and possibilities to pursue a career in the return country (Carling et al. 2015; Iglicka 2002).

In general, return migration is driven by mixed motivations, reflecting the successes and failures in the country of destination, as well as other factors such as family status and life cycle. There are also those who may “try out” return for a short period of time before making the final decision, as has been shown in research on Poles who emigrated to Norway (Bivand Erdal 2015). Indeed, circular migration may be the more appropriate term for some, since they return only to re-emigrate again (White 2014) or become seasonal or even daily commuters (Anghel et al. 2016).

One may initially assume that return is a relatively easy process: after all, emigrants already know the country and are perhaps expected to “blend in” once they return. However, there is an array of different return experiences, which depend on a number of interrelated factors. These include: **conditions in the country of origin; how long** the migrant has been abroad (the longer the stay abroad, the more intense and challenging the reintegration process usually becomes); the **character of their migration experience**; and the (beneficial or unfavourable) **factors that motivated** return.

Through the individual and structural context formed by these factors, returnees go through the **readjustment process of reintegration**. According to IOM, there are at least three dimensions of reintegration: **social, economic, and psychosocial** (Davids and Van Houte 2008; Graviano et al. 2017). Furthermore, reintegration is shaped on the **individual level** (such as the experiences of the migrant abroad, or the return motivation – from “crisis” to “achievement”), the **community level** (which may be welcoming or adding further challenges), and the **structural level** (the general situation in the country of origin) (Cassarino 2004; Davids and Van Houte 2008; Graviano et al. 2017).

Depending on the type of return, **economic challenges** including labour market reintegration can be more or less difficult to overcome. There is some evidence that (especially young) intra-European **emigrants may be well placed to benefit from their time abroad** once they return (Iara 2006; Masso et al. 2016). If it is a case of return of achievement, returnees may already have a plan regarding their work, and thus may achieve a higher salary (Martin and Radu 2012; Masso et al. 2016). Returnees’ preparedness may also be such that they are well placed to invest their resources and become an **entrepreneur** (Pauli and Osowska 2018), although such a choice may also be related to difficulties in accessing employment (Martin and Radu 2012; OECD/Scalabrini Migration Center 2017). **Difficulties in accessing employment** may occur because the skills acquired by migrants abroad may not be those needed on the domestic labour market and/or because the skills are not easily transferable (i.e. education/professional degree acquired abroad) and/or because of limited access to attractive positions (e.g. nepotism or corruption). Returnees thus often have to go through a phase of retraining in order to access employment again (Battistella 2018). Many migrants also experience de-skilling abroad.

Severe challenges in the return process can lead to re-emigration (Kuschminder 2017). This is also connected to the question of whether returnees are covered by the social protection system in the country they have returned to, which may work as a disincentive to re-emigration, especially if opportunities for training and/or employment are offered (Barrett and Mosca 2013).

One specific dimension of reintegration concerns the **families (spouses and children) of returnees**, who may not be citizens of the country of origin and may experience the return more like an immigration process. **They have similar needs to other immigrants regarding their integration**, including social, language, education (schools) and labour market aspects of integration (Battistella 2018).

Overall, it is difficult to pinpoint at what point exactly reintegration is “**successful**”. IOM defines reintegration as successful “when returnees have reached levels of economic self-sufficiency, social stability within their communities, and psychosocial well-being that allow them to cope with (re)migration drivers. Having achieved sustainable reintegration, returnees are able to make further migration decisions a matter of choice, rather than necessity” (Battistella 2018:3). This definition acknowledges that, on a structural level, **return migrants may face a situation (and migration drivers) similar to when they emigrated**, and that re-migration may not necessarily be an indicator of “unsuccessful” return migration.

2. RETURN IN THE POLICY CONTEXT



2.1 DIVERSE APPROACHES TO RETURN POLICY AMONG EU MEMBER STATES

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Countries do not usually have a stand-alone **comprehensive return policy** – it tends rather to be an **element of other** policies, for example, **diaspora policies**. While diaspora policies generally have a wider scope than return policies, they overlap in their outreach to (potential) returnees. From a diaspora policy perspective, whether a (former) citizen actually returns permanently or temporarily, or whether they invest their resources while living abroad instead, is of relative importance; the focus depends on the current understanding of what is beneficial for the country (Frankenhaeuser and Noack 2015). For example, in the case of **Ireland**, return is incorporated into a broader diaspora policy presented in the policy document “Global Irish. Ireland’s Diaspora Policy”. Although Ireland currently does not pursue a policy of actively attracting emigrants to return, the aim is to facilitate the process for those who wish to return. At the same time, the document states that the Irish government will remove obstacles to return linked to general domestic policies.

Some states have established return policies as part of broader **migration** strategies. For example, the Portuguese “Strategic Plan for Migration” highlights the importance of focused strategies in support of the return of Portuguese emigrants. It also states that in addition to being an “inherent duty of national solidarity”, return also contributes to the retention and enhancement of national human capital.

There are also countries where return policies constitute a dimension of **multiple and overlapping policies, including talent attraction, migration and diaspora**. For example, in Lithuania, return has been included in the “Global Lithuania Strategy”, which aims to promote the diaspora’s involvement in life back in Lithuania and prevent the continuation of “brain drain”. A special Action Plan from 2016 designed to reduce emigration and increase return migration speaks to broader target groups and includes measures aimed at promotion of entrepreneurship and the creation of new job positions, attracting investors and talents in general.

Interestingly, in Latvia, return constitutes an important element of **development** policies. The National Development Plan of Latvia for 2014-2020 indicates as one of its strategic goals: “to encourage people to stay in Latvia and facilitate the return of Latvian nationals to Latvia”. A previous strategic document in this policy area, “Plan of remigration support activities for 2013-2016” highlighted, among others, a need to support returnees in find-

Evidence-based policies

In some countries, return policies are adopted based on an in-depth analysis of the identified problems and challenges faced by returnees. For example, in Ireland, the Inter-Departmental Committee on Irish Abroad commissioned a report investigating the challenges faced by emigrants returning to Ireland and considered potential measures to address these challenges. It highlighted that emigrants perceive significant barriers in three areas: employment, mobility-related issues and housing. Other relevant barriers include health and childcare, finance and banking, immigration and welfare, and education. The study resulted in **30 targeted** recommendations across nine thematic areas to facilitate emigrant return.

The “**Return to Spain Plan**” was based on the outcomes of various meetings, workshops and surveys conducted among emigrants and returnees, and more than 60 companies. The research and consultation process on problems related to return as well as motivations behind the decision to emigrate and return were part of the preparatory process to satisfy the demands of the different profiles of emigrants who want to return and those who already have.

ing employment and re-integrating into society, as well as supporting returnee families through language and cultural classes, with additional support offered to school-aged children.

Spain remains the only country that has both **regional and national level return policies**. The “Return to Spain Plan” that was approved by the Spanish government in March 2019 aims to facilitate the return of emigrants who left the country during the economic crisis and are now seen as a resource for the Spanish economy. The Plan builds on previous initiatives at a local level, such as those launched by the region of Castilla-La Mancha and the municipality of Valladolid, which are also currently ongoing.

Integration policies also play a role, as returning emigrants (and especially their families) may have similar needs to immigrants. For instance, the Portuguese “Immigrant Mentoring Programme” simply broadened their target group to include returnees too.

At the same time, especially in countries experiencing significant **labour shortages**, we observe an approach to potential returnees from the perspective of labour market policies; such an approach, in turn, defines the type of support measures. In **Spain**, 27 out of 50 measures of the Return to Spain Plan

relate to professional/work-related support, including professional mentoring, networking between companies and emigrants, recognition of competences and skills acquired abroad, and online and face-to-face training in emerging sectors (Figure 1).

Figure 1

Return measures foreseen in the Return to Spain Plan



Source: Authors

The **goals and target groups** of the policies also diverge. For instance, regional or local level policies in **Spain** pursue the goal of attracting highly skilled Spanish emigrants to return, e.g. those who have gone abroad to study. The present national plan targets persons planning to return in the short, medium or long term, with a special focus on the second group. Attracting entrepreneurs by funding entrepreneurship programmes can also be identified as a trend among the countries studied. Other approaches are more welfare-oriented, i.e. helping emigrants who have faced a difficult situation abroad or providing tailored information support to all potential returnees (e.g. Ireland). However, quite often the target group is limited to potential returnees that possess the citizenship of the country of origin.

In **Ireland**, where the target group is very broad and includes everyone planning to return (including those who have experienced difficulties while being abroad), the focus is presently put on counselling, outreach, and information, with special attention placed on less successful return migrants and Irish-born emigrants over the age of 57. Special attention is also paid to housing support, and a mentoring programme has been created which aims to support returning emigrant entrepreneurs (Figure 2).

Figure 2
Return measures in Ireland



Source: Authors

At the same time, some states have introduced **special programmes for particularly desired returnees** – these are mostly highly-skilled migrants, who are offered a “package” of incentives. So-called state-assisted return programmes (SARPs) targeting highly-skilled migrants focus on the return of desirable human capital by assisting returnees and their families. Support for the highly-skilled rests on two main axes: employment and social support (Cohen and Kranz 2015). For example, GAIN in **Germany** is a return programme run by the DAAD (German academic exchange organisation), which created an outreach strategy for German academics. It seeks to facilitate the return of departed scientists, and provides job placement assistance for those landing jobs in academic institutions as well as housing and integration offers for the family. The **Malaysian** Returning Expert Programme (REP) offers not only tax incentives but also a permanent residency status for foreign spouses and children.

However, countries rarely offer such complex support for returnees and, in general, the majority of the analysed initiatives have a relatively small scale and often a regional or even local approach (see also EC 2018). Quite often they are project-based and their scope and outcomes are limited or unknown (ibid).

2.2

EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT OF RETURN MEASURES

Regarding the **effectiveness** of existing return policies, it is difficult to make any assessment since there is a lack of systematic evaluation. There is a certain discrepancy between the optimistic formulations of the policies and the more limited outcomes (i.e. a few dozen or (a few) hundred returnees directly targeted). For example, according to Žvalionytė (2014), figures from the survey of Lithuanian re-migrants show that as few as 5.8 % of migrants decided to return to Lithuania as a result of Lithuanian policies promoting return migration. Similarly, in the case of Portugal, actions appear to have limited impact since the small-scale programmes mentioned above attracted few Portuguese to return home (European Centre of Expertise (ECE) in the field of labour law employment and labour market 2018a). However, the existence of a return policy may also have a signalling effect to emigrants in general that their return is desired.

Even though research has shown that emigrants often return without any institutions or formal procedures involved (Masso et al. 2016), potential returnees do consider the social policy environment (e.g. health care, linguistic support for children) before making the decision to return, and some returnees are more in need of support than others (Carling et al. 2015; Masso et al. 2016). This also reflects the fact that often the barriers to return cannot be addressed in a simple manner, but lie within mainstream policies needing adjustment in order for return to take place. For instance, Ireland currently sees a housing shortage as a major obstacle to return, which cannot easily be solved and is a general government priority.

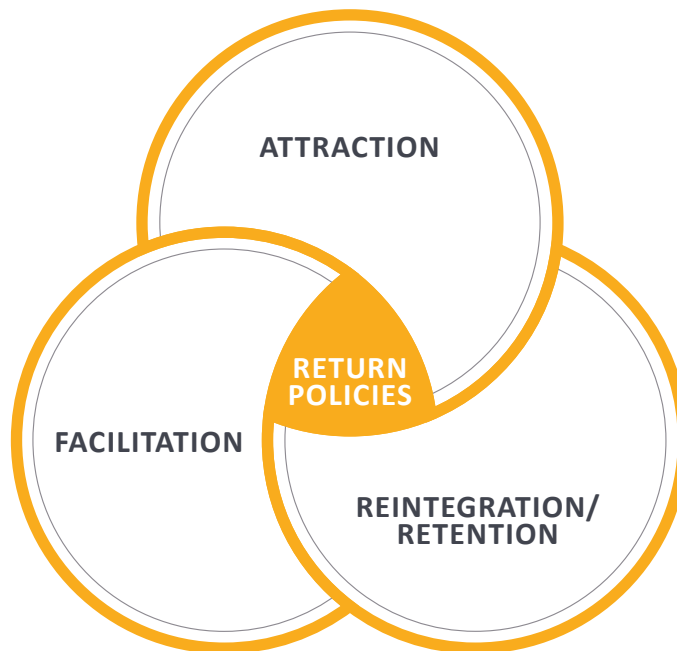
Finally, difficulties in designing effective return policies lie not only in the “hard barriers” to return (such as bureaucratic requirements, unfavourable taxation or (lack of) portability of social rights), which can be overcome by political and legislative changes. They also lie in the “soft” barriers, which are more difficult to address, as they originate in the socio-economic context of return. These can include barriers in the following areas: labour market opportunities (including wage differentials), business climate, educational opportunities (including for children with special needs), access to quality health care, and integrational services for family members, who may be de facto immigrants to the country of return. Both “hard” and “soft” barriers are context-dependent and their perception differs from migrant to migrant.

States may benefit from return under optimal conditions: if the migrant has acquired professional experience, these new skills may match the skills needed on the domestic labour market of the return country, and returnees may actually manage to apply these skills and experiences after they return (Lesińska 2013). If these factors are not fulfilled, the potential benefits of states in the case of return may be reduced or non-existent; still, states may want more welfare-based policies in place to address challenges returnees may face.

2.3 RETURN POLICY TOOLBOX

Return policies presented on the next few pages can be divided into: 1) policies aimed at attracting returnees; 2) policies aimed at facilitating return, targeting potential returnees (e.g. through information); and 3) policies aiming to ensure reintegration (Lesińska 2010). They can be further classified by what type of return they address: the successful “return of achievement” or the more difficult “return of crisis” outlined above. As shown in the graph below (Figure 3), the abovementioned measures can overlap. For example, migrants might require information support prior to and after the return process. Entrepreneurship support might attract emigrants to return, but also plays an important role in the reintegration process.

Figure 3
Return policies according to the objective



Source: Authors

2.3.1 Policies aimed at attracting returnees

Attraction policies aim to convince citizens living and working abroad to return to their country of origin, thus stimulating return migration. The target group is, in general, those emigrants who declare their willingness to return (referred to as “return potential”, see above), although they may not have the means or readiness to actually return (“return preparedness”). Among policies promoting return, engagement and **information strategies** play a prominent role (Table 1). They can promote an idea of return as a success story rather than a failure, which is important considering the social pressures returnees may be sub-

ject to; thus, they can also support reintegration. Campaigns can also promote a positive image of the country of origin/return in general. However, a challenge exists here, since studies have shown that some emigrants perceive such campaigns negatively, as showing an unrealistic image of the country.

Another type of attraction instrument is **financial incentives**. These can include preferential income tax (implemented, e.g., in Portugal), flat income tax (e.g., Malaysia, Malta), tax exemptions on imported cars, subsidies for buying a home, one-time re-entry subsidy and preferential tax schemes for highly-skilled workers. In the case of **Portugal**, emigrants have the option to return under the non-habitual resident regime (Regime do residente não habitual) if they have worked abroad for five years, which allows them to receive significant tax breaks if they perform highly qualified activities in an artistic, scientific or technical area (IOM 2018). Another measure is preferred status bank accounts: emigrants (both permanent and temporary), retired former emigrants who have returned to Portugal, and descendants of emigrants can open a special bank account offering them fiscal benefits on the purchase of land or housing (Santana-Pereira and Horta 2017). The **Returning Expert Programme (REP)** targeting highly skilled Malaysians living and working abroad offers a 15% flat tax rate on employment income for the first five years. In addition, returnees enjoy tax exemptions on the import or purchase of vehicles. All personal belongings brought back to Malaysia are exempt from tax as well. In the case of **Malta**, individuals born in this country who have resided outside Malta for an aggregate period of 20 years and have returned to Malta after 1 January 1988 may opt to benefit from a 15% flat rate of tax on their chargeable income under certain conditions. Another more specific programme is the grant scheme supporting the return of experts from abroad run by the **Slovak** Ministry of Education, which seeks to encourage highly skilled Slovak experts living abroad to work in the public sector in Slovakia. **One-off subsidies** are expected to partly compensate for the costs associated with the return, such as lost opportunity costs, tuition fees or non-financial costs (European Centre of Expertise (ECE) in the field of labour employment law and labour market 2018b).

Other measures aimed at attracting returns are related to **education** and their introduction is closely connected with the issue of **brain circulation and global competition for talents** (see also EC 2018). The predominant goal is to attract back young future professionals who could fill the gaps in the labour market. The education programmes often target students and young professionals from specific study disciplines such as technology or science, which are lacking high-skilled workers. Types of instruments might include **scholarships** granted to returnees or their family members or **student exchange** programmes. The latter enable students to acquire graduate or postgraduate degrees abroad, on the condition that they must return to the country of origin to work and live there for a specific period of time after graduation. Examples of such initiatives can be found in a number of EU countries. For example, the Erwin Schrödinger Fellowship in **Austria** enables young scientists or researchers based in Austria to work abroad at prominent institutions during the post-doc phase. They receive funding for research abroad and return to apply the expertise they gained abroad.

After emigrants have made the return decision, there is a range of policy instruments that can assist their return and make it easier and more likely to be a success. Information and communication activities (e.g. websites, hotlines, etc.) (Lesińska 2013) are again crucial to increasing “return preparedness” and providing answers to emerging questions. Information needed can concern all relevant **administrative processes and bureaucratic necessities** for returning, **legal issues** including recognition of education, **opportunities for employment** and **(re)integration policies** (Table 1).

All EU countries under study have been involved in information and communication related activities. In **Ireland**, the Crosscare Migrant Project provides information for those planning to move abroad, and for those planning to return, particularly on how to access social services. In **Spain**, direct support of the process of return is included in the recently approved Return to Spain Plan that foresees the creation of a one-stop shop (“ventanilla unica”) as a key element for the purpose of providing information. Moreover, a practical handbook, “*Return Guide (Guía del Retorno)*”, has been published on the website of the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Social Security, covering administrative requirements for return, eligibility for welfare benefits for returnees, etc.¹ In the case of Lithuania, IOM Vilnius Office in cooperation with the Lithuanian Ministry of Interior established the **Migration Information Center** to provide one-stop shop consultations. Finally, in the case of **Estonia**, the Integration Foundation has been providing financial support and counselling.

Previous studies have pointed out that **information policies actually seem to be a weak element** of return policies, since many emigrants do not know about the institutional support available to them (Boros and Hegedüs 2016). Even in the case of Ireland, which has relatively extensive activities targeting returnees, information seems to be a weak element: according to a study from 2018, more than 65% respondents (returnees) found it difficult to obtain information related to return (Indecon International Economic Consultants 2018). Therefore, effective information strategies seem to be a crucial element during the return process.

Some countries have also created various measures aimed at **connecting potential returnees with employers**, including **jobseeker platforms, job fairs or diaspora skills databases**. For example, **Germany** has organised large-scale job fairs in North America. It uses them as a part of its overarching strategy of labour-matching and support for industry, which is experiencing shortages of highly-skilled staff. In **Spain**, the Service Labour Mediation platform to facilitate the matching of job offers with potential returnees has yet to open. It will also offer the assistance of a so-called mediator, who will adapt their support depending on the sector of employment and locations of future employment of the potential returnee. In the case of **Portugal**, the Global Professional Mobility Platform (Plataforma de Mobilidade Profissional Global) is an online tool that fosters the recruitment of highly skilled Portuguese living abroad by publishing job opportunities in Portugal and elsewhere. In this context it is also worth mentioning a project by the title of “Talent for Lithuania” implemented by the Global Lithuanian Leaders in **Lithuania**, which is aimed at attracting Lithuanian graduates.²

¹ This guide is available at: www.ciudadaniaexterior.empleo.gob.es/es/pdf/guiaretorno.pdf

² <http://lithuanianleaders.org/projects/talents-for-lithuania/>

2.3.3

Policies aiming to ensure reintegration

Reintegration support refers to a broad gamut of support offered to emigrants once they are back in their country of origin. This type of support may include counselling and general assistance relating to employment, housing, education, welfare and adjusting to return. In the case of immigration of members of the diaspora who have never before resided in the country of return, as well as their family members, this policy instrument may be more accurately referred to as integration support.

One of the relatively common measures within reintegration is **tailored advice** that addresses the fact that potential returnees need to assess which information and regulations are relevant to them personally, and why. However, many returnees come back with a job opportunity already organised as a precondition for their return. Thus, **economic reintegration policies** are most relevant for those returnees coming back without a plan in place. From a labour market and welfare policy perspective, returnees can become a problematic target group if they **return only to become unemployed** or in need of welfare support (Lesińska 2013). One study on Slovak intra-EU mobility found that returnees may rely on the transferability of their unemployment benefits from abroad in order not to have to take up a job immediately (Masso et al. 2016). Returnees may need support to find **employment in the origin country and may need a phase of training before they can re-enter the domestic labour market** (Battistella 2018; Coniglio and Brzozowski 2018). Therefore, including returnees in employment programmes is important, either by creating specific programmes or by including integration of returnees into existing **labour market activation** programmes, including training. **Skills/education recognition** is also an important mainstream reintegration policy tool that can be specifically targeted to a returnee target group.

Regarding active labour market policies, **employers can also become a target group of return policies**. Additional incentives for employers may be offered to encourage them to employ returnees (Battistella 2018).³ Information campaigns targeting employers to increase their awareness of this target group are also sometimes used. For example, the Municipality of Valladolid offers financial aid for companies who hire returnees full-time and for a minimum of two years for the expansion or development of a new project in fields such as innovation, internationalization, circular economy or cultural and creative industries, among others.

A popular instrument that is thought to speak to returnees of the “achiever” type is **entrepreneurship programmes**. On the one hand, returnees may generally be more entrepreneurial since emigration is itself selective for more “adventurous” characters (Naudé et al. 2015). Emigrants may, moreover, be well positioned to invest their accumulated capital from their migration into their business (financial capital as well as other forms such as human capital in the form of acquired skills) (Pauli and Osowska 2018). On the other hand, returnees may be pushed into self-employment because they are unable to access formal employment (Martin and Radu 2012). Entrepreneurship programmes targeting returnees can include preferential access to loans, lessons on how to create a business plan and financial

³ For an example, see also the “Talent Return Plan” of the city of Valladolid, <https://www.retornoavalladolid.es/que-es/>.

management skills (Lesińska 2013), and support in the bureaucratic steps necessary to start a business. Although entrepreneurial activity can be a good option for some returnees and benefit the country of origin as well, it is important to keep in mind that **not all returnees are fit to become entrepreneurs**. The added value and innovative character of the new businesses compared to what was invested in the training programme may be limited (Naudé et al. 2015). An example of an entrepreneurship programme in **Ireland** is the “Back for Business”⁴ mentoring programme, aimed at returning emigrant entrepreneurs. In **Spain**, in some regions subsidies are offered for **start-up costs** of entrepreneurial activity, aimed at people who have resided or worked abroad and want to develop economic activity on their own.

Additionally, returnees might be offered various types of **financial support**. For example, within “Return to Estonia”, the Integration Foundation in **Estonia** offers financial support to facilitate the return of families with children who have stayed abroad for a long time, as well as to young people who have completed their postgraduate and doctoral studies abroad. In **Spain** at the national level, certain returnees are entitled to receive an unemployment subsidy for returnees. The target group for this measure is restricted to certain countries outside the EU/EEA, Switzerland, or Australia.

Other reintegration policies, such as language introduction, are more likely to concern members of families of returnees who had not lived in the country previously. As mentioned above, the **spouses and children of returnees**, who may not be citizens of the country of origin, may experience the return more like an immigration process. **They may have similar needs to other immigrants regarding their integration**, including social, language, education (schools) and labour market aspects of integration (Battistella 2018). Thus, general integration policies should support the (re)integration of returnees’ household members. In **Estonia**, as far as issues related to education are concerned, the Ministry of Education is cooperating with the “Innova” organization to offer a special counselling service to parents who experience difficulties with education or schools for their children. The **Latvian** project PAPS aims to support families living abroad which are considering returning to Latvia.

⁴ <https://www.backforbusiness.com/>

Table 1
Examples of return measures

Tool	Advantages	Disadvantages
Cross-Cutting		
Engagement and Information strategies and campaigns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key element of the success of any other instrument • If well-designed, addresses different types of returnees • Information and various tools can be brought together and presented as an attractive package • Cross-cutting relevance from attracting (potential) returnees to facilitating their return and reintegration • Concrete impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost depending on scale and duration, appropriate budget is crucial for success • Risk of negative perception of (image) campaign (“false portrayal”) • Relies on participation of employers and potential returnees alike – risk factors if not well-designed • Necessary to regularly maintain, update, advertise (“dead” websites/channels can be damaging)
Attraction		
Financial incentives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income tax break is serious incentive to invest and possibly to return • Tax exemption on import reduces the bureaucratic burden faced at customs (personal belongings) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits depend on the characteristics of the recipient (more attractive for those earning more) • Tax exemption on the import of personal effects is unlikely to have substantial monetary benefits • Might create social tensions
Education-related instruments (e.g. scholarships)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting future specialists desired in particular areas to secure the needs of the labour market and promote innovation • Programmes often tailored to the specific needs of participants • Help in the development of scientific career by facilitating access to new scientific areas, methods, procedures and techniques 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High costs • Small target group • Without the appropriate conditions and attractive career prospects in the country of origin, the targeted participants are reluctant to return/emigrate

Facilitation		
Job Fairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can bridge the gap between potential returnees and employers with face to face meetings • Clear impact for involved potential returnees • Government implementation: especially beneficial to small and medium sized companies (SMEs) – lack of resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost compared to limited impact may be too high – if there is no specific target group • Relies on participation of employers and potential returnees alike – risk factors if not well-designed
Online Matching Tools for Returnees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addresses one of the most prominent factors for reintegration, i.e. employment • Higher outreach compared to face-to-face job fairs • Concrete impact • Can bring information and various tools together in one place • Support for companies with limited resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relies on usage of employers and potential immigrants alike • Needs to be regularly maintained and advertised • No incentives to sign up
Diaspora Skills database	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Way to understand the mobilisation potential of diaspora members • It allows the government to reach out to emigrants without middle-men • Low cost instrument 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privacy issues might cripple its effectiveness and value added for the government • It serves the goal well only if constantly updated • Low registration rate if no incentives to sign up
Reintegration		
Tailored advice: Mentoring and individualised counselling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personalised information can directly remove individual barriers to return and reintegration • Addressing not only one sector, but a whole range of topics • Counselling can identify and target particular skills that are considered as a policy priority, such as entrepreneurship • Direct contact, empowerment approach and links to possibly other topics than the core service of the institution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More resource-intensive than simple (online) information provision • In view of potentially large caseloads, service intensity and quality may be limited

Entrepreneurship Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment and innovation • Support in overcoming a number of challenges related to return (a lack of networks and/or capital and familiarity with the functioning of local markets) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource-intensive initiative • Might create social tensions • Low success rate • Demand for combined offer of training and regulatory advice and facilitated access to business funding and working spaces
Start-up Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A start-up brings new dynamics to the economy • A business cluster can enhance innovation • A start-up can lead to long-term return, which can in turn boost longer-term innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cost of offering meaningful seed money can be prohibitive • The best ideas for start-ups will not always come from returnees • The private sector might have a different perception of innovation than the government working on return policies • Low intake, limited funding and success rates
Integration instruments including school education, language courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More limited target group: relevant esp. for wider diaspora with less strong ties to origin country; and/or family members of returnees • Can be combined with other integration measures as for other immigrants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Returnees may have specific needs differing from other immigrants
Programmes for highly skilled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate for global competition for talent • Government services signal public support • Allows added effect of spousal employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many determinants are unrelated to return decision making • Public opinion may be against subsidies for specific groups

3. SITUATION IN POLAND



3.1 INTRODUCTION

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Inflows to Poland – whether of returning nationals or foreign citizens – have been for many decades outnumbered by large outmigration. Thus, Poland has registered a negative net balance of migration. Nevertheless, several waves of intensive return migration have been observed in the contemporary history of Poland: the first wave occurred straight after WW2 and concerned Polish nationals displaced during the war or those who, due to the change of borders, found themselves in the USSR. The second wave of returns took place in the 1990s, after the collapse of the communist regime. Several studies were devoted to this migration (Anacka and Fihel 2002; Fihel and Górny 2013; Górny and Osipovic 2006; Iglicka 2002; Wein- ar 2002); most of them stressed its marginal size, but its significance in qualitative terms (such as human capital) and impact on the social and economic development of Poland.

The accession of Poland to the European Union led many Polish nationals to move abroad in search of better employment opportunities. Many of them, however, returned in the following years. This section concerns the inflow of returnees that occurred in the 1990s and 2000s. We discuss the socio-demographic characteristics of returnees, their motives and plans regarding potential re-emigration from Poland, and the current situation on the Polish labour market. We also present the policy measures that have been introduced in Poland in order to support the returnees.

3.2 EXISTING POLICY INSTRUMENTS TO ATTRACT RETURNEES

The first governmental reaction to the post-2004 emigration consisted of providing assistance to migrants and persons planning to emigrate. Although labour emigration from Poland was relatively intense in the 1990s and 2000s and transformed into a massive outflow in 2004, the first reaction of the Polish government appeared only in 2006 under the programme *Closer to work, closer to Poland (Blżej pracy, blżej Polski)* addressed both to emigrants abroad and those who planned to emigrate. Its objective was *to increase assistance to the growing labour migration of Poles* by creating additional Polish consulates and providing easier access to these institutions. Also, in order to *protect Polish citizens against dangers and threats related to the often unprepared labour emigration*, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized a large information campaign about the conditions and procedures of employment in the European Union.

More active campaigns aiming to promote returns started in 2008. Since 2007, return migration had been mentioned in several governmental documents as an important subject of state policy, and the Minister of Labour and Social Policy announced – in close collaboration with other administrative bodies – the creation of a *Return Programme*. In 2008, the Inter-departmental Working Group on Return Migration formulated an outline of policy based on the assumptions that 1) returns are an inevitable consequence of mass emigration, and therefore 2) instead of exerting an impact on individual decisions about return, the government should facilitate a smooth return and adaptation to the Polish labour market. The Return Programme consisted of six packages (Lesińska 2013):

1. Special services addressed to returnees: a dedicated website, job consulting centres, investment and business advisory centres, a guidebook for returning migrants, *Powrotnik* (The Returner);
2. Tax policy instruments, such as the Tax Abolition Act, allowing migrants who worked abroad between 2002 and 2007 to avoid double taxation;
3. Support for individual return migrants and their families, in particular in education;
4. Support for public administration bodies, such as training of civil servants employed in institutions responsible for contact with returnees, e.g., local and regional work agencies;
5. Information and promotion campaigns, such as *Have you got a PLan to return?* aiming to provide all the necessary information (concerning taxes, social security, education system recognition of diplomas, starting own business, etc.) to migrants considering returning or even having decided to do so. An official website (www.powroty.gov.pl) and a guidebook for returnees (*Powrotnik – The Returner*) were established; the latter was distributed abroad through consulates and diaspora organizations (50,000 printed copies);
6. Consultations with specific target groups such as highly skilled professionals (e.g. medical personnel), students, and second generation migrants.

As highlighted in the document *Polish Migration Policy - current status and postulated activities*, approved in 2011, Polish institutions have limited possibilities to stimulate returns since the most important factors affecting the decision about possible return are linked to the economic situation of Poland and the standard of living. Therefore proposed activities should be focused on minimizing the potential negative effects of this phenomenon, including, among other things: provision of information on the possibilities of economic activity in Poland; supporting the adaptation of children returning to the Polish system; increasing the availability of Polish education abroad; and supporting the families of emigrants after the return.

Creating incentives for Polish returnees was also foreseen in the document “Socio-economic priorities of migration policy”, adopted by the Council of Ministers on 29 March 2018, including incentives for entrepreneurship and employment back in Poland. Foreign students

and graduates and Polish academic staff of foreign universities were also defined as a target group of the planned measures.⁵

Finally, the government *Programme of Cooperation with Polonia and Poles abroad in the years 2015-2020*, as well as a previous document, defined both the strategic policy goals for Poles abroad and instruments for their implementation. Measures aimed at Poles living abroad include, amongst other things, supporting Polish language teaching, whereas measures aimed specifically at return (to Poland) include creating incentives for people of Polish origin to settle in Poland. The document puts emphasis on developing contacts with migrants and motivating them to return, as well as on improving information policy, including in tax and pension matters. As a result, a number of projects related to return have been implemented within the annual grant schemes. At the same time, regional authorities, non-governmental organizations and private companies have launched several programmes aiming to promote return migration. Most programmes have consisted of information campaigns and training, with a special focus on entrepreneurship and self-employment. Current initiatives focus on information (running of the powroty.gov.pl portal), attracting students and graduates, and pilot job matching.

3.3 RETURN MIGRATION

Since its accession to the European Union, Poland has experienced intensive labour emigration to other European countries, with the number of Polish nationals residing abroad for at least 2 to 3 months by the end of 2004 being estimated at about 1 million, an estimate that was then increased to 2.5 million by the end of 2017 (Table 2).

Because voluntary human migration reflects a complex picture of international mobility of a non-permanent nature, the reality is that all surveys and databases on migration have certain limitations. This may be due to the type of research that is conducted and/or a lack of a diverse set of surveys and data collection initiatives and/or narrow selectivity in certain surveys in their considerations of who represents a Polish emigrant living abroad or a returnee. Therefore, the databases and surveys referenced in this report, though rich in valuable information revealing many important migratory trends and allowing room for analysis, can hopefully be beneficially supplemented by reports such as this one. A push for increased data collection initiatives about Polish migration and returnees in the near future can further complete the picture.

⁵ Nowe priorytety rządowej polityki migracyjnej (New Priorities of Government Migration Policy), 29.03.2018, <https://www.mii.gov.pl/strony/aktualnosci/nowe-priorytety-rzadowej-polityki-migracyjnej>.

Table 2

Number of Polish citizens staying abroad for longer than 2 or 3 months¹ by destination, selected years (estimates; thousands)

Destination	2004 ²	2007 ²	2010 ²	2013 ²	2017 ²
Total	1,000	2,270	2,000	2,196	2,540
European Union	750	1,860	1,607	1,789	2,121
Austria	15	39	29	31	40
Belgium	13	31	45	49	54
France	30	55	60	63	64
Germany	385	490	440	560	703
Ireland	15	200	133	115	112
Italy	59	87	92	96	92
Netherlands	23	98	92	103	120
Spain	26	80	48	34	28
Sweden	11	27	33	40	50
United Kingdom	150	690	580	642	703

Notes: ¹ Since 2007, 3 months; ² end of year.

Source: Authors, based on Central Statistical Office estimates (GUS 2018).

In the 20th century, Poland remained an emigration country with a small incidence of return migration and general immigration. In the 1990s, though relatively small, the inflow to Poland consisted mostly of return migration. Between 1989 and 2001, the return migration to Poland involved 69,704 persons returning mainly from Germany, the United States and Canada, which were major destination countries for Polish emigrants. The arrival of most of them in Poland, however, did not mark a definite return to the country, as migrants either continued to circulate or re-emigrated from Poland once again. **Although overall return migration was not large in scale in the 1990s and early 2000s, it was unique in terms of the human capital possessed by returnees**, who included professionals such as teachers, managers, medical doctors, and specialists in new types of services and domains in Poland like marketing, commerce, finance and IT. Those who decided to stay in Poland therefore often occupied high professional positions in the labour market, and those who re-emigrated to find employment abroad were mostly middle-ranking employees in the service sector, salesmen, workers, machine operators and other blue-collar jobs. In the

1990's stagnation of Polish industry and the construction sector, as well as slow increases in wages created relatively unfavourable conditions for those with secondary, vocational, or primary levels of education.

It is important to mention that the **fluidity of mobility of Polish nationals continued into the post-2004 era**. Decisions concerning settlement in a new country, the option to return, and re-emigration were not definite and underwent modifications in the rapidly changing economic and social circumstances. After 2004, the inflow to Poland remained dominated by return migration, especially in times of financial crisis. Several surveys show that the experience of migration and of return migration is quite common among Polish nationals. Although not designed to track international mobility, in 2008, the Polish Labour Force Survey (LFS) included a special module dedicated to return migration. The scale of returnees was estimated at 580,000 adult persons arriving in Poland between January 2004 and June 2008. Between 2002 and 2007, there were over twice as many male (11%) as female returnees (4.3%), placing the overall percentage of returnees at 7.97% for those born in Poland who had spent at least six months working abroad over the last ten years. Statistics collected in 2008-2011 indicated that in case of Polish citizens who did not deregister from their permanent place of residency in the country, at least one emigrant out of four returned to Poland. Additionally, it is relevant to note that the post-2004 return migration has proven to be selective regarding age and level of education: according to the 2008 Labour Force Survey (LFS) module, returnees are on average older compared to migrants who settle down abroad (41% of returnees were aged 35 and over, as compared to 36% of emigrants (who stay abroad)), more often have a vocational level of education (39% for the returnees versus 33% for the emigrants), and less often hold a university degree (10 versus 14%). In 2011, a population census provided insight into the fact that returnees – also including persons who came back before 2004 – generally lived in medium to large cities, were relatively well-educated, and were frequently married (67%). More precise estimates indicate that 36% of returnees live in towns of 20,000 to 300,000 residents, while 27% reside in cities of over 300,000 residents.

One concrete example of a lack of data about the post-2004 emigration from Poland concerns the “fluidity” aspect of demonstrated migration trends. “Fluidity” or temporary migration is perhaps detected to such a high degree because most social surveys that were conducted at the beginning of the massive, post-2004 outflow from Poland did not track the migrants over a longer period of time (Bieńkowska et al. 2010, Bieńkowska et al. 2012, Szymańska et al. 2012, Coniglio and Brzozowski 2018). Participants in the surveys were not questioned about their migratory strategies within two years following the initial survey and analysis. Migration trends do, however, also extend beyond the simple dichotomy of permanent versus circulatory migration. Based on data collected by the *National Bank of Poland* (NBP) on over 20,000 Polish migrants living abroad, several types were recognised, including *circular migrants*, *project family migrants*, *overstayers*, *settlers*, and “old wave” migrants (Figure 4). These clusters of the main types of migrants were analysed in the years 2009 and 2012 in four of the main destination countries for Polish migrants: the Netherlands, Ireland, Germany and the UK. The data shows that in 2009, the highest percentages of Polish migrants to all four destination countries were practicing *circular migration*, which assumes a situation where a migrant stays abroad for a short period of time without his or her family or plans to settle down abroad, and then repeats the act of migrating and sending remittances

to Poland. However, in 2012, *project family migration* was the most common in three out of four destination countries: the Netherlands, Ireland and Germany. *Project family migrants* stayed abroad for a short period of time with their families without a plan of settling down abroad permanently. The UK is the only country that showed a higher amount of more committed *settler migrants*, who exhibited plans to settle down abroad and receive welfare benefits abroad, not remitting to Poland. The high level of *circular migrants* in 2009, later in most cases manifesting as *project family migrants*, reflects a situation where many Polish emigrants indicated a desire or plan to either stay “fluid” or eventually return to Poland.

According to other studies, those who performed professional tasks below their qualifications abroad often failed to re-integrate into the Polish labour market. Being without a job in Poland in that situation prompts returnees to re-emigrate and these “returnees of failure” remain invisible to many of the studies conducted in Poland. This brings us to the next factor that is crucial to understanding Polish migration: the labour market in Poland. According to a survey conducted in 2018 about the economic inactivity rate in Poland and the EU-15 by age, Poland was characterized by a relatively high percentage of persons of working age who remained economically inactive, observed mainly in the age group of 50 and over. Though the employment rate was for the most part steadily increasing up to 2017, 26% of those between the ages of 20 and 64 still remain economically inactive. Rates of unemployment are influenced by the nature of each sector, level of education and regional disparities. A range of solutions or activity-boosting measures can be implemented in order to raise employment levels. These include the introduction of part-time employment (a phenomenon that is not so common in Poland), greater attainment of higher education, which leads to higher levels and longer periods of employment, and ideas and actions addressing the fact that the highest levels of employment occur in urbanized areas (so perhaps jobs and job infrastructure could be distributed more evenly for greater inclusivity).

Despite higher rates of inactivity in Poland than the EU average, it is important to mention that in recent years employment in Poland has increased, while unemployment has conversely decreased overall. The employment rate, or share of persons employed in the working age population was as high as 66% (73% for men and 60% for women) in 2017.

At the same time, the unemployment rate became the lowest since the introduction of the capitalist system in Poland and reached as low as 3.8% in 2018, according to an LFS study. Improvement of the labour market situation can be attributed to the favourable global economic situation, improvement in transport infrastructure in Poland, increased internal mobility of the labour force and a generational change in the labour market, leading to better education and higher labour productivity. Additionally, with the accession of Poland to the EU in 2004,

Figure 4

Types of Polish emigrants in four destination countries (in percentages), 2009 and 2012



Source: Janicka, Kaczmarczyk (2018) based on NBP data.

average labour costs increased from 4.7 euros per hour to 9.0 euros, constituting an increase by 91%. This translated into higher wages and living standards, leading to an average wage increase of 86%. By the end of 2011, employment agencies in Poland registered approximately 60,000 work offers, while at the beginning of 2017, this number jumped to 160,000.

Although a bit sporadic, lacking in some sectors and perhaps requiring even more up-to-date data, the above information allows us to draw a number of important conclusions about Polish migration and returnees to Poland that are relevant to understanding real-time trends. Polish migration has continued from the pre-2004 to the post-2004 era but has taken on different forms, ranging from *circulatory*, through *project family* to *settlers*. Individuals continue to return to Poland for a variety of reasons or to remain in circulation between their country of origin and host countries, often adding to the make-up of Poland's labour force as educated professionals. Urban areas are faring better than less urbanized areas in terms of economic output and employment, and although certain bottlenecks in unemployment remain in Poland, the overall trend has been an upward increase of employment opportunities in the country. Unemployment has conversely gone down, and as wages rise and employment opportunities increase, Poland could become more attractive to both citizens still residing within the country (as a place to remain) and potential returnees. There is of course always room for improvement and for the introduction of greater diversification in types and quantity of jobs offered.

4. REVIEW OF SELECTED RETURN POLICIES



4.1 INTRODUCTION

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How can return migrants be supported in their return? There are many cross-cutting issues that returnees face when they go back to their country of origin. The following chapter will look at a number of instruments selected by Polish partners in more detail: information activities; tailored reintegration services and labour market support; language support for adults; support for returnee children at school; and housing support. Each section will review international examples, which are then discussed in the Polish context in a final section.

4.2 INFORMATION ACTIVITIES: CREATING AN ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY TARGETING (POTENTIAL) RETURNEES

How can potential returnees be reached by their governments while they are still abroad? Only one or two decades ago, the answer to this question was: not at all, or in a very limited manner. Today, potential returnees can be reached through both the increasing number of diaspora organisations operating abroad and directly (and often cheaply) through the use of numerous digital channels and technologies enabling both public and private communication. This has multiplied the possibilities while highlighting the important considerations of how best to reach out, inform and advise emigrants about potential return.

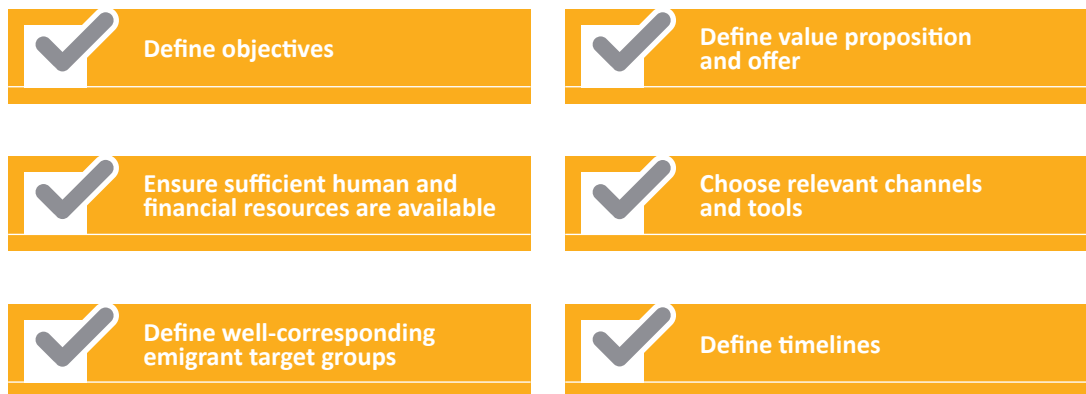
Today, “**digital engagement**” is a possibility, where information does not simply flow in one direction as in the case of traditional mass media, but rather becomes an interactive, two-way stream of communication and feedback loops between potential returnees, the government and other stakeholders. This section aims to provide some insight into considerations which can guide information activities for potential returnees, building on practices in business marketing as well as on experiences gained from diaspora engagement initiatives.

Defining return-related objectives for information and engagement

When thinking about how best to reach potential returnees, the question “**why**” must first and foremost be answered. There are a number of potential reasons why a government would want to reach both diaspora and potential returnees, all of which require somewhat different strategies or approaches. Considering budgetary limits, it is advisable to **select a limited number of objectives** and build information activities that are most appropriate for these objectives (Figure 5). In defining objectives, a distinction must first be made between product marketing and content/information marketing. Applied to the topic of return, product marketing would mean wanting to “sell” or publicise a new service, like a new programme or support measure, to the target group of returnees. The latter case of content marketing can simply mean providing information about the conditions of their country of origin via information brochures, for instance. A more complex approach involves positioning whole packages offered, and in effect “selling” the idea of returning to the country of origin (DeMers n.d.). This may involve “nation-branding” activities known from diaspora engagement, and a long-term approach of engaging with potential returnees. The two types of marketing can also complement each other: while content marketing may be used to slowly build up an audience among emigrants abroad over time, specific time-limited campaigns around new services can be added to complement it.

Figure 5

Starting an engagement campaign



Source: Authors

Second, there needs to be a decision about whether the respective informational activities are intended to attract returnees that would not come otherwise, or whether the intention is to engage those parts of the diaspora that are already likely to return. There is no right or wrong answer, but the decision will influence which approach is taken. In the majority of case examples identified for this report (see below), the second approach – of attracting those already considering return – was chosen.

Objectives need to be frequently redefined for each individual campaign that is designed. A campaign to promote a new business start-up programme for highly-skilled returnees, for instance, may aim to attract those who would stay abroad otherwise (as is the case in Valladolid, Spain). Another campaign, on the other hand, may promote a new service supporting families with children, who may have already been considering returning (such as the Latvian PAPS project). The general rule is that the more coherent the engagement via a variety of on- and offline channels is, and the more channels that are used, the higher the potential that returnees will be reached. Using multiple channels for such engagement is called “multi-channelled marketing”. It refers to the practice of interacting with customers/target audiences via a combination of indirect and direct communication channels, and enabling them to take action in response by using the channel of their choice. Most practice examples identified used multiple channels, e.g. combining e-mail newsletters, telephone services, websites and various social media platforms.

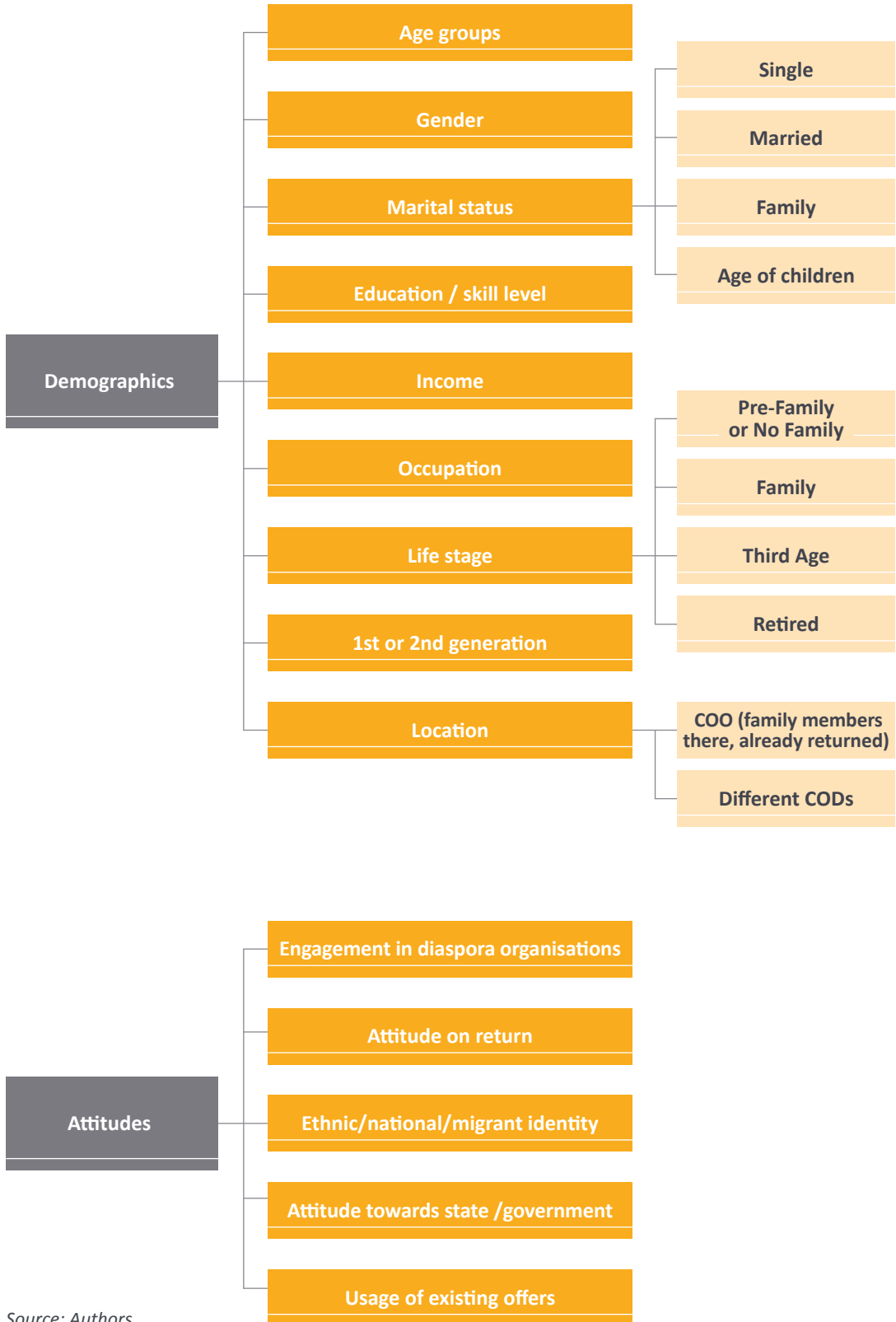
4.2.2

Understanding and identifying the emigrant target groups: demographics and attitudes

Once the objective(s) have been clarified, the next step is to think about the target group, which may be closely connected to the objective(s). Above, we have already outlined certain target groups, such as potential entrepreneurs or low-income emigrants. Diaspora members in general and potential returnees in particular are driven by diverse motivations, which often go beyond economic gain. Since there are many possibilities and usually limited funds, the task is therefore to think more closely about the target group; this is also called “segmenting” (Sarin 2010). In a best-case scenario, the segmentation exercise is supported by empirical (market) research so that there is a factual overview of the actually existing different groups of emigrants; it is the same exercise as a comprehensive diaspora mapping.

The point of thinking about target group characteristics is that people may not only ignore campaigns that do not speak to them – and thus, the goal of reaching them will be missed – but they might even react very negatively to such campaigns. Negative attitudes need to be anticipated in order to prevent a negative outcome for a campaign. This was also a key lesson learned in a number of practice examples. What characteristics does the type of person have that should be reached? What is their demographic profile? What age are they? The figure below outlines some possible criteria.

Figure 6
Potential emigrant target groups by demographic characteristics and attitudes/usage



Source: Authors

Besides taking into consideration relatively straightforward demographics, another way of thinking about target groups is through attitudes. For instance, a person can strongly feel that they belong to a certain ethnic/national group (identify as a Pole, German, Italian etc. who emigrated), and thus identify as a member of what is also called the “affinity diaspora”, which is the target group of diaspora policies. They may therefore be more ready to engage themselves on behalf of issues concerning their country of origin (Aikins et al. 2009).

Often overlooked, especially by states, are people who do not feel strongly about their ethnic/national identity or being a migrant. Instead, they may, for example, feel a strong sense of professional identity, e.g. as a scientist or consultant. This group needs to be approached in a different way than the general diaspora engagement strategy would suggest. Each group should be approached in a different way and diaspora organisations are only one way of doing so.

Diaspora organisations can be a good starting point for information campaigns on return. However, interviews conducted for this report show an ambivalent result on the engagement of such organisations. For Ireland, they have been quite essential and helpful partners, while Latvia reported disinterest and a lack of engagement on the topic of return from the side of diaspora organisations.

Another related factor is the **attitude towards the state or government of origin**, since, depending on this attitude, people may feel very differently about being approached by a state institution about their return intentions. Most practice examples found that emigrants themselves may harbour resentment against the origin country since they may feel they were “forced to leave” due to negative economic circumstances, so a welcoming attitude, not pushing return too actively, is key. Initiatives

found it important to show that emigrants’ experiences are valued and wanted. Especially in the Spanish case, the attitudes of the state staff towards returning emigrants were considered crucial for the success of measures.

There are a number of other techniques for target group segmentation not discussed here, for instance creating psychographics (demographics plus lifestyle, personality characteristics, etc.), behavioural segmentation (level of engagement, loyalty, etc.), creating personas (consumer profiles whose characteristics are broken down to the individual level, i.e. an imagined person), etc., which are more complex and can also be considered.

It is possible to have multiple target groups, which may then be targeted by different messages and channels that speak to them, as already discussed. However, a big aspect of marketing is that targeting “everyone” is simply not effective or efficient. It is necessary and potentially more impactful to somehow define, characterize and limit target groups as narrowly as possible to inform the further decision-making process regarding the most appropriate channels and messages.

As objectives and target groups are closely connected, analysing the target groups through a segmentation exercise can also help in better understanding and even revising the objectives.

Table 3
Key lessons learned from practice examples – selection

Lesson	Description	Example 1: Lithuania	Example 2: Ireland	Example 3: Latvia	Example 4: Spain
<p>Definition of target groups</p>	<p>Successful engagement and information strategies have a clear understanding of their target group(s).</p>	<p>“Talent for Lithuania” targets young professionals and University graduates.</p>	<p>While the government approach includes all returnees and also has a welfare approach, sub-contracted NGOs focus on specific target groups, such as returning pensioners and diaspora organisations.</p>	<p>Latvian PAPS mainly targets families with a desire to return.</p>	<p>Spanish Volvemos initiatives mainly target young semi- or highly-skilled emigrants of the most recent emigration wave.</p>
<p>Adapt channels to target group habits, implement multi-channel strategy</p>	<p>Young people rely on Internet resources, in particular websites and social media services, while completely different channels of communication are required in the case of elderly migrants, who may be accessible through diaspora organizations and diplomatic missions rather than social media.</p>	<p>Multiple channels and tools are focused mostly on online and social media, according to the target group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Putting yourself on a map” online (gamification approach) • Comprehensive website • Engaging journalists to feature the project in media 	<p>Government approach includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Info website (continuously maintained) • “Global Irish” twitter account (mainly as information channel) • E-mail newsletter <p>Funded NGO approaches include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed information websites • Working with diaspora organisations 	<p>The project mainly works through social media to reach interested emigrant families (Facebook and draugiem.lv). Information about the project is regularly shared on online groups dedicated to the topic of return or to Latvians abroad. The project also forwards access (links) to infographics comparing the different municipalities, using a more visual channel.</p>	<p>Depending on the target group, Volvemos works mostly online and through social media. The Facebook groups of Spaniards in specific cities are particularly targeted, as well as blogs and other online communities that have formed around Spanish culture or identity abroad.</p>

Lesson	Description	Example 1: Lithuania	Example 2: Ireland	Example 3: Latvia	Example 4: Spain
<p>Adapt channels to target group habits, implement multi-channel strategy (cont.)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facebook, LinkedIn – and Instagram – engagement campaigns including “success stories” and programme alumni, purchase of social media ads in target countries Young people are asked to start regular meetings in their city for the initiative by themselves (“start-up” mentality) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshops in the UK (“information clinics”), particularly targeting pensioners Social media as information channels 		<p>Volvemos pays particular attention to the design of its online resources, making them as interactive and user-friendly as possible.</p>
<p>Hitting the right note: Addressing the image of emigration and return, creating a positive feeling of belonging, providing a realistic presentation of the situation</p>	<p>A negative image of returnees as “failures”, or as privileged recipients of additional state funding, was encountered by most initiatives and needed to be addressed. Emigrants themselves may harbour resentment against the origin country since they may feel they were “forced to leave” due to negative economic circumstances, so a welcoming attitude, not pushing return too actively, is key. Initiatives found it important to show that emigrants’ experiences are valued and wanted.</p>	<p>The target group mainly addressed is desirable talented young professionals: They are encouraged to return home and invest the newly acquired knowledge and experience in Lithuania. The campaigns include working with “success stories” and sharing the experiences of programme alumni.</p>	<p>The Irish approach is described as “neutral”. The goal is not to tell people that they <i>should</i> come back, but rather facilitate the process of those who want to return.</p>	<p>At the beginning of the project, the strategic decision was made not to build up a full image campaign promoting Latvia as a country, since this may not be well received by emigrants, who may hold feelings of disappointment connected to their leaving. Instead, an informal approach of active reach-out through social media was chosen. The aim is not to promote return “aggressively”, but just to facilitate the return of those who are intending to.</p>	<p>Volvemos believes that a lack of feeling of belonging of emigrants needs to be tackled together with providing tailored information. The key messages include that emigrants and their acquired knowledge are valuable and recognised. Communication is aimed to be realistic and in line with Spanish reality. It is necessary to moderate emigrants’ expectations and be honest.</p>

Lesson	Description	Example 1: Lithuania	Example 2: Ireland	Example 3: Latvia	Example 4: Spain
<p>Hiring the right staff, Continuous monitoring and training</p>	<p>Staff members need to understand the situation and emotions of their clients in order to build up sufficient trust for the return process.</p>	<p>Project founders have migration experience themselves and can be considered members of the target group.</p>	<p>NGO staff have long-term experience with migration issues (working with both emigrants and returnees).</p>	<p>The most successful staff members (highest number of returnees) were those with migration experience. It was easier for them to build up a relationship of trust with clients. Monthly meetings among all coordinators allowed sharing of experiences and building of best-practice approaches across the team.</p>	<p>Some Volvemos initiatives involved training of officials within (local) government administrations. Creating a motivated staff who place migrants at the centre of communication and who have a helpful attitude and friendly tone was considered absolutely crucial for the success of the initiatives.</p>
<p>Network of institutional partners</p>	<p>Initiatives needed to build up a network of institutional partners on the regional and local level: municipal offices, tax offices, employment agencies, and other institutions, such as schools and regional boards of education. International partners such as diaspora organisations and embassies in relevant destination countries are also important partners.</p>	<p>Since the goal of the programme is job facilitation, it mainly needed to work on its network with Lithuanian companies.</p>	<p>The NGO programmes maintain contact with diaspora organisations on the one hand, and relevant Irish institutions and services on the other hand. The NGO CrossCare has a dedicated Networking Officer for this task.</p>	<p>The regional counselors continuously work with a broad range of institutions within their region, including municipalities, schools, housing agencies and other services.</p>	<p>Volvemos builds up networks and offers trainings for government services and companies in order to raise awareness of returnees. For the new Spain-wide Return Plan, it coordinates a number of Ministries and Agencies.</p>

Lesson	Description	Example 1: Lithuania	Example 2: Ireland	Example 3: Latvia	Example 4: Spain
<p>Unique offer</p>	<p>Past initiatives have shown that emigrants are attracted by a concrete offer that a project/programme is making. This establishes the first contact and allows other questions that arise concerning return to be answered.</p>	<p>The offer consists of the concrete facilitation of a job opportunity, since programme members are connected to co-operating Lithuanian companies who are looking to hire. The offer is framed as a prestigious opportunity.</p>	<p>The government-funded NGO Safe Home Ireland has a concrete offer of supporting older emigrants in accessing social housing in Ireland – this is what attracts them. Similarly to the Lithuanian example, “Back for Business” offers a prestigious spot in an entrepreneurship training programme.</p>	<p>The initiative was accompanied by a strategic offer of small business grants for returnees, in order to “sell” return and have something “special” to offer when approaching emigrants. The initiative was justified by the argument that new businesses will create new tax revenues and thus finance the programme by itself. It is considered a successful approach and was continued in the second year of the programme.</p>	<p>Volvemos creates its unique offer by establishing a feeling of “joining a community” of like-minded returnees, and concretely facilitating job offers between companies and returnees.</p>

Source: Authors, based on interviews

4.2.3

Value proposition and offer

After the target audiences have been defined and characterised, the next step is to put oneself in the position of potential returnees and think about their needs: What can be offered that is of value to them? What problems do they face that can be addressed by the specific campaign? How can returnees' lives be made easier? A very general question encompassing all of these inquiries is: What's in it for them?

Every information campaign is only as good as the given offer, which needs to be as concrete as possible. All the initiatives worked according to this principle, but in the Latvian case, it was applied especially consciously. The PAPS initiative was accompanied by a strategic offer of small business grants for returnees, in order to "sell" return and have something "special" to offer when approaching emigrants. Outlining key messages can make it clear to all staff involved what product exactly is being marketed to potential returnees. The content of such key messages should stimulate a "call to action" and trigger a reaction from emigrants to engage with the topic further and hopefully take up the offer. Moreover, it is important to note that persistence is crucial, as was also emphasised in the Latvian case, where they approached emigrants online again and again, and gave them updates about return to Latvia. There is no single marketing tool that will automatically generate attention, but over time, an audience can be built up and sustained.

4.2.4

Choosing channels and tools

Generally, there are no right or wrong channels, but using more than one is always better since different target groups will respond to different modes of contact. However, there are more and less appropriate channels for the purpose in question. Choosing the right channels for your audience starts with an analysis of which channels and tools are already the most popular among different groups of emigrants.

There are three relevant types of communication channels to be distinguished:

- Interpersonal channels, such as information events, job fairs (see Irish examples below)
- Community-oriented channels, such as involvement of diaspora organisations (see Irish examples below)
- Media channels, including:
 - mass media such as radio, TV, newspapers
 - internet-based (online) channels, including websites, social media. It should, however, be mentioned here that all "social media" are operated by technology companies, which have a different business model and operate under a different jurisdiction than traditional mass media outlets.

One must know which are the most relevant channels for the selected target audiences and the defined objective. For example, in the PAPS project, Facebook and a platform that is popular in Latvia were chosen as the main tools to access emigrants who organise there in groups. The Lithuanian case only targets young professionals, so social media is the appropriate channel for them. In the Irish case, pensioners were a main target group, which meant that e-mail newsletters and face-to-face workshops were more important than social media.

It is also advisable to pre-test the overall message of information campaigns on a limited audience (or focus groups) in order to receive feedback, fine-tune the messaging and the channels used accordingly. This will help to avoid wasting resources on potential unsuccessful or even counter-productive campaigns.

Table 4

Advantages and disadvantages of social media for returnee information activities

Advantages	Disadvantages
Relevant especially for emigrants: almost everyone has a smart phone and uses some form of social media to stay better connected with the origin country	Need to be tailored to target groups to be relevant, multiple types of social media need to be targeted
Social media analytics tools provide sophisticated methods for refining the information strategy	Need professional and continuous attention as rapid reactions are usually expected
Are interactive – people will let you know how they rate your services (both an advantage and a disadvantage)	Are interactive – people will let you know how they rate your services (advantage and disadvantage)
Are cheap (but no advertisement funding will result in only having very limited reach)	Still need budget for optimal outcomes such as an online campaign focusing geographically on certain target audiences, or the use of social media “influencers”
Easy way to target audience	Need to be consistently updated with content tailored to audiences Can only be controlled to a certain extent due to their nature as “many-to-many communication” channels in which anyone can post whatever they want

Source: Authors

Table 5

Practice examples in the area of information and engagement

Institution, country	Description
<p>Global Lithuanian Leaders (GLL), Lithuania</p>	<p>“Talent for Lithuania”</p> <p>Global Lithuanian Leaders is a social enterprise aiming to facilitate the hiring of Lithuanian young professionals and University graduates abroad at Lithuanian companies in the manufacturing and service sectors. A well-designed communication strategy through multiple channels has been central to their approach.</p> <p>A website provides comprehensive information about the project. Young people interested in return can also register by putting themselves on a map featured on the website (a “gamification” of getting in touch with the programme). Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram are the social media used.</p> <p>The communication strategy also includes the posting of videos and other posts on the social media platforms, purchase of social media advertisements targeting the most important countries of destination, and working through journalists to get announcements on national television and newspapers. Interviews featuring “success stories” are shared on the platform. Alumni of the programme are targeted to share information. When people register on the platform, they are asked how they learned about the programme, and the answer is mostly through social media.</p>
<p>Safe Home Ireland, Crosscare, Ireland</p>	<p>Safe Home Ireland, Crosscare Migrant Project</p> <p>In Ireland, information provision has been identified as a key challenge for returning emigrants. Research into the needs and expectations of Irish returnees showed that they expected a government-backed, up-to-date information website, which was implemented as part of the Global Irish Hub website, as a first step. Furthermore, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade runs a “Global Irish” twitter account, mainly as a further channel to provide information, and an information newsletter targeting those communities that might not use social media. The target group for these measures are all returnees.</p> <p>The Emigrant Support Programme, furthermore, funds the Charities Safe Home Ireland and Crosscare to provide information and counselling to (potential) returnees, with Safe Home Ireland having a particular focus on the target group of returning pensioners, and Crosscare working with a broader target group of immigrants as well as returnees. Both projects have detailed information websites. Crosscare has a Networking Officer whose role is to link with and travel to Irish Emigrant support groups overseas; thus diaspora community channels are an important part of outreach.</p> <p>Safe Home Ireland also works with the same groups internationally, and conducts so-called “information clinics” in the UK, where a staff member travels to diaspora groups to provide an information session. Crosscare also offers online and in-person trainings for diaspora organisations offering advice in return related matters. Both organizations work with diaspora groups who have government support, and as a result are obliged to cooperate amongst each other; this is considered a crucial success factor of the reach-out work.</p> <p>Both organizations also work with Irish embassies to receive referrals, and use social media to inform about their work. Another crucial factor is the longevity of the funding (over ten years) and the high degree of trust that has been built up accordingly.</p>

<p>Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, Latvia</p>	<p>PAPS project</p> <p>In Latvia, the PAPS project is tasked by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development to provide a one-stop-shop for returning emigrants. The main target group are families intending to return, as well as individuals who regularly maintain contact with Latvia. The key message agreed internally is that Latvia is: “The best country to raise your kids”.</p> <p>An informal approach of active reach-out through social media was chosen. The aim is not to promote return “aggressively”, and only facilitate the return of those who intend to.</p> <p>The work is organised by regions: each region has a responsible coordinator who is knowledgeable about local services. The duties of the coordinators are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. needs assessment - address and clarify the needs of returnees in direct contact – if they were to return to Latvia 2. individual offer - make an individual offer on issues of particular interest to returnee 3. regular contact - regularly show interest in returnees’ plans. <p>To reach the target group, regional coordinators access Facebook groups dedicated to the topic of return, or dedicated to Latvians abroad. The regional coordinators are also on a social media platform that is especially popular in Latvia (draugiem.lv). Since their work has been well-received, it has also attracted some media attention and has thereby become more known among emigrants. According to the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, it has been crucial that coordinators on the one hand know the region well, and on the other hand are returnees themselves (those counsellors who have never emigrated have been less successful).</p> <p>Aside from returnees, municipalities are also a target group of counsellors, since another crucial component of the project has been to convince doubtful municipalities that returnees should be welcomed and that they make a positive contribution (rather than being seen as “failures”). The PAPS coordinators try to avoid simply referring returnees to the responsible schools, services etc., but rather, directly talk to the responsible persons and try to find individual, tailored solutions to whatever challenges arise. At the same time, this makes their work more well-known.</p>
<p>Integration Foundation Estonia</p>	<p>Return to Estonia</p> <p>In Estonia, the Integration Foundation is funded by the Ministry of Education and Research as well as the Ministry of Culture to support returnees in financial difficulties with a state-assisted programme. Since 2019, the Foundation has also been tasked with a counselling service for the target group of all returnees. The Foundation can build on its existing counselling work with immigrants, whose needs often overlap, and its existing outreach work: Foundation staff access Facebook groups (“Estonians in country x”), advertise the service there and directly answer questions, as well as correcting false information. Starting this year, a community-based strategy will be building up a volunteer network of returnees in the region, who are already in the country and who can share their experiences with other returnees.</p> <p>Among other goals of the information work of the foundation are preventing wrong information from circulating and increasing a positive attitude about return, both among the local population and among potential returnees.</p>

Volvemos, Spain

The target group of *Volvemos* initiatives are mainly young, semi-skilled or highly skilled emigrants of the most recent emigration wave, aged between 30 and 40 years old. Based on their background research, *Volvemos* assumes that they mainly return for reasons related to family, although professional motivations are also important.

Based on its experience, *Volvemos* believes that disappointment, a feeling that one will be perceived as a failure, and a negative perception of the country of origin are often part of the emigration experience. There has also been resentment among young Spanish emigrants, who felt like they were being “thrown out of the country” due to a lack of opportunities, and blame the government and administration for this. In order to facilitate return, *Volvemos* believes that this feeling of lacking belonging needs to be tackled together with providing tailored information. The goal is, among others, to (re-) connect emigrants to the Spanish public administration and Spanish companies through digital channels and personalised career guidance services.

In order to make use of digital communication, all *Volvemos* initiatives have digital platforms with the following aspects:

- Are intended to be central information hubs: The dispersion of information is one of the main problems migrants face when considering their return. An efficient platform must contain all existing information in one place.
- Language used is emigrant language and not administration language. A recurrent complaint of Spanish emigrants in their dealings with the administration is usually the difficulty of language used. Language used on the new platforms also appeals to the emotional component of migration, thus recognizing the importance that the decision to return has for the person who takes it.
- Website design patterns tend to be more commercial and less administrative. Just as administrative language is a barrier in the relationship of migrants with their administrations, the design of administrative websites is also considered a significant barrier.
- Platforms are used not only as communication tools but also as work tools: They serve as a centralizing element of processes and are workplaces where migrants, managers and labour mediators (public administration officials) interact. The communication between all actors involved occurs within platforms.

Source: Authors, based on interviews

4.2.5

Information activities in the Polish context

Since 2008, Poland has implemented a comprehensive information campaign dedicated not only to returnees but also to the general population of Poles staying abroad (with a clear focus on the largest group of Polish migrants residing predominantly in the United Kingdom).

First, a group of experts prepared a guidebook dedicated to Poles staying abroad – “Powrotnik” (The Returner) – that included data on economic developments in Poland and, above all, practical information for those who were planning to return to Poland (e.g. Polish labour market, housing, education, access to public services). The guidebook has been distributed mostly via Polish consular offices and diaspora organizations.

Second, all the topics included in the guidebook were mirrored on a website dedicated to Poles abroad and people planning to return (www.powroty.gov.pl). The website includes the most important – and practical – information concerning taxes, social security system, edu-

Examples of information activities implemented in Poland:

- Powrotnik publication
- Website dedicated to Poles abroad and potential returnees (www.powroty.gov.pl)
- Telephone service or helpline
- Newsletter and social media accounts with information including Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube

cation system, recognition of diplomas, starting own business etc. The website started as an independent entity (but sponsored by the government and EU funds), but then became part of the so-called Green Line aimed at general labour market support in Poland.

Third, the Voluntary Labour Corps (Ochotnicze Hufce Pracy) started to manage and develop the website www.powroty.gov.pl, and supported it with

a telephone helpline and social media accounts on Facebook (Powroty.gov.pl), Twitter (@powroty) and YouTube (Powroty.gov.pl). The Facebook Page, currently followed by more than 14 thousand persons, is equipped with an instant messenger service enabling visitors to ask questions. The Page is updated every day and includes both informational posts (most recent example: how to combine pension entitlements acquired in several countries) and “entertainment” posts, aimed at establishing and strengthening the link between emigrants and Poland (photos, quizzes etc.). Between 2008 and 2010, the phone hotline and series of webinars played a particularly important role, as they served as a main and direct channel for information on particular needs and expectations of Poles staying abroad and delivered immediate answers to the most important issues raised by participants. Additional services currently offered by powroty.gov.pl include the possibility of consulting an expert in individual matters, help in writing a CV and a search tool relating to vacant posts in Poland.

Apart from the programme *Have you got a Plan to return?* organized at the national level, in 2009, the *Opolskie* region introduced an information campaign: *Opolskie – here I stay*. Its main objective was to promote this region as an attractive place to live, work and study, and thus to counter intensive labour emigration. Within the framework of this project, researchers from Opolski University edited the “Reemigrant’s guidebook” (*Poradnik reemigranta*) dedicated to Polish emigrants planning to return to *Opolskie* voivodship. It includes practical information on administrative obligations, work opportunities, education services for children, etc.

Although not explicitly aimed at promoting returns to Poland, the governmental administration – mostly diplomatic missions and cultural institutes abroad – maintains close contacts with diaspora organizations (and migrants themselves) in the main host countries (i.e. France, Germany, Ireland, the United Kingdom, and the United States). These contacts and related activities are inherently inscribed into the foreign policy of the Polish state, aimed at promoting Polish culture and language abroad, and tourism and entrepreneurial opportunities in Poland. Most of these activities are also accessible to the Polish diaspora, which strengthens the link with the country of origin and constitutes an opportunity to steadily provide information on developments in Poland. More specifically and most recently, in 2019, Polish Job fairs were organized in London by the Polish Investment and Trade Agency, the Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Technology, and the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy, in order to provide information about work opportunities in Poland. Some similar promotion actions have also been organized by diaspora organizations in the past. An example was a programme titled *Twelve cities – to go back, but where to?*, an initiative

by the Poland Street Association (Polish NGO based in London). Within the framework of this programme, in 2009, representatives of the largest municipalities in Poland presented (in London) the opportunities that their cities provide to their inhabitants (in terms of work opportunities and living conditions).

4.3 TAILORED REINTEGRATION SERVICES

4.3.1

Introduction

As already mentioned, returnees go through a readjustment process in various spheres of life – especially the economic one – as part of reintegration. Returnees may need support to find employment in the origin country and training before they can re-enter the domestic labour market. They are also often interested in self-employment in order to make use of their skills and new knowledge gained abroad. The relationship between integration – not only of return migrants themselves, but also of their family members – and long-term or permanent settlement in the region is reflected in international research findings (Kilpatrick et al. 2011; Wulff et al. 2008).

Actions aimed at fostering return migration should thus not only focus on labour market policies, but also take into account the diversity of individual situations. Ideally, support for reintegration should be “tailored”, i.e. reflecting the diversity of the target group of returning emigrants and supporting them with individually fitting measures. Only a limited number of initiatives identified for this report focused just on returnees. The examples discussed below often target migrants only, or include returnees as one group (amongst others) of migrants. However, in all cases we consider the examples to be potentially applicable and transferable to the target group of returnees as well.

4.3.2

Types of intervention

Below we present the main types of intervention, followed by a list of initiatives that fall into one or several of these categories of intervention. These types do partly overlap, and so distinctions may be blurred at times.

Mentoring, understood as individual coaching or advising, is increasingly seen as a tool for improving labour market integration of groups that might be disadvantaged on the labour market, including, for example, highly skilled newcomers, immigrants, and returnees. While many programmes have a broad target group, in many cases participants have a migration/emigration background. An example of mentoring focusing only on returnees is the Irish Back for Business project (Table 6).

Examples of mentoring programmes for migrant workers

Programmes of professional associations in Sweden include, among others, a mentoring programme by the Swedish Engineers' Union (Sveriges Ingenjörer) and by the Swedish Doctors' Union (Sveriges Läkarförbund). The engineering union's programme was designed to help foreign engineers enter the Swedish labour market. The doctors' union is implementing the planned "introduction guides" in cooperation with the Swedish Public Employment Service (financing). They are intended to support foreign doctors in obtaining professional accreditation and through internships. It is part of the general (up to two-year) integration programme for refugees and family migrants.

Dutch Dream Foundation founded in 2006 with the aim of promoting entrepreneurship and diversity, implemented the coaching programme "Dare to have a dream" in 2010. Every year, 20 entrepreneurs (mentees) are selected and placed in pairs with 20 coaching managers or well-known personalities from both the private and public sectors (mentors). The partnership lasts one year and includes at least one monthly personal meeting in addition to workshops and other courses. The programme does not receive any structural or public funding, but is financially supported by the participating entrepreneurs in coaching companies (Petrovic 2015:24).

Mentoring is a coaching process in which an experienced individual (the mentor) advises a junior partner (lagging behind in a particular set of skills or experience). Mentoring initiatives are aimed at helping those who face barriers to accessing and benefitting from general employment and education services (Migration Policy Institute Europe 2015). Initiatives aimed at employment have the goal of employment but also try to achieve other objectives, such as developing social skills, expanding networks or improving self-reliance. Addressing not only one sector, but also a whole range of topics, providing guidance and information on a one-to-one basis is the main strength of this approach, which, if linked to employment services, can have a direct benefit for participating migrants. On the other hand, it is intensive in terms of time investment and therefore often limited to a small group of beneficiaries.

Furthermore, there is not a standardised format of the mentoring programmes. While they are relatively well established in America and in some European countries (Germany, France), efforts are more scattered in other parts of Europe. In many cases, a civil society or non-profit organisation facilitates between mentor and mentee. In many cases, the interplay of government, private sector and civil society determines the number, size and type of mentoring programmes.

Although there has been little research aimed at evaluation of such initiatives, it seems that **sustainable funding and harmonised stakeholder collaboration** is crucial for the effective use of mentoring initiatives. At the same time, the mentor's competence, attitude and experience will have an impact on the mentee's development and reintegration potential. Therefore, **selection and possibly training of mentors may be a decisive element of such schemes**, e.g., own migration experience proving to be a success factor in a number of cases identified for this report. Moreover, in the case of the Irish Back for Business project, the key

to success was indeed to recruit lead entrepreneurs – many of whom already had experience working abroad – to do the trainings and workshops on a voluntary basis. The budget could not support paid workshops, but individuals involved on a voluntary basis were willing to offer their expertise free of charge (Table 6).

Table 6

Key lessons learnt from practice examples

Key issues relevant for mentoring projects	Back for Business, Ireland
Short description	Back for Business (pilot phase budget: €111,900) is an initiative supported by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade aimed at fostering and supporting entrepreneurial activity among returned emigrants who have lived abroad. The six-month project entails a tailored entrepreneurial development programme, targeting aspiring entrepreneurs who have recently returned or are planning to return to Ireland.
Personalised and concrete offer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-depth analysis of problems and challenges specific for returnees, including networking and re-establishing contacts (mentoring needs of potential entrepreneurs differ, e.g., women, young people) • Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) research has demonstrated that in Ireland returnees are engaged more frequently in early stage entrepreneurial activity than those who have never travelled
Quality and sustainability of the programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing psychological isolation among participants • Developing a suitable culture of collaboration and confidentiality by preparing Lead Entrepreneurs and experts involved in workshops to establish the groups • Selection of experienced service provider specialising in consultancy assignments in the area of entrepreneurship • Back for Business is based on peer support: entrepreneurs supporting entrepreneurs • Further development phase would be offered to those who successfully complete the cycle
Necessary resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very high volunteer contribution to Back for Business reduces the costs of the programme • The participants are not asked for a contribution
Network of experts/mentors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective recruitment and management of Lead Entrepreneurs, relevant experts and organisations prepared to contribute time and expertise on a voluntary basis • Successful individuals willing to give back to other entrepreneurs at an earlier stage of their development
Target group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target group was changed after the pilot from returning emigrants to returned and from starting a business to start. This had a very positive effect on the outcomes of the programmes and success rates. • Reach out and recruitment: social media, extensive media campaign

Source: Authors, based on interview with Back for Business (6 August 2019)

According to the conducted research and consultations, **counselling, often linked with training or mentoring**, remains a crucial element of return support. It often encompasses all issues related to return, with a special focus on career guidance. Its aim is to *support employability and adaptability by assisting people to make career decisions both on entering the labour market and on moving within it*. Similarly to the support within mainstream policies, it is provided through a wide diversity of structures (European Network on Youth Employment 2010).

Desk research has identified a number of various initiatives targeting (potential) returnees aimed at **job seeking and matching**, with a special focus on internet-based tools. Digital platforms are increasingly helping connect job seekers—from informal workers to highly skilled professionals—to suitable job opportunities. These platforms, which can aggregate vast amounts of data, accomplish three things. First, they make it easier to learn about available jobs and requirements; second, they reduce the cost of recruiting; and third, they allow individuals to market themselves to a wider audience (Chen and Haymon 2016). Relative to offline platforms, digital platforms significantly reduce time and money spent on the job search by both the job seeker and the employer, especially in the case of companies with limited resources. This is particularly relevant for (potential) returnees who are not present in the country of origin.

The research identified various approaches regarding internet-based tools with a majority of such approaches focusing on a broad target group (Workindenmark, Make it in Germany), often supported by the state or local authorities or smaller initiatives targeting potential returnees: *Volvemos*, Talent for Lithuania, Global Professional Mobility Platform in Portugal, as well as Work for Lithuania (Table 7).

Job linking platforms with broad target groups

www.make-it-in-germany.com is the German government's portal for qualified professionals from around the world. The portal, which can be browsed in a variety of different languages, offers information for those interested in moving to Germany – starting with preparations in the home country, through the actual move, to the first steps to be taken in Germany. The Make it in Germany job listings enable qualified professionals to look for suitable job vacancies and to find out what sectors and regions are looking to recruit.

Workindenmark in Denmark is a service for job placement ("PES"-like), especially for highly qualified people. It supports highly qualified foreigners (in Denmark or abroad) in their job search in Denmark and companies in their international recruitment. Workindenmark also has a spouse service. It provides a job database, job search seminars, e-learning courses, information about working and living conditions in Denmark and other tools.

Manitoba start is a non-profit organization funded by the Canadian government and the government of Manitoba. It is aimed at newcomers and companies and sees itself as an intermediary between highly qualified job-ready newcomers and companies looking for personnel. For new immigrants, Manitoba Work offers support in searching for an appropriate job for their qualifications, with job preparation workshops, information on qualification recognition, individual career coaching, preparation of application documents and networking opportunities.

Interestingly, some of the return focused platforms offer information and counselling at the same time. Despite certain advantages of such measures, there are also certain challenges that limit the scale or effectiveness of the small-scale projects. Such tools rely on usage by employers and potential immigrants alike, and therefore require considerable communication resources to reach out and also attract both employers and employees to sign up. The risks related to project implementation include a small limited budget to reach out to emigrants, a lack of candidates or poor quality of their profiles, and employers' attitudes to hiring via digital job platforms (perceived costs, preferring traditional recruitment methods). Scaling up the initiative might also be limited by the lack of human and financial resources and the necessity to allocate a much bigger budget to marketing, and to reach out to students and potential candidates abroad.

Table 7

Key lessons learnt from practice examples

Key lessons	Work for Lithuania
Short description	<p>The Work in Lithuania project implemented by agency “Invest Lithuania” aims to help businesses find the right employees, encourage professionals living abroad to choose Lithuania for their careers, and improve the talent ecosystem on a national level. The workinlithuania.lt portal is a website where international companies and potential employees can meet. Since the programme’s launch in October 2017, more than 100 international companies with a presence in Lithuania have joined the initiative. These companies regularly publish job vacancies for highly skilled employees on the portal.</p>
Definition and analysis of target groups	<p>Young professionals who already have about 2 to 8 years of experience, a university degree or higher diploma and have already embarked on their professional careers (both returnees and foreigners).</p> <p>The biggest target countries for the project have been countries like the United Kingdom, which hosts a high number of Lithuanian expatriates.</p> <p>Regarding foreigners, the strategy (message) differs as non-Lithuanians have a different starting knowledge about Lithuania and may be looking for different things.</p>
Strategic approach	<p>The website and project as a whole mainly promote companies and the Lithuanian lifestyle rather than vacancies. It is assumed that returnees and immigrants are looking for a “packaged story”, which proves that there is a high-quality life available in Lithuania. Three main strategic elements have been implemented:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Greater visibility is brought to companies based in Lithuania, bearing in mind that much of the Lithuanian diaspora has not kept up with this information or followed the development of the local and national economy throughout the years. 2. Success stories of those who have returned are shared at large in order to influence the decision-making process of potential returnees. 3. Job offers of present companies are posted on the portal. They are not offered separately because it is recognized that people return for reasons other than employability and they accompany positive news on the economy. 4. Gaining the interest of companies in using their platform, as well as providing information post-hire in order to track progress. 5. Fully utilising the existing database of CVs in the future so that staff involved in the project can analyse and categorize the CVs that can then be redirected to potential employers.

Outreach	<p>Not limited to social media since it targets people with a wide variety of professional backgrounds, who do not always fall into the category of highly-skilled professionals.</p> <p>Facilitating partner events with embassies proved to be successful. Potential employers also send representatives to joint-events to present career opportunities and explain the environment in Lithuania.</p>
Monitoring and evaluation	<p>The project's website makes it possible to track the analytics, including number of clicks and submitted applications, the profile of those involved, countries of origin of those applying, searches, rate and percentage of foreigners and other general website traffic.</p> <p>Identified challenge: monitoring is the tracking of returnees or foreigners who have returned/come to Lithuania using different channels.</p>

Source: Authors, based on interview with Work in Lithuania (31 July 2019)

Finally, **One-Stop-Shop services** were also identified as a relevant measure for returnees, although as a rule they are usually based on the provision of both government and non-government services to immigrants and people interested in immigration issues under one roof. The One-Stop-Shop is an essential approach because it responds to the problem that services provided to immigrants and procedures to be undertaken are usually dispersed and normally provide independent responses, obliging the immigrant to visit several state institutions and undergo various, sometimes unnecessary, procedures. During the research, the following two types of One-Stop-Shop approach were identified: information services without the processing of applications (website, online consultations, etc.), and provision of broad services including the regularisation of stay and work.⁶ Furthermore, in the majority of cases the services had broad target groups: both immigrants and emigrants.

⁶ <http://www.oss.inti.acidi.gov.pt/>

One-stop-shop initiatives targeting migrants

International Citizens Services⁷ were established in 2011 in Denmark's four largest cities. The ICSs are located at municipal level in Copenhagen, Aarhus, Aalborg and Odense. Their target groups are foreign workers, their relatives and Danish companies employing foreign workers and students. The services include support in a variety of administrative steps including, for example, applying for a tax card or access to the health system (health insurance card, family doctor), as well as consultation concerning, amongst other things, work opportunities, Danish courses and the tax system

In Ireland, the **Citizens Information Services** (CISs) are overseen by the Citizens Information Board under the Department of Social and Family Affairs. CISs provide a face-to-face service to the public. Through trained staff, the Citizens Information Services provide free, impartial and confidential information, advice and advocacy services to the public. This service is aimed at the general population, but in practice a high proportion of service-users in some locations are immigrants.

The city of Calgary (capital of the province of Alberta, 1.1 million inhabitants) also pursues an interesting approach where so-called "employment forums" are implemented within the framework of the Immigrant Employment Partnership project. The city cooperates with organisations supporting migrants in entering the labour market. The forums see themselves as "one-stop shops" for newly qualified migrant workers who aspire to next career steps. The forums offer direct contact with human resource managers in the city of Calgary (Maytree Foundation/Cities of Migration 2012, 42f.).

⁷ <http://icitizen.dk/>

Table 8

Practice examples in the area of tailored reintegration services

Institution, country	Description
<p>Global Lithuanian Leaders (GLL), Lithuania</p>	<p>“Talent for Lithuania”</p> <p>Global Lithuanian Leaders is a social enterprise aiming to facilitate the hiring of Lithuanian young professionals and university graduates abroad in Lithuanian companies (in Lithuania) in the manufacturing and service sectors. For three years, it has built up cooperation with around 15 companies and has facilitated the recruitment of approximately 100 employees against a fee of EUR 500 per hire. The website matching tool provides comprehensive information about the project. Young people interested in return can also register by putting themselves on a map featured on the website (a “gamification” of getting in touch with the programme). Twice a year, the opening of the application period is announced and accompanied by a communication campaign described in detail in the section above (more info in Table 5).</p> <p>In the experience of the organisation, the target group of young professionals and university graduates respond to concrete offers that are attractive to them. In the programme, returnees receive an attractive package, are mentored, introduced to other returnees, etc. The programme has so far managed to achieve a high retention rate – only 20% have gone back abroad.</p>
<p>Fitzsimons Consulting, Lead Entrepreneurs Ireland</p>	<p>Back for Business (Ireland)</p> <p>Back for Business has a mentoring component and a training component, including the following subjects: Understanding and Developing a Business, Incorporating Vision, Goals, KPIs; Knowing and Reaching Your Customer; Finance and Your Business; Roadmap to Progress your Business; and SMART Planning.</p> <p>The programme addresses the challenges that all early stage entrepreneurs face, with a particular focus on additional barriers encountered by those who have been out of the country for some time, such as networking and re-establishing contacts. Back for Business is based on a model of peer support, entrepreneurs supporting entrepreneurs. This approach has proven to be effective in bringing about increased motivation and confidence among entrepreneurs and having a positive impact on their enterprise development. This applied learning model involves a series of round table interactive sessions, which are facilitated by volunteer Lead Entrepreneurs who have the experience of successfully starting and growing a business. The sessions are focused on the achievement of goals and milestones and the exploration of relevant themes. Lead Entrepreneurs works with groups of up to eight participants each in a series of round table sessions, supporting them to address the challenges they face in starting, developing and positioning their business for sustainability and growth.</p> <p>Thus far, the pilot programme (38 participants) has brought the following positive results (pilot phase): At the start of the cycle, the majority were pre-revenue, with just one in four having generated some sales. Over the course of six months of the programme, a further additional 10 participants began to trade. At the end of the cycle, over half were trading (52%), with others planning to generate sales in the coming months.</p>

Volvemos, Spain

(Described in detail in Table 5)

Job matching constitutes an important service provided by Volvemos. There is a job search engine on the website (<https://volvemos.org/busca-dor-empleo>) where companies can publish their job offers without any fee. Volvemos also offers paid job matching, including the following activities: selection of the best candidates (profiles) and mediation between potential employee and employer. The same consulting services are also offered to public institutions. **Talent Sourcing** services might cover multiple vacancies and/or look for a specialized profile. Volvemos takes care of the entire selection process and acts as an intermediary between the candidate and the company. The first step is to search and review all profiles in relation to the requirements of the position and, secondly, to contact candidates personally. The main source is the database, with more than 8,000 registered candidates from all professional profiles, but other professional channels are also used. To carry out the selection of personnel, a contract is signed beforehand with the company, which states the terms of the agreement and the cost of the service. The employer pays a fee only in the case of successful recruitment (10% of gross annual salary).

Communication and employer branding constitute another service offered by the organisation, including the development of specific communication plans for the dissemination of programmes for hiring professionals abroad. These plans are prepared, taking into account the type, needs and objectives of each company, and the professional profile of candidates.

Services of mediators - the “Return of Talent” Programme of Castile-La Mancha - The Return of Talent” Programme of Castile-La Mancha, developed in cooperation with Volvemos, aims to facilitate the return of young people who had to go abroad. It includes subsidies for indefinite hiring, addressed to employers hiring people from Castile-La Mancha who have resided or worked abroad, with the purpose of incorporating them into the labour market of Castile-La Mancha. A budget of EUR 310 000 includes subsidies for start-up costs of entrepreneurial activity, aimed at people from Castile-La Mancha who have resided or worked abroad and want to develop economic activity in the Autonomous Community. A budget of EUR 234 000 as well as a “Return passport” for people from Castile-La Mancha who reside abroad and want to return to the region to live is also offered, which includes financial aid to cover moving costs to Castile La-Mancha (budget: EUR 156 000). Up until this point, almost 500 Castile-La Mancha emigrants have returned thanks to the programme.

The role of a team of 33 labour mediators from public employment services (some of them belong to the EURES network as well) has been crucial to the success of the initiative. The goal is to give emigrants reliable information about the return plan and labour situation, especially in a specific sector. They also review emigrants’ CVs and look for interesting companies and job offers in order to put emigrants in contact with companies that are interested in their profile. The team of mediators took part in training where they learned how to deal with the needs and expectations of Spanish people living abroad and the realities of return. Once an emigrant creates an account (<https://retorno-talento.castillalamancha.es>), a mediator is assigned to help the individual with the return process. This service is carried out via video calls (Skype), standard email and other technological platforms <https://retorno-talento.castillalamancha.es/>.

<p>Ordem dos Engenheiros, Ordem dos Enfermeiros Gulbenkian Foundation, Portugal</p>	<p>Global Professional Mobility Platform (Plataforma de Mobilidade Profissional Global)</p> <p>The Platform, created within the Strategic Plan for Migration, is an online tool to support the recruitment of highly qualified Portuguese emigrants residing abroad, with the objective of promoting and disseminating work opportunities in Portugal and abroad. It also targets national and international companies that wish to recruit professionals and national companies that intend to internationalize. The objective of the Platform is to systematize information on Portuguese professionals who carry out their professional activities abroad, allowing for an analysis of their skills and curriculum, and resulting in a consistent information tool on Portuguese human resources.</p>
<p>State agency “Invest, Lithuania”</p>	<p>The Work in Lithuania project aims to help businesses find the right employees, encourage professionals living abroad to choose Lithuania for their careers, and improve the talent ecosystem on a national level. Up until 2018, the project focused primarily on the Lithuanian diaspora but since 2019 has also included both international students and international specialists as its target groups. Work in Lithuania’s launch in 2017 was driven by the singular aspiration of inspiring other Lithuanians living abroad to return to Lithuania, as well as foreigners who were open to continuing their careers in Lithuania. The initiative is funded by the Ministry of Economy and Innovation. Work for Lithuania is free of charge to the companies and individuals using it.</p>

Source: Authors, based on interviews

4.3.3

Tailored reintegration services in the polish context

The labour market performance of return migrants in Poland is extremely hard to assess, mostly due to data limitations and differences in definitions of returnees adopted by various data sources and social studies. The information campaign started in 2008 is dedicated to returnees and Polish diaspora (*Have you got a PPlan to return?*) and is focused on administrative information and labour market opportunities upon returning to Poland. The service, managed by the Voluntary Labour Corps, including the website, social media services and handbook, provides detailed information about labour market opportunities both in specific regions and at a national level. In comparison to other countries running tailored reintegration services, Poland is missing more personal, individualised support dedicated to specific groups of migrants.

Thus far, three tailored reintegration programmes have been introduced in Poland, but they have not been thoroughly evaluated. In chronological order of creation, the first was the programme *To return – and what next?*, established by the *Fundusz Lokalny Ziemi Biłgorajskiej* Foundation, a local labour agency and *Biłgorajska Agencja Rozwoju Regionalnego*, implemented between 2007 and 2009. The programme aimed at promoting entrepreneurship and included setting up a consulting point open to everyone in need of information or assistance in accountancy, business plans, law, or administrative procedures. A special focus was put on young (aged below 35 years) migrants (mostly short-term and circular migrants) who considered starting their own local business in Bilgoraj county. Participants of the programme, 21 migrants, took part in a training course lasting 60 hours, which trained them how to set up and run their own company. Out of all the participants, nine individuals submitted a business plan and an application for a subsidy to the local labour agency. Two

of the participants established their own company as a result and received a government subsidy. Moreover, four of the participants also gained employment.

The second programme, *Become you own boss – stay in Poland*, was run by the Warsaw Municipality and Higher School of Finance and Management in Warsaw between 2010 and 2012. This action aimed at promoting entrepreneurship and included trainings on administrative procedures, how to set up and manage one's own company, and useful interpersonal skills in business. Participants included 26 returnees. They benefitted from individual consulting in law, finance, business, career, marketing, and IT, and those who decided to set up their own company got subsidies during the first 12 months of this activity. Out of 26 participants, 23 set up their own companies, such as architectural design studios, graphic and marketing studios, and agencies providing extra-curricular activities for children. At this point in time (May 2019), it has been confirmed that twelve participants have continued their enterprise activities in Poland, although three of them run different companies than the ones they started in 2011. Little is known about the remaining eleven participants; however, it is certain that three of them have suspended their companies, which were established in 2011, and that one lives abroad. Without this information, however, a full evaluation of this programme is not possible.

The third programme, *Go4Poland*, was started in 2015 by the Warsaw Stock Exchange Foundation. This is a mentoring programme linking selected Polish emigrants studying abroad (mentees) with entrepreneurs and experts in Poland (mentors). Mentors dedicate 8 hours of individual support to the mentees, while internships and visits to mentors' companies are also envisaged. The fourth wave of the programme is in its initial phase (candidates are now being selected), while the previous three waves involved approximately 1,000 participants altogether.

Apart from the programmes described above, two other tailored programmes are being introduced at the local level. The labour agency in Kraków aims to provide work counselling to approximately 600 returnees in particularly difficult situations in relation to the labour market. Target groups include persons aged 50 and over, the long-term unemployed, low qualified, handicapped, and men aged 30-49 whose situation is particularly difficult. This project is about to start and is co-financed from the European Social Fund and the voivodship's own contribution (853 198.82 zł). The other programme is going to be introduced in Gdańsk. The labour agency in Gdańsk plans to provide professional counselling and training to approximately 50 migrants returning from several European countries who remain unemployed in Poland. The service includes professional mentoring and counselling, training and material support (translating documents, training stipends, re-funding the costs of professional exams, and relocation benefits).

Due to the relatively short history of recent Polish emigration, one can assume that the vast majority of Polish returnees finished their education in Poland. Consequently, improving the procedures for skills recognition is not the priority, at least not for now. On the other hand, however, brain waste is a common issue in the case of Polish migrants. Working below one's own skillset results not only in lower incomes but also in a sometimes substantial depreciation of skills acquired in Poland. As a result, professional counselling involving labour market matching and additional training could be perceived as one of the top priorities.

Poland needs to address precisely established target groups, and this needs to be done not only in relation to migration experiences (potential return migrants, return migrants, members of their families not necessarily of Polish origin, second generation migrants), but also qualifications (highly skilled, particular professions). Indeed, professional assistance requires distinguishing between high and low skilled workers, and between different professions, such as nurses and qualified manual workers.

Both migration and labour markets are local and regional phenomena; thus, to address local labour market mismatches, tailored reintegration services should be established according to the local labour market needs and in close collaboration with local employment services, regional authorities and municipalities, and possibly non-governmental organizations specializing in professional counselling. Such individualised support could include personal counselling provided by local employment services as well as mentoring programmes, coordinated by local employment services but organized in cooperation with local entrepreneurs and NGOs. A point of reference for such regional collaboration of several partners would be the Regional Coordination Offices established in Latvia and the International Citizens Services established in Denmark. The one stop shop established in large cities represents a good example of regional initiatives connecting potential or *de facto* returnees with their personal counsellors and other actors: employers, HR managers, and coaches. The idea here is to provide an opportunity to support migrants with information on work opportunities and recruitment procedures, such as during the employment forums in Calgary. This activity, if organized in close collaboration with local authorities, could be effective in the Polish case.

Active job matching measures could be of use in relation to highly skilled migrants or certain professions, such as medical personnel of medium rank (nurses, physiotherapists) or skilled construction workers. This service can be provided by a subcontracted NGO (as in Canada) or public administration (as in Denmark) that intermediate between qualified workers and HR personnel. Other services offered to migrants, such as workshops, individual coaching, and e-learning courses should be considered as well. In particular, the Irish Back for Business programme constitutes a very good point of reference in tailored reintegration practices. Dedicated to students, graduates and young professionals, a similar programme introduced in Poland would provide returnees with an opportunity to acquire business competencies and market-oriented knowledge from successful and experienced Polish entrepreneurs.

4.4

GENERAL REINTEGRATION POLICIES: LANGUAGE LEARNING, REINTEGRATION IN SCHOOLS, AND HOUSING

This chapter will present general reintegration policies used in different countries, which include language learning for adults, various reintegration measures in schools and housing policies supporting returnees.

4.4.1

Language learning

Assuming that many returnees are emigrants that have gone through the domestic school system and emigrated as adults, they will not be the primary target group of this measure. It is rather relevant for returning emigrants who have left as children and may not have the same full command of their native language when they return, and their potential spouses, who likely have limited to no language capacity. Since they are considered as having similar needs regarding language learning to other migrants, we will summarize a few different language learning models used for both returnees and immigrants.

There are almost no examples of language learning targeting returnees explicitly. Methods tailored to serve potential returnees are mostly an element of diasporic policies, which target emigrants living abroad. These include various cultural institutes offering language and/or culture classes, summer camps and other activities, or e-learning platforms for emigrant families who do not live close to such institutes. Some examples of language learning programmes for returnees can be observed in Germany, Valladolid in Spain and South Korea.

In Germany, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth implemented a special counselling programme which included subsidies for language courses for ethnic German returnees between the ages of 12 to 27 coming from former USSR republics, as well as other Eastern European states. The programme focused on strengthening the skills of young people and their integration into education and the labour market. In Valladolid, Spain, highly-skilled returnees who are accepted into the “Talent Return Plan” are supported in improving their Castilian language skills through a subsidy of 100 euros per month for one year after they return to the city. In South Korea, Korea’s Immigration Integration Program (KIIP) organized by the Social Integration Division of the Ministry of Justice also targets ethnic Koreans returning to the country. It provides trainings in Korean language and culture as well as courses to better understand Korean society.

Institutionally speaking, there are several great examples of language classes offered by a number of European Member states. Over the last two decades, the number of free and obligatory language courses as measures for the integration of newly arriving migrants has risen significantly. Therefore, there is a growing knowledge base on designing and implementing adult language learning programmes for new immigrants, which can then be recycled and transferred over to the returnee target group as well. Language courses across Europe are structured according to the categories established by the 2001 Council of Europe Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). In addition to complementing regular language classes, there are several good practice examples developed within the framework set up by the CEFR that may be deemed as relevant for returnees.

One example is a model – which has spread across Germany and Austria over the last two decades – of organised language courses for parents at their children’s **school or kindergarten**. The course teaches German, but also allows participants to learn about life and cultural norms in Germany, especially related to schooling and the education system. An evaluation of these programmes highlighted that classes should be practical and relevant for everyday life as much as possible, touching upon subjects like homework, expected interactions with the school and teachers, expected engagement around school trips and school subjects themselves (BAMF Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge 2010).

A second practice example, which could improve returnees’ language skills, is **vocational language courses**. Such courses teach language skills tailored to certain sectors, occupational areas and qualifications. Offering these types of courses recognises that there are specific language skills needed in order to find a job (e.g., writing a CV, interview skills, etc.), to be able to make a valuable contribution as an employee, and to progress and develop a career (European Centre For Modern Languages n.d.). One example is from Sweden, which offers “Svenska för yrkesutbildade/Swedish for qualified workers” courses. The goal of the programme is to speed up labour integration for skilled immigrants with language courses that offer specific trainings related to fields like engineering, entrepreneurship, medicine and education. In some cases, courses include internships, work placements or informational visits at companies, as in the case of the ESF-BAMF programmes offered in Germany. Essentially, designing language learning courses or initiatives requires tailored actions involving multiple stakeholders and takes into consideration an array of contexts, which ultimately support the overall goal of providing support for returnees with greater language (learning) inclusion in schools and professionally.

4.4.2

Reintegration in schools

In many cases returnees face a situation whereby their children – who were born abroad and/or attended school mainly in the host country – might certainly be able to understand and even speak the native language due to it being spoken at home, but are not fluent enough to properly read and write, and thus to continue with formal education in their native country. There are several measures within diaspora policies among the European states that target emigrants living abroad, such as Cultural Institutes offering language and/or culture classes, schools established abroad that follow the official national curriculum, summer camps and other activities, or e-learning platforms for emigrant families who do not live close to such institutes. Aside from the support offered abroad, it is vital that children of returnees are supported in school after they return, so that return is a feasible reality for families looking to make the shift back to their countries of origin. According to our research, programmes specifically tailored for returnee children do not exist, an unsurprising fact considering the difficulty of establishing entire programmes for such a small, and fluctuating, number of children. Nevertheless, well-established school integration models exist which meld together children of returnees and immigrants, and provide good practice examples. Most OECD countries, including Poland, have established such programmes. An initiative with the goal of sharing experiences and good practices in the EU is the “European Toolkit for Schools: Promoting inclusive education and tackling early school leaving”. Funding for implementation and capacity building in the context of (language) education policies is eligible under a number of EU funds, including AMIF and ESF (European Commission n.d.; Salant and Benton 2017).

A helpful practice example for school reintegration comes from Latvia, where “regional return coordinators” connect with schools of the municipalities that emigrants want to potentially return to, and find out what offers they can make for returning children. Some schools already have existing Latvian language classes for the Russian minority in Latvia, and in this case, children can visit such classes. Some schools also hire assistants, who are funded through municipal budgets. Challenges do not only concern language, but also other subjects that may not have been taught in a different education system. In the experience of regional return coordinators, it is important to address the fears of parents and help them to compare the school and broader education infrastructures offered by the municipalities that the emigrant family considers as options. For instance, free kindergarten and public (state) schools, as well as free music and arts classes in some cases were seen as an “attractive package” that some municipalities can offer to returnees. The project also revealed that in some cases, schools and municipalities are simply not aware of this issue and that making them aware of the needs of returnees and the importance of allocating resources can make a significant difference. An active approach by the coordinator was a key success factor in such cases.

4.4.3

Housing

Housing was identified as a main challenge in the first research on return migration conducted in the 1970s (King 1978), and more recently by a key IOM publication on return (Graviano et al. 2017). Existing research highlights that many migrants actually pursue the goal of investing in housing in the country of origin while they are abroad, though this is not the case for everyone. It is important to consider all different types of returnees and their needs and capacities when discussing housing (Table 9).

Table 9

Housing instruments and types of returnees

“Achiever” returnees, professionals with already secured job	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and advice on private housing market • Fiscal benefits on purchase of real estate • Access to state-assisted loans
Low-income returnees, pensioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and advice on private housing market • Advice and support in accessing social housing, other welfare benefits if needed
Crisis returnees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for emergency housing • Advice and support in accessing social housing, other welfare benefits if needed

There have been several housing programmes introduced to facilitate the return to and re-integration into the country of origin. For instance, in Portugal, retired former emigrants and descendants of emigrants who returned were allowed to open a special bank account, which offered them fiscal benefits on the purchase of land or housing. In Bulgaria, ethnic Bulgarians that are residents in other countries are granted state-assisted loans in order to purchase real estate within the country. Two other programmes are described in Figure 7. In Poland, such housing policies dedicated exclusively to returnees would face criticism of discriminating against other social groups. Therefore, the goal of housing policy should in fact be to make mainstream policies/offers such as social housing and/or housing subsidies (rent support) accessible to returnees, and to offer information, advice and support in the application processes.

Figure 7

Practice examples in housing policy

The most prominent example of housing support specifically for returnees comes from **Ireland**. The challenges in Ireland include a general housing crisis affecting the entire country. Since a shortage of housing combined with the economic crisis has led to an enormous increase in rents and social housing shortages, stakeholders in Ireland emphasise that all types of returnees must be informed about the situation. As a result, almost all types of returnees need support with housing in some form in Ireland. The Charity Safe Home Ireland has been receiving funding from the Department of Foreign Affairs for almost 20 years for this work and supports returning pensioners aged 57+ to access social housing. The service is organized in such a way as to help both potential returnees still residing abroad and returnees already in the country.

In **Latvia**, the new Diaspora law of 2019 specifically foresees that state and local governments shall provide assistance in solving residential issues in accordance with the Law on Assistance in Solving Apartment Matters. This law means that municipalities can decide on preference criteria through which they can offer apartments to specific groups, e.g. specialists in specified sectors, families without property, and in some cases return migrants. This, in turn, means that local governments maintain a significant role in attracting returnees through housing benefits. In the experience of the project coordinators, most returnees look for social housing as an interim solution for the first few years and later try to find something else. The “Coordinators for Returnees” offer information on accessing (social) housing in Latvia and standing offers for returnees by specific municipalities.

4.4.4

Language learning for adults in the Polish context

Polish migration policy lacks a system facilitating the comprehensive re-adaptation of adults. Due to the relatively short history of recent Polish emigration, one can assume that the vast majority of returnees finished their education in Poland and speak Polish. Although organizing language training for adults is not one of the priorities, at least not for now, the need for language training for adults will soon increase for two reasons: **the return flow of family members (not necessarily of Polish origin) will intensify, and the time spent abroad will increase.**

The Voluntary Labour Corps focus on labour market integration and do not provide returnees and their family members with particular language, work-related language or professional trainings. So far, such trainings have been organized by municipalities (in Warsaw and in the Opolskie region), Universities (project: Become your own boss – stay in Poland) or consortiums of public administration and non-governmental organizations (see projects: To return – and what next? and ReturnToPoland.pl). Professional trainings are offered by work services, but they are dedicated to the general public and do not necessarily reflect the needs of returnees. Commercial language assistance services are affordable and accessible only to a narrow group of migrants.

4.4.5

Reintegration in schools in the polish context

The practices concerning reintegration at school that are implemented in Poland are already precisely defined. Children coming back from abroad and experiencing difficulties have the right to at least two additional, individual (or organized in small groups) lessons of Polish language per week, and one additional lesson per week on a different subject. The directive concerning reintegration also introduces the possibility of organizing a preparatory section in schools dedicated to (Polish and foreign) children coming from abroad who experience serious difficulties in Polish.

Despite the existence of a legal and institutional framework for the education of children of return migrants, the discrepancy between basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) should be definitely considered and addressed. All children coming from abroad have an experience of a different education system, translating into differences in knowledge and ways of studying (more individual, more collective etc.), but also differences in personal relations between pupils, and between pupils and teachers. Last but not least, children coming from abroad also experience problems other than purely linguistic ones, related to re-adaptation to the Polish education system and local community. Needless to say, changing the closest social environment through return migration, which tends to be mostly the parents' and not the children's decision, may affect the children's feeling of identity, belonging and stabilization. For them coming to Poland does not mean a "return migration", but rather a "migration" from the hitherto country of residence. This means that children of return migrants, in particular of adolescent age, need special emotional support and psychological supervision.

Information about "culture shock" and problems experienced by children upon return are described at the website powroty.gov.pl; the website also includes information that children may make use of assistance provided by school personnel and pedagogues, as well as Psychological-Pedagogical Centres (*Poradnie Psychologiczno-Pedagogiczne*). In practice, however, the number of such centres might not be sufficient to ensure special support for returnees, and many children returning from abroad and experiencing psychological problems resort to commercial offers, which are available only to persons who can afford them and to those living in large cities. Thus, another solution would be to intensify cooperation with non-governmental organizations specializing in providing psychological support to children returning from abroad and experiencing social dysfunctions and special emotional problems.

In this context, it is worth mentioning the *(Z)Powrotem w Polsce* project implemented by the *Sto Pociągów* Foundation and the *Świat na Wyciągnięcie Ręki* Foundation in 2015 and 2016. The aim of the project was to improve the standards of support for returnees, including children taking up education in Polish schools and kindergartens as well as raising awareness of issues related to return migration (Białek 2015).

The support provided in Polish schools to pupils returning from abroad seems thorough and similar to policy measures incorporated in other countries, such as Estonia and Latvia, where individual counsellors and regional coordinators are engaged in contacts with families, schools and teachers. Nevertheless, Polish policy towards returnees should also target potential returnees who are still living abroad. Children living abroad need reinforced support in the Polish language. Although they are already bi-cultural and bi-lingual (to a varying degree), they often have only one Polish parent and do not speak Polish with both parents (and hence Polish is their weaker language). The foundations for support in education abroad have already been laid. The Centre for the Development of Polish Education Abroad (*Ośrodek Rozwoju Polskiej Edukacji za Granicą*, ORPEG) prepares regular and supplementary learning plans dedicated to pupils educated abroad, provides teachers of such pupils with training and additional support materials (textbooks etc.), and also runs consultation points at diplomatic missions abroad, providing free education to children with Polish origins.

Schools run by ORPEG abroad are present on almost every continent, but their number is obviously limited. At the same time, there are a large number of schools, or rather education “sites” – as lessons are mostly organized part-time on Saturdays or Sundays – founded and managed “bottom-up” by diaspora or parents’ associations. These education missions, financed completely from fees paid by parents, may apply for additional funds dedicated to pedagogical training or organization of patriotic events. Furthermore, these schools require regular financial support, e.g., to cover the rent and to ensure the continuity of teaching. They also require pedagogical assistance, such as textbooks, pedagogical materials, and regular training for teachers, which could easily be provided by ORPEG. Indeed, ORPEG could establish a standard for educational materials, textbooks, and online trainings easily accessible by teachers, children and their parents. Close cooperation between schools organized by diaspora organizations and ORPEG may also be beneficial for the latter and, more generally, Polish migration policy. Thanks to incorporating these schools into the system already run by ORPEG, the latter would become a leading and important managing institution with increasing impact on the Polish diaspora.

Table 10

Programmes implemented to intensify return migration to Poland

Name of programme	Institution	Target group	Main initiatives	Time frame	Level of implementation
Have you got a Plan to return? <i>Czy masz Plan na powrót?</i>	Chancellery of the Prime Minister, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Centre of Human Resources Development	Migrants staying abroad and return migrants	Information campaigns at the national level, a telephone helpline, newsletter and social media accounts	Since September 2008	National
ReturnToPoland.pl/ <i>WracaJDoPolski.pl</i>	Hays Polska, Polish-British Chamber of Commerce, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy	Migrants staying abroad, particularly the highly skilled in some economic sectors (IT, banking, finance)	Information campaigns, training activities abroad and in Poland	2007 – 2011	National
Returns/ <i>Powroty</i>	Barka Foundation	Polish migrants in London, particularly homeless and addicts	Transportation to Poland, rehabilitation and detoxification in Poland, employment programmes	Since 2007	Regional
Twelve cities – to go back, but where to? <i>12 miast – wracać, ale dokąd?</i>	Poland Street Association (Polish NGO based in London), municipalities of 12 cities in Poland: Białystok, Bydgoszcz, Gdańsk, Katowice, Kraków, Lublin, Łódź, Poznań, Rzeszów, Szczecin, Warsaw, and Wrocław	Polish migrants in the United Kingdom	Promotion campaigns of 12 cities organized in London, meetings and information campaigns on business and labour market opportunities	January – August 2009	Regional

Opolskie – here I stay/ <i>Opolskie – tutaj zostaję</i>	Self-government in Opole, Labour agency in Opole	Migrants abroad, graduates, persons looking for a job in the <i>Opolskie</i> region	Encouraging persons to return to the region, improving work and education opportunities	2009	Regional
To return – and what next?/ <i>Wrócić – i co dalej?</i>	<i>Fundusz Lokalny Ziemi Bytowskiej</i> Foundation, local labour agency, <i>Bytowska Agencja Rozwoju Regionalnego</i>	Young (under 35) Polish emigrants and their families	Training and assistance to young persons considering starting own local business	January 2007 – June 2009	Local
Become you own boss – stay in Poland/ <i>Zostań w Polsce – swoimi szefem</i>	Warsaw Municipality, Higher School of Finance and Management in Warsaw	Returnees in the <i>Mazowieckie</i> region, in particular aged 45 and over, women, persons who lost job abroad	Trainings in establishing own enterprises and business plans, grants and donations covering six months of operating costs	2010 – 2012	Regional
Supporting return to country of origin/ <i>Wspieranie migracji powrotnej do kraju ojczystego</i>	“Polish Community” Association	Polish returnees	Creation of information centres, expert consultations, preparation and dissemination of return guide, research	2013	National
Pilot programme - supporting return to country of origin/ <i>Pilotażowy program wsparcia migracji powrotnych</i>	“Polish Community” Association	Polish returnees	Training, career and financial counselling, language and other courses, entrepreneurship training and writing a business plan, financial support, research	2013	National
<i>Polski Targi Pracy w Londynie</i> / Polish Job Fairs in London	Polish Investment and Trade Agency, Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Technology, Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy	Polish emigrants living in the UK	Organising job fairs in London, with the participation of employers based in Poland (both Polish and international enterprises) and Polish emigrants	May 2019	National

(Z)Powrotem w Polsce/ Back in Poland	Sto Pociągów Foundation, Świat na Wyciągnięcie Ręki Foundation	Persons considering return and returnees, with a special focus on families	Consultations, integration workshops for parents and children	March 2015/16 – December 2015/16	National
Go4Poland	Warsaw Stock Exchange Foundation	Polish emigrants studying abroad	Mentoring provided by Polish entrepreneurs, internships in Polish companies	Since 2015	National
Nowy Start w Matopolsce/New Start in Matopolska	Labour agency in Kraków	Polish returnees, in particular aged 50 and over, long-term unemployed, low qualified, handicapped.	Information campaigns, consultations and counselling	2019–2022	Local
<i>Pomorskie! Tu wracam, tu pracuję/Pomorskie! I come back here, I work here</i>	Labour agency in Gdańsk	Polish returnees	Counselling and training	Since 2019	Local

Source: Kaczmarczyk (2013:120) based on Fiatkowska and Szczepański (2012), author's compilation.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



5.1 GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

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Mainstream and return policies need to be coherent and play together to form an effective package for returnees

When analysing the bigger picture, it becomes clear that **mainstream policies** play a crucial role for returnees. Policy areas and integration measures such as labour market activation, housing and support at school are crucial for both the return decision and retention of returnees and their families. An essential step to support returnees is a thorough **review of mainstream policies and their accessibility and effectiveness**. This allows stakeholders involved to consider additional measures that may compensate for the possible deficits of return migrants and other improvements that could be made. Returnees should also be provided with information about mainstream measures taken and existing policies.

Identifying and addressing “hard” barriers to return should become a short-term priority

“Hard” barriers can be defined as legal obstacles that hamper or demotivate the return of emigrants. These include inaccessible financial instruments, bureaucratic requirements, unfavourable taxation and a lack of social rights in the country of origin. A comprehensive approach may entail an investigation into the challenges faced by potential returnees in order to consider appropriate measures to address these challenges, as in the case of an Irish study commissioned by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Immigration and return policies should complement each other

Poland is still an emigration-immigration country but the importance of immigration has increased substantially in recent years. This means that the reception and integration of newcomers may become one of the main challenges in the near future. Given the fact that public resources are scarce, policies targeting return migrants and immigrants might be treated as competitive ones. However, this perspective or approach should be avoided as both processes are important from a demographic, economic and social perspective and can complement one another.

Similarly, **there is no trade-off between return migration policies and diaspora policies**. Although most Polish migrants do live transnationally, and remain a part of Polish and transnational social networks while abroad, all possible data sources suggest that a growing share of Polish migrants exhibit clear plans to settle permanently outside of their country of origin. Therefore, bearing in mind the history and structure of Polish migration, both return migration policies and diaspora policies should be implemented simultaneously. This entails facilitating return and re-integration in Poland while strengthening links with the Polish diaspora and using its developmental potential. Poles residing abroad should not be treated (and presented in the public discourse) as “lost”, because they represent an enormous stock of financial, social and cultural capital that can be activated in today’s globalized world. On the contrary, more focus is needed on enhancing greater scientific and business cooperation with the Polish diaspora. The following measures might be taken into consideration:

- Re-defining well-established channels of cooperation, which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs mainly supervises and consular services implement, as well as extending the scope of support and cooperation, which also requires extending the list of participants.
- Creating and strengthening existing international scientific networks with a clear focus on already existing institutions. Such networks should be part of national science and other education-related policies/programmes.
- Identifying existing organizations of Polish students abroad and strengthening their capacities. These organizations are vital partners that can help to attract recent graduates to Poland and strengthen academic cooperation with Polish institutions.
- Creating and strengthening of existing business networks, also with a clear focus on already existing institutions.
- Creating investment schemes for populations abroad also in order to increase their involvement in the economy of Poland.
- Identifying and supporting those migrant organisations which are the most active/vital abroad and helping to strengthen their capacities.

Address the argument of unequal treatment between returners and non-movers

All policies targeting returnees should consider **the potential argument of unequal treatment**. In practical terms, this means that measures projected and applied need to take into account possible discriminatory effects against the immobile part of the population. Perceived unequal treatment might lead to resentment among the population without emigration experience. For this reason, it is important to refer to the international experience and already identified best practices, and to consider them in the Polish legal context. As examples of Ireland, Lithuania and Latvia demonstrate, it is important to be prepared to meet concerns related to potentially unequal treatment with a proper communication strategy already in place.

A regional and multi-stakeholder approach is necessary

Several programmes favouring the integration of returnees have been introduced in recent years, but actually there are only a few initiatives that are currently on-going. Introducing a new programme requires good coordination and integration so that policy actions are not duplicated by the central and local (voivodship) administrations.

It is also important to keep in mind that emigrants return to specific places, often cities and places of origin, and that policies at a local level play an important role. Close cooperation between all institutions (central administration, self-government, local employment services and NGOs) is therefore crucial for the implementation of effective and well-coordinated policy. Moreover, it may be most appropriate for the local/regional administration to choose measures which are most relevant in the local context. The costs of support and reintegration could be shared between governments and local/regional administration.

Expand the evidence base

A precondition for successful and efficient return policies, including information campaigns, is reliable information and expertise on Poles residing abroad. Due to the long-lasting tradition of migration research, knowledge on the Polish diaspora is relatively extensive (as shown in this report), but there still remain many **knowledge gaps**. Many studies focus on declarations, intentions and plans of returning. The statistics from the powroty.gov.pl website confirm a growing interest in returning, especially in the context of Brexit. Nevertheless, these studies and statistics do not deliver measurable or reliable information about actual returns and challenges faced by this group. There are further knowledge gaps regarding the strategies of Polish migrants, their return intentions and the situation of second and third generation immigrants. Thus, we recommend considering a **large-scale, ideally global survey of the Polish diaspora** designed to provide necessary inputs into return measures, but also into diaspora-related policies. Additionally, **comprehensive research among returnees and relevant stakeholders** about barriers to returning should be considered.

Support more active involvement of the private and nongovernmental sectors

Experiences of other countries prove that public-private partnerships and non-governmental organizations contribute importantly to initiatives aimed at attracting and retaining return migrants. Both the private sector and NGOs are competent, flexible and efficient in reaching out to returnees and helping them in social and labour market re-integration. Establishing public-private partnerships and subcontracting NGOs should primarily concern measures related to the labour market: job matching, internships for students and graduates, professional training aimed at re-skilling and gaining new competencies, as well as reaching out activities abroad. NGOs should also be more active in other support dedicated to families of migrants, for instance, language training for family members of non-Polish origin, psychological help for children experiencing difficulties at school, and integration measures dedicated to older/retired return migrants.

It is necessary to build on success stories during promotion campaigns. These should also demonstrate that emigrants' experiences are valued and wanted. Young emigrants may feel especially alienated from institutions because of the disappointment they carry related to their emigration. They may feel like they were being "thrown out of the country" due to the lack of opportunities. Both the lack of information and the feeling of belonging need to be addressed together.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS: MEASURES TAILORED TO DEFINED KEY TARGET GROUPS

Polish migrants represent a truly diverse group and this diversity is a result not only of basic socio-demographic stratifications but also the characteristics related to the host countries the migrants have emigrated to. Consequently, in every destination country, the group of Polish emigrants is somewhat distinct. Most importantly, this diversity translates into differences in terms of propensity or readiness to return, plans upon return, re-integration potentials, expectations and needs, etc.

Strategies that target return migrants should also take into account structural and political circumstances. The first important question in this area relates to the aim itself of return policy in the case of Poland. Based on empirical evidence and the experiences of past programmes, we recommend focussing more on enabling the return of those who want to return and the situation of returnees upon arrival. Attracting people residing abroad and the reasons behind their decision to emigrate are topics for general socio-economic policies to address.

Return policies are most effective when targeting precisely defined groups of emigrants intending to return or already established back in Poland

Any return policy instrument, in order to be efficient, should consider **differences in various migration processes** (short- versus long-term stay abroad, intention versus accomplished return, etc.), **migration patterns** (e.g., well established patterns of migration to Germany vs. relatively novel forms of seasonal migration to the Netherlands), the **life cycle** of involved migrants (e.g., starting family, pension), and **types of return** (successful or crisis situation). In particular, **available data on Polish migrants documents a gradual shift towards long-term strategies or settlement abroad**. This is visible in all locations where data exists, including those with traditionally large seasonal sectors (e.g. the Netherlands, Norway). This shift is among other things attributable to the fact that emigrants get older and set up families abroad, and therefore, adopt more family-focused strategies.

The **key target groups of return policy in Poland should include (Table 15):**

1. **Young first and second generation migrants**, most preferably highly skilled or with precisely defined professions for whom career opportunities in Poland are the main argument for returning.

2. **Young families with children**, for whom access to and quality of public services (education, system of welfare benefits) and work opportunities are the main reasons for returning.

The specific needs of these groups should be considered: families with children represent a particularly sensitive category as they value not only certain income levels but also the **accessibility and the quality of public services**. This expectation can be met by improving the aforementioned access and quality, in particular, regarding **childcare and education**. On the other hand, young adults without family obligations would value the **labour market and business-related measures the most**.

We also distinguish two other target groups of returnees: Elderly persons, not necessarily from EU countries, who might be willing to return to their country of origin out of sentimental reasons, and migrants of working age who face particular difficulties in the labour market and might need professional training aimed at re-skilling and gaining new competencies.

5.3

RECOMMENDATIONS: INFORMATION ACTIVITIES AND ENGAGEMENT ABROAD AND REGIONALLY

Information and communication have been identified as a relatively weak element of (return) policies both by studies and by the practitioners interviewed for this report. Through “digital engagement”, government institutions can not only provide information, but also have the opportunity to actually communicate with (potential) returnees, answer questions, facilitate the return process and actively guide returnees along the way.

Build upon functioning elements of the current information system

Existing and established services such as Zielona Linia and powroty.gov.pl should be maintained. They should be tasked with expanding their existing services by:

- **Organising job fairs abroad,**
- **Organising tailored promotion campaigns** according to defined target groups, and
- **Hiring additional outreach counsellors who would individually connect to emigrants** living abroad through social media, webinars, and meetings and trainings of diaspora organizations (most relevant in the case of elderly migrants).

Establish a network of regional counsellors

The creation of a team of regional counsellors should be considered, who will connect with migrants identified by the outreach counsellors and are ready to inform, advise and deal with practical problems faced by individual migrants/migrant families. Municipal authorities working in close cooperation with employment services should preferably implement this measure. In this context:

- **Invest in the hiring of competent counsellors:** Based on the Latvian and Spanish experience, it is important that counsellors have some migration experience themselves and therefore directly understand the situation and emotions of their clients.
- **Clear mandate for the regional counsellors:** They should proactively engage with potential returnees online, as well as to reach out to institutional stakeholders in order to answer individual questions and find tailored solutions for each case. The tasks of regional counsellors are: 1) Needs assessment – address and clarify the needs of returnees after establishing contact through outreach counsellors; 2) Individual offer – make an individual offer on issues of particular interest to the returnee, highlighting existing measures such as education system integration, housing, skills recognition or recruitment procedures in certain professions. Finding such solutions are the central tasks of coordinators; 3) Regular contact – regularly show interest in returnees’ plans.
- **Network of institutional partners:** Counsellors need to build up a good network of institutional partners on the regional and local level: municipal offices, tax offices, employment agencies, and other institutions, such as schools and regional boards of education. The tasks of counsellors should be to engage with these partners to achieve concrete solutions, rather than simply referring returnees to them.
- **Language:** All information should always be provided in two languages, Polish and English, in order to facilitate access by the second generation of Polish emigrants. Working with counsellors who have migration experience will also ensure “hitting the right note” with different audiences. The language used should not be administrative/institutional; communication should rather be established on an equal footing with the target audience, with a friendly tone, understanding and reflecting on what it means to be a migrant.

Enable targeted digital and face-to-face engagement

As a crucial intermediate step, we recommend the coordinating Ministry to **commission a comprehensive study on the Polish diaspora**, including potential returnees (see general recommendations above). Building on this academic research, we further recommend hiring a **professional communications company to provide a detailed market analysis** based on the target groups recommended in this report, allowing for the next steps of targeted digital and face-to-face engagement. In this context it is also important to:

- **Adapt channels to target group habits:** Young Poles rely on Internet resources, in particular websites and social media services (e.g., according to JRC experts, Facebook usage by Polish migrants residing in the UK is higher than 90%). Completely different channels of communication are required in the case of elderly migrants, who search for information about pension systems and, potentially, assistance in returning to their country of origin for retirement. For this target group of migrants, diaspora organizations and diplomatic missions may be more accessible and more efficient than social media. Consequently, counsellors need to extend their outreach to activities beyond social media organizations and refer to more traditional ways of communication. This is reflected in the measures outlined above.

- **Establish an evaluation and monitoring system** defining clear numerical goals and regularly monitor and evaluate the outcomes of activities.
- **Prepare a unique offer** as emigrants are attracted by a concrete offer that the project/ programme is making, including, for example, a job offer, access to housing, funds for starting a business.

Table 11

Return migration measures – information campaigns (summary)⁸

Measure	Information campaigns
Aims	<p>Reaching out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diaspora mapping (e.g. large scale surveys, with reference to innovative survey methodologies using big data) • Categorisation/clustering that would lead to a segmentation of targeted emigrants • Optimal distribution channels (dedicated for particular groups) <p>Information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The distinction between “Product” and “Content” (important: branding as an option) • Information can also be valuable in the era of the Internet (information vs. reliable/credible information) • Role of “Influencers” • Success stories – carefully chosen case studies (important: not to exaggerate with an overoptimistic message) • Unique and concrete offer <p>Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentive or support (recommendation: focus on support) • Multi-channel and multi-target group campaigns rather than a single campaign (i.e. actions dedicated to particular tools/measures) • Key: clear offer needs to be included to make a campaign work
(Expected) effects	<p>Learning about diaspora (statistical characteristics, aspirations, plans)</p> <p>Branding (PL2020?)</p> <p>Developing effective communication channels</p> <p>Awareness, access to information</p> <p>Increase in the scale of returns (but: difficult to monitor and to evaluate)</p> <p>“Effectiveness” of reintegration (but: difficult to monitor and to evaluate)</p>

⁸ The following tables have been constructed in the same way to provide insights into both conceptual (aims, expected effects) and practical aspects (risks and side effects, stakeholders, evaluation and monitoring) of various policy measures.

Risks/side effects and externalities	Involvement of migrant organisations (with very complex motivations) Too general nature of the campaign = Campaign without an offer The propaganda character of the publicized “success stories”
Stakeholders involved	Network of institutional partners should be developed including among others: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy (MFLSP), Ministry of Investment and Economic Development (MIED), Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Polish Senate, Chancellery of the Prime Minister of PL • (Selected) regions • Diaspora organisations (and other relevant NGOs) • Media • Service provider/operator • Embassies
Evaluation and monitoring	Problematic monitoring/evaluation (target and effect indicators to be set) Ad-hoc vs. continuous monitoring mode (when possible)

Source: Authors

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS: TAILORED LABOUR MARKET MEASURES

Brain waste is a common issue in the case of Polish migrants. Working in low-skilled jobs abroad results in a depreciation of the skills acquired in Poland and is often negatively assessed by Polish employers. In-depth interviews with returnees show that during recruitment procedures in Poland, potential employers tend to ignore work experience gained abroad, or even assess it as a break in professional activity (Bieńkowska et al. 2012, 2010; Szymańska et al. 2012). This applies mostly to middle- and low-qualified migrants.

Develop tailored support by establishing professional mentoring, entrepreneurial counselling, training, and re-skilling, preferably to be implemented by employment services

Support needs to be adapted to serve a diverse set of migration experiences and qualifications. To address local labour market mismatches, tailored reintegration services should be established according to the local labour market needs and in close collaboration with local employment services, regional authorities and municipalities, and possibly, non-governmental organizations specializing in professional counselling.

The majority of persons considering or planning to return do it for family reasons. This means **that all supportive activities need to target not only return migrants themselves but also their family members (i.e., spouses not necessarily of Polish origin, and children, possibly second generation).**

Implement special measures for highly skilled returnees (students and graduates)

Similarly to students and graduates in other countries analysed in the report, these returnees constitute an important target group. Internships in local companies would offer an opportunity to learn in the work environment and about business activities in Poland. Such initiatives not only offer the possibility to start one's career path in Poland but also promote the country and selected sector abroad among a broader group of Polish students and graduates. A point of reference here would be the "Talent for Lithuania" initiative implemented by Global Lithuanian Leaders (GLL), which aims to facilitate the hiring of Lithuanian young professionals and university graduates abroad at Lithuanian companies in the manufacturing and service sectors. In the experience of the organisation, the target group of young professionals and university graduates are attracted by a concrete job offer. Thus far, the programme has managed to achieve a high retention rate – only 20% have gone back abroad. The Go4Poland programme is an example of such activities in Poland that could be initiated by other stakeholders as well.

Improve and facilitate job matching

Better facilitation of job matching with a special focus on internet-based tools should be considered. An example of this can be found in the Global Professional Mobility Platform in Portugal, which supports the recruitment of highly qualified Portuguese residing abroad, with the objective of promoting and disseminating work opportunities in Portugal and abroad in engineering and nursing. It also targets national and international companies that wish to recruit these types of professionals, and national companies that intend to internationalize.

Address specific needs of the self-employed through counselling and mentoring

Any policies targeting return migrants should consider the relatively specific position of the self-employed in Poland, who may be engaged in their business out of choice, but also – quite commonly – out of necessity. Professional counselling and mentoring activities should identify the potential for creating one's own business, particularly as return migrants may have an advantage in the form of capital accumulated abroad. Still, the main aim should be to open avenues for participation in the open labour market upon return. A point of reference here would be the Irish Back for Business programme based on individual counselling.

The potential programme, implemented by a private company, should include: 1) identifying potential entrepreneurs, 2) providing them with support from volunteer mentors, i.e., lead local entrepreneurs. The latter share their experience and up-to-date local knowledge on establishing and expanding businesses, and address gaps in returnees' personal and professional network bases, which in turn are crucial for running a local business. Returnees participate in workshops and individual mentoring concerning the possibilities of professional co-networking, private co-funding sources for start-ups, market needs and growing their own company.

Table 12

Return migration measures – labour market integration (summary)

Measure	Labour market integration
Aims	<p>Risk reduction (avoidance) of economic and social exclusion (through mentoring, sponsoring schemes, buddy programmes)</p> <p>Lower risk (risk avoidance) of re-migration</p> <p>Return of the “prepared”: counselling before return, vocational training</p> <p>Attracting talent programmes (targeting highly skilled migrants)</p> <p>More efficient use of human capital (hard and soft skills)</p> <p>A general increase in human capital (pre- and post-return vocational training)</p> <p>Filling gaps in the Polish labour market</p> <p>Reducing the scale of structural mismatches (on the Polish labour market)</p>
(Expected) effects	<p>Higher labour force participation and employment rates</p> <p>Competence-based employment</p> <p>More efficient use of unique skills (language, business culture)</p> <p>Reducing the number of vacancies in Poland</p> <p>Smaller scale of re-migration</p> <p>Increasing the scale of private/public cooperation</p>
Risks/side effects and externalities	<p>Return migrants and other participants of the Polish labour market (general rule: fair treatment) à general vs. dedicated support</p> <p>Mechanisms for competence checks (problematic: to what extent do they exist? to what extent do they work?)</p> <p>(High) costs of individual approaches</p> <p>Sustainability of the employee-employer relationship (with the subsidy model)</p> <p>Welfare-seeking activities, e.g. risk of creating a group of “professional mentors/mentees”</p> <p>An increase in general (internal) mobility can bring potential risks for e.g. remote areas (further depopulation)</p>
Stakeholders involved	<p>Business</p> <p>MFLSP, MIED</p> <p>Institutions that support the regional and local labour market</p> <p>Employers’ associations, trade unions</p> <p>Vocational training institutions</p> <p>Mentors (other return migrants?)</p> <p>NGOs</p>
Evaluation and monitoring	<p>Assessment of both short- and long-term effects (problematic: dedicated and costly surveys needed)</p> <p>Point of reference: other (non-mobile) Poles or foreigners (country of previous residence)</p> <p>Ad-hoc vs. continuous monitoring mode (when possible)</p> <p>Challenging: assessment of outcomes of complex social processes (e.g. labour market participation)</p>

Source: Authors

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS: LANGUAGE LEARNING AND EDUCATION

Focus on work-related language training

Language learning in the context of return is relevant especially for spouses who have limited to no language capacity. They can be considered as having similar needs with regard to language learning to other immigrants. Two relevant international examples are special language courses for parents that are set up at children's schools/kindergartens; and vocational language courses. **Such courses teach language skills tailored to sectors, occupational areas, and qualifications;** they may also be integrated into the workplace. It may be relevant for family members of returnees, but in certain cases, also for returnees themselves, e.g. if they emigrated at a young age (interrupted biography of education) and are not sufficiently proficient in the work-related language required after returning. **Language and work-related language training could easily be organized in cooperation with public employment services, representatives of the Zielona Linia service and non-governmental organizations. Face-to-face training and e-learning methods could both be established here.**

Provide support beyond language in schools

Extending the support to children of returning families at school can be considered a crucial reintegration policy area, especially since young families are a target group that is active in the labour market. The **recommendations in the area of reintegration at school are to improve the measures already applied by:**

- Establishing a system of recognition of knowledge and skills of children starting their education in Poland;
- Evaluating the adaptation and the progress achieved by children during the first years after return;
- Training teachers (especially in large cities) to deal with children coming from different cultural settings (interpersonal skills of teachers) who know Polish as a second language (pedagogical skills);
- Strengthening the support provided by Psychological-Pedagogical Centres (*Poradnie Psychologiczno-Pedagogiczne*).

These measures need to be **coordinated** at the regional level, most preferably (as in Latvia and Estonia) by newly established **counsellors (see recommendation 2) having individual contact with families that come back from abroad**. Local counsellors can then also answer any concerns that parents may have about schooling after return, connect parents with prospective schools and help them find the best matching school during the return process.

Finally, the existing system of support should be properly **evaluated** through regular (i.e. every three months) meetings between pedagogues from Psychological-Pedagogical Centres (*Poradnie Psychologiczno-Pedagogiczne*) on the one hand, and children, their parents, teachers and school directors, on the other. **The PPCs should have a strong, coordinating role in facilitating the integration of children:** they should be responsible for diagnosing children’s skills and capacities upon return (interpersonal communicative skills *versus* cognitive academic language proficiency), for developing an integration plan (additional lessons), and for evaluating progress and possible problems that arise.

Strengthen cooperation with Polish schools abroad

Polish policy towards returnees should also target potential returnees still living abroad. Considerable investments in the Polish language and, more generally, education following the Polish curriculum may be aimed at both maintaining cultural ties and creating a potential pool of returnees for the future. Despite the long tradition of Polish schooling abroad, some additional measures should be considered. It is recommended to strengthen cooperation with Polish schools established by the diaspora’s associations of parents. These schools require regular financial support to ensure the continuity and stabilization of their teaching activities. Including these schools into ORPEG’s scope of outreach will be beneficial for schools, teachers, pupils and ORPEG as an important institution maintaining a link with the diaspora. Finally, children educated according to uniform educational materials (set by ORPEG) and by teachers trained accordingly by ORPEG, will have less difficulties returning to Poland at a later time and joining a “regular” school.

Table 13

Return migration measures – language and educational system (summary)

Measure	Integration: language and educational system
Aims	<p>Elimination of language deficits as a potential barrier to access, e.g., to the education system, labour market etc.; key target groups: children of return migrants, Polish children abroad (key: to refer to a large number of good practices)</p> <p>For returning adults: practical language skills and an increase in the skills required to take up secondary/tertiary education</p> <p>Smooth integration of children into the educational system</p> <p>Reducing the risk of exclusion (in peer groups)</p> <p>Integration/harmonisation of (Polish) education systems abroad (weekend schools, language and culture learning) and in Poland</p> <p>Preparation for functioning in Poland as an element of a broadly understood policy of promoting the Polish language and culture abroad</p>

(Expected) effects	<p>A smaller scale of re-migration resulting from adaptation problems of children (mainly) at the level of the educational system</p> <p>Less risk of social/educational exclusion</p> <p>Effective education abroad as a means towards more smooth integration upon return</p> <p>Reducing the gap between basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) (return migrants and their children, 2nd generation)</p>
Risks/side effects and externalities	<p>The stigmatisation of children of return migrants</p> <p>Infrastructure deficits as a key challenge</p> <p>Shortage of financial resources that need to be dedicated to return migrants and/or immigrants (to what extent is it possible to link activities targeting both groups, e.g., through the development of the teaching of Polish as a foreign language?)</p> <p>Limited transferability of foreign experiences (e.g. language training)</p> <p>Careful choice of support delivery model (subsidy or services)</p>
Stakeholders involved	<p>Ministry of Education (ME)</p> <p>Polish Senate</p> <p>Regional and local administration (networking and coordination strongly recommended)</p> <p>NGOs</p> <p>Business oriented organisations (education as a business)</p> <p>Zielona Linia</p>
Evaluation and monitoring	<p>Monitoring of social/educational exclusion of returning children</p> <p>Assessment of atypical and dysfunctional phenomena at the level of the educational system (with reference to already existing evaluation tools)</p> <p>Assessment of language competences (with reference to already existing evaluation tools)</p> <p>Evaluation of curricula abroad (innovative approaches strongly recommended)</p>

Source: Authors

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS: INFORMATION ON HOUSING

Finding appropriate housing is a key component of the return process. Because of their stay abroad, returnees face challenges such as a lack of information on current prices on the private market, the inability to visit a potential apartment in advance, or lack of knowledge on eligibility for social housing. This is especially an issue for returnees who come back to a different region than they originally emigrated from, where they lack social networks for information and support. Housing is also more likely to be a major issue for returnees from a lower socio-economic background than for highly-skilled individuals.

Use the newly established network of outreach and regional counsellors to individually inform returnees about housing and mainstream policies relevant for them, and to support them in completing the relevant paperwork, if needed.

In general, it is important to note that the housing situation is one of the key challenges for non-migrants in Poland. Therefore, **actions aimed at returnees should be an element of mainstream policy** (with necessary information about activities as indicated above). Return migration can, however, substantially shape the demographic situation of particular regions and thus housing policy dedicated to returnees could easily be incorporated into local and regional development plans. **Therefore, this aspect should be included in strategic documents and actions, including, among others, the Housing+ programme.**

Table 14
Return migration measures – housing (summary)

Measure	Housing
Aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reliable information on the market situation (including both market and non-market options) Support for internal mobility in Poland (upon return) Increasing structural adjustment in Poland (with housing policy as a tool) Support for housing investments of migrants Increasing life satisfaction/career opportunities Integrate return migration into spatial planning and housing management
(Expected) effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesser scale of housing-related re-migration Reducing the scale of structural mismatch in Poland Improvement in the stock of social and emergency housing Reduction of vacancy rates (empty housing) Improvement of the efficiency of the flat/apartment rental market Improving the effectiveness of government-operated housing programmes

Risks/side effects and externalities	<p>Support for returnees may affect the general situation on the housing market (substantial shortages) - may be perceived as contravening the principle of fair treatment of the whole population</p> <p>Supporting those who would manage anyway (in the case of using subsidy solutions, e.g. subsidizing rent, credit, etc.)</p> <p>Interference in risk assessment mechanisms developed by the banking system (in the case of credit-related support measures)</p>
Stakeholders involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIED • Other governmental agencies (responsible for various housing-related programmes) • Regional and local administration • Employers (support for employees) • Business <p>IMPORTANT: needs to be coordinated with regional and local development plans and strategies</p>
Evaluation and monitoring	<p>The scale of re-migration caused by housing deficits</p> <p>Problematic assessment of the efficiency of the residential market in general</p> <p>Credit action</p> <p>The scale of availability and use of communal flats</p> <p>Development of the market of apartments for rent</p>

Source: Authors

Table 15

Recommendations targeting specific target groups

Target group	Migrants' needs and motives	Recommended policy instruments
<p>Young migrants, most preferably professionals and Polish graduates of foreign universities (post-2004 migrants living in EU)</p>	<p>Primary motive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search for good work opportunities: high wages, career development. <p>Needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Favourable conditions on the labour market (for employees) and in the economy (for entrepreneurs), • Simple and stable tax regulations, simple and stable regulations for investment and entrepreneurship, • Professional counselling and mentoring. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining an economic policy that favours knowledge-based development, technological progress, setting up start-ups etc., • Maintaining stable conditions of economic development (tax policy, investment conditions, entrepreneurship, etc.), • Promotion of Poland abroad (i.e. as a place for career, for investment), maintaining and developing links with the Polish diaspora, • Job fairs organized in large cities abroad, e.g. Brussels, Dublin, Frankfurt, London, and Paris (to be backed most preferably by public employment services, business leaders and large municipalities) (important: all these activities need to include a clear and concrete offer for would-be returnees), • Maintaining information campaigns (run by Zielona Linia, powroty.gov.pl and related services) on specific topics: tax regulations, diploma recognition, employment opportunities, • Establishing a network of counsellors who connect individually to emigrants via social media accounts, in order to promote Poland as a destination, inform about economic opportunities, connect those who eventually decide to return with regional counsellors (a similar service is already provided, but not at the individual level, by Zielona Linia and powroty.gov.pl), • Establishing a network of regional counsellors who inform those who have returned about work opportunities, available professional training and counselling (to be backed most preferably by local public employment services and voivodship authorities, i.e. municipal offices or Marshal's offices), • Providing professional counselling and training to relatively homogenous (with regard to qualifications) groups of migrants and their foreign spouses (to be backed most preferably by public employment services and NGOs), • Providing professional counselling and training to migrants wishing to establish their own business (to be backed most preferably by public employment services and NGOs), • Providing mentoring opportunities (in particular to graduates) in dynamic and renowned enterprises (to be backed most preferably by public employment services and business leaders).

<p>Young families with minor children (post-2004 migrants living in EU)</p>	<p>Primary motives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search for stable work opportunities, • Easy access to public services (schools, welfare benefits), • Public services of relatively good quality (education system, health system). <p>Needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Favourable conditions on the labour market, • Simple and stable regulations concerning taxes, welfare benefits, diploma recognition for children, • Professional counselling and mentoring. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining stable economic conditions (labour market) and regulations (tax policy), • Promotion of Poland abroad (i.e. as a place for career, for family life), maintaining and developing links with the Polish diaspora, • Maintaining and strengthening the link to and support (financial, establishing common education programmes, training for teachers) for Polish schools abroad, including schools managed by associations (to be backed by ORPEG), • Job fairs organized in large cities abroad, e.g. Brussels, Dublin, Frankfurt, London, Paris, which would include broad information on public services being offered/available, • Maintaining information campaigns (powroty.gov.pl and related services) on specific topics: tax regulations, welfare benefits, diploma recognition, employment opportunities, access to schools and integration opportunities for children and foreign spouses, • Establishing a network of counsellors who connect individually to emigrants via social media accounts, in order to promote Poland as a destination, inform about economic opportunities, and connect those who eventually decide to return with regional counsellors, • Establishing a network of regional counsellors who inform those who have returned about work opportunities, available professional training and counselling, possibilities of integration services for children (at schools) and foreign spouses (to be backed most preferably by local public employment services and voivodship authorities), • Providing professional counselling and training to relatively homogenous (with regard to qualifications) groups of migrants and their foreign spouses, • Providing language lessons for foreign spouses, most preferably in large cities and in cooperation with municipalities, • Strengthening the support provided by Psychological-Pedagogical Centres to migrants' children at Polish schools, strengthening the role of Psychological-Pedagogical Centres in diagnosing children's skills and capacities, designing children's integration plan, evaluating the progress they make (let the PPCs be the institution coordinating children, families, teachers, and school directors), • Training teachers to work with children who started their education abroad (to be backed by regional teacher training centres, <i>lokalne Centra/Ośrodki Doskonalenia Nauczycieli</i>), • Providing information on conditions of access to social housing (i.e. eligibility criteria), private real estate offers in a given locality (to be assured by regional counsellors).
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<p>Elderly migrants coming back to retire</p> <p>(Pre-2004 migrants from all over the world, in particular, Europe and Anglo-Saxon countries)</p>	<p>Primary motives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentimental, • Easy access to public services (i.e. healthcare), • Public services of relatively good quality. <p>Needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on tax regulations, pension systems, public housing and other forms of public support, • The existing offer of public services (e.g. elderly care). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of Poland abroad and information campaigns on retirement conditions (linking pensions from different pension systems, tax conditions, healthcare services in Poland, etc.), maintaining and developing links with Polish diaspora, in particular through direct meetings and events (pre-electronic generation), • Establishing a network of regional counsellors who inform those who have returned about pension regulations, welfare benefits, tax conditions, public housing, • Providing information on conditions of access to social housing (i.e. eligibility criteria), private real estate offer in a given locality (to be assured by regional counsellors), • Developing public services for elderly people (as a part of mainstream policy)
<p>Migrants of working age with a precarious situation on the labour market</p> <p>(mostly post-2004 migrants living in EU)</p>	<p>Primary motives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure in integration on foreign labour markets, • Difficult living conditions abroad. <p>Needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional training, counselling, possibly re-skilling and acquiring new competencies, • Social support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of Poland abroad (i.e. as a place for work and family life), maintaining and developing links with Polish diaspora, • Maintaining information campaigns (run by Zielona Linia, powroty.gov.pl and related services) on specific topics: tax regulations, diploma recognition, employment opportunities, • Establishing a network of counsellors who connect individually to emigrants via social media accounts, in order to promote Poland as a destination, inform about economic opportunities, connect those who eventually decide to return with regional counsellors, • Establishing a network of regional counsellors who inform those who have returned about work opportunities, available professional training and counselling (to be backed most preferably by local public employment services and voivodship authorities, i.e. municipal offices or Marshal's offices), • Providing professional counselling and training to assure re-skilling and acquiring new competencies (to be backed most preferably by public employment services and NGOs), • Providing in-detail information on the welfare benefits system and conditions of access to social housing (i.e. eligibility criteria).

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