

## The first European Dialogue on Skills and Migration (27-28 January 2016)

### Key Points\*

The European Dialogue on Skills and Migration has confirmed that it is crucial to ensure that the skills and human capital of migrants are maximised so that migration becomes an opportunity for both the migrant and the hosting society. The EU has a role to play in promoting and supporting innovative and successful practices such as early integration measures, labour market support, skills assessment and validation.

The **key issues** that have emerged from the discussions are the following:

1. The **attractiveness** of the EU towards highly skilled migrants should be improved, in particular for highly skilled workers in sectors where labour shortages are already visible, such as the ICT sector. The fragmentation in admission policies in Europe should be overcome by creating a fast and predictable admission scheme.
2. To attract talents, creating favourable business environments around certain key economic sectors would also be important. Pre-screening systems to create a "**pool of talents**" and facilitate job-matching could also be considered at EU level to help addressing labour shortages, drawing inspiration from approaches and practices successfully developed by other countries in the area of labour migration.
3. To ensure effective **integration** of third country nationals, including refugees, **validation of skills and recognition of qualifications** is key. Skills and qualifications of migrants and refugees recognised by one MS should be more easily recognised by all MS with EU support (e.g. exchange of information, online EU-wide tool), without necessarily harmonising legislation on the recognition of qualifications. Employers, chambers of commerce and public employment services have an important role to play regarding the assessment, validation and recognition of qualifications, including through partnerships with third countries' equivalent organisations.
4. In the field of integration, the very active role played by the host society in the integration of migrants and refugees in certain third-countries, including **private sponsorship programmes** (involving NGOs, local authorities, diaspora communities) could also be a model for the EU.
5. **Migrant entrepreneurs'** needs must be met by existing and mainstream entrepreneurship structures opened to diversity management. Specific support intervention is required only for very limited and specific issues such as legal assistance for business creation, access to finance and growth management. Designing a **specific residence permit** at EU level could be an important tool to overcome the entry obstacle, but would not be sufficient in itself (the 'overall package' matters).

6. In the **ICT sector, attracting highly-qualified** workers is vital for the **competitiveness of European companies**. In addition to an easier admission scheme – combined with a favourable business environment - highly qualified workers with ICT skills should be offered an "integration package", taking into account their needs and those of their families.
7. In the **health sector**, measures should be in place to **avoid 'brain waste' or undercut of local working conditions** and ensure respect of qualification requirements. These measures could include facilitation of recognition of (non-EU) qualifications, compensation measures for foreign-trained workers and other specific programmes, notably to ensure language proficiency. Investing in assessing and validating the skills of third-country migrants already residing in the EU is essential in this sector. **'Brain drain'** is a also real challenge in this area; a 'fair deal' with migrants' origin countries is needed, building on existing successful code of conducts on ethical recruitment and bilateral agreements that define working conditions and sharing of costs of recruitment and training between the various actors.

*\* The views and opinions expressed during the European Dialogue on Skills and Migration as summarised in this document do not represent the official opinion nor necessarily reflect the views of the European Commission on the issues debated.*