



International
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▶ Labour market reintegration of return migrant workers and former refugees in origin countries

Concepts and definitions

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► Foreword

The return of migrant workers is a complex process and often requires specific measures to address the challenges of labour market reintegration. The situation can be even more difficult when migrants are returning in large numbers due to extraordinary events, such as economic, political, or public health crises. Returnees' decision to go back to their origin country can also be driven by family, job, and health-related issues, among others. Returnees may also include former refugees, whose return may be linked to the end of the conflict in the country of origin, to a peace process or to reconstruction efforts – these individuals often require additional reintegration assistance. Reintegration might also be more complex in the case of forced return, as the returnee may be unwilling or unprepared for the return. These examples highlight the need for increased policy attention to the reintegration measures applied in the labour market of countries of origin.

This paper is part of the ongoing work of the International Labour Organization (ILO) on labour market and socio-economic reintegration. The aim of that work is to address the structural and circumstantial difficulties often inherent in labour migration and displacement experiences. This paper focuses primarily on the labour market policy aspects of reintegration, making a distinction, when necessary, between the return migrants and former refugees. Other reintegration measures and services, covering economic, social, and psychological factors, are also discussed on a more limited basis.

Labour market reintegration can be challenging if there are limited employment opportunities in the country of origin, and if the economic and social context is unfavourable. These aspects have already been incorporated in the ILO's *Guidelines on Labour Market Reintegration upon Return* (2023b). To complete those Guidelines, this paper contains a more detailed review of existing concepts and definitions covering the policy and process of the labour market reintegration of migrant workers and former refugees.

Understanding the various concepts and policy approaches that influence the reintegration process of different groups into the labour market – highly, medium- and low-skilled return migrant workers, former refugees and voluntary or forced returnees – can help to improve the design of labour market reintegration policies and measures. The aim of this report is to contribute to fostering a common understanding of the complexities and policy needs that may arise, and to facilitate the implementation of reintegration measures, while also ensuring that reintegration policies provide for the equal treatment of returnees and workers, who have not migrated. The document provides indications on the different target groups to be covered, along with their specific needs and vulnerabilities. It also introduces the issue of how to measure labour market reintegration, both in statistical and policy terms. The targeted audience includes government officials, social partners, humanitarian and development practitioners and other actors.

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► List of acronyms

AIMS	Approach to Inclusive Market Systems
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ICMPD	International Centre for Migration Policy Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
ISCO	International Standard Classification of Occupations
ITC/ILO	International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization
KNOMAD	Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development
MAFE	Migration between Africa and Europe
NCVER	National Centre for Vocational Education Research
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OFII	<i>Office Français de l'Immigration et de l'Intégration</i> (French Office for Immigration and Integration)
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNEVOC	United Nations Vocational Education
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNNM	United Nations Network on Migration

► Introduction

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and geopolitical and economic crises have had a heavy impact on the return of migrant workers and made reintegration policies a priority on the agendas of many countries of origin. COVID-19 affected migrant workers in the ASEAN region, for example: around 310,000 migrant workers returned from Thailand to Myanmar, Cambodia, and the Lao People's Democratic Republic as a result of the pandemic (Jones, Mudaliar and Piper 2021). And in Uzbekistan, a report from UNDP (2022) stated that the COVID-19 pandemic forced about half a million migrant workers to return, with unemployment there rising from 9.1 per cent in 2019 to 13.2 per cent in 2020 as a result.

The labour market reintegration of return migrant workers touches upon several cross-cutting policy issues, especially in low- and middle-income countries of origin. It is therefore important to ensure that efforts to support their reintegration are coordinated and that the various stakeholders mandated to administer specific components of the assistance are involved in the management process. However, different development partners may use different terms when it comes to labour market reintegration, which makes mapping existing concepts and definitions of key importance, as it will facilitate the coordination of stakeholders and in forging a common understanding of these terms. The lack of clarity on related concepts, definitions and methodological approaches can also present challenges for government and non-governmental institutions and social partners in terms of the institutional, structural, and coordinating aspects of reintegration. This, in turn, can have an impact on policy design, implementation and monitoring.

The present paper helps to clarify these aspects to facilitate the coordination of effective support for return migrant workers. It also covers former refugees returning to their origin countries, since they, too, face challenges when it comes to labour market reintegration.

The document includes an in-depth analysis of the methods and tools available for measuring the reintegration of returnees into the labour market. It also provides an assessment of the vulnerabilities of various groups of return migrant workers and former refugees (e.g. gender and other factors contributing to discrimination/stigmatization). The various data sources available, including household surveys, censuses, and administrative sources, are also analysed.

The implementation of reintegration policies, through services and other measures, is analysed based on the various labour market, economic, social, and psychosocial aspects of reintegration. These are discussed along with the main outcomes of these services and other measures and the quantitative and qualitative indicators that can be used to ensure their effective monitoring and evaluation.

This paper consists of four chapters. Chapter 1 gives an overview of the main integration theories and definitions. It also covers aspects of labour market reintegration policies and measures from a structural, institutional, community and individual perspective. Chapter 2 describes the target groups for labour market reintegration. Chapter 3 analyses how labour market reintegration can be measured, while chapter 4 assesses policy measures for return and reintegration.

1. Literature review: Reintegration – definitions, levels of analysis and policy areas

While integration and reintegration may seem similar, they can be used to express different situations, in different contexts. When referring to the national labour market, the integration process can be described as the mechanisms for finding employment by citizens, with no specific link to migration. The same term may also be used for describing the process, through which migrant workers, enter the labour market and society of the destination countries. Instead, reintegration is specifically focusing on the reinsertion of returnees in the social, labour, and economic context of their country of origin.

1.1. Integration

Integration is a general sociological concept. In this sense, it is the process that individuals follow to become part of society. Social integration concerns the inclusion of individuals in an established legal system. The concepts of system integration and social integration were developed in 1964 by David Lockwood (see Archer 1996). Heckmann (2006) defines integration as a process whereby a person adapts to the living conditions of the host community and becomes a member of it.

In social science, various terms have been used to describe integration processes: inclusion, adaptation, acculturation, placement, cohesion and so on. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), integration is a final result, “a state, usually denoted as ‘successful’ but it can be otherwise and, like all social process, it is potentially reversible” (Böhning and Zegers de Beijl 1995, 2). Social inclusion refers to migrants’ full economic, social, cultural, and political participation in host communities (IOM 2017), while social cohesion can be defined as the “willingness of members of a society to cooperate with each other in order to survive and prosper” (Stanley 2003, 5). Refugee inclusion into national systems, financial services and labour market encompasses a wide array of areas, such as ensuring access to public services, and the labour market, including self-employment and entrepreneurship. Pending the achievement of durable solutions (voluntary repatriation to country of origin, local integration in the country of first asylum or resettlement in a third country), this multifaceted approach is essential to promote self-sufficiency and mitigate protection risks that can result if refugees are unable to meet their basic needs (UNHCR 2023).

Some groups in the labour market present multiple layers of vulnerabilities that, in turn, may have an impact on the process of integration, and on labour market integration in particular. Such groups may need additional policy attention; migrant workers and refugees are often included in these groups. In the European Union, for instance, integration is defined as a dynamic two-way process of mutual accommodation by migrants and residents of European Union Member States (European Commission 2005). The main integration factors are considered to be the promotion of fundamental rights, non-discrimination, and equal opportunities (Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, Article 79(4)). Labour market integration is deemed to be achieved when migrants have the same level of labour market participation as nationals with the same level of skills (OECD et al. 2016).

In the EU context, it is worth mentioning the exceptional measures that allow for an immediate and temporary protection in the event of a mass influx of displaced persons from non-EU countries, who are unable to return to their country of origin. The 2001 Temporary Protection Directive provides a tool for the EU to address such situations (see box 1). The Temporary Protection Directive was adopted following the conflicts in former Yugoslavia, and has recently been used to offer quick assistance to people fleeing the war in Ukraine.

► **Box 1. Rights for beneficiaries of temporary protection**

The 2001 Temporary Protection Directive includes the following rights:

- A residence permit for the entire duration of the protection (from one year to three years).
- Guarantees for access to the asylum procedure.
- Access to employment, subject to rules applicable to the profession and to national labour market policies and general conditions of employment.
- Access to suitable accommodation or housing.
- Access to social welfare and to medical care.
- Access to education for persons under 18 years to the state education system.
- Possibilities for families to reunite in certain circumstances.
- Access to banking services.
- Move to another EU country, before the issuance of a residence permit.
- Move freely in EU countries (other than the Member State of residence) for 90 days within a 180-day period after a residence permit in the host EU country is issued.

Source: Council Directive 2001/55/EC of 20 July 2001

1.2. Reintegration

The return of migrant workers and former refugees can trigger a process of reintegration in the country of origin that can raise different issues from those experienced in a typical situation of integration. Depending on the reason for return, this process can require specific policy measures to ensure the reintegration of workers and former refugees, not only into the labour market but also into the social, cultural, economic, and political life of their home countries (Cassarino 2014). Reintegration is never an automatic process, but instead calls for a customized policy approach to address individual needs. The *Handbook for Repatriation and Reintegration Activities* of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) states that “the ‘end state’ of reintegration is the universal enjoyment of full political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights” (UNHCR 2004, 5). According to the ILO, reintegration is a multidimensional concept, and effective reintegration is the “successful reintegration of returning workers into their families, communities, the economy, and society” (Wickramasekara 2019, 4).

Whatever the reason for return, returnees should expect to be supported with appropriate measures to facilitate their reintegration into the labour market. Such measures include the recognition of skills acquired abroad, assistance with access to social services (such as housing, education, legal services, healthcare, food and water) and psychosocial support, as appropriate. When referring to reintegration, the literature uses different specifications that are not always synonymous, such as “successful”, “effective” and “sustainable”. When reintegration is “sustainable”, for instance, the decision to re-migrate becomes a free choice for the returnees and not a necessity (African Union 2018).

The United Nations Network on Migration (UNNM) defines sustainable reintegration as:

A process which enables individuals to secure and sustain the political, economic, social and psychosocial conditions needed to maintain life, livelihood and dignity in the country and community they return or are return to, in full respect of their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. This should include targeted measures that enable returning migrants to have access to justice, social protection, financial services, health-care, education, family life, an adequate standard of living, decent work, and protection against discrimination, stigma, arbitrary detention and all forms

of violence, and that allows returnees to consider that they are in an environment of personal safety, economic empowerment, inclusion and social cohesion upon return (UNNM 2021).

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) states that “reintegration can be considered sustainable 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” (IOM 2023, 41). Other authors define return as sustainable when “[t]he individual has reintegrated into the economic, social and cultural processes of the country of origin and feels that they are in an environment of safety and security upon return” (Koser and Kuschminder 2015, 8).

It should be noted that sometimes sustainability may refer to return and not specifically to reintegration, but these concepts are nonetheless usually linked. The focus is often put on possible re-migration of the returning migrants. Black and Gent (2004) identified three indicators to measure the sustainability of return: “lack of desire to re-migrate” (as an indicator of physical sustainability); employment and income levels (to measure socio-economic sustainability); and feeling of security (as an indicator of political sustainability).

UNHCR (2008) recognizes that return and reintegration is a dynamic process, involving individuals, households and communities. For refugees, successful voluntary repatriation requires a stable political situation in the country of origin. Reintegration can present obstacles for those returnees, who go back to areas affected by poverty and instability and are often not covered by national recovery and development plans. Peacebuilding is essential in post-conflict situations to foster community cohesion and contribute to the prevention of new or secondary movements.

From the individual perspective, reintegration into society, including the labour market, will depend on many factors such as: (i) the type of migration experience, i.e. whether it was successful; (ii) the length of the migration, with a longer duration implying that the economic and social environments have changed deeply, meaning that the returnees might face new and unexpected situations; and (iii) the accessibility of appropriate information on reintegration services upon return.

For the countries of origin, reintegration challenges are linked to the lack of institutional capacity, as well as to the availability of human and financial resources. This is the situation in many countries with large return migrant or former refugee populations that may experience difficulties in implementing effective reintegration policy measures. In some cases, reintegration policies give priority to supporting the investment of returnees’ savings and the reinsertion of highly skilled returnees to foster brain gain (ITC/ILO 2019). While this approach could be beneficial in terms of the country’s economic development, the main reintegration challenges relate to those returnees who have experienced abuse and exploitation or who could be subjected to stigmatization and discrimination upon their return. Not addressing these reintegration aspects with adequate policies and measures may result in tensions within host communities.

At the institutional level, ensuring the sustainability of reintegration policy measures requires certain factors to be duly taken on board. These include (OECD 2020):

- adequate information on return and reintegration opportunities;
- improved consensus among institutions on the positive aspects of return and reintegration;
- initiatives addressing the stigmatization and negative perception of returnees;
- strengthened psychosocial support in the reintegration process;
- improved coordination of reintegration services and referral to those services;
- adoption of reintegration measures, targeting both return migrant workers and local residents;
- monitoring and evaluation of reintegration programmes covering all groups of returnees.

Arowolo (2000) underlines that reintegration may give the false impression that nothing has changed in the countries of origin during the migration experience abroad, while in fact the labour market and social environment may have evolved considerably. In addition, in many origin countries where labour markets operate on an informal basis, returnees might face additional challenges due to missing or lost networks.

Building on the returnees' preparedness theory developed by Cassarino (2004), Kuschminder (2017) describes the four different reintegration strategies that return migrants adopt, depending on the length of the migration process and the human and social capital they possess. The first type of strategy is used by returnees who have been abroad for more than five years, who are well prepared for their return and possess savings. These returnees have maintained their cultural ties with the country of origin, even if they have adapted to the culture of their destination. Usually, they have a broad social network that allows them to access employment and other relevant integration measures upon return. The second strategy is defined as an "enclave" strategy: return migrants adopting this strategy share characteristics with those who adopted the first strategy, but they preserve the culture of their origin country and do not adapt to the destination culture. The third strategy is the "traditionalist" strategy, where the returnees have been abroad for between three and five years, have a medium level of preparedness for return, and have fewer social contacts than those who adopted the previous two strategies. The last reintegration strategy is the "vulnerable" category: migrants who have been abroad for less than two years, have a low level of preparedness for return, and are often low-skilled and with limited social contacts.

1.2.1. Labour market reintegration

The following scenarios may take place upon return: (i) employment; (ii) unemployment; (iii) self-employment; (iv) retirement; (v) re-migration; or (vi) inactivity/dropping out of the labour force. Employment, unemployment and self-employment make up the process of labour market reintegration. For each of these scenarios, workers and former refugees can expect to receive different services and support. These are described below.

Job search services

- Provision of information on how to go about registering to establish returnees' eligibility for reintegration support.
- Profiling of the returnees to identify their skills and potential skills gaps.
- Affordable assessment services to support the validation of prior learning and recognition of qualifications earned abroad.
- Up-skilling/re-skilling programme leading to qualifications, if appropriate.
- Employment counselling.
- Skills and job matching.

In this respect, the literature underlines that there is a need to systematically assess the efficacy of vocational education and training for return migrant workers' reintegration and their abilities to remain in employment over the long term (Strachan 2019).

Services for self-employment

- Advice on self-employment options
- Entrepreneurship training
- Business advice
- Financial literacy
- Access to financing and credit
- Legal assistance for business registration, access to financial services and products

Social protection benefits

All nine branches of social security are relevant for return migrant workers and former refugees, namely: medical care, sickness, unemployment, old age, employment injury, family, maternity, invalidity and survivors' benefits (ILO 2021b).

In addition, returnees may need:

- support from social services in addressing legal, administrative and practical obstacles they may face in accessing social security benefits;
- support from social security institutions in recognizing working periods abroad, including the portability of a pension earned during migration (if applicable).

With respect to social security, eligibility criteria may include minimum residency duration irrespective of nationality. Return migrants in many countries need to fulfil these minimum requirements before they can access certain social security benefits. In general, if they are part of such a scheme, they should be entitled to both non-contributory and contributory benefits.

1.2.2. Re-migration

Success or failure of the reintegration process can have an impact on the eventual decision of the returnee to re-migrate. In case of re-migration, migrant workers are entitled to the same services foreseen by the origin country as for regular migration, such as: (i) labour market information and cultural orientation; (ii) language training; and (iii) occupation-specific pre-departure training. According to Cassarino (2008), the desire to re-migrate is stronger among those migrants who were compelled to return than among those who returned on their own initiative.

1.2.3. Economic reintegration

It should be noted that in the literature, labour market and economic reintegration are sometimes used interchangeably. Labour market reintegration can be used more broadly to refer to measures and incentives to promote economic contribution to the origin country's development, such as investments in various types of assets. For instance, lack of access to credit is a strong bottleneck for entrepreneurship. Labour migration can make it possible to accumulate savings, which they could invest in starting up a business once back home. In a context of high unemployment in many origin countries, small- and medium-size enterprises can be an important source of job creation and poverty reduction, making entrepreneurship an important source of growth (Wahba and Zenou 2012; Wahba 2021). In addition, where necessary, legal services have to be provided for housing, land and property management, including litigation settlement (land and property disputes).

An interesting experience of job creation by promoting economic development is offered by the Enterprises Development Fund (EDF) of IOM (see box 2).

► **Box 2. Enterprise Development Fund**

The Enterprise Development Fund (EDF) is an IOM programme that promotes access to employment through private sector revitalization and economic development. The EDF provides financial capital to SMEs in all economic sectors with a high demand for labour. Originating as a pilot project in Mosul, Iraq, EDF has expanded into a national program in Iraq and globally across nine countries, supported by a global team, an EDF toolkit, workshops and in-person and online capacity-building support. With investments exceeding 35 million dollars of direct financial capital injected to SMEs, it has supported over 2,300 SMEs, created more than 12,000 jobs, and mobilized over 25 million USD.

Source: <https://edf.iom.int/>

1.2.4. Social reintegration

Social reintegration requires appropriate interventions aimed at addressing the priority needs of the returnees, such as access to affordable housing, education, and healthcare. Concerning housing, return migrant workers and their families may need temporary assistance, including help with rental fees or the payment of security deposits.

All return migrants should have access to healthcare. Returnees and their families may face challenges including:

- administrative barriers to accessing health services;
- high cost of health services, which, in many countries, patients need to cover themselves;
- a lack of care options and specialized services in the area of return.

In the case of former refugees, they may also face discrimination upon return, including in relation to the reasons they fled in the first place (i.e. because of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion). For them legal assistance might be necessary for update, replacement, and access to civil records.

1.2.5. Psychosocial reintegration

In cases where the migrant has been forced to return or induced by emergency situations (such as the COVID-19 pandemic), they may need professional assistance to allow them to reintegrate into their family, personal networks, and local communities. This is particularly important when the migration experience of returnees has been traumatic due to discrimination, exploitation, or difficult working conditions. Another specific area for which psychosocial counselling and support services are necessary is stigmatization (Wickramasekara 2019). Returnees may face stigma in their own communities and families because of their challenging migration experience, because of lost family assets or if they are returning because of debt. Migrant women may experience additional stigma if their migration was associated with the sex industry and/or trafficking (Harkins, Lindgren and Suravoranon 2017).

Some former refugees have been displaced for decades, or even over several generations, which means they have likely lost or weakened their connections with their countries of origin. This can constitute a significant obstacle for reintegration that requires specific psychosocial support. The same applies to former refugees

who have experienced violence and persecution in their origin countries and where return and reintegration (even if desired) may bring back experiences of trauma and create a need for psychological support.

1.3. Reintegration policies

National labour migration policies are part of a national policy framework, strategy and/or action plan for migration governance (ILO 2010). They may contain specific objectives and policy actions on the labour market reintegration of returnees. There could also be a separate policy or a sub-policy on reintegration, to complement national labour migration policies, such as in Sri Lanka (see Sri Lanka, Ministry of Foreign Employment 2015). There may also be other policies, on employment, for instance, that contain provisions on the labour market reintegration of returnees. The ILO has supported national stakeholders in many countries to design and implement a national employment policy, as appropriate, that also covers labour migration (see box 1 for some examples).

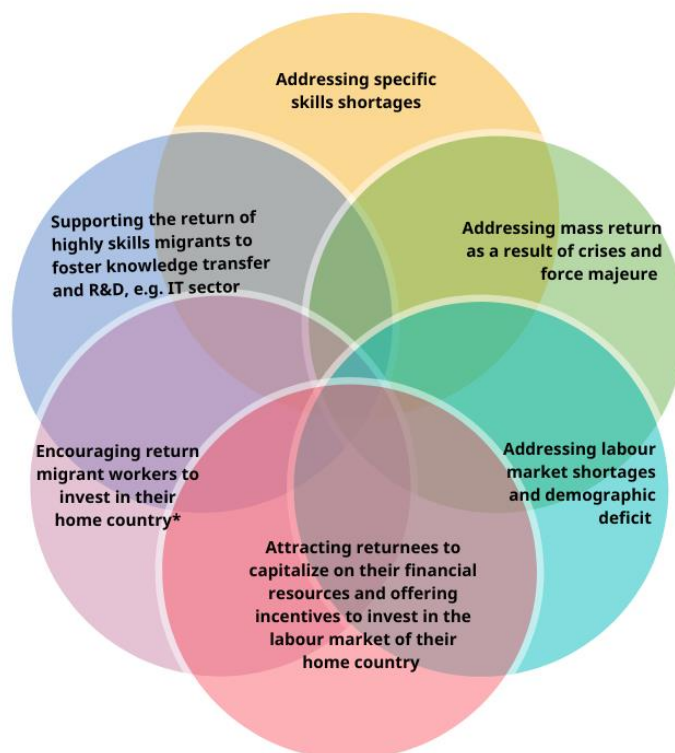
► **Box 3. National employment policies and strategies, including labour migration components, and return migration**

The Moroccan National Employment Strategy 2015–2025 is a comprehensive document that targets job creation, human resources development, support to youth employment and strengthened labour market governance. It also makes reference to return migration, where it is triggered by crises in host countries, and to capitalizing upon the skills of migrant workers in the domestic labour market.

The Ghana National Employment Policy was launched in 2015. The goal of this policy is to create decent employment opportunities for the growing labour force and promote equity, fairness, security and dignity. The policy has a specific section on “Labour Migration and Emigration”, which focuses, among other things, on the “integration [of migrant workers] into the national economy upon return”.

Sources: Morocco 2015; Ghana 2014; ILO, n.d.

► Figure 1. Typology of labour market reintegration policies and processes



Source: Authors' own.

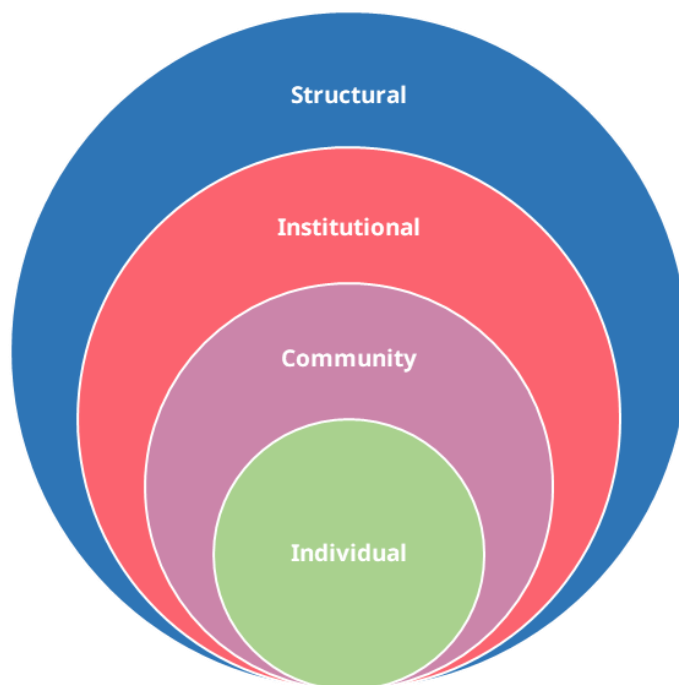
* Retired return migrant workers could be integrated into the labour market to the extent that they are available and interested to work. In some cases, origin countries are interested in attracting their retired nationals back to contribute to the country's development through investment and job creation (Wahba 2021).

Figure 1 provides a typology of the labour market reintegration policies that an origin country can use. It should be noted that a policy will often be a combination of several types, depending on the country's specific needs. Recently, and particularly with the COVID-19 pandemic, policies addressing mass return due to force majeure situations have become a priority in many origin countries. There have also been situations of mass return as a result of specific actions by the host country. Saudi Arabia, for example, sent nearly 170,000 migrant domestic workers back to Ethiopia (ILO 2018a). Other origin countries, such as Albania and Moldova (European Training Foundation 2015), have been trying to attract back skilled migrant workers.

1.4. Levels of analysis

Labour market reintegration is a multidimensional concept that should be analysed at the structural, institutional, community and individual levels (see figure 2), drawing on the integration framework developed by Bosswick and Heckmann (2007). The structural level is the most comprehensive and contains, in turn, the institutional, community and individual levels. These different levels are overlapping, mutually connected and in constant interaction. They can comprise political, economic, cultural and social factors (Benton et al. 2014).

► Figure 2. Labour market reintegration of return migrant workers and former refugees: levels of analysis



Source: Authors' own.

1.4.1. Structural level

The structural level of analysis refers to macro-level social processes, including institutions and patterns of institutionalized relationships. Structural reintegration relates to the level of access that return migrant workers have to the main institutions within society, i.e., the labour market, education, housing, welfare, and the healthcare system (ILO 2023b; Bosswick and Heckmann 2007). The reintegration experience is also influenced by the “reality” of the economic context and social norms in the country of origin, such as whether it is business friendly and gender norms (Cassarino 2004).

In line with Principle 12 of the ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration (2006), reintegration should be based on the needs of men and women migrant workers. An age, gender and diversity approach should be mainstreamed in all phases of reintegration policies and programmes. The analysis of the literature confirms that few studies mainstream gender and disability (Strachan 2019).

Reintegration policy should include measures aimed at combating the stigma that returnees could be confronted with because of their migration experience. This is particularly challenging for return women migrant workers, some of whom may also have been subject to trafficking. Former refugees may also suffer from stigmatization due to their displacement experience. Awareness-raising campaigns can contribute to the creation of a positive environment for their reintegration into society and help to reduce stigmatization and discrimination of return migrant workers. An example of this type of campaign is included in box 2. The structural level also covers social norms, to allow gender considerations linked to reintegration to be mainstreamed in the institutions involved.

► Labour market reintegration of return migrant workers and former refugees in origin countries

► Box 4. Information campaign on return migration in Ethiopia

To increase awareness about local job opportunities and to create a welcoming environment within local communities, the ILO produced and disseminated a series of TV and radio talk shows, with social media engagement and a 15-minute documentary, on success stories of returnees from Saudi Arabia. The campaign focused on facilitating reintegration through enhanced awareness of local communities and combating the stigma associated with return migration. It reached more than 4.5 million people.

Meetings were organized to raise awareness of the specific aspects of stigma and discrimination affecting returnees in the regions of Amhara, Oromia and Tigray. The meetings involved 193 faith-based institution leaders, experts from labour and social affairs offices, the media and representatives of returnees.

An awareness-raising radio programme entitled, "I Give Hope" was broadcasted for 14 weeks on 96.3 FM to help to prevent stigma and discrimination against returnees and combat irregular migration. It is estimated that approximately 600,000 listeners were reached in this way.

Source: ILO 2018a.

1.4.2. Institutional level

The institutional level of analysis includes the design of a consistent reintegration system, the identification of the institutional framework, and modalities for the delivery, monitoring and evaluation of reintegration services. The national institutions and implementing agencies in charge of providing returnees with adequate opportunities and effective services should work in a coordinated manner, together with local institutions. The institutional level also covers cooperation with destination countries, for example through bilateral agreements to protect return migrant workers, and possible investments to facilitate their reintegration back home (Battistella 2018). Other institutional factors that have a strong impact on the process of labour market reintegration include the type of education and training system, labour legislation and the employment system. Boxes 3 and 4 provide examples of institutional approaches adopted by national organizations in Indonesia and Armenia.

► Box 5. Indonesia: Institutions in charge of the labour market and economic, social and psychosocial reintegration measures

The following institutions oversee the implementation of policies and measures to ensure the labour market reintegration of return migrant workers in Indonesia:

- The Directorate General for Employment, Placement and Expansion within the Ministry of Manpower is the regulatory and implementing body in the area of labour, including labour market development, placement and reintegration.
- The Directorate of Social Protection for Violence Victims and Migrant Workers within the Ministry of Social Affairs targets the reintegration of return migrants facing various reintegration challenges.
- The National Agency for the Placement and Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers is a government institution tasked with implementing policies for the placement and protection of Indonesian migrant workers abroad. It ensures collaboration with the destination country including on return and reintegration issues.
- The Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection manages several programmes for the protection of return women migrant workers.
- The National Commission on Violence against Women contributes to preventing and responding to all forms of violence against women, and strengthening the protection of women's rights, including those of return women migrant workers.

Source: Bachtiar and Prasetyo 2017.

► Labour market reintegration of return migrant workers and former refugees in origin countries

Another example of reintegration policy from institutional point of view may be offered by the case of Armenia (see box 6)

► Box 6. Reintegration of returnees in Armenia

Armenia has adopted a migration policy for the period 2022–2032, along with an action plan aimed at addressing integration/reintegration issues affecting foreigners, returnees, internally displaced persons, asylum seekers and refugees. The policy sets out measures to address the needs of returnees, including support for employment and livelihoods, health services, housing, access to general education, training and psychological support.

The Migration Service of Armenia runs a forum to coordinate actions to support the reintegration of returnees in the country. The forum includes international organizations (IOM, the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) and the French Office for Immigration and Integration (OFII), non-governmental organizations (e.g. Armenian Caritas, People in Need, Armenian Fund for Sustainable Development) and State agencies. The aim of the forum is to discuss issues and programmes relating to the reintegration of returnees, share knowledge and deepen cooperation between organizations providing support to returnees.

Source: Asatryan (2020).

1.4.3. Community level

The reintegration of return migrants and former refugees is mainly realized at the community and local levels, which is where reintegration services should be available. This is also the level at which tensions between returnees and the local population should be addressed. Returnees may be perceived as competitors in the local labour market, and it is important that the local community is fully involved in the reintegration process and that measures foreseen for returnees are available to all workers. Local institutions should collect data on their return migrant populations and provide information on opportunities and constraints (Battistella 2018). Social and psychological challenges can also be addressed at this level, either through tailored services or through referral to other measures available to the entire community. Local institutions can cooperate with central authorities by collecting data on return migrants and former refugees present on their territory, with a focus on opportunities and constraints for labour market reintegration. An interesting example of community-led reintegration is the initiative run by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs targeting vulnerable return migrants in Nepal (see box 5 below).

► Box 7. Reintegration project in Dhankuta municipality in Nepal

The Dhankuta municipality project focuses on supporting the reintegration of families of vulnerable return migrants, including victims of trafficking, affected by COVID-19. It takes a multidimensional approach, providing economic empowerment, psychosocial and capacity-building support to the targeted population, enabling them to reintegrate into society and start income-generating activities. The project promotes innovation and economic diversification through the development of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in sectors such as goat farming, vegetable farming and milk production. It is a multi-stakeholder initiative emphasizing collaboration among various actors – including the Government, civil society and the private sector – in the reintegration of return migrants.

Source: <https://sdgs.un.org/partnerships/sustainable-reintegration-project>.

1.4.4. Individual level

At the individual level, the reintegration process needs to focus on the needs of returnees and on which services are available or required. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown that a more comprehensive approach to reintegration is needed, one that goes beyond assisted voluntary return and includes all returnees (Le Coz and Newland 2021). Returnees also need to be proactive in identifying what may be the most suitable reintegration solutions for them, rather than simply relying on public intervention, which might be insufficient, especially in cases where there are large numbers of returnees (such as due to the COVID-19 pandemic). Among other factors, individual reintegration efforts may largely depend on the social capital of return migrants. A social network of people they can count on can be an invaluable source of advice and support at each step of the reintegration process, including when it comes to finding employment (Battistella 2018).

As already noted, reintegration depends largely on the individual migration experience and strategy, the availability of human, financial and social capital, and the implementation of reintegration policies. These factors should be complemented by the capacities of central and local institutions in the country of origin to support the reintegration process (Battistella 2018).

In some countries, returnees can rely on support from international organizations and non-governmental organizations (see box 6). In this case, sustainability aspects should be carefully considered. The need for having both demand and supply interventions for labour market reintegration is the focus of the ILO's Approach to Inclusive Market Systems (see box 8).

► Box 8. European Return and Reintegration Network

In some 40 countries worldwide, a joint initiative of the European Return and Reintegration Network and other partners – namely Caritas International Belgium, e.b. consulting & project management GmbH, the ERSO network of European reintegration support organizations, International Returns And Reintegration Assistance, the European Technology and Training Centre, ICMPD, OFII and Women Empowerment Literacy and Development Organization – provides support to ensure the safe return of migrants and offers the following reintegration services:

- assistance upon arrival, such as reception at the airport, transportation and housing if necessary;
- support for education and vocational training, as appropriate;
- advice on labour market reintegration (e.g., on finding a job or starting a business);
- support tailored to the needs of vulnerable groups (e.g. women, people with disabilities, victims of trafficking/smuggling and unaccompanied migrant children).

Source: ICMPD, n.d.

► **Box 9. The ILO's Approach to Inclusive Market Systems (AIMS)**

Jointly designed by the ILO and the UNHCR, the AIMS has been increasingly used to support returnees and other vulnerable groups to reintegrate into the labour market. The approach is based on a holistic and market-based livelihoods strategies. While traditional approaches to livelihoods of refugees and other vulnerable groups may focus mostly on enhancing skills, competencies, and asset-bases of refugees, the AIMS seeks to work on both the supply and demand sides of the labour market.

AIMS, therefore, envisages two sets of separate but interlinked interventions. On the one hand, push interventions aim at developing the skills and capacities of the target group, and the ILO can utilise its dedicated "Start and Improve your Business (SIYB)" entrepreneurship training programme. With a network of over 300 Master trainers and 65,000 trainers in over 100 countries, over 15 million end beneficiaries have been trained on technical or entrepreneurial skills development, strengthening social networks, or transferring assets. On the other hand, pull interventions make use of the ILO's "Value chain development for Decent Work" methodology to promote sectors and value chains with inclusive growth potential. The ILO has extensive experience in designing and implementing such interventions in more than 30 countries, including for returnees through the 'Better Regional Migration Management (BRMM)' project that seeks to promote reintegration of returnees in Ethiopia and Kenya.

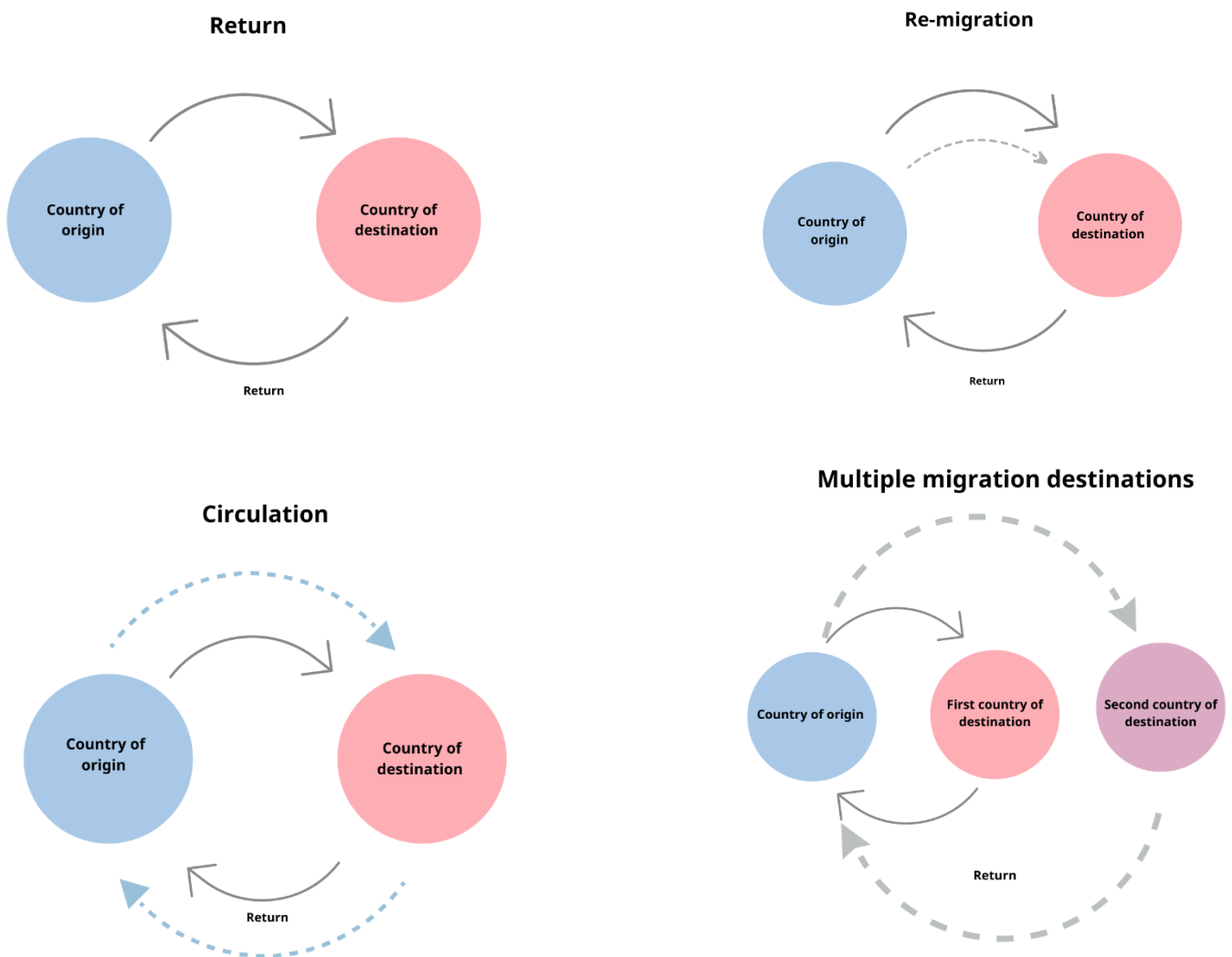
Source:<https://www.ilo.org/empent/Projects/refugee-livelihoods/vcd/lang--en/index.htm#:~:text=The%20approach%20studies%20market%20dynamics,a%20way%20that%20ensures%20greater>

2. Return migration scenarios and target groups

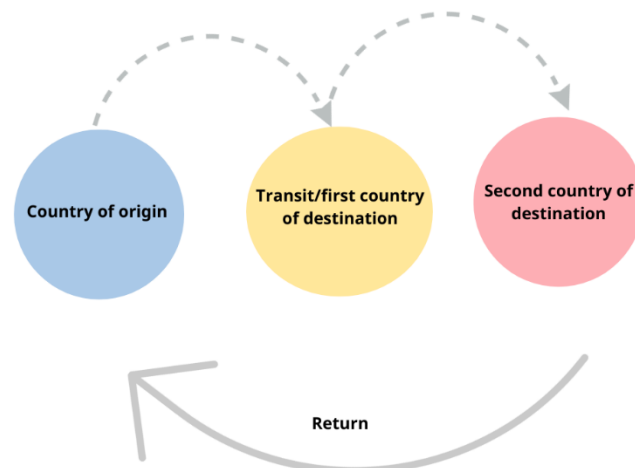
2.1. Defining migration scenarios

Various return migration scenarios may be observed (see figure 3). These migration scenarios can have an impact on the reintegration process, e.g. somebody who intends to re-migrate will not be interested in long-term labour market reintegration. This information is also important to consider at the institutional level, since it affects the typology, duration and cost of the reintegration services offered.

► Figure 3. Return migration scenarios



Transient migration



Source: Adapted from Bovenkerk 1974; Dustmann and Weiss 2007; UNECE 2016.

Note: The term “country of destination” (employment) refers to a State where the migrant worker is to be engaged, is engaged or has been engaged in a remunerated activity, as the case may be. The term “country of origin” refers to the State of which the person concerned is a national (Article 6 of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, available at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/cmww.aspx>). The term “transient migration” refers to situations where a migrant moves from one destination to another (Dustmann and Weiss 2007).

2.2. Target groups

The target groups described below are usually taken into consideration regarding labour market reintegration upon return. The definitions provided are policy and legal definitions.

2.2.1. Return migrants and former refugees

There is no unified definition of return migration. The ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration (2006) makes a reference to return migration in Guideline 15.8: “adopting policies to encourage circular and return migration and reintegration into the country of origin, including by promoting temporary labour migration schemes and circulation-friendly visa policies”.

According to the UNHCR definition, a “returnee” is “[a] former refugee who has returned from a host country to their country of origin or former habitual residence, spontaneously or in an organized fashion, with the intention of remaining there permanently and who is yet to be fully integrate” (UNHCR 2021). The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) defines return as an “umbrella term to refer to all the various forms, methods, and processes by which migrants are returned or compelled to return to their country of origin or of habitual residence, or a third country. This includes, inter alia, deportation, expulsion, removal, extradition, pushback, handover, transfer, or any other return arrangement” (OHCHR 2018, 16–17).

2.2.2. Return women migrant workers

As women and men migrant workers may experience different issues throughout the migration cycle, it is important that gender considerations are mainstreamed into the entire reintegration process (in terms of

► Labour market reintegration of return migrant workers and former refugees in origin countries

labour market, economic, social and psychosocial support). Some returning women migrant workers may face discrimination and inequality in accessing housing due to factors such as limited financial resources, gender-based discrimination in housing policies, and societal norms that prioritize men's access to housing (EJESM, 2022; Springer, 2023). Additionally, returning migrant women may encounter challenges in accessing land and property rights, which can further contribute to their housing insecurity and vulnerabilities on the labour market. For many women returnees, reintegration into the labour market can present additional challenges, since they may also have care responsibilities and be unable to dedicate sufficient time to their job search (see box 7). In addition, return women migrants who worked as domestic workers abroad may experience difficulties in finding similar employment at home. In this regard, there is a need to promote understanding of the issues faced by return women migrant workers that have an impact on their opportunities for effective reintegration. There is a lack of data, documented evidence and good practices concerning reintegration programmes for returning women migrant workers. There is also a need to mainstream gender-responsive reintegration strategies for these workers within governments' national migration and other policies.

► Box 10. Reintegration of return women migrant workers in the ASEAN countries

A study by UN-Women (2018) on Nepali women migrant workers found that just under 34 per cent of these returnees found employment in the home country. This suggests that the working experience abroad per se does not necessarily provide a comparative advantage when it comes to finding a job once back home.

The challenges faced by women migrant workers in the labour market reintegration process were also confirmed by a 2022 study of the Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW) covering Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. More than 70 per cent of women were unemployed upon return. Additionally, the burden of housework and child and elder care still falls on women, making their labour market reintegration even more difficult. The study confirmed that the skills women gained during migration, especially in Arab countries, such as speaking the Arabic language and using modern appliances, were not necessarily sought-after skills in their communities of origin. In addition to employment support measures, social and psychosocial reintegration measures need to be designed in a more comprehensive way, addressing health issues (such as illness and injury sustained while escaping abusive work situations; occupational and other related accidents; sexually transmitted infections; and disease outbreaks) and psychological stress (such as experiencing conflicts with the local community and family).

Sources: UN-Women 2018; GAATW 2022.

2.2.3. Young return migrant workers

Young people may be more exposed than other workers to the risks of unemployment, inactivity, and discouragement. The ILO estimates that young migrants, who are those aged 15–24 years (ILO 2021a) account for 10 per cent of all international migrant workers. Some studies define young returnees as those aged 15–35 years (Hall 2022). Given the possible heterogeneity within this wider age group, it may be split into two subgroups of 15–24 years and 25–35 years. Some of the migrants in the older group will already have gained the relevant experience. Besides additional individual needs, their reintegration patterns are likely to be like those of prime-age return migrant workers (i.e., those aged 25–64 years). Those in the 15–24 age group are likely to have an occupational profile requiring further skilling and support (ILO 2017a), including:

- second chance programmes – through more flexible learning methods these programmes can allow young people who left school early to acquire a formal qualification so that they can enter the labour market or continue their studies;
- labour market training, to provide young people with the knowledge, skills and experience required by the labour market;

- apprenticeship/internship, to combine classroom learning with on-the-job training.

2.2.4. Older return migrant workers

The challenges related to the labour market reintegration of older migrant workers (55–64 years) may vary by country. In general terms, data show that older workers are less likely to be unemployed, but also less likely to be recruited (Konle-Seidl 2017). To overcome the reintegration of older return migrant workers, it may be necessary for job counsellors at employment services to use existing active labour market programmes, in particular training and re-training, combined with recruitment incentives for employers, if available.

2.2.5. Return migrants with disabilities

Article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities includes among persons with disabilities “those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others”. While national legislation usually envisages the equality of all citizens before the law and the principle of non-discrimination, the effective integration or reintegration of persons with disabilities in the labour market can be challenging. Examples of successful integration measures can include wage subsidies, equipment, workplace adaptations and work-experience programmes combined with vocational training (Peijen and Wilthagen 2022). Some returnee migrants with disabilities might have been injured abroad and might need assistance obtaining workers’ compensation.

2.2.6. Temporary migrant workers

There is no unanimously accepted definition of temporary migration (ILO 2022a). According to the ILO, temporary migration can be either for all types of employment, to fill vacant jobs, or for time-bound employment, e.g., to fill seasonal jobs in the agricultural sector, as well as in tourism, construction, and entertainment (ILO 2004; ILO 2022b). The OECD (2019) states that “a temporary migrant is a person of foreign nationality who enters a country with a visa or who receives a permit which is either not renewable or only renewable on a limited basis. Temporary migrants include seasonal workers, international students, service providers, persons on international exchange, etc.” The European Migration Network defines temporary migration as “migration for a specific motivation and/or purpose with the intention that, afterwards, there will be a return to the country of origin or onward movement” (European Commission, n.d.). It should be noted that temporary migration can also imply circularity when it is repeated overtime, and this will have an impact on the frequency and typology of the reintegration services demanded.

3. Measuring labour market reintegration upon return

3.1 Return migration and its measurement: concepts and definitions

This chapter focuses on statistical concepts and definitions, and the measurement of labour market reintegration of return migrant workers and former refugees in origin countries. It highlights the potential value of different data sources to improve the availability of statistics on return migration, including return migrant workers, and former refugees.

The United Nations Expert Group on Migration Statistics, in its “Final Report on Conceptual frameworks and Concepts and Definitions on International Migration” (2021), indicates that: “Another important indicator is return migration of native-born citizens who previously resided in another country.” At the same time, in many countries of origin the tracking of returnees is not systematic, which means that many aspects regarding reintegration and sustainable return cannot be analysed properly (Koser and Kuschminder 2017).

A key policy issue for labour migration is how it contributes to addressing the current economic and development challenges in origin countries. The successful and sustainable labour market reintegration of returnees could play an important role in responding to some of these policy concerns. The ability to address them adequately depends on the availability and quality of statistics on return migration and labour market reintegration.

Although data collection capabilities vary across different institutions and countries, several key statistics should be considered at the national level as “priority data” to enhance labour migration policies, as well as to promote comparability of results and their analysis. Data collection and analysis prioritization should focus on two vital questions: 1). What type of information (such as data variables) is needed to understand the socioeconomic profile and labour market outcomes in origin countries for return migrant workers and former refugees? 2). Which data collection tools and methodologies (including concepts and definitions) are needed to have shared national, regional, and international standards and definitions? (GMG, 2017).

Needs and challenges in the collection, use, and availability of official statistics may derive from several inter-linked technical, political, and financial issues, comprising of (GMG, 2017):

- Lack of quality data, to be used for the analysis of labor migration, including missing populations of interest, uneven periods of data collection, or key characteristics not being covered;
- Limited data comparability due to the use of different concepts, definitions, and measurement methods;
- Insufficient infrastructure and capacity for data processing and dissemination;
- Limited priority given to labor migration in national data collection plans and related budget allocations.

Given the multidimensionality of the reintegration process, mixed methods are often used to analyse it. This is also linked to the limited availability of data on return migrant workers and former refugees. Table A2 in Annex 2 summarizes country-level studies from 2013 to the present and their respective methodologies.

3.1.1. Return migration

The United Nations Expert Group on Migration Statistics (2021) provides the following statistical definitions of return migrants stock and flow:

Stock:

“Returned migrants (stock) refer to persons who previously resided in the country of measurement who emigrated and subsequently came back to live in the country and stayed or intended to stay for the minimum duration required for residence.”

“Returned native-born migrants (stock) refer to native-born persons who previously resided in the country of measurement who emigrated and subsequently came back to live in the country and stayed or intended to stay for the minimum duration required for residence.”

Flow:

“Returning citizens (flow) includes all national citizens who previously resided in another country and become residents of the country in a given year.”

“Returning native-born population (flow) includes all native-born persons who previously resided in another country and become residents of the country in a given year.”

In this context, it should be noted that temporary mobility could result in one or multiple returns, which in turn may impact the process of reintegration (UNECE 2016; United Nations Expert Group on Migration Statistics 2021). Most of the existing information on return migration is based on cross-sectional data, coming from ad hoc surveys or specific projects. Time-series data are rare, which makes analysis of return migration trends challenging.

3.1.2. Return labour migration

The “Guidelines concerning Statistics of International Labour Migration” (ILO 2018b) state that: “[...] return international migrant workers are defined as all current residents of the country who were previously international migrant workers in another country or countries. ...”. Further, the Guidelines indicate that: “[...] the minimum duration of labour attachment abroad for a person to be considered as a return international migrant worker be relatively short, such as 6 months ...”¹.

3.2. Data collection and tools

Migration statistics are collected from administrative sources (e.g., border data collection systems, population registries, work permits), and field inquiries, which include population censuses and sample surveys.

3.2.1. Field inquiries

Countries may derive migration flows, using information from both administrative sources or sample survey data. Depending on the frequency of implementation, one of the main limitations of the field inquiry is that surveys or censuses are more appropriate for collecting data on migration stocks, pictured at the moment of data collection, but they are less suitable for the assessment of migration flows on a continuous basis.

¹ Please note that these definitions are being revised for consistency with the UN framework and to facilitate statistical measurement. The latest proposed revised text is available here (see Annex I): https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---stat/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_894674.pdf

3.2.1.1. Census

Regarding international migration, population censuses may be the most complete source of internationally comparable migration data. This is related to the fact that censuses are implemented universally and periodically. They should cover everyone, present at a given point in time, in a country. Population censuses are thus appropriate for collecting data on immigrant stocks, and they should be carried out recurrently for the data to be comparable (UNPF, 2019; UN, 2022).

Censuses usually ask about place of usual residence five years before the census. Some countries ask about usual residence 1 or 10 years before the census. Combined with place of birth, previous residence information can identify return migrants. Some countries also include a question on "ever resided abroad" (IOM, 2018; Sobek, 2016).

Censuses can provide actual data and detailed information on the geographic distribution of the population of interest, and their detailed labour market characteristics, living conditions, etc. It is important to highlight their value for survey design that adequately cover the population of interest.

However, censuses also have several limitations. First, most censuses take place only every 10 years. Second, there may be only a few questions on migration, which cannot provide many details. Third, irregular migrants may not be covered since they do not share their status with the authorities. Fourth, errors in reporting may occur due to lack of sufficient training on migration issues to census officers. Fifth, census questions may involve a proxy approach, where answers are provided by a person other than the migrant (UNPF, 2019).

3.2.1.2. Household surveys

The ILO has developed several labour migration modules, based on the context and measurement priorities. It should be noted that the modules can only be proposed for attachment to a labour force survey if the survey design covers the relevant population group(s) and supports the generation of estimates with some level of precision. Depending on the country's priorities, the ILO migration module could provide detailed information on: i) scope, scale and geographical coverage of labour migration; ii) socio-demographic and education characteristics of migrant workers and iii) types of economic activities, working conditions, frequency and duration of trips abroad.

Attaching a module on return migration to a labour force survey can be valuable as it allows for information to be combined, making it possible to assess the extent to which people with previous migration experience are reintegrated into the labour market in the country of origin. This can be done only if the survey is designed to capture return migrants. Otherwise, it is more suitable to measure return migration and reintegration using a specialized migration survey.

If the survey is not designed to adequately target the relevant migrant population (which may differ depending on whether the focus is on immigration, emigration, return migration, temporary mobility, displacement, etc.), attaching a module per se will not be of use and could negatively impact the quality of other topics collected by the survey.

In Europe, the ILO migration modules were implemented in Moldova in fourth quarter of 2012 and in Ukraine, in both cases to cover labour migration, including return migration. Special modules were designed specifically for these two countries, taking into consideration their priorities and context.

► Labour market reintegration of return migrant workers and former refugees in origin countries

► Box 11. ILO migration modules implemented in Moldova

In Moldova, the labour force survey used three separate questionnaires (A, B and C) to gather information on migrant workers. The target group in all three questionnaires was individuals aged 15–64 years who had either left the country to work or look for work in the 24 months preceding the date of the survey or who intended to leave the country to work or look for work in the six months following the survey. Questionnaire A collected information on household members living abroad; questionnaire B on household members who had not been abroad in the previous 24 months, but who intended to migrate within six months following the survey date; and questionnaire C on household members who had been abroad in the previous 24 months, but who had returned and were residing in Moldova at the time of the survey. Migrant workers were identified based on the purpose of their trip abroad: individuals who were employed abroad during the reference period of 24 months preceding the survey date were classified as migrant workers; individuals travelling abroad for leisure, study, healthcare or business were not. The labour force migration data made it possible to construct a number of different categories that are useful for understanding the extent and nature of labour migration out of Moldova. Returnees were further divided into two groups according to whether or not they intended to leave Moldova again to work or look for work abroad within six months following the survey date.

Source: ILO 2017b.

► Box 12. ILO migration modules implemented in Ukraine

Similarly, in 2012, the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, in collaboration with the ILO, integrated the migration module into the labour force survey to measure labour migration and analyse the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of Ukrainian migrant workers (ILO 2017c). The coverage was extended to capture short-term migrant workers, as the geographic focus was on border regions, characterized by cross-border migration movements. The questionnaire includes four sections (A, B, C and D): section A is used to identify migrant workers; section B gathers detailed information on their demographic and socio-economic characteristics; section C aims to identify potential migrant workers by asking non-migrants and returned migrant workers about their intentions to migrate in the six months following the survey date; and section D collects information on remittances received by households.

Source: ILO 2017c.

3.2.2. Administrative sources

There are different types of administrative records, e.g., population registers, in the form of tax or social security registers; registers of foreigners, maintained to regulate immigration and the presence of foreigners, or emigration and the absence of nationals; border data collection systems, etc. Administrative sources do not always contain information on return. For instance, some countries maintain continuous migration registration systems, through data collected at points of entry or departure of the country; however, they tend to collect information on those arriving but not on those leaving, with a few exceptions, e.g., Australia, Japan and New Zealand. Despite the fact that these systems may present challenges for analysing migration, they have the advantage of generating information on a more regular basis than population censuses and some sample surveys.

Administrative data present a number of challenges:

- Data collected and stored in administrative data bases are the result of administrative processes, and not necessarily have been collected with the objective of measuring labour migration, return and reintegration;
- Given these different objectives, each administrative source uses its own “methodology”;
- Administrative “methodologies” are very difficult to change as they are usually stipulated by law, and harmonization among these sources requires an intense inter-agency collaboration;
- Only “officially occurring” events are registered in administrative sources;
- The growing cost of administrative data processing.

To improve the links between administrative data sources, the following steps may be considered:

- Work with government institutions to make administrative data comparable and more appropriate for analytical purposes;
- Consider options for linking survey and administrative data. It is hardly feasible that the administrative data satisfy all policy needs. In this context, it is important to have an efficient dialogue and not to demand total reformatting of data but rather be able to extract the most useful and adequate information from existing sources.
- Allow a legal basis for statistics service to have access to the administrative data. Facilitate data harmonization, based on the specific national situation, considering the legislation in force and the procedures approved. When organizing data, it is important to identify the stages of data harmonization, giving priority to those, which are already accessible and their harmonization is not complicated;
- Encourage good cooperation with the owners of administrative data;
- Carry out regular inventories of administrative sources, and develop methods for assessing the quality of sources;
- Ensure the protection of personal data, delivered to the statistics service from the administrative sources.

3.2.3. Existing data sets containing information on return and labour market reintegration

Up-to-date and internationally comparable statistical information on return migrant workers is available on a limited basis. The list below provides a non-exhaustive inventory of data collection on return migration.

3.2.3.1. Global level

Since 2010, IOM has collected voluntary return data on a regular basis. The data include the number of participants, by sex, age, and migration status in the host country, as well as in the origin country. IOM data also include information on assisted migrants by specific vulnerability (unaccompanied migrant children, migrants with health-related needs and victims of trafficking).

Data on returned or “repatriated” refugees are collected by IOM and UNHCR.

The OECD collects data on the outflows of the foreign population from selected member states through the Continuous Reporting System on International Migration and publishes that data in the annual *International Migration Outlook* report.

3.2.3.2. Regional level

European Union

Since 2014, Eurostat has provided the following data for European Union Member States on return migration:

- third-country nationals ordered to leave (annual data);
- third-country nationals returned following an order to leave (annual data);
- third-country nationals who have left the territory, by type of return and citizenship;
- third-country nationals who have left the territory, by type of assistance received and citizenship.

Data on forced and voluntary return from European Union Member States and the four Schengen associated countries (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland) are also published in the Frontex Risk Analysis reports.²

Data on forced return and on voluntary return are scattered across different data sources and are often incomplete or only partially publicly available. For example, data from several countries that implement assisted voluntary return and reintegration programmes are not included in the Eurostat database (e.g. Germany and the Netherlands). In addition, voluntary departures are usually not recorded.

The Return Migration and Development Platform of the European University Institute³ promotes exchange and knowledge-sharing about return migrants’ realities and the contexts of their experiences.

Central and South America

Data on return migration from and to Central and South (and North) American countries were collected by the OECD’s Continuous Reporting System on International Migration in the Americas and published in the *International Migration in the Americas* reports, the latest of which was released in 2017.

3.2.3.3. Cross-country level

There are a few multi-country datasets on return migration available for conducting quantitative analysis of the labour market reintegration of return migrants. One example is the European Training Foundation⁴ data set on return migration for Albania, Egypt, Republic of Moldova, Tunisia and Ukraine. It has a total number of observations (5,000), based exclusively on interviews with return migrants already in their home countries. The data collection took place in 2006 and 2007.

Another example is the project run by Eurostat and the Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute to study the push and pull factors explaining international migration flows in the 1990s, covering migration from the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean region and from sub-Saharan Africa to the European Union.

The results from multi-country surveys on return have been conducted in the Migration between Africa and Europe (MAFE) project⁵ data set, covering sub-Saharan migration to the European Union and gathering data

² Frontex is the European Border and Coast Guard Agency.

³ See <https://www.eui.eu/Research/Library/ResearchGuides/Economics/Statistics/DataPortal/DReMM>.

⁴ The European Training Foundation is an agency of the European Union based in Turin, Italy. It was established by Council Regulation No.1360 in 1990 (recast as No. 1339 in 2008) to contribute to the development of the education and training systems of European Union partner countries. It became operational in 1994, see http://www.etf.europa.eu/web.nsf/pages/AboutETF_EN?OpenDocument.

⁵ See https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/dataset/ds00111_en

on 6,000 individuals from three African origin countries (Ghana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Senegal) and six European Union destination countries. The data collection took place in 2008 and 2009. Three groups of people were interviewed – non-migrants in origin countries, return migrants and migrants in destination countries – to allow migration trends to be analysed and the developmental effects of migration to be assessed.

Another example of multi-country statistical information on return migration patterns is the database on return migrants to the Maghreb, which was based on 992 interviews⁶ with returnees in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia and carried out over the period September 2006–January 2007. The survey included, among other topics, motivation factors for return; the impact of the migration experience on labour market reintegration back home and on the livelihoods of returnees' households; and types of investments upon return (Cassarino 2008).

3.2.3.4. Country level

United States of America

Data on the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency's "enforcement and removal operations", including forced returns, are summarized in the agency's annual reports.

Australia

The Australian Government Department of Immigration and Border Protection publishes annual data on forced and voluntary return from Australia.

Mexico

There are several examples of national quantitative information covering return migration, such as the Mexican Migration Project,⁷ an important longitudinal data set on the trends and outcomes of Mexican migration to the United States of America, initiated in 1982 (Massey 1987).

Germany

Another national example is the German socio-economic panel (*Sozio-oekonomisches Panel*),⁸ which is a nationally representative longitudinal database started in 1984 and managed by the German Institute for Economic Research (DIW-Berlin), which collects information on samples of immigrants (Constant and Massey 2002).

Albania

As part of the living standards measurement study in Albania, a migration module was run by the World Bank and the Albanian Institute of Statistics in 2002, on temporary and permanent migration, as well as on countries of destination. These data were used to analyse the frequency, duration and destination of migration and to compare the characteristics of migrating and non-migrating individuals and households (De Brauw and Carletto 2012).

3.3. Measuring vulnerabilities of return migrant workers and former refugees ⁹

The multiple and intersecting vulnerabilities of return migrant workers and former refugees, together with the difficulty of capturing their occurrence, are key challenges measuring labour market reintegration.

⁶ See https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/dataset/ds00012_en. 332 interviews were conducted in Algeria, 330 in Morocco, and 330 in Tunisia.

⁷ See <http://mmp.opr.princeton.edu/>.

⁸ See Research Infrastructure Focus, Socio-Economic Panel: <http://www.diw.de/en/soep>.

⁹ The current document focuses on former refugees in their countries of origin only. However, it should be noted that some national authorities, as well as international organizations, such as UNHCR and Eurostat, publish annual statistics on refugees and asylum seekers.

Disaggregated data that trace the intersection of, for instance, gender and other discrimination/stigmatization factors are needed, given the importance of gender as a dimension of many forms of multiple discrimination. There is also a growing need to measure the overlapping aspects of multiple vulnerabilities based on other grounds (age, gender and diversity approach). It is therefore necessary to capture intersecting and compound inequalities in data collection in order to obtain clear and up-to-date information on the complex and multidimensional realities of vulnerabilities in the process of labour market reintegration. To do this, both quantitative and qualitative data need to be collected (Sheppard 2011).

It should be noted that disaggregated quantitative data are still very important for analysing indicators of multiple and overlapping inequalities. Two or three key factors may be identified for the purposes of data collection, based on important structural, institutional and community contexts. At the same time, it is important to keep in mind the risks of any category-based research, and to be prepared to revisit the categories in the future (Sheppard 2011). It is also essential to ensure that the collection of data used to measure vulnerabilities factors in the complex and multidimensional identities of the most vulnerable members of the specific groups of returnees covered by the research.

Qualitative interviews are often used in research on multiple vulnerabilities. Given the complexity of the realities covered, these vulnerabilities are best identified through the narratives of individuals experiencing complex multiple discrimination. This experiential knowledge is key to understanding multiple discrimination and the importance of taking it into account in policies that address labour market reintegration and inequalities at work (Sheppard 2011).

In qualitative research, it is critical to consider how questions are formulated. Questions about experiences need to be intersecting and interdependent, as the ways in which individuals reflect on their lives are affected by the relational context of their narrative. In addition to the challenge of collecting data about multiple vulnerabilities, interpretation of this data requires knowledge of the broader context of structural, institutional and community aspects (Sheppard 2011).

3.4. Measuring the skills and qualifications of the target groups

To reintegrate into the labour market, return migrant workers and former refugees need to have competencies and skills that match those in demand. The different skills levels are displayed in table 1 according to the relevant international statistical classifications, the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) and the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) (see box 8). Table 2 shows the key terms relating to skills and qualifications to be considered in the labour market reintegration process.

There are (remain?) several challenges associated with the collection, compilation, and presentation of these data, including issues of comparability and the lack of socio-economic data that would permit analysis of their basic and ongoing needs. To address these challenges, the UN and EUROSTAT launched in 2018 an Expert Group on Refugee and Internally Displaced Persons Statistics tasked to formulate International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics (EGRIS, 2018).

► **Box 13. ISCO and ISCED**

International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO)

ISCO-08, adopted by the ILO, provides a system for classifying and aggregating occupational information obtained by means of statistical censuses and surveys, as well as from administrative records.

ISCO-08 is a four-level, hierarchically structured classification that allows all jobs in the world to be classified into 436 unit groups. These groups are aggregated into 130 minor groups, 43 sub-major groups and 10 major groups, based on their similarity in terms of the skills level and skills specialization required for the jobs. The major groups are:

- 1 Managers
- 2 Professionals
- 3 Technicians and associate professionals
- 4 Clerical support workers
- 5 Services and sales workers
- 6 Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers
- 7 Craft and related trades workers
- 8 Plant and machine operators and assemblers
- 9 Elementary occupations
- 10 Armed forces occupations

Based upon the level and specialization of skills involved, occupations are grouped into four levels:

Skills level 1 – Typically involve the performance of simple and routine physical or manual tasks.

Skills level 2 – Typically involve the performance of tasks such as operating machinery and electronic equipment; driving vehicles; maintenance and repair of electrical and mechanical equipment; and manipulation, ordering and storage of information.

Skills level 3 – Typically involve the performance of complex technical and practical tasks that require an extensive body of factual, technical and procedural knowledge in a specialized field.

Skills level 4 – Typically involve the performance of tasks that require complex problem-solving decision-making and creativity based upon an extensive body of theoretical and factual knowledge in a specialized field.

International Standard Classification of (ISCED)

ISCED is the international classification, promoted by UNESCO, for organizing education programmes and related qualifications by levels (ISCED 2011) and fields (ISCED 2013). The ISCED 2011 sets out nine levels of education:

ISCED level 0 – Early childhood education

ISCED level 1 – Primary education

ISCED level 2 – Lower secondary education

ISCED level 3 – Upper secondary education

ISCED level 4 – Post-secondary, non-tertiary education

ISCED level 5 – Short-cycle tertiary education

ISCED level 6 – Bachelor's or equivalent level

ISCED level 7 – Master's or equivalent level

ISCED level 8 – Doctoral or equivalent level

Sources: ILO 2016; UNESCO 2012.

► Table 1. Skills levels of workers, including return migrant workers and former refugees

<p>Low-skilled worker</p>	<p>ISCO-08 classifies low-skilled work as mainly consisting of “simple and routine tasks which require the use of hand-held tools and often some physical effort”. The category includes office cleaners, freight holders, garden labourers, kitchen assistants and other similar workers. By extension, a low-skilled worker can be defined as a person who performs low-skilled work.</p> <p>According to ISCED 2011, based on the level of education attainment, low-skilled workers are those who have completed: Level 2 – Lower secondary education Level 1 – Primary education</p>
<p>Medium-skilled worker</p>	<p>ISCO-08 classifies workers with a medium skills level (level 2) as “skilled manual workers”. Skilled manual work is characterized by routine and repetitive tasks in cognitive and production activities. Medium-skilled workers include workers in occupations such as skilled agriculture and fishery work, clerical work, craft and related trades and plant, machine operators and assemblers.</p> <p>According to ISCED 2011, based on the level of education attainment, medium-skilled workers are those who have completed: Level 4 – Post-secondary, non-tertiary education Level 3 – Upper secondary education</p>
<p>Highly skilled worker</p>	<p>According to ISCO-08, levels 3 and 4 require high skills levels.</p> <p>Skills level 3 –Typically involves the performance of complex technical and practical tasks that require an extensive body of factual, technical and procedural knowledge in a specialized field. This includes shop managers, medical laboratory technicians, legal secretaries, commercial sales representatives, diagnostic medical radiographers, computer support technicians, and broadcasting and recording technicians.</p> <p>Skills level 4 – Typically involves the performance of tasks that require complex problem-solving decision-making and creativity based upon an extensive body of theoretical and factual knowledge in a specialized field. This includes sales and marketing managers, civil engineers, school teachers, medical practitioners, musicians and computer system analysts.</p> <p>According to ISCED 2011, based on the level of education attainment, highly skilled workers are those who have completed: Level 5 – Short-cycle tertiary education Level 6 – Bachelor’s or equivalent level Level 7 – Master’s or equivalent level Level 8 – Doctoral or equivalent level</p>

Source: ILO 2016; UNESCO 2012.

► Table 2. Skills and qualifications: key terms

<p>Prior learning</p>	<p>The knowledge, know-how and/or competencies acquired through previously unrecognized training or experience.</p> <p>Source: UNESCO-UNEVOC/NCVER 2009.</p>
<p>Recognition of skills and qualifications</p>	<p>The recognition of qualifications and skills covers two main areas: academic and professional recognition. Academic recognition allows studies to be continued at the appropriate level and facilitates access to an appropriate job. Professional recognition provides the opportunity to practise professional skills acquired abroad.</p> <p>Professional recognition covers both regulated and unregulated professions. Regulated professions are usually governed by legal acts requiring registration, certification or licensing. Unregulated professions do not involve any specific process, as the employer assesses qualifications and professional competency.</p> <p>Source: ILO 2020a.</p>
<p>Skills</p>	<p>Skills are the ability to carry out the tasks and duties of a given job.</p> <p>Source: ILO 2016.</p> <p>Skills refer to the relevant knowledge and experience needed to perform a specific task or job and/or the product of education, training and experience which, together with relevant know-how, are the characteristics of technical knowledge.</p> <p>Source: UNESCO-UNEVOC/NCVER 2009.</p>
<p>Skills gap</p>	<p>Where the type or level of skills is different from that required to adequately perform the job.</p> <p>Source: ILO 2014.</p>
<p>Skills matching</p>	<p>A complex and dynamic process involving multiple stakeholders making multiple decisions at different times: individuals and their families, as they make decisions regarding their own education and training; education, training and labour market policymakers, as they decide on the configuration of education and training systems, employment policies and investments; training institutions, as they make decisions on the type and content of the training courses to be delivered; and employers, as they take decisions on how to train workers and use skills.</p> <p>Source: European Training Foundation, Cedefop and ILO 2016.</p>
<p>Up-skilling</p>	<p>Training that supplements and updates existing knowledge, skills and/or competencies.</p>

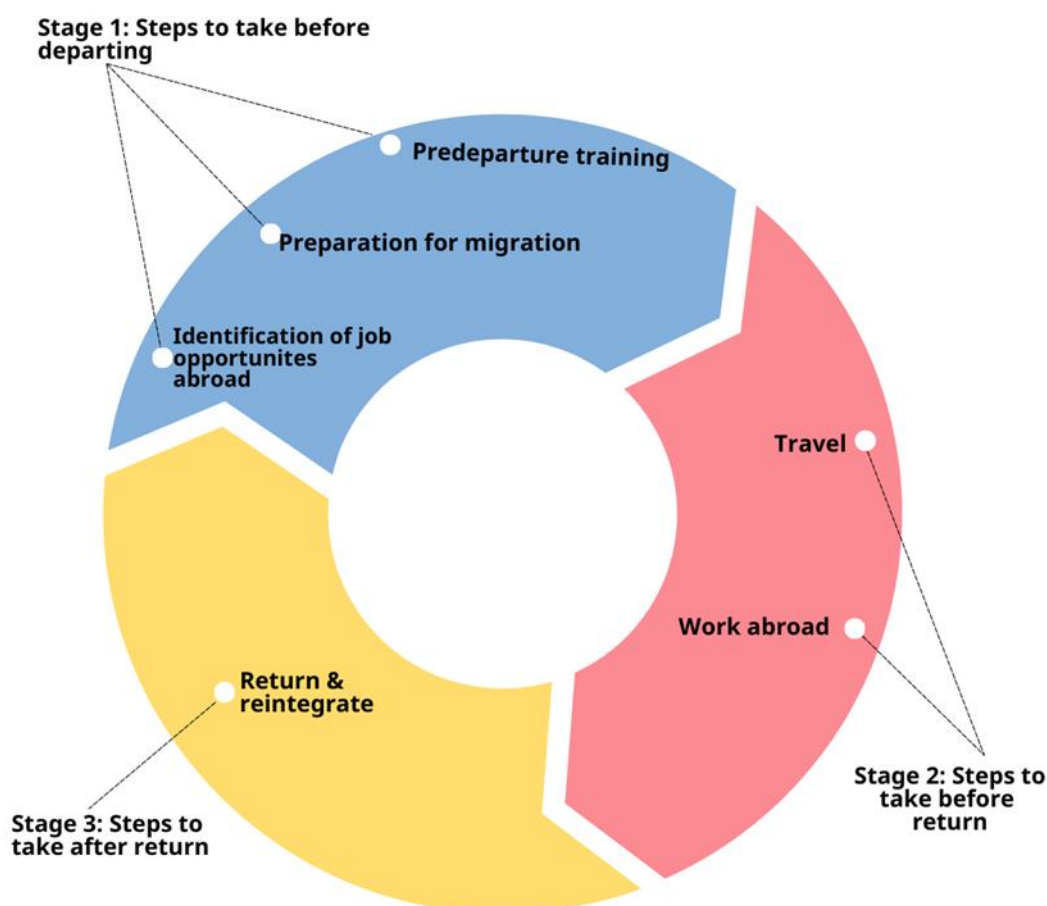
	Source: ILO 2020b.
Validation of prior learning	<p>Process of identifying, documenting, assessing and certifying formal, non-formal and/or informal learning against standards used in formal education and training. Recognition of prior learning provides an opportunity for people to acquire qualifications or credits for a qualification or exemptions (of all or part of the curriculum, or even exemption of academic prerequisites to enter a formal study programme) without going through a formal education or training programme.</p> <p>Source: ILO 2018c.</p>

4. Assessing policy measures for return and reintegration

The return decision and the modalities of return can affect the process and outcomes of labour market reintegration back home (Cassarino 2004; Black and Gent 2004). The stages of the labour migration cycle for migrant workers include the identification of job opportunities abroad; preparation for migration, such as receiving information, the visa application, document verification and pre-departure training; travel; post-arrival adaptation/orientation; work abroad; and return to the country of origin (IOM 2022). Return and reintegration services have their own cycle, consisting of three consecutive steps: (i) pre-return; (ii) return; and (iii) post-return and reintegration (UNNM 2021). Figure 4 superimposes these two cycles, which are important both for the sequencing of service delivery and for monitoring and assessment purposes.

Additional considerations may be taken on board when it comes to the return of former refugees – the labour dimension of reintegration is often combined with other factors related to safety and peace in the country of origin. It is also important to note that, in some instances, the return (and reintegration) will take place in contexts where safety and security are not guaranteed, labour demand is insufficient and many of the related services that support reintegration may be non-existent or scarce, and the returnees may thus require additional support.

► Figure 4: Stages of the labour migration cycle and corresponding steps for labour market reintegration measures



Source: Authors' own, based on African Union 2018 and UNNM 2022.

Tables 3 and 4 provide a comprehensive list of reintegration services, with respective outcomes and indicators to enable progress to be measured. It should be noted that labour market reintegration services require effective coordination between central and local governments, social partners, returnees' organizations and other stakeholders in the design, implementation and monitoring of the assistance to be provided. Labour market reintegration may be facilitated by an effective social dialogue between government and employers' and workers' organizations. Many countries have models that have been developed based on the ILO's approach to social dialogue, which includes all types of negotiations and consultations, in addition to the simple exchange of information. Some of the key objectives of social dialogue cover inclusion, engagement of the key stakeholders and contributing to the promotion of consensus building (ILO 2021c).

► Table 3. Labour market reintegration measures and services for return migrant workers and former refugees

Reintegration measures and services	Main outcomes	Quantitative indicators	Qualitative indicators
Information on reintegration services	Detailed information on the legal, social, psychosocial, employment and financial support services returnees can receive, and related modalities	Number of contacts at information points, by phone, Internet, and email, by typology of services requested	Level of returnees' satisfaction
Services for addressing vulnerability ¹⁰ of returnees	Screening procedures are in place to assess the vulnerability of returnees, and those with specific needs are referred to psychosocial services	Number of vulnerable returnees identified, by age and sex Number of vulnerable returnees who received psychosocial services, by age and sex	Level of satisfaction with psychosocial services
Assessment of employability, including skills and professional experience	The public employment service has employability assessment services in place	Number of self-assessment skills tests, by age and sex Number of skills assessment tests administered by the public employment service, by age and sex	
Job counselling and orientation	The public employment service has job counselling and orientation services in place	Number of returnees who have received job counselling and orientation services, by age and sex Share of returnees who have found employment following job counselling and orientation services, by age and sex	Level of satisfaction with the services received
Job matching	The public employment service has job-matching services in place	Number of returnees who have received job-matching services by age, sex and branch of economic activity	Level of satisfaction with the job-matching services received

¹⁰ There is no generally accepted definition of "vulnerable worker"; the term is often used to denote those for whom employment is "precarious, poorly paid and sometimes dangerous, and who often suffer from some form of discrimination" (ILO 2022c).

		Share of returnees who have found employment following job-matching services, by age, sex and branch of economic activity	
Recognition of skills and qualifications	National policies are in place and funds are allocated to ensure the recognition and transfer of returnees' skills and qualifications, including the recognition of prior learning	Number of returnees whose skills and qualifications have been recognized, by age, sex and branch of economic activity Share of returnees who have found employment following the recognition of their skills and qualifications, by age, sex and branch of economic activity	Level of returnees' satisfaction
Occupation-specific training	National training policies are in place and funds are allocated to offer training opportunities to returnees	Number of returnees who have participated in occupation-specific training, by age, sex and branch of economic activity Share of returnees who have found employment following occupation-specific training, by age, sex and branch of economic activity	Labour-market relevance of the occupation-specific training received
Entrepreneurship training	Specific measures are designed and implemented to improve financial literacy and provide entrepreneurship training	Number of returnees who have participated in entrepreneurship or financial literacy training, by age and sex	Level of returnees' satisfaction
Business-support services	Business-support services are put in place, including business advice, financial incentives and business collateral (e.g. grants, loans at preferential rates)	Number of returnees who have received business-support services, by age and sex Number of grants/loans received by returnees, by age and sex	Effectiveness of the business advice/financial assistance received

► Labour market reintegration of return migrant workers and former refugees in origin countries

		Amount disbursed in grants/loans each year to returnees	
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Source: Authors' own, based on UNNM 2021.

The reintegration of returnees is a complex process that can require not only interventions to ensure labour market reintegration but also services to ensure full social and psychosocial reintegration. For these services to be fully effective, local communities, the authorities and relevant stakeholders need to be involved in reintegration planning and implementation and play a key role in addressing the stigma and discrimination to which returnees may be exposed.

► **Table 4. Other reintegration measures and services for return migrant workers and former refugees**

Reintegration measures and services	Main outcomes	Quantitative indicators	Qualitative indicators
Economic reintegration	Investment advice and incentives are available for returnees interested in capitalizing on their savings	Number of returnees who have received investment advice and incentives, by age and sex	Level of satisfaction in terms of the advice and incentives provided
Healthcare	Returnees have access to existing preventive, curative, rehabilitative, physical and mental health services, under the same conditions as other citizens	Number of returnees who have received health services, by age and sex	Level of satisfaction with the services received
Housing	Returnees and their families have access to adequate housing	Number of returnees who have received housing assistance provided by social services	Level of satisfaction with the services received
Schooling	Returnees' children have access to the national education and training system, at the appropriate level	Number of returnees' children who have entered the national education and training system, by age, sex and ISCED level	Level of returnee parents' satisfaction with the services received

<p>Social protection</p>	<p>National policies, laws and programmes as well as bilateral social security agreements are implemented to allow access to social security schemes and for the portability of social security benefits</p> <p>National (non-contributory tax-financed) social assistance programmes are available for returnees</p>	<p>Number of returnees who benefit from the portability of social security benefits, by age and sex</p> <p>Number of returnees who have access to national non-contributory tax-financed) social assistance programmes, by age and sex</p>	<p>Level of returnees' satisfaction with the benefits or services received</p>
<p>Psychosocial support</p>	<p>Returnees have access to counselling to ensure their psychosocial well-being and to address any trauma they may have suffered during the course of their migration experience</p> <p>Policies are in place to identify and refer returnees to specialized services for mental and psychosocial care, if needed</p> <p>National information and awareness campaigns are designed and implemented to address stigma and discrimination, by engaging with communities of returnees and returnees themselves</p> <p>Individual peer support or involvement in support groups is made available</p>	<p>Number of returnees, who have been referred to counselling services, by age and sex</p> <p>Number of returnees, who have benefited from counselling services, by age and sex</p> <p>Social reach of information campaigns (e.g. website traffic metrics)</p>	

► Labour market reintegration of return migrant workers and former refugees in origin countries

<p>Access to justice</p>	<p>Returnees have access to national complaint mechanisms to address human and labour rights violations or abuses upon return</p> <p>Returnees have access to these mechanisms under the same conditions as other citizens, and legal advice and support are provided, if appropriate</p>	<p>Number of returnees, who have received legal advice, by age and sex</p> <p>Number of consular interventions assisting migrant workers in relation to violations and abuses suffered in countries of destination, still pending even after their return</p>	<p>Level of returnees' satisfaction with the services received</p>
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Source: Authors' own, based upon UNNM 2021.

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► Annex 1. International standards

► Table A1. International standards on the return and reintegration of migrant workers

Key theme	International instrument	Specific references to return and reintegration
Universal right to return	Universal Declaration of Human Rights	Article 13 (2)
1. Voluntary orderly return 2. Durable social and cultural reintegration in the State of origin	International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families	Article 67
Forbidden return for permanent migrant workers in case of illness contracted or injury sustained subsequent to entry	ILO Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97)	Article 8 (1)
Cost of return of migrant workers regularly recruited	ILO Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97)	Annex II – Article 9
Personal effects of migrant workers shall be exempt from customs duties on the return to the country of origin	ILO Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97)	Annex III – Article 2
Free services and information provided to migrants	ILO Migration for Employment Recommendation (Revised), 1949 (No. 86)	Para. 5 (2) Para. 5 (3)
Cost of return	ILO Migration for Employment Recommendation (Revised), 1949 (No. 86)	Para. 18 (2)(f)
Compulsory return	Model Agreement on Temporary and Permanent Migration for Employment, including Migration of Refugees and Displaced Persons – Annex to ILO Recommendation No. 86	Article 25
Return journey	Model Agreement on Temporary and Permanent Migration for Employment,	Article 26

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	including Migration of Refugees and Displaced Persons – Annex to ILO Recommendation No. 86	
Migrants affected by crisis situations	ILO Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205)	Para. 26
Voluntary repatriation and reintegration of returnees	ILO Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205)	Paras. 37–40
Social benefits	ILO Employment Promotion and Protection against Unemployment Convention, 1988 (No. 168)	Article 26
Return of nursing personnel	ILO Nursing Personnel Recommendation, 1977 (No. 157)	Para. 64 (2)
Voluntary return of migrant workers with scarce skills	ILO Employment Policy (Supplementary Provisions) Recommendation, 1984 (No. 169)	Para. 42
Assistance to workers and members of their families wishing to return to their country of origin	ILO Employment Policy (Supplementary Provisions) Recommendation, 1984 (No. 169)	Para. 44
Enhanced protection, through multilateral and bilateral agreements, to migrants wishing to return	ILO Employment Promotion and Protection against Unemployment Recommendation, 1988 (No. 176)	Para. 9
Voluntary repatriation and reintegration of returnees	ILO Guiding Principles on the Access of Refugees and Other Forcibly Displaced Persons to the Labour Market	E.29 and 30
Equitable process of labour migration	ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration (2006)	Principle 12
Information on return process	ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration (2006)	Guideline 12.2

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Returning nationals are duly received	UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015)	Para. 29
Safe and dignified return and re-admission, as well as sustainable reintegration	UN Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (2018)	Objective 21
Support to receive and reintegrate returnees, notably women, youth, children, older persons and persons with disabilities	UN Global Compact on Refugees (2018)	Point 89
Sustainable reintegration of returning refugees	UN Global Compact on Refugees (2018)	Outcome 4.1
Reintegration of returnees in cases climate or natural disaster, conflict or other emergency	IOM Guidelines to Protect Migrants in Countries Experiencing Conflict or Natural Disaster (2016)	
Repatriation of fishers	ILO Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188)	Article 21
Safe and voluntary repatriation for migrants subjected to forced or compulsory labour	ILO Forced Labour (Supplementary Measures) Recommendation, 2014 (No. 203)	Para. 11 (c)
Repatriation of domestic workers	ILO Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189)	Article 7 (j) Article 8 (4)
Repatriation at no cost of domestic workers	ILO Domestic Workers Recommendation, 2011 (No. 201)	Paras. 22 and 33 (a)

► Annex 2. Research on measuring reintegration at country level

► Table A2. Measuring reintegration at the country level (from 2013 onwards)

S/N	Country	Main findings	Methodology
1.	Dakar (Senegal) (Kveder and Flahaux 2013)	The paper investigates the labour market conditions of Senegalese return migrants in Dakar. Return migrants can gain valuable resources during their migration, but reintegration can be challenging due to limited resources and weakened ties. The study aims to examine the relationship between return migration and occupational outcomes, considering Dakar's high unemployment rate and the prevalence of the informal sector. The objective is to provide evidence of occupational attainment and explore variations based on migration experiences.	The study utilizes a mixed methods approach, combining quantitative data from the MAFE-Senegal survey (2008) and qualitative interviews with return migrants to examine the labour market behaviour and experiences of return migrants.
2.	ASEAN (Wickramasekara 2019)	The main findings highlight the importance of addressing the return and reintegration of migrant workers in the ASEAN region. Comprehensive and gender-responsive services are needed to address the diverse needs of returning migrants, including economic, social and psychosocial support. Global and regional frameworks emphasize the importance of policies and programmes for successful reintegration. However, challenges remain in accessing return and reintegration services. The development of the <i>ASEAN Guidelines on Effective Return and Reintegration of Migrant Workers</i> aims to address these gaps and promote effective and sustainable reintegration policies and programmes in the region.	The methodologies used in the background paper include a desk review of existing research and documents on return and reintegration in the ASEAN region and internationally. The review was based on available public information, supplemented by information provided by the ILO's "TRIANGLE in ASEAN" programme. The focus of the study is primarily on the return and reintegration of migrant workers with a regular status, specifically low- and semi-skilled workers, and does not cover special programmes, such as assisted voluntary return and reintegration. Skilled workers' return and reintegration within ASEAN and beyond are not included in the paper.
3.	Afghanistan (Loschmann and Marchand 2020)	This study examines the labour market outcomes of returned refugees from Iran and Pakistan to Afghanistan, focusing on their reintegration process and access to sustainable income-generating activities. The findings show that returned refugees are less likely to be wage employed compared to non-migrants. Socio-economic factors and migration-related experiences,	The study employed a mixed methods approach, utilizing cross-sectional data from a household survey conducted in Afghanistan in 2011. Comparative analysis was conducted to compare the labour market outcomes of returned refugees and non-migrants. Regression analysis techniques

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		such as education, social networks, employment prior to migration, time spent abroad, savings brought back, return assistance, and intentions to re-migrate, significantly influence their current employment status. These findings offer insights for policymakers addressing the reintegration of returned refugees in Afghanistan.	were used to examine the influence of migration and return experiences on employment status. These methodologies aimed to provide insights into the reintegration process and labour market outcomes of returned refugees in Afghanistan.
4.	Armenia (Chobanyan 2013)	This paper examines return migration and reintegration in Armenia, addressing factors and challenges related to the process. It analyses the reasons for migrants' return, profiles of returnees, challenges faced during reintegration, government policies for reintegration and their effectiveness. The study highlights various patterns of reintegration and provides insights into the institutional framework and the experience of Armenia with returnees. Overall, the research sheds light on the motivations, socio-demographic traits, challenges and policy landscape surrounding return migration in Armenia.	The study employs a methodology comprising a literature review, qualitative analysis, data collection and comparative analysis to examine return migration and reintegration issues among Armenian citizens. It investigates reasons for return, socio-demographic traits, challenges faced, government policies and their effectiveness.
5.	Cambodia (Hatsukano 2019)	The paper focuses on the economic dimension of the reintegration of unskilled or lower-skilled migrant workers. Returning migrants can reintegrate economically by participating in economic activities, such as working at a factory or starting a small business or returning to agricultural work. Comparing the occupations of Cambodian migrants in Thailand after returning to Cambodia, only construction workers tend to continue in the same type of job. Others choose to work in different sectors, and it was difficult to find people who were using the skills they had gained from their migration experience in Thailand.	The analysis draws on limited data from a survey questionnaire, general statistical data and in-depth interviewee information. The survey was conducted on 129 return migrants in two provinces that send more workers to Thailand than other provinces of Cambodia.
6.	Kerala (India) (Rajan and Akhil 2019)	Most return migrants are unskilled or semi-skilled. They have returned because they lost their jobs as a result of the recession and nationalization policies in the Gulf countries. The poor savings rates of return migrants and lack of employment opportunities in the state of origin show that their reintegration cannot take place without the support of the State. The national government needs to	The study used the Kerala Migration Survey, conducted semi-structured interviews and analysed policy documents. It focused on the reintegration of return migrants in Kerala, India. The findings emphasized the need for State support, given that most return migrants were

		create a comprehensive framework for return migrants that involves effective management of their skills gained in the host country, and long-term financial assistance.	unskilled or semi-skilled workers affected by recession and nationalization policies. Additional measures and collaboration between national and state governments were recommended for effective reintegration, including managing acquired skills and providing long-term financial assistance.
7.	Indonesia (Bachtiar and Prasetyo 2017)	This paper expands the understanding of migrant workers beyond remittances, considering human, financial and social capital. It discusses return migration theories and their relevance in Indonesia, highlighting the challenges and importance of reintegration strategies. The study identifies existing reintegration programmes initiated by stakeholders, emphasizing their sporadic and insufficient nature. The paper concludes by emphasizing the need to incorporate reintegration into future legislation for the protection of Indonesian migrant workers.	The methodologies highlighted include a literature survey, in-depth interviews with stakeholders, stakeholder engagement in East Java and West Nusa Tenggara, utilization of existing research, and mapping of reintegration programmes in Indonesia.
8.	Eastern Europe (Martin and Radu 2012)	This study examines return migration in Central and Eastern European countries, using data from labour force surveys and the European Social Survey. The findings show that the income premiums for working abroad range from 10 to 20 per cent, and they are positively related to the relative income position within countries but negatively related to the average income level across countries. Return migrants are less likely to participate in the labour market and may switch to self-employment. However, the relationship between return migration and self-employment is not robust when considering the endogeneity of migration decisions.	The paper utilizes data from labour force surveys and the European Social Survey to conduct a cross-country analysis of return migration in Central and Eastern Europe. The specific methodologies employed within these surveys, such as sampling techniques and data analysis methods, are not explicitly mentioned in the information provided.
9.	Georgia (Tukhashvili 2013)	Significant numbers of return migrants are unemployed or work in discriminatory labour conditions, which do not correspond to their education and work experience. A significant share of these will be forced to migrate in the near future. Many subjective factors prevent return migrants from implementing their business projects.	This study is based on information provided by surveys devoted to labour migration conducted by the author and other scholars, as well as other statistical sources. 205 returning migrants were given “deep interviews” on the problems of their economic and social reintegration; the results were compared with the data from analogous surveys.

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10.	Poland (ICMPD 2019)	Free labour mobility within the European Union has created opportunities for skilled labour exchange, but the consequences of emigration are now evident. Some European Union Member States are considering policies to attract their citizens back, often integrated into diaspora or migration strategies. Return policies lack comprehensive approaches and are implemented on a small scale; evaluation is also limited. Digital media offer effective targeting, while tailored support measures, such as language learning and housing assistance, are crucial. The return policies of Poland need coordination to ensure local integration, and adaptation to changing migration patterns is needed.	The report relied on desk research and expert interviews conducted within the Labour Migration Strategy for Poland project. The analysis focused on three selected return migration instruments, which were discussed during workshops with Government of Poland stakeholders. The lack of a consistent definition of return migration and returnees posed methodological challenges, as different surveys use varying definitions and data sources.
11.	Slovakia (Kureková and Žilinčíková 2020)	The study examines the factors influencing the successful labour market reintegration of return migrants to Slovakia in 2015. Data from a web survey was used to analyse the impact of migration and return motivations, labour market factors, and personal characteristics on post-return labour market integration. The findings indicate that migration purpose and preparedness of returnees have a greater influence on reintegration prospects than labour market factors. Returnees who achieved their migration goals were more likely to reintegrate successfully. Expectations regarding employment opportunities and wage levels may hinder employment prospects after return. The study highlights the need for further research to understand the interconnected nature of migration motivations, return motivations and post-return labour market outcomes.	The methodology used in this study involves the analysis of data from a web survey. The survey was designed to collect information on migration and return motivations, labour market factors, and personal characteristics of return migrants in Slovakia. The researchers assessed the relative importance of these factors in explaining the success or failure of post-return labour market integration. It is likely that statistical analysis techniques were employed to examine the relationships between variables and draw conclusions from the data.
12.	Turkey (Aker and Görmüş 2018)	The study argues that returnees face far greater employment challenges than non-migrants. Holding a university or postgraduate degree facilitates the employment of returnees to a certain degree, but lower levels of educational attainment, employment lacking social security and micro-sized establishments pose several challenges.	The main methodology used in this study is an analysis of labour force survey data conducted by the Turkish Statistical Institute. The study focuses on the economic integration of return migrants and examines whether there are significant differences between return migrants and non-migrants regarding the impact of demographic factors and work-status determinants on their employment. It argues that returnees encounter greater

			employment challenges compared to non-migrants.
13.	Ecuador (Mercier et al. 2016)	This study examines the factors influencing reintegration of Ecuadorian migrants returning from Spain. It finds that reintegration is multidimensional, encompassing various outcomes. Targeted assistance programmes should focus on supporting returnees in starting businesses, supporting vulnerable workers and facilitating the integration of foreign-educated returnees. Further research is needed to better understand the impact of these programmes.	The study utilizes ECM2 survey data on Ecuadorian migrants returning from Spain to examine reintegration determinants. It analyses the correlation between migration experience, pre- and post-migration characteristics, and migrants' outcomes upon return.
14.	Mexico (Wassink and Hagan 2018)	This paper improves the understanding of self-employment among return migrants by identifying three types of self-employment and exploring the underlying mechanisms. The study emphasizes the complex relationship between international migration experiences and labour market mobility, highlighting the need to consider migrants' pre- and post-migration circumstances. It contributes to economic theories of international migration and offers insights for future research on return migration and labour market reintegration.	The study utilizes a longitudinal analysis of Mexican return migrants' labour market trajectories to identify three types of self-employment: survivalist, temporary and prosperous. It integrates research areas on work in Latin America, return migration, and economic theories of international migration. The study explores the mechanisms of human capital formation and life-course stage through narrative analysis.