Labour Migration and Human Development:

Showcase Projects in South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia in 2012

South-Eastern Europe & Turkey:

Diaspora Engagement for Economic Development in Kosovo¹

Donor: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland

“Traditional Kosovar Albanian saying wishes every family six sons; two to go abroad and work, two to take care of the family, and two to die for their country.”

The history of Kosovo is marked by the movement of people especially over the last century, however Kosovar society has not managed to benefit from the full positive potential of migration to stimulate sustainable development.

IOM and UNDP with the generous support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland seek innovative ways to enable the engagement of the Kosovo diaspora in the economic life of their communities of origin.

Through the Diaspora Engagement for Economic Development, DEED, project launched in July 2012, IOM is reaching out to Kosovars abroad as well as public and private sector actors in Kosovo to develop and pilot mechanisms that will remove obstacles for migrants and members of the diaspora who would like to invest in Kosovo.

Thus far IOM has organized seven focus group meetings with around 90 members of the Kosovo diaspora in five of the primary countries of destination, including Austria, Finland, Germany, Sweden, and Switzerland. These meetings have confirmed the interest among the diaspora for investing as well as identified the main barriers, like lack of trust and financial security, lengthy and unclear bureaucratic procedures, and high taxation which hinder the investment. The stimulus that this kind of investment would provide could help reduce the greatest push-factor driving Kosovars to emigrate - the persistently high unemployment rate which stands at above 40%. Diaspora has already been playing an important role in job creation, with 30% of foreign direct investment coming from joint ventures with the diaspora. Through the DEED project IOM is working with the Kosovo authorities and the private sector in order to alleviate some of the aforementioned barriers. The project includes the development of new public policies as well as the establishment of a guarantee facility for expediting access to credit for migrants in their countries of destination. These efforts aim at channelling the vibrant potential of the Kosovar diaspora into stimulating sustainable long term economic growth that will reduce the need for future generations to eave their home to seek economic opportunities abroad.

¹ This designation is without prejudice to position and status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence
"I'm dreaming that I'm on the radio, speaking in Romani. I can hear myself: "Hello Roma, hello children. I wish you good health and luck. Studio. Microphone. Music. Kids who aren’t Roma are playing with us, laughing with us. I’m happy. I’m dreaming I’m on the radio, speaking in Romani."

(Transcript from the radio program “Romanipe”).

Many of Bosnia and Herzegovina’s young people see emigration as a solution to their unemployment problems within the country. Because these same young people are relatively uniformed about both the positive and negative aspects of labour migration, IOM works to raise the awareness of young people and their families about the potential dangers of irregular migration including human trafficking and smuggling. The workshops and trainings are designed especially to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable groups. Amongst them are Roma youth of which 34.2% do not complete elementary school and most frequently cite poverty as the cause. In the Voices of Youth survey conducted as part of the MDG-F Youth. Employability and Retention Programme (MDG-F YERP), only 6.1% of Roma youth declared themselves as employed full time and 25.3% were actively seeking employment. Perhaps as a result of this, they much more frequently declare a willingness to leave the country for seasonal work, to marry, or to permanently settle abroad.

As part of the MDG-F YERP, IOM Sarajevo organized a three day workshop for Roma youth during which they learned about the Romani language, culture, identity, and migration through the creation of radio programmes that addressed these topics. The purpose of the workshop was to provide young people with information about regular and irregular migration within a context that was relevant, interesting, and important to them, while also encouraging them to use their own voices and creativity to speak to their peers around the country through the radio about Roma identity, migration, and language.

At the premises of the Sarajevo University’s campus radio station (Studentski eFM), 20 young people - chosen based on their academic success and active participation in their communities - learned about the history and language of their people (only three of them had any knowledge of the Romani language) and the impact of migration on their identities. They also learnt basic interviewing and recording techniques, practiced interviewing each other about their cultural traditions and holidays, and finally wrote and then translated into Romani poems about their experiences of migration and discrimination. Based on the material they recorded, three radio shows were produced and aired on Studentski eFM and other radio stations around Bosnia and Herzegovina.
A partnership of IOM, universities in the EU (Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg, Karl-Franzens University of Graz, University of Alicante, Université Libre de Bruxelles) and the six universities in the South Caucasus region (Yerevan State University and Russian-Armenian University in Armenia; Khazar University and Qafqaz University in Azerbaijan; Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University and Institute for Public Affairs in Georgia) have resulted in successful development of the basic Curriculum of Migration Studies with a regional dimension. The Curriculum is also in line with the Bologna requirements for implementing two year Master Programmes.

Within the TEMPUS project National Migration Competence Centers (MCC) and a Regional Research Network (RRN) will be established which will serve as an interface between universities, research and public institutions, governments and society. The Regional Online Platform on Migration constitutes another very important project output maintained by the MCCs to support master students through providing relevant literature and data for research purposes and the setup of an e-Learning component. In partnership with IOM the Project will ensure that academic staff, students, professionals, researchers, stakeholders dealing with migration related topics, have access to capacity building, development and employment in the field of migration management complementary to international and national legal strategy and policy standards.

**Eastern Europe & South Caucasus:**

**Migration and Higher Education - Building Skills and Capacities**

**TEMPUS Program in Armenia, Azerbaijan & Georgia**

Donor: EU

Basic Life Skills Update Among young Migrants in Antalya, Turkey

This is the first joint project of IOM with its UN partners in Turkey. IOM’s intervention addressed the adaptation of young migrants to urban life through developing their basic life skills which would promote their chances of gaining employment.

The programme was first implemented via training of trainers for 27 job counsellors of the National Employment Service, İşKUR, who were deployed to different provinces in Turkey. Four job counsellors of İşKUR Antalya Provincial Directorate in cooperation with IOM delivered basic life skills training to 1200 young migrants via 48 cascaded trainings.

The “Basic Life Skills Training Programme”, with its five modules, addresses the essentials for young migrants to adapt to the life in city, seeking jobs and employment opportunities, enhancing interpersonal communication skills, raising awareness on health care and nutrition as well as gender equality and prevention of gender based violence.

As a result of this intensive basic life skills training programme, not only the newly recruited job counsellors have been equipped with the competencies and capabilities related to migration management and delivery of services to vulnerable migrants, but also 1200 unemployed migrant youth were provided with appropriate guidance to adapt to urban life prior to their employment.

The General Directorate of the National Employment Agency has been provided with the training material which can now be used for replication in other provinces of Turkey. İşKUR, given its improved capacity via trained job counsellors and institutional budget, reported its interest to include the basic life skills training programme in the curriculum of the relevant vocational trainings.

Donor: UNJP, IOM
A lack of employment opportunities in the Armenian labour market drives many Armenians to look elsewhere. Migration processes are insufficiently regulated however, and the procedures for selection of migrant workers and regulating emigration are lacking. Therefore the protection of migrant rights becomes much more challenging.

IOM, through the IOM Development Fund, is providing Armenian governmental partners technical assistance in the facilitation of foreign recruitment and circular migration as well as capacity building on labour migration. It is anticipated that this will ultimately lead to relieving unemployment and contributing to development through channelling remittances to more productive use, transfer of “know-how” and the creation of business and trade networks.

A needs assessment of labour migration management has identified main gaps in policy, legislation and administrative structures for both labour emigration and immigration, and resulted in the development of policy options to regulate labour migration. The project also initiated a dialogue between the Armenian government and Armenian diaspora organizations on the diaspora’s role in labour migration management.

IOM facilitated negotiations, aimed at helping Armenians wishing to work abroad, began in June 2011 when a delegation headed by the Minister of Labour and Social Issues of Armenia visited Qatar at the invitation of the Minister of Social Affairs and Labour of the State of Qatar to sign a bilateral agreement concerning the regulation of employment in the State of Qatar. The visit also entailed meetings with potential employers interested in highly qualified Armenian workers.

Since then, IOM has assisted the Government to negotiate bilateral labour agreements with other countries (Kazakhstan, Italy and other EU Member States). In addition to the technical assistance to the Government, IOM has been raising awareness among the population about new opportunities for legal employment abroad, contributing to the elaboration of the procedures for recruitment and pre-departure orientation for migrant workers.

**Pre-signing of the Agreement between Armenia and Qatar**

**The representatives of delegations of the Armenian and Qatari governments and IOM Armenia**

**Experience exchange programme in labour migration to Philippines, November 2012**
MORE ECONOMIC AND ENTREPRENEURIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH AND WOMEN FROM RURAL AREAS

The lack of economic opportunities in the home communities is a primary reason for migration, in particular of youth and women. In order to tackle this problem, IOM launched an economic empowerment and entrepreneurial development initiative for the above mentioned target groups to support independent income generating activities. About 540 people, the majority from socially vulnerable groups from rural areas of Moldova, benefited from free trainings and counseling on business set-up and development during 2011. A hundred training participants out of the trained people received in-kind grants of 2000 Euro, each based on a competitive basis and selected from the submitted business plans. The plans covered a wide range of activities, from cooking and selling bakery in schools and kindergartens, to the development of touristic or computer services.

PROMOTION OF CROSS-BORDER ACADEMIC MOBILITY OF EXPATRIATED SCIENTISTS

A pilot Programme aimed at fostering temporary return of representatives of the Moldovan Scientific Diaspora was implemented by IOM in cooperation with the Academy of Sciences of Moldova during 2011-2012. Its goal was to address brain-drain and to expand Moldova's capacity in increasing the impact of circular migration on the development in the research and development sector through temporary and permanent return and skill transfer.

Over 30 scientific Diaspora representatives from 13 countries (EU and overseas) conducted short-term visits with the purpose of research and teaching activities at institutions in Moldova. As a result of the Programme, the scientific Diaspora representatives have (re-)initiated research collaborations with colleagues from Moldovan research and development institutions, delivered lectures to Master and PhD level students, shared their knowledge and experience. Furthermore, joint articles were published in national and international science journals, and concrete joint projects were developed under different national and international programmes including the EU’s FP7 Programme.

RETURN AND EMPLOYMENT OF YOUNG GRADUATES OF FOREIGN UNIVERSITIES

“Are you a student of a foreign university? Do you want to return to serve your homeland?” – was the key message of a pilot Programme, promoted through Moldovan diplomatic missions abroad, diaspora associations, partners’ channels targeting young people who wished to return and apply their knowledge at home.

By promoting the return of young graduates from foreign universities and facilitating their employment in the local labour market, IOM, in partnership with the Government of Moldova, contributed to the development and sharing of innovative ideas, skill transfer, and enhancement of cross-border professional networks. The Programme was meant as a measure of addressing/reversing brain-drain process and took place in 2011-2012. More than 40 young Moldovan graduates returned home from different European countries, the USA and China, and were offered assistance. One of the beneficiaries stated: “Due to IOM’s support, I accepted an offer to be a project assistant in an NGO as a volunteer. In the future I see myself here, in Moldova, together with my family and friends.”
Towards improved vocational education and training in Kyrgyzstan

Based on an innovative approach, IOM in partnership with the national stakeholders assists with introducing new occupations that are in demand in domestic and foreign labour markets: roofers, car mechanists, car electricians, crane operators and procurers/preparers of agricultural produce.

IOM believes that skilled migrant workers demanded in the labour markets are less susceptible to exploitation, and in order to keep such workers employers tend to provide decent working conditions for them. With this in mind, the training curricula of the selected occupations are being developed in close cooperation with relevant industries and employers’ associations. An added value of the project is gender-mainstreaming of the activities and contributing to eliminating the existing gender segregation of occupations in the vocational education and training system of Kyrgyzstan.

Bringing employment opportunities closer to people in Kyrgyzstan

In Kyrgyzstan IOM helped the Government to launch a first Employment Centre that facilitates employment in the domestic and foreign labour markets. The Kyrgyz citizens have now the opportunity to look for jobs both locally and abroad through a one stop shop facility.

Interested job seekers are first suggested to explore job offers in the domestic labour market and, if they are not satisfied with the local offers, the job seekers are referred to the information on employment opportunities abroad. The Programme of Employment Abroad provides a whole range of job vacancies and relevant services in the neighbouring countries as well as overseas. The number of visitors to the Centre has increased significantly, and the Centre is quite popular among the unemployed citizens of Kyrgyzstan.
Migrant Training and Counselling

Donor: DFID, Aga Khan Foundation

As a part of the multi-component Central Asia Regional Migration Programme implemented in Central Asia and Russia, Migrant Support Centers (MSCs) are operating in Tajikistan to provide quality information and counseling, and to ensure legal assistance and referral services.

These Migrant Support Centers facilitate information delivery and counseling through office and mobile awareness rising sessions, individual counseling and hotline operation. Comprehensively designed information materials in simple language have been developed and are regularly distributed during info sessions. A total of 32,971 beneficiaries were supported in 2012 through info sessions, mobile and office consultations. One of the most demanded services among migrants was support in verifying if their legal status still allowed them to enter their main destination country—the Russian Federation. IOM-supported MSCs explained to the migrants about existing ways of verifying their right to enter Russia before undertaking the journey.

Want to learn something new? Join trainings!

In 2011 and 2012 specialists of the IOM Moscow Information-Resource Center were invited to conduct educational training in a summer camp for foreign students. The summer camp was a part of a pilot project targeting young migrants and implemented upon the initiative of the “Aga Khan” Foundation in Russia. During two weeks about twenty five young people (mostly from Tajikistan), of 18-25 years old, gathered together from all Russian regions: from Saint-Petersburg to Novokuznetsk. IOM consultants presented theoretical and practical sessions on various migration issues to the participants who demonstrated a vivid interest and creativity during the study process. In April 2012, IOM Information-Resource Center specialists trained Tajik migrant workers (men and women) on health protection issues in the “Opora Druzhby” Center for migrants’ assistance in Moscow. The training was conducted in a modern computer classroom for 25 people. IOM colleagues spoke about legal aspects of receiving emergency and planned medical services by foreigners in Russia (adults and children), highlighted aspects of medical assistance for migrant women during the period of pregnancy and childbirth, spoke about the necessity of prevention of Tuberculosis. The migrants actively participated in the information sessions of the training and demonstrated desire to learn more about the topics.

Mobile Consultations in train Dushanbe - Moscow

For the second year, IOM Moscow Information-Resource center colleagues in cooperation with the counselors of the Trade Union of Labor Migrants in Moscow, organized mobile consultations in trains coming to Russia from Dushanbe, Tajikistan. “Trainings on the wheels” are conducted during the middle of the spring to early summer, which is the high season for labour migration to Russia. Trains remain the most popular transport for migrant workers to enter the country. At the same time, these are the most effective points for information campaign and counseling of migrants who are just entering the country and have time to quietly talk and think about next steps after arrival. Consultations are held in a form of open discussions, with consultants who speak both the Russian and Tajik languages. Migrants, both men and women, are informed how to legally reside and work in Russia, what steps should be done to receive a work permit, get medical and social insurance and access free education courses. As the most valuable asset, useful contacts, booklets, hotline business cards and journals developed specifically for migrants are given out for free. As a result of these consultations conducted in trains in 2012, about 1,500 migrants travelling to Moscow from Dushanbe were counselled on topics such as legal stay, employment and main rights in the Russian Federation. Although labour migration flows to Russia amount to hundred thousands, it is good to realize that at least these people who were consulted on the trains got to know their rights and duties during their stay in Russia and can competently exercise them.
FREE MASTER-CLASSES ON THE ART OF PHOTOGRAPHY FOR MIGRANT STUDENTS

Donors: Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic in the Russian Federation, Foundation for Support of Documentary Photography, IOM

In November 2012 the Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic in the Russian Federation jointly with the International Organization for Migration’s mission in Moscow and the Foundation for Support of Documentary Photography on the territory of the former USSR, organized a free workshop on the art of photography for foreign students from Central Asian countries.

The workshop trainer was Oleg Klimov, a documentary photographer, the Chairman of the Foundation for Support of the Documentary Photography. He conducted a theoretical and practical express "master class" course on photo art for more than 30 migrant students studying in different Moscow universities.

The main thematic slogan of the workshop was "A Big City for All".

This and other master-classes encouraged creativity among young migrant students, providing them with additional professional skills in the sphere of art. They also contributed to the formation of sense of tolerance through photographic artistic reflection of urban landscape and the life of Muscovites.

The most successful photos made by the migrant students were chosen by the trainer and published in several printing and electronic media. Information about this event is available on the website:

http://journal.liberty.su/notes/nurzhannat/?rss&utm_campaign=nurzhannat