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# New and innovative ways to attract foreign talents in the EU

European Migration  
Network – OECD joint Inform

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## Explanatory note

This inform was prepared on the basis of national contributions from 21 EMN NCPs (AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, EE, FI, FR, DE, HU, IE, IT, LV, LT, LU, NL, PL, PT, SK, SI, SE) collected via an AHQ developed by the EMN NCPs to ensure, to the extent possible, comparability. Information on non-EU OECD countries was collected and provided by the OECD. The information contained in this inform refers to the situation in the abovementioned EMN Member and Observer Countries up to March 2024.

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# CONTENTS

1. KEY POINTS TO NOTE	4
2. AIM AND SCOPE OF THE INFORM	4
3. CONTEXT AND RATIONALE	5
3.1. International context	5
3.2. European context	5
4. NEW AND INNOVATIVE INITIATIVES TO ATTRACT FOREIGN LABOUR	6
4.1. High value-added economic sectors	7
4.2. Overview of new and innovative approaches	8
4.3. Actors and funding sources	16
5. MONITORING AND EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INITIATIVES TO ATTRACT FOREIGN TALENT	17
6. CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING INITIATIVES TO ATTRACT FOREIGN TALENT	18
ANNEX 1: OVERVIEW OF INITIATIVES	19



## 1. KEY POINTS TO NOTE

- European Migration Network (EMN) Member Countries<sup>1</sup> vary in their understanding of 'high value-added economic sectors'. Commonly reported sectors are health-care and life sciences (including social work and the pharmaceutical industry), information communication technology (ICT) and (high) technology and manufacturing and chemical industries.
- Since 2021, 15 EMN Member Countries have introduced multiple new innovative approaches to attract foreign talent. Of these, eight EMN Member Countries reported having used European Union (EU) funds and/or relying on EU initiatives and action, such as the Talent Partnerships. Italy was the only one to report projects relying exclusively on EU funding, with the remaining seven countries reporting a mix of projects funded by both EU and national sources. Additionally, six EMN Member Countries only reported projects that were organised and funded nationally.
- Six EMN Member Countries reported no new initiatives. This does not necessarily indicate an absence of measures to attract foreign talent, but, rather, that existing measures were neither new nor specifically targeted. Each EMN Member Country defined 'new and innovative' at its own discretion.
- Initiatives often target specific economic sectors or countries of origin. High-skilled sectors such as information technology (IT), engineering, and healthcare are commonly targeted, with the Philippines, India, and Brazil frequently mentioned as countries of origin.
- Websites targeting third-country nationals and employers, commonly used by EMN Member Countries to attract foreign talent, serve purposes such as providing job listings, guidance on recruitment and migration procedures, and facilitating direct connections between jobseekers and employers. Other initiatives include diplomatic efforts and tax and other financial incentives.
- Six EMN Member Countries are implementing or planning programmes to validate and develop skills in third countries. Thirteen EMN Member Countries provide third-country nationals with pre- and post-arrival assistance, such as relocation information and cultural orientation.
- Initiatives are implemented by a range of actors, including national authorities, private stakeholders, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Ministries of Economic Affairs, Labour, and (sometimes) Migration or Foreign Affairs play a key role, with private enterprise and NGOs involved to varying extents, depending on the project.
- Ten EMN Member Countries regularly monitor their initiatives to attract foreign talent. For example, seven have already carried out evaluations, with five more planning or implementing evaluations.
- Ten EMN Member Countries reported challenges that can deter participation in these initiatives, including complex administrative processes, verifying foreign qualifications, coordinating stakeholders, and integration difficulties.



## 2. AIM AND SCOPE OF THE INFORM

This EMN inform provides an overview of EMN Member Countries' and selected non-EMN Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) member countries' new and/or innovative initiatives to attract foreign talent between January 2021 and March 2024. It explores practical initiatives by national authorities to attract foreign talent, focusing on specific programmes and projects rather than legal frameworks, including national initiatives that receive support from EU funding, such as those organised under the Talent Partnerships framework. It also analyses whether and how EMN Member Countries monitor the effectiveness of these initiatives and identify related challenges and good practices. This analysis was prepared on the basis of contributions from 21 EMN Member Countries<sup>2</sup> and the OECD.

The inform focuses on two groups of foreign talent: third-country nationals with higher professional qualifications or skills; and those of all skill levels working in high value-added economic sectors. The inclusion of the latter group takes into account evolving innovation processes in the EU that are reshaping the landscape of labour migration by blurring the strict line between skill groups. This is particularly challenging in high-skills areas, where European businesses risk overlooking qualified candidates who lack a degree or accredited certification.<sup>3</sup> High value-added economic sectors are understood in terms of the substantial economic value they add to the economies of EMN Member Countries. This document does not include international students, whose primary aim is to pursue higher education.

<sup>1</sup> Key points provide a summary of the main information contained in the inform. For ease of reading, key points do not contain footnotes. EMN Member and Observer Countries referenced here are listed in full in the relevant sections.

<sup>2</sup> AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DE, EE, FI, FR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, NL, PL, PT, SE, SI, SK.

<sup>3</sup> EURACTIV, The EU made the case for digital – now the skills must follow, 2023, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/digital/opinion/the-eu-made-the-case-for-digital-now-the-skills-must-follow/>, last accessed on 19 November 2024.



## 3. CONTEXT AND RATIONALE

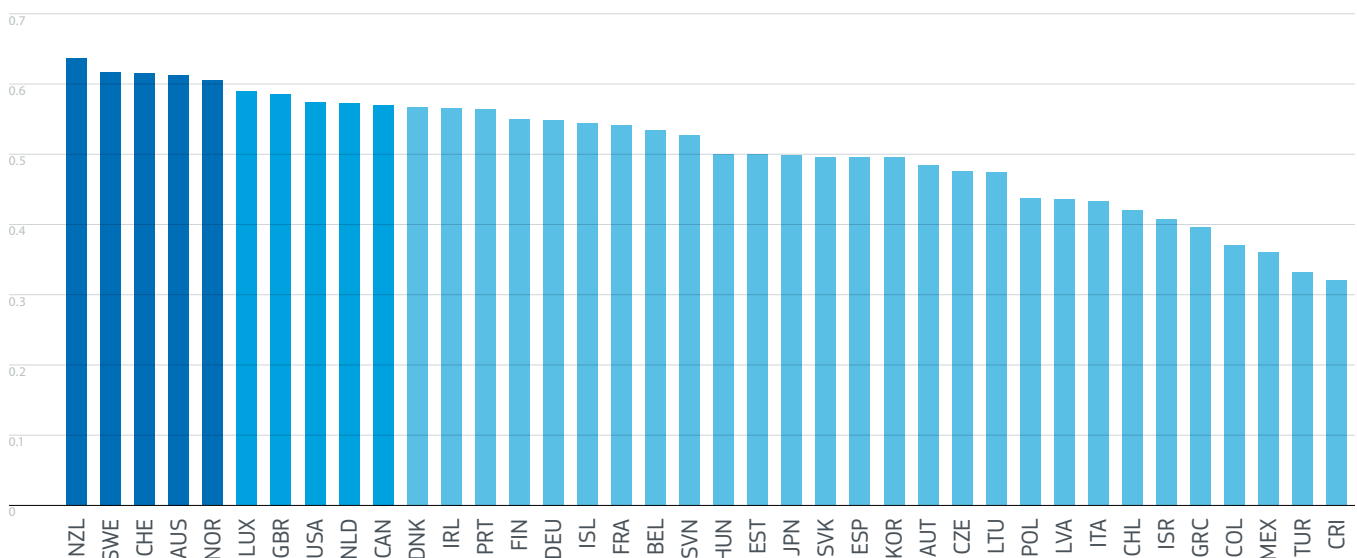
### 3.1. International context

The increasing global competition for talent has resulted in a convergence of migration policy frameworks across EMN and OECD countries.<sup>4</sup> This convergence often reflects a shared focus on attracting highly skilled workers, fostering innovation, and addressing labour market shortages. However, significant differences in policies and practices remain.

Talent attractiveness is partially determined by migration conditions and programmes, such as visa processes, work permits, and pathways to residency. However, it also depends on broader factors, such as economic opportunities, quality of life, cost of living, and societal openness. The **OECD Indicators of Talent Attractiveness** (ITA) were launched in 2019 as a benchmark of countries' ability to attract talent.<sup>5</sup> The ITA framework distinguishes between four different migrant profiles: highly skilled workers, entrepreneurs, international

students, and start-up founders, reflecting that groups are attracted by different things. The ITA also includes migration policy as a factor in the attractiveness of potential host countries. The indicators assess visa and admission barriers and consider the impact of other migration-related policies, such as the right of spouses to join and work, financial incentives through tax breaks for foreign nationals, and the ease with which immigrants' children can obtain citizenship. Accordingly, the indicators include a range of economic and social dimensions that jointly play a role in recognising and rewarding international talent, such as job opportunities, wage levels, and opportunities for career progression, as well as access to quality healthcare and education, affordable housing, and the overall inclusiveness of society. The second edition of the ITA was released in 2023, with New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland, Australia, and Norway ranked as the most attractive OECD countries for highly skilled workers (Figure 1).<sup>6</sup>

**Figure 1: Most attractive OECD countries for highly skilled workers, 2023**



Source: OECD ITA 2023.

This inform complements the OECD ITA by exploring specific initiatives and programmes beyond legal pathways introduced by EMN Member Countries and, where applicable, non-EMN OECD countries to attract foreign talent.

### 3.2. European context

Skills shortages challenge the labour markets of several EU countries, driven by factors such as ageing populations, rapid technological change, increased demand for specific

labour categories, and uncertainty about future economic growth in multiple sectors and occupations.<sup>7</sup> In 2023, the European Commission's Communication on Skills and Talent Mobility highlighted the EU's difficulties in attracting talent from abroad.<sup>8</sup> More specifically, the European Skills Agenda underscored a growing demand for digital experts in advanced sectors, reflected in companies seeking highly skilled individuals in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields essential for fostering innovation.<sup>9</sup>

4 OECD, 'How do OECD countries compare in their attractiveness for talented migrants?', 2019, [https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/how-do-oecd-countries-compare-in-their-attractiveness-for-talented-migrants\\_ba9ce632-en.html](https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/how-do-oecd-countries-compare-in-their-attractiveness-for-talented-migrants_ba9ce632-en.html), last accessed on 15 November 2024.

5 OECD, 'Talent Attractiveness', 2023, <https://www.oecd.org/migration/talent-attractiveness/>, last accessed on 10 September 2024.

6 OECD, 'What is the best country for global talents in the OECD', <https://web.archive.oecd.org/2023-03-09/652850-What-is-the-best-country-for-global-talents-in-the-OECD-Migration-Policy-Debates-March-2023.pdf>, last accessed on 18 September 2024.

7 European Commission, 'Mapping and analysing bottleneck vacancies in EU Labor Markets', 2014.

8 Communication on Skills and Talent Mobility, COM (2023) 715 final, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52023DC0715>, last accessed on 12 August 2024.

9 Communication on a European Skills Agenda for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience, COM (2020) 274 final, pp. 12-14, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52020DC0274>, last accessed on 12 September 2024.

Attracting foreign talent is recognised as increasingly vital for EMN Member Countries to sustain economic growth in the context of persistent skills shortages.<sup>10</sup> As the global competition for talent is intensifying, countries try to attract and retain foreign workers through strategies such as the creation of local economic opportunities, upskilling the workforce, and effective leveraging of non-European Economic Area (EEA) talent.<sup>11</sup> Recent analyses highlight the growing role of third-country nationals in filling gaps across various sectors, including digital and green jobs, yet their overall participation remains low.<sup>12</sup>

The EU aims to increase its efforts to attract foreign workers, recognising their crucial role in driving growth, competitiveness, and innovation, particularly in the ongoing transition to green<sup>13</sup> and digital economies.<sup>14</sup> The Communication on Attracting Skills and Talent (2022) proposes specific legislative, operational, and forward-looking policy initiatives. These initiatives include the adoption of the Recast Single Permit Directive (2024/1233/EU) in April 2023,<sup>15</sup> the ongoing negotiations on the Recast Long-Term Residents Directive (2003/109/EC),<sup>16</sup> bolstering cooperation with partner countries through Talent Partnerships, adoption of the Commission proposal for a Regulation establishing the EU Talent Pool,<sup>17</sup> and the revised EU Blue Card Directive<sup>18</sup> for highly-skilled workers.<sup>19</sup> Talent Partnerships provide a comprehensive policy framework and funding to enhance mutually beneficial international mobility based on a better matching of labour market needs and skills between the EU and partner countries. Co-funded by the

EU Trust Fund for Africa, the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe (NDICI-GE), and the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) through the Migration Partnership Facility (MPF), these partnerships support study, work, and training opportunities.<sup>20</sup> Outside of the Talent Partnerships, the broader AMIF 2021–2027 programme supports legal migration to the Member States, including funding initiatives to attract highly skilled third-country nationals, support job placement, and foster integration efforts.<sup>21</sup> The European Commission's MPF also assists EU Member States to implement projects with target third countries.<sup>22</sup>

This topic continues to be explored in previous and upcoming EMN publications. An EMN study in 2015 identified instruments used by EU Member States to pinpoint skill shortages and quantify the need for migrant labour from third countries,<sup>23</sup> while a 2019 study explored the incentives in place for international students to study and then join the labour market in EU Member States.<sup>24</sup> The topic of foreign talent attraction has been examined in more detail in three EMN informs, on legal pathways (2021),<sup>25</sup> skills mobility partnerships (2022),<sup>26</sup> and the attraction and retention of international researchers (2022).<sup>27</sup> A 2024 EMN study will focus on labour migration in times of labour shortages.

This inform complements existing and upcoming EMN publications by focusing on innovative initiatives to attract foreign talent in EMN Member Countries and providing insights into measurement of their effectiveness.



## 4. NEW AND INNOVATIVE INITIATIVES TO ATTRACT FOREIGN LABOUR

This section presents an overview of high value-added economic sectors in EMN Member Countries. It outlines how they are defined and updated, as well as the new and innovative projects and programmes adopted by EMN Member Countries to attract foreign talent to these sectors. These initiatives arise from different contexts and

are tailored to specific goals, such as addressing labour shortages, fostering innovation, or enhancing global competitiveness. This section also highlights several particularly innovative projects linked to legal pathways reported by EMN Member Countries and the OECD. It also outlines additional forms of assistance in attracting foreign

10 OECD, 'OECD Indicators of Talent Attractiveness: What is the best country for global talents in the OECD?' March 2023.

11 OECD, 'OECD Indicators of Talent Attractiveness: What is the best country for global talents in the OECD?' March 2023.

12 European Commission, Joint Research Centre (JRC), 'Labour Migration: What's in it for Countries of Destination and Origin?', 2024 [https://joint-research-centre.ec.europa.eu/jrc-news-and-updates/labour-migration-whats-it-countries-destination-and-origin-2024-06-12\\_en#:~:text=Migration%20can%20stimulate%20a%20beneficial,income%20levels%20via%20financial%20remittances](https://joint-research-centre.ec.europa.eu/jrc-news-and-updates/labour-migration-whats-it-countries-destination-and-origin-2024-06-12_en#:~:text=Migration%20can%20stimulate%20a%20beneficial,income%20levels%20via%20financial%20remittances), last accessed on 12 September 2024.

13 European Commission, 'Green Transition', n.d., [https://reform-support.ec.europa.eu/what-we-do/green-transition\\_en](https://reform-support.ec.europa.eu/what-we-do/green-transition_en), last accessed on 12 August 2024.

14 European Commission, 'Digital Transition', n.d., [https://reform-support.ec.europa.eu/what-we-do/digital-transition\\_en](https://reform-support.ec.europa.eu/what-we-do/digital-transition_en), last accessed on 12 August 2024.

15 Directive (EU) 2024/1233 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 April 2024 on a single application procedure for a single permit for third-country nationals to reside and work in the territory of a Member State and on a common set of rights for third-country workers legally residing in a Member State (recast), [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ%3AL\\_202401233](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ%3AL_202401233), last accessed on 19 November 2024.

16 Council Directive 2003/109/EC of 25 November 2003 concerning the status of third-country nationals who are long-term residents, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2003/109/oj>, last accessed on 19 November 2024.

17 Regulation establishing an EU talent pool, [https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/regulation-establishing-eu-talent-pool\\_en](https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/regulation-establishing-eu-talent-pool_en), last accessed on 19 November 2024.

18 Directive (EU) 2021/1883 – conditions of entry to and residence in the European Union of non-EU nationals for the purpose of highly qualified employment, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/EN/legal-content/summary/eu-blue-card-entry-and-residence-of-highly-qualified-workers-from-2023.html>, last accessed on 19 November 2024.

19 Communication on Attracting Skills and Talent to the EU, COM (2022) 657 final, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52022DC0657>, last accessed on 12 August 2024.

20 European Commission, 'Talent Partnerships', n.d., [https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/migration-and-asylum/legal-migration-and-integration/talent-partnerships\\_en](https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/migration-and-asylum/legal-migration-and-integration/talent-partnerships_en), last accessed on 12 August 2024.

21 European Commission, 'Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund 2021–2027', 2024, [https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/funding/asylum-migration-and-integration-funds/asylum-migration-and-integration-fund-2021-2027\\_en](https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/funding/asylum-migration-and-integration-funds/asylum-migration-and-integration-fund-2021-2027_en), last accessed on 12 August 2024.

22 European Commission, 'Migration Partnership Facility (MPF)', 2024, [https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/international-affairs/migration-partnership-facility-mpf\\_en](https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/international-affairs/migration-partnership-facility-mpf_en), last accessed on 12 August 2024.

23 European Migration Network (EMN), 'EMN study on determining labour shortages and the need from third countries in the EU – EMN inform', 2015, [https://www.emn.lt/uploads/Products/product\\_1445/ES\\_studija-EN.pdf](https://www.emn.lt/uploads/Products/product_1445/ES_studija-EN.pdf), last accessed on 12 August 2024.

24 European Migration Network (EMN), 'EMN study on attracting and retaining international students in the EU – EMN inform', 2019, [https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-05/00\\_eu\\_international\\_students\\_study\\_2018\\_en.pdf](https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-05/00_eu_international_students_study_2018_en.pdf), last accessed on 12 August 2024.

25 European Migration Network (EMN), 'EMN inform on exploring legal pathways to fulfil labour needs – EMN inform', 2021, [https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-07/00\\_eu\\_legal\\_pathways\\_inform\\_2021\\_en\\_0.pdf](https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-07/00_eu_legal_pathways_inform_2021_en_0.pdf), last accessed on 12 August 2024.

26 European Migration Network and OECD, 'EMN inform on skills mobility partnerships: Exploring innovative approaches to labour migration – EMN inform', 2022, <https://www.oecd.org/migration/mig/2022-March-Joint-EMN-OECD-Inform-Skills-Mobility-Partnerships.pdf>, last accessed on 12 August 2024.

27 European Migration Network (EMN), 'EMN inform on attracting and retaining international researchers – EMN inform', 2022, [https://www.emn.lt/uploads/Products/product\\_1934/EMN\\_inform\\_international\\_researchers.2022.pdf](https://www.emn.lt/uploads/Products/product_1934/EMN_inform_international_researchers.2022.pdf), last accessed on 12 August 2024.



talent, such as skills validation and development, and other supports before, during, and after arrival.

#### 4.1. High value-added economic sectors

**Understandings of ‘high value-added economic sectors’ vary between EMN Member Countries and can change over time.** Nineteen EMN Member Countries reported compiling a list of high value-added economic sectors in their country.<sup>28</sup> Nevertheless, EMN Member Countries have different ways of framing what constitutes a ‘high value-added economic sector’. In Italy, the list of high value-added sectors is based on various laws regulating broader economic sectors, Austria and Germany focus on ‘shortage occupations’,<sup>29</sup> while the Netherlands focuses on sectors that contribute the most to the overall economy, particularly those where it has a strong global influence or competitive standing. Germany also monitors overall trends across all sectors.

**The structure and format of these lists vary between EMN Member Countries:**

■ **In seven EMN Member Countries, the government identifies sectors of high value-added sectors in policy or legislation.**<sup>30</sup> In Finland, the sectors listed in the Government Programme are focused on talent attraction, based on current demand rather than being tied to specific industries. Similarly, in Austria, the list is composed of shortage occupations rather than economic sectors but highlights areas crucial for attracting talent. In the Netherlands, the sectors are based on various policy documents, including a list of the top 10 high value-added sectors and the national technology strategy, which identifies key technologies for future development.

■ **In three EMN Member Countries the identification and prioritisation of ‘high value-added economic sectors’ is determined outside of formal frameworks.**<sup>31</sup> In Belgium, this list is regularly updated on the Federal Public Service Economy (*Service Public Fédéral Économie*) website.<sup>32</sup> In Estonia, certain sectors have been politically and strategically prioritised in recent years, while in France, the Ministry of Economy, Finance, and Recovery strategically designates specific high value-added sectors.

**EMN Member Countries identify high value-added economic sectors in different ways.** In seven EMN Member Countries, high value-added economic sectors are selected on the basis of **key economic indicators** such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Gross Value Added (GVA), and investment trends.<sup>33</sup> In Austria, in addition to the annual shortage occupation list, the Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy and the Public Employment Service (PES) identify occupations with significant shortages through the quarterly Skilled Labour Barometer. Three EMN Member Countries draft lists of high value-added economic sectors on the basis of targeted research.<sup>34</sup> In Estonia, in addition to politically designated sectors, authorities identify other high value-added sectors through regular research by an Estonian Skills and Career Development Foundation (*Oskuse ja Karjääri Arendamise Sihtasutus – OSKA*) and the Estonian Qualifications Authority (*Kutsekoda*).

Table 1 presents the economic sectors recognised as high value-added of different EMN Member Countries. It highlights how EMN Member Countries prioritise labour in various high-skilled sectors, such as ICT, research and education, and financial services, as well as in low-skilled sectors such as agriculture and hospitality. However, many high value-added economic sectors, such as healthcare and construction, continue to require both high and low-skilled workers.

**Table 1: High value-added economic sectors across EMN Member Countries**

High value-added economic sector <sup>35</sup>	EMN Member Countries
Healthcare and life sciences, including social work and the pharmaceutical industry	BE, CY, CZ, DE, FI, FR, HU, IE, IT, LT (life sciences), LU, LV, NL, SI, SK
ICT and (high) technology	CZ, DE, EE, FR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, NL, SI, SK
Manufacturing and chemical industry	BE, CY, DE, EE, FR, IE, IT, LU, NL, PL, SI, SK (manager, specialist, researcher level)
Research and education	DE, EE, IE, IT, LU, LV, SK
Services and hospitality	CY, IE, IT, LU, PL, SK (manager level)
Agriculture and food	BE, HU, IE, IT, LU, NL, SK (manager level)
Transport and logistics, including aircraft and aerospace	CY, CZ, DE, FR, LU, NL, SK (manager, specialist level)

<sup>28</sup> AT (shortage occupations, rather than high value-added economic sectors), BE, CY, CZ, DE (shortage occupations), EE, FI, FR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, NL, PL, PT, SI, SK.

<sup>29</sup> In Austria, there is an official definition for the term ‘shortage occupation’, which is used to create the shortage occupation list. In the event of a longer-term need for labour that cannot be covered by the available domestic labour force, shortage occupations in which foreigners can be admitted as skilled workers for employment in the entire federal territory or in certain provinces are defined by regulation for the following calendar year in order to secure the economic and employment location. The 110 nationwide shortage occupations identified for 2024 can be assigned to all three economic sectors (raw materials [primary sector], manufacturing [secondary sector] and services [tertiary sector]); Make it in Germany, ‘2024 Skilled Worker Shortage Professions (Mangelberufe)’, 2024, [https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/fileadmin/1\\_Rebrush\\_2022/a\\_Fachkraefte/PDF-Dateien/3\\_Visum\\_u\\_Aufenthalt/2024\\_Mangelberufe\\_DE.pdf](https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/fileadmin/1_Rebrush_2022/a_Fachkraefte/PDF-Dateien/3_Visum_u_Aufenthalt/2024_Mangelberufe_DE.pdf), last accessed on 10 November 2024.

<sup>30</sup> AT (shortage occupations), CY, FI, LT, LV, SK, NL.

<sup>31</sup> BE, EE, FR.

<sup>32</sup> FPS Economy, ‘Aperçu de l’activité économique’, n.d., <https://economie.fgov.be/fr/themes/entreprises/analyses-economiques/conjoncture-en-belgique/apercu-de-lactivite-economique>, last accessed on 15 October 2024.

<sup>33</sup> BE, CY, CZ, IE, IT, LU, PT.

<sup>34</sup> EE, FR, NL.

<sup>35</sup> Austria’s Regulation for Skilled Workers for 2024 lists 110 shortage occupations nationwide and additional regional shortage occupations in the nine Austrian provinces, covering a wide range of sectors.

High value-added economic sector <sup>35</sup>	EMN Member Countries
Financial services and insurance	CY, FR, IT, LU, SK (manager level)
Energy and power technologies	DE (mining – manager level), CY, CZ, IT, LV, NL, SK (specialist level)
Engineering and automotive industries	CZ, DE (construction and civil engineering – manager level), EE, IT, LT, LV, SI
Creative industries	DE (architecture and graphic design), LU, NL
City and infrastructure planning	DE

The criteria used to describe high value-added sectors also vary in non-EU OECD countries. For example, Australia's Global Talent Visa indicates different sectors, but not all occupations within those sectors are considered high value-added, nor is the government list exhaustive (see Box 3).<sup>36</sup>

## 4.2. Overview of new and innovative approaches

Innovative approaches can be understood as projects and programmes that develop creative solutions, advanced technologies, or tailored programmes to better address current labour market needs and adapt to evolving conditions. Since 2021, 15 EMN Member Countries have implemented new or innovative approaches to attracting foreign talent.<sup>37</sup> All 15 reported implementing multiple initiatives, often tailored to specific sectors.<sup>38</sup> In Austria and Finland, initiatives to attract foreign talent are organised under broader programmes with overarching goals: the International Skilled Workers Initiative in Austria, and the Talent Boost programme in Finland.<sup>39</sup> In Luxembourg, initiatives are organised under the remit of an Interministerial Committee, which replaced the previous Talent Attraction Working Group in 2024. The Committee defines strategic directions and follows up on government efforts to attract

foreign talent, involving key ministries and professional chambers.

Six EMN Member Countries did not introduce any new or innovative approaches between January 2021 and March 2024.<sup>40</sup> However, this does not imply a lack of measures or initiatives, but, rather, indicates that the measures in place were neither new nor innovative, nor did they specifically target the groups outlined in the inform. The reasons varied, as each country used its discretion to determine what it considered new and innovative.

Overall, 15 EMN Member Countries<sup>41</sup> focus at least one of their initiatives on specific economic sectors, while nine<sup>42</sup> target specific third countries of origin, with some initiatives<sup>43</sup> targeting both specific sectors and countries of origin. Tables 2 and 3 present an overview of these economic sectors and countries. The economic sectors targeted most frequently are technology, ICT, and healthcare, while the most targeted third countries of origin are the Philippines, India and Brazil. Many initiatives are aimed at economic sectors that demand high-skilled workers such as ICT/technology, engineering, and life sciences, although some also address economic sectors spanning different skill levels, such as health and care services.<sup>44</sup> Annex 1 presents a country-by-country overview of initiatives.

**Table 2: Economic sectors targeted by EMN Member Country initiatives**

Targeted sector	EMN Member Country
Technology and ICT	ICT/technology: AT, BE, EE, FI, FR, IE, LT, LU, LV, NL, SE, SK
Health and life sciences	Health and care: AT, BE, DE, FI, FR, IE Life sciences: LT, LV, NL, SE Chemistry: NL Biomedicine, pharmaceuticals: LV
Engineering	Engineering: AT, IE, LT, LV, SE Manufacturing: FI, SE Mechatronics: IT Energy: LV, NL

36 Department of Home Affairs, 'Global Talent Independent Programme – Eligibility', n.d., <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/working-in-australia/visas-for-innovation/global-talent-independent-program/eligibility>, last accessed on 10 September 2024.

37 AT, BE, DE, EE, FI, FR, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, NL, SE, SI, SK.

38 AT, BE, DE, EE, FI, FR, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, NL, SE, SI, SK.

39 Austrian Federal Economic Chamber, 'Internationale Fachkräfteoffensive', n.d., <https://www.bmaw.gv.at/European-Year-of-Skills/Newsletter/3-Newsletter-Fachkraefte/2-Fachkraefte-gesucht/Internationale-Fachkraefte-Offensive-.html>, last accessed on 12 August 2024; Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland, 'Talent Boost', n.d., <https://tem.fi/en/talent-boost-en>, last accessed on 12 August 2024.

40 BG, CY, CZ, HU, PL, PT.

41 AT, BE, DE, EE, FI, FR, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, NL, SE, SI, SK.

42 AT, DE, EE, FI, IT, IE, LT, SI, SK.

43 AT, BE, DE, EE, IE, IT, LT.

44 European Commission, 'Employment and Social Developments in Europe (ESDE) 2023: Labour Shortages', 2023, <https://op.europa.eu/webpub/empl/esde-2023/chapters/chapter-2-6.html>, last accessed on 22 August 2024.



Targeted sector	EMN Member Country
<b>Business, finance, and start-ups</b>	Finance: LU, NL Start-ups: BE, EE, FR, IE, NL
<b>Manufacturing and industry</b>	DE, FI, LV (smart energy and mobility), SE
<b>Construction</b>	BE, DE, IT
<b>Logistics and infrastructure</b>	NL
<b>Agriculture and environment</b>	NL
<b>Tourism and hospitality</b>	AT, IT
<b>Creative industries</b>	NL
<b>Education</b>	FR
<b>Skilled trades</b>	AT
<b>Knowledge intensive bioeconomy</b>	LV

**Table 3: Third countries of origin targeted by initiatives**

	Targeted countries of origin EMN Member Country
<b>Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia</b>	Ukraine: LT (before 2022), SK Bosnia and Herzegovina: DE, SI Georgia: BE, DE Moldova: DE, SK Albania: AT, LT Belarus: LT (before 2022) Serbia: SI Kosovo: AT Armenia: LT United Kingdom (UK): IE Uzbekistan: DE
<b>Middle East and North Africa (MENA)</b>	Jordan: BE, DE, IE Lebanon: BE, IE Tunisia: BE, IT, DE Morocco: BE, DE, IT Egypt: DE, IT Iraq: LT
<b>Sub-Saharan Africa</b>	Kenya: DE, LT Nigeria: BE, LT Ghana: DE Côte d'Ivoire: BE South Africa: IE Senegal: BE
<b>Asia</b>	Philippines: AT, FI, DE, IE India: AT, FI, DE Indonesia: AT, DE Vietnam: FI Hong Kong: IE
<b>Oceania</b>	Australia: IE New Zealand: IE
<b>The Americas</b>	Brazil: AT, DE, EE, FI, LT Argentina: LT Colombia: DE, LT Ecuador: DE El Salvador: DE Mexico: DE, LT Suriname: BE Canada: IE United States (US): IE

## National Initiatives to attract foreign talent

Since 2021, EMN Member Countries have used websites and online platforms, fast-track procedures, diplomatic efforts, and tax and financial incentives as new and innovative methods to attract foreign talent.

### Websites and platforms for recruitment and information

EMN Member Countries typically use websites targeting prospective job applicants from third countries and employers seeking to hire foreign talent, providing resources such as job listings, guidance on recruitment and migration procedures, and tools to facilitate connections between candidates and employers. Four EMN Member Countries<sup>45</sup> use general platforms for posting vacancies for both domestic and third-country job applicants, 11 have developed<sup>46</sup> and one is developing<sup>47</sup> websites or webpages specifically targeting employers and prospective third-country national employees. In nine EMN Member Countries,<sup>48</sup> these websites include job vacancy listings, with six<sup>49</sup> offering filters or exclusively displaying job vacancies that do not require proficiency in (all of) the country's official languages. Luxembourg has three separate complementary websites targeting the attraction of foreign talent: *Work in Luxembourg* provides information for foreign talent potentially interested in working in Luxembourg, including vacancies and direct communication between registered users and employers via dedicated video and chat; *Digital Skills Luxembourg* focuses on digital skills development and opportunities; and *Move to Lux* provides guidance on relocating and finding jobs in the finance sector.<sup>50</sup> Together, they cover job matching, skills enhancement, and relocation support.

Nine EMN Member Countries<sup>51</sup> have created **websites to attract foreign talent in multiple economic sectors**. In the Netherlands and Luxembourg, the focus is (partially) on one or more specific sectors, rather than on vacancies in general. The 'Welcome to NL' initiative targets: Agriculture and food; chemistry; Creative industries; energy and cleantech; life sciences and health; high-tech systems; ICT; logistics and infrastructure; horticulture; water; aerospace; artificial intelligence (AI); cyber security; finance and fintech; sustainable innovation; and quantum computing. One of Luxembourg's three websites, 'Move to Lux', targets professions experiencing significant labour shortages, based on an annually updated list of high-demand occupations

provided by the National Employment Service (*Agence pour le développement de l'emploi – ADEM*).

Of the EMN Member Countries with websites targeting multiple sectors, three<sup>52</sup> are designed to attract **highly skilled individuals**, while the other six<sup>53</sup> focus on third-country nationals **across various skill levels**. Only in Lithuania does the website targeting multiple sector **target particular third countries**. 'Work in Lithuania' initially targeted Eastern Partnership countries such as Belarus and Ukraine, but shifted its focus to Latin America (Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico) following the outbreak of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine in February 2022. It is also targeting non-EU European countries, notably Albania and the UK. The initiative is actively assessing other global markets through pilot marketing initiatives.

Several EMN Member Countries offer website navigation options:

- **Filters for available vacancies** (AT, DE, EE, FI, LT, LU, LV, NL): Seven websites ('Work in Austria'; 'Make it in Germany'; 'Work in Estonia'; 'Work in Finland'; 'Work in Luxembourg'; 'Work in Lithuania'; 'Work in Riga'; 'Work in NL') allow users to tailor their job search to their profile.<sup>54</sup> These filters include the selection of industry, location, position type, and salary. The 'Make it in Germany' website features a self-assessment tool that offers third-country nationals a personalised overview of their career opportunities in the country.<sup>55</sup> Launched in 2023, the *Internationaler Webauftritt der BA (IntWeb)* project aims to enhance the digital usability of the Federal Employment Agency's (*Bundesagentur für Arbeit*) website for foreign skilled workers by improving multilingual access and user-friendly registration services to better attract and assist international applicants to the German labour market.
- **Filter for required languages** (BE, DE, FI, NL): Work in Flanders<sup>56</sup>, Make it in Germany, Work in Finland, and Work in NL allow users to filter jobs to show only vacancies that do not require proficiency in (all of) the country's official languages.<sup>57</sup>
- **Guidance for employers wishing to attract foreign talent** (AT, FI, LT, LU, LV): The Work in Austria, Work in Finland, Work in Lithuania and Work in Luxembourg websites have a dedicated section for employers wishing to recruit from abroad.<sup>58</sup> Work in Finland and

45 BE, CZ, PT, SK.

46 AT, DE, EE, FI, FR, IE, LT, LU, LV, NL, SI.

47 SE (in development).

48 BE, DE, EE, FI, IE, LT, LU, LV, NL.

49 BE, DE, FI, LT, LU, NL.

50 Work in Luxembourg, 'About This Platform', n.d., <https://work-in-luxembourg.lu/about-this-platform>, last accessed on 15 October 2024 (a new online platform is due to go online in spring 2025, replacing the Work-in-Luxembourg platform); Digital Skills Luxembourg, 'Digital Skills', n.d., <https://digitalskills.lu/>, last accessed on 15 October 2024; Move to Lux, 'Finding a Job', n.d., <https://movetolux.com/working-in-luxembourg/finding-a-job>, last accessed on 15 October 2024.

51 AT, DE, EE, FI, LT, LU, LV, NL, SI.

52 AT, LT, NL.

53 DE, EE, FI, LU, LV, SI.

54 Work in Austria, 'Work in Austria', n.d., <https://www.workinaustria.com/en/>, last accessed on 15 October 2024; German federal government, 'Make it in Germany', n.d., <https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/>, last accessed on 15 October 2024; Work in Estonia, 'Work in Estonia', n.d., <https://www.workinestonia.com/>, last accessed on 15 October 2024; Work in Finland, 'Work in Finland', n.d., <https://www.workinfinland.com/>, last accessed on 15 October 2024; Work in Luxembourg, 'Work in Luxembourg', n.d., <https://work-in-luxembourg.lu/>, last accessed on 15 October 2024; Work in Lithuania, 'Work in Lithuania', n.d., <https://workinlithuania.com/>, last accessed on 15 October 2024; Work in NL, 'Work in NL', n.d., <https://www.werkl.nl/en/>, last accessed on 15 October 2024; Live Riga, 'Work in Riga', n.d., <https://www.liveriga.com/en/12213-work-in-riga>, last accessed on 10 November 2024.

55 German federal government, 'Make it in Germany', n.d., <https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/>, last accessed on 12 August 2024.

56 Work in Flanders is a general website targeting domestic and third-country job applicants. It is included here because it allows tailored searches for third-country job applicants.

57 Work in Flanders, 'Work in Flanders', n.d., <https://www.workinlanders.be/>, last accessed on 10 November 2024; Make it in Germany, 'Make it in Germany', n.d., <https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/>, last accessed on 10 November 2024; Work in Finland, 'Work in Finland', n.d., <https://www.workinfinland.com/>, last accessed on 10 November 2024; Work in NL, 'Work in NL', n.d., <https://www.werkl.nl/en/>, last accessed on 10 November 2024.

58 Work in Austria, 'Work in Austria', n.d., <https://www.workinaustria.com/en/>, last accessed on 15 October 2024; Work in Finland, 'For employers', n.d., <https://www.workinfinland.com/en/tyonantajati>, last accessed on 7 October 2024; Work in Luxembourg, 'About this platform', n.d., <https://work-in-luxembourg.lu/about-this-platform>, last accessed on 15 October 2024; Work in Lithuania, 'Home', 2024, <https://workinlithuania.com/>, last accessed on 12 August 2024.

Work in Lithuania provide consultations on international recruitment strategies, tailored talent attraction tactics, analytics, and assistance with migration procedures.<sup>59</sup> Work in Lithuania is also developing the Global Talent & Partner Readiness Index to evaluate and improve partner companies' international hiring practices through a structured assessment and customised tools.

- **The possibility to upload a CV and be contacted by employers directly** (FI, LT, LU): The Work in Finland and Work in Luxembourg websites allow jobseekers in shortage professions (as per ADEM list<sup>60</sup>) to directly upload their CV and apply for vacancies through their respective websites. Employers can then review these profiles and contact suitable candidates directly.<sup>61</sup> Work in Lithuania has a talent database where people seeking job opportunities can create profiles.<sup>62</sup> It also offers tailored search and match functionalities, designed to align individuals' profiles with available vacancies.
- **Consultation services for potential foreign talent** (EE, FI, NL): The Work in Finland and Work in Estonia websites feature chatbot services that offer guidance to both prospective employees and employers on recruiting international professionals. Work in Estonia particularly focuses on attracting talent for the ICT sector and digital services.<sup>63</sup> The Welcome to NL platform includes video tutorials.<sup>64</sup>

France, Ireland, and Luxembourg offer **websites** for prospective employers and highly skilled job candidates from third countries **tailored to a particular sector**. For example, 'Welcome to the French Tech' provides resources for third-country nationals and returning French nationals from abroad, such as administrative procedures (e.g. immigration), the French tech ecosystem, and service providers offering services to settle in France.<sup>65</sup> It also provides a virtual helpdesk offering personalised assistance and connects foreign nationals in the French tech sector. Ireland offers tailored sector-based platforms, such as the 'Medical Consultant Recruitment Hub', which supports foreign healthcare candidates by providing information on housing, taxation, banking, driving, education, and available job vacancies.<sup>66</sup> A 'Talent Catalogue', a global database and portal for displaced professionals is used in the EU-funded Displaced Talent for Europe (DT4E) programme, managed by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and implemented in Ireland alongside partners like Talent Beyond Boundaries (TBB) and Fragomen.<sup>67</sup> The Talent Catalogue allows eligible displaced candidates to register, received tailored job application advice, and connect with recruiters, facilitating complementary pathways for individuals in need of international protection. Working through the Talent Catalogue, DT4E mainly targets displaced

individuals in Jordan and Lebanon and focuses specifically on sectors with identified labour shortages in Ireland, such as healthcare, construction, and IT. Luxembourg's 'Move to Lux' website is managed by Luxembourg for Finance (LFF), which operates under the Ministry of Finance and focuses on attracting talent to Luxembourg's financial sector.<sup>68</sup> Luxembourg also offers the Digital Skills and Jobs platform (Digital Skills LU), which functions as a one-stop shop for training and news on digital skills and opportunities.<sup>69</sup>

### Diplomatic initiatives

Four EMN Member Countries<sup>70</sup> are introducing working on **diplomatic initiatives to attract foreign talent**.

Finland, Ireland and Sweden have allocated **resources to embassies and consulates for attracting foreign talent**. In Ireland, the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) plans to appoint six Talent and Innovation Attachés in key regions by 2030, with the first Attaché to be appointed in San Francisco. The Attachés will focus on various initiatives, including attracting highly skilled researchers to Ireland by organising and leveraging global talent attraction and innovation activities. They will serve as a resource for Irish institutions, assisting with student recruitment, research and innovation events, and other activities. Each location will implement an integrated annual work programme that includes ministerial visits, trade missions, St. Patrick's Day celebrations, and local events, such as gatherings for alumni of Irish higher education institutions, the Irish diaspora, Irish companies with regional bases, and students in study abroad and internship programmes. Similarly, the Swedish Institute is developing a toolkit for Swedish diplomatic missions to support their work of promoting Sweden as an attractive career destination. In Finland, the Ministry of Education and Culture established the 'Team Finland Knowledge Network', a group of higher education and science counsellors based in London, New Delhi, Beijing, Pretoria, São Paulo, Singapore, and Washington.<sup>71</sup> Their role is to monitor local higher education and science policies, promote cooperation opportunities and visibility in their respective countries or regions, and support Finnish stakeholders in enhancing collaboration with regional partners.

Austria has set up **diplomatic agreements** with third countries to facilitate regular dialogue between government agencies to attract foreign talent. It signed a comprehensive Migration and Mobility Agreement with India in May 2023, promoting the exchange of information on immigration opportunities for skilled workers, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Philippines on the recruitment of qualified professionals in October 2023, and a Declaration of Intent with Indonesia on cooperation in

59 Work in Lithuania, 'Home', 2024, <https://workinlithuania.com/>, last accessed on 12 August 2024.

60 ADEM, 'Les métiers en pénurie au Luxembourg', 2024, <https://adem.public.lu/content/dam/adem/fr/publications/adem/metiers-penurie-en.pdf>, last accessed on 11 November 2024.

61 Work in Luxembourg, 'Home', n.d., <https://work-in-luxembourg.lu/home>, last accessed on 12 August 2024.

62 Work in Lithuania, 'Work in Lithuania', n.d., <https://workinlithuania.com/>, last accessed on 10 November 2024.

63 Work in Finland, 'Work in Finland', n.d., <https://www.workinfinland.com/en/>, last accessed on 12 August 2024; Work in Estonia, 'Work in Estonia', n.d., <https://workinestonia.com/>, last accessed on 12 August 2024.

64 Welcome to NL, 'Welcome to NL', n.d., <https://www.welcome-to-nl.nl/>, last accessed on 12 August 2024.

65 Welcome to France, 'Welcome to La French Tech', n.d., <https://www.welcometoFrance.com/en/welcome-to-la-french-tech>, last accessed on 12 August 2024.

66 PublicJobs.ie, 'PublicJobs.ie Launch Medical Consultant Recruitment Hub in Partnership with HSE', n.d., <https://www.publicjobs.ie/en/information-hub/latest-news-and-events/816-publicjobs-ie-launch-medical-consultant-recruitment-hub-in-partnership-with-hse>, last accessed on 12 August 2024.

67 Talent Beyond Boundaries, 'Talent Catalogue', n.d., <https://www.talentbeyondboundaries.org/talentcatalog/?&>, last accessed on 12 August 2024.

68 Move to Lux, 'Finding a Job', <https://movetolux.com/working-in-luxembourg/finding-a-job>, last accessed on 15 October 2024.

69 Tech Life Ireland, 'Home', n.d., <https://techlifeireland.com/>, last accessed on 12 August 2024; Digital Skills Luxembourg, 'Digital Skills', n.d., <https://digitalskills.lu/>, last accessed on 15 October 2024.

70 AT, FI, IE, SE.

71 Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland, 'Team Finland Knowledge Network', <https://okm.fi/en/team-finland-knowledge-network>, last accessed on 18 December 2024.

the field of vocational education and training (VET) in the workplace in November 2022.

### Box 1 OECD non-EMN countries: Canada

In 2024, Canada's federal department for immigration (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada IRCC) announced its intention to introduce a Chief International Talent Officer, responsible for identifying future needs of foreign workers and developing a long-term talent attraction, recruitment, and retention strategy. The Officer will improve the alignment between immigration and Canada's future skills needs, including the identification of sectoral skills needs. Part of their mission will include the coordination of global skills missions, in collaboration with government representatives, employers and stakeholders, to help to recruit the talent identified.

### Tax and financial incentives

Countries use tax breaks for migrants to increase their attractiveness.

Nine EMN Member Countries **provide tax and/or financial incentives to attract foreign talent, benefiting both employers and third-country national employees**.<sup>72</sup>

- Six EMN Member Countries reported **tax incentives** for employers or prospective employees from third countries.<sup>73</sup> In Finland, Ireland, the Netherlands and Luxembourg, tax incentives are available for (newly) hired foreign employees. In Finland, the salary of foreign highly skilled employees ("key employees") may be taxed with flat 32 % tax at source instead of progressive tax rates when certain prerequisites regarding the employee, employer and salary are fulfilled. In the Netherlands, highly skilled workers, including third-country nationals, can receive up to 30% of their wages tax-free through their employer, making the scheme particularly attractive for foreign talent. Dutch nationals who were born outside the Netherlands, have never lived in the Netherlands, and have acquired Dutch nationality through one or both parents are also eligible to apply under these conditions, further broadening the programme's reach. In Luxembourg, employers can provide highly qualified foreign employees with tax-free financial contributions for certain expenses. From 1 January 2025, the regime will simplify to offer a 50% tax exemption on gross annual remuneration, up to € 400 000. In Ireland, the Special Assignee Relief Programme (SARP) offers significant tax reductions for non-EU nationals assigned to Irish companies, including exemptions on a portion of their salary and certain allowances. In Estonia and France, tax incentives are available for employers. In Estonia, start-ups and scale-ups benefit from exemptions from investment and salary requirements, unemployment fund permissions,

and annual immigration quotas, with scale-ups also enjoying a reduced salary requirement. In France, innovative companies can take advantage of tax incentives such as exemptions from corporation tax for two years, reductions in social security contributions, and additional benefits for research and development activities through statuses like Young Innovative Company (JEI), Young Innovative and Growth Company (JEIC), and Young Innovative and Breakthrough Company (JEIR). These measures aim to enhance financing and innovation while attracting foreign talent, both as employees and investors, to support the growth of cutting-edge industries.

- Six EMN Member Countries reported **financial incentives** for prospective employees, primarily relocation and travel costs.<sup>74</sup> In Ireland, the Health Service Executive (HSE) covers travel costs, registration fees with the Irish Medical Council, and one week's accommodation on arrival, depending on the hospital site. In Lithuania, there is a special relocation incentive (up to € 3 788) for highly qualified foreign nationals, as well as Lithuanian nationals who left the country, with a specific component for individuals from Ukraine. Lithuania also offers a financial incentive (up to € 6 652) for eligible employers to compensate the cost of attracting highly skilled employees from outside the EU, provided they are retained for at least one year. Similarly, in Germany, expenses that could fall on third-country nationals participating in their talent attraction initiatives, such as language training, visa procedures, and travel arrangements, are instead covered by the employer or public funding.
- Three EMN Member Countries specified that **no tax or financial incentives** within the scope of this inform were in place.<sup>75</sup>

### Box 2 Tax incentives in non-EMN OECD countries

At least 24 OECD countries offer tax relief programmes for foreign migrants and (often) returning nationals.<sup>76</sup> Some countries have implemented targeted tax relief programmes for foreign workers for decades, with 16 OECD countries already offering such initiatives by 2010.<sup>77</sup> For example, Korea has implemented long-standing tax exemption programmes on income for foreign workers, while Israel offers a flat tax rate to attract and retain international talent, both in place for over two decades. Other countries have more recently introduced or expanded their schemes to attract international talent.<sup>78</sup> For example, in 2019 Denmark expanded its "Tax scheme for foreign researchers and highly-paid employees" by broadening eligibility criteria to include individuals not solely bound by Danish employment contracts, thereby enhancing its appeal to a wider pool of international talent.

72 DE, EE, FR, IE, LT, LU, NL, SI, SK.

73 EE, FI, FR, IE, LU, SI.

74 DE, IE, LT, LU (part of the tax regime rather than a financial incentive per se), SI, SK.

75 AT, IT, LV.

76 OECD, 'Why do OECD countries offer tax relief programmes to attract foreign migrants and returning nationals?', 2024, [https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/why-do-oecd-countries-offer-tax-relief-programmes-to-attract-foreign-migrants-and-returning-nationals\\_5a23e2a3-en.html](https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/why-do-oecd-countries-offer-tax-relief-programmes-to-attract-foreign-migrants-and-returning-nationals_5a23e2a3-en.html), last accessed on 10 September 2024.

77 OECD, 'Why do OECD countries offer tax relief programmes to attract foreign migrants and returning nationals?', 2024, [https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/why-do-oecd-countries-offer-tax-relief-programmes-to-attract-foreign-migrants-and-returning-nationals\\_5a23e2a3-en.html](https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/why-do-oecd-countries-offer-tax-relief-programmes-to-attract-foreign-migrants-and-returning-nationals_5a23e2a3-en.html), last accessed on 10 September 2024.

78 OECD, 'Why do OECD countries offer tax relief programmes to attract foreign migrants and returning nationals?', 2024, [https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/why-do-oecd-countries-offer-tax-relief-programmes-to-attract-foreign-migrants-and-returning-nationals\\_5a23e2a3-en.html](https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/why-do-oecd-countries-offer-tax-relief-programmes-to-attract-foreign-migrants-and-returning-nationals_5a23e2a3-en.html), last accessed on 10 September 2024.



These tax relief measures vary: some countries, like Korea and Israel, offer flat tax rates for income of highly qualified workers or specialists. In Korea and Iceland, foreign experts may benefit from tax exemptions. Switzerland offers annual deductions or lump-sum payments to temporary foreign highly skilled workers. Foreign income is often tax-exempt for a specific period, e.g. Australia, Costa Rica, Israel, New Zealand, Switzerland, and the UK.

### Innovations in fast-track procedures

While legal pathways are not the primary focus of this inform, Box 3 offers an overview of examples from EMN Member Countries and other OECD countries, showcasing significant innovations in residence schemes to attract foreign talent. The examples are based on selections made by EMN Member Countries in response to the ad-hoc query of this inform.

#### Box 3 Visas for global talent

##### EMN Member Country examples:

Launched in 2017, **Estonia's** Start-up Visa programme offers favourable entry conditions for start-up founders and employees, including exemptions from salary and investment requirements. Expanded in 2023 to include the Growth Company/Scale-up Programme, it allows mature technology companies to fast-track the recruitment of foreign workers by offering reduced salary thresholds and straightforward family relocation options, and bypassing immigration quotas. The Growth Company/Scale-Up Programme stands out as an innovative initiative by specifically catering to non-EU talent for scale-up companies.<sup>79</sup> A notable feature is its list of pre-included scale-ups, currently comprising 14 companies eligible to hire non-EU employees under preferential terms.

Innovative economic projects, start-up founders, employees and investors are eligible for the '**French** Tech visa', which has streamlined procedures. The Talent Residence Permit (formerly the Talent Passport) is also evolving. This four-year permit supports qualified employees, innovators, and individuals with notable achievements in science, arts, and sports, including medical and pharmaceutical professionals since January 2024. The Talent Residence Permit also includes the Qualified Salaried Talent and Project-Driven Talent residence permits, which, while not sector-specific, emphasise the innovative and significant nature of the applicant's economic project.

**Latvia** is piloting a 'green corridor' initiative, speeding-up the visa process by providing priority service at embassies and offering an accelerated application process for residence documents. It targets specific economic sectors prioritised by the government: knowledge-intensive bioeconomy, smart energy and mobility, biomedicine, medical technologies, pharmaceuticals, and photonics, smart materials, technologies, and engineering systems.

The **Netherlands** introduced a four-year pilot initiative to simplify conditions for start-ups to employ highly skilled workers from outside the EU. It aims to help Dutch start-ups to grow quickly and develop into competitive international enterprises, driving economic growth, innovation, and social solutions in the Netherlands. It recognises an identified resource gap faced by many start-ups when scaling-up, allowing them to meet reduced salary requirements by offering equity-based remuneration. This enables essential staff to receive company shares alongside their salary for up to three years, making the role more financially attractive while preserving the start-up's resources for growth.

In 2022, **Sweden** introduced a residence permit for highly qualified individuals looking to work or start a business in Sweden.<sup>80</sup> It allows applicants with advanced degrees to stay for up to nine months to find employment in their field. To be granted this permit, applicants must demonstrate self-sufficiency and adequate health insurance, as the permit provides no financial benefits or any other support to the holder. Once they secure employment, individuals can apply for and begin work in Sweden as soon as they receive their work permit, diverging from the usual requirement to obtain the permit before entering the country. The Swedish Migration Agency can accelerate the immigration decision process for highly qualified third-country nationals, such as those seeking management positions or jobs requiring a university degree. Completed applications are processed within 30 days, a substantial reduction from the usual processing time of up to four months. This model prioritises robust service and support for employers hiring highly qualified labour migrants, streamlining the application process from the start.

##### Non-EMN OECD countries:

A number of non-EMN OECD countries have developed specific visas for highly talented individuals.

**Australia's** Global Talent visa is a permanent residency visa available for high-earning individuals in future-focused sectors.<sup>81</sup> The sectors are defined by the Minister of Home Affairs and include specialisations in sectors ranging from health to data science to fintech. The visa is meant for individuals with skills that will promote innovation, create jobs, and "raise Australia's standing in their field". The process is driven by the applicant. Between 2019 and 2022, the Global Talent visa programme used Global Talent Officers to scout for potential applicants and support them through the fast-tracked process.<sup>82</sup> Specific visas for exceptional foreign talent also exist in the US (O-1A and EB-1), Korea (F-5-11) and Japan (highly skilled professional visa).

<sup>79</sup> Scale-ups as high-growth enterprises, specifically referring to them as firms that have achieved annual growth in employment or turnover of more than 20% over a three-year period, starting from a base of at least 10 employees; OECD, 'Policy toolkit for strengthening scale-ups and high growth enterprises', 2022, <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/253655e5-en.pdf>, last accessed on 10 November 2024.

<sup>80</sup> Swedish Aliens Act, Chapter 5, Section 9, [https://www.government.se/legal-documents/2005/09/sfs-2005\\_716-aliens-act/](https://www.government.se/legal-documents/2005/09/sfs-2005_716-aliens-act/), last accessed on 10 November 2024.

<sup>81</sup> Department of Home Affairs, 'Global Talent Independent Programme', n.d., <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/working-in-australia/visas-for-innovation/global-talent-independent-program>, last accessed on 10 September 2024.

<sup>82</sup> Department of Home Affairs, 'Global Talent Programme – Business', n.d., <https://minister.homeaffairs.gov.au/davidcoleman/Pages/global-talent-program-business.aspx>, last accessed on 10 September 2024.



### Other assistance in recruiting foreign talent

EMN Member Countries support the recruitment of foreign talent by offering comprehensive support throughout the migration process, including training in the destination country and pre- and post-arrival assistance.

### Six EMN Member Countries have programmes for skills validation and development.<sup>83</sup>

#### Initiatives for the recognition of qualifications

Four EMN Member Countries<sup>84</sup> support the **recognition of professional/academic qualifications** in different ways, such as coordinating the recognition of qualifications obtained abroad. For example, Germany has in place procedures for the recognition of professional qualifications from third countries, offering both individual advice and support integrated in programs for the recognition of qualifications obtained abroad (e.g. ProRecognition for individuals or the TripleWin project recruits nurses from Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Philippines, and Tunisia for employment in Germany<sup>85</sup>). For members of Engineers Ireland, a professional body in the engineering sector, Ireland has mutual recognition agreements (MRAs) in place with several partner countries (Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, New Zealand, South Africa, and the UK) ensuring that professional titles from these countries are recognised in Ireland.

#### Skills development initiatives

Seven EMN Member Countries<sup>86</sup> reported offering **skills development opportunities in third countries**. These training programmes are part of projects attracting foreign talent, but do not guarantee a residence and work permit in the respective Member State. For example, Italy established the Italo-Egyptian Centre for Employment, which provides vocational training for workers in the tourism and hospitality sector and potential job opportunities in both Egypt and Italy, as a project under the Talent Partnership framework.<sup>87</sup> Germany's Global Skills Partnership project, funded by the Federal Ministry of Health (*Bundesministerium für Gesundheit*) and involving the Federal Employment Agency (*Bundesagentur für Arbeit*) and the German Agency for International Cooperation (*Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit - GIZ*) offers nursing and care training in the Philippines and Mexico.<sup>88</sup> While some participants pursue employment in Germany, others use the skills acquired in their home countries. Similarly, Belgium's Skills Mobility Partnership with Suriname, run by the IOM and co-funded by the EU, offers financial support for capacity-building for healthcare workers in Suriname.<sup>89</sup>

#### Pre-arrival support

Thirteen EMN Member Countries provide **other forms of support to third-country nationals before their**

**arrival** as part of their efforts to attract foreign talent.<sup>90</sup>

This support includes information and guidance on relocating and finding employment in the EMN Member Country,<sup>91</sup> for example through in-person advice on obtaining a visa and work permit assistance (e.g. one-to-one counselling, mentoring programmes, local helpdesk, dedicated events),<sup>92</sup> as well as through the aforementioned dedicated websites (Section 4.2.1.1), brochures.<sup>93</sup> The Austrian Integration Fund was established in October 2023 and its Integration Service for Professionals offers advice and information on integration-related topics, including German language learning and the recognition of qualifications.<sup>94</sup> In Germany, the Hand in Hand for International Talent project provides pre-arrival support in the form of tailored assistance (e.g. language training up to B1; qualification recognition; organisation of (digital) interviews with interpretation) and resources (e.g. support during visa application and immigration processes; integration into host society and employing company). In Finland, Lithuania and Slovenia, counselling is available for businesses wishing to employ foreign talent. For example, Business Finland's Talent Manager Network advises all Finnish companies that want to recruit international talent. Similarly, Work in Lithuania supports partner companies by offering insights into international recruitment and migration procedures, helping them to develop effective talent attraction strategies to find and hire global talent.

Three EMN Member Countries provide **pre-arrival recruitment support through targeted partnerships**.<sup>95</sup>

Slovenia has established a partnership between its national employment services and those of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia to organise tailored events, job fairs, and to provide information on administrative procedures and new legislation. Finland's 'partnership country model' focuses on attracting highly skilled workers from India, the Philippines, Brazil, and Vietnam through focused recruitment methods, including local partnerships and support for integration into the Finnish labour market. The Austrian Federal Economic Chamber's International Skilled Workers Initiative aims to position Austria as an attractive place to work, including supporting domestic companies to recruit skilled workers from third countries. Ireland's Innovate for Ireland partnership between the government and industry will be established to attract high-calibre PhD students to undertake research and innovation in the country.

Pre-arrival assistance in five EMN Member Countries includes **language and cultural orientation**.<sup>96</sup> Similarly, the Goethe Institute, a cultural organisation that promotes the study of German and fosters international cultural exchange, offers German language training and pre-integration cultural programmes abroad.

83 AT, DE, IE, IT, LT, SK.

84 DE, IE, IT, SK.

85 GIZ, 'Returning Experts Programme', 2024, <https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/41533.html>, last accessed on 13 August 2024.

86 AT, BE, DE, FR, IT, LT, SK.

87 Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (Italy), 'Partecipazione italiana ai partenariati per il talento della UE per l'attrazione di manodopera qualificata dall'estero', 2024, [https://www.esteri.it/en/sala\\_stampa/archivionotizie/comunicati/2024/02/partecipazione-italiana-ai-partenariati-per-il-talento-della-ue-per-lattrazione-di-manodopera-qualificata-dallestero/](https://www.esteri.it/en/sala_stampa/archivionotizie/comunicati/2024/02/partecipazione-italiana-ai-partenariati-per-il-talento-della-ue-per-lattrazione-di-manodopera-qualificata-dallestero/), last accessed on 13 August 2024.

88 Global Skills Partnerships, 'About', 2024, <https://global-skills-partnerships.de/en/about-2/>, last accessed on 13 August 2024.

89 International Organization for Migration (IOM), 'Skills Mobility Partnership Belgium-Suriname', n.d., <https://belgium.iom.int/skills-mobility-partnership-belgium-suriname>, last accessed on 12 November 2024.

90 AT, CZ, DE, EE, FI, FR, IE, IT, LT, LU, NL, SE, SK.

91 AT, EE, FI, LT, LU, NL, SK, SI.

92 AT, DE, FI, FR, IT.

93 AT, DE, EE, FR, LU.

94 Austrian Integration Fund, 'International Skilled Workers', n.d., <https://www.integrationsfonds.at/integrationservice/en/international-skilled-workers>, last accessed on 15 October 2024.

95 AT, FI, SI.

96 CZ, DE, EE, IE, IT.

## Support during and after arrival

Twelve EMN Member Countries offer important **support on and after arrival** to ensure effective and sustainable retention of foreign talent,<sup>97</sup> such as assistance with finding accommodation,<sup>98</sup> help with legal and administrative tasks (obtaining identity cards, navigating local bureaucracy)<sup>99</sup> and additional resources for integration.<sup>100</sup> The Work in Lithuania website provides a detailed step-by-step relocation guide for each phase of the relocation process.<sup>101</sup> Six EMN Member Countries provide comprehensive support through one-stop shops, which offer guidance on administrative procedures, residence laws, and job opportunities, as well as information on living and working in the country.<sup>102</sup> Luxembourg offers support through the Citizen's Pact (*Biergerpakt*), a voluntary commitment to intercultural living open to everyone working and/or living in Luxembourg.<sup>103</sup> The Pact offers access to various training, developed in collaboration with a wide range of partners from the state, communal and non-governmental sectors, such as access to a free online platform to help with learning of its three official languages (Luxembourgish, French, German) or sessions on understanding administrative procedures.

## EU-funded approaches on mobility pathways to attract foreign talent

Nine EMN Member Countries<sup>104</sup> reported new and innovative initiatives to attract foreign talent funded by **EU initiatives and programmes**:

- Five EMN Member Countries reported using **the Migration Partnership Facility**<sup>105</sup>, a Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs (DG HOME)-funded programme supporting EU Member States to establish partnership projects with targeted countries that blend tailored training with professional opportunities.<sup>106</sup> In Lithuania, the Digital Explorers project, managed by the Lithuanian non-profit OSMOS, attracts foreign technology talent by providing tailored migration pathways, such as employment and internships for ICT specialists from partner countries.<sup>107</sup> Building on its initial success with Nigerian specialists, the expanded Digital Explorers II aims to train and connect up to 150 ICT professionals from new partner countries (including Kenya, Armenia, and Iraq) with opportunities in the Baltics and in their home regions between 2023 and 2026.<sup>108</sup> In Italy, the Mediterranean Network for Training Orientation to Regular Migration (MENTOR 2) is led by the Municipality of Milan. It integrates structured training and internships, enabling young Moroccan and Tunisian people to gain professional experience through temporary and circular migration schemes with Italian companies.<sup>109</sup> Similarly, the Slovak Republic's DigiTalents project recruits ICT graduates from Ukraine and Moldova, providing a customised programme that

combines targeted recruitment with digital skills training.<sup>110</sup> In the Netherlands, the MOBILISE project focuses on building a circular talent development programme between the Netherlands, Tunisia, Egypt, and Ethiopia, specifically targeting climate-smart agriculture. This initiative involves public and private sector partners, as well as cooperation with local educational institutions to meet labour market demand in these countries.

Belgium, Germany, and Italy reported several additional new approaches within the framework of **Talent Partnerships**, combining targeted recruitment, skills development, and tailored migration support to attract and integrate foreign talent. All three Member States participate in the EU funded regional programme THAMM Plus ("EU support to legal migration, mobility and skills partnerships with North African countries"). It is implemented by International Labour Organization (ILO), International Organization for Migration (IOM), Belgian development agency ENABEL, French Office for Immigration and Integration (OFII), Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS), German Federal Employment Agency (BA) in Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia. The project takes a holistic approach to vocational training and employment for migrants by enhancing job prospects through training and language courses, fostering partnerships between countries of origin and the selected Member States through joint activities, and strengthening partner institutions' capacity to implement mobility programmes and integration networks independently. For example, in Italy, the initiative includes a programme to facilitate the mobility of 2,000 Tunisian construction workers and 500 Moroccan mechatronics workers. Implemented by the IOM, the programme provides participants with vocational and language training to prepare them for employment in Italy. The DEMO project in Egypt, led by AICS Egypt and the Italian Embassy and funded by the THAMM Plus, aims to establish the Italian-Egyptian Employment Centre to provide vocational training for workers in the tourism and hospitality sectors, enabling employment in both Egypt and Italy.

- Five EMN Member Countries reported **AMIF-funded projects** that introduce new and innovative migration pathways by directly linking third-country nationals with European job opportunities.<sup>111</sup> In Belgium and Ireland, the DT4E programme attracts foreign talent by creating skilled labour mobility pathways for individuals in need of international protection in Jordan and Lebanon. This innovative approach not only connects these individuals with employment opportunities but addresses labour shortages and facilitates their integration into the workforce. Beyond the inform timeframe, the project will not continue in Ireland but will continue to be

97 AT, BE, DE, EE, FI, FR, IE, IT, LT, LU, NL, SK.

98 BE, DE, EE, IT, LT.

99 AT, BE, EE, FR, NL, SK.

100 BE, DE, EE, IT, LU, NL, SK.

101 Work in Lithuania, 'Smooth Relocation', 2024, <https://workinlithuania.com/smooth-relocation/>, last accessed on 13 August 2024.

102 AT, BE, EE, FI, LT, NL.

103 Guichet.lu, 'Pacte citoyen', 2024, <https://guichet.public.lu/en/citoyens/actualites/2024/janvier/17-pacte-citoyen.html>, last accessed on 13 August 2024.

104 BE, DE, FI, IE, IT, LT, LU, NL, SK.

105 The MPF also funds initiatives within the scope of the Talent Partnership. It is listed separately to facilitate reading and to organise the information by EU instrument.

106 BE, IT, LT, NL, SK.

107 Digital Explorers, 'Home', 2024, <https://digitalexplorers.eu/>, last accessed on 13 August 2024.

108 Digital Explorers, 'Digital Explorers II', 2024, <https://digitalexplorers.eu/projects/digital-explorers-ii/>, last accessed on 13 August 2024.

109 Migration Partnership Facility (MPF), 'Mediterranean Network for Training Orientation to Regular Migration (MENTOR 2)', 2024, <https://www.migrationpartnershipfacility.eu/mpf-projects/30-mediterranean-network-for-training-orientation-to-regular-migration-mentor-ii>, last accessed on 13 August 2024.

110 Digital Talents, 'Home', 2024, <https://digitaltalents.sk/>, last accessed on 13 August 2024.

111 BE, FI, IE, LU, NL.

implemented in Belgium. From January 2020 to April 2023, the Migration of African Talent through Capacity Building and Hiring (MATCH) project addressed specific labour market needs in Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands by proactively connecting skilled African professionals with European employers through a targeted recruitment process.<sup>112</sup> In May 2023, the Belgian Development Agency (Enabel) launched the Human Mobility Project for Entrepreneurial Mobility with Côte d'Ivoire (PEM-N'Zassa), providing circular mobility opportunities for 120 talented Ivorian entrepreneurs, focusing on sectors such as agro-food, digital, green economy, and creative industries. The project collaborates with Belgian and Ivorian institutions, offering tailored training to boost the socioeconomic impact of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Similarly, the Pilot Project for Entrepreneurial Mobility between Senegal and Belgium fosters entrepreneurship by connecting Senegalese talent with Belgian economic actors. In Finland, the Discover Finland project, led by Business Finland as part of the AMIF initiative, promotes labour migration by streamlining international recruitment and providing foreign workers with resources like career planning, mentoring, and accurate information about Finnish society and work practices. The project involves collaboration with various partners, including the KEHA Development and Administrative Service Centre (*Kehittämisen- ja hallintokeskus*), as well as the Helsinki Region Chamber of Commerce, the Talent Boost network, and Finnish companies.

- In Luxembourg, the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition, part of the **European Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition initiative within the Digital Europe Programme** and funded by the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), brings together over 500 public and private sector stakeholders to develop and implement strategies for enhancing digital skills across the country.

### 4.3. Actors and funding sources

EMN Member Countries involve a variety of national, private, and non-governmental actors in the design and implementation of new and innovative approaches to attract foreign talent.

At **national** level, the main competent authorities responsible for initiatives to attract foreign talent across responding EMN Member Countries are the Ministries of Economic Affairs<sup>113</sup> (e.g. economic policy, growth and industry) and Labour<sup>114</sup> (e.g. employment policies, workforce development, working conditions). In some countries, these responsibilities are combined within a single ministry, while in others they are managed by separate ministries. Depending on the initiative and the country, additional departments or ministries may be involved to handle the components pertaining to arrival and residence and work permits (e.g. the Ministry for Foreign Affairs<sup>115</sup>). As France

and Ireland have initiatives that focus on health professionals, the Ministry of Health plays a key role. Additionally, in 10 EMN Member Countries, local and regional authorities,<sup>116</sup> and/or national agencies,<sup>117</sup> support these efforts. Four EMN Member Countries involve employment<sup>118</sup> and/or migration<sup>119</sup> agencies, while eight have dedicated business, innovation, or investment agencies.<sup>120</sup> For example, in Luxembourg, talent attraction is treated as a cross-cutting issue, involving seven ministries, including several of their agencies and Directorates: the Ministry of Economy (coordinates the newly established High Committee for Talent Attraction, Retention and Development), the Ministry of Home Affairs (handles requests on the free movement of persons, and third-country nationals' entry, residence and work rights), the Ministry of Labour (supports labour migration management), the Ministry of Family Affairs, Solidarity, Living Together and Reception of Refugees (introduced the Citizen's Pact), the Ministry of Education, Children and Youth (oversees the integration of foreign children through public (international) schools), the Ministry of Higher Education (recognition of foreign higher education degrees), and the Ministry of Finance (designs and implements Luxembourg's fiscal incentives to attract and retain foreign talent).

EMN Member Countries involve **private** and **non-governmental actors** in the design and implementation of new and innovative approaches to attract foreign labour:

- Eleven EMN Member Countries involve **private stakeholders**.<sup>121</sup> These include recruitment agencies in the target third countries, or organisations to support and implement initiatives, such as by joining events, acting as advisors, or listing vacancies on respective platforms. In Finland, the private sector plays a crucial role in shaping initiatives, with public entities running initiatives with hiring companies, participation in recruitment events in target countries (India, Brazil, Vietnam, the Philippines), and initiatives' engagement with organisations such as the Confederation of Finnish Industries, the Federation of Finnish Technology Industries, and various Chambers of Commerce. As part of the larger French Tech mission, the 'I Choose the French Tech' programme was launched in June 2023 to tackle market entry challenges for French start-ups and double public and private orders by 2027. To date, over 500 private companies, including major companies like Air France, Capgemini, and EDF, have committed as either partners to increase their purchases from start-ups or as supporters, by appointing start-up advisors. In Germany, private companies, in conjunction with NGOs, play a role in implementing initiatives to attract foreign talent, such as knowledge exchanges in recruitment programmes and advisory services. For example, in the Faire Integration counselling centres, these organisations assist with and guide the recognition of foreign qualifications and certifications.<sup>122</sup>

112 IOM Belgium, 'MATCH Project', 2024, <https://belgium.iom.int/match#:~:The%20project%20started%20in%20January,a%20surplus%20of%20qualified%20professionals>, last accessed on 13 August 2024.

113 DE, EE, FI, FR, LT, LU (entities such as professional chambers representing specific private sectors and interest groups, e.g. Women in Digital Empowerment) LV, NL, SE, SK.

114 AT, DE, FI, IE, IT, LU, LV, NL, SI.

115 FR, IE, IT, LU, SK.

116 AT, DE, IT, NL, SK.

117 AT (federal economic chamber), EE, FI, FR, IT, LT, NL, SE.

118 DE, IE, LU, SE.

119 SE, LU.

120 AT, EE, FI, FR, LT, LV, NL, SE.

121 DE, EE, FI, FR, IE, IT, LT, LU, NL, SE, SK.

122 Faire Integration, 'Faire Integration', n.d., <https://www.faire-integration.de/en/>, last accessed on 15 October 2024.



- Five EMN Member Countries engage **NGOs** to varying extents,<sup>123</sup> ranging from NGOs taking a direct role in implementing initiatives to providing consultation during the design and execution stages. In the Slovak Republic, an NGO is the main implementing organisation of the DigiTalents project. In Lithuania, the NGO OSMOS formed a consortium of five organisations (including the Diversity Development Group, a Lithuanian NGO focused on research and advisory projects related to human rights, education, and migration) to implement the first iteration of Digital Explorers. By contrast, in Slovenia, NGOs were involved to a limited extent, largely through informal exchanges of information, typically when there is suspicion of exploitation and/or trafficking.
- Five EMN Member Countries partner with **international organisations**,<sup>124</sup> often the IOM and the International Labour Organization (ILO). For example, within the framework of the THAMM programme, Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (*Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung – BMZ*), the

International and Specialized Services Department of the Federal Employment Agency (*Zentrale Auslands- und Fachvermittlung der Bundesagentur für Arbeit – ZAV of the BA*), and GIZ work closely together, collaborating with local employment services and international organisations such as the ILO and IOM.

**EMN Member Countries use a range of national, EU, and private funding sources to support their new and innovative initiatives for attracting foreign labour.** EMN Member Countries may use various funding sources for different initiatives and components within the same country. Eight EMN Member Countries<sup>125</sup> reported initiatives or projects using a combination of EU and national funding types, six<sup>126</sup> reported projects that relied solely on national public funds, nine<sup>127</sup> reported to rely on EU funds, and three<sup>128</sup> to use private funds. Key EU funding sources include AMIF, the EU Trust Fund for Africa, the European Social Fund (ESF), the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the NDICI – Global Europe, and NextGeneration EU (NGEU). France and Germany use public-private partnerships.



## 5. MONITORING AND EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INITIATIVES TO ATTRACT FOREIGN TALENT

Ten EMN Member Countries **regularly monitor their innovative approaches to attracting foreign talent**.<sup>129</sup> Of these, six<sup>130</sup> review their progress annually or quarterly, assessing performance against national action plans or roadmaps. For instance, the Work in Estonia programme tracks its progress annually according to the Action Plan to Involve Foreign Talent 2022-2025.<sup>131</sup> Similarly, the Invest Lithuania strategy aims to attract 2 000 highly qualified specialists by 2025, with yearly monitoring in place.<sup>132</sup>

EMN Member Countries have implemented a range of **methods for monitoring their initiatives**. Those using EU funds followed the monitoring requirements of the respective fund. Six EMN Member Countries<sup>133</sup> introduced specific indicators, such as tracking the number of job descriptions shared, candidates interviewed, candidates and families resettled, and of the use of pre-departure and post-arrival support (e.g. Ireland's DT4E programme), as well as measuring improvements in companies' readiness for international hiring and following the increase in foreign employees (e.g. Work in Lithuania initiative). Finland developed a monitoring model for the Talent Boost programme,

including 13 indicators, which are updated on an annual or quarterly basis. Five EMN Member Countries collect feedback from beneficiaries to evaluate their initiatives.<sup>134</sup> For example, the Start Up Estonia initiative conducted the Estonian Startup Ecosystem Participants' Satisfaction Survey 2022 to gauge satisfaction and effectiveness of support measures and identify areas for improvement.<sup>135</sup>

Seven EMN Member Countries have carried out **evaluations of their initiatives**.<sup>136</sup> For example, Lithuania's Digital Explorers programme employed experts to carry out two evaluations: a value-for-money evaluation to analyse the project's quantitative impact; and a thorough qualitative assessment on the project's impact on various parties involved. The Netherlands conducted a mid-term evaluation of its pilot residence permit project for start-up personnel. In Sweden, the government has commissioned 11 agencies, led by the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth, to enhance the coordination, predictability, and effectiveness of measures to attract, establish and retain highly qualified international talent and their families. Five other EMN Member Countries are planning or carrying out evaluations.<sup>137</sup>

123 DE, LT, SE, SI, SK.

124 BE, DE, IE, IT, SK.

125 BE, DE, EE, FI, IE, LT, LU, SK.

126 AT, FR, LU, NL, SE, SI.

127 BE, DE, EE, FI, IE, IT, LT, LU, SK.

128 DE, FI, FR.

129 AT, DE, EE, FI, IE, IT, LT, NL, SE, SK.

130 EE, FI, IE, LT, NL, SK.

131 Work in Estonia, 'Work in Estonia Action Plan', 2023, [https://workinestonia.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/wie\\_tegevuskava-21-03.pdf](https://workinestonia.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/wie_tegevuskava-21-03.pdf), last accessed on 13 August 2024.

132 Ministry of the Economy and Innovation of the Republic of Lithuania, 'The goal of Invest Lithuania in five years: To attract investments creating more than 20 000 jobs', 2023, <https://eimin.lrv.lt/en/structure-and-contacts/news-1/the-goal-of-invest-lithuania-in-five-years-to-attract-investments-creating-more-than-20-thousand-jobs/>, last accessed on 13 August 2024.

133 DE, FI, IE, LT, SE, SK.

134 EE, DE, IE, NL, SK.

135 Startup Estonia, 'Estonian Startup Ecosystem Participants Satisfaction Survey 2022', 2022, [https://media.voog.com/0000/0037/5345/files/Estonian%20Startup%20Ecosystem%20Participants%20Satisfaction%20Survey%202022\\_ENG.pdf](https://media.voog.com/0000/0037/5345/files/Estonian%20Startup%20Ecosystem%20Participants%20Satisfaction%20Survey%202022_ENG.pdf), last accessed on 13 August 2024.

136 AT, EE, DE, FI, IE, LT, NL.

137 EE, FR, IE, LU, SK.

## 6. CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING INITIATIVES TO ATTRACT FOREIGN TALENT

EMN Member Countries identified challenges for national authorities in creating and implementing innovative talent attraction initiatives, as well as obstacles faced by third-country nationals in accessing these initiatives effectively:

- **Complex administrative processes.** Six EMN Member Countries note that complicated administrative procedures, especially for obtaining visas or work permits, can delay third-country nationals' participation and may deter them from choosing to work in their country.<sup>138</sup>
- **Assessing and verifying foreign qualifications.** Five EMN Member Countries note that recognising foreign professional qualifications, work experience, and education credentials, as well as verifying the authenticity of documents, poses challenges for authorities and third-country nationals, especially in highly regulated sectors such as healthcare.<sup>139</sup>
- **Integration difficulties.** Five EMN Member Countries identify integration challenges as a factor that diminishes the appeal of new and innovative talent attraction initiatives for third-country nationals.<sup>140</sup> These challenges include difficulties in finding affordable housing, unclear family reunification rules, and limited access to childcare and healthcare. Austria, Germany, and Ireland also mention the role of language barriers.
- **Coordinating and engaging relevant actors.** Four EMN Member Countries highlight challenges in engaging and coordinating with the right actors.<sup>141</sup> Austria and Lithuania both experienced difficulties in coordination: Lithuania struggled to maintain a unified approach across different stages of its talent attraction policy (attraction, reception, integration), while Austria faced delays and inefficiencies due to the lack of an integrated IT system between the various authorities involved. The Netherlands and Ireland had issues with engaging regional authorities<sup>142</sup> and employers, respectively, in their programmes.

<sup>138</sup> BE, DE, IT, LT, SI, SK.

<sup>139</sup> BE, DE, IE, SI, SK.

<sup>140</sup> AT, DE, FI, IE, LT.

<sup>141</sup> AT, IE, LT, NL.

<sup>142</sup> Welcome to NL project.



## ANNEX 1: OVERVIEW OF INITIATIVES

EMN Member Country	New and innovative initiatives to attract foreign talent	Type of initiative	Time period	National project	National initiative under EU framework	Target economic sectors	Target countries of origin
Austria	<a href="#">International Skilled Workers Initiative</a>	Umbrella policy initiative	2022-present	✓		12 occupations on the shortage occupation list in IT, skilled trades, electrical engineering, care and tourism	The Philippines, Indonesia, Brazil, Kosovo, Albania, North Macedonia
	<a href="#">Migration and Mobility Agreement</a>	Diplomatic agreement	2023-present	✓		N/A	India
	<a href="#">MoU on the recruitment of qualified professionals</a>	Diplomatic agreement	2023-present	✓		N/A	The Philippines
Belgium	<a href="#">Strengthening the partnership between Belgium and Georgia through temporal mobility of entrepreneurs – Entrepreneurial Mobility Link (EMLINK)</a>	Bilateral mobility partnership	2023-2025		✓	Innovation and entrepreneurship	Georgia
	<a href="#">Displaced Talent for Europe (DT4E)</a>	Skills matching and labour mobility programme with pre-arrival support	2022-2024		✓	Sectors with identified labour shortages, such as healthcare, construction, IT	Jordan, Lebanon
	<a href="#">Migration of African talents through capacity-building and hiring (MATCH)</a>	Skills matching and capacity-building programme	2020-2023		✓	Sectors with identified labour shortages	Senegal and Nigeria
	<a href="#">Towards a holistic approach to Labour migration governance and labour mobility in North Africa (THAMM)</a>	Comprehensive mobility governance initiative	2020-2024		✓	Construction, ICT, industry	Tunisia and Morocco
	<a href="#">Project for entrepreneurial mobility between Côte d'Ivoire and Belgium (PEM-N'zassa)</a>	Bilateral entrepreneurial mobility partnership with capacity-building support	2022-2024		✓	Agro-food, digital, green economy, cultural and creative sectors	Côte d'Ivoire
	<a href="#">Project for entrepreneurial mobility between Senegal and Belgium (PEM-Wecco)</a>	Pilot entrepreneurial mobility programme with bilateral cooperation	2021-2024		✓	Entrepreneurship	Senegal
	<a href="#">Establishing the foundations of a Belgium-Suriname skills mobility partnership (SMP) in the healthcare sector</a>	Skills mobility partnership with a focus on healthcare sector capacity-building	2022-2025		✓	Healthcare	Suriname
	<a href="#">Work in Flanders</a>	Website	2023-present	✓		Industry, construction, IT	
	<a href="#">International houses (Leuven, Ghent, Limburg, West-Flanders)</a>	One stop shop information hub	2017-present	✓		N/A	N/A
Estonia	<a href="#">Start-up visa programme (2017-2023)</a> Expanded to Growth Company/Scale-up Programme in 2023	Fast-track procedures	2017-present	✓		ICT, digital services	Brazil
	<a href="#">Work in Estonia website</a>	Website	2014-present	✓			N/A
Finland	<a href="#">Talent Boost, including Talent Manager Network</a>	Umbrella policy initiative	2017-present <sup>143</sup>	✓		N/A	N/A
	<a href="#">Work in Finland</a>	Website	2022-present	✓		N/A	N/A
	<a href="#">Partnership country model for international partnerships</a>	Diplomatic initiative	2023-present	✓		N/A	India, the Philippines, Brazil, Vietnam

<sup>143</sup> Talent Boost was launched in 2017 and evolved over time. The most recent Talent Boost programme was approved in 2023.

EMN Member Country	New and innovative initiatives to attract foreign talent	Type of initiative	Time period	National project	National initiative under EU framework	Target economic sectors	Target countries of origin
France	<a href="#">French Tech mission</a> (including Welcome to French Tech website)	Fast track procedure; Website; Financial incentives	2017-present	√		Innovative technology start-up sector, particularly for ecological transition, re-industrialisation, technological sovereignty, technology companies addressing major societal challenges, agriculture, digital technology, health, education, and New Frontiers, which encompass advanced fields such as marine, space, and quantum technologies	N/A
	<a href="#">Talent Residence Permit</a> (formerly Talent Passport)	Fast-track-procedure	2016-present	√		Talent - Medical and Pharmaceutical Professions permit focuses on the healthcare sector, specifically doctors, dental surgeons, midwives, and pharmacists  Talent - International Renown permit for individuals with established or potential national or international reputations in science, literature, arts, crafts, intellectual pursuits, education, or sports  Qualified Salaried Talent and Project-Driven Talent permits do not target specific sectors, but instead emphasise the seriousness and innovative nature of the applicant's economic project	N/A
Germany	<a href="#">Make it in Germany website</a>	Website	2021-present	√		N/A	N/A
	<i>Internationaler Webauftritt der BA (IntWeb)</i>	Website	2023-present	√		N/A	N/A
	<a href="#">TripleWin</a>	Skills development and migration partnership with pre-departure and post-arrival support	2013-present	√		Nurses	Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Philippines, Tunisia, Indonesia, Jordan, India
	Hand in Hand for international talents (TEAM) (HiH)	Comprehensive labour mobility programme with skills matching and pre- and post-arrival support	2024-2027	√		IT, electronics, metal works and mechatronics, hospitality, food services	Brazil, India, Vietnam
	Global Skills Partnerships	Skills development programme with pre- and post-arrival support	2019-present	√		Nurses	The Philippines, Mexico
	<a href="#">Towards a holistic approach to Labour migration governance and labour mobility in North Africa (THAMM)</a>	Comprehensive mobility governance initiative	2024-2026		√	Based on needs in the partner countries, currently: Electrical trades, metal trades, mechatronics, automotive mechatronics.	Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia

EMN Member Country	New and innovative initiatives to attract foreign talent	Type of initiative	Time period	National project	National initiative under EU framework	Target economic sectors	Target countries of origin
Ireland	<a href="#">Talent and Innovation Attachés</a>	Diplomatic initiative	2024-present	√		Research and innovation	Priority regions (e.g. US)
	<a href="#">Tech/Life</a>	Talent attraction initiative with promotional campaigns and pre-arrival support	2016-present	√		Technology	
	<a href="#">Displaced Talent for Europe (DT4E)</a>	Labour mobility programme with job matching, skills development, and pre- and post-arrival support	2021-2024		√	Sectors with identified labour shortages, such as healthcare, construction, and IT	Jordan, Lebanon
	<a href="#">Mutual Recognition Agreements</a> for members of Engineers Ireland	Professional qualification recognition for international mobility		√		Engineering	Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, New Zealand, South Africa, UK
	<a href="#">Medical Consultant Recruitment Hub</a>	Website	2023-present	√		Health	N/A
	<a href="#">Special Assignee Relief Programme (SARP)</a>	Financial incentive	2012-present	√		N/A	N/A
	<a href="#">International recruitment relocation package</a>	Financial incentive	2023-present	√		Health	N/A
Italy	<a href="#">Thamm plus: towards a holistic approach to labour migration governance and labour mobility in Italy and North Africa</a>	Comprehensive mobility governance initiative	January 2024-December 2026 (36 months)		√	Construction (Tunisia), Mechatronics (Morocco)	Tunisia, Morocco
	<a href="#">DEMO: Enhancing Decent Employment and Mobility Opportunities for Egyptians</a>	Comprehensive mobility governance initiative	2025-2028 (indicative implementation period – 36 months)		√	Tourism, hospitality	Egypt
	<a href="#">Mentor2 Project</a> – Mediterranean Network for Training Orientation to Regular Migration	Circular migration programme with vocational training, skills development, and pre-arrival support	July 2021-December 2024 (36 + 6 months)		√	Automotive and mechatronic (Turin) Communication, renewable energies, food and packaging, social education (Milan)	Tunisia, Morocco
Latvia	<a href="#">Green corridor</a>	Fast-track procedures	2024-present	√		Ministry of Economics pinpointed priority sectors to drive high value-added, export-oriented investment and foster an environment for testing innovative products, technologies, and services. Main fields: knowledge-intensive bioeconomy; smart energy and mobility; biomedicine, medical technologies, pharmaceuticals; photonics, smart materials, technologies and engineering systems; ICT	N/A
	<a href="#">Work in Riga website</a>	Website	2023-present	√		N/A	N/A

EMN Member Country	New and innovative initiatives to attract foreign talent	Type of initiative	Time period	National project	National initiative under EU framework	Target economic sectors	Target countries of origin
Lithuania	Work in Lithuania website	Website	2017-present	√		Smart economy, particularly life sciences, engineering, ICT	Initially focused on Eastern Partnership countries, conducting ICT talent market studies in Belarus and Ukraine. Since the outbreak of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine in February 2022, focus shifted to pilot marketing initiatives in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico Project underway to assess other potential global markets
	Digital Explorers	Skills mobility partnership with ICT skills development and pre- and post-arrival support	Digital Explorers I (2019-2021) Digital Explorers II (2023-2026)		√	ICT	Nigeria, Kenya, Armenia, Iraq
	Special relocation incentive	Financial incentive	2022-2024	√		Highly-skilled foreigners and Lithuanians who left the country who work in a high value-adding profession (ICT, engineering, life sciences)	
Luxembourg	List of occupations in very high demand published annually by ADEM). Occupations listed will no longer require a labour market test	Fast-track procedure	2023-present	√		Yes, updated annually	N/A
	Work-in-Luxembourg platform	Website	2022-present	√		N/A	N/A
	In June 2024, an Interministerial Committee of relevant departments and economic interest groups replaced the Talent Attraction Working Group	Cross-sectoral coordination body for talent attraction	2024-present	√		N/A	N/A
	Inpatriate Tax Regime	Tax incentive	2011-present	√		N/A	N/A
	Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition	Website	2017-present		√	Digital skills (and lifelong learning)	N/A
	movetolux website	Website	2022-present	√		Finance	N/A
	Welcome to NL	Website	2021-present	√		Agriculture and food, chemistry, creative industries, energy and cleantech, life sciences and health, high-tech systems, ICT, logistics and infrastructure, horticulture, water, aerospace, AI, cyber security, finance and fintech, sustainable innovation, quantum computing	N/A
Netherlands	Pilot essential start-up personnel	Fast-track procedure	2021-2025	√		Start-up	N/A
	Tax incentives for employees	Tax incentives		√		N/A	N/A

EMN Member Country	New and innovative initiatives to attract foreign talent	Type of initiative	Time period	National project	National initiative under EU framework	Target economic sectors	Target countries of origin
Slovak Republic	<a href="#">DigiTalents</a>	ICT-focused skills development programme with pre-arrival training and job placement support	July 2021 – June 2024		√	ICT	Slovak Republic, Ukraine, Moldova
	<a href="#">Migration Information Centre</a> of the IOM, financed from the Recovery and Resilience Plan of the Slovak Republic (MIC RRP)	One stop shop information hub	1 July 2022 – 31 December 2024	√		N/A	N/A
Slovenia	Partnerships with employment services of third countries based on bilateral employment agreements <a href="#">Link (Serbia)</a> <a href="#">Link (Bosnia)</a>	Partnerships with third-country employment services for recruitment and pre-arrival support	2019-present (Agreement with Serbia) 2013-present (Agreement with Bosnia and Herzegovina)	√		N/A	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia
	<a href="#">Information point for foreign workers and employers that would like to employ foreigners</a>	One stop shop information hub	2023-31 December 2024	√		N/A	N/A
Sweden	Residence permit for highly qualified persons to look for work or start a business	Fast track procedure	2022-present	√		N/A	N/A
	Fast-track working model	Fast track procedure	2024-present	√		Highly qualified workers (e.g. manager positions/ jobs that require university degrees)	N/A
	<a href="#">Work in Sweden</a> (joint initiative led by the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth to improve attraction, integration, and retention of highly skilled international talent for competitiveness)	Website	2024-2026	√		N/A	N/A
	Work in Sweden Toolkit for diplomatic missions	Diplomatic initiative					
	<a href="#">Tax relief under the 'expert tax rules'</a>	Tax incentives	1999-present	√		N/A	N/A





## For more information

EMN website: <http://ec.europa.eu/emn>

EMN LinkedIn page: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/european-migration-network>

EMN X account: <https://x.com/emnmigration>

EMN YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@EMNMigration>

## EMN National Contact Points

Austria [www.emn.at/en/](http://www.emn.at/en/)

Belgium [www.emnbelgium.be/](http://www.emnbelgium.be/)

Bulgaria [www.emn-bg.com/](http://www.emn-bg.com/)

Croatia [emn.gov.hr/](http://emn.gov.hr/)

Cyprus [www.moi.gov.cy/moi/crmd/emnncpc.nsf/home/home?opendocument](http://www.moi.gov.cy/moi/crmd/emnncpc.nsf/home/home?opendocument)

Czech Republic [www.emncz.eu/](http://www.emncz.eu/)

Estonia [www.emn.ee/](http://www.emn.ee/)

Finland [emn.fi/en/](http://emn.fi/en/)

France [www.immigration.interieur.gouv.fr/Europe-et-International/Le-reseau-europeen-des-migrations-REM3/Le-reseau-europeen-des-migrations-REM2](http://www.immigration.interieur.gouv.fr/Europe-et-International/Le-reseau-europeen-des-migrations-REM3/Le-reseau-europeen-des-migrations-REM2)

Germany [www.bamf.de/EN/Themen/EMN/emn-node.html](http://www.bamf.de/EN/Themen/EMN/emn-node.html)

Greece <https://migration.gov.gr/emn/>

Hungary [www.emnhungary.hu/en](http://www.emnhungary.hu/en)

Ireland [www.emn.ie/](http://www.emn.ie/)

Italy [www.emnitalyncp.it/](http://www.emnitalyncp.it/)

Latvia [www.emn.lv](http://www.emn.lv)

Lithuania [www.emn.lt/](http://www.emn.lt/)

Luxembourg [emnluxembourg.uni.lu/](http://emnluxembourg.uni.lu/)

Malta [emn.gov.mt/](http://emn.gov.mt/)

The Netherlands [www.emnnetherlands.nl/](http://www.emnnetherlands.nl/)

Poland [www.gov.pl/web/european-migration-network](http://www.gov.pl/web/european-migration-network)

Portugal [rem.sef.pt/en/](http://rem.sef.pt/en/)

Romania [www.mai.gov.ro/](http://www.mai.gov.ro/)

Spain [www.emnspain.gob.es/en/home](http://www.emnspain.gob.es/en/home)

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Georgia [migration.commission.ge/](http://migration.commission.ge/)

Republic of Moldova [bma.gov.md/en](http://bma.gov.md/en)

Ukraine [dmsu.gov.ua/en-home.html](http://dmsu.gov.ua/en-home.html)

Montenegro [www.gov.me/mup](http://www.gov.me/mup)

Armenia [migration.am/?lang=en](http://migration.am/?lang=en)

Serbia [kirs.gov.rs/eng](http://kirs.gov.rs/eng)

North Macedonia