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FOSTERING SUSTAINABLE LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS: SKILLS MATCHING POLICIES AND INSTRUMENTS

Common template for EMN study

1.BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

This study deals with skills matching of migrants in EMN Member and Observer Countries. The target group of this study are labour migrants of third countries (TCNs) and TCNs arriving via family reunification, beneficiaries of international protection and beneficiaries of temporary protection.¹ Skills matching in this study refers to **education**, i.e. one's field of study and level of qualification, as well as to **skills**, i.e. the ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems.² The main focus of the study lies on an analysis of policies and initiatives that address mismatching and promote skills matching. Based on the analysis of policies and initiatives, the study will identify challenges, best practices and lessons learned in promoting sustainable labour market integration of migrants through skills matching.

More than half of European companies perceive skills shortages as their most pressing challenge as they cannot find workers with suitable qualifications and skills to fill vacancies.³ Skills shortages are predicted to further aggravate in the future.⁴ Developments such as automation, action against climate change and its harmful effects

¹ When no certain group is explicitly specified, the study refers to these migrant groups.

² EC: Skill, <https://esco.ec.europa.eu/en/about-esco/escopedia/escopedia/skill>

³ European Commission, 'The future of European competitiveness Part B | In-depth analysis and recommendations', 2024, p. 258, <https://dorie.ec.europa.eu/en>, accessed 20 January 2025.

⁴ Ibid., p. 261; European Commission, 'Flash Eurobarometer FL537 : SMEs and skills shortages', 2023, https://data.europa.eu/data/datasets/s2961_fl537_eng?locale=en, accessed 26 March 2025; European Commission, 'Flash Eurobarometer 529 - European Year of Skills: skills shortages, recruitment and retention strategies in small and medium-sized enterprise', 2023, <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/api/deliverable/download/file?deliverableId=88720>, accessed 26 March 2025; Weber, T., Adăscăliței, D., 'Employment and labour markets Company practices to tackle labour shortages', Eurofund, 2024, <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/en/publications/2024/company-practices-tackle-labour-shortages>, accessed 26 March 2025.

(green transition),⁵ and digitalisation in combination with demographic aging are transforming labour markets and are changing which skills are most urgently needed⁶ in Europe and beyond.

Whilst attracting foreign talent is one relevant avenue to address skill shortages,⁷ another key question⁸ is: How can the skills of migrants already living and working in the EU be used effectively? This question is particularly relevant in view of the widespread evidence that the potential of migrant workers – e.g. particularly of migrants with foreign qualifications⁹ – is often underutilised in Europe, as they are working in jobs that do not correspond to their qualifications.¹⁰

Skills mismatch is costly for the affected persons as well as for businesses, the economy, and society overall as it negatively impacts on earnings and – linked to it – migrants' remittances,¹¹ state revenues, productivity, innovation and economic growth.¹²

1.1 SKILLS MISMATCH IN MIGRANT GROUPS

1.1.1 SKILLS MISMATCH DISPROPORTIONALLY AFFECTS MIGRANTS

The types of mismatch this study is interested in refer to situations in which migrants are unable to put their educational qualifications and/or skills to use in their countries of residence. Put more concretely, the types of mismatches this study looks at can occur in regard to skills and levels of education (vertical mismatch) and/or in regard to the fields of education (horizontal mismatch; see definitions in Section 8). As a consequence, migrants can end up in lower-paid and lower-skilled positions than the ones they might have held in their countries of origin. These types of mismatches can also manifest itself

⁵ Green transition refers to a process towards environmentally sustainable and fairer societies. It aims to address human-induced climate change emergencies, environmental degradation and the loss of biodiversity and to build resilience and mitigate inequalities in our societies. See European Training Foundation (ETF), 'ETF Policy Briefing: Skilling for the Green Transition', 2022, p. 2, <https://www.etf.europa.eu>, accessed 20 March 2025.

⁶ Worldbank, 'Skills and Workforce Development', <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/skillsdevelopment>, last accessed on 20 January 2025; See also European Migration Network (EMN), 'Labour Migration in time of Labour Shortages – EMN study', forthcoming.

⁷ European Commission, 'Commission sets out actions to tackle labour and skills shortages', 20 May 2024, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_24_1507, accessed 26 March 2025; European Migration Network (EMN), 'Labour migration in times of labour shortages – EMN study', forthcoming.

⁸ ILO, 'The role of migrant skills in shaping tomorrow's workforce', <https://www.ilo.org/resource/article/role-migrant-skills-shaping-tomorrow%E2%80%99s-workforce>, last accessed 11 April 2025.

⁹ Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, 'Quarterly Review of Employment and Social Developments in Europe (ESDE) - January 2025', European Commission, 2025, https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/quarterly-review-employment-and-social-developments-europe-esde-january-2025_en, accessed 26 March 2025.

¹⁰ For example, an analysis of Eurostat's Labor Force Survey (2017 - 2022) across all EU Member States revealed that nearly half of tertiary-educated migrants in Europe are overqualified for their jobs, and are almost twice as likely to be unemployed compared to natives. See: Infomigrants, 'Unrealized potential: The challenge of 'brain waste' among Europe's skilled migrants', <https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/59149/unrealized-potential-the-challenge-of-brain-waste-among-europes-skilled-migrants>, accessed 4 February 2025.

¹¹ McDonald, Ted & Valenzuela, Maria Rebecca. (2009). The Impact of Skill Mismatch among Migrants on Remittance Behaviour. SEDAP research paper no. 242, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/23970170_The_Impact_of_Skill_Mismatch_among_Migrants_on_Remittance_Behaviour, accessed 4 March 2025.

¹² McGuinness, S., Pouliakas, K., Redmond, P., 'Skills Mismatch: Concepts, Measurement and Policy Approaches' (2018), *Journal of Economic Surveys*, p. 985, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/322668688_SKILLS_MISMATCH_CONCEPTS_MEASUREMENT_AND_POLICY_APPROACHES_SKILLS_MISMATCH, accessed 4 February 2025.

in greater rates of unemployment or underemployment¹³ of migrants compared to similarly qualified/skilled residents without migratory backgrounds and/or foreign qualifications.¹⁴

An analysis from Eurostat based on the European Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS) data set demonstrates that the overqualification rate for third-country nationals – measured as tertiary-educated persons working in low- or medium-skilled occupations – stood at 39.4% in 2023. It further showed that it was therefore considerably higher than the overqualification rate for citizens of other EU countries (31.3%) and almost twice as high as the rate for nationals (20.8%). For female non-EU citizens, the overqualification rate was 6.7 percentage points higher than for male non-EU citizens.¹⁵ Similarly, Frattini and Dalmonte¹⁶ note in a recent study that whilst the percentage of foreign-born migrants in Europe with a university education (32%) is comparable to that of native-born (34%), they lag behind in employment probability and exhibit significant overqualification. For a migrant with a foreign university degree the likelihood of working in a highly skilled occupation is 20% lower than for a comparable native while for migrants with an educational qualification attained in the country of residence the likelihood for overqualification is significantly lower (6% compared to natives).¹⁷

These findings underline that skills mismatching is a fundamental barrier to effective labour market integration for migrant populations.¹⁸

1.1.2 MISMATCHING DIFFERS ACROSS MIGRANT GROUPS AND ACROSS COUNTRIES

Skills mismatching is more prevalent among certain migrant groups.¹⁹ Existing research suggests that skills mismatch depends on a variety of factors relating to the country of origin (e.g. education system),²⁰ the reasons for and circumstances of migration (e.g.

¹³ Lighthouse Reports, 'Brain Waste Methodology – Section 2: Data acquisition and analysis', https://www.lighthousereports.com/methodology/brain_waste/#section-2, last accessed on 4 February 2025.

¹⁴ Infomigrants, 'Unrealized potential: The challenge of 'brain waste' among Europe's skilled migrants', <https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/59149/unrealized-potential-the-challenge-of-brain-waste-among-europes-skilled-migrants>, last accessed on 4 February 2025.

¹⁵ Eurostat, 'Migrant integration statistics – over-qualification', https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Migrant_integration_statistics_-_over-qualification, last accessed on 20 January 2025.

¹⁶ Frattini, T., Dalmonte, A., '8th Migration Observatory Report: Immigrant integration in Europe'. March 2024, <https://dagliano.unimi.it/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/8th-rapporto-web.pdf>, last accessed on 4 February 2025.

¹⁷ Dalmonte, A., Frattini, T., Giorgini, S., 'The Overeducation of Immigrants in Europe'. 18 October 2024, https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4991626#, last accessed on 4 February 2025.

¹⁸ Giorgio, B., Wruuck, P., 'Skill shortages and skill mismatch: A review of the literature' (2021), *Journal of Economic Surveys*, 35 (6), p. 1145, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/351126192_Skill_shortages_and_skill_mismatch_A_review_of_the_literature, last accessed on 20 January 2025.

¹⁹ Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, 'Quarterly Review of Employment and Social Developments in Europe (ESDE) - January 2025', European Commission, 2025, pp. 16-19, https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/quarterly-review-employment-and-social-developments-europe-esde-january-2025_en, last accessed 26 March 2025.

Broschinski, S., Heidenreich, M., 'Overeducation among EU and Third-Country Immigrants in Europe: The role of Institutions, Policies and Culture' (2025), *European Societies*, <https://direct.mit.edu/euso/article/doi/10.1162>, last accessed on 20 January 2025; OECD/European Commission (2023), *Indicators of Immigrant Integration 2023: Settling In*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/1d5020a6-en>, last accessed on 26 March 2025. Nikolov, P., Salarpour G., L. David, T., 'Skill Downgrading among Refugees and Economic Immigrants in Germany: Evidence from the Syrian Refugee Crisis', July 2022, <https://docs.iza.org/dp15426.pdf>, last accessed on 31 January 2025.

²⁰ Broschinski, S., Heidenreich, M., 'Overeducation among EU and Third-Country Immigrants in Europe: The role of Institutions, Policies and Culture' (2025), *European Societies*, <https://direct.mit.edu/euso/article/doi/10.1162>, last accessed on 20 January 2025; OECD/European Commission (2023), *Indicators of Immigrant Integration 2023: Settling In*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/1d5020a6-en>, last accessed on 26 March 2025.

labour migration/humanitarian reasons/family reunification),²¹ the conditions in the receiving country (migration status/visa, duration of stay, challenges related to the portability and recognition of qualifications, further educational opportunities) as well as individual circumstances (e.g. age, gender, language proficiency).

The extent of skills mismatching also varies greatly across different EMN Member and Observer Countries.²² This variation is the result of different migrant integration and immigration regimes, as well as varying labour market, employment, housing and education structures (see section on drivers of mismatching below).²³

1.1.3 SKILLS MATCHING CONCEPT OF THE STUDY

Skills matching in this study (see also section on definitions below) refers to the extent that an individual's **skills and qualifications** are utilised in the labour market. The degree of a skills match is identified by looking at the compatibility between the individuals' (actual) qualification/skills and the labour market's skills/qualification needs. A skills match refers to a situation of high compatibility, while a skills mismatch refers to an imbalance.

A mismatch between a worker and their job may occur either in terms of their **(educational) qualifications and skills (vertical mismatch)** or in their **fields of study (horizontal mismatch)**; for more details see section 8).

Skills mismatching can refer both to formal educational qualification (overeducation/undereducation)²⁴ or to individuals' skills²⁵ (overskilling/underskilling) (see section 8).

A mismatch of educational qualifications can be measured²⁶ by checking whether educational qualifications exceed job requirements. It is more difficult to measure skills, as skills are multidimensional.²⁷ To operationalize skills and make them measurable, the OECD Survey on Adult Skills (PIAAC) analyses them, by collecting adults' proficiency in

²¹ Ibid., p.88.

²² Eurostat, Migrant integration statistics - over-qualification, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>, accessed 20 March 2025.

²³ Riaño, Y., 'Understanding brain waste: Unequal opportunities for skills development between highly skilled women and men, migrants and non-migrants' (2021) *Population Space and Place*, Special Issue Paper, p. 11, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/349599037_Understanding_brain_waste_Unequal_opportunities_for_skills_development_between_highly_skilled_women_and_men_migrants_and_nonmigrants, accessed 10 January 2025; TRAILS - Enabling data analytics for actions tackling skills shortages & mismatch, 'D1.1 - REVIEW I – Theoretical and empirical questions for tackling skills shortages and mismatch in Europe', 2024, p. 44-58, https://www.trails-project.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/TRAILS_Deliverable_D.1.1_Final.pdf, accessed 4 February 2025.

²⁴ McGuinness, S., Pouliakas, K., Redmond, P., 'Skills mismatch: concept, measurement and policy approaches' (2018), *Journal of Economic Surveys*, 32 (4), p. 985, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/joes.12254>, accessed 21 January 2025.

²⁵ To operationalize skills and make them measurable, the OECD Survey on Adult Skills (PIAAC) analyzes skills, by collecting adults' proficiency in key information-processing skills - literacy, numeracy and problem solving. OECD, 'Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC)', <https://www.oecd.org/en/about/programmes/piaac.html>, accessed 31 January 2025.

²⁶ For the different (four) types to measure overeducation/overqualification see e.g. Erdogan, B., Bauer, T., & Karaeminogullari, A. (2017). Overqualification in the Workplace. *Oxford Research Encyclopaedia of Psychology*. Retrieved 26 Mar. 2025, from <https://oxfordre.com/psychology/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190236557.001.0001/acrefore-9780190236557-e-18>, accessed 26 June 2025.

²⁷ Lise, J., Postel-Vinay, F., 'Multidimensional skills, sorting, and human capital accumulation' (2020), *Journal of Economic Surveys*, https://www.atlantafed.org/-/media/documents/news/conferences/2017/0921-labor-supply-sorting-wages/papers/lise_postel-vinay-multidimensional-skills-sorting-human-capital-accumulation.pdf, accessed 21 January 2025.

key information-processing skills - literacy, numeracy and problem solving.²⁸ In this regard, the European Commission and EU Member States worked together in recent years to map national qualifications with skills from ESCO (the classification of European Occupations and Skills) using Artificial Intelligence.²⁹

1.1.4 LINK BETWEEN OVERQUALIFICATION AND UNDERSKILLING

The higher rates of overqualification (overeducation) among foreign-born migrants compared to native-borns tend to co-exist with their relative under-skilling, i.e. migrants tend to have higher formal education than required for their job but can be at the same time underqualified in regard to the skills that the job requires. To illustrate, an individual who holds a university degree in medicine, which is not necessary for their job as assistant at a GP office, is overeducated in terms of qualification/degree. At the same time this individual lacks a technical skill needed to deal with medical equipment needed for their job or does not meet the required language skills, which renders the person underskilled.

One reason for this co-existence could be that migrants often acquire their work experience in different languages and labour markets.³⁰ Determining the level, value and usefulness of skills that migrants have acquired through work experience and training in their countries of origin may therefore prove challenging for employers and state authorities (e.g. public employment services).

Understanding the correlation of these two forms of mismatch (skills and qualification) is an important factor for comprehending integration dynamics with relevant consequences for policy making.³¹

1.2 DRIVERS OF AND POLICY SOLUTIONS TO SKILLS MISMATCHING

1.2.1 REASONS FOR SKILLS MISMATCHING ARE MULTI-FACETTED AND INTERLINKED

According to existing research, generic and migration-specific drivers both impact skills matching of migrants and are therefore relevant for policy-makers to consider when addressing the phenomenon as outlined in the following paragraphs.

Important generic drivers include e.g. economic and labour market conditions, the design of educational curricula and their alignment with skills demands. There is also evidence that housing policies and relocation costs can impact skills mismatch as these may be a determinant for employees' ability to find affordable housing close to suitable work opportunities. In this context, remote work opportunities may promote skills matching by counteracting geographical constraints. In addition to these systemic drivers, employer-specific determinants refer to recruitment practices, on-the-job adjustments (e.g. promotions), and opportunities for skills development for employees.³² Whilst these drivers have an impact on all workers (migrant and non-migrant ones), they also can

²⁸ OECD, 'Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC)', <https://www.oecd.org/en/about/programmes/piaac.html>, accessed 31 January 2025.

²⁹ See e.g. European Commission: ESCO Skills mapping pilot [Artificial intelligence for ESCO maintenance process]. <https://esco.ec.europa.eu/en/about-esco/escopedia/escopedia/esco-skills-mapping-pilot>, accessed 26 March 2025.

³⁰ OECD, 'Do Adults Have the Skills They Need to Thrive in a Changing World?: Survey of Adult Skills 2023', 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1787/b263dc5d-en>, accessed 4 February 2025.

³¹ Bonacci, M., Mineo, S., 'Social Integration Dynamics for Migrants: PIAAC to Measure Skill and Qualification Mismatch' (2018), *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 6 (5), p. 970, <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1177836>, accessed 4 February 2025.

³² TRAILS - Enabling data analytics for actions tackling skills shortages & mismatch, 'D1.1 - REVIEW I - Theoretical and empirical questions for tackling skills shortages and mismatch in Europe', 2024, p. 44-58, https://www.trails-project.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/TRAILS_Deliverable_D.1.1_Final.pdf, accessed 4 February 2025.

impact migrant workers differently and hence are useful to take into account in terms of policies/initiatives aiming to tackle mismatches in migrant groups.

Migration-specific causes for skills mismatch, include the compatibility of regulations and standards of country of origin and country of residence. Some combinations imply less frictions than others, for instance, because of greater disparities or similarities in educational requirements, labour market regulations, and in terms of language barriers.³³ Recognition of qualifications acquired abroad may be hindered by a lack of transferability of qualifications, e.g. due to differences in study programs/educational systems between the country of origin and the country of residence, kinds of technologies used in the country of origin and country of destination, specific (legal) criteria for practicing specific professions, including the necessity of requalification through additional studies/training, as well as high costs associated with recognition and requalification procedures. However, less institutional, i.e. non-policy-related dynamics can also be at play here.³⁴ Simply not knowing how to evaluate qualifications acquired abroad and compare them to the credentials of workers trained in the destination country might manifest itself in risk aversity by employers, leading to downgrading of migrants' credentials.³⁵ How easily skills can be transferred between countries' systems can therefore impact the scale of mismatching. To respond to this challenge, some EU countries have started for instance to implement Pre-Check-registers in cooperation with third countries that simplify these processes.³⁶ Countries in need of workforce have also used Skills Mobility Partnerships to prepare workers abroad and enhance the matching of (future) migrant workers, and have established national schools abroad that teach in line with the curricula and skills needed.³⁷

Migration and asylum regulations and migrant integration policies (see section on policies below) need to be taken into account as drivers, too.³⁸ EMN research on the labour market integration of beneficiaries of temporary protection from Ukraine, for example, indicated that the uncertainty about the duration of their stay - based on the temporality of their legal status - is considered to contribute, among other factors, to skills mismatch as early employment in low-skilled jobs is prioritised (by state authorities and/or beneficiaries themselves) over employment corresponding to their qualification.³⁹

³³ Ibid, p. 52.

³⁴ Sanroma et al. (2015) cit. after Perry, A., 'Are over-qualified immigrants mismatched according to their actual skills? An international comparison of labor market placement in OECD countries', 2017, p. 7, <https://doi.org/10.21241/ssoar.52592>, accessed 4 February 2025.

³⁵ Bolzani, D., Crivellaro, F., Grimaldi, R., 'Highly skilled, yet invisible. The potential of migrant women with a STEM background in Italy between intersectional barriers and resources' (2021), *Gender, Work and Organization*, 18 (6), p. 2132; Sparreboom, T., Tarvid, A., 'Skills mismatch of natives and immigrants in Europe', 2017, p. 13, https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_protect/@protrav/@migrant/documents/publication/wcms_548911.pdf, last accessed on 22 January 2025; Perry, A., 'Are over-qualified immigrants mismatched according to their actual skills? An international comparison of labour market placement in OECD countries', 2017, p. 6, <https://doi.org/10.21241/ssoar.52592>, accessed 4 February 2025.

³⁶ See e.g. Hadj Abdou, L. and P. Ebner (2024). *Labour Migration in Times of Labour Shortages in Austria*. International Organization for Migration (IOM), Vienna, p. 37.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Riaño, Y., 'Understanding brain waste: Unequal opportunities for skills development between highly skilled women and men, migrants and non-migrants' (2021) *Population Space and Place*, Special Issue Paper, p. 11, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/349599037_Understanding_brain_waste_Unequal_opportunities_for_skills_development_between_highly_skilled_women_and_men_migrants_and_nonmigrants, accessed 10 January 2025.

³⁹ European Migration Network (EMN), 'Labour market integration of beneficiaries of temporary protection from Ukraine: Joint EMN-OECD inform', May 2024, www.emn.at, last accessed on 9 January 2025; European Network of Public Employment Services (2023): *Labour market integration of displaced people and refugees*. <https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=26990&langId=en>, accessed 4 March 2025.

Existing research also emphasises the impact of discrimination, stereotypes and negative public attitudes towards migrants on skills mismatch.⁴⁰

In addition to country-level and structural factors, skills mismatch also stems from individual factors of the migrant population. For example lack of knowledge of the language of the country of residence was found to increase the likelihood for skills mismatch (in form of overeducation), as appropriate qualifications can often not compensate for language barriers (see also the section on link of overqualification and underkilling).⁴¹ Furthermore, limited knowledge of the labour market (e.g. regarding opportunities for potential jobs and networks) is considered a key driver for skills mismatch.⁴² The individual family and financial situation may also play a role as migrants in need to support their families (either in the country of origin or in the receiving country) are likely to prioritise a quick labour market entry over a job that matches their skills and/or qualifications.⁴³

Previous studies also found that gender and age impact skills mismatch, which implies that female and/or elderly migrants can be impacted even more by skills mismatch.⁴⁴ Women are generally more affected by skills mismatch than men, which is often attributed to care and family duties as well as less favourable opportunities for their career development (e.g. due to lack of childcare arrangements). These gender-specific drivers can intersect with migration specific drivers that exacerbate⁴⁵ skills mismatch in

⁴⁰ Bolzani, D., Crivellaro, F., Grimaldi, R., 'Highly skilled, yet invisible. The potential of migrant women with a STEMM background in Italy between intersectional barriers and resources' (2021), *Gender, Work and Organization*, 18 (6), p. 2132; Sparreboom, T., Tarvid, A., 'Skills mismatch of natives and immigrants in Europe', 2017, p. 13, https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_protect/@protrav/@migrant/documents/publication/wcms_548911.pdf, accessed 22 January 2025; Aleksynska, M., & Tritah, A., 'Occupation-education mismatch of immigrant workers in Europe: Context and policies', 2011, <https://ideas.repec.org/p/cii/cepidt/2011-16.html>, accessed 4 February 2025.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² TRAILS - Enabling data analytics for actions tackling skills shortages & mismatch, 'D1.1 - REVIEW I – Theoretical and empirical questions for tackling skills shortages and mismatch in Europe', 2024, https://www.trails-project.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/TRAILS_Deliverable_D.1.1_Final.pdf, accessed 4 February 2025; Bolzani, D., Crivellaro, F., Grimaldi, R., 'Highly skilled, yet invisible. The potential of migrant women with a STEMM background in Italy between intersectional barriers and resources' (2021), *Gender, Work and Organization*, 18 (6), p. 2132; European Network of Public Employment Services (2023): Labour market integration of displaced people and refugees. <https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=26990&langId=en>, accessed 4 March 2025.

⁴³ Bolzani, D., Crivellaro, F., Grimaldi, R., 'Highly skilled, yet invisible. The potential of migrant women with a STEMM background in Italy between intersectional barriers and resources' (2021), *Gender, Work and Organization*, 18 (6), p. 2132.

⁴⁴ International Labour Organization, 'Skills mismatch of natives and immigrants in Europe', 2017, https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_protect/@protrav/@migrant/documents/publication/wcms_548911.pdf, accessed 4 February 2025; Visintin, S., Tijdens, K., van Klaveren, M. 'Skill mismatch among migrant workers: evidence from a large multi-country dataset' (2015), *IZA Journal of Migration*, 21 (4); Birgier, D., Bar-Haim, E., 'Language Used at Home and Educational–Occupational Mismatch of Migrants by Gender' (2023), *Social Indicators Research*, 170, p. 265; Riaño, Y., 'Understanding brain waste: Unequal opportunities for skills development between highly skilled women and men, migrants and non-migrants' (2021), *Population Space and Place*, Special Issue Paper, p 1-13, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/349599037_Understanding_brain_waste_Unequal_opportunities_for_skills_development_between_highly_skilled_women_and_men_migrants_and_nonmigrants, accessed 10 January 2025.

⁴⁵ Bolzani, D., Crivellaro, F., Grimaldi, R., 'Highly skilled, yet invisible. The potential of migrant women with a STEMM background in Italy between intersectional barriers and resources' (2021), *Gender, Work and Organization*, 18 (6), p. 2132; Riaño, Y., 'Understanding brain waste: Unequal opportunities for skills development between highly skilled women and men, migrants and non-migrants' (2021), *Population Space and Place*, Special Issue Paper, p. 1-13, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/349599037_Understanding_brain_waste_Unequal_opportunities_for_skills_development_between_highly_skilled_women_and_men_migrants_and_nonmigrants, accessed 10 January 2025.

migrant women, e.g. due to a spouse residence permit; higher childcare constraints compared to native-born women.⁴⁶ Migrant women have consequently found to be the group most vulnerable to overqualification.⁴⁷ Regarding the impact of age, research shows a difference between foreign nationals and natives. Among nationals, young people (18-34 years) are more affected by skills mismatch while among third-country nationals older persons (35-64 years) are most affected.⁴⁸ Hence the age structure of the migrant population in a country may also need to be taken into account when explaining migrant's skills mismatch and taking policy action.

The migration status is another important factor as studies find that e.g. humanitarian migrants tend to be particularly affected by skills mismatch. As refugees' trajectories are marked by seeking shelter and protection, they are constrained in choosing their country of destination. As a consequence, the likelihood that their prior educational qualifications and professional experience correspond to the labour market conditions and needs in the receiving country is lower than in other groups. They may lack preparation for the labour market - including documentation of qualification- and its requirements (such as language skills).⁴⁹ Similar observations can be made for family migrants, who also have weak attachments to the labour market of the host country upon arrival.⁵⁰

1.2.2 POTENTIAL OF POLICY ACTION

According to the existing body of research, **mainstream policy measures** can contribute to tackling skills mismatches in the overall population, including migrants (for a more comprehensive overview see e.g. the Trails project),⁵¹ for example:

Labour market information: Enhancing the availability and accessibility of e.g. online job portals and career guidance services.⁵²

⁴⁶ OECD, 'International Migration Outlook 2023', OECD Publishing, 2023, pp. 145ff, <https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/international-migration-outlook-2023>, accessed 26 March 2025.

⁴⁷ Akgüç, M., Parasnis, J., 'Occupation-Education Mismatch of Immigrant Women in Europe' (2023), *Social Indicators Research*, 170, p. 75; Eurostat, 'Migrant integration statistics – over-qualification', https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Migrant_integration_statistics_-_over-qualification, accessed 4 February 2025.

⁴⁸ Eurostat, 'Migrant integration statistics – over-qualification', https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Migrant_integration_statistics_-_over-qualification, last accessed 4 February 2025.

⁴⁹ On the effect of migrant status, see e.g. Gamble, H., Cebulla, A., Tan, G. 2023. Migrants Skills Mismatch Analysis of Multi-Agency Data Integration Project (MADIP) data. Adelaide: Australian Industrial Transformation Institute, Flinders University of South Australia, <https://doi.org/10.25957/syzv-tk81>, accessed 04 March 2025.

⁵⁰ OECD/European Commission (2023), *Indicators of Immigrant Integration 2023: Settling In*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/1d5020a6-en>, last accessed on 26 March 2025.

⁵¹ TRAILS - Enabling data analytics for actions tackling skills shortages & mismatch, 'D1.1 - REVIEW I – Theoretical and empirical questions for tackling skills shortages and mismatch in Europe', 2024, p. 59ff, https://www.trails-project.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/TRAILS_Deliverable_D.1.1_Final.pdf, accessed 20 January 2025.

⁵² See e.g. European Commission (2023): PES Network adopts 7 recommendations to guide employment services assisting refugees and persons displaced from Ukraine, last accessed 4 March 2025, last accessed 4 March 2025; TRAILS - Enabling data analytics for actions tackling skills shortages & mismatch, 'D1.1 - REVIEW I – Theoretical and empirical questions for tackling skills shortages and mismatch in Europe', 2024, p. 63, https://www.trails-project.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/TRAILS_Deliverable_D.1.1_Final.pdf, accessed 20 January 2025.

Training and education: life-long learning policies⁵³ that subsidise retraining for suitable groups or incentivise on the job trainings⁵⁴ and the alignment of the educational system with the needs of the labour market by modernising the curricula and teaching methods.⁵⁵

Unemployment insurance regulations: if designed appropriately, they allow workers to search for better fitting jobs or provide incentives to acquire new skills before entering the labour market.⁵⁶

Housing policies (to reduce prices): High housing prices may force workers to relocate or to constrain their employment to specific localities with a negative impact on skill matching.⁵⁷

Family policies: Access to formal childcare and parental leave policies promote the labour market participation of women and can contribute to reducing (involuntary) part-time employment.⁵⁸

Reports emphasise that labour market **integration policies and initiatives, which target migrants**, potentially help reduce skills mismatch e.g. by **providing support to access suitable jobs**, providing financial support during early integration and job search, or facilitating the **recognition of foreign qualifications**.⁵⁹ A 2021 study furthermore emphasised that **integration policies** can impact skills matching indirectly by steering who migrates to a country in the first place.⁶⁰

Sustainable labour market integration efforts that tackle skills mismatching are, as experts⁶¹ highlight, no quick fixes. They take time in order to show effects⁶² and they involve multiple actors.⁶³ As the drivers for skills mismatch are found at different levels

⁵³ TRAILS - Enabling data analytics for actions tackling skills shortages & mismatch, 'D1.1 - REVIEW I – Theoretical and empirical questions for tackling skills shortages and mismatch in Europe', 2024, p. 66, https://www.trails-project.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/TRAILS_Deliverable_D.1.1_Final.pdf, accessed 20 January 2025.

⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 67.

⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 68.

⁵⁶ Ibid, p. 69.

⁵⁷ Ibid, p. 65.

⁵⁸ OECD, 'International Migration Outlook 2023', OECD Publishing, 2023, pp. 145ff, <https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/international-migration-outlook-2023>, accessed 26 March 2025.

⁵⁹ Council of Europe, 'Integration of migrants and refugees: benefits for all parties involved', 2017, <https://rm.coe.int/integration-of-migrants-and-refugees-benefits-for-all-parties-involved/1680aa9038>, accessed 5 February 2025; International Labour Organization, 'Skills mismatch of natives and immigrants in Europe', 2017, https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_protect/@protrav/@migrant/documents/publication/wcms_548911.pdf, accessed 5 February 2025.

⁶⁰ Limitations to integration policy measures in turn may hinder migrants to find work in line with their qualifications and thereby lead to skills mismatch. See Bolzani, D., Crivellaro, F., Grimaldi, R., 'Highly skilled, yet invisible. The potential of migrant women with a STEMM background in Italy between intersectional barriers and resources' (2021), *Gender, Work and Organization*, 18 (6), p. 2132.; Aleksynska, M., Tritah, A., 'Occupation-Education Mismatch of Immigrant Workers in Europe: Context and Policies', 2011, <https://ideas.repec.org/p/cii/cepidt/2011-16.html>, accessed 4 February 2025.

⁶¹ OECD, 'Do Adults Have the Skills They Need to Thrive in a Changing World?: Survey of Adult Skills 2023', 2024, p. 128, <https://doi.org/10.1787/b263dc5d-en>, accessed 4 February 2025.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ European Commission, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on 'Action plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027', 2020, COM(2020) 758 final, p. 11, https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/document/download/2148b15d-884c-4ac6-977a-1ffc6b5a8d59_en, accessed 4 February 2025.

(individual, family, employer, state),⁶⁴ responses involve government agencies, educational institutions and academic credential assessment services, employers, unions, professional regulatory and licensing bodies, non-governmental organisations and skilled migrants and their associations.⁶⁵ This study will therefore look at skills matching efforts implemented by different stakeholders to provide a comprehensive policy analysis of this issue.

2. STUDY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The **core objective** of this study is to contribute knowledge on effective policy action for promoting skill matching and tackling (vertical and horizontal) skills mismatch of non-EU/EEA migrants in EMN Member and Observer Countries. To this end- as a necessary background for the analyses of policy action- the study also seeks to provide an overview of the prevalence of skills mismatch (among different groups) of migrants, and the specific drivers of this mismatch.

To provide a comprehensive insight, the study aims to analyse data from expert interviews conducted at national level, from legal and policy documents, as well as by reviewing available research, (quantitative) data, and policy debates at EU and national level.

The different objectives of the study are:

- First, providing an **overview on** how migrants are affected in EMN Member and Observer Countries by the phenomenon of **skills mismatch** with a view of outlining existing differences across migrant groups (selected categories of labour migrants from third countries, and third-country nationals that arrived via family reunification, beneficiaries of international protection, beneficiaries of temporary protection), as available;
- Second, highlighting the **underlying causes for skills mismatch among (the different groups of) migrants** in EMN Member and Observer Countries.
- Third, identifying and exploring different **policies and instruments** of EMN Member and Observer Countries that specifically aim to promote skills matching and address skills mismatching for (different groups of) migrants;
- Fourth, identifying **challenges** in addressing skills mismatch/promoting skills matching;
- Fifth, pointing out **lessons learned** for overcoming the identified challenges;
- Sixth, collecting **good practices** in addressing skills mismatch/promoting skills matching.

3. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on **vertical and horizontal skills mismatch**. Other concepts of skills mismatch such as skill shortages are not covered as skills shortages have already been

⁶⁴ Riaño, Y., 'Understanding brain waste: Unequal opportunities for skills development between highly skilled women and men, migrants and non-migrants' (2021), *Population Space and Place*, Special Issue Paper, p. 12, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/349599037_Understanding_brain_waste_Unequal_opportunities_for_skills_development_between_highly_skilled_women_and_men_migrants_and_nonmigrants, accessed 10 January 2025.

⁶⁵ International Organization for Migration (IOM), 'Crushed hopes: underemployment and deskilling among skilled migrant women', 2012, p. 171, <https://publications.iom.int/books/crushed-hopes-underemployment-and-deskilling-among-skilled-migrant-women>, accessed 10 January 2025.

covered by a recent EMN study.⁶⁶ In the following, the term 'skills mismatch' includes vertical skills mismatch (over- /underqualification regarding education and skills) and horizontal skills mismatch (mismatch regarding the field of educational qualification).

In line with the study's focus **on policies and initiatives aimed at promoting skills matching for a sustainable labour market integration of migrants** in EMN Member and Observer Countries, the study will identify and analyse the following:

- **National trends and underlying causes** of skills mismatch among migrants (i.e. prevalence of skills mismatch among different groups of migrants and the individual-level and country-context-specific drivers).
- Major **policy developments and current state of play of policies and instruments at national level** directed at countering skills mismatch/facilitating skills matching/addressing the drivers of skills mismatch.
- **Challenges, lessons learned and good practices** in tackling skills mismatch among third country nationals, including specific groups like female migrants or elderly migrants(see Section [1.2.1](#)).

The study will map the relevant **policies and instruments** in EMN Member and Observer Countries for promoting skills matching of migrants/counteract skills mismatch. In regard to **actors**, this study will look at key policies/instruments by national and sub-national public actors/institutions (including municipalities), actors/institutions acting on behalf of or in partnership with public authorities as well as the relevant key initiatives of interest organisations, employer associations, inter- and non-governmental organisations (IGOs and NGOs).

In terms of the **temporal scope**, this EMN study looks at **policies and instruments/initiatives** currently (at the point of time when the study is launched – June 2025) in place or are about to be launched, i.e. a specified scheme/measure that is very likely to be put into place as planned in the foreseeable future.

The statistical data used is based on the latest available (study) reports and data (OECD, Eurostat).⁶⁷

Given the focus of the study on skills mismatch on the labour market, this study focuses specifically on migrants working in jobs that do not match their qualification and skill profile. These are (legally residing) **labour migrants**, i.e. third-country nationals moving to an EMN Member or Observer Country for the purpose of employment - however excluding circular, short time work which is not related to the sustainable labour market integration focus of this study (e.g. seasonal workers and other workers falling under scheme of circular migration, posted workers, and workers hired out of labour). It further covers **third country nationals arriving via family reunification, and beneficiaries of international protection and beneficiaries of temporary protection**. Whilst this study focuses on third-country nationals, it needs to be considered that key data sources (e.g. OECD PIAAC) do not provide information based on citizenship but on country of birth.

⁶⁶ European Migration Network (EMN), 'Labour migration in times of labour shortages – EMN study', forthcoming.

⁶⁷ Eurostat, 'Overqualification by citizenship', 2024, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/lfsa_eoqgan_custom_15044941/default/table?lang=en , accessed 5 February 2025.

Applicants for international protection are not included as their access to the labour market varies in EMN Member Countries and different restrictions/waiting periods apply.⁶⁸ However, countries with specific labour market integration frameworks to foster labour market integration/facilitate skills matching for applicants for international protection are invited to report on this group, as this information will be then provided in info-boxes. Seasonal workers and other forms of temporary workers (e.g. for harvesting) and posting of workers and hiring out of labour⁶⁹ are, as mentioned before, also outside the scope. The scope of this study does also not encompass international students, as their primary motivation for moving to EMN Member and Observer Countries is the pursuit of higher education degrees, and not employment.⁷⁰ If an EMN Member or Observer Country categorizes **PhD students** as young researchers rather than university students and has specific initiatives to foster their labour market integration/tackle skills mismatch for third country national PHD students, these initiatives can be included in the responses too, and as with applicants for international protection this information will be showcased in an info-box.

This study will be the first EMN output dedicated to the topic of skills mismatch. It will complement existing outputs on labour migration and (labour market) integration topics, such as the forthcoming EMN-OECD study on "Labour migration in times of labour shortages", the EMN-OECD inform on "Labour market integration of beneficiaries of temporary protection from Ukraine",⁷¹ the EMN study on "Integration of migrant women"⁷² as well as the EMN inform on "Recognition of qualifications and skills of third-country nationals: overview of procedures and challenges in relation to regulated professions", which will be developed in 2025.

The involvement of relevant stakeholders is actively encouraged, both in the development of the EMN study and for the national contributions. This is also reflected in the choice that the study is conducted with the OECD.

4. EU LEGAL AND POLICY CONTEXT

In view of the policy developments at EU level in the past few years – which were, among others, driven by efforts to respond to labour market needs and attract foreign skilled workers to the EU – the topic of skill matching has gained importance for EU⁷³ and national policy makers. For example, in regard to beneficiaries of temporary protection

⁶⁸ EMN (2023). Integration of applicants for international protection in the labour market – EMN Study, <https://www.emn.at/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/emn-study-labour-market-integration-2023.pdf>, accessed 24 March 2025

⁶⁹ International hiring-out of labour refers to a situation in which an employer wishes to employ foreign labour for one or more periods of less than 183 days and therefore recruits the foreign personnel through an intermediary established abroad who purports to be the employer and hires the personnel out to the user. See Bourguignon, J., 'International Hiring-out of Labour - A Comprehensive Overview' (2017), Jura Falconis, 2017, pp. 103-129.

⁷⁰ European Migration Network (EMN), 'EMN Study on Attracting and Retaining International Students in the EU', 2019, p. 6, https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/whats-new/publications/attracting-and-retaining-international-students-eu_en, accessed 11 July 2024.

⁷¹ European Migration Network (EMN), 'Labour market integration of beneficiaries of temporary protection from Ukraine: Joint EMN-OECD inform', May 2024, www.emn.at, accessed 9 January 2025.

⁷² European Migration Network (EMN), 'Integration of Migrant Women – EMN study', September 2022, <https://www.emn.at>, accessed 16 January 2025.

⁷³ See also the activities by the European Training Foundation, <https://www.etf.europa.eu/en/what-we-do/skills-and-migration-0>, accessed 26 June 2025.

from Ukraine – who to a large extent exhibit a high level of educational attainment⁷⁴ – preventing skills mismatch has been a policy priority for several EMN Member Countries.⁷⁵

Ensuring that persons have the right skills for jobs is a key component of the **European Skills Agenda**,⁷⁶ which, among other things, aims to strengthen skills and support people in their lifelong learning pathways.

Overqualification is addressed in the **Action plan on integration and inclusion 2021-2027**.⁷⁷ In view of the skills needs in the EU, the action plan emphasises the important role of migrants in the European economy and society but also underlines the difficulties migrants often encounter with the recognition of their skills and finding employment that match their skills and qualifications. By highlighting that migrant women are more likely to be overqualified for their job, the action plan further points to the gender dimension of skills mismatch.⁷⁸ To address the issue of overqualification the action plan suggests concrete measures for EU Member States, including the use of the EU Skills Profile Tool for Third Country Nationals⁷⁹ and measures to prevent and raise awareness of discrimination in the recruitment process and in the workplace.⁸⁰

In 2022, the European Commission published a **Communication on attracting skills and talent to the EU**⁸¹ proposing a number of legislative and operational policy initiatives,⁸² announcing the establishment of **Talent Partnerships** with third countries and the **EU Talent** as an international recruitment platform. The **European Commission's Skills and Talent Mobility Package**⁸³ from November 2023 included a

⁷⁴ European Migration Network (EMN), 'Labour market integration of beneficiaries of temporary protection from Ukraine: Joint EMN-OECD inform', May 2024, p. 11, www.emn.at, accessed 9 January 2025.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 12

⁷⁶ European Commission, 'European Skills Agenda', https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies-and-activities/skills-and-qualifications/european-skills-agenda_en, accessed 31 January 2025.

⁷⁷ The action plan refers to the overqualification rate defined as working in low or medium skilled occupations despite having a high level of education based on Eurostat data as presented in [Section 1](#). European Commission, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on 'Action plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027', 2020, COM(2020) 758 final, [EUR-Lex - 52020DC0758 - EN - EUR-Lex](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0758), accessed 5 February 2025.

⁷⁸ Ibid, p. 11.

⁷⁹ The EU Skills Profile Tool for Third Country Nationals, developed in 2017 as part of the [Skills Agenda for Europe](#), supports early profiling of the skills of refugees, migrants and citizens of non-EU countries who are staying in the EU and can, among others, be used for job matching. For further information see European Commission, 'EU Skills Profile Tool for Third Country Nationals', https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies-and-activities/skills-and-qualifications/skills-jobs/eu-skills-profile-tool-third-country-nationals_en, accessed 16 January 2025.

⁸⁰ European Commission, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on 'Action plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027', 2020 COM(2020) 758 final, p. 2, 12f, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52020DC0758>, accessed 5 February 2025.

⁸¹ European Commission, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on 'Attracting Skills and Talent to the EU', 2022, COM(2022) 657 final, p. 6, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52022DC0657>, accessed 11 July 2024.

⁸² The proposals are based on three pillars: 1. legislative pillar (revision of Single Permit and Long-term residence Directive), 2. operational pillar (introduction of talent partnerships and talent pool), 3. forward looking measures (long-term care workers, youth mobility, entrepreneurship).

⁸³ European Commission, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on 'Skills and Talent Mobility', 2023, COM(2023) 715 final, https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2023-11/COM_2023_715_1_EN.pdf, accessed 11 July 2024.

proposal for a regulation establishing the EU Talent Pool⁸⁴ and proposed measures to simplify and expedite the recognition of third-country qualifications and skills at national level.⁸⁵ The Talent Partnerships and the EU Talent Pool aim to match skills needs in Member States with foreign talents that have these skills and can therefore be considered as instruments targeted to addressing skills shortages.⁸⁶ The **European Commission's Recommendation on the recognition of qualifications of third-country nationals** explicitly refers to the issue of overqualification and stresses that it can lead to economic losses for the individuals concerned as well as for the EU. The recommendation encourages EU Member States to reduce the gap in the overqualification rate⁸⁷ between third-country nationals and nationals by 2030 and advocates for a 'skills first' approach in qualification procedures prioritizing the assessment of skills and experiences.⁸⁸

In March 2024, the European Commission published an **Action plan to tackle labour and skills shortages**⁸⁹ as key deliverable of the European Year of Skills⁹⁰ as part of the EU's strategy to boost its competitiveness and enhance its economic and social resilience.⁹¹ It takes stock of existing initiatives by the EU, Member States and social partners, announces new EU initiatives and calls on Member States and social partners to take further actions in five different areas.⁹² The action plan underlines the important role of third-country nationals in addressing domestic labour and skills shortages, reaffirms the 'skills first' approach proposed in the European Commission's aforementioned recommendation and calls for effective job matching and integration policies as well as equal and fair working conditions for migrants.

⁸⁴ Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing an EU talent pool {SEC(2023) 716 final} - {SWD(2023) 716 final} - {SWD(2023) 717 final} - {SWD(2023) 718 final}, COM(2023) 716 final, https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/document/download/d74d42e8-96b7-416b-b5b7-b3b7334317d8_en?filename=Regulation%20establishing%20an%20EU%20Talent%20Pool_en.pdf, accessed 16 January 2025.

⁸⁵ European Commission, 'Commission Recommendation of 15 November 2023 on the recognition of qualifications of third-country nationals', COM(2023) 7700 final, [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=PI_COM:C\(2023\)7700](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=PI_COM:C(2023)7700), accessed 16 January 2025.

⁸⁶ See [Section 1](#) on the terminology and concepts for skills mismatch.

⁸⁷ The recommendation refers to the overqualification rate defined as working in low or medium skilled occupations despite having a high level of education based on Eurostat data as presented in [Section 1](#). European Commission, 'Commission Recommendation of 15 November 2023 on the recognition of qualifications of third-country nationals', COM(2023) 7700 final, p. 2, [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=PI_COM:C\(2023\)7700](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=PI_COM:C(2023)7700), accessed 16 January 2025.

⁸⁸ European Commission, 'Commission Recommendation of 15 November 2023 on the recognition of qualifications of third-country nationals', COM(2023) 7700 final, p. 10, 18, [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=PI_COM:C\(2023\)7700](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=PI_COM:C(2023)7700), accessed 16 January 2025.

⁸⁹ European Commission, 'Commission Sets Out Actions to Tackle Labour and Skills Shortages', 20 March 2024, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_24_1507, accessed 11 July 2024.

⁹⁰ The European Year of Skills was started on 9 May 2023 and covered a period of 12 months during which a number of different actions and initiatives were launched and promoted. The main objective of the European Year of Skills were (1) promoting investment in training and upskilling, enabling people stay in their jobs or find new ones, (2) ensuring skills match the needs of employers, by closely cooperating with social partners and companies, (3) matching people's aspirations and skill sets with opportunities on the job market, especially for the green and digital transitions and the economic recovery and (4) attracting people from outside the EU with the skills needed. European Commission, 'European Year of Skills', https://year-of-skills.europa.eu/index_en, accessed 16 January 2025.

⁹¹ European Commission, 'A new plan for Europe's sustainable prosperity and competitiveness', https://commission.europa.eu/priorities-2024-2029/competitiveness_en, accessed 16 January 2025.

⁹² These areas are: (1) supporting the activation of underrepresented people in the labour market, (2) providing support for skills development, training and education, (3) improving working conditions in certain sectors, (4) improving fair intra-EU mobility for workers and learners, (5) attracting talent from outside the EU. European Commission, 'Commission sets out actions to tackle labour and skills shortages', 20 March 2024, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_24_1507, accessed 16 January 2025.

In March 2025, the European Commission launched the Union of Skills as an overarching strategy to quality education and skills policies.⁹³

5. PRIMARY QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED BY THE STUDY

This EMN study provides an in-depth analysis of the phenomenon of skills mismatch in form of vertical skills mismatch (over-/underqualification regarding skills and education) and horizontal skills mismatch (mismatch regarding field of education; in the following both referred to as **skills mismatch**) of migrant groups in EMN Member and Observer Countries. It further explores policies and instruments aimed at promoting skills matching for a sustainable labour market integration. In light of existing evidence on skills mismatch disproportionately affecting migrants (see section 1), the study thereby seeks to answer the following primary research questions: How and why are different groups of migrants affected by skills mismatch and how do policies in EMN Member and Observer countries respond to this?

To answer this question the following sub-questions are asked:

1. Based on available data (Eurostat, EU-LSF, OECD PIAAC) how, if at all, are (different groups of) migrants affected by skills mismatch in EMN Member and Observer Countries?
2. What are the main underlying causes for skills mismatch among (different groups of) migrants in your country?
3. Which policies and initiatives are in place in your country aimed at countering skills mismatch and/or promoting skills matching of (different groups of) migrants?
4. Which challenges in regard to the implementation of policies aimed at countering skills mismatch/facilitating skills matching for (different groups of) migrants exist in your country?
5. What are lessons learned and good practices in regard to overcoming the identified challenges, tackling skills mismatch and facilitating skills matching in your country?

6. RELEVANT SOURCES AND LITERATURE

6.1 EMN STUDIES, INFORMS AND AD-HOC QUERIES

This study will build on and complement the following data collections and previous outputs by the EMN that focused on the research areas of labour migration and labour market integration of migrants:

EMN Studies:

- European Migration Network (EMN), 'Labour migration in times of labour shortages', forthcoming.
- European Migration Network (EMN), 'Integration of Migrant Women', September 2022, <https://www.emn.at/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/emn-study-2022-integration-of-migrant-women.pdf>.
- European Migration Network (EMN), 'Labour Market Integration of Third-Country Nationals in EU Member States', February 2019, <https://www.emn.at/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/emn-synthesis-report-2019-labour-market-integration-of-tcn.pdf>.

⁹³ European Commission, Union of skills, Investing in people for a competitive European Union, https://commission.europa.eu/topics/eu-competitiveness/union-skills_en, accessed on 26 June 2025.

EMN Asylum and Migration Overview:

- EMN annual reports, https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/networks/european-migration-network-emn/emn-publications/emn-annual-reports_en.

EMN Informs:

- European Migration Network (EMN), 'Language and literacy support measures for adult beneficiaries of international protection: Joint EMN-OECD-COE inform', forthcoming.
- European Migration Network (EMN), 'New and innovative ways to attract foreign talent into the EU', forthcoming.
- European Migration Network (EMN), 'Implementation of measures for civic training as an important tool for integration of third-country nationals: Joint EMN-OECD inform', October 2024, <https://www.emn.at/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/emn-inform-civic-training.pdf>.
- European Migration Network (EMN), 'Monitoring the integration of third-country nationals: Joint EMN-OECD inform', July 2024, <https://www.emn.at/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/emn-inform-monitoring-integration-final-290724.pdf>.
- European Migration Network (EMN), 'Labour market integration of beneficiaries of temporary protection from Ukraine: Joint EMN-OECD inform', May 2024, <https://www.emn.at/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/emn-inform-labour-market-integration-of-botp-from-ukraine.pdf>.
- European Migration Network (EMN), 'Skills mobility partnerships: exploring innovative approaches to labour migration: Joint EMN-OECD inform', March 2022, <https://www.emn.at/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/joint-emn-oecd-inform-2022-skills-mobility-partnerships-1.pdf>.
- European Migration Network (EMN), 'Exploring Legal Pathways to Fulfil Labour Needs', 2021, <https://www.emn.at/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/emn-inform-legal-pathways-final-19072021.pdf>.

EMN Ad-hoc Queries:

- 2024.64 Language and literacy support measures for adult beneficiaries of international protection
- 2024.34 New and innovative ways to attract foreign talent into the EU
- 2024.16 Recognition of third-country qualifications for the profession of doctor with basic medical training
- 2024.9 Recognition of documents in unregulated professions
- 2023.47 Labour market integration of beneficiaries of temporary protection from Ukraine
- 2022.36 The recognition of diplomas from third countries
- 2022.17 Access to employment (TPD)
- 2021.44 AHQ for EMN Inform on Skills Mobility Partnerships
- 2021.27 Complementary Pathways Part 2
- 2021.26 Talent Partnerships
- 2020.74 Integration measures regarding language courses - Part 2
- 2020.73 Integration measures regarding language courses - Part 1
- 2020.53 Managed Labour Mobility Schemes
- 2020.28 Labour market integration policies aimed at third-country nationals – update

6.2 OTHER LITERATURE

- The **European Commission** publishes various reports relevant for this topic, including: EC/OECD [Indicators for immigrant integration 2023](#) (2023), [Quarterly Review of Employment and Social Developments in Europe](#) (2025).

- The **European Network of Public Employment Services** offers a database with good practice examples of skills identification and sustainable labour market integration measures across EU Member States.
- The **European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP)** offers a database of policy tools for skills matching in EU Member States.
- The **OECD** published various reports relevant for this topic, including [Do Adults Have the Skills They Need to Thrive in a Changing World?](#) (2024).
- The **European Training Foundation** produces country fiches on skills for selected countries of origin, <https://www.etf.europa.eu/en/what-we-do/skills-and-migration-0>
- Research within the **Skills4Justice** project, <https://skills4justice.eu/>.
- Literature published by the project '**TRAILS - Enabling data analytics for actions tackling skills shortages & mismatch**', www.trails-project.eu.
- **Academic research** in economics and political economy focuses on different, aspects of skills mismatch (such as the economic impact and quantitative evidence for countries).

7. AVAILABLE STATISTICS

7.1 EU-LEVEL STATISTICS

- **Eurostat** offers data on “Over-qualification rates by country of birth” ([lfsa_eoqgan](#)) measured as tertiary-educated persons working in low- or medium-skilled occupations in different EU Member States, which is disaggregated by sex, age, time and regions of birth (nationals, EU citizens, third-country nationals).
- **The European skills and jobs survey (ESJS) by Cedefop** (www.cedefop.europa.eu) is a periodic EU-wide survey aimed at collecting information on the skill requirements, skill mismatches and initial and continuing learning of adult workers in EU labour markets. The ESJS is carried out in all EU Member States. The first wave of the ESJS was carried out in 2014 and focused on the collection of comprehensive contextual information about the incidence and reasons underlying the emergence of skill mismatches in EU job markets. The second wave was carried out in 2021 and focused on the relationship between technological change, changing job-skill requirements and skill mismatch of EU adult workers and their adaptiveness to such trends via remedial vocational education and training.
- The **OECD Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC)** (www.oecd.org) was designed as part of the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) to provide insights into the availability of some key skills (literacy, numeracy and problem solving). It also gathers information and data on how adults use their skills at home and at work. The 1st cycle of the Survey of Adult Skills was conducted over three separate rounds between 2011 and 2018 in 39 countries. During the 1st cycle, about 245.000 adults were interviewed, representing 1.15 billion people. The 2nd cycle of the Survey of Adults Skills has been conducted in 31 countries and economies so far. A first round of data collection took place in 2022-2023 with results released on 10 December 2024. Only permanent residents are part of the target population of the Survey of Adult Skills. In some countries recent migrants who are considered to be temporary residents are excluded from these statistics.
- The **European Skills Index (ESI)** (www.cedefop.europa.eu) is Cedefop's composite indicator measuring the performance of EU skills systems. The ESI consists of three pillars; skills development, activation and matching, each of which measures a different aspect of a skills system. Basis of the ESI are 15 individual

indicators from various international datasets. The scores are calculated across countries at the indicators' level.

- The **adult education survey (AES)** by Eurostat (<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>) collects data on self-reported language skills, which is used for the area on skills supply, and on adult participation in education and training in the last 12 months prior to the survey. The AES covers formal, non-formal, and informal learning activities. It also provides information on training activities paid for by the employer, which is used for the area on skills development. Up to 2016, the survey was carried out every 5 years, from 2016 onwards it takes place every 6 years.
- The **Continuing Vocational Training Survey (CVTS)** carried out by Eurostat (<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>) collects information on enterprises' investment in the continuing vocational training of their staff. This is used for the area on skills development and demand. The indicators cover education and training activities financed completely, or at least partly, by the enterprise, including vocational training during working hours. The CVTS takes place every 5 years. The most recent CVTS was carried out for the reference year 2020.
- The **(EU-LFS)** (<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>) is the main data source for Eurostat's skills-related statistics. The data covers: skills supply, for example data on the population by educational attainment or by formal qualifications, including young people, as well as early leavers from education; skills demand, for example indicators on employment by educational attainment, occupation, and economic sector. The EU-LFS provides several indicators on the participation in formal and non-formal education and training in the last 4 weeks before the reference week in which the survey took place. This information is used for the area on skills development.
- The **EU-LFS modules** (<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>) provide statistics on a particular topic concerning the labour market by adding each year a set of variables to supplement the core EU-LFS. These include: the 2022 module on job skills providing, among other things, information on the utilization of skills at work; the 2021 module on the labour market situation of migrants and their immediate descendants providing information on the level of language proficiency of foreign-born people in the language of their current host country, the level of skills in this language before the migration, the skill equivalence between current job and the job before migrating, i.e. a comparison between the skill levels required for the current job and the job before migrating.

7.2 NATIONAL LEVEL STATISTICS

At the national level, statistics on skills (mis-)match among migrant groups complementing the available EU-level statistics and OECD data are likely to be available from Ministries of Labour, employment agencies, national statistical offices and other competent authorities.

8. DEFINITIONS

Unless otherwise specified, and with the exception of terms relating to skills, the definitions refer to the **EMN Asylum and Migration Glossary**, online version.⁹⁴ The definition of skills in turn are mostly based upon **CEDEFOP**.⁹⁵

Beneficiary of international protection: A person who has been granted refugee status or subsidiary protection status.

Beneficiary of temporary protection: A person who enjoys temporary protection.

Employment: The exercise of activities covering whatever form of labour or work regulated under national law or in accordance with established practice for or under the direction and / or supervision of an employer.

Labour market integration: The extent to which migrants will achieve the same range of labour market participation as nationals of EU Member States by using their skills and realising their economic potential.

Labour matching: The process by which the skills and qualifications of a worker is compared with the requirements of a particular job vacancy, to establish whether they match wholly or partly.

Migrant: In the EU/EFTA context, a person who either:

- (i) establishes their usual residence in the territory of an EU/EFTA Member State for a period that is, or is expected to be, of at least 12 months, having previously been usually resident in another EU/EFTA Member State or a third country; or
- (ii) having previously been usually resident in the territory of the EU/EFTA Member State, ceases to have their usual residence in the EU/EFTA Member State for a period that is, or is expected to be, of at least 12 months.

N.B.: For more information on the specific groups of migrants covered in the context of this study, please refer to the section 'Scope of the study'.

Migrant worker: A person who is to be engaged, is engaged or has been engaged in a remunerated activity in a state of which they are not nationals.

Qualification: The formal outcome of an assessment and validation process by a competent body determining that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to given standards.⁹⁶

Refugee: In the EU context, either a third-country national who, owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group, is outside the country of nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of that country, or a stateless person, who, being outside of the country of former habitual residence for the same reasons as mentioned above, is unable or, owing to such fear, unwilling to return to it, and to whom Art. 12 (Exclusion) of Directive 2011/95/EU (Recast Qualification Directive) does not apply.

⁹⁴ European Commission, 'EMN Asylum and Migration Glossary', https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/networks/european-migration-network-emn/emn-asylum-and-migration-glossary_en, accessed 11 July 2024.

⁹⁵ CEDEFOP, 'Skills matching', <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/european-skills-index/skills-matching>, accessed 20 January 2025.

⁹⁶ European Commission, 'European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations', <https://esco.ec.europa.eu/en/about-esco/escopedia/escopedia/skill>, accessed 24 March 2025.

Skill: The ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems. Skills can be described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) or practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments).⁹⁷ The term skills covers generic (skills that are not specific to a particular job or industry, such as problem-solving or communication skills) and specialised (e.g. technical expertise required for certain professions) skills.⁹⁸

Skills matching: A process by which individuals' skillsets are aligned with organisations' skill needs.⁹⁹ In the context of this study skills matching also includes when the educational qualification and/or field of study is aligned with the job performed/recruited for.

Skills mismatch: A situation of imbalance between the skills and/or (educational) qualifications possessed by the workforce (supply) and those needed by the labour market (demand).¹⁰⁰

The term as used in this study includes mismatch in terms of skills and educational qualification, as well as of one's field of study:

Vertical skill mismatching: when an employee's **skills or education level** is either higher (overqualification) or lower (underqualification) in relation to their occupation, e.g. a nurse working as a nursing assistant.¹⁰¹

Vertical skills mismatching can manifest in the following ways:¹⁰²

- **Overskilling:** the individual has more skills than required to perform a job adequately;
- **Underskilling:** the individual has less skills than required to perform a job adequately.
- **Overeducation:** the individual has a level of education and training higher than that required to perform their job.
- **Undereducation:** the individual has a level of education and training lower than that required to perform their job.

Horizontal skills mismatching: when the individual's **field of education or (vocational) training** does not relate to field of the occupation they work in ('out-of-field employment'),¹⁰³ e.g. a nurse working as a marketing manager.¹⁰⁴ Horizontal

⁹⁷ European Commission, 'European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations - Qualifications', <https://esco.ec.europa.eu/en/classification/qualifications>, accessed 24 March 2025.

⁹⁸ Lise, J., Postel-Vinay, F., 'Multidimensional skills, sorting, and human capital accumulation' (2020), *Journal of Economic Surveys*, https://www.atlantafed.org/-/media/documents/news/conferences/2017/0921-labor-supply-sorting-wages/papers/lise_postel-vinay-multidimensional-skills-sorting-human-capital-accumulation.pdf, accessed 21 January 2025.

⁹⁹ Joss, S., Collings, D. G., McMackin, J., Dickman, M., 'A skills-matching perspective on talent management: Developing strategic agility' (2024), *Human Resource Management*, 63 (1), p. 141, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/hrm.22192>, accessed 5 February 2025.

¹⁰⁰ The definition of skills mismatch and the following forms of this phenomenon are based on the definition of CEDEFOP, 'Glossary – Skills mismatch', <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/vet-glossary/glossary?search=mismatch&letter=S>, accessed 5 February 2025.

¹⁰¹ Albert, C., Davia, M. A., Legazpe, N. (2021). Educational mismatch in recent university graduates. The role of labour mobility. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 26(1), p. 119.

¹⁰² The following definitions were developed by EMN Austria for the purpose of this study based on existing research.

¹⁰³ Redmond, P., Brosnan, L., 'Skills mismatch in Europe', <https://www.trails-project.eu/skills-mismatch-in-europe/>, accessed 20 January 2025.

¹⁰⁴ Albert, C., Davia, M. A., Legazpe, N. (2021). Educational mismatch in recent university graduates. The role of labour mobility. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 26(1), p. 119.

mismatch is usually measured by comparing an employee's attended field of study and the field required for the job the employee holds.¹⁰⁵

Third-country national: Any person who is not a citizen of the European Union within the meaning of Art. 20(1) of Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) and who is not a person enjoying the European Union right to free movement, as defined in Art. 2(5) of the Regulation (EU) 2016/399 (Schengen Borders Code).

¹⁰⁵ Somers, M. Cabus, S., Groot W., Maassen van den Brink, H. (2019), 'Horizontal Mismatch Between Employment And Field Of Education: Evidence From A Systematic Literature Review' Journal of Economic Surveys 33(2), 567-603.

9.TEMPLATE FOR NATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Common Template of EMN Study: Sustainable labour market integration of third-country nationals: Skills matching policies and instruments

National Contribution from Latvia

Disclaimer: The following information has been provided primarily for the purpose of contributing to a Synthesis Report for this EMN Study. The EMN NCP has provided information that is, to the best of its knowledge, up-to-date, objective and reliable within the context and confines of this study. The information may thus not provide a complete description and may not represent the entirety of the official policy of the EMN NCPs' Member State.

Top-line factsheet [max. 1 page]

The top-line factsheet will serve as an overview of the National Contribution introducing the Study and drawing out key facts and figures from across all sections, with a particular emphasis on elements that will be of relevance to (national) policymakers. Please add any innovative or visual presentations that can carry through into the synthesis report as possible infographics and visual elements.

Please provide a concise summary of the main findings of Sections 2-5:

The issue of skills mismatch among third-country nationals has not been a national policy priority in Latvia and consequently this topic has not been widely studied. This issue has been discussed more since the arrival of Ukrainian civilians, which resulted in a relatively large number of third-country nationals entering the labour market over a certain period of time. However, the causes of skills mismatch are fundamentally the same for all types of migrants in Latvia.

The interviewed experts from public institutions and business sector pointed to similar main causes of migrants' skills mismatch, which include differences between the requirements of the country of origin and the host country for certain professions, gender-related causes that affect women more, lack of knowledge of the national language, which has a particularly negative effect on highly qualified specialists, limited access to information about the labour market, stereotypes in society about certain groups of migrants, and career breaks due to unemployment.

Regarding the factors of skills mismatch related to the state and employers, the following were pointed out: the mismatch between the professional experience of migrants and the current needs of the labour market, the structure of the housing market characterised by a pronounced lack of available and affordable rental apartments, the concerns of employers and the related need to practically assess the migrants' ability to work in the local working environment, the complexity and duration of the procedure for the recognition of qualifications obtained abroad, and regional differences in terms of available vacancies.

Several institutions are involved in addressing the skills mismatch of Latvian residents and promoting their sustainable integration into the labour market.

The State Employment Agency implements the state policy in the field of reducing unemployment and supporting the unemployed, jobseekers and persons at risk of

unemployment. The objective of the State Education Development Agency is to implement the state policy in the field of development of higher education, lifelong learning system, vocational education system and general education system. As regards third-country nationals, the Ministry of Culture coordinates the organisation of Latvian language courses and the Society Integration Foundation provides services within the framework of the Integration and Inclusion Agency.

Various measures and initiatives aimed at increasing the employment of the population and the integration of third-country nationals are in place. In 2023, the Integration and Inclusion Agency was established to provide timely and targeted consultations and practical support to third-country nationals on various issues. The State Employment Agency offers a wide range of active employment measures for job seekers. A support program is available for adults to obtain new qualifications or improve existing skills in professions with high demand in the labour market. Latvian language courses of various levels are also available for third-country nationals.

Summarizing the opinions of experts, it was reported that the biggest challenges are still the acquisition of the Latvian language skills, the complexity and duration of the professional qualification recognition procedure, and the mismatch between employers' requirements and migrants' practical skills and readiness. At the same time, examples of good practices were also highlighted, such as Latvian language courses available to migrants and measures implemented by the State Employment Agency to promote employment and cooperate with employers.

Section 1: Statistical Overview of Skills (Mis-)Match Phenomenon

This section provides an overview of the latest available statistical data on skills mismatch (Eurostat, EU-LFS and PIAAC), and will be drafted by OECD/ICF. Initial figures will be made available to NCPs for their qualitative analysis in subsequent sections prior to the launch of the study as background information. A more detailed analysis of the data for the report will be provided by the OECD at a later stage.

The Eurostat data ([lfsa_eoqgan](#)) compiled by ICF will provide an overview of the overqualification rate (measured as tertiary-educated persons working in low- or medium-skilled occupations) third-country nationals in EU Member States compared to EU citizens/nationals.

Based on EU-LFS and PIAAC data, the OECD will provide insights on the recognition of foreign qualifications of migrants and describe how migrants in EMN Member and Observer Countries are affected by skills mismatch:

- Based on the EU-LFS 2021 Special Module on Labour market situation of migrants and their descendants, the OECD will provide an overview of the recognition of formal qualifications obtained abroad. This will be complemented by an overview on whether qualifications of migrants were obtained abroad based on the latest EU-LFS data (for 2023, if available 2024).
- Based on the 2022/2023 cycle of the Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC),¹⁰⁶ the OECD will provide an overview of the scale skills mismatches in EMN Member and Observer Countries (specified which type of mismatch, i.e. vertical and/or horizontal).

¹⁰⁶ The data is collected via a household survey designed to collect information on the skills proficiency of the adult population aged 16-65. The survey includes two direct questions relating to skills recognition (Subjective skills mismatch; Match of qualifications to job requirements), and it is possible to further gauge

Section 2: Drivers of Skills Mismatch

In this section, NCPs are asked to provide input on the drivers of skills mismatching, if possible referring to different migrant groups outlined in the scope (labour migrants, third country nationals arriving via family reunification, beneficiaries of international protection, beneficiaries of temporary protection) in their respective country based on available reports and studies, and expert opinions (policy makers, national and sub-national public actors, government agencies, international organisations, civil society organisations, including migrant-led organisations, government agencies etc.). The section covers drivers of skills mismatch in regard to vertical skills mismatch (mismatch regarding the level of skills/ education) as well as horizontal skills mismatch (mismatch in the field of education). Different types of drivers are divided into different tables to facilitate descriptive comparison across countries at a later stage, however this different type of drivers may partly overlap.

credentials/skills recognition via (a) information on educational attainment including the country where it was obtained, and the field of study, and (b) information on the current job (sector, industry, various details including the qualifications and experience required). Regarding migration status, PIAAC includes information on country of birth of the respondent (and their parents) but not on citizenship, so migrant status would be captured via country of birth.

1. Based on available literature and expert opinions, what are migrant-specific drivers for skills mismatches, i.e. drivers related to the migrant populations in your country? ¹⁰⁷ Please explain, using the table below. *The mentioned drivers below are derived from the literature (see Section 1) and are meant as orientation to help NCPs in their data collection/analysis. If some drivers do not fit the situation in a country, they can/should be disregarded.*

Driver	Applicable (YES/NO)	Explanation (including information on source)
Country of origin related drivers (e.g. lack of documentation of qualifications)		Not reported on.
Disparities in education system between country of origin and receiving country (e.g. strong vocational focus in receiving countries not present in countries of origin)		It is necessary to undergo the procedure for the academic recognition of credentials and academic degrees obtained abroad to continue education in Latvia or to work in an unregulated profession in Latvia.
Disparities in skill requirements for specific professions between country of origin and receiving country	YES	Employers' Confederation of Latvia notes that even if a person has the appropriate education or experience, employers are forced to assess the practical readiness to work in a specific environment — language skills, knowledge of regulatory frameworks, work culture and safety requirements.
Extent of regulated professions in country of origin– as opposed to receiving country- (i.e. regulations for the practice of certain professions)		It is necessary to undergo the procedure for the recognition of foreign professional qualifications, if a person has been educated and have rights to practice a profession fully and independently in their home country and this profession is regulated in Latvia and they want to practice it in Latvia.
Age-related drivers (that in combination with migrant status interact on skills mismatch, e.g. age at time of arrival could impact skills mismatch, since younger migrants tend to have less difficulties in learning the language of the receiving country- see below)		Not reported on.
Gender-related drivers (that in combination with migrant status interact on skills mismatch)	YES	State Employment Agency reported on lack of part-time positions that would be especially useful for women with pre-school or primary-school aged children, this factor has become particularly

¹⁰⁷ This question addresses drivers for skills mismatches that are specifically related to certain features of migrants.

		relevant with regard to women who are beneficiaries of temporary protection from Ukraine.
Language proficiency of language of receiving country	YES	<p>Society Integration Foundation and Employers' Confederation of Latvia reported on the lack of Latvian language proficiency as one of the main drivers of skills mismatch of migrants. State Employment Agency specifically highlighted the negative impact lack of language skills has on third-country nationals who are highly qualified professionals such as teachers, medical doctors, lawyers, etc. and how it impedes the possibility of working in their profession and fully realise their potential.</p> <p>According to the results of a survey of Ukrainian civilians conducted in 2024, the majority of survey participants answered negatively to the question of whether they were working in a job that corresponded to their qualifications, and the main reason was the lack of Latvian language skills and the language requirements imposed in certain.¹⁰⁸</p>
Length of stay (considering that the longer a migrant lives in country, the more the extent of skills mismatch tends to be reduced)		Not specifically reported by any of the organizations interviewed, but it would be only logical to assume that the longer a person lives in a specific country there would be more opportunities to learn about the labour market in the country, acquire language skills and apply to participate in measures to reduce unemployment. All of these opportunities are available to third-country nationals legally residing in Latvia.
Limited information about the labour market/employers, migrants might exhibit in comparison to natives/locals	YES	Society Integration Foundation expert and Employers' Confederation of Latvia reported on limited information about the labour market and its requirements in Latvia as an important driver for skills mismatches.
Discrimination/Stereotypes in public against (certain groups of) migrants (e.g. colour, ethnicity/origin, status)	YES	Society Integration Foundation expert mentioned stereotypes and the discrimination risk in the society, as well as the employers' caution and lack of understanding of the skills of third-country nationals and beneficiaries of international protection as a contributing factor.

¹⁰⁸ Latvia. Socio-Economic Insights Survey 2024. Available: <https://data.unhcr.org/fr/documents/download/114718>

Career gaps of migrants (e.g. due to migrant journey)	YES	Another migrant specific aspect reported by the Society Integration Foundation expert was loss of skills due to prolonged periods of unemployment.
Other (please specify)		Not reported on.

- 2. Based on available literature and expert opinions, what are country-/employer-specific drivers for skills mismatching of migrants in your country?** Please explain, using the table below. *The mentioned drivers below are meant as orientation and are derived from the literature (see Section 1). If some drivers do not fit the situation in a country, they can/should be disregarded.*

Driver	Applicable (YES/NO)	Explanation (including information on source)
Economic and labour market conditions (e.g. economic recession, which might affect migrants' skills mismatch more than non-migrants) Discrepancies between the migrants' professional experience and the current needs of the labour market	YES	Employers' Confederation of Latvia reported that additional difficulties are caused by the mismatch between the migrants' professional experience and the structure of the Latvian labour market, and the fact that the offer of available vacancies often does not match the highest qualifications of migrants.
Structure of housing markets (e.g. housing policies with no rent caps, shortage of affordable housing in areas with available matching jobs for migrant population's profiles)	YES	An important driver according to the State Employments Agency is the housing market in general. There is a significant lack of available and affordable apartments for rent in the capital city and regional centres of economic development. Even though this driver applies to all types of migrants, it has had a particularly negative effect on the integration of Ukrainian civilians in the labour market.
Limited accessibility/availability of social assistance		Not reported on.
Limited access to formal childcare (for migrants based on their status, as opposed to non-migrants)		Not reported on.

Employer-specific conditions (e.g. no diversity and inclusion strategy from which particularly migrants would benefit from in terms of skills mismatch)	YES	In the opinion of Employers' Confederation of Latvia, even when individuals possess the necessary education or professional experience, employers must still evaluate their practical readiness to work in the local environment — this includes assessing language proficiency, familiarity with regulatory frameworks, understanding of workplace culture, and compliance with safety requirements. An additional challenge is that companies often lack the resources and mechanisms to provide such an evaluation and adaptation period.
Migration laws, policies, and practices (e.g. recognition processes of foreign qualifications, insecure status)	YES	Society Integration Foundation listed the complexity of the procedure to recognize qualifications obtained abroad as contributing factor to skills mismatch. Employers' Confederation of Latvia added that the process of recognizing diplomas and qualifications is not just complex but also lengthy.
(Lack of) integration policies, and practices (e.g. no tailored, subsidized language trainings, no job guidance for migrants, no early facilitation of labour market access) ¹⁰⁹		Not reported on.
Others (please specify) Regional disparities regarding available positions (lack of available jobs in rural areas)	YES	State Employments Agency listed the issue of limited job offers in regions and specifically rural areas outside the Riga region which is compounded by limited public transport routes from rural areas to regional centres.

Section 3: National policies in the EMN Member and Observer Countries for promoting sustainable labour market integration through countering skills mismatch/facilitating skills matching

In this section, NCPs are asked to give an overview of the responsible actors for addressing skills mismatch/promoting skills matching and to provide a policy analysis of the available policies and initiatives in their country that aim to:

¹⁰⁹ See e.g. recommendations by [PES Network to have an idea about labour market integration policies, https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/pes-network-adopts-7-recommendations-guide-employment-services-assisting-refugees-and-persons-2023-07-07_en](https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/pes-network-adopts-7-recommendations-guide-employment-services-assisting-refugees-and-persons-2023-07-07_en), accessed 6 March 2025.

- address skills mismatch among migrant groups; and/or
- promote skills matching of migrant groups.

3. Who are the key actors in your country responsible for addressing skills mismatch/promoting skills matching of migrants?

There is no designated institution in Latvia that would be responsible for addressing or promoting skills mismatches among migrants. A number of different institutions are involved in addressing the skills mismatches of Latvian residents and promoting their sustainable integration into the labour market, and there are also institutions involved in providing integration measures for third-country nationals:

- Ministry of Education and Science coordinates the recognition of professional qualifications in the field of regulated professions
- Ministry of Economics is involved in managing human capital and labour supply and demand.
- Ministry of Culture coordinates the organisation of Latvian language courses for third-country nationals.
- Ministry of Welfare is responsible for employment services.
- State Employment Agency – subordinate institution of the Ministry of Welfare – implements state policy in the field of reducing unemployment and supporting the unemployed, job seekers and persons at risk of unemployment.
- State Education Development Agency – subordinate institution of the Ministry of Education and Science - implement the national policy in the field of development of higher education, lifelong learning system, vocational education system and general education system.
- Academic Information Centre (ENIC/NARIC) is responsible for the recognition of diplomas.
- Society Integration Foundation is coordinating the services of the one-stop shop and the change agent/mentor services for third-country nationals.
- Municipalities and NGOs are involved in providing language and integration support.

4. Have there been policy debates on skills (mis-)matching of migrants in your country between January 2023 and June 2025? YES/NO. If yes, please elaborate on the policy debate, including their understanding of/perspective on migrants' skills mismatch, and focus (e.g. educational qualifications, language skills, etc.) and the issues the policy actors seek to tackle (e.g. GDP loss, productivity loss, financial losses for migrants). Please limit your answer to policy debates in the past 2,5 years. 2023 is selected as a start year given that this was the EU Year of skills, and a relevant, national policy debate might be likely during that year.

YES. However, the debates taking place on this issue have been dedicated for the most part to beneficiaries of temporary protection and their integration in the labour market. For instance, on 25 February 2025, Defence, Internal Affairs and Corruption Prevention Committee of Saeima raised the issue of support for Ukrainian civilians and their integration into society, specifically the need to explain the possibility of long-term residence in Latvia, as well as the promotion of integration initiatives, including

employment integration measures such as facilitation of the recognition of qualifications and acquisition of Latvia language skills.¹¹⁰

5. Does your country have policies and instruments in place to counter skills mismatching and/or promote skills matching? YES/NO. If yes, please explain how, using the table below, choosing the driver(s) addressed by the policy/instrument, indicating the form(s) of mismatch the policy/instrument aims to address, specifying the target group of the policy/instrument, and adding rows for additional policies/instruments as needed. The mentioned drivers below mirror the ones from Questions 1 and 2 are meant as orientation. Please find examples of how to fill out the table below in the grey column.

YES. Although the main objective of these policies and instruments is not specifically dedicated to countering skills mismatching or promoting skills matching of migrants, they address some of the drivers listed in the tables of Section 2: Drivers of Skills Mismatch.

Policy/instrument (please explain, indicate the actor and the information source)	Driver(s) for skills mismatch addressed (if possible to identify)	Describe form(s) of mismatch targeted if any/if possible (vertical, horizontal, both)	Target group of the policy/instrument (jobseekers, employees, employers, institutions, other (please specify))	Beneficiaries of the policy/instrument in case policies are targeted (labour migrants, beneficiaries of international protection, beneficiaries of temporary protection; TCNs that arrived via family reunification; others - please specify – e.g. female migrants; elderly migrants (please specify); etc.)
Measures for the implementation of the Social Cohesion Policy Guidelines 2021–2027 and the Employment Policy Guidelines 2021–2027 and integration measures within the framework of National Programme for the 2021–2027 programming period of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language proficiency Limited labour market information 	Both	All third-country nationals legally residing in the country.	Not specified

¹¹⁰ Saeimas komisija aktualizē atbalsta un integrācijas jautājumus Ukrainas civiliedzīvotājiem un NVO nozīmi krīžu pārvarēšanā. Available: <https://aizsardziba.saeima.lv/raksti/2261-saeimas-komisija-aktualiz%C4%93-atbalsta-un-integr%C4%81cijas-jaut%C4%81jumus-ukrainas-civiliedz%C4%ABvot%C4%81jiem-un-nvo-noz%C4%ABmi-kr%C4%AB%C5%BEu-p%C4%81rvar%C4%93%C5%A1an%C4%81>

<p>The measures relevant to migrant skills matching:</p> <p>1) Latvian language and cultural orientation courses to promote the integration of individuals and their inclusion in the labour market</p> <p>2) Career counselling and labour market orientation activities that help individuals understand the professions and necessary skills in demand in the Latvian labour market</p> <p>3) Mentoring and individual support (for example, social mentors and change agents)</p> <p>The actors involved in carrying out these measures: Ministry of Culture, Society Integration Foundation, State Employment Agency.</p> <p>Information source: Society Integration Foundation</p>				
<p>Active employment measures provided by State Employment Agency</p> <p>Active employment measures and preventive measures to reduce unemployment of both registered unemployed persons and job seekers, as well as persons at risk of unemployment (employed), including retraining and skills development to eliminate skills mismatches and/or promote the adaptation of skills to the needs of the labour market in accordance with Support for Unemployed Persons and Persons Seeking Employment Law¹¹¹ and Regulations Regarding the Procedures for the Organising and Financing of Active Employment Measures and Preventative Measures for Unemployment Reduction and Principles for the Selection of Implementers of Measures.¹¹²</p> <p>Support for Unemployed Persons and Persons Seeking Employment Law determines the persons entitled to receive the support specified in this Law for unemployed persons, persons</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Limited labour market information ○ Disparities in skill requirements for specific professions ○ Discrepancies between the migrants' professional experience and the current needs of the labour market ○ Employer-specific conditions 	Both	Jobseekers, registered unemployed persons, employed persons at risk of unemployment	Not specified

¹¹¹ Support for Unemployed Persons and Persons Seeking Employment Law, *Latvijas Vēstnesis*, No. 80, 29.05.2002. – [entered into force 01.07.2002.] – Available: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/62539-bezdarbnieku-un-darba-mekletaju-atbalsta-likums>

¹¹² Cabinet Regulation No. 75 of 25 January 2011 "Regulations Regarding the Procedures for the Organising and Financing of Active Employment Measures and Preventative Measures for Unemployment Reduction and Principles for the Selection of Implementers of Measures", *Latvijas Vēstnesis*, No. 21, 08.02.2011. – [entered into force 09.02.2011.] – Available: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/225425-noteikumi-par-aktivo-nodarbinatibas-pasakumu-un-preventivo-bezdarba-samazinanas-pasakumu-organizšanas-un-finansesanas-kartib>

<p>seeking employment, and persons subject to the risk of unemployment, which include various groups of third-country nationals (See Section 2 of the Law). Additional criteria are set out in Regulations Regarding the Procedures for the Organising and Financing of Active Employment Measures and Preventative Measures for Unemployment Reduction and Principles for the Selection of Implementers of Measures.</p> <p>There are various employment measures included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • career consultations, which are an essential prerequisite for targeted and successful client involvement in retraining and skills development activities • mobility support is also available within the framework of in-person training to cover transportation expenses for trips from the declared place of residence to the place of work or study and back, or to compensate for expenses for renting a living space or living in accommodation facilities • Continuing vocational training programmes • Vocational in-service training programmes • Non-formal education programmes (official language, computer science, foreign languages) • Training of vehicle drivers and tractor drivers • Study module or course offered by a higher education institution and implemented within the framework of a licensed study programme of an accredited study field • Training programme developed by a higher education institution or a sectoral undertaking which is offered on an open online course platform • Other ICT training in cooperation with international organizations or companies • Measures to increase a person's competitiveness in the labour market, including consultations and classes on methods for seeking employment, basic abilities and skills necessary for the labour market and psychological aid. 				
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Actor: State Employment Agency Source: State Employment Agency				
Academic recognition of foreign credentials Assessment of credentials issued abroad, as well as documents certifying academic degrees obtained abroad is performed by the Academic Information Centre. Academic recognition of credentials and academic degrees obtained abroad is required if a person wishes to continue education in Latvia or to work in an unregulated profession in Latvia. ¹¹³ Actor: Academic Information Centre Source: Academic Information Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Migration laws, policies, and practices (e.g., recognition processes of foreign qualifications) 	Both	Anyone	
Recognition of foreign professional qualifications It is necessary to undergo this procedure, if a person wants to work in their profession in Latvia, the, he/she has received an education and have the right to practice their profession fully and independently in his/her home country, but the specific profession in is regulated in Latvia. ¹¹⁴ A regulated profession is a profession with specific requirements for education and training and the professional qualifications are specified in the law "On the Regulated Professions and the Recognition of Professional Qualifications". ¹¹⁵ Actor: competent body – the institution, which issues the decision on recognition of professional qualification Source: Academic Information Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Migration laws, policies, and practices (e.g., recognition processes of foreign qualifications) 	Both	Anyone	
Support for the assessment of professional competence by State Employment Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Migration laws, policies, and practices (e.g., recognition processes) 	Both	Persons with unemployed status	Not specified

¹¹³ Academic recognition of foreign credentials in Latvia. Available: <https://aic.lv/en/recognition-of-foreign-diplomas/academic-recognition-of-foreign-credentials-in-latvia/>

¹¹⁴ Professional recognition of foreign professional qualifications. Available: <https://aic.lv/en/recognition-of-foreign-diplomas/professional-recognition-of-foreign-qualifications/>

¹¹⁵ On the Regulated Professions and the Recognition of Professional Qualifications, *Latvijas Vēstnesis*, No. 105, 06.07.2001. – [entered into force 20.07.2001.] – Available: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/26021-par-reglamentetajam-profesijam-un-profesionalas-kvalifikacijas-atzisanu>

<p>On a project basis State Employment Agency also offers support for the assessment of professional competence.¹¹⁶ The purpose of this support measure is to give an unemployed person the opportunity to demonstrate the professional competences they have acquired during their lifetime and to obtain a nationally recognised professional qualification by passing a professional qualification examination and increase his/her competitiveness and promote his/her integration into the labour market.</p> <p>Actor: State Employment Agency Source: State Employment Agency</p>	<p>of foreign qualifications)</p>			
<p>Support for adult education based on the individual needs of adults and platform STARS¹¹⁷</p> <p>The program provides adults with the opportunity to acquire new qualifications or improve existing skills in professions with high demand in the labour market.¹¹⁸ The objective of the platform is to create a single common point for the offer of educational programs from various institutions. Courses are offered by many institutions – the State Employment Agency, the Ministry of Economics, municipalities and others.</p> <p>Platform STARS was developed by the State Education Development Agency in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science, to enable every user, including third-country nationals with the right to work in Latvia, to access training opportunities, use an individual training account and plan their skills development.</p> <p>Actor: State Education Development Agency, Ministry of Education and Science, educational institutions Source: Society Integration Foundation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discrepancies between the migrants' professional experience and the current needs of the labour market 	<p>Both</p>	<p>Any employed or self-employed person of at least 18 years of age, regardless of education level. Priority is given to employees with a low level of education - completed or incomplete primary or general secondary education, employees aged 50 and over, as well as refugees and persons with alternative status (beneficiaries of subsidiary protection)</p>	<p>One of the priority groups: refugees and persons with alternative status (beneficiaries of subsidiary protection)</p>

¹¹⁶ Atbalsts profesionālās kompetences novērtēšanai. Available: <https://www.nva.gov.lv/lv/atbalsts-profesionalas-kompetences-novertesana>

¹¹⁷ Platform STARS. Available: <https://stars.gov.lv/>

¹¹⁸ Atbalsts pieaugušo individuālajās vajadzībās balstītai pieaugušo izglītībai. Available: <https://www.ikvd.gov.lv/lv/projekts/atbalsts-pieauguso-individualajas-vajadzibas-balstitai-pieauguso-izglitiba>

<p>Integration and Inclusion Agency of Latvia – One-Stop Shop for third-country nationals¹¹⁹</p> <p>Integration and Inclusion Agency of Latvia is a Society Integration Foundation project created in 2023 and funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and Latvian state budget. The aim of the project is to provide timely and targeted consultations and practical support to third-country nationals and beneficiaries of international protection who are legally residing in Latvia and to support their successful social and economic inclusion during the initial integration stage. Besides informative assistance, their services include interpretation and translation services, legal advice and psychological and psychotherapeutic counselling. Their offices are located in Riga and several regional centres. To address the needs of their clients they collaborate with representatives from national and local authorities, non-governmental organisations, universities and business community. The overall objective of the project is to establish a systemic and unified national approach and provide the necessary information and consultation support in one place.</p> <p>Implemented by Society Integration Foundation</p> <p>Source: Society Integration Foundation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Limited labour market information ○ Migration laws, policies, and practices ○ 	<p>Both</p>	<p>Third-country nationals who have received the right to reside in the territory of Latvia, and persons in need of international protection (refugees, persons granted alternative status and asylum seekers) and who are legally residing in the territory of Latvia, particularly during the initial integration stage.</p>	
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6. Are there any initiatives to counter skills mismatching and/or promote skills matching implemented by municipalities, interest organisations, employer associations, IGOs or NGOs? YES/NO. If you answer yes, please provide up to a maximum of three initiatives. Please explain, using the table below, choosing the driver(s), indicating the form(s) of mismatch addressed, indicating, if applicable, whether they differentiate between different groups of migrants, and adding rows for additional key initiatives as needed. The mentioned drivers below mirror the ones from Questions 1 and 2 are meant as orientation. Please find an example of how to fill out the table below in the grey column. For another example, see the project ‘Talent-based matching of newcomers to employment opportunities.’¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ Integration and Inclusion Agency of Latvia. Available: <https://livelatvia.lv/>

¹²⁰ For an example for such an initiative see e.g. Global Compact on Refugees, ‘Talent-based matching of newcomers to employment opportunities’, <https://globalcompactrefugees.org/good-practices/talent-based-matching-newcomers-employment-opportunities>, accessed 5 February 2025.

YES. Although the main objective of these initiatives is not specifically intended to counter skills mismatching and/or promote skills matching of migrants, the available measures and opportunities address some of the drivers listed in the tables of Section 2: Drivers of Skills Mismatch.

Initiative (please explain the initiative, indicate by whom it is implemented and indicate information source)	Driver(s) addressed (if possible, to identify)	Form(s) of mismatch (vertical, horizontal, both)	Target group (labour migrants of third countries, beneficiaries of international protection, beneficiaries of temporary protection; migrants/TCNs that arrived via family reunification; others: female migrants; elderly migrants (please specify); etc.)
<p>Latvian language courses and conversation clubs</p> <p>Latvian language courses and conversational language clubs for third-country nationals, provided with the support of AMIF funding. The language courses, conversation clubs and other integration measures are coordinated by the Society Integration foundation and the Ministry of Culture (by way of organizing procurement and assigning the implementations to other organizations).</p> <p>Various non-governmental organizations, local government institutions and educational centres that participate in the implementation of PMIF projects and provide access to courses in the regions are involved in the organization of the courses. These institutions include the Latvian Language Agency, Education Development Centre, Daugavpils University Lifelong Learning, Culture and Science Communication Society "Intelektā Parks", Innovation Support Centre, etc.</p> <p>Implemented by various organizations.</p> <p>Source: Ministry of Culture, Society Integration Foundation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lack of language proficiency 	Both	Third-country nationals who have received the right to reside in the territory of Latvia, and persons in need of international protection (refugees, persons granted alternative status and asylum seekers) and who legally reside in the territory of Latvia and have arrived in Latvia within the last five years.
<p>Latvian language courses provided by Riga Municipality</p> <p>Free Latvian language courses are available to residents who have declared their place of residence in Riga. The courses are available to adult residents of Riga, except for students and the unemployed. Language learning is provided at levels</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lack of language proficiency 	Both	Adult residents declared in Riga who are not unemployed and students and whose native language is not Latvian

<p>A and B. The project is co-financed within the framework of the Riga City Municipality's Social Integration Program.</p> <p>Implemented by Riga City Municipality in cooperation with Riga City Municipality educational institutions</p> <p>Source of information: Riga City Council</p>			
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Section 4: Skills Matching Challenges

In this section, NCPs are asked to identify the main challenges that their country faces with regards to countering skills mismatch among migrant groups based on available reports and studies, and expert opinions (policy makers, government agencies, international organisations, civil society organisations including migrant-led organisations, etc.).

- 7. Does your country face any challenges in addressing skill mismatching of migrants? Please explain, if you face any, and indicate the information source (according to whom this is a challenge).**

YES

- 8. What are the underlying causes for these challenges? Please explain and indicate the information source (according to whom this is an underlying cause).**

Please answer to questions 7 and 8 jointly by filling out the table below, explaining the challenge, indicating according to whom this is considered a challenge, indicating the group that is mostly affected, indicating the relevant form(s) of mismatch of this challenge, explaining the underlying cause(s) for this challenge and indicating according to whom this is considered as underlying cause(s):

Challenge (please explain and indicate information source)	Group this challenge mostly affects, if applicable (labour migrants, beneficiaries of international protection, beneficiaries of temporary protection; persons that arrived via family reunification; others: female migrants; elderly migrants; etc.)	Form(s) of mismatch (vertical, horizontal, both)	Underlying cause(s) for this challenge (please explain and indicate information source)
Language acquisition (Source: State Employment Agency, Society Integration Foundation, Employers' Confederation of Latvia)	All groups	Both	Long and resource-intensive process
Qualification recognition procedure (Source: Society Integration Foundation, Employers' Confederation of Latvia)	All groups	Both	Complexity, cost and length of the procedure
Potential mismatches between employers' requirements and migrants' practical skills and readiness, as well as	All groups	Both	The employers are of the opinion that even if a person in theory has the appropriate education or experience, the employers are forced to assess

employers' insufficient understanding of migrants' skills (Source: Employers' Confederation of Latvia, Society Integration Foundation)			the practical readiness to work in a specific environment — language skills, knowledge of regulatory frameworks, work culture and safety requirements in Latvia. An additional challenge is the employers' cautiousness and that companies often lack the resources and mechanisms to ensure adaptation processes for migrants.
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Section 5: Skills matching Lessons Learned & Good Practices

In this section, NCPs are asked to share lessons learned and good practices in tackling migrant skills mismatch, in tackling the challenges identified in Section 4 and/or promoting their sustainable labour market integration through skills matching.

- 8. Are there any good and implemented practices to counter the identified challenges or to counter skills mismatching and/or promote skills matching for migrants in your country that have been identified by your country?**
YES/NO. If yes, please explain, using the table below, indicating the information source (according to whom this is a good practice), choosing the cause(s)/challenges addressed by the good practice, indicating the form(s) of mismatch addressed, indicating, if applicable, whether they differentiate between different groups of migrants, and adding rows for additional good practices as needed.

YES

Good practice (please explain the practice and how it has affected/ameliorated the skills matching; indicate information source)	Cause (s) /Challenges addressed (if possible, to identify)	Form(s) of mismatch (vertical, horizontal, both)	Target group (labour migrants, beneficiaries of international protection, beneficiaries of temporary protection; third country nationals that arrived via family reunification; others: female migrants; elderly migrants (please specify); etc.)
Latvian language courses Latvian language courses are available to legally residing third country nationals. They are provided by NGOs, municipal institutions and education centres in various regions. As lack of language skills is one of the main drivers of skills mismatch of migrants in Latvia, taking language courses is an obvious avenue to advance future career opportunities. (Source: State Employment Agency, Society Integration	Lack of language skills	Both	TCNs legally residing in Latvia

Foundation, Employers' Confederation of Latvia)			
State Employment Agency implemented measures to promote employment and cooperate with employers The Agency organizes job fairs, career days, as well as targeted training and retraining courses, available to both Latvian citizens and third-country nationals with a right of residence. Employers participate in these events by presenting vacancies and requirements, thus facilitating the opportunities of job seekers, including migrants, to obtain appropriate employment. (Source: State Employment Agency, Society Integration Foundation, Employers' Confederation of Latvia)	Limited information about the labour market/employers Economic and labour market conditions	Horizontal	Jobseekers, unemployed persons – TCNs legally residing in Latvia

9. Are there any lessons learned (i.e. insights that are not necessarily put into practice yet, but are important to consider for future policymaking) regarding effective measures to counter skills mismatching of migrants and/or promote skills matching for migrant groups? YES/NO. If yes, please elaborate and indicate the information source (according to whom this is a lesson learned).

NO

Section 6: Conclusions

In this final section, NCPs are asked to provide concluding reflections based on their analysis of sections 2-5. ***The questions proposed below shall simply support NCPs to reflect the main topics of the study template and to synthesise/link the main points:***

- How prevalent is the skills mismatching of migrants in your country?
- What are the main drivers for skills mismatching of migrants in your country?
- How do the policies in your country respond to the phenomenon of skills mismatch of migrants and/or promote skills matching?
- What are your country's lessons learned, good practices, and challenges in regard to tackling skills mismatching/promoting sustainable labour market integration of migrants through skills matching?

In Latvia, the issue of skills mismatch among third-country nationals has not been within focus of national policy, and has therefore received limited academic and policy analysis. The issue gained more attention after the influx of Ukrainian civilians when a large number of third-country nationals entered the Latvian labour market in a relatively short period of time. This event led to a broader discussion on the importance of promoting Ukrainian integration initiatives, including employment integration measures, such as the procedure for the recognition of qualifications and the acquisition of the state language skills. Overall,

however, the underlying causes of skills mismatch are largely the same across all migrant groups in Latvia.

As part of the study, experts from public institutions and the business sector were interviewed, and despite the different fields of activity the same main causes of migrants' skills mismatch were identified. In particular, the negative impact of the lack of knowledge of the state language on the opportunities for highly qualified specialists to work in their profession was highlighted, as well as migrants' limited access to information on the labour market and the complex process of recognition of professional qualifications obtained abroad.

The common list of causes of the problem included the lack of available and affordable rental housing, the limited supply of jobs in the regions, mismatches between the professional experience of migrants and the available offer of vacancies, mismatches between the requirements of employers, which include, for example, language skills, knowledge of regulatory enactments, compliance with safety requirements and others, and the practical readiness of migrants to work in the local environment, loss of skills as a result of long periods of unemployment, employers' caution and lack of understanding of migrants' skills, as well as the scarcity of part-time jobs, which particularly affects women with small children.

In order to promote the employment of Latvian residents and facilitate the integration of third-country nationals, several support measures and initiatives are being implemented. Since 2023, the Integration and Inclusion Agency has been operating providing consultations and practical assistance to third-country nationals. Latvian language courses of various levels are available to third-country nationals. The State Employment Agency provides a wide range of active employment measures for the unemployed and job seekers. The State Education Development Agency in cooperation with other institutions provides adults with the opportunity to obtain new qualifications or improve existing skills in professions with high demand in the labour market, and the STARS platform provides access to a wide range of online training offers. If necessary, academic recognition of educational documents obtained abroad and recognition of professional qualifications obtained abroad can be carried out.

The main challenges in addressing the problem of migrant skills mismatch are language acquisition as it is a long and resource-intensive process and the procedure for recognition of qualifications as it is complex and requires time and financial resources. Difficulties are also caused by mismatches between migrants' professional experience or education and the actual skills required for the position. Good practices include Latvian language courses for third-country nationals in the capital and regions and measures of the State Employment Agency to promote employment and cooperate with employers, such as job fairs, career days, as well as targeted training and retraining courses.