



# Re-Turn

Regions benefitting from returning migrants

**Toolkit**  
**Regions benefitting from**  
**Returning Migrants**  
**Instruments to support Re-Migrants**

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## Re-Turn

Re-Turn is an acronym of the European project 'Regions benefitting from returning migrants'.

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## 1 Introduction

The Toolkit is part of the CENTRAL EUROPE Project “Re-Turn - Regions benefiting from returning migrants”. The main activities of the project are linked to the development and implementation of services to support re-migrants as a main target group (final beneficiaries). The project partners defined three main areas of intervention (Re-Attract, Re-Integrate, Re-Employ). Consequently three specific Task Forces, Re-Attract, Re-Employ and Re-Integrate were established and developed this Toolkit of instruments. All tools are foreseen as common transnational instruments contributing to the implementation of pilot actions planned specifically for every project region and are available for disposal to regions and organisations to support re-migrants.

The Toolkit was developed based on information from different studies and statistics showing a strong willingness of people to move back to their home countries or region on one hand and on the other a lack of sufficient supporting instruments. This lack influences the whole process of re-migration creating additional barriers for potential re-migrants. Thus, sufficient and demand tailored tools and services are necessary to reduce those obstacles and enhance the re-integration of migrants.

Therefore the project partners conducted a field research to find and analyse examples of best-practice operating successful in the support of re-migrants. The chosen examples were then analysed using surveys and phone and face-to-face interviews. Based on these in depth analysis tools to support re-migrants in the different areas defined were identified and adapted (if needed) to form this Toolkit. Such instruments are necessary, especially if the new economy aspects like e.g. globalisation, knowledge economy, demographic change etc. are considered.

### 1.1 Megatrends and their consequences for the regions in EU (incl. CE)

At the beginning of the 21st century, the regions worldwide face at least three megatrends which are historically without precedence:

**Globalisation** - although in the history of mankind not a new phenomenon - created during the last two decades a new quality of regional development processes. Latest after the collapse of the Soviet Empire a new international environment of nations came into existence. New actors like the BRIC-countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China) and new institutional arrangements like the World Trade Organization (WTO) changed the world economic system significantly. Globalization means the free flow of goods, services, capital, labour and information, integrating a growing number of nations, regions and markets into the international division of labour.

The global economy has created new challenges for regions wishing to raise standards of living for their people. Economic power has become increasingly multipolar and it is essential for regions and nations to produce goods and services that can compete on the global market. Public authorities and business clearly understand the necessity to create new conditions for socio-economic processes in the regions. This is a one of crucial requirements to support companies in their daily work and to allow them to compete successfully on the international market.

**Knowledge Economy;** Globalization is a phenomenon that influences the principles of the strategic thinking on the regional level. One of the most important consequences of glob-

alization -driven e.g. by an on-going revolution in IT-communication systems - is that knowledge (including education, research and development, information and know-how), its renewal and application have become critical factors for sustaining competitiveness and development of regions. And as knowledge is “personally embodied” (D. Bell), the quantity and the quality of human resources in the region - at least in the long run - became the most crucial element in competition of regions.

In the past the regional economy and its development has been basically focusing on supply of material resources, energy and low-wage labour as a driving-force for their economy. Nowadays, as the economy growth is influenced by intensive global competition and rapid technological change, the key to development is a well-educated, highly skilled workforce producing high-value-added, knowledge intensive goods and services, called by R. Florida as a creative class. Apart from that they should be part of a business characterised by entrepreneurial spirit and capacity to find, adapt, and adopt modern, up-to-date technology and to sell sophisticated goods and services in local and global markets. To summarise, a knowledge-driven society creating added value, accumulating and disseminating knowledge is the engine of modern economic development. As a consequence, the knowledge system - has to possess relevant human resources for innovation and growth.

**Demographic Change;** The EU, including Central Europe (CE) regions face a significant problem of ageing society with all correlated consequences. Demographic profile and population stagnation becomes more and more a challenge for economic growth and social development in the coming decades. This challenge takes on two specific dimensions:

- i. The first, related to the exceptional “youth gap” (15-24 year olds) due to low birth rates which will place additional pressure on the knowledge-driven societies - especially in non-metropolitan areas of CE countries.
- ii. The second is a stagnating (in some areas decreasing) and ageing population, caused by an increase of average life expectations and out-ward migration of young and better qualified talents.

Both challenges have to be tackled especially in relation to the non-metropolitan areas of the CE countries. This aspect should be considered as a crucial one while discussing knowledge driven economy as a key for well-being regions. Thus, if the quantitative amount of human resources and workforce is decreasing, the only possible way of reduction of the negative effects is to increase a quality of the human capital by creating entrepreneurial talents, high potentials, researchers and developers as engines of competitiveness and growth.

These secular megatrends described above imply fundamental consequences:

- (1) Competition about the Creative Class (e.g. engineers, entrepreneurs, architects and other people in design, education, arts, music and entertainment, whose economic function is to create new ideas, new technology and/or creative content).

The global competition changed its character from competition about products and services into a race for talents and entrepreneurial skills. Those regions which are able to produce and attract a creative class (like engineers, entrepreneurs, managers, researchers, designers, artists) will be able to generate competitive advantages in the new international order - symbolized by three t's - “tolerance, talents and technology” (R. Florida). On the other hand, those regions which are not able to compete in this run about creative

talents will be the ‘looser’ in the international economic system. This competition is intensified mostly by the demographic decline in post-industrial societies. Therefore the “creative class” already became a most important element for growth and development of knowledge-driven economies.

### (2) New Global Hierarchy of Regions

As a consequence of the change of paradigm for growth, a new distinctive hierarchy of knowledge intensive regions is emerging. At the top are the ‘Science Cities’ and ‘Icon Regions’ (as Silicon Valley) with a critical mass of knowledge-based business and research clusters, innovative milieus and high development dynamics. CE Centres of knowledge, culture and creativity, the “sticky knowledge places” (A. Markusen), are predominantly metropolitan or at least urban areas like Vienna, Silesian Region, Prague, Leipzig, Milan etc. On the opposite end, at the bottom of this hierarchy of regions are agricultural and old-industrial areas less populated, with low GDP, higher unemployment rate, aging population, low qualified human capital and outward-migration.

### (3) Innovation in Non-Metropolitan Areas

However, even in structurally weak, peripheral areas an innovation, supported by regional policy based on a “smart specialisation approach”, can lead to sustainable growth and development. Many examples (based on theoretical discussion and empirical research) confirm positive effects of a combining of an ‘exploitation’ of endogenous resources with exogenous know-how strengthened by an investment which all together can transform declining regions into centres of innovation and growth. The combination of existing mostly traditional economic sectors with key-enabling technologies like e.g. nanotechnology, micro- and nanoelectronics, advanced materials, photonics, industrial biotechnology and advanced manufacturing systems could be a possible development way in the future.

If non-metropolitan areas will be able to develop their distinctive regional product portfolio, combining internal and external drivers of growth and apply an open, knowledge-driven innovation strategy they can turn even declining areas into growth regions (G. Braun, University Rostock).

Therefore discussing all elements of innovation and growth (including human resources and supporting measures), the regions and their development should be considered at different levels:

- From a local perspective, a region should be considered as a place for well-being of people living there. Regional conditions shall contribute to creation of the circumstances for their personal development.
- From a countries’ or Europe’s point of view, regional development has to contribute to aims at national level and strategic goals: to standards defining the quality of life (e.g. economic, social and cultural well-being), to research and innovation capacities, to mobility etc.
- The global perspective casts the light on global challenges. They do often have their origin on global level and always show their effects on local / regional level, without their geographical and time correlation. On the other hand actions on the regional level can influence global processes and can be used as a driving-force for innovation. As Danuta Hübner, European commissioner for regional policy said: “It is in the regions and cities that we have to look for ways to turn globalisation into

sustainable growth and jobs and to move upwards in terms of international competitiveness.” (Hübner 2007, 30)

Thus, following aspects become obvious:

- i. Nowadays, regional development cannot be limited only to the level of regional challenges and necessities alone, by neglecting European and global perspectives.
- ii. Entrepreneurship development is a realistic lever not only for a regional growth but also contributes to the development of countries, macro regions and overall global economy.
- iii. Entrepreneurial acting has potential to create both, solutions for others and nuisance. Entrepreneurship can have an impact upon life. A non-normative, broad view defines it as a “(...) mindset and process to create and develop economic activity by blending risk-taking, creativity and/ or innovation with sound management (...)” (EU 2003, 6)

Attracting the talents (human resources) within regional development strategies needs to accept a sort of broader view and responsibility. A Regional framework should contribute to the increase of socio-economic attractiveness of the region and thus make such entrepreneurial activity more common for entrepreneurial talents which have a potential to improve the standards of living. Certainly promotion of entrepreneurial behaviour includes support not only for business start-ups, but it goes far beyond.

The Toolkit tries to provide organisations and institutions, active in regional development with instruments that can address the above mentioned challenges. Re-Integrate and Re-Employ to develop a distinctive regional product portfolio, by making use of the skills, competences and networks of re-migrants obtained and developed abroad (outside the region). Re-Attract to provide instruments to communicate and present the region in the race for talents. To make use of the talents of re-migrants to the benefit of the whole region is one essential task for regional development. Within the Toolkit we focus on two areas on that behalf, Re-Integrate to provide companies with the qualified labour force to stay competitive in a global market and Re-Employ to give re-migrants the possibility to enhance the regional product portfolio by founding new businesses.

The instruments presented are meant to be implemented by organisations involved in the regional development process. They can be implemented either as a standalone tool added to already existing services provider, or a range of them. Though re-migrants are the main intended beneficiaries some tools, mainly in the area of Re-Attract and Re-Employ yield potential synergy effect to benefit migrants in general and locals. Each tool is presented that it can be easily implemented or adapted according to the regional specificities. However there are some prerequisites that have to be considered beforehand, independently of the specific tool. First, these tools are meant as regional development tools, hence for successful implementation the support and backing of the region is needed. To avoid duplicate services and inefficiency a thorough research of already existing regional services targeted at re-migrants is highly recommended. Cooperation within all relevant organisations and institutions within the region, for each tool all relevant partners needed are given. To present the region as a whole, to express “You are welcome” and to provide services for re-migrants effectively a broad network is needed. In that respect there is one

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substantial recommendation for the implementation of the tools, Cooperation, rather than Competition.

## 2 How to use

The Tool-kit gives an overview of instruments to support re-migration processes at regional level. Within it the tools are presented according to their scope in three main categories, plus one general category for universally applicable tools. The introductory section “Regional Strategy and Framework Conditions“ briefly defines necessary conditions on regional level, that should (need to) be fulfilled for a successful implementation of the tools described. An outline of the best-practices analysed, tools and scope of usage is given in the section ”How to use“. The three main categories, Re-Attract, Re-Integrate and Re-Employ, cover the different aspects of re-migration.

**Re-Attract**, Tools in this category describe how to attract emigrants back to their home region. Re-Attract is defined as a set of instruments, that allows to reach out to emigrants and to inform them about the region and show them a future perspective in the region. One assumption is that emigrants still have links and ties, e.g. family, friends, emotional affection, to their home region, hence are more likely to move to the region than outsiders. Another assumption is that employees do not put salary as a topmost priority, especially re-migrants value personal satisfaction in the job, particular when connected to their home region. Therefore the tools in this category try to address emigrants on an emotional level. The Re-Attract tools can serve as a transmitter for the opportunities within the region provided by the Re-Integrate and Re-Employ tools.

**Re-Integrate**, Within this category the focus of the tools is set on integration of re-migrants. The two topics of Re-Integrate are employment and career and social / personal integration. Many emigrants left their home region for career and educational reason and demands, that could not be provided for when they left. The instruments in this category try to address this problem. The aim is to get re-migrants into employment, to help them find the career they want to follow and to make the social integration as smooth as possible for them.

**Re-Employ**, The tools to Re-Employ try to provide measures that help re-migrants to become self-employed. The reasoning is to make use of the entrepreneurial potential and experienced gained abroad (outside the home region), to benefit the re-migrant and the region as well. The assumption is that re-migrants have acquired skills and built networks that will help them to succeed as entrepreneurs.

**General Tools**, are instruments that do not fit exactly in one of the above categories. There are tools that can serve more than one of the three main categories and are assigned to them accordingly. But unlike these, the general tools, Website and Hotline, are meant to be adapted to the specific needs of the implementer and can fit either any of the three main categories.

Tools within each category are presented to explain what is done, why it is done, how it is done, what and who is needed for implementation. Each tool can be implemented on its own as a single instrument, but in accordance with the best-practices analysed, a set of two to three tools should be implemented. Whenever applicable a combination with another tool is given for each tool, to make use of synergy effects. The tools, except the Ambassador, Hotline and Website, are all based on best-practice examples and can be implemented as described, however there is room for adaptation to fit specific needs.

### 3 Regional Strategy and Framework Conditions

A regional development strategy and the given framework conditions lay the foundation of all the tools to exist within. None of the tools can be successfully implemented, if they are not part of a coherent strategy to support re-migration processes. No single tool or organisation can consistently represent the whole region and express “you are welcome” to potential re-migrants. In the further evolving competition for qualified labour force a regional strategy has to consider human resource development, especially the potentials of re-migrants and should create conditions that enable organisations to actively target potential re-migrants.

The regional strategy should define the general policy of the region towards human resources in general and should specifically consider returning migration trends. The reversal of migration tendencies and creation of conditions for re-migration’ should be a part of the political discussion at the regional level and be a part of an integrated approach in the regional management. The strategy should define a field of intervention for developing initiatives to encourage return migration to the region. The framework conditions should allow for cooperation of the regional government, business and other actors, as a result a coherent approach in the support of re-migrants. The strategy should aim at the capitalisation of the potential of returning migrants in the region and therefore contribute to the regional development by capitalising of the unique skills of re-migrants gained during their stay abroad.

Within the regional framework specific measures, activities and financing structure (instruments) should be defined that address all relevant stakeholders in the region

- Regional and local authorities (decision-makers);
- Intermediaries
  - Labour Offices
  - Training and coaching organisations
  - Business development institutions
  - Business representatives (like Chamber of Commerce, Business associations)
- Scientific institutions and
- NGOs

and allow them a coherent support of re-migrants. All in all, the framework conditions should define a space for the implementation of actions (e.g. tools), based either on organisation or project level that enable all the stakeholders in the region to actively support re-migration.

## 4 Overview of Tools

The tools presented in this Toolkit are based on best-practice analysis of different initiatives working in the fields of regional development, labour market, workforce mobility and migration. Based on the analysis of the following initiatives

- “mv4you” - Specialists workforce for Mecklenburg-Western-Pomerania, [www.mv4you.de](http://www.mv4you.de);
- “PFIFF - Portal für interessierte und flexible Fachkräfte”, [www.pfiff-sachsen-anhalt.de](http://www.pfiff-sachsen-anhalt.de);
- “Pößnek kommt zurück” - Pößneck returns, [www.poessneck.de](http://www.poessneck.de);
- “SIR Sportello Informativo Rientro” - RID Return Information Desk, [www.venetolavoro.it](http://www.venetolavoro.it), [www.sportellorientro.veneto.it](http://www.sportellorientro.veneto.it);
- “revenio zurückkommen lohnt” - revenio it is worth to return, [www.revenio.de](http://www.revenio.de);
- “Sachse, komm zurück!” - Saxonian, come back!, [http://www.sachsekommzurueck.de/servlet/portal?knoten\\_id=9320&sprache=deu](http://www.sachsekommzurueck.de/servlet/portal?knoten_id=9320&sprache=deu);
- “Thüringer Agentur Für Fachkräftegewinnung (ThAFF)” - Thuringian Agency for Specialist Recruitment, <http://www.thaff-thueringen.de>;
- “Gruppo Giovani Imprenditori” - Young Businessmen Group, <http://www.uivco.vb.it/UIVCO/Pubblico/PublicGuest.aspx?PG=GIOIMP&AR=1>;
- “Progetto Imprenditoria Giovanile” - Youth Entrepreneurial Project, [www.provincia.verbano-cusio-ossola.it](http://www.provincia.verbano-cusio-ossola.it);
- “Zuhause in Brandenburg” - Home in Brandenburg, [www.zuhause-in-brandenburg.de](http://www.zuhause-in-brandenburg.de) and
- “Strategia rozwoju województwa opolskiego” - The Development Strategy for the Opole Voivodship, <http://opolskie.pl/serwis/index.php?id=393&idd=22>

tools and instruments were identified according to their applicability to support re-migration processes . The following tables give an overview of the identified tools, their scope and the corresponding best-practice initiative.

**Table 1 Tools and their corresponding Best-Practice Initiatives**

Tool	Best-practice
Postcard - A Reminder from Home	"mv4you"
Photo Calendar - Impressions from Home	"Zuhause in Brandenburg"
Job Portal	"PFIFF - Portal für interessierte und flexible Fachkräfte", "mv4you", "Thüringer Agentur Für Fachkräftegewinnung (ThAFF)"
Company Consultation and Services	"PFIFF - Portal für interessierte und flexible Fachkräfte"
Commuter's Day	"mv4you"
Entrepreneurship Training and Mentoring	"Progetto Imprenditoria Giovanile"

**Table 2 Tools and their Scope**

Tool	Scope - Tool Category				Page
	General	Re-Attract	Re-Employ	Re-Integrate	
Ambassador	x	x			14
Hotline - Contact Point for Re-Migrants	x				18
Website - Portal to the Region	x				22
Postcard - A Reminder from Home		x			25
Photo Calendar - Impressions from Home		x			27
Job Portal				x	29
Company Consultation and Services				x	32
Commuter's Day		x		x	34
Further qualification and Entrepreneurship training			x		36
Entrepreneurship Training and Mentoring			x	x	38

## 5 Ambassador

In order to increase re-migration back into your region a good network of collaborators and public acceptance in the region is needed. A strong network either to get in contact with migrants directly or to complement and extend the services offered for re-migrants is essential. A region which coherently expresses “you are welcome” will be more likely successful in supporting re-migration.

The concept of Ambassador is meant to support the return migration process in two aspects. On the one hand ambassadors can help to re-attract migrants directly, but can also help to promote initiative and their services in- and outside the region. The basic idea is to have people within or outside the region, who work to further the cause of returning migrants. As such the Ambassadors can form an important part of regional networks of collaborators and can help to extend it. One can think of an ambassador, as an evangelist of the region.

The main object of ambassadors is to disseminate information about the region, initiatives active in the region, the services provided for re-migrants and benefits for the region and re-migrants. In general ambassadors can help to

- gain broad public acceptance (and support) for initiatives within the region,
- encourage additional organisations and persons to support the cause of re-migration,
- improve conditions for re-migrants (inform decision makers about bottlenecks and problems for re-migrants),
- extend and build networks of collaborators and
- increase the familiarity of the initiative outside (especially in regions with a lot of potential re-migrants) the region.

Ambassadors can also help to re-attract former outward migrants directly. This can be achieved by

- contact and inform migrants abroad,
- promoting the region and its potential,
- point out future perspectives and chances for re-migrants in their home region and
- telling success stories of re-migrants, either their own or others’.

These are the main fields of help and support that have been identified. As already hinted above an Ambassador can be anyone, re-migrants, migrants, people engaged to develop the region or working in related organisations. The Ambassadors work as intermediaries between initiatives supporting re-migration, the region and migrants and can form an integral part within the regional network. The way they work and support is given can be described by assigning different roles in which the Ambassador can act. These roles can be distinguished by location, background and function of the Ambassador. The Ambassador can act inside or outside the region, being a re-migrant, migrant or a local in- or outside your region.

An ambassador, a re-migrant or other local, can help to promote initiatives inside the region, extend the network of supporters or encourage others to further support initiatives. He can inform stakeholders, e.g. politicians, regional authorities, companies etc., about the benefits and potentials of re-migrants. In that role the ambassador can help to build a regional network of collaborators and stakeholders.

Especially Re-migrants as ambassadors can provide valuable information and experience from the migration and return process. For companies re-migrants (as employees or consultant) can provide useful help, information and contacts for across regional borders cooperation and how to become more attractive for qualified labour force. Re-migrants have gained a valuable outside perspective view on the region, it's perception outside the region and its' presence there. With that they can help to improve the image and attractiveness of the region for investors, qualified labour force and in general. They can assist re-migration supporting initiatives, regional authorities and decision makers in making your region more attractive for re-migrants. In particular they can provide first-hand information about bottlenecks and problems for re-migration to improve conditions in the region (target regional decision makers) and services provided for re-migration.

Outside the region re-migrants as ambassador can help to attract other migrants to return. They can inform them using contacts and channels you do not have access to. These can be personal contacts to migrants they met abroad, former classmates or virtual or new contacts using the internet and social networks. One advantage is that they can communicate on a more personal level. Especially with the background of having made the experience to return they have gained credibility and can provide personal experience and helpful information. In general, inside or outside your region, success stories of re-migrants can increase acceptance of initiatives targeting re-migrants, point out the benefits for the region and encourage others to return.

In the above mentioned roles the ambassador acts either as an ambassador of the region or tries to increase and improve the support inside the region. Another role for an ambassador is the promotion of re-migration support to other (neighbouring) regions. Reasoning is that initiatives that focus on smaller coherent regions have been identified as more successful to convey the message of return home. And most important, more local and regional initiatives cooperating can bring the issue on the agenda on a higher political level (national or supra-regional) to improve conditions and the framework for returning migrants.

An additional aspect of the migration and return process re-migrants as ambassador can cover is training for people willing to go abroad. So far the focus has been on how to make people return. Obviously there is no one to return without people leaving and people cannot be stopped from leaving. But they can be prepared before leaving, e.g. re-migrants can visit schools tell their stories, how to succeed abroad, build networks and contacts that can become a benefit for the home region while away or after the return. There is nothing bad about people leaving and learning new different things, but it is important to prepare and stay in contact with them.

## 5.1 Executor, Partners and Networks

The executor in this case is twofold, first the ambassador himself and second initiative(s) of the region, which the ambassador supports. For initiatives it is important to note that

ambassadors are not necessarily meant to be part of the staff, but rather supplement and support them. In that way initiatives can concentrate resources on their services. The advantages of adding ambassadors as outsiders are

- no classical resources such as staff costs, facilities and working equipment is needed,
- they are committed people, which can result in long-term and deep collaboration,
- they bring in their own networks and partners and work as multipliers.

However certain resources and requirements such as

- The ambassador should have knowledge about the region as a destination for re-turning from abroad.
- If possible the ambassador should have a re-migration background to understand the processes of (re)migration.
- The ambassador can bring his own networks, however access to regional networks of stakeholders and partners is needed.
- A coordination and management function is needed to coordinate and align tasks for effectiveness and efficiency.
- Depending on the ambassador's background detailed information and some form of training will be needed.

are still needed.

As described in the different roles / functions for ambassadors above, building networks and cooperation with partners are crucial for the success and effectiveness of the ambassador. Therefore it is important that ambassadors have access to already existing networks and can include further partners to these. These networks should represent all relevant stakeholders, such as regional and supra-regional administration and authorities, organisations dealing with labour market issues (e.g. job agencies, labour offices), etc.

## 5.2 Methodology

For ambassadors, depending on the role of the ambassador certain tasks have been identified.

- Building up communication platform (focused on social networks) through personal networks / friends etc. to contact migrants and form a network of re-migrants.
- Provide training and information for migrants (planning to go abroad) how to build networks and contacts that benefit their home region and personal professional career.
- Build regional networks.

For initiatives an important question is how to get people engaged to become ambassadors of the region, most likely these will be re-migrants or people abroad. One important characteristic of ambassadors is their commitment and engagement for their home region, but also the time and effort they put into the cause. To gain the support of potential ambassadors it is important that the region, initiatives therein, already support re-migration, promotes the region and its potential. Regional stakeholder need to be active first in order

to get people involved. It is unlikely that all re-migrants are able to become ambassadors, due to limited amount of time available to spend on the task, lacking the required skills or commitment for the region. Hence it is crucial to actively address potential ambassadors, e.g. by organising open workshops for re-migrants, address them directly through personal or partners' contacts, address schools and provide information about the region so they can promote the region if going abroad etc. Further tasks are

- Organise workshops with re-migrants, business institutions and intermediaries.
- Regular round table meetings with partners in the region to schedule and align tasks, discuss and plan current and next activities.
- Provide information and material to support the ambassador.

### **5.3 Critical Factors and Recommendations**

An important aspect to be taken into consideration is the qualifications and personal skills of the ambassador. This role requires excellent communication and negotiation skills as well as moderation competences.

For initiatives, it is always to be remembered that the ambassadors work (for free) to help, so they should not rely on them to provide their services. One important aspect is motivation, especially if no immediate success can be seen. Especially rewards in form of appreciation from the public and regional and public authorities are important to keep them motivated.

## 6 Hotline - Contact Point for Re-Migrants

The Telephone Hotline is a tool to be considered as a contact point for migrants willing to return. The purpose of actions was to provide returners with practical information to facilitate making the decision to return or support them while or after coming back.

The aim of a hotline for re-migrants is to create high quality relationships with:

- The potential re-migrants or returnees in general (independent on their professional situation) as a target group for capitalization of an additional knowledge gained abroad;
- The unemployed and job seeking re-migrants to help them to find jobs suitable to their skills and experience;
- Re-migrants willing to start-up.

The paramount aims of the hotline are: to make a public services available to the customers at any time and place and to help everyone who contacts an institution, whatever their requirements. In other words, the goal of the Hotline is to modernize and improve the accessibility to the services namely enhancing the pace and facilitating the access to information via phone (and optionally via internet). The customers can get information on:

- current job offers and overview of career opportunities,
- professional licenses,
- sources of business financing,
- possibilities of vocational trainings and re-trainings,
- trial periods, vocational trainings at the workplace, public works etc.,
- registration of the unemployed and those seeking employment,
- benefits from district labour offices,
- contact details and fields of work of: Public Employment Services, Employment Agencies, Centres for Information and Career Planning, Chamber of Commerce and other institutions.
- soft location factors, such as childcare and school choices, housing, general information about the region,

The hotline can be a part of the supporting system attracting migrants to come back or an information campaign focused on economic migrants living abroad who are considering the possibility of returning to their country of origin.

In that relation it should be emphasised that a large part of the migrant group are young and well-qualified people.

As an addition to the main target groups, secondary target groups that can be served are

- People desiring to improve their skills - we advise and assist them in looking for suitable trainings,
- Employers seeking workers - to help them to find the employees with the unique skills connected to their staying abroad.

For employers the hotline can give an opportunity to match both sides of the labour market - companies looking for specific skills connected to the knowledge possessed abroad and potential employees offering such know-how.

## 6.1 Executor, Partners and Networks

While planning necessary resources, it is necessary to distinguish between equipment, instruments and processes, including standardised procedures.

Staff - persons responsible for the hotline should possess very good communication skills. As the hotline should be available in the late working hours, it is recommended to split the working time at least between 2 persons. Additional training by experts in the call centre methods (communication) is recommended, although not necessary, as this hotline has not a typical call centre function. The staff shall get special trainings, guidelines and workflows to give the correct information. Network management and organisational skills are as far important as the staff will be also responsible for the establishing and cooperation with the network of institutions delivering support and / or input for the content related aspects of the hotline. As the frequency of the phone calls is not expected to be on the level of commercial call centre (will be significantly lower), it is not recommended to hire additional staff, but rather the work with the hotline can be an additional task for the already working employee.

Standard office equipment is required. Additional software or other tools can be an added value although it should be tailored-planned.

Concerning financial aspects, the hotline does not require a high level of additional funds (if the staff will consist of a regular employee and the responsibility for the hotline will be an additional task). What should be planned is the additional budget for travels and meetings / workshops with the network partners.

Keeping in mind that the hotline should not replace any existing institution but rather be a first contact point from abroad, it is absolutely necessary to establish a network of organisations delivering most important information in different aspects. Therefore following institutions should be involved in the cooperation with the host of the hotline Regional Labour Offices, Local Labour Offices in the region, Regional Authority of Region, trade offices in the region, chamber of industry and commerce, crafts and trade, business associations, real estate agencies, organisations responsible for education at all levels (incl. kinder gardens) and institutions supporting start-ups (like incubators, business centres etc.).

The regional network should select and name specific employees as contact persons for questions from specific thematic fields that are beyond the competences of the hotline staff.

## 6.2 Methodology

While planning methodology and day to day work, the thematic focus has to be clarified during the hotline development process. The implementing organisation together with partners should adjust the thematic focus according to the regional specifics and competences, e.g. the working field of the hotline can be overall, which means that the hotline will deliver information covering possibly wide spectrum of aspects of the private and pro-

professional life or focus on in depth information about specialised topic, like entrepreneurship.

The telephone-hotline should provide information on reintegration of returning migrants, associations, job opportunities, bureaucratic procedures, accommodation, etc. By providing a telephone-hotline we would like to offer a full range of information which are valuable for the returning migrants. Compared to the website it is going to offer more personal and interactive approach for acquiring information.

The working methodology should consist of:

**Information preparation**, Collecting and disseminating of content related aspects / instruments / information in form of a Handbook, with most asked questions and answers, to be used by the hotline operators. The collected information should cover following topics:

- general socioeconomic situation in the region
- job vacancies and all information related to the labour market including formal procedures, taxes, insurance, application documents etc.
- professional licenses,
- sources of business financing,
- possibilities of vocational trainings and re-trainings,
- trial periods, vocational trainings at the workplace, public works etc.,
- registration of the unemployed and those seeking employment,
- benefits from district labour offices,
- contact details and fields of work of: Public Employment Services, Employment Agencies, Centres for Information and Career Planning, Chamber of Commerce and other institutions.
- etc.
- collecting data for a database of the specialised institutions (including contact details of persons to be contacted) responsible for specific topics, like taxes, supporting of start-ups etc.

**Operation**, Using the collected information to the customer during the telephone consultation. Customers get consultation covered in the Handbook. For specific questions the costumers get the contact information of relevant institutions collected in the database.

**Monitoring Procedure**, Developing of monitoring tools like, template of the consultation minutes, database for analysing of the statistical data and content of the consultancies and preparing regular reports (e.g. 6 months periods) on the results of the hotline activities.

**Networking**,

- contacting cooperation partners and disseminating information about role and fields of work of the hotline
- establishing of a (quasi) formal cooperation platform

- informing about the results e.g. in form of regular reports on needs of re-migrants and statistical information

**Training** of persons in charge for the hotline in specific thematic topics - to be able to deliver expected quality, it is strongly recommended to train the staff being in charge of the hotline in all thematic aspects covered by the hotline. It does not necessary requires a deep knowledge but base on the FAQs relevant information should be transferred from the specialised institutions to the hotline staff to enable basic information to be delivered to the customers.

### **6.3 Critical Factors and Recommendations**

- Accessibility (working time) is one of the most important factors and opening time has to exceed the usual working time to allow the potential customers to use the hotline service after their work
- A hotline does not necessary have to be for free - if the using of the hotline causes a fee, it does not reduce a willingness of potential users
- Separate phone number is absolutely needed
- Long-term financing has to be discussed and ensured as the expected results of the existing of the hotline for re-migrants are expected in a long-term period.
- Hotline should be accessible from home country and from abroad.

## 7 Website - Portal to the Region

A Website is one of the essential tools to support re-migration processes, directly or indirectly. All analysed best-practices use it as an integral part of their services. It can be used to indirectly support the initiative by promoting the region, the initiative and its services or provide services directly for re-migrants. These services can range from basic offers such as information and news about their home region, contact with other migrants to concrete offers like job offers.

Nowadays the internet is one of the main sources of information and means of communication. It is one of the easiest ways to get to know about the region, about services provided and get in contact with. Especially for people abroad the use of the internet is an easy and convenient way of accessing information and news about their home region or to make use of services directly (e.g. Job Portals). The advantage of the web portal is that the information and services can be accessed independently of time and location. This makes first contact and basic research of possibilities and future perspectives in the region for potential re-migrants an easy process. However, though convenient and easy to use a web portal cannot replace in depth information and personal consulting.

The website can be designed in different ways, ranging from a simple website to a more complex platform providing different services itself. In its most basic way it serves as a sole information platform about the region and the initiative. In such manner it can be used to present essential information such as:

- Who is providing the services;
- Partners and Networks;
- What services are provided, with an exact description;
- How to make use of the services and
- Contact details of the main institution responsible for the initiative.

The website's role is to introduce the initiative as such, present a background and motivation of the initiators based on the philosophy "the region welcomes you". In addition to the information about the initiative further information about the region such as, socio economic situation in the region or other important organisations and initiatives, which support re-migrants, in the region are recommended.

For this purpose a simple web site will suffice. However the website should be scalable and extendable to be able to serve more complex needs for future demands. More complex web portals can be built on different modules to extend the depth of information provided or to provide services through the portal. Possible extensions to the website are for example the Job Portal or the Photo Calendar or incorporation of social networks.

### 7.1 Executor, Partners and Networks

Resources for staff and equipment depend on the actual implementation of the website. The decision is to have an internal or external solution for web design, programming, technical support, hosting, administration, content creation and upload.

If IT staff with the required competences is not available it is recommended to assign the web site design and programming to an external service. The actual administration of the

web site, once it is set up, requires no in depth IT knowledge and can be conducted by a trained (should be provided by the assigned external service, if needed) member of staff.

The hosting of the web site requires a server publicly accessible via the Internet and a registered domain address. This again depends on your existing equipment and realisation / implementation of the web site. If the web cannot be hosted on an own server or included in an existing web site, an external hosting service is recommended. As the different CMSs have different software requirements it is advisable to have the assigned external service to offer you suitable choices and take care of the upload process.

For the day to day content management an internal solution is preferable. The extent of needed knowledge depends on the CMS in use, but can be easily obtained in form of training (as above for the web site administration). The member(s) of staff responsible should have the relevant communication / writing skills and command of at least English in addition to your mother tongue.

There are no specific partners needed for the implementation and administration of the website. However partners and networks can provide a lot of useful information and content to be employed on the website.

## 7.2 Methodology

**Planning,** Before designing and implementing the website the target groups, way of communication, provided services and desired content should be clearly defined to set up the website accordingly. The content provided on the website should always be targeted at the defined user groups. When setting up a website several content, design and technique related aspects have to be taken into consideration. Basic content related questions that need to be answered are:

- What is the exact purpose of the website?
- How does the website integrate with our services?
- What content do we want to offer? Are there any foreseeable changes, extension etc. to our services and how can these be reflected and implemented in the website?
- What is our target group? What is our relation to the target group? What is the appropriate way of communication; formal or informal / casual; usage / inclusion of social networks?

The importance is to focus on your target groups, the services and how to make use of them. Even in its simplest form, the website should address at least two target groups, end beneficiaries and cooperation partners. If highly specialised services / content are needed, consultation with the implementing entity about feasibility and resources is recommended. That way misguided planning is avoided and alternatives can be defined early in the planning process.

From a technical point of view scalability and extendibility of the web site is very important. Related question and issues that can arise are:

- Responsive web design and accessibility for different target platforms (e.g. desktop systems, mobile devices);

- Content management, who is responsible for providing content and how many people are actively working on the web site;
- Integration of user statistics for evaluation purposes;
- Inclusion of feedback channels for users;
- A forum for user interaction or integration of social networks to build a discussion platform for re-migrants or to get in a more personal contact with the target groups;
- A network cooperation platform or task management system to organise the collaboration with your partners;
- Multilingual setup, if the services need to be extended for migration support in general and different target groups and
- Further extensions of your services.

These things can be best reflected and covered by the use of a dedicated content management system (CMS) for web sites in contrast to static html websites. There are several CMSs available for small to large scale web sites and different license options. Popular choices are Joomla, Drupal, TYPO3 and WordPress. All of these provide easy mechanism to realise the above mentioned issues, provide customisable layouts and support.

**Operation**, The amount and type of services offered determine the quantity of and intervals at which content needs to be updated. As such no general rule can be given, but based on an initial experience phase regular updates, at least in form of quarterly newsletter are recommended.

### 7.3 Critical Factors and Recommendations

Critical factors for the success of a website are foremost content, usability and search engine placement. Also up to date information, no outdated or old information (irrelevant), and updates on a regular basis are important. Another important aspect to consider is accessibility (visual impaired users) and different types of access devices (desktops, mobile devices). Although not of highest importance, due to the relevance of search engines, is a suitable meaningful domain name (web address).

The website, as a general tool can be designed to play along with different tools. Combined with the Job Portal Re-Integrate services are provided, in combination with the Postcard and / or Photo Calendar it serves tasks of Re-Attract and providing information about entrepreneurship education and support within the region it can be combined with the Re-Employ tool Further Qualification and Entrepreneurship training.

## 8 Postcard - A Reminder from Home

The purpose of the postcard is to re-attract emigrants. To support re-migration processes it is important to remind people of their home region, to stay in contact with them. Re-attracting emigrants to a region, which cannot compete with other region in terms of average income, career opportunities etc. involves a lot of communication on an emotional level, like family, friends and home. That is what the postcard aims at, to address emigrants and convey the message / image of home.

The postcard, as reminder from home is literally a postcard. On the card the main feature is a picture related to the home region. On the back side of the card should be references to organisation(s), which address and support re-migration processes in the home region, such as contact information or website address(es). The picture can either be a photo, painting or drawing on its own or combined with a suitable catchphrase. Pictures are a good way of bringing back the home region to the emigrants' attention and to address them on an emotional level. Therefore the picture should depict some characteristic and distinctive symbol of the region (e.g. landscape, famous person, building etc.), which is instantly associated with it. In that way the postcard appeals to the emotional level in a twofold way. First the picture and second the card itself, something usually received from family members or friends as a sign of courtesy.

The postcard is meant as a regular but discontinuous regional marketing activity. With a constant distribution of the postcard the desired effect on the target group will wane. Therefore it should not be available constantly, rather periodically (e.g. on an annual basis) or related to special events or historical dates of the region.

The card can be distributed outside and inside the region. Inside the region relatives and friends of emigrants are targeted, who will then redistribute the card to the emigrants. Outside the region emigrants are targeted directly. It is therefore important to identify areas with a lot of potential recipients, as well as the appropriate places and channels of distribution.

### 8.1 Executor, Partners and Networks

The most reasonable implementing organisations are regional marketing initiatives, regional or municipality authorities or initiatives commissioned by the before mentioned authorities. For the implementation no additional or specialised partners and networks are required. The executing organisation does not need to provide special resources or staff qualifications for the implementation.

### 8.2 Methodology

Following important steps need to be considered.

**Picture selection process**, the chosen picture needs to reflect a distinctive and unique characteristic, symbol or person of the region. An optional catchphrase / slogan can be added to the postcard as well. If there is an already existing slogan or other suitable marketing materials for the region these need to be considered for a coherent marketing approach. Public support can be incorporated in the selection process, by contributing pictures or voting pictures via social media or website channels.

**Target regions and distribution channels**, The regions, in which to distribute the postcards, need to be chosen according to the potential of re-migrants. Therefore an analysis

of migration movements needs to be conducted beforehand. Once the areas with a high potential of re-migrants have been identified a distribution channel for each area must be chosen. For example in Germany it is common practice to deploy postcards for free in bars and pubs.

**Evaluation**, To estimate the success of the postcard distribution, which is hard to monitor in the different target regions, a channel for feedback needs to be established. On the backside of the postcard should be some references to organisations, which support re-migration processes. Via these, if potential re-migrants contact these organisations the success of the postcard distribution can be estimated.

**Distribution Interval**, As mentioned before the distribution of the postcards is not meant as a continuous process. Distribution on a periodic basis is recommended. Based on the evaluation analysis the interval might be adjusted or the distribution stopped at all.

### 8.3 Critical Factors and Recommendations

The postcard marketing activity can help to attract attention to the region and increase interest to return. Critical is to identify areas with many emigrants, potential re-migrants, to target. If most emigrants have moved to several different areas, none with a significant amount of potential re-migrants, the postcard distribution will be less effective and inefficient, if not futile. Another critical factor is the quantity and quality of services for re-migrants provided in the region. As the postcard is a marketing activity only, services for re-migrants need to be provided in the region to meet the interest raised.

It is possible to combine this tool with the “Photo Calendar - Impressions from Home” tool, as such the pictures contributed to the calendar can be also used for the postcard. In form of a digital version, an e-card, this tool can also be combined with the “Website - Portal to the Region” tool. The e-card can then be offered on the website to be sent by site visitors, via a newsletter subscription or email list to potential re-migrants.

## 9 Photo Calendar - Impressions from Home

The Calendar tool is an instrument to re-attract migrants. In a similar fashion to the Postcard tools pictures of the home region are used to re-attract migrants. The basic reasoning behind this tool is to address emigrants on an emotional level to create a desire for home, as is explained in more detail in the description of the Postcard tool.

The calendar can be designed either in a pocket format, to hang on a wall or can be produced in both version. Regardless of its format the main elements are the pictures depicted on it. The pictures need to show characteristic well known landscape, symbol, building, person etc. of the region. For each month there is one (or more if the layout allows) picture paired with it. As such the calendar features several distinctive characteristics in the final calendar itself and production process that address and helps to re-attract migrants. These characteristics that set the calendar apart from common calendars are public engagement in the production process and the unique regional specific pictures.

The calendar creation is organised as an open competition for locals (people of the region) and externals (emigrants, tourists etc.). In a set time frame participants contribute their regional specific pictures to a website. The uploaded pictures are then displayed on that website and can be openly voted for to be included in the calendar. As the public is involved in the picture competition the production process itself already helps to re-attract potential re-migrants. Besides the engagement of locals helps to create public awareness for the cause of re-migration processes, raises the positive perception of and identification with their region. Once the pictures are chosen professional services for photo post processing, layout and printing of the calendar are commissioned. The distribution of the calendar is done utilising different channels like local bookshops, tourist centres and website orders. In order to make the calendar a success, participation in the picture competition and distribution, public attention needs to be raised. Hence it is important to advertise / promote the campaign in local media (e.g. print media and radio), on the website and social media networks. As an additional incentive for participation prizes for chosen picture contributors can be awarded.

### 9.1 Executor, Partners and Networks

As there are a lot of synergy effect with different other regional marketing activities the implementing organisation should be active in regional marketing or development. To save money on advertising for the campaign it is recommended to partner with local media.

### 9.2 Methodology

**Public attention,** A high degree of public participation and attention is essential for the success of the calendar. Hence it is crucial to gain the needed attention by utilising different media channels. Local media, such as radio and print media are good channels to reach locals. To reach outside the region, especially to potential re-migrants, the use of social media networks and the internet via websites, mailing lists and newsletters is highly recommended.

**Picture competition,** the open approach of the calendar creation, picture contribution, voting and especially participant interaction, is the vital aspect of the calendar, next to the final printed version. Therefore the utilised website needs to allow for an open (and easy) uploading process, a transparent voting system and participant interaction. The par-

Participants interaction can be done directly on the website or through social media, either way it is important to moderate and provide feedback.

### **9.3 Critical Factors and Recommendations**

Besides the high degree of public participation needed, copyright and the use of right of the contributed pictures need to be clarified beforehand. Since the pictures are going to be distributed (sold) and possibly used for other (regional) marketing activities these rights have to be granted by the participants. To avoid later legal action these aspects have to be thoroughly checked in accordance with national legislation.

The calendar tool offers a high potential of synergy effects. The calendar itself can be distributed on the Commuters' Day alongside the information material about the region. The pictures collected are used on the website during the picture competition and if the proper rights are granted can be used afterwards on the website and for the Postcard tool. As a side effect it can help to create a social media presentation for the region to stay in contact with emigrants with an active user basis, including locals and emigrants.

## 10 Job Portal

The Job Portal is an extension to the website with focus set on regional employment, though it can be implemented as a standalone website portal too. As the name suggest, it aims to help people to find employment in the region. Since it is almost impracticable and not desirable to distinguish job seekers by their origin (focus on re-migrants) it targets applicants in general, though with the employment location in the region.

As for the web site, the use of the internet as communication platform offers a time and destination independent flexible service. On the downside one cannot provide individual and personal support, as a job agency with direct personal contact. With the focus set on regional employment, it cannot cover and offer the same number of vacant jobs as bigger (trans-)regional, national or international job portals, either. Therefore the extension is not meant as a direct competition to other job portals or job agencies (private or public), but rather as a first contact platform. Depending on regional (or national) legislation and conditions, this first contact through the website can lead to a direct contact to a company or job agency, which then takes care of the placement process. As such the site works as an intermediary between, job seekers, job agencies, companies and the region. However the benefit for users and advantage of the site is the regional focus and the other services that are offered for re-migrants out of one hand alongside. Another advantage is to know the needs of re-migrants, who in a lot of cases are in employment, a fact that cannot be taken care of by other job agencies (e.g. mandatory obligations for the applicant, services mainly offered for unemployed applicants, etc.).

In order to be successful and to add an extra value to existing offerings the site needs to set itself apart from other job portals. One such added value is the strong regional focus. Others are a specific target group orientation and quality requirements job offers have to meet. As already stated it is hard to distinguish the target group of applicants by origin. The service is targeted at re-migrants and migrants likewise, to attract them to the region and at people within the region to prevent outward migration. Therefore it is important to target applicants by their profession and qualification based on regional demand. In that way resources are concentrated on the identified groups, with likely higher effectiveness. To attract qualified labour force, especially those in employment, it is important to set certain quality requirements for job offers, such as:

- full time employment,
- working hours and conditions,
- social benefits,
- employment inside the region only,
- no anonymous (companies needs to be known) job offers, etc.

rather than just list all available positions. Another target group are regional companies. Giving companies the possibility to present themselves with a detailed description on the website adds an important extra to the offer (in contrast to other job portals), which helps to attract qualified work force too.

This service can be run as a standalone website or as an extension to an existing website. The service is designed as a job portal with accounts and profiles for applicants and companies. Applicants are given the possibility to create a personal profile with all important

information, such as profession, curriculum vitae, job requests, career aspiration etc. Optionally that profile can be anonymous for applicants currently in employment. These profiles for example allow companies to scout for suitable applicants. Companies can create profiles on their own to present themselves and advertise job vacancies through their account. To meet the desired job quality requirements companies are obliged to advertise quality matching offers only, but in addition members of staff have to check the offers at random. Job offers could also be added through cooperation with job agencies and other job portals. This can be implemented that job agencies advertise job vacancies on the portal manually or as an automated process to integrate offers from other portals. To ensure the quality of the service no outdated job offers should be listed on the site, therefore companies are obliged to remove no longer vacant positions. But again this needs to be checked by members of staff. All, applicants' profiles, job offers and company profiles need to be searchable for applicants and companies respectively. For both, applicants and companies an automated matchmaking is desirable. In that way notifications are sent via email (or an integrated messaging system) to applicants, about the offer and to companies with a list of suitable applicants. The actual application process can be processed

- directly between the applicant and company through email or by post,
- through a job agency or
- through another job portal

depending on the job advertise. From a technical point of view the portal needs to offer:

- database based profiles for applicants and companies,
- online form to fill in profiles and job offers,
- database based listing of job offers,
- user accounts and login management for applicants and companies,
- searching capabilities based on full text and tag / label (e.g. professions) search,
- automated matchmaking and notification system and
- an optionally automated integration of job offers from other job portals.

## 10.1 Executor, Partners and Networks

Resources to implement, run and administrate the website are similar to the website tool and can be done the same way. Extra staff resources are needed to promote the service, get in and stay in contact with companies and job agencies and to maintain and check job offers and profiles. Due to the needed partners, close contact to companies and possible assistance and consultation (company description, job advertisement) given to the companies staff members of the implementing organisation need to have a knowledge of the labour market, good communication and network skills to address companies and applicants and command of English for international applicants.

To be effective a minimum of job vacancies needs to be advertised through the website. Therefore a good network of companies to provide these is essential. Highly recommended are cooperations with job agencies active in the region, as they can provide a reasonable amount of job offers. If possible cooperation with other job portals can provide additional job offers.

## 10.2 Methodology

For the design and implementation process from a technical point of view similar requirements as for the website have to be met. In addition to these following steps are important.

**Target group definition,** As outlined above the job portal is designed with a strong regional focus in mind. It is therefore essential to identify the regional demand of labour force. This is needed to position and promote the Job Portal accordingly.

**Companies and job offers,** Regional companies are the main sources of job offers. Hence the service needs to be promoted directly to them in personal contact. It is important to build and maintain good personal contacts to the business community. An extra service for companies and a distinguishing feature of the portal are the detailed company presentations, an extra hardly given on other job portals. These will give applicants a better picture about career opportunities in the region, even if not all companies offer vacant positions. Thus the company profiles require special care and companies should be given assistance for the creation of these, if needed.

**Monitoring and evaluation,** especially monitoring of job offers is of high importance. To get accepted from applicants as a useful source of job offers alongside several other options it is important to regularly check that the offered jobs meet the quality requirements and no outdated offers are listed on the portal. For the evaluation page hits (visitor of the website / portal), feedback from companies and applicants should be used.

## 10.3 Critical Factors and Recommendations

Critical for the Job Portal are the number of jobs offered. Hence a critical mass of companies is required in the region to achieve a regular minimum of job offers. Is that critical mass given it is important to set the portal apart from other (bigger and (inter-)national operating) job portals and services provided by job agencies. Therefore a strong focus on regional offers and labour force demand with a clearly defined target group in mind is of utmost importance. Another important aspect is quality. A clear picture of companies (career opportunities) and job offers with defined quality criteria are crucial in order to be attractive for applicants.

As implemented as in the best-practice analysis of “mv4you” and “PFIFF Portal für interessierte und flexible Fachkräfte”, the Job Portal is combined with the “Company Consultation and Services” and the “Commuter’s Day” tools.

## 11 Company Consultation and Services

The tool Company Consultation and Services targets companies to help them to attract qualified work force. Though the instruments provided in this tool help to attract labour force into the region the tool's main focus is set on the support of re-integration processes.

Regions highly affected by the demographic change and its consequences, such as decline and aging of the population, economical decline, decrease of quality of living conditions etc. face a severe threat for future regional development. In the competition for qualified labour force with other regions these highly affected regions have to provide more than just jobs, especially if the average income is lower than that in competing areas. Though not targeted solely at potential re-migrants they are more likely to be attracted than immigrants in general. Surveys with re-migrants have shown that income is not of highest importance to them when returning to their home region, but working- and living conditions, career opportunities and further education are factors they consider important.

The instruments presented are targeted towards companies, not to focus on individual companies but meant to strengthen the region as a whole. As especially SMEs lack resources to provide additional services in the competition for labour force, they are the main target group.

For these companies support in the recruitment process is provided. The support covers following aspects:

- Consultation and assistance to improve the company presentation, job offers description and what distribution channels should be used for the placement of the offer.
- Training and assistance for internet based business networks, to access a larger pool of possible employees.
- Support for finding successors of company owners in case of retirement to prevent closure of companies and loss of jobs in the region.
- Consultations for improving working conditions, such as possibilities for further education of employees, flexible working hours etc. to offer more than a job.

Additional services for new employees and their families can be crucial to attract qualified workers. Quite often SMEs lack the resources in the human resource department (if present at all) to provide extra services. Hence support for new employees such as

- Assistance in the integration process like finding housing, school and nursery school etc.;
- Providing job offers and assistance in job seeking for the partners

need to be provided.

To present the region and its career opportunities as whole companies of the region are presented at business related fairs (regional and transregional), job and career information days in schools, VET schools and universities.

### 11.1 Executor, Partners and Networks

To implement all of the above mentioned services a broad portfolio of competences is required from the implementing organisation. A thorough knowledge of the labour market

and trends, contacts for employee recruitment and networking skills are crucial requirements for staff. Dependent on the size of the region and number of companies to be supported members of staff can be deployed in branches to operate locally close to companies.

For the implementation a strong network of labour market and business related partners is required. Essential partners are chambers of industry and commerce, crafts and trade, job agencies, regional marketing initiatives and public authorities. Additional partners can be educational institutions specialised in or bigger companies providing further education to provide training of employees from SMEs.

## 11.2 Methodology

**Company overview**, an overview of companies (especially SMEs) and their needs is essential. Therefore these need to be monitored using for example surveys or face to face meetings. This is important to adapt the services to the needs of the companies.

**Labour market trends**, as for the company overview, trends of labour markets in- and outside the region should be monitored, as they provide the basics for the company consultations. Following these trends is important to provide the consultations and assistance for companies, especially employees' demands and common working conditions. A special focus should be set on potential re-migrants, as they do have links and roots in the region and do not put income as a top priority.

**Networking**, maintaining good contacts to partners is crucial to provide the services. Good personal contacts, e.g. job agencies, housing offices and associations and real-estate agents can help a lot to provide the extra services for new employees. A strong network and partner participation, e.g. regional marketing initiatives and chambers of industry and commerce, crafts and trade, is needed for attending business related fairs to present the region as whole. Collaboration with aforementioned chambers with their good contacts to companies can help to gain information about the companies and their needs, to provide further education and to find successors in case of retirement.

## 11.3 Critical Factors and Recommendations

The most crucial factors are the broad network partners and a minimum of companies (critical mass) in the region.

It is highly recommended to combine this tool with the Job Portal to gain direct access to a number of job seekers, who specifically have an interest to work in the region. The Commuter's Day is another tool that can be paired with this tool to make use of synergy effects, such as company presentations that can be presented at the stands on the Commuter's Day.

## 12 Commuter's Day

The reasoning behind the Commuter Day is to likewise (re-)integrate and to (re-)attract commuters (migrants or potential migrants). Based on two aspects, that first; Nowadays regions are competing for highly qualified labour force to maintain or gain economic competitiveness and second; Rural areas suffering from a decline in population accompanied by a decrease of infrastructure and services (public and private) provided for the inhabitants, which then again increases outward migration. To counter these trends it is essential to attract qualified labour force to these regions.

The reason to target especially commuters is that they are in employment and still close to the region. Two sub target groups can be identified, those who commute from the region and those who commute to the region. To address commuters from the region is justified by the fact that they provide qualified labour force in a competing region, thus not available to the region's economy and that commuting bears the risk of outward migration due to the time spent on commuting. The second group is targeted to (re-)attract them to the region. Again due to the time spent on commuting, there is the risk of loss of qualified labour force, if commuters to the region seek employment closer to their place of residence. All in all

- Prevent outward migration by re-integration;
- Counter the loss of qualified labour force and decline of population and the accompanying effects by (re-)attraction.

The Commuter Days tool can be described as a small fair / exhibition in which the region, its job and career opportunities and its soft location factors are presented. On one day on an annual basis stands are deployed at commuter hubs, in which business representatives (companies, chambers of industry and commerce, chambers of trade, regional marketing / business initiatives, etc.), regional and public authorities inform commuters about their region and it's potential. In form of personal consultation, brochures and flyers companies of the region are presented; commuters get information about current job offers and living conditions, as incentives to move to the region are shown. As a side effect, commuters from other regions can be attracted and integrate in the region too, especially at commuter hubs in big cities and regional centres where people from several regions commute to and from.

In a slightly modified form this tool can also be incorporated to target emigrants to re-attract and re-integrate them. In that modified form, the focus is not set on commuters, but on potential re-migrants, who live in areas more distant to their home region. The main difference is the change of location for the stands. These changed locations can be airports, ferry ports or train stations with transregional connections. Still these locations need to be carefully chosen in accordance with the main migration regions of potential re-migrants. Also it can be justified to maintain a single stand for a longer period or deploy stands in shorter interval at central stations or air or ferry -ports, to reflect the different travel times compared to commuters.

### 12.1 Executor, Partners and Networks

The implementing organisation will need good contacts to the business community of the region, as well as to public authorities. As it is the executors responsibility to organise the Commuter's Day and coordinate several different partners organisational and networking

skills are a requirement for staff. Crucial factors for a successful implementation are the companies and the job offers presented, therefore a good knowledge of the labour market and business contacts are essential.

As already mentioned above a broad of range of partners should be involved to present the region properly and to show the commitment of the whole region. Crucial partners are companies, business networks, chambers of industry and commerce, crafts and trade, job agencies, regional marketing initiatives, public authorities and public service providers (kindergarten, transport, etc.).

## 12.2 Methodology

**Commuter hubs**, The success of the tool is highly dependent on the number of commuters reached. It is therefore essential to analyse the commuter potential, commuting areas and to identify possible commuter hubs (hubs for start, change and end of commuting) to target. Likely commuter hubs are train stations of big cities and regional centres.

**Advertisement to raise attention**, Another success factor is to get public awareness and raise commuters' interest. This can be achieved by presence (articles in newspaper, interviews in radio) and advertisement in regional media of the defined commuter areas.

**Partner's support**, is the most crucial success factor for the tool. Hence the establishment of a partner network and maintenance of contact are of utmost importance. Especially the participation and support of regional companies, business organisations and job agencies is of high importance and therefore they need to be involved as early as possible in the preparation process. A very important aspect are the face to face consultations and company presentations for the commuters, thus the participation of company and business representatives needs to be ensured.

**Preparation of information material**, Face to face consultation is one essential aspect of the tool, since commuters are targeted not all of them can or want to take their time for a personal dialogue when on the way to or from work. Thus good information material needs to be prepared for those in a rush. For the preparation of the flyers and brochures the partners should be involved to provide valuable input and information. The information material should represent the region, companies and job opportunities and the living conditions within the region.

## 12.3 Critical Factors and Recommendations

The most critical factor for the success of this tool is the partners' support and cooperation.

As an addition to the "Job Portal" tool these two tools can be combined and make use of synergy effects as both require a great amount of network and partner cooperation with almost the identical partners involved.

## 13 Further qualification and Entrepreneurship training

In the framework of entrepreneurship-training, participants should get to know and apply methods of analysis, structuring, idea generation, evaluation of alternatives, priority setting, and planning of strategy implementation which they can use again and again at turning points of their professional career as needed. Step by step they should explore the organisational pattern of their respective branch of (service) industry, trends and development pattern in their market, the specifics of customer needs and competitors' strengths while eventually revising and re-revising their original business concept.

During this process the existing context conditions are influencing expectations, strategies as well as (obviously) the results of entrepreneurial action. It should be distinguished (e.g. for the decision to involve in a start-up project and during that process) between three levels of selection:

- The first order level of selection is represented by the founder person herself and the complete genesis of a personality that intends to start a new venture, (because human beings construct their reality and it is unrealistic not to expect a strong impact on the start-up process).
- Context conditions like actual market development trends and branch structures additionally influence action taken - thus, represent a second order level of selection.
- Finally specifics of the 'entrepreneurial situation' may be subsumed as third order level of selection. Their importance results from the fact that - in contrast to established enterprises - action is not limited or bound by formal or informal structures created in the past - as far as new venture creation or the running of young enterprises is concerned.

### 13.1 Executor, Partners and Networks

To create a sufficient pool of trainers it is necessary to look for experienced experts with an educational knowledge and involve them in two ways:

- To start training sessions and
- Allow them to transfer a knowledge to the organisation foreseen for future entrepreneurship programmes by organising so called Training of Trainers (ToT)

It is necessary to establish a cooperation platform of institutions supporting start-ups at different stages and in different form, like technology parks, business incubators, and training organisations transferring know-how in different thematic topics (e.g. project management, marketing etc.). It means that a supporting structure should consist of different organisations delivering different services and possessing different competences. Those organisations should have their own role within the whole system to ensure a wide spectrum of services to be offered.

### 13.2 Methodology

The proposed tool is based on so-called "Action Learning" method developing knowledge and competency through the creation of space for experimental learning leading to strengthening a motivation and (further) developing entrepreneurial competencies.

A complete didactic should display the following characteristics:

- i. ,Pragmatism': pedagogical interventions are always directed towards practical action;
- ii. ,Legitimation': as a didactic concept should lead to taking action, it should provide its theoretic or empirical foundation as well;
- iii. ,Paradigmatic': thus, a didactic concept should refer to and position itself with regard to scientific paradigm.

The degree of complexity of individual exercises should be increased by suitable revision. Very practically, the participants first should gather / exchange available insights on a topic, then pass through exercises - individually or in small teams - that correspond as much as possible to typical entrepreneurial or managerial challenges they are up to confront during the start-up process. They should compete in a simulated market, design successful strategies or fail. Thus, a training ground is offered to exercise trial variation, make 'mistakes' to learn from with limited costs and understand critical concepts and interdependencies not in the classical way (one question => one answer) but including the relevance of all driving forces of the integrated holistic process of new venture creation. Again and again there should be developed new unexpected situations to grasp and analyse, strategies for action have to be conceptualised, own perceptions and ideas need to be communicated and eventually co-operation or compromise might have to be negotiated with other parties. Feedback on one's own behaviour, steps in the planning process and central features of the business model should be received throughout the course from the fellow-participants as well as from the different trainers involved.

### 13.3 Critical Factors and Recommendations

Entrepreneurship Education as Evolutionary Competence Development should be ensured which means that the focus should be on:

- Acquisition of Entrepreneurial Competences and
- Acquisition of Entrepreneurial Learning Competences

The paradigm should be changed:

- Learning competences instead a typical learning process - "container education";
- "Do-know-tell" instead "tell-know-do" and
- Do not teach but let people learn

The training programmes should:

- be very practically;
- create a ground to make 'mistakes' to learn from;
- include the relevance of all driving forces;
- work with limited resources and interdisciplinary and
- create communication competences.

The training programme developed can then be used for the Entrepreneurship Training and Mentoring tool.

## 14 Entrepreneurship Training and Mentoring

The Entrepreneurial Training and Mentoring is a training programme to enable participants to think and act entrepreneurial and ultimately to found their own business. Regions with a lack of entrepreneurs and high unemployment rates, especially rural areas facing threats of demographic change and lack of qualified labour force will benefit from additional entrepreneurs. This tool aims to re-employ re-migrants in the region, but it is not designed exclusively for re-migrants only. The additional qualification obtained in the training can also prevent emigration by providing young graduates (university or VET) with entrepreneurial skills and career opportunities in the region. These acquired skills can be put into practice either by founding a new business or within existing companies providing them with qualified labour force. Especially re-migrants can bear an entrepreneurial potential, due to their contacts and networks established during their time abroad (outside the region), which can be utilised for their own business or for existing companies.

The main objectives are to provide re-migrants and young graduates with specialist qualification, entrepreneurial skills and thinking and practical entrepreneurial experience. Accordingly the training and mentoring programme is split in three phases, the internship in companies, entrepreneurship training and mentoring.

The object of the internship in companies is, that participants of the programme develop their entrepreneurial ideas. Initially trainees have to apply for the training programme with a business / project idea they want to realise. In accordance to that initial business idea a host company is chosen to reflect the participant's idea. Within the company they gain specialist qualification (branch specific knowledge) and entrepreneurial reasoning in a real life context they need to possess to successfully implement their idea.

After the internship participants take part in entrepreneurship training. The training should enable the participants to think and act entrepreneurial, provide them with the required background information and develop with them a finalised business plan. Topics covered in the training are creativity and idea generation techniques; needed soft skills for business contacts and negotiations; personal and business SWOT analysis; marketing and basics of business administration and economics; legal requirements and basics in law, tax and insurances.

In the final stage the business plan is implemented. The implementation process is guided by a mentor, an experienced entrepreneur, arranged in a cooperation agreement. The reasoning is that the participant (new entrepreneur) benefits from the experience of the mentor. The mentor's role is to help the participant to avoid typical and common mistakes, give strategic and practical advice for the business development and provide contact to networks and businesses. If chosen wisely, the mentor and trainee share a business background, the mentor and trainee can develop joint projects for long term cooperation.

### 14.1 Executor, Partner and Networks

As this training and mentoring programme cannot be implemented by a single organisation, the implementing organisation has to build a network and needs partners for cooperation. Of utmost importance is the support from companies and entrepreneurs to provide the internships and mentors for the participants. Further relevant partners are, business representatives, chambers of industry and commerce, crafts and trade, organisations active in entrepreneurship education, job agencies and public authorities. Support from public

authorities and job agencies is especially needed for job seeking participants. If the entrepreneurship training is not conducted by the implementing partner additional cooperation with trainers and / or organisations offering entrepreneurship training is needed.

## 14.2 Methodology

The three main aspects of the training programme are to provide specialist qualification in a real life context, entrepreneurial skills and training and guidance from experienced entrepreneurs during the initial phase of business foundation.

**Application process,** The application process proceeds the three main phases of the training programme. The submitted business ideas have to be evaluated and approved by a pool of experts, business representatives, company representatives, job agencies, etc.

**Internship,** In dependence on the business idea, branch specific requirements for specialist knowledge and the duration of the placement can vary. In average a four month placement at a company should be realised. The role of the internship is to provide participants with the required specialist knowledge. To offer the training to a number of participants with different branches and backgrounds a broad pool of companies needs to be created.

**Entrepreneurship training,** The main task is to teach participants entrepreneurial thinking, basics in business administration and legal requirements. As the main output from this phase is a ready to implement business plan, the training needs to be practical orientated and conducted by experienced trainers with an entrepreneurial background.

**Mentoring,** During the mentoring phase the main task is to accompany the trainee and the mentor. Important is to ensure the trainee receives the needed guidance from the expert.

## 14.3 Critical Factors and Recommendations

The critical factors are to gain enough support from companies and entrepreneurs to support and guide the trainees and new entrepreneurs. Therefore it is important to convince companies to not see the new entrepreneurs as a threat, but rather as a chance for cooperation and future development.

This tool can be build up on the Further Qualification and Entrepreneurship Training tool. The training concept and structure developed in that tool are used to provide the entrepreneurship training in this tool. However it is possible to implement this tool using a different entrepreneurship training concept.

In addition the implementing organisation can act as a contact point for entrepreneurship information. In such form the established networks and contacts, knowledge of the region and financing sources can be used to provide information about entrepreneurship training possibilities, sources for financing and public funding, provide business contacts to other entrepreneurs and companies, initiate entrepreneur meetings (e.g. open round table discussions) etc.

## 15 Example Implementation One-Stop-Shop

The described tools are single measures to support re-migration processes and each can be implemented on its own by institutions with the respective fields of duties (e.g. regional development agencies, labour offices, etc.). However most of the analysed Best-Practice initiatives deploy a set of several tools and measures. Whether to focus on one tool or to implement a range of services depends on the region's and re-migrants' needs and the resources available. As an example implementation of a set of tools the concept One-Stop-Shop for re-migrants is introduced.

In general the implementation of services targeted at re-migrants requires careful preparation and planning. The tools and services have to be tailored to regional demands and should make use of synergy effects wherever possible. The implementation need to be based on a thorough analysis of needs and demands; existing services for re-migrants and / or services that can be adjusted to serve re-migrants; existing structure and networks of cooperation and identification of missing services. Based on these findings such services should be developed with cooperation with existing services and initiatives in mind. Cooperation of different service providers within the region is one aspect that almost all analysed initiatives stressed as a crucial factor for success.

For this example implementation the following assumptions are made. The above analysis has shown the existence of loosely cooperating organisations offering services to increase immigration in general, i.e. a regional marketing initiative to promote the region and attract investors, a labour office with extra services for needed qualified labour force and a community / regional housing and real estate programme to counter vacancy and abandoned property.

Within these conditions the aim of the One-Stop-Shop is to promote the already existing services, attract re-migrants, especially those with the needed qualification and make the services easily accessible through one hand. To complement and enhance the existing efforts, besides other measures the following tools have been chosen:

- Hotline - Contact Point for Re-Migrants and
- Website - Portal to the Region.

The tools chosen do not provide concurrent services to already existing ones. They follow the approach to cooperate, make use of synergy effects and fill in gaps of missing services. They bundle the required provision of information and promotion of services in one hand, thus reducing the efforts for individual promotion of each single service; promote the region as a whole to better express the "You are Welcome"; maintain one website for attracting re-migrants joining the efforts of the different initiatives and provide thorough counselling for all aspects of the return process. They reduce the efforts needed from the potential re-migrants to collect all the information about the available services to return.

With the help of these tools the One-Stop-Shop can become the contact point to the region. It is set up in a way that potential re-migrants can access all relevant information about the services provided for them - the website for an on-going promotion and source of information and the hotline for individual consultation and in-depth information. The concept of the One-Stop-Shop is that potential re-migrants get a first overview of all relevant services and necessary information through the website. For individual questions and counselling re-migrants can get further advice and help through the hotline. In the end, to

make use of the services provided by the other initiatives in the region the re-migrants get redirected to the actual service provider. In that case the benefit of the One-Stop-Shop is a common information and promotion initiative of all the different service provider within the region. In addition to these main tasks a feedback channel from the (potential) re-migrants can be implemented (e.g. in form of online surveys or surveys taken via the hot-line service) and further demand analysis can be conducted. This allows not only for the evaluation of one service provided, but for the improvement and / or provision of new service at regional level. As such the One-Stop-Shop serves several aspects i) as a service provider for re-migrants, ii) strengthening regional cooperation and harmonisation of services and iii) as a source for service evaluation and development.

Independent of the above mentioned feedback channel, all initiatives and services should undergo quality management and evaluation procedures. One common denominator of all analysed Best-Practice example is the monitoring and evaluation of the provided services. For more detailed information about the implementation of an One-Stop-Shop see the “Service Concept: One-Stop-Shop Concept to re-integrate migrants to the benefit of the regional economy” by the consortium of the Re-Turn project.

# Regions benefitting from returning migrants

After 1989 Central Europe has gone through important political, economic and social changes. The entry of many CE countries to the European Union during first decade of 21st century enhances the European integration. Joining European space accelerated economic growth of these countries and opened work migration flows, mainly from Central Europe to North-Western Europe.

Economically motivated migration of in particular young and well educated people from the New Member States to high-income countries is currently dominating international migration flows in Europe thanks to the free right to work in any other EU Member State. This is intensifying a brain drain process for many regions in Central Europe and certainly for the Re-Turn case study regions.

On the other hand statistics show the willingness of these people to come back to their countries. However, this process is often associated with significant problems of reintegration. Often the home regions neglect the returning migrants' contribution to regional economic development of

## **Project message:**

*“Re-Turn perceives returning migrants as a key factor for innovative regional development and therefore it creates new services and tools in order to facilitate their return and reintegration in their home region.”*

these countries, and they do not support migrants in their return. It is estimated, that up to 50% of these outmigrants would return to their home countries within 5 years after emigration - a huge potential for regional development as these people gained new

social, cultural and professional competencies while being abroad.

Re-Turn's main objectives are linked to the development and implementation of services needed to support migrants in their wish to return, the promotion of returning migrants as a human capital resource for innovative business development, the creation of framework conditions for reintegration into their home countries' labour markets and social communities. The project aims at developing, testing and implementing joint strategies, new support policies, tools and services in the participating regions.

## **Target groups:**

1. decision takers, senior officers from regional authorities and labour market organisations
2. training and qualification organisations
3. business associations and economic development organisations
4. social groups representing migrants
5. returning migrants

## **Further information:**

[www.remigrants.eu](http://www.remigrants.eu)

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The project seeks to gather original knowledge on the specific situation of returning migrants. Therefore an online survey will be available under <http://return.ifl-leipzig.de> addressing emigrants who have already returned home, or who want to do so in the future. This knowledge will be used to push the topic of

'return migration' on the political agenda, providing an account of the specific motivations and problems of returning migrants, and offering solutions for regional stakeholders to support them in their return.

## **Project information:**

### *Project partners:*

*Countries involved: Germany, Poland, Czech Republic, Austria, Hungary, Slovenia, and Italy*

### *Case Study Regions:*

*Ústí Region (CZ)  
Görlitz Region (DE)  
Harz Region (DE)  
Mid Pannon Region (HU)  
Lodz Region (PL)  
Swietkrzykie Region (PL)  
Piemonte Region (IT)  
Podravska Region (SI)*

### *Main outputs:*

1. *CE remigration online visualisation platform*
2. *Toolkit with methods and instruments of success stories*
3. *Handbook with Transnational joint planning and management tools*
4. *Tools and services to re-attract emigrants*
5. *Transnational Strategy for attracting and reintegrating migrants*

*Project duration: 5/2011 – 4/2014*

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