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## Post-Accession Economic Migration of Young Adults as Element of Changing Career Patterns in Poland

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### Abstract

The results presented in this paper were obtained as part of a research project (funded by the National Science Centre in Kraków – NN 106 348 140) entitled: Economic Migration and Returning Home as Experienced by Contemporary Poles. A Social Pedagogy Study. Quantitative research strategies were used (N-174) – a diagnostic survey, and the basic problem was – What experiences related to work (before, during and after emigration) do young Poles have? This article reviews how vocational career patterns changed against the background of the social and cultural transformations that took place in Poland; it also addresses economic migration as a part of these transformations and identifies career guidance in the context of migration experiences of young adults. Sampling studies of young adults (return migrants) revealed significance they assigned to their labour migration experiences that mainly involved 3D (dirty, dull, dangerous) jobs. A two-stage skill depreciation was found – brain waste (before

and during migration) and the reasons for the waste as well as its consequences for the future career potential (post-migration “CV gaps” vs. the sense of agency, resourcefulness).

**Keywords:** career patterns, economic migration, brain drain, brain waste, young adults.

## **Introduction. Changing career patterns against background of cultural transformations in Poland**

As a time and space, defined through the concepts of ambiguity, uncertainty, lack of security, individual and social dissonances relating to human existence, postmodernism is a result of years of social transformations. As they advanced, the ideas of individualism, consumerism, and liberalism were ripening slowly, followed by cultural and economic globalization (Wnuk-Lipiński, 2004). Self-realization and pursuing a success in life, including a career success, have become obligatory, because otherwise we may end up being pushed off a speeding train of continuous changes (Bauman, 2000; 2006; 2007a; 2007b; Beck, 2002; Giddens, 2007). Postmodernity is a time of a permanent discontinuity (Drucker, 2008), destabilization of life caused predominantly by a sudden and global cultural change, social and economic transformations, and a dynamic labour market. It involves major changes of vocational careers of individual people, changes relating to transitions from the education to the labour market (Liberska, 2002; Radziewicz-Winnicki, 2004; Bańka, 2007; 2016).

The 1989 political reforms introducing democracy and a transition from a centrally-managed economy into an evolving free market caused enormous changes in vocational lives of many people. Careers at the time were mainly characterised by certainty of employment and low mobility of employees. The transition period invoked a realistic spectre of unemployment, forced people to develop vocational competencies sought after in the business-cycle driven market, pursue lifelong education and actively construct their careers, gave them an opportunity (at time, a necessity) for economic mobility, which also involved moving abroad for economic reasons. This also affected work organization – new forms of labour market participation emerged that mirrored the flexibility of the legal concepts of employment, time, place or form in which work was provided.

This work organisation remodelling resulting from macro social changes changed biographies (vocational careers) of individuals. Until recently, human life, including its work-related aspect, was relatively ordered, predictable, with prospects for careful and long-term planning (Ziółkowski, 2000; Sztompka, 2005; Giddens, 2007). However, all these career building and implementation concepts have become outdated.

Poland's transition from a collectively organized society in which everyone was employed regardless of their individual potential, and remained employed regardless of their personal involvement, to an individual-focused and success-driven vocational career, was a major developmental experience to many people (with work becoming their life style), and a source of anxiety and disappointment to others (Hajduk, 1996; 2001). A career course became destandardized, differentiated, and privatized (Piorunek, 2016). Standard labour market behaviour can be described as rapid, immediate, transient (liquid), dynamic, fragmentary, ceaselessly requiring continuous education, frequently characterized by multidirectional work experience, offering an opportunity to pursue one's career abroad, causing transnationalization or deterritorialization of work.

All these changes intensified, but also became easier to introduce after Poland's accession to the European Union in 2004.

At that time, a social phenomenon of international migration of Poles gained momentum. (Garapich, 2007; Grabowska-Lusińska & Okólski, 2009; Engbersen, 2013). Already when negotiating its conditions of accession, Poland's foreign policy was focused on ensuring that, in line with the idea of free movement of workforce, its citizens were granted access to the European labour markets. On accession to the EU, Polish nationals, as members of the United Europe, could be legally employed in other Member States.

This was one of the factors that diversified and varied career patterns and career courses. Few and universal vocational trajectories available before the transformation were replaced with a broad spectrum of vocational opportunities and possibilities, including employment in a foreign country. People had to redefine and actively form their careers.

Generally speaking, at least three career patterns co-exist in the Polish market nowadays (Piorunek, 2009).

They include Linear Careers (Piorunek, 2009). Linear careers are characterized by a relative stability and low pressure to change work. Changes, if they occur, are not radical and are often caused by external factors. These careers are usually routine, with a promotion occurring as a consequence of reaching a certain age (the rule of seniority) or vocational initiation. Mobility, if any, occurs scarcely. Individuals pursuing linear careers set each subsequent goal within a once chosen vocational path, often in a once assigned place of work, never giving it up, but rather slightly modifying the activity patterns, they specialize in their profession of choice. Linear careers correspond essentially to Super's (1984; 1994; Smart & Peterson, 1997) maintenance stage in which the vocational position (once chosen and consistently pursued) is fully assimilated and vocational maturity is reached. Linear careers may be horizontal (frequently with a slight horizontal mobility), vertical (a vertical mobility as a result of regular promotions within an institution or organization), or may involve a "down deep" mobility by developing one's specialism (increasing one's knowledge, skills, vocational experience) as part of one's formally invariable vocational position (Buehler, 1999). In their purest form, linear careers are pursued by persons who spend their entire vocational lives in one workplace and have their responsibilities hardly modified, or mastered the professional arcana moving upwards in one company. A career needs to be carefully planned to ensure vocational satisfaction, as no major changes are expected to happen in this area.

Career guidance for this group of people needs to mainly assist individuals in properly evaluating their resources and knowing the specifics of their work environments to optimize their vocational choices. It is all the more important as all these choices are made for life.

Sequential Careers. These are not as stable as the linear careers. In sequential careers, individuals often transition between forms of participation in the education and labour markets, change or discontinue their employment, start looking for new jobs and begin a new sequence, disregarding the temporal framework to a larger extent than in linear careers. They are mostly motivated by self-realization and vocational satisfaction (e.g. financial). Persons engaging in sequential careers are continuously looking for the right place in the labour market. This search, stimulated by an individual or environment, often demands initiative, i.e. to educate oneself, be ready to

invest in developing one's competencies, accept changes occurring in one's life and individual career course. Educational and vocational plans of persons pursuing sequential careers are usually flexible and made for a short term. These careers are pursued by persons who in their lifetime often take various vocational positions, are able to embark on a career in a different occupation or workplace, do not shun various forms of employment, are not limited by rigid time frames; the changes can happen at various life stages, with each of them representing a separate sequence of events and experiences, a sequence that starts at a specified time, culminates, and ends or closes as a new sequence of vocational commitment emerges.

Career guidance for persons pursuing sequential careers should advise them on how to embrace changes in their vocational lives and learn how to actively seek employment opportunities, without providing them with algorithms.

**Decentralized and Kaleidoscope Careers** This career pattern abounds in numerous episodes of space-time vocational involvement that are not limited by time and do not refer to any earlier patterns that were followed and accepted in the previous generation. Work is treated as a temporary "discovering" of one's identity, with many attempts made before one decides whether a job is suitable and satisfactory. Individuals preferring this career pattern are very tolerant of changes and their high dynamics and randomness in their lives. An individual plays a "game" with other labour market participants by engaging in many projects, staying open to proposals, agreeing to temporary satisfaction, as he knows that in the absence of standards or rules he can always change his work or school and begin all over again. To complete projects with set time limits, an individual needs to agree that the employer-employee relations will be based on flexible forms of employment and contracts for a specific assignment (not the safer and stable contracts of employment); he also has to accept that no workplace is permanent and that he may have to often change his workplace location (e.g. going to work abroad). Kaleidoscope careers are temporary as regards time and space, and more often than the other career patterns involve economic migration (not necessarily a natural consequence of pursuing one's career). They look like a peculiar collage that has no unnecessary or unfitting pieces, and often represents an inconsistent accumulation of educational and vocational experiences of varied origins

that are not simply ordered by a rule of progress. Kaleidoscope career scenarios abound in various transitions, and individuals pursuing them are highly tolerant of discontinuity in their biographies and permanent changes.

In particular, they are characteristic of young people who have to intensively look for work and keep afloat on a highly demanding market where many segments have already been taken by more experienced workers. As a result, they are much more flexible in approaching economic mobility, including emigration - both being included in their vocational life courses.

Career planning, especially long-term, is impractical in this case; persons pursuing kaleidoscope career patterns believe that with the labour market changing so quickly and in such an uncoordinated way that most changes cannot be foreseen, they have to maintain maximum flexibility, focusing on the now and here.

As particularly important, vocational guidance should accompany these individuals in the course of their lives to provide support in the decision-making and career-changing processes. In no event it should be limited to a territory of a single country.

## **Phenomenon of Polish economic migration**

Mobility of migrants that was already characterized when discussing career patterns may be divided into spatial and occupational mobility (European Commission, 2009) or social mobility. Spatial mobility can be defined as moving between locations in one country (domestic mobility) or between countries (international mobility). The European Commission (2009) defines migrants' job mobility as a change of work, job (job content), changes in the labour market (employment, unemployment, passivity) or career level involving a change of address. Thus, spatial mobility may have a significant impact on, or can even determine, job mobility. Job mobility can heavily depend on the course of one's vocational career and may be an instrument of or a plane for pursuing one's vocational goals.

Statistics of Poland-Central Statistical Office (*Główny Urząd Statystyczny - GUS*) (2014) show that, after a noticeable drop in the number of Polish nationals living abroad between 2008-2010, 2014 marked another year when the number of Poles living abroad increased - Statistics Poland esti-

mates that around 2320 thousand Poles lived abroad at the end of 2014, i.e. by 124 thousand (5.6%) more as in 2013. The number of Poles temporarily living abroad continues to increase and was about 2.54 million at the end of 2017. Among the EU countries, the largest migrant communities lived in the UK (685 k), Germany (614 k), Ireland (113 k), and the Netherlands (109 k) and Italy (96 k). The largest age group among migrants living abroad longer than three months are people aged 25–29 years (almost 383 thousand, of which women were 54% (207 thousand)). The second largest group included persons aged 30–34 years, followed by a group of 35 to 39-years-olds (with a majority of men), and of 20 to 24-year-olds (with a majority of women). In terms of educational levels, 40.5% of migrants have secondary education, 24% have vocational education, and 22.8% graduated from schools of higher education (women are better educated than men). According to Statistics Poland, 38.7% of persons having higher education hold degrees in social sciences, law, and most often economics. A larger percentage, as might be expected based on the educational preferences prevailing in Poland, was observed among migrant graduates of the humanities, foreign languages, biological and IT sciences. This leads to a conclusion that a decision to migrate is easier for people who speak foreign languages (graduates of foreign language faculties), are sought after by employers abroad (e.g. IT graduates), and have difficulty finding in Poland a job matching their qualifications. (Szyszka, 2016). Kaczmarczyk (2006) emphasizes that the structure of migrants imitates the structure of the population they have left behind. Given that the highest mobility is among 18 to 35-year-olds and that education quality among young persons in Poland has improved significantly from 1989, it comes as no surprise that a share of migrants with higher education has been increasing, and exceeds the percentage of people staying in Poland. Additionally, migration of university graduates does not seem to have features of brain drain, but looks more like a depreciation of qualifications and brain waste, which happens also for reasons other than migration. Analyses conducted by Statistics Poland demonstrate that persons having basic vocational education found jobs most easily abroad (with 81% of them working), the next group included persons with secondary (almost 78% were working) and higher-level education (over 72%) (Kaczmarczyk, 2006).

## Materials and methods

This paper presents some of the results of the original research conducted to analyse careers and social and job mobility of migrants from Poland. The research was exploratory, focusing on courses of job careers of migrants from three temporal perspectives and examining how migration affected development of career courses after their return to Poland.

The study was conducted in the pre-accession period, when Poland became a full member of the EU and lasted 5 years – so as to delight with the moment before, after and during the stay in exile. The study was conducted. The questionnaire was distributed among the returning migrants. The research was initiated at the employment office, the first returning migrants were found there, then they transferred the contact to other returning people. Therefore, the snowball method was used.

Survey research (questionnaires were used) was supplemented, with context qualitative research. Each research sample in the quantitative analysis was made of 174 persons who lived abroad for at least one year and lived in Poland for not shorter than six months between their return and this research. The sample was purposive. The target group were returning migrants who migrated to a European country shortly before or after Poland's EU accession. The quantitative research was supplemented with a qualitative text analysis (based on hermeneutics methods) based on internet forums (created by and for migrants who still live abroad and those who either plan to return or have returned to Poland) and blogs publishing migrants' stories.

## Results. Three temporal employment perspectives of migrants from Poland. Job satisfaction vs. job dissatisfaction

The respondents' employment structure shows that a majority of the interviewees had worked in Poland before migrating. So, even though 77% of the respondents had been employed in Poland, they decided to go abroad and start new lives there. An analysis of the research materials shows that migration money was sought not by the unemployed alone but also by people claiming that they already had fairly good jobs in Poland, however, due to some circumstances making the job unsatisfactory, they decided to leave.



Hence, Polish migration is rather a migration strategy followed to **improve the quality of one's life, not to survive.**

There were no statistically important differences between employment structures of men and women. Thus, we are not able to say whether any of these groups experienced particularly difficult employment-related conditions in Poland before leaving ( $p = 0.433$ ). However, a comparison of employment and education levels of the respondents reveals differentiation ( $p = 0.000$ ). In the respondents' group, the persons with post-secondary, vocational, and technical education levels were employed more often than persons with master's degrees. The respondents also had different experiences in the domestic labour market.

Describing their experiences, the respondents often compare their lives before, during, and after emigration. Young respondents point out that though they used to have jobs in Poland they found them unsatisfactory on many levels, not meeting their expectations. It is important that when depreciation of qualifications is mentioned, over 70.00% of the respondents said that in Poland they were manual workers, only three of them had white collar jobs. Those respondents whose work matched their education account for only 30.00% of the employed. This may indicate that qualification depreciation did not happen as a result of migration, as brain waste occurred before migration and very often was a reason for migration. Therefore, skill depreciation that is strongly associated with employment of migrants happens before migration, in the migrants' home country. More than every second respondent said that the work they did in Poland before going abroad did not match their education.

It is interesting that as much as 58% (i.e. the largest groups) of the unemployed (for at least six months) were master's degree holders. The second largest group of the unemployed were respondents with basic vocational education (16.00%), while a slightly smaller group graduated with a bachelor's degree (13.00%). In the majority of cases (over 70.00%), the employed were not satisfied with their work in Poland in terms of the character of the employment and salaries. None of the respondents was fully satisfied, and only 28.00% of the employed respondents said they were rather satisfied.

The number of the respondents employed after migration was 93.00%, which marks a 20.00% increase of employability vs. the employment level

of the respondents before going abroad. Those respondents whose work matched their education accounted for only 20.00% of those employed abroad. As many as 90.00% of the respondents said that their work abroad was manual, and only 17 of them were employed in professional occupations. The respondents with good language skills ( $p = 0.002$ ) claimed to have work matching their education, however, it did not matter whether they had a university diploma or not ( $p = 0.616$ ).

An analysis of the data collected from answers to a question about whether work done abroad was satisfying may lead to some interesting conclusions; though the respondents worked manually more often when employed abroad than during their employment in Poland (a 20% increase of pre-migration to in-migration phase), young Poles were much more satisfied with their jobs. Actually, a reverse trend can be noticed in comparison with the pre-migration circumstances. Every third respondent said to be definitely more satisfied with work done abroad, and over a half of the respondents declared they had been rather satisfied, while as few as every tenth described his/her employment situation as unsatisfactory.

Interestingly, though during their migration period migrants took up less prestigious jobs that mismatched their education – manual work for which they were overeducated, they still found the job performed in that time more satisfactory (regardless of education they received).

According to the respondents, high earnings were the main reason why they felt satisfied with their work abroad, mitigating hardships caused by hard work. Another important comparative factor was the occupational situation in Poland vs. abroad. At times, the respondents found good atmosphere at work and good relations with the employer to be considerably important. The respondents often mention a relation between their education (usually higher education) and the occupation they worked in while abroad. Many of the respondents and readers of blogs and forums shared a feeling that their occupations did not match their education. However, they tended to stifle or rationalize a resulting cognitive dissonance with high earnings (that allowed them to enjoy unrestrained consumption) and good relations at work (as compared with the ones they had experienced in Poland). The respondents were observed to apply denial or rationalization mechanisms in some of their statements. Basically, all respondents mentioned a high satisfaction from their

jobs abroad, regardless of their education level ( $p = 0.662$ ), gender ( $p = 0.107$ ), type of occupation ( $p = 0.306$ ) or relation to their education ( $p = 0.236$ ). Despite that, those respondents who asserted that their occupations abroad were matched with their education (i.e. usually, vocational school graduates) were slightly more satisfied with their work. Gender of the respondents did not affect their satisfaction levels, as demonstrated above. Both university and vocational school graduates reported high satisfaction with their profession. This is surprising, because while people with vocational education who more often worked in the profession they learned in Poland (e.g. bricklayers) have nothing to complain about, a high level of satisfaction with taking up work with low qualifications is reported by people with high qualifications. Educated people (in principle prepared during their studies for a job requiring high qualifications) may surprise. They do not report clearly the feeling of a cognitive dissonance from the relationship between the (higher) education and the physical work that is incompatible with it. The fact that master's degree holders are also satisfied with low-skilled jobs during their stay abroad (which for these respondents meant manual jobs that mismatched their education) is thought provoking. This phenomenon has been discussed in the context of education and migration; Okólski noted that "unlike Americans, Japanese, or French, Polish migrants tend to look for low-skilled jobs even when holding a university diploma. They mainly find employment in hotel, catering, construction, food processing industries" (Okólski, 2006, pp. 84–85). Thus, the notions of brain waste or skill depreciation (i.e. working in occupations mismatching one's education and, in the majority of cases, requiring no special skills) – describe the situation more accurately than brain drain (Okólski, 2006). The industries where migrants typically found employment were named 3D (for "dirty, dull, dangerous") industries. The satisfaction levels depended largely on prior expectations a person had about his/her migration and the actual situation they encountered on arrival. More satisfied ( $p = 0.000$ ) with work were these respondents who were pleasantly surprised with migration and for whom the migratory experience turned out better than expected. It is likely that they assumed and prepared themselves for manual work that would be below their skill and education levels before they left abroad.

It is difficult to definitely assess occupational experiences of migrants, the impact these experiences had on vocational lives of migrants after their

returns, or more broadly – on structuring subsequent stages of their vocational biographies. An assessment is difficult because some of the surveyed respondents managed to adapt to the new conditions in Poland after return, while some of them had stayed in Poland for only about six months or less before the interview (with an average time spent looking for jobs of 7.5 months in the research sample). After returning home, 120 (67.00%) respondents found jobs. Slightly more than half of those employed asserted that their work matched their education. This indicator wasn't that high either before or during the migration period. In most cases, they worked in professional jobs (60.00%). As many as 40.00% of the employees say they work in manual occupations, declaring at the same time that this matches their education.

Some respondents could claim that their situation improved compared to the one before migration because their earnings and savings allowed them to look longer for a suitable job. Thus, equipped with the declared potential, i.e. self-confident, responsible, open to the world and people, determined to reach their goals, and with a sense of agency, they were more successful in finding a job that matched their expectations. This improved their occupational and, consequently, economic position. Their stay abroad increased other non-economic individual resources, i.e. they were able to effectively look for work or create own workplace in Poland.

It should be noted that in the diagnosed sample, the highest number of the unemployed was reported after return to Poland, and that returning migrants most often reported feeling anxious about finding a job. As mentioned, the respondents were mostly concerned of their occupational situation. They worried whether they were going to find a job and be able to maintain the current standard of living. They were anxious that they "might be paid less, worried about employer's approach towards employees, the speed of life and pursuit of wealth" (K.22/2011). Another respondent reports "what I feared most was that I would end up unemployed, feeling useless. I had some plans – I wanted to set up my own business, but I wasn't sure if I could manage in the Polish reality. I was terrified of returning to this sad country where people in the street hardly smile to each other" (K.67/2011). The respondents were also unsure about their educational prospects ("Will I get to university?") and worried about a rate at which their foreign currency savings were disappearing in Poland. They were afraid of reliving the financial difficulties

experienced before leaving abroad. “What I feared most was that I would not be able to provide for my family and myself with Polish wages. That we would not be able to afford comfortable life, like buying clothes, car, paying instalments” (K.80/2012), etc. The respondents feared a life “[...] from the first [day of a month] to the first [day of the next month] [...]” (M.97/2012).

As mentioned above, respondents from the research sample were looking for a job for an average of 7.5 months. Only every tenth respondent who worked after returning to Poland said that finding a job was not a problem, and that they found a job immediately on their return. From the presented research sample, 15% decided to set up as sole traders and they were the ones who most often claimed that finding a job was not difficult for them. Own business and self-employment activities were part of their migration plan that they devised once they decided to return.

Returning migrants may face difficulties in re-establishing themselves in the Polish labour market due to the following three types of traps. “A Repeat Cultural Difference Trap” (Gmaj & Małek, 2010, pp. 115–116). Living and having paid work abroad change people’s perceptions of their home labour market. The main reason is that a Polish migrant learnt while living abroad that “work is for people, and not the other way round” (K.67/2011). Additionally, there were other differences unrelated to the labour market but emerging in everyday life [Polish frustration] (Gmaj & Małek, 2010, pp. 115–161).

The next snare can be called “A Different Pay Standards Trap”. After living and earning money in high developed countries, Returner Poles may face problems with finding a job as their pay expectations are too high compared to what Polish employers are able to offer - if a “spoiled” migrant fails to adjust to the Polish reality, they must accept that seeking a job might take a bit longer. A majority of the respondents find a resulting collision with the Polish labour market reality quite painful, but finally they accept the situation and take a job. (Gmaj & Małek, 2010, p. 153).

The third one is “a Polish CV Gap Trap”. Research on the post-accession migration of Poles shows that migrants were mainly young, often well-educated university graduates without any occupational experience. On return home, they fall into a trap associated with a gap in their Polish CVs. Polish employers may not always find the migration experience attractive, usually because migrants take “typically migrant jobs” (Gmaj & Małek, 2010, pp. 153–157). These

circumstances are particularly difficult to university diploma holders who took 3D jobs while living abroad and become more interested in high-skilled jobs matching their interests and education after coming back home. Returning migrants are afraid about whether due to the CV gap trap potential employers will appreciate their migration experience. The present authors also found by empirical methods that some Poles returning to Poland are well aware of gaps in their Polish CVs. Though an overwhelming majority worked abroad, they worked in occupations they found unattractive or shameful.

Knowing the widely held or even stereotypical opinions about jobs taken by migrants, the respondents feared that potential employers might underrate their experience, as it is difficult to recognize values of “an employee who did dishes and now (on return) wants to be Mr Big” (K.12/2011).

### **Instead of discussion. Transnational career guidance as support in capitalizing on migration experience**

Accepting spatial mobility in its international dimension by taking up a challenge of migration and return home are key decisive moments in a career development. For this reason, Transnational Vocational Counselling (Bańka, 2006) (TVC – Transnational Vocational Counselling), focused on career guidance across borders and cultures, is so important. It is addressed to people whose educational and occupational paths run, in many dimensions, outside their homeland or across borders (e.g. either through direct or virtual contact with employees or employers abroad). Poland witnesses a very dynamic growth of work-related migration. Though the selected research results sketched merely few emerging trends, they nevertheless identified the key areas in which transnational career guidance is needed.

Career guidance should mainly:

- Educate young people to practically adapt to permanent transformations of social and economic reality and accept changes in their vocational lives, such as episodes of career discontinuation, occupational, spatial and social mobility;
- Teach openness to diversity and multiculturalism, promote independent thinking about a potential to develop one's personal and/or vocational life outside the country of one's origin;

- Assist young people in taking a decision to migrate for work, which may involve a diagnosis of the actual potential and opportunities of a young person in the local and foreign labour markets, identification of actual reasons for migration, balancing pros and cons for the migration scenario;
- Assist young people in flexible planning of their careers based on their migration experiences that may contribute to their career development (even if a job is below their skill levels they still may improve their language and social skills, learn about teamwork, how to get on with life, be courageous, increase self-awareness and self-evaluation provided that to attain these qualities they have optimized time and resources);
- Assist young people in obtaining adequate information on cultural and social (as well as occupational) characteristics of the place of destination where they intend to take jobs to mitigate potential problems and difficulties that may arise in a multicultural environment;
- Assist migrants in identification and acquisition of competencies required for successful employment abroad;
- Assist migrants in increasing trust in their own occupational potential (enabling proper recognition of skills and potential) and encourage them to seek adequate and matching employment;
- Support migrants emotionally and by providing adequate tools and information in adjusting to a new environment, support in on-going activities in a foreign labour market (informing on the types of skills needed in the market, arranging application papers abroad, assisting or mediating in arranging legal and employment-related formalities, social benefits, etc. in the employment process, etc.), encourage people to make effort to improve their skills and careers;
- Assist migrants who return home in using their experience gained abroad to build future satisfactory careers, identify occupational and practical competencies acquired by migrant and the ways of using them in career development to prevent undesired effects, such as a CV trap (gaps in CVs of returning migrants);
- Provide information and expertise on how to practically complete subsequent occupational projects, e.g. to recognize the demand of the local market, arrange self-employment, use flexible employment forms;

- Encourage and motivate returning migrants to take or continue education, also by using their experience gained abroad;
- Assist individuals in adding their occupational activity, as a component of sustainable individual development, to their lifelong activity to ensure Work-Life Balance (WLB);
- Assist individuals in responding to subsequent work-related challenges (taking account of subsequent migration episodes) and including migration work projects in their careers.

Defined broadly, career guidance needs, on the one hand, to launch a training programme for career counsellors that has regard to the specifics of the transnational labour market and requirements of people that, for a variety of reasons (that may be but do not have to be strictly economic), decide to migrate for money, and on the other hand, requires massive efforts to launch a transnational network for career support and counselling and increase mobility of career counsellors themselves.

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