



INDIA-EU MIGRATION GOVERNANCE: REGULAR MIGRATION AND WELL-MANAGED MOBILITY

INTRODUCTION

With **7.6 percent of all Indian migrants** living in the EU¹, India and the EU share a comprehensive and complex migration relationship. India is a country of source for **high-skilled** migrants as well as **low-skilled** migrants. It is estimated that between 2016 and 2030, **4 in 5 new job openings in the EU** will relate to **high-skilled** occupations, with nearly **12 million** new jobs for Business and Administration Associate professionals. India is projected to possess a **surplus of 245 million** high-skilled workers by **2030**, placing it in a position to plug a large portion of the **skilled worker gap** expected to arise in the EU². Moreover, **8.7 million jobs in the 'low-skilled category'** are expected to become available in the EU by 2030³, indicating that mobility of **low skilled** workers between India and the EU could also be explored in the coming decade.

Students' mobility is another significant channel which, when managed well, will **benefit workforce and research** in both India and the EU. The number of Indian students and researchers in the EU has **increased** steadily, with over **50,000 currently in the EU**. Research has identified **financial feasibility** and **employment**



1. India Migration Profile, European Commission. All data cited in this brief relates to EU-28 as the brief refers to research studies and data sets available till 2019. The UK exited the EU in January 2020, with resulting data implications for Indian migrant statistics in EU-27.
2. Korn Ferry FOCUS Study
3. Skills Forecast: Key EU Trends to 2030 (EU Skills Panorama).



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prospects as the major driving forces for Indian students in Europe⁴. **Balancing** the concerns of Indian students with **long-term workforce requirements** of the EU will help ensure that the benefits of migration accrue for all. **Bilateral** flows of researchers, academics and students will also **boost knowledge networks**, with programs such as **Erasmus+** in Europe and the **Scheme for the Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration** in India benefiting both partners.

In the context of this growing need to manage regular migration and mobility, the **India-EU Migration Governance Seminar** was held under the framework of the **India-EU Common Agenda on Migration and Mobility**, an international cooperation policy framework, which aims to better organise and **promote** migration at relevant **skill levels** and foster **well-managed mobility**, including **enhanced issuance of visas**.

BEST PRACTICES

The **Erasmus program** offers **nearly 500 scholarships**, and allows for credit mobility, Joint Masters, **capacity building within universities** and **inter-university cooperation**. Similarly, 130 Indian institutions offer foreign students 'study abroad' options and **2500 scholarships** are available. The **Global Initiative for Academic Networks (GIAN) Program** also **promotes foreign faculty visits** and **work opportunities in India**.

The **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship** and **National Skills Development Corporation** collaborates with Japan on the Indo Japan Apprenticeship Programme. It involves the **panelment of organisations**, **language training**, and bridging the **gap** between **skills and demand** for them to **mutually benefit** both countries and their workers. Such initiatives between **India** and **the EU** could **build robust skills ecosystems**.

4. Migration Policy Centre: India-EU Student Mobility

The **key insights** and **recommendations** from the summary are presented below.

KEY INSIGHTS

- The EU **Intra-Corporate Transfer (ICT) Directive**, which allows **corporate employees** in the EU to stay and work in EU Member States (MS) must be effectively implemented. Other policy directives for legal migration, such as the EU Directive for **Students and Researchers** and reform of the EU **Blue Card** must be prioritized.
- Facilitating the **mobility of students** is paramount. This will help enrich the **research** ecosystem and balance students' mobility from a skill and employment perspective.
- A system for the mutual recognition of **qualifications** and **skills** needs to be established. Lessons may be drawn from the **European Qualification System**, which **standardizes** skills.
- EU **work visas** must lower **limitations** on **intra- EU mobility**, some of which arise due to differing work **visa policies** at the **national** level. **Extension** of visa duration and **enhancement** of intra- EU mobility are crucial to enhance **structured** India- EU work migration movements.
- Effective implementation of social security agreements between India and EU MS is imperative



POLICY ENVIRONMENT AND COVERAGE

Fine-tuning of the EU's migration policy for the labour market and creating a **uniform policy** for highly- skilled and skilled workers.

Alignment of qualifications, including language training and mutual recognition mechanisms and collaboration in apprenticeships should be explored; Post study employment and stay needs to be more flexible. Initial acquisition of professional experience through internships, apprenticeship and cooperation opportunities with industry could be a starting point

Pilot projects that focus on offering legal channels to medium/low-skilled workers should be explored.

Social Security Agreements for migrants need to be effectively administered to address the issues of double coverage of payment, totalisation and portability. Grievance portals should be established in this regard

A review of existing visa and residence schemes to address the needs of the start-up ecosystem on both sides is essential; brainstorm innovative visa schemes



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

INFORMATION

Information dissemination on academic channels and scholarships for both EU and Indian students needs to be spread. Both the EU and India have extensive scholarship and mobility options for foreign students (for example: the Erasmus+ program in the EU and scholarships offered by over 130 Indian universities to foreign students).



VISA AND RESIDENCY PROCESSES

A **new Visa Code**, effective 1st February 2020, will **balance visa application processing** with a country's cooperation on return and readmission of irregular migrants.

A **new Blue Card Initiative** (to be finalised), with **fast-track processing** and **enhanced labour market access** and **intra-EU mobility**, for better mobility of highly skilled migrants.

Harmonise rules across sectors and companies for the Intra-Corporate Directive in order to **promote stability and predictability** for corporate employee mobility.

Longer duration of visa for high-skilled workers, especially Information Technology workers, and their requirement of intra-EU mobility needs to be addressed





INDIA-EU MIGRATION GOVERNANCE: MAXIMIZING THE DEVELOPMENT IMPACT OF MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

INTRODUCTION

Mobility Overview: India is the **world's largest source country** for migration (17.5 million emigrants¹) and the EU, **the world's largest destination region**. Migration in the India-EU context **spans a number of sectors including science, technology, research, agriculture, agro-business, services, and education** and is **expected to increase** in the coming decades. While manufacturing, dairy, and agriculture dominate migration streams to EU MS such as Italy, information technology and services prevail in Germany and the Netherlands. Among the Indian diaspora, 20% of total Indian payment agents are women who have built sophisticated financial companies and are active in trade, thereby boosting bilateral relations significantly.

Development Impact Overview: Migration has **extensive development impact** on both host and origin countries. The Indian diaspora contributes an estimated **2.9 % of the country's GDP**. **Social, human, and cultural transfers** are also deemed critical in the development process. Immigrants from India also **positively impact the development process** in host countries. Ireland's **education, healthcare, and start-up** sectors have benefited from India immigration in recent times.



1. CEDEFOP Press Release, 10/2016.



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In Italy, **manufacturing, engineering, dairy,** and **agriculture** sectors have also seen extensive immigrant contribution. Furthermore, the diaspora **acts as a linkage** between host and origin societies, **boosting bilateral relations,** and partnering with policymakers to **better achieve development** outcomes such as the UN **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).**

Strengthening strategic diaspora engagement is key to **maximising the development impact of migration,** as outlined in the **India-EU Common Agenda on Migration and Mobility (CAMM).** Under this framework, the **Migration Governance Seminar** discussed the **key insights** and proposed **recommendations for maximising development impact** given below.

EMIGRANT INITIATIVES BY INDIA

MADAD is an online Consular Services Management System for helping emigrants and members of the Indian diaspora.

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is a biennial event focused on strengthening the engagement of overseas Indians with the GoI and reconnecting them with their roots.

Kshetriya Pravasi Bhartiya Sahayta Kendra (KPBSKs), disseminate information and guidance for potential emigrants including extending help to returning migrants.

KEY INSIGHTS

1. Recognising the critical potential of the diaspora in contributing to the **achievement of UN Sustainable Development Goals** in both countries of origin and destination, strategic **engagement with the diaspora is imperative** for building relations between countries of destination and origin.
2. Governments need to focus on **broadening institutional support** enabling **diaspora to become effective partners** in the process of development.





3. EU MS and India have **developed initiatives and programmes for supporting diaspora engagement**: these not only **address integration and progression** in the destination society but also protect rights and nurture ties with the country of origin.
4. There needs to be **co-development of tools for facilitation, re-integration, and retention** of diaspora groups as well as analysis of existing initiatives in these areas. It is important for origin countries to **consider alternative** engagements other than the permanent return of diaspora groups.



EU MEMBER STATES: GOOD PRACTICES FOR DIASPORA



Ireland has a program called '**Global Irish**' which provides **welfare services to vulnerable emigrants**, facilitates **outreach** to the diaspora. **Safe Home Ireland** is a non-governmental program that facilitates **return migration** and provides services to Irish emigrants looking to return home.



Poland has a system **promoting cultural ties** and protecting the **rights of Polish emigrants**. The country also **mentors Polish students** studying in foreign countries.



Georgia has started developing **Legal Migration Guidelines** for three important destination countries – **Greece, Italy, and Spain** in order to support the Georgian diaspora in these areas.



The **Netherlands**, an emerging **destination for Indian talent of medium and high skill workers**, has welcomed Indian immigrants, by **providing tax concessions** and **easier dependent rules**, thereby propelling industrial growth and strengthening migration patterns.



In **Italy**, regularisation initiatives **facilitating family** reunion of Indian migrants, primarily low-skilled, has been instrumental in promoting migration and mobility of workers and their households.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

POLICY ENVIRONMENT AND COVERAGE

Provide a **conducive environment for diaspora engagement** that will **strengthen the diaspora's ties** with India and enhance investment and policy development.

Regular assessment and profiling of the diaspora in the respective country for **targeted support and engagement programmes**.

Reconnect with well-established diaspora and enhance partnerships with migrants and diaspora through capacity building and empowerment of migrants' networks.

Enhance diaspora engagement through **tools assisting pre-departure, arrival, and during the stay, pre-return, and return**.

Provide **targeted support to potential students** through pre-departure orientation, **institutional partnerships with destination countries**, particularly for potential **students from disadvantaged regions** of India.

Facilitate inter-governmental and non-governmental partnerships to enhance diaspora engagement and aid the integration process.



INFORMATION

Knowledge exchange between the EU MS and India on areas such as **diaspora communication and engagement strategies, support to vulnerable communities, capacity building** of diaspora organisations and **return of talent**. The potential **role of diaspora in trade and investments** needs to be investigated and calls for research in future.



VISA AND RESIDENCY PROCESSES

Facilitate **job-orientation and gaining of work experience** for Indian students after graduation.





India-EU Common Agenda on Migration and Mobility



INDIA-EU MIGRATION GOVERNANCE: INITIATIVES TO PREVENT AND TACKLE IRREGULAR MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

INTRODUCTION

Irregular border crossings to the EU takes place through three main routes, Western Mediterranean, Central Mediterranean and Eastern Mediterranean and change rapidly. In 2018 the main route was the Western Mediterranean, whilst in 2019 it was along the Eastern Mediterranean. The number of overall irregular detections in the EU have been dropping in the last two years, but attention needs to remain high, as this remain a significant problem, often involving smuggling services provided by criminal organisations. In 2018, 135 nationalities were detected using fraudulent documents upon entry in to the EU and Schengen Associated Country (SAC). In the same year, 8,490 Indian nationals were found to be residing irregularly within the EU-27, 7,980 return decisions were issued to nationals believed to be of Indian origin, out of which 1,625 were returned (source: EUROSTAT).

Most irregular suspected migration from India is found to be from specific regions within the country (Punjab, Haryana, West Bengal) and mostly motivated by economic benefit or lured by unscrupulous recruiting agents (or sub-agents)., Some job seekers (low skill or unskilled people) have been found to opt for a tourist visa to migrate for employment purposes.

Preventing irregular migration and addressing smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings, as outlined in the **India-EU Common Agenda on Migration and Mobility (Camm)**, is a priority area for both India and the EU. Specifically, developing research in support of policy recommendations; collecting and exchanging information and statistics; addressing relevant policy gaps and implementation; and building capacity in border management in preventing irregular migration.



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Given this framework, the **Migration Governance Seminar** in 2019 – held in New Delhi – discussed prevention of irregular migration between EU and India. **Key insights** and proposed **recommendations** are listed below.

KEY INSIGHTS

1. An Emigration Check is required (from the office of Protector of Emigrants) for certain passport holders prior to their travelling for employment to 17 countries¹. Additionally, 12 officers are empowered at the national level in India to take penal actions against irregular agents. Similar measures could be taken to check India-EU irregular migration.
2. To combat irregular immigration and raise awareness about legal ways of migration, engagement and dissemination of information at the community level through local self-help groups, charity organisations and panchayat/village leaders is essential. Bringing the dialogue to colleges and skill training centres was also seen as vital.
3. Other steps which can be taken to tackle irregular migration include counsellor dialogue, biometric passports and prosecution of irregular agents.
4. EU is trying to develop a network of Immigration Liaison Officers (ILOs). According to the information provided by Member States 16 ILOs are deployed in India and could be instrumental in exchange of information on irregular migration from India, but also in supporting stakeholders (e.g. commercial carriers and Indian authorities) in tackling irregular migration in all its aspects (e.g. documentary fraud).
5. Challenges experienced in handling irregular migration included lack of effective action against unauthorised recruiting agencies, mismatch of promised versus paid wages, dispute between the employer and the employee upon the enforcement of agreement; claiming compensation amount for death of the emigrant and injuries sustained in the work place. The process of returning migrants also involves re-inclusion or reincorporation of a person into his or her own culture, family and society, and often such reintegration is not seamless.



1. <https://www.mea.gov.in/emigration-clearance-system.htm>

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA INITIATIVES

A program named '**Surakshit Jayein, Prashikshit Jayein**' (Go Trained and Go Safe).

Pravasi Bharatiya Sahayata Kendra (PBSK), which provides 24x7 assistance and counselling facilities to prospective emigrants.

Nationality Verification Portal has been set up, 11,386 cases have been referred so far, of which 9,201 have been verified, 229 are in process and 1,102 cases are pending. The strike rate of verification is 81%.

EU POLICY FRAMEWORK ON IRREGULAR MIGRATION

EU adopted an Agenda on Migration in 2015 and amongst many of its objectives are: saving lives at sea, targeting criminal smuggling networks, relocation and resettlement of asylum seekers, working in partnership with key countries outside EU and helping front-line members states.

To better manage migration, there is a need to address its root causes, combat smuggling and initiate more effective returns, reinforce border management and stronger asylum system. EU Action Plan against Migrant Smuggling (2015-2020) aims to prevent and combat exploitation of migrants by criminal networks, through a multi-disciplinary approach and building stronger investigation capacity and prosecution, investigation exchange of information and intelligence, enhanced prevention of smuggling and assistance and stronger cooperation with partner countries.

Deployment of Immigration liaison Officers from Member States, Commission and EU agencies, improving exchange of information, building cooperation networks and are some of the steps taken to foster stronger cooperation with partner countries. An EU Return Liaison Officer was also in place from 2018-2019 to improve European cooperation in return matters by posting return liaison officers in strategically important countries as well as by using existing networks.

Return of irregular migrants found is an integral part of the EU Migration Policy. As a reflection of the critical importance of return and readmission in EU policy, the new Visa Code entered into force in February 2020 establishes a link between cooperation on readmission by third countries and visa issuance for their nationals.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

1. To combat irregular immigration and raise awareness about legal ways of migration, engagement at the community level with local self-help groups, charity organisations and panchayat/village leaders is essential.
2. Seminars in India and EU Member States (engaging diaspora communities) were encouraged to increase awareness building about visa types, avoiding the use of fraudulent agents, educating about the realities of life in the EU as an irregular migrant.
3. Strengthen cooperation of the local network of immigration liaison officers in order to facilitate exchange of information, transmission of information to EU and common initiatives on the ground.
4. Some initiatives taken at the state level to reduce irregular migration were highlighted: short films made to raise awareness on regular and safe migration, conducting awareness workshops, booklets and leaflets.
5. Understanding the perspective of the migrant – economic, social and emotional, will help protect the migrant from being exploited.
6. To prevent irregularity, safe migration practices through ethical recruitment checks needs to be created at the community level in conjunction with private sector. Pre-departure orientation is also a helpful practice. Capacity building at the provincial level, mainstreaming of welfare schemes are some of the other means to support prevention of irregularity.

INFORMATION

An experience of re-integration of Indians from Europe was presented conducting awareness campaigns against unsafe migration, advocacy with local self-help groups and panchayat/village leaders in Punjab. This was supported by Dutch Ministry of Justice and Safety. Progress was monitored by working groups consisting of British High Commission and an EU Liaison Officer.

Though figures of return migrants are not high and most have returned voluntarily, good practices of return and reintegration need to be established to assist others who are irregularly staying in Europe to return. Apart from Punjab some other states like Gujarat, Haryana and West Bengal are also recording returnees and have been reintegrated.