



Project Part financed by the European Union

## **PROJECT 'IMMENSITY'**

**Ref. No. 5D016**

# **IMMIGRANT'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC COHESION AND IMPROVEMENT OF LIVING STANDARDS**

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<b>Work Package 5:</b>	<b>Evaluation of the Project – Formulation of Plans for Immigrants' Return – Follow-up Plan</b>
<b><u>Action 5.1:</u></b>	<b>Formulation of Plan for the Return of Economic Migrants to their countries of origin Slovakia</b>
<b><u>Deliverable 5.1.1.:</u></b>	<b>Plan for the Return of Economic Migrants to their countries of origin SLOVAKIA</b>

Version:	<b>Final 1.2</b>	Date: <b>29/12/2007</b>
Type:	<b>Report</b>	
Availability:	Confidential	
Responsible Partner:	Agency for the support of Regional Development Kosice	
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**Part 1:**  
**IDENTIFICATION SHEET**

## Part 1: IDENTIFICATION SHEET

<b>Ref. No</b>	<b>5D016</b>
<b>Project acronym</b>	<b>IMMENSITY</b>
<b>Project full title</b>	<b>Immigrant's Entrepreneurship for Socio-Economic Cohesion and Improvement of Living Standards</b>

[Please fill in the yellow-colored fields]

<b>Security (distribution level)</b>	Confidential
<b>Date of delivery</b>	29/12/2007
<b>Deliverable number</b>	5.1.1
<b>Type</b>	Report
<b>Status &amp; version</b>	Final 1.2.
<b>Number of pages</b>	[...]
<b>Work Package contributing to the deliverable</b>	Work Package 5
<b>Action Responsible Partner</b>	Kosice Region
<b>Other Contributors</b>	-
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<b>Keywords</b>	Returns, migrants, immigration, entrepreneurship, plans, economy,
<b>Abstract (for dissemination)</b>	The document deals with the migration trends, situation and opportunities for voluntary returns of economic immigrants to Slovakia and conditions for entrepreneurship and bilateral trade with countries of origins of the economic migrants. The document tries to map the labour market and opportunities for self-employment of the economic immigrants as well. Due to the specific position of Slovakia the document focus on Slovak labour market and desired migration as well.

**Part 2:**  
**RETURN PLAN FOR ECONOMIC MIGRANTS**

## Part 2: RETURN PLAN FOR ECONOMIC MIGRANTS

### 2.1 PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

*Please describe the setting of your pilot structure for economic migrants established in the framework of the IMMENSITY project. The design of the IMMENSITY project aims at supporting the socio-economic integration of migrants and the improvement of their living standards by providing assistance to become entrepreneurs and self-employers. Please explain IMMENSITY's aims to improve the conditions in the countries of origin as well by facilitating bilateral trade and through the return of economic migrants' resources.*

"The **overall objective** of the project IMMENSITY is to develop regional strategic operational plans and pilot structures (immigrant entrepreneurs' reception offices) in every participating host region. The Kosice Regional selfgovernment through its development Agency established an Immigrant Entrepreneurs Reception Office within its office facilities in order to boost the target groups' entrepreneurship/self-employment in growing economic sectors by promoting and supporting bilateral trade, thus ensuring their socio-economic inclusion in the region. The project's long-term objective is **the return of economic immigrants to origin countries**. Focus will be on:

- The development of the immigrants' and repatriates' entrepreneurship/self-employment potential through pilot structures providing online/offline services, e.g. information, consultation, training and business mentoring in Kosice Region. This service will be provided through on-line information provision (Immensity portal that will be kept regularly upgraded in order to provide up to date information and valuable data for clients – economic immigrants.
- The IERO Office within the Agency will put at disposal of economic immigrants necessary equipment and work space in order to enable the use of the on-line services and available personal consultancy. The Agency's staff will provide consultancy on entrepreneurship and local/regional business environment.
- The promotion of bilateral trade between countries of origin and receiving regions as a way to improve quality of life in origin countries will be facilitated through distant assessment of business environment of the origin countries and external assessment of possible and plausible trade affairs.
- **The carefully planned return of immigrants to their origin countries and the development and possible re-establishment of their businesses in their homelands."**

The secondary purpose of the plan is to provide the economic immigrants necessary information and knowledge on available education and training in the region in order to achieve skills and abilities to start their own business or enter into job.

As one of the most significant barrier of successful integration into Slovak society is the lack of language skills and cultural differences, the offered and assisted education and training can be a very first step towards the self reliance and self dependence development of the economic migrants.

The current trends in organized labor migration clearly shows that an increasing number of developing countries and countries with transition economies seek to adopt policies, legislation and structures which promote foreign employment for their workplace and generate remittances, while providing safeguards to protect migrants.<sup>1</sup> Due to the ageing and regional migration the Slovak economy similarly like the other rapidly developing economies in Europe needs specific labor force. The organized labor migration is still in its very early stage in Slovakia. There is a growing need to optimize the benefits of organized labor migration.

The third purpose of the plan is to identify barriers that prevent the region and the Agency to deal with the relevant authorities of the countries of origin of the economic immigrants in order to facilitate business and entrepreneurship development.

## 2.2 SCOPE OF THE PLAN

*Describe the target group for whom the return plans are to be formulated. Information for this section can be drawn from the "Existing Situation Analysis" which the project partners have already undertaken in the course of the implementation of IMMENSITY. Please refer also to the current status of the migrants and the legislation which determine this status. Describe the geographical coverage for which the return plans are to be formulated: your region and the CADSES area.*

Target groups :

A) Institutions affected/informed about the return plan

### **Self-government regions:**

Kosice Self-governing region (KSK) is the founder of the Agency and it coordinates lots of projects for KSK. The relationships of the Agency towards the other self-governing regions are standard and some of these regions are involved in projects that are managed by Agency.

### **Central state bodies and other state bodies (Migration Office of the Ministry of Interior, Office of the Border and Foreign Police, labour offices):**

The Agency's relations with these stakeholders are formal – the Agency is the recipient of EU support managing by these institutions.

The Agency coordinates the activities, including various project activities, on the international, national, regional and local level in regard to all projects in which the Agency participated.

The representatives of the institutions mentioned above will be invited to all events within the IMMENSITY project. They will be also informed about the process of project's implementation, outputs and results.

### **Self-government associations (Association of Villages, Association of Towns and Villages of Slovakia):**

All these associations are partners of the Agency within the frame of different projects.

**Other organizations, especially NGOs (UNHCR Office in Slovakia, International Organization for Migration in Slovakia and its Migration Information Centre.** The Agency has no special relationships to them. The representatives of the institutions mentioned above will be invited to all events within the IMMENSITY project.

The preliminary, introductory communication and initial meetings with some of the above listed stakeholders revealed that the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Slovakia and its pilot structure – the (Migration Information Centre established in 2006 founded within the framework of a project financed the community initiative EQUAL in Slovakia (2 offices in capital Bratislava and Kosice) are the most suitable partners for a close co-operation with Immensity project. The IOM Office in Berlin is a project partner on trans-national level so the national office

seems to be the logical choice for local co-operation that proved to be the probably best conclusion from analysis and on-going discussions.

This tandem of co-operative partners will be backed by the local Labour Office, City Council and regional council offices and Border and Foreign Police Departments. Besides, NGOs and associations of migrants registered in Slovakia will be involved as well.

## B) Economic immigrants

The most of the economic immigrants in Slovakia are from the Czech Republic, Poland and Korea. In 2004 and 2006, amount of the foreigners have been generally increasing in more than 140 %. Slovakia is an attractive country mostly for the low qualified labour force. In 2006, there were registered 3491 illegal residences. It is 25% more than in 2004. There is an assumption that amount of this kind of migrants will increase even more and in 10 -20 years, Slovakia will be in stage , that population in the country will be lower. Because of this reason, there is a plan to attract labour force for which Slovak condition will be sufficient. This includes countries as e.g.: India, China, Pakistan....

The biggest number of economic immigrants in Kosice region is from neighbouring countries (Hungary, Ukraine, Czech Republic and Poland), however since 1990 there is a growing number of Chinese, Vietnamese and Palestinian or Albanian traders and shop keepers. Some of the mentioned communities are rather difficult to reach due to the restricted lifestyle and little integration effort into Slovak society.

## Current status of the migrants

### **Labour immigrants in the country – a problem of accurate statistics**

As regards *economic activities of immigrants in Slovakia, it is quite difficult to provide any reliable data*. As accentuated in Introduction, comprehensive surveys (statistical, academic or any others) pertaining to labor immigration have long been underestimated by respective institutions in the country and no vision of its future position and tasks in the country was ever discussed. In principle, no relevant strategy, conception, plan or any other document dealing with the impacts of labor immigration on society exist. The domain of labor immigration is thus in fact least addressed, analyzed and evaluated out of all immigration phenomena in Slovakia (Divinský, 2005a; Divinský, 2004; cf.

Kellenbergerová, 2006). This has been, unluckily for all migration actors and migrants themselves, a long-term situation though development proves that labour immigration is in the country as fundamental immigration component as in other countries. One of the cardinal problems resides in *complicated, insufficient, imprecise and often illogical statistics of (labor) immigration*. Also, the systems for issuing permits for/registering labor immigrants – kept separately by several essential State authorities – *are mutually little consistent and comparable*. As of the end of 2006, the Ministry of the Interior gave the following figures on the single groups of labor immigrants: persons employed explicitly = 1,453; those that can be included among the employed (lecturers, researchers, scientists, those active within the government programs or international agreements, other modalities of this kind) = 249 persons; then persons doing business = 1,661. *This makes in total 3,363 persons* (statistics of Office of Border and Alien Police). These individuals are labour immigrants *sensu stricto* and constitute an excessively low figure: 0.13% of overall EA population or *0.15% of the stock of employed persons in the country*.

However, as explained above, there are large groups of foreigners with a permanent stay permit who are allowed to work without a permit and no precise data on their economic activities are registered by the Ministry of the Interior – persons with “first permission” (2,081), persons with “next permission” (4,753), “citizens of the EEA” (7,708), refugees (88). On the basis of a deeper knowledge of the situation, it can be estimated that a greater part of them (over 50% in all modesty) is employed and/or doing business. There is also another numerous group of foreigners in the country in which the purpose of their stay is not specified in statistics at all (8,729 persons); analogically here we can count upon their 50% economic participation at minimum. The aggregate number of immigrant workers and entrepreneurs out of all latter categories of immigrants may thus form at least additional 11,6 thousand – *altogether with those registered about 15 thousand, i.e. 0.65% of all employed persons in the country*.<sup>45</sup>

The Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Family in Slovakia regularly offers data on officially employed foreigners registered by it. By these statistics, together *6,546 foreign residents were employed* (not doing business) in the territory of the country in 2006. This was either with work permits (1,156 persons, i.e. almost 18% of the total), or on the basis of work registrations-information cards (5,390 individuals, i.e. over 82%) – see Table 22. An upward trend in 2004-2006 is evident and, inter alia, confirms the acceleration of labor immigration to Slovakia since it has joined the European Union (statistics of Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Family). The overwhelming majority of employed foreigners in the country consisted of citizens of the EEA (almost 73%), of which the Czechs (17.6%), Poles (3.7%) and Britons (3.2%) led in 2006. Among the

non-EEA citizens (over 27% of the total) dominated notably the Ukrainians (6.2%), South Koreans (5.7%), Romanians (2.9%) and U.S. citizens (2.1%). Nevertheless, presented aggregate figures in Table 22 – i.e. 2,679; 5,497; and 6,546 employed persons in 2004, 2005 and 2006, respectively – seem to be extremely low. The employed foreigners thus form 0,10%, 0.21% and 0.25%, (respectively) of overall EA population or 0,12%, 0,25% and 0.28% (respectively) of all employed persons in the country in those years. There is no doubt that these values have to be rather underestimated with regard to the number of citizens as such residing in Slovakia (cf. already aforementioned 32,153 persons at the end of 2006 by statistics of Office of Border and Alien Police) and whose economic activity in the country is unquestionably higher. Under statistics of Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Family, *some parameters are observed* for the individual groups of labor immigrants (registered citizens of the EEA, registered non-EEA citizens, and non-EEA citizens with a work permit required) in the Slovak Republic. It is their sex structure, age structure, education structure, occupational structure, the expected duration of their employment and the branch structure of employers. According to corresponding data for 2006, persons aged 25-39 were the most numerous among the labor immigrants in Slovakia constituting over half the total; the ratio of men to women was 80% : 20%. As a whole, higher levels of education dominated among the employed foreign nationals in the country – those with secondary one comprised 48% and those having tertiary one formed 46% of the total number. University education prevailed among the nationals of the EEA conditioning their higher-skilled occupations and labor posts in Slovakia, while the secondary educational level was more typical of less skilled non- EEA citizens (as pointed out in other places of this chapter). By the anticipated length of employment as well as the duration of work permits it is obvious that most of the employed foreigners have planned to work in Slovakia from 7 to 12 months (43.5%), then over 12 months (42.6%). Shorter periods expected/planned have been relatively rare and there have not been differences between EEA and non-EEA citizens. The above demonstrated data apply to 2006 but the two preceding years do not show major dissimilarities in values of parameters, with the exception of the very last parameter – the duration of employment (either realized or intended). This was then most often longer than 12 months in all groups of labor immigrants.

Table 22 Number of officially registered foreigners employed in Slovakia in 2004-2006, as of the end of the year. In terms of foreign nationals doing business in the country, the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic (ŠÚ SR, 2006e; cf. Košta, 2006a) provided its own calculation of their number. According to it, *as of January 1st, 2005, the stock of foreign entrepreneurs in Slovakia reached 2,960 persons*. Out of this number, 1,111 persons (37.5%) came from the EU-25. By single countries of origin, the most numerous were quite expectedly entrepreneurs from the Czech Republic (20.0%), Vietnam (18.4%), Ukraine (18.3%), Poland

(6.0%), Serbia (5.4%) and Hungary (3.8%). Men outnumber women (72.4% to 27.6%); the age category 40-54 dominates (43.5%). Most of the foreign businessmen develop their activities in retail, wholesale, other trade services and the building industry; they live chiefly in Bratislava and the region of western Slovakia (ŠÚ SR, 2006e).

Summarizing, the estimated total number of *labor immigrants in the Slovak Republic in 2006 ranged approximately between 3 and 15-20 thousand persons; the higher figure is much more realistic and we recommend to use it for the next analyses and comparisons* (cf. figures in Divinský, 2005a; Drbohlav, 200546; Divinský, 2004; SME, 28.4.200647).

Country	Persons employed on the basis of						Altogether		
	work permits			information cards					
	2004	2005	2006	2004	2005	2006	2004	2005	2006
<b>EEA countries</b>									
Belgium	–	–	–	28	57	68	28	57	68
Cyprus	–	–	–	1	1	1	1	1	1
Czech Republic	–	–	–	512	943	1,150	512	943	1,150
Denmark	–	–	–	40	39	36	40	39	36
Estonia	–	–	–	1	1	1	1	1	1
Finland	–	–	–	1	2	7	1	2	7
France	–	–	–	166	936	745	166	936	745
Greece	–	–	–	4	13	20	4	13	20
The Netherlands	–	–	–	17	45	47	17	45	47
Ireland	–	–	–	16	23	38	16	23	38
Latvia	–	–	–	0	3	3	0	3	3
Lithuania	–	–	–	1	2	8	1	2	8
Luxembourg	–	–	–	0	0	0	0	0	0
Malta	–	–	–	0	1	1	0	1	1
Hungary	–	–	–	87	218	343	87	218	343
Germany	–	–	–	232	413	449	232	413	449
Poland	–	–	–	224	560	1,025	224	560	1,025
Portugal	–	–	–	1	9	10	1	9	10
Austria	–	–	–	110	169	241	110	169	241
Slovenia	–	–	–	16	21	20	16	21	20
Spain	–	–	–	26	161	126	26	161	126
Sweden	–	–	–	21	31	26	21	31	26
Italy	–	–	–	60	99	173	60	99	173
United Kingdom	–	–	–	127	178	225	127	178	225
Island	–	–	–	0	0	0	0	0	0
Liechtenstein	–	–	–	0	0	0	0	0	0
Norway	–	–	–	6	6	5	6	6	5
Switzerland	–	–	–	0	5	4	0	5	4
<b>In total</b>	–	–	–	<b>1,697</b>	<b>3,936</b>	<b>4,772</b>	<b>1,697</b>	<b>3,936</b>	<b>4,772</b>

non-EEA countries									
Australia	7	65	33	0	1	2	7	66	35
Belarus	8	8	11	0	3	3	8	11	14
Bosnia & Herzeg.	4	14	13	0	0	2	4	14	15
Brazil	5	8	18	1	1	3	6	9	21
Bulgaria	18	58	63	8	10	14	26	68	77
Canada	21	21	10	2	4	8	23	25	18
China	22	109	32	0	2	8	22	111	40
Croatia	24	27	17	3	12	17	27	39	34
India	33	21	11	1	2	5	34	23	16
Indonesia	0	17	21	0	0	1	0	17	22
Japan	28	30	17	6	6	7	34	36	24
Malaysia	9	6	9	6	8	4	15	14	13
Moldova	5	1	14	0	4	4	5	5	18
Romania	29	102	99	17	58	89	46	160	188
Russia	43	32	37	7	20	39	50	52	76
South Korea	49	79	237	37	71	137	86	150	374
Serbia/Yugoslavia	12	16	12	0	8	28	12	24	40
Turkey	14	8	11	1	6	13	15	14	24
Ukraine	295	374	290	30	74	119	325	448	409
U.S.A.	152	148	77	5	17	59	157	165	136
Vietnam	0	1	46	0	4	5	0	5	51
Other countries	69	80	78	11	25	51	80	105	129
<b>In total</b>	<b>847</b>	<b>1,225</b>	<b>1,156</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>618</b>	<b>982</b>	<b>1,561</b>	<b>1,774</b>
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>847</b>	<b>1,225</b>	<b>1,156</b>	<b>1,832</b>	<b>4,272</b>	<b>5,390</b>	<b>2,679</b>	<b>5,497</b>	<b>6,546</b>

Source: statistics of Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Family

#### b) Geographical coverage

In the framework of the INTERREG IIIB CADSES project IMMENSITY five project partners are representing regions where the pilot structures will be established which will offer support and counseling to migrants who wish to become entrepreneurs and self-employed. As part of the IMMENSITY project the very same regions will formulate return plans for economic migrants.

CADSES (Central, Adriatic, Danubian and South-Eastern European Space) is addressing trans-european cooperation on a transnational level and aims at achieving higher territorial and economic integration within the co-operation area, promoting more balanced and harmonious development of the European space. The CADSES Programme is, among the 13 transnational co-operation areas in Europe, the largest and most complex area. From the coasts of the Baltic Sea, through the mountains of the Central Europe and the Hungarian plains, through the Austrian and Slovenian alpine landscapes, CADSES stretches down to western Italy and Greece, thus

grouping the Balkan regions, including Moldova and part of Ukraine. The CADSES area comprises regions belonging to [18 countries](#): 9 of them are EU-Member States (Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Slovak Republic and Slovenia) and 9 are Non-EU-Member states (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Federation of Serbia and Montenegro, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Republic of Moldova, Romania and Ukraine).

The highly skilled immigrants in Slovakia are thus only little able to fill the gap caused by educated Slovaks leaving the country. Not positively is also regarded *stagnation in the number/proportion of enrolled foreign students in Slovakia*, part of which could remain to live and work in the country. From the absolute aspect, the number of foreign students is the lowest (after Iceland) among the OECD countries, and the share of them in the entire stock of students in the country is the 4th lowest (after South Korea, Poland and Turkey) (OECD, 2006d). The number of enrolled students from abroad in the country has stagnated from mid-1990's ranging between 1,400 and 1,700 individuals (Divinský, 2005a; cf. Eurostat on-line data). Foreign students form *only 1% of all students* in the country annually, which is an extremely low figure from the international viewpoint (OECD, 2006d; OECD, 2006a; TREND, 15.6.2006). From a long-term perspective, Slovakia is favorite especially among the students from the Czech Republic (over ¼ of the total foreign students in Slovakia), then Serbia, Israel, Ukraine, Romania; in the recent years those from Norway and Greece have also remarkably increased in number.<sup>82</sup> The data by Eurostat are similar. As of 2004 (the latest date), the number of enrolled foreign students in Slovakia reached the 6th lowest absolute value within the European Union, but proportionally – to the number of inhabitants – it was the 3rd lowest share in the EU after Lithuania and Poland (Eurostat on-line data). Hence, it is understandable that the number of students who may possibly remain in Slovakia after completing their study cannot be – in contrast to some other EU States – a significant factor contributing to brain gain in the country.

## 2.3 RETURN MODEL(S)

*Please describe which return model you consider most appropriate for the target group which consists of the beneficiaries of the IMMENSITY project. The IMMENSITY project aims also to support the development of countries of origin by promoting bilateral trade and facilitating the return of migrant's resources. Please outline how these resources can be used within the context of your return plan in order to ensure a sustainable return and/or circular migration movement which contributes mutually to the development of countries of origin as well as the host country.*

### a) Voluntary return

Due to the fact that Slovakia is being a transition country the voluntary return is scarce and limited. As voluntary return is based on a decision freely taken by the individual in the country there must be implemented a scheme that enables this. A voluntary return decision embraces two elements: freedom of choice, which is defined by the absence of any physical, psychological or material pressure; and an informed decision which requires having enough accurate and objective information available upon which to base the decision. The last one precondition is not developed neither enforced throughout the country. There are established support schemes for returns of refugees and assisted returns of illegal immigrants but not for the returns of economic immigrants yet. This lack of the service results from the current needs of the country and attitude and awareness of relevant authorities and stakeholders.

With regard to the duration and specification of the migration pattern in Slovakia the so called circular model of migration would fit to the Slovak circumstances. It can be distinguished between different categories:

- Permanent return
- Temporary return:
  - Seasonal migration between host country and country of origin with stays of less than a year's duration
  - Temporary migration: stays in host countries exceeding a year
  - Repetitive migration: the same individual crosses the border more than once over the time

Repetitive migration, whether seasonal or temporary, is called circular (pls. refer to c) Circular Migration in the text below).

With their return men and women migrant workers can contribute to the development in countries of origin. Successful development can be an incentive for return, and in turn return often helps spur development. The challenge for policymakers is to design interventions that can jump-start this 'virtuous cycle'. Governments of countries of destination and origin may sponsor initiatives to make return, whether on a temporary or permanent basis, more appealing to migrants with the skills needed for development.

**Sustainable return policies** should also be based on **gender analysis**: are women interested in the same return opportunities as men? Are there gender differences in sectors attracting or needing returning men and women? How to take account of the changed socio-economic roles of women who have worked abroad? And how to avoid potential brain or skill waste when women return?

#### c) Circular Migration

In the framework of its "Global Approach to Migration", the EC has published in May 2007 a package of communications and draft legislation consisting of i) a communication on circular migration and mobility partnerships between the EU and 3<sup>rd</sup> countries, ii) a communication on the application of the Global Approach to migration to the Eastern and South Eastern regions neighbouring the EU, and iii) a draft directive providing for sanctions against employers of illegally staying third country nationals. These initiatives form part of the ongoing development of the comprehensive European migration policy, as highlighted in the European Council's conclusions of December 2005 and December 2006 and the Commission's communication on 'the Global Approach to migration one year on'. This policy was initiated at the Tampere European Council in 1999.

The communication on circular migration and mobility partnerships between the EU and 3<sup>rd</sup> countries proposes two main types of circular migration:

- Circular migration of persons residing in a third country
- Circular migration of third country nationals settled in the EU (relevant for IMMENSITY beneficiaries).

The latter category covers just some selected groups of highly skilled migrants such as business persons, doctors and professors wishing to start an activity in their country of origin. For migrants that have returned, the EC also proposes to ensure circularity by giving them the possibility to retain some form of privileged mobility to and from the EU member states where they were formerly residing, for example options for re-entry (dual citizenship, permit to stay, work permit), portability of social welfare (pensions, health insurance). These elements are particularly important for low-skilled workers, but are advantageous to migrants at all skill levels, giving them more flexibility to tailor their migration experience to their particular needs and preferences.

Countries of origin and destination may cooperate to set up networks and databases designed to connect expatriates with projects, jobs and other opportunities. Portable benefits, such as pensions and health insurance, may also facilitate mobility; again these require careful inter-governmental planning and negotiation.

The new path on circular migration calls for action to be taken by both countries of origin and destination in close cooperation. Receiving countries can create more flexible and profitable immigration schemes that encourage people to move back and forth with greater ease. Countries of origin can work on increasing their institutional capacities to manage circular migration and benefiting from it. In both of these endeavours, receiving countries may find it in their own interest to offer technical and financial assistance.

## 2.4 RETURN SUPPORT

*Please identify existing structures which provide return counseling to migrants that want to return to their home countries. Please describe the type of information offered (tailored, country specific, migrant specific). Please find out, whether it is possible to provide return information tailored to the needs of IMMENSITY beneficiaries. Please describe the scope of logistical and financial support offered to migrants who wish to return. Please identify the main actors in this field and describe how they can be involved in your return plan.*

*Please describe how return migrant entrepreneurship can be stimulated and prepared. Identify institutions and structures which can assist the migrant with the preparation of the return in advance, i.e. draft of a business plan, market research in country of origin. Describe the linkages to the countries of origin. Please explore the possibilities of how to use migrants' remittances in order to support entrepreneurship. Please identify development or financial institutions which can support the migrants' plans by providing micro-credits, grants, co-financing. Please identify governmental structures, international organizations or NGOs which can support the migrant entrepreneur upon his return*

Slovakia and the target region face a rather specific situation. Due to the inflow of illegal immigrants through Slovak-Ukraine border the main recently recognized agenda of authorities deals with this phenomenon. In the region currently besides the existing IOM information office and newly established Immensity IERO advisory centre is not any institution providing counselling to economic migrants. It must be clearly said that thanks to the Immensity project a seed service has been established in this area of interest. The information offered to target clients focus on the several aspects that either can cause problems of integration or provide opportunities for business or skill development. So far the regional structures are only in the very starting phase of the return assistance.

Type of information offered to the economic immigrant clients :

- Education and training opportunities (language schools, entrepreneurial skills, business start up advisory services)
- Housing and employment services (job counselling, access to social and community services,)
- Legislative and business registration services (assistance to enable start ups, registration, tax and social insurance registration assistance)
- Partnership mediation (business and job opportunity assessment)
- Business Environment Assessment (assessment of business plans and ideas, problem and gap analysis), SWOT analysis of proposed economic migrant business proposals,
- Project proposal development, programme identification, consultancy
- Project management, expertise, training, mentoring and consultancy, risk assessment, economic impact assessment

The IERO centre will be able to provide tailored services based in large extent of self help services to potential immigrant entrepreneur. The assisted return is considered as one of the services that will be based on voluntary decision or request of the client. In current light of migration patterns in the region the most suitable type of returns will be the circular migration.

The speciality of the circular migration in the region is based on the following determinants :

### **Brain drain, return migration and brain gain**

A brain drain – departure of young, high skilled and educated professionals to more developed EU countries causes a heavy burden to the Slovak economy. The consequences are apparent in higher regional demand for either craftsmen in technical and natural human medicine sector. In the Slovak regions it will be necessary to work out a comprehensive policy with the aim of reducing the number of university educated and highly-skilled persons leaving the country for work annually; One way is to more intensively combat brain drain and the lack of young professionals in Slovakia through raising their wages, enhancing the R&D infrastructure, providing them with better economic and non-economic conditions to remain in the country. The other is to develop and implement active immigration policies that will attract highly skilled immigrants from abroad to Slovakia, which would comprise important motivational tools, bonuses, allowances and other mechanisms to retain this group of migrant workers in the country.

It will be necessary to legally simplify the procedure of granting a permit to reside and work in Slovakia in favour of highly-skilled immigrants and to facilitate entry into the labor market for foreign graduates completing their study in Slovakia and to offer them legal, economic and social advantages to settle in the country.

In this situation the specific circular migration (either from and to Slovakia from other EU countries and temporary or final return to the countries of origin) could result in a beneficial effect to either the host as well as countries of origin.

### **Labor immigration**

As the near future will very probably bring a larger influx of immigrants to Slovakia approximately after 2015 it is necessary to prepare the regional and national bodies for the rising number/share of labor immigrants in the total labor force of the country.

Due to the ageing patterns that slowly follow the western Europe trends it is necessary to manage the switch from preferring skilled immigrants from the EU or other developed countries at present to absorbing greater numbers of low-skilled immigrants from less developed European and third world countries in the next decades. In that concern it will be necessary to support more immigration from geographically and culturally related regions.

It is crucial to realize that anticipated labor shortages in some economic branches and professions in the country may have grave consequences for the pace of economic growth including the labor market without the replacement of missing domestic workers by labor immigrants. Therefore the assisted returns will be branch specific limited to those clients that can no longer find an appropriate job or space for their business services.

The already and though Immensity established support structures and their future development and intervention projects should prepare a base for managing the deepening disparities in the regional distribution of labor immigrants in Slovakia and their increasing concentration in several areas or bigger cities with the best economic conditions in the country. It will be necessary to tackle all (also negative) accompanying phenomena resulting from the preceding process – e.g., a rise in illegal employment, social conflicts, etc.

Return migration management.

As the Immensity project established an IERO office within the office space of the Agency, the main services as already declared in the Strategic and Action Plan is to enable integration of the economic immigrants into the Slovak society and particularly into the regional business and social environment. This role of the IERO will either fulfill the objectives of project (provide desired follow up effect) and provide assistance to local SMEs and regional economy as a such.

The return migration management will require additional partnership establishment with stakeholders like IOM (particularly in countries of origin of the target clients), local / regional entrepreneur support bodies, BICs, local SMEs and local/regional municipalities interested to improve social and labor conditions in their environment. The Agency will be in position of facilitator of this process rather than responsible stakeholder to handle and manage assisted and voluntary returns. As it has been formerly mentioned the country and regions is still not in the position that return migration is on the political neither institutional agenda. The country will of course face growing importance of return management however the priority of next decade will be the immigration management (aiming to face population decline and brain drain) in order to achieve brain gain. In order to sustain the quality of life and economic growth sooner or later the region should prepare an appropriate immigration policy that will recruit specific economic immigrants for innovative and challenging economic sectors. The management of return migration poses significant challenges and will be a key issue on the agenda of national and regional policy makers in near future though.

As main actors in the field of assisted voluntary returns are governmental authorities on different levels and different scopes of activity and responsibility (labour, interior, social issues). The Agency being a NGO, active in various areas and fields of interest in case of need can provide pre-departure counselling and post arrival assistance to migrants. As well as in several European countries IOM and other international bodies are implementing return projects and programmes. Their network of representations all over the world makes it possible to support the migrant throughout the whole return migration process.

The Agency already developed specific moduls that can supplement those programmes by providing special services (e.g. business development related counselling services, access to grant programmes and training, etc.) for the target group of the IMMENSITY project. The clients of the Agency, the migrants themselves and migrant communities can become multipliers for information dissemination (through spread of mouths ).

#### b) Return migrant entrepreneurship

Due to the other projects of the Agency in this particular area of interest we can provide needed consultancy and tailored services. The Agency can provide transfer of ideas, introduce methods of work and access to innovative technology for its clients. The fair trade movement worldwide can offer an opportunity for the development of bilateral trade amongst the developing and developed countries as well.

## 2.5 PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

*Please characterize the different stakeholders involved in the field of return migration of economic migrants in your country and describe their activities and responsibilities. Please identify possible partners and facilitators of a possible return project for IMMENSITY beneficiaries. Consult with them how a possible cooperation can be realized. Describe the other stakeholders, possible overlapping and/or competing fields of actions.*

### **Migration Information Centre (MIC) of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Slovakia**

Activities of the Migration Information Centre aim at supporting and cooperating with a wide spectrum of associations, union, clubs, organizations and informal groups of foreigners living in Slovakia on a long-term basis. The cooperation of the Migration Information Centre with communities of migrants is working also through cultural mediators. The task of cultural mediators is to work with ethnical and cultural communities in regions, establish contacts with closed communities where it is difficult to distribute information and integration services. Moreover, the MIC organises information meetings for migrants focusing on the issues concerning their integration into the Slovak labour market, society, and on supporting their community life.

Specific objectives

- To identify the needs and requirements of the target groups – the migrants and victims of trafficking – regarding their integration into the labour market and society through the research realized by the Department of Social and Biological Communication of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, as well as through cooperation with these target groups
- To increase the quality of provided services to the target groups endangered by social exclusion
- Through counselling and consultation activities of MIC IOM provide assistance and useful information to migrants legally residing in the Slovak Republic, or with the intention to gain a residence permit and a work permit in Slovakia, and thus facilitate their integration
- Through counselling and educational activities of MIC provide information to another actors on the labour market considering the employment of migrants
- To establish a network of cooperating organizations in areas related to labour and social integration of migrants and victims of trafficking, and to strengthen the capacity of services provided to the target groups through activities focusing on mutual information and experience exchange
- To create mechanisms for safe and dignified return of Slovak nationals to Slovakia, who have become victims of trafficking in human beings, and help them to reintegrate to the society and to integrate onto the labour market through establishing a referral help system – a network of organizations and professionals providing individual reintegration services

- To contribute to the elimination of discrimination on the labour market through activities supporting multiculturalism
- To support the intensive exchange of experience in areas related to reintegration help to victims of trafficking with the objective to improve the system of help through multinational cooperation with French and Italian development partnership
- The project contributes to the fulfilment of a global goal of the Community Initiative EQUAL in the conditions of the Slovak Republic defined as "to increase the effectiveness of tools, methods and process of problem solution in areas related to discrimination and inequality on the labour market". The initiative EQUAL implements new ways allowing the integration of marginalized groups (migrants and victims of trafficking), into the labour market and society. Following this purpose, this project creates new capacities and designs solutions strengthening the cooperation of institutions, it increases the effectiveness of methods and process of providing (re)integration assistance to target groups.

Other possible partners in future return management are the following ones:

**Slovak Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SOPK):**

The Agency has no formal and informal relations with SOPK. However could provide for its client (economic immigrants and entrepreneurs) useful links and connection to possible business partners.

**Regional advisory and information centres (RPIC), Business and Innovation Centres (BIC), Centres of first Contact (CPK), Regional (Local) Development Agencies (RRA), NGOs:**

These stakeholders are the partners of the Agency in several projects related to regional development. These institutions in specific development or training or return management projects can provide similar services as the Agency and thus become a capacity rising factor. The good working relations can establish beneficial partnership in future immigration based projects.

**Tourist Boards and regional tourism and renewable energy clusters**

The emerging local tourist boards and regional tourism clusters could become important stakeholders by developing mutually beneficial relation with countries of origin. These bilateral relation can enhance the incoming as well as departing tourism (find attractive ecotourism and low impact destinations in the countries of origin).

Another opportunity is the transfer of know-how and knowledge in area of renewable energy sources and conservation of virgin rainforests in some countries of origin. The establishment of relations among either energy clusters and environment conservation NGOs could result into some interesting innovative areas of assisted returns and bilateral trade.

It is quite sure that *migration for work will dominate future immigration to the country*. Regardless of the country of origin, all labor immigrants will be able to benefit from several factors. Among them are: better access to the Slovak labor market than hitherto, the interconnectedness of EU Member States labor markets, the rapid ageing of the country's population and – above all – the dramatic ageing and decline of its labor force, the falling unemployment rate, the almost negligible numbers of labor migrants in Slovakia and therefore the “unsaturated” labor market for them, the anticipated expanding economy and growing demand for employees from the side of domestic economic subjects.

We are of the opinion that *development in labor immigration in Slovakia in the future decades will be marked with the following fundamental trends*:

- the rising absolute numbers of labor migrants and their increasing shares in the total labor force of the country;<sup>49</sup>
- the growing internationalization, transnationalization and globalization of the Slovak labor market;
- continuing demand for the educated and highly-skilled labor force from the Union or third countries;
- the qualitative transformation and restructuring of the Slovak labor market: at first towards absorbing greater numbers of highly-skilled immigrants from developed countries, but later towards an increasing inflow of low-skilled migrants originating from less developed European countries as well as developing countries of the third world;
- the deepening of disparities in the regional distribution of labor immigrants in Slovakia;
- the rise of illegal work performed (mostly) by low-skilled immigrants in the country.

The follow up strategy of the Immensity project in area of return management should either assist currently rather limited number of clients as well as to provoke wider debate on labor migration, its causes and consequences for Slovak society with the intention to raise interest in its phenomena and processes. It seems to be crucial to start discussion on the topic especially on the Slovak political scene in order to better incorporate labor migration issues into agendas of political parties in the country; to strengthen the fight against social exclusion and manifestations of intolerance towards labor immigrants. It is recommended to allocate from the State budget and budgets of self-government authorities radically greater means than so far to solve problems – in certain cases acute already now, but definitely increasing – connected with migration management in Slovakia; to encourage

respective NGO's, IGO's, immigrant associations and other stakeholders to be more active in searching additional resources outside the mentioned budgets (e.g., EU funds).

One of the very crucial steps would be the necessity to develop a network consisting of the entire spectrum of significant Slovak stakeholders involved in the management of labor migration (State institutions, employers' associations, chambers of commerce, professional associations, trade unions, competent NGO's and IGO's, self-government authorities, the academic community, immigrant associations, etc.) collaborating together in the process of preparing a (still absent) comprehensive labor migration policy for the Slovak Republic, under the supervision of the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Family. This policy should at least define the role of labor migration for the economic and non-economic advancement of the country; set the place of labor migration among the other migration components; specify the priorities within labor migration itself; assess the current situation and trends; identify those areas of the country's labor market, economic branches, professions, educational levels and geographical regions to which labor immigration could be of the biggest benefit; evaluate future needs and changes in the realm of labor immigration; outline policies to attract, select, support and treat the foreign labor force; analyze probable developmental trajectories of labor emigration from Slovakia; help build in the country the institutional framework relating to labor migration.

#### **Labor migration schemes and practices**

- to adopt hitherto missing concrete schemes to make Slovakia more attractive to the intended groups of labor immigrants (to thoroughly consider a point system, variants of the Highly Skilled Migrant Program realized in the UK, structural demands by single economic branches, and other alternatives); to determine/select these groups of immigrants according to the contemporary and anticipated situation on the Slovak labor market – with particular preference for highly-skilled workers as well as those low-skilled for positions unattractive for the domestic labor force;
- to take a more active and helpful approach to labor immigrants by Slovak labor offices, the police and other institutions concerned thus facilitating access to the labor market of the country for these persons; to increase qualifications and language skills of the staff at labor offices;
- to develop better mechanisms to check more frequently and to combat more effectively illicit work and employment in the country, chiefly in association with an expected rise in undocumented low-skilled immigrants in the decades to come;
- to establish (e.g., in the capitals of four Slovak NUTS 2 regions or eight administrative macro-regions, best at labor offices) consultative and information centers for migrant workers providing them with information on the Slovak labor market, lists of jobs available, ways of doing business, possibilities to improve education and practical skills, legal and other

conditions to be met, labor and social offices networks, housing possibilities and other related issues. The Immensity IERO structure within the Agency office space aims to fulfil this recommended role in Kosice Region;

- to create and operate an information-communication system in Slovakia specialized in providing various updated information on both labor emigration and immigration (through Internet sites, dedicated phone services, statistics, etc.) and serving for migrants, experts, the media and the public;

- to reappraise and amend – if necessary – national legal norms regulating labor immigration flows.

The analysis and recommendation data used are based on publication of Boris Divinský, "Labour market - migration nexus in Slovakia – time to act on comprehensive way", printed and distributed through Immensity project, 2008.