

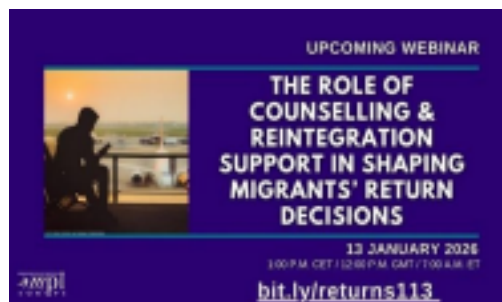
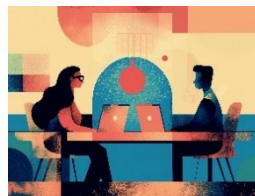


In the Digital/IT, Construction, and Care Industries
A Global Strategy for Skills, Migration, and Development

GS4S Working Paper Series



Across the European Union, labour and skills shortages are intensifying, while the skills of many migrant workers already residing in the EU remain underutilised. Despite increasing policy attention to up- and re-skilling, participation rates among migrant workers – particularly those facing legal, economic, and social vulnerabilities – remain limited. Released in December, 2025, the GS4S working paper Deliverable D5.2, “How to make the most of migrants’ skills - Hurdles and potential of up-/re-skilling of migrant and refugee workers” addresses gaps by examining migrant workers’ attitudes towards their professional future and their propensity to engage in skills development programmes. The deliverable, authored by Sara Korbi and Ferruccio Pastore from GS4S partner #FIERI, is based on a comparative qualitative study conducted in five countries – Estonia, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and Switzerland—drawing on approximately 22 focus groups with migrant workers, each composed of 6–10 participants. The focus groups explored two core dimensions: (i) perceived incentives and barriers to participation in up- and re-skilling programmes, and (ii) the role of skills development in shaping secondary and return mobility intentions. Participants were selected to reflect diverse migration statuses, family situations, employment profiles, and gender compositions. D5.2 provides policy-relevant evidence on why existing skills policies often fail to reach those most affected by skills mismatch and labour market exclusion. The findings point to the need for more integrated, stable, and enabling policy frameworks. In doing so, this deliverable offers concrete policy implications and recommendations for a more effective and inclusive approach to migrant up-/re-skilling. Read the full document on the GS4S.eu website and at Zenodo - <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17630039>.



New Research on Migration Return Decisions

How does counselling and reintegration assistance actually influence the decisions of migrants facing return orders? GS4S partner Migration Policy Institute Europe explores what the evidence reveals about assisted return programmes, and what can make them more effective.

Featuring findings from a new study analyzing nearly 118,000 cases from the Dutch government's Repatriation and Departure Service and interviews with Iraqi and Nigerian migrants who navigated return decisions, MPI's webinar on 13 January will explore practical steps to strengthen support systems and approaches and partnerships that shape meaningful outcomes. Register at <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/events/counseling-reintegration-return-decision>

About GS4S

From January 1st 2024 to December 31st 2026, the Horizon Europe project 'Global Strategy for Skills, Migration, and Development' (GS4S) will seek to better understand global skills shortages in Digital, Care, and Construction sectors. GS4S proposes multi-level policies on labour migration governance, and develops alternative ways for addressing skills shortages in six regions: EU, EEA, Western Balkan, Middle East and Northern Africa, West Africa, and South/South-East Asia. To achieve these ambitious objectives, the interdisciplinary GS4S consortium led by senior researchers at Radboud University (The Netherlands) conducts innovative analyses using mixed-methods research. A particular emphasis in the project is paid to capturing business strategies for filling skills shortages, and skilled (migrant) workers' experiences with skilling, upskilling and reskilling in EU and non-EU regional contexts.

All project deliverables are accessible on Zenodo and the GS4S website [here](#).



Global Strategy for Skills, Migration, Development

In three focused industries:

IT/Digital * Construction * Care

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