

# PRO-MOTE

PROMOTING MIGRANT OPPORTUNITIES,  
TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

## Policy Conclusions

Policy Dialogue Forum ‘From  
“Uberization” to Integration’

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## Executive summary

This report presents the findings of the PRO-MOTE project (Promoting Migrant Opportunities, Training and Employment), funded by the CERV Program of the European Union. Launched in response to growing concerns over migrant integration, labor market challenges, and the political climate in Europe, the project aims to foster a pragmatic, evidence-based approach to the economic inclusion of immigrants and refugees. As part of Work Package 3, a Policy Dialogue Forum was held on 12 June 2025, gathering nearly 200 stakeholders and experts from across Europe to explore how migrants can transition from precarious “Uberized” jobs into stable, meaningful employment.

An interactive survey conducted during the Forum revealed strong support for policies guided by labor market needs, with participants emphasizing the importance of recognizing qualifications, simplifying legal pathways, and promoting inclusive entrepreneurship. Respondents also identified key barriers to integration, including skills mismatches, language proficiency gaps, and cultural differences. Highly skilled migrants and international students were seen as a valuable yet underutilized resource, while the economic potential of refugees and diaspora communities was also highlighted.

Based on these insights, the report proposes ten key policy recommendations:

- 1. Enable immediate labor market access for forced migrants, including support for refugee entrepreneurship, to reduce dependency and foster rapid integration.**
- 2. Ensure legal stability by creating clear, inclusive pathways from temporary protection to permanent residency, especially for Ukrainians.**
- 3. Support immigrant retention in depopulating regions through innovative local initiatives such as vocational training, international schools, and self-employment schemes.**
- 4. Establish accessible, multilingual one-stop shops to assist immigrant entrepreneurs with legal, administrative, and financial support.**
- 5. Develop and co-finance business incubators for immigrant entrepreneurs, leveraging EU funds, corporate partnerships, and local government support.**
- 6. Promote networking among immigrants, expats, and refugees through municipally-backed intercultural centers and peer-led initiatives like Expats in Business Kraków.**
- 7. Create an effective system for skills and qualification recognition, modeled on Germany’s IQ program, to combat overqualification and brain waste.**
- 8. Implement fast-track visa schemes for highly skilled migrants, following the example of Poland’s Business Harbour program.**



**9. Support diaspora initiatives abroad, recognizing their role in development and transnational entrepreneurship, as seen in Mexican hometown associations.**

**10. Facilitate labor market transitions for international graduates by easing post-study work rights and expanding the EU Blue Card to include all graduates of EU universities.**

Together, these measures can help Europe move beyond reactive, fragmented approaches toward a more cohesive and opportunity-driven model of migrant economic integration—one that benefits both newcomers and host societies.

## **Key Policy Recommendations**

### **1. Introduction: Pro-Mote Project and the need to promote economic integration of immigrants and refugees in Europe**

This report was prepared as part of the PRO-MOTE project, funded by the CERV Programme of the European Union. The main objective of PRO-MOTE is to promote the employment and economic integration of immigrants and refugees across Europe. Our core motivation is to help create a supportive environment that fosters open dialogue, skills development, policy advocacy, and awareness-raising. We believe that successful integration depends on the joint efforts of both migrants and host communities, grounded in respect for human rights, diversity, and social cohesion.

When we first developed the project idea and grant application in 2023, the European Union was largely focused on Russia's military aggression against Ukraine, the resulting influx of war-displaced migrants into member states, and the wave of civil society solidarity that followed. However, as we write this report in July 2025, the challenge of effective integration has become more urgent than ever. Host countries such as Germany and Poland are showing signs of fatigue with refugee integration policies, and the growing popularity of right-wing populist parties—often promoting anti-immigrant and even xenophobic agendas—poses additional challenges.

In this context, our role is clear. As a consortium of academics, social activists, and labor market experts, we do not aim to paint an overly optimistic picture of migration. Human mobility is a complex phenomenon that brings both benefits and costs to receiving societies. Like any major social process, migration must be properly managed—both through effective migration policies (determining who enters and how) and integration policies (ensuring that newcomers can contribute meaningfully to



society). For this reason, we advocate for a pragmatic, evidence-based approach to migration governance in Europe.

This report is part of Work Package 3 (WP3) of the PRO-MOTE project, titled Policy Dialogue Forum: From “Uberization” to Integration. As the title suggests, the aim is to explore how migrants and refugees can transition from precarious, platform-based jobs toward more stable and fulfilling employment. Research on migrant socio-economic integration shows that newcomers often begin in low-status sectors abandoned by native workers—commonly referred to as the “3D jobs” (dirty, difficult, and dangerous). In this sense, “uberization” is often a natural entry point. However, when migrants are given the chance to develop their skills, apply their work ethic, and bring their innovation to the labor market, they can and should move up the socio-economic ladder.

It is equally important to recognize the opportunities migration presents. Many immigrants arrive with valuable skills and qualifications that can benefit both themselves and the host society—provided there are mechanisms to put these to use.

To explore successful cases of economic integration and generate informed policy ideas, our consortium organized an online Policy Dialogue Forum on 12 June 2025, titled: From “Uberization” to Integration: How to Improve Migrants’ Integration in Europe? The event featured five leading experts from Austria, Croatia, Italy, Poland, and Spain, and brought together nearly 200 participants from across Europe and beyond. Attendees included policymakers, public officials, business leaders, academics, students, and engaged citizens.

Together, we discussed how to improve the regulatory environment for migrant and refugee employment and entrepreneurship. This report presents the main findings and insights from the event, including results from an interactive online poll conducted with participants. Based on this, we propose ten key, actionable policy recommendations for advancing the integration of immigrants and refugees at the European, national, and regional levels.



## **2. Most important policy recommendations**

Based on the presentations, discussions, and survey responses within our Policy Dialogue Forum, we formulated ten actionable policy recommendations that we believe can support the improved economic integration of immigrants and refugees in Europe.

### **Recommendation 1: Economic integration of forced migrants should begin from day one**

Refugees and other forced migrants seeking international protection in Europe represent a particularly vulnerable group. Many have fled violent conflicts or long-term persecution based on ethnicity or religion, and often arrive deeply traumatized, requiring time to recover and regain a sense of stability and psychological well-being. Their admission to Europe is driven primarily by humanitarian considerations rather than economic ones. As such, host countries should adjust their expectations and not assume rapid economic integration for these individuals.

That said, policies aimed at refugees should not assume that all forced migrants are equally vulnerable or require participation in time-consuming and costly adaptation programs run by public authorities. Refugees are a highly diverse group—some are eager to begin working immediately upon arrival. For many, employment serves not only as a means of regaining control and rebuilding their lives after a chaotic escape, but also as a deliberate part of their migration strategy. For example, many Syrian refugees who arrived in Germany in 2015 sought employment as soon as possible. Their motivation was clear: as representatives of families remaining in Syria or in refugee camps in Türkiye, they aimed to establish an economic foothold in Europe and begin sending remittances to support their families and facilitate reunification.

Similarly, refugee entrepreneurship should be encouraged and supported within the legal framework. For many forced migrants, starting even a small business is both a key motivation and a survival strategy in their new environment. Denying them the opportunity to pursue entrepreneurship can lead to frustration and a loss of the initial drive and optimism they bring to their host country.

**Consequently, the individuals under international protection or in a process of applying for that status should be granted access to labor market and entrepreneurship rights.**



## **Recommendation 2: A clear pathway to legal stability is essential**

Currently, one of the largest groups of third-country nationals seeking international protection in Europe are Ukrainians. As of 1 July 2025, there are approximately 5 million Ukrainian refugees across Europe, including 1.2 million in Germany, 1 million in Poland, nearly 400,000 in Czechia, and 250,000 in the United Kingdom.

In response to the full-scale Russian invasion, the European Union adopted the Temporary Protection Directive in March 2022—just weeks after the conflict began. This directive granted Ukrainians full access to the labor markets and healthcare systems of EU member states, along with freedom of movement within the EU for three months, allowing them to choose where to settle. This rapid and flexible response was highly effective and beneficial in the early phase of the crisis.

However, more than three years later, many Ukrainians find themselves in a state of legal and personal uncertainty. While the Temporary Protection Directive has been repeatedly extended—most recently until 4 March 2027—many host countries have taken a passive approach, simply implementing the extensions without offering a long-term perspective. As a result, many Ukrainians fear that their temporary status could be revoked without a clear path forward.

Some EU member states have begun to address this by introducing national measures that allow a transition from temporary protection to more stable legal status. For example, since 1 April 2023, Poland has offered a pathway to a temporary residence permit (with the possibility of later transitioning to long-term or permanent residence) for Ukrainian refugees who are well integrated economically, such as those in full-time employment or running their own businesses. However, a key challenge remains: many refugees are accompanied by dependent family members—often elderly parents—who are unable to work and thus remain excluded from these transition schemes.

**Therefore, EU member states should work toward establishing clear, transparent, and inclusive pathways that allow a transition from temporary protection to residence permits.** These pathways should not only accommodate economically self-sufficient individuals but also provide options for their dependent family members.

Such a move is essential. The ongoing war in Ukraine makes the prospect of returning home in the near future highly uncertain. At the same time, without assurances of legal stability, many Ukrainians in the EU may be discouraged from fully investing in their economic integration or in the development



of their businesses, uncertain whether they will be allowed to remain once the Temporary Protection Directive ends.

### **Recommendation 3: Population-shrinking and peripheral regions should recur to non-traditional policies in immigrant retention and integration**

Although Europe's population is aging, the pace of this demographic shift varies significantly across the continent. In many peripheral and economically marginalized regions, attracting immigrants to settle has become a matter of survival. Yet these areas often face a vicious cycle: their economic fragility hinders job creation, which in turn discourages newcomers, further deepening their decline.

To address this challenge, we have identified two noteworthy examples of non-traditional approaches to the socio-economic integration of immigrants.

The first case is the establishment of the Lolland International School in Maribo, Denmark. Lolland is a peripheral region that has experienced steady population decline since the gradual collapse of its once-thriving sugar industry, which had been the backbone of the local economy. In the 1930s, Lolland had a population of around 90,000, including many immigrants from Poland. Today, the population has fallen to fewer than 60,000, with a population density of just 47 people per square kilometer—less than half the EU average of 106.

A new opportunity for the region has emerged with the Fehmarn Belt Tunnel project, one of Europe's largest infrastructure investments, which will link Hamburg in Germany with Copenhagen in Denmark. Currently, around 3,000 workers—most of them immigrants—are employed on the construction site. To encourage them to settle permanently in the region, local authorities have established Denmark's first public international school with English as the language of instruction, recognizing that Danish is often perceived as too difficult for many immigrants to learn.

The second example comes from Soria, a region in central Spain with one of the lowest population densities in Europe—just 8 people per square kilometer. In an effort to revitalize the area, local municipalities have turned to the ancient tradition of pine resin extraction, a practice with growing demand in the food, cosmetics, and paint industries due to its sustainable, bio-based properties.

Local governments piloted a program to train immigrants in pine resin extraction and provided them with subsidized housing. These workers operate as self-employed individuals, harvesting resin from municipal forests in exchange for paying extraction fees. This initiative has not only revived a



traditional form of sustainable forestry and boosted the local bioeconomy but also helped attract and settle new residents in one of Spain's most depopulated areas.

#### **Recommendation 4: Ensuring full and comprehensive access to information strengthens immigrant entrepreneurial initiatives**

A notable example of supporting migrant entrepreneurship—particularly through skills development and legal advice is the one-stop shop model initiated under the Interreg Central Europe project TASKFORCOME (Transnational Action to Advance Skills and Competences for Community Engagement and Social Migrants Entrepreneurship Initiatives).

Interreg projects offer an effective starting point for such initiatives, as they require collaboration between universities, NGOs, and local or regional governments. TASKFORCOME aimed to support migrants interested in starting businesses by creating a one-stop shop—a single office where entrepreneurs could access a wide range of services in one visit.

Thanks to this project, a dedicated consultant was hired to assist clients in English, Ukrainian, and Russian. The services offered included:

- Guidance on setting up a business and choosing its legal form;
- Information on legal and administrative obligations, including classification codes (PKD 2007);
- Help with activating a Trusted Profile (Profil Zaufany) for access to digital services;
- Advice on available financial support programs.

The consultant also supported clients in navigating services offered by other on-site institutions, such as:

- The Social Insurance Institution (ZUS) for information on social contributions and employer obligations;
- The Kraków Labor Office for financial support options like internships, wage subsidies, and start-up grants;
- The Polish Chamber of Patent Attorneys for guidance on intellectual property rights and regulations.





This Entrepreneur Service Point (Punkt Obsługi Przedsiębiorcy) in Kraków illustrates how innovative public policy ideas, developed by academia and civil society with EU support, can be successfully institutionalized. Although the TASKFORCOME project ended in 2021, the City of Kraków has continued to fund and operate the service using its own budget.

The one-stop shop's current location at Zabłocie 22 is particularly strategic, being only 20 meters from the Intercultural Centre in Kraków, which offers complementary services for the city's immigrant community, including language classes and legal assistance.

### **Recommendation 5: Encourage and support the development of incubators for immigrant entrepreneurs**

Business incubators and accelerators play a key role in promoting entrepreneurship across Europe. In recent years, the number of incubators offering tailored services to immigrants has grown. The MIG.EN.CUBE project (<https://site.unibo.it/mig-en-cube/en>) identified over 50 such initiatives in Italy, France, and the Netherlands alone. Most provided mentoring, training, and consultancy services, while some also offered office space and even limited financial support. Interestingly, many of these incubators were either public-private partnerships or privately run, often with a profit-oriented approach.

Incubators supporting migrant entrepreneurs typically offer all three categories of support:

- Development of non-business-related skills (e.g., networking, intercultural training),
- Improvement of business-specific skills (e.g., mentoring, business training), and
- Assistance with tangible needs (e.g., help with funding applications and legal procedures).

One of the most successful and still active incubators highlighted by the MIG.EN.CUBE project (as of June 2025) is Forward-INC, based in the Netherlands. Forward-INC (<https://www.newcomersforward.com/>) supports newcomer entrepreneurs and operates as a Dutch ANBI (Public Benefit Organisation), allowing corporate sponsors to benefit from tax advantages. This status has enabled Forward-INC to build strong partnerships with companies such as Citigroup, LinkedIn, Nordian Private Equity, and Coca-Cola, which contribute both funding and expertise through mentorship and training.



Immigrants interested in starting a business can apply for two main programs:

- Forward Digital Entrepreneurship Program: An 8-week online course covering local culture, digital skills, and business fundamentals.
- Forward Incubator: A 5-month program where 30 participants develop and test their business ideas while expanding their networks. Each entrepreneur is supported by an experienced business coach and two student consultants from Dutch universities.

In 2024 alone, nearly 1,000 individuals participated in Forward·INC training programs—68% of whom were forcibly displaced. The incubator helped register 55 new businesses, and its community raised €3.6 million in funding (Forward·INC, 2024). Another key asset is its growing alumni network, which currently includes over 4,000 members. Forward·INC organizes regular alumni events that facilitate knowledge exchange, collaboration, and continued entrepreneurial growth.

The creation and co-development of such incubators can be supported through smart tax incentives (tax exemptions for corporate partners from private sector), public support through provision of public premises for free or at discounted rate and through financing from EU funds (in particular, Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (2021-2027)).

## **Recommendation 6: Support for networking activities among expats, immigrants and refugees**

Foreigners settling in a new location often lack not only the necessary skills, cultural competencies, and financial resources to start a business, but also social capital. Typically, they have limited personal connections in the host country. As emphasized by social scientists, success is influenced not only by strong ties—such as close family and friends—but also by weak ties, including acquaintances, neighbors, and colleagues. These broader networks enhance access to information, foster trust, generate inspiration, and facilitate the exchange of business ideas, all of which can contribute to future entrepreneurial partnerships.

Therefore, host countries—particularly large cities with significant immigrant populations—should foster a welcoming environment and actively support the networking of newcomers. Intercultural centers are ideal venues for such efforts. These centers, often municipally owned but co-managed by



civil society actors such as migrant associations, offer free space for immigrants to host non-profit events and build social connections.

A notable example of such an initiative is Expats in Business Kraków (EiB), a grassroots group based in Kraków, Poland (see: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/896625982541747>). The group was founded by immigrants from Southeast Asia who first met at a cultural event organized by the local Intercultural Centre. It has since evolved into an open, inclusive community of foreign entrepreneurs and aspiring business owners in Poland. While the group initially consisted mainly of Indian and Sri Lankan members, it is now highly diverse, including Ukrainians, Somalis, and Latin Americans.

EiB members meet monthly at the Intercultural Centre. Typical gatherings include business training sessions or presentations, followed by informal socializing and shared meals featuring ethnic cuisine prepared by members. The group also maintains a Facebook page where members promote their businesses, offer ad hoc consulting, and share practical advice—for example, on choosing a suitable bank for foreign entrepreneurs in Poland. Events are recorded and shared online, allowing those who cannot attend in person to stay connected.

What makes this initiative particularly valuable is not only the networking it fosters, but also the community agency it exemplifies. With minimal initial support, the group has become largely self-sufficient, operating with little or no public funding.

## **Recommendation 7: Creation of coherent and complex system of qualifications and skills recognition**

Skills mismatch and overqualification are common challenges that hinder immigrants' successful integration into the labor market. Although many immigrants and refugees possess significant professional experience and higher education, transferring their human capital across borders and putting it to productive use in the host country often proves difficult. This is not only due to language barriers and limited proficiency in the host country's language, but also because educational systems and career pathways may differ substantially.

As a result, many immigrants and refugees are employed in jobs far below their qualifications. There are numerous cases of experienced lawyers, surgeons, nurses, or university professors working as waiters, taxi drivers, or manual laborers. This phenomenon, known as brain waste, not only leads to personal frustration and dissatisfaction but also causes deskilling—the gradual erosion of human



capital that is neither utilized nor updated in the current work environment. This situation is particularly paradoxical given that many host countries face acute labor shortages in specialized sectors such as healthcare and elder care.

An interesting model addressing this issue exists in Germany through the "Integration through Qualification" (Integration durch Qualifizierung, IQ) program, designed for individuals seeking international protection. Adult refugees are offered opportunities for vocational education and training, apprenticeships in partnership with regional and local businesses, and even access to higher education. These publicly funded programs are based on a thorough assessment of the individual's educational credentials and professional experience from their home country, aiming to improve the transferability of their skills and ensure better job-qualification matching. Crucially, this support is combined with intensive German language training.

Although the program has been criticized for being time-consuming, it has shown promising results—particularly in the case of Syrian asylum seekers who arrived after 2015. Among those who have been in Germany for seven years or more, the employment rate has reached a relatively high 61%. However, the program requires substantial public investment, including the training of administrative personnel and increased staffing to manage the expanded administrative workload.

## **Recommendation 8: Fast-track admission procedures for highly-skilled migrants**

Highly skilled immigrants are prime candidates for international labor recruitment. They tend to integrate more easily and generate greater benefits for host countries than other migrant groups—particularly through their fiscal contributions, their ability to fill labor shortages, and their role in enhancing the competitiveness of the host economy. As a result, many EU member states have introduced targeted measures to attract such individuals through selective immigration policies.

A notable recent example comes from Poland—a relatively new but increasingly important destination country. The Poland.Business Harbour program was launched in September 2020 as a direct response to the rigged presidential elections in Belarus and the subsequent persecution of opposition figures. Its primary goal was to facilitate the relocation of Belarusian ICT professionals, startup founders, and tech entrepreneurs to Poland.



In June 2021, the program was expanded to include citizens of Georgia, Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, and Armenia. It offered a fast-track D23 Poland visa, allowing beneficiaries—and their family members—to work and conduct business in Poland without the need for additional work or residence permits. Between 2020 and 2023, approximately 13,500 specialists took advantage of this opportunity to settle and work in Poland.

Although the program was officially discontinued in January 2024 for political reasons, it is still widely regarded by labor market experts as a successful example of skills-based immigration policy.

## **Recommendation 9: Supporting diaspora integration initiatives by sending countries**

Paradoxically, successful economic integration of emigrants is also in the best interest of the sending countries. The alternative—failed integration and social marginalization—can lead to frustration and a "return of failure," raising serious challenges for reintegration in the home country. Conversely, immigrants who integrate successfully abroad often maintain strong ties with their homeland and can become valuable assets—as tourists, investors, or transnational entrepreneurs.

For this reason, countries experiencing high levels of emigration should actively support the economic integration of their citizens abroad while fostering continued connections with their country of origin. A strong example of such an approach is the hometown associations (HTAs) established by the Mexican diaspora in the United States. These associations typically bring together *paesanos*—people from the same region or town—and are sustained through membership fees. In exchange, members receive support with economic integration, including language and vocational training, access to job opportunities, and business mentoring.

HTAs often operate within umbrella organizations that facilitate broader cooperation between associations from the same state—such as Zacatecas or Oaxaca—and collaborate with government institutions like the Institute for Mexicans Abroad (Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior, IME), which is affiliated with the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

What makes HTAs particularly noteworthy—among Mexican, Dominican, Guatemalan, and Salvadoran communities alike—is that beyond supporting immigrant integration in the U.S., they increasingly engage in charitable and development projects back home. One prominent example is



collective remittance programs, in which diaspora communities pool resources to fund local initiatives in their hometowns.

These practices illustrate that, when diaspora policies are well-designed and respect the agency of migrants, they can unlock tremendous development potential for countries of origin. This model holds particular relevance for countries such as Syria and Ukraine within the European context.

### **Recommendation 10: Supporting labor market transition of foreign graduates of universities in the EU**

According to Eurostat, there were 1.66 million international students in the European Union in 2022. Europe's appeal as a global higher education hub has increased significantly in recent years—initially following Brexit, which made the UK less accessible to many non-EU students, and more recently due to reduced funding and restrictive visa policies for international students in the United States, particularly during the Trump administration.

International students represent a valuable and often underutilized pool of potential future economic migrants. Many of them are young, highly educated, multilingual, and already partially integrated into European societies. They are familiar with local cultures, legal systems, and labor market expectations, making their transition from student to skilled worker comparatively smoother than for other migrant groups. Facilitating this transition through tailored policies—such as post-graduation work permits, simplified visa pathways, and targeted labor market integration programs—can help European countries address demographic challenges and fill skills gaps in key sectors of the economy.

In particular, at the EU level it would be interesting to reconsider the EU Blue Card program, by extending it to all graduates of university programs in all member states. For instance, such extended program would enable them to stay within the EU and look for employment opportunities in other countries for a period of 12 months. Currently, some of the member states have internal regulations that enable the graduates to stay and seek employment, but there are little incentives to promote intra-European mobility.

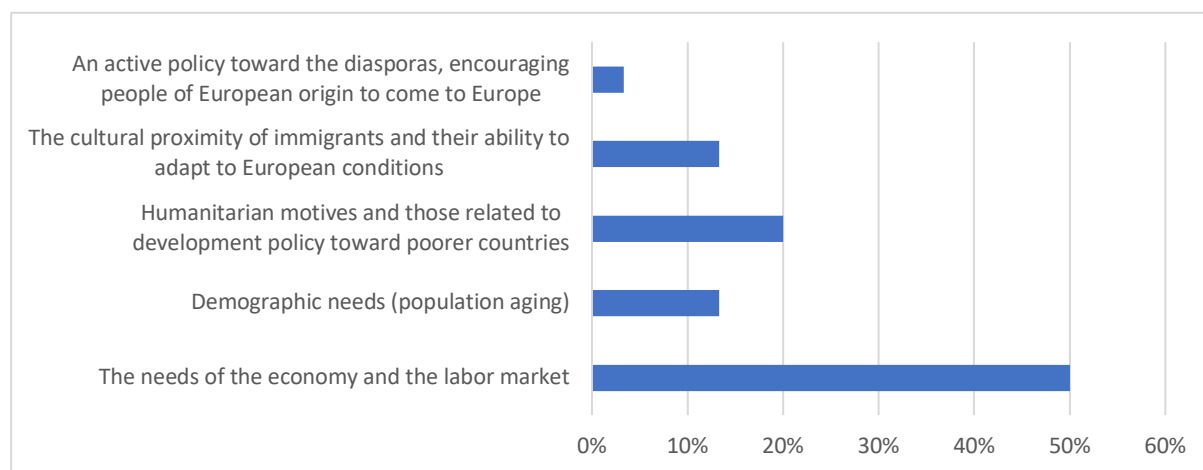
## Appendix:

### *The results of poll of public opinion among the participants of the Online Policy Forum*

During the Policy Dialogue Forum, we conducted an online survey to better understand participants' views on European immigration policy and integration measures. We received 30 valid responses from participants based in Austria, Croatia, Czechia, Germany, France, Italy, Malta, Poland, and Ukraine. While the survey is not representative, it provides valuable feedback and serves as an additional source of inspiration for the policy recommendations emerging from the Forum. Below, we present a summary of the main results.

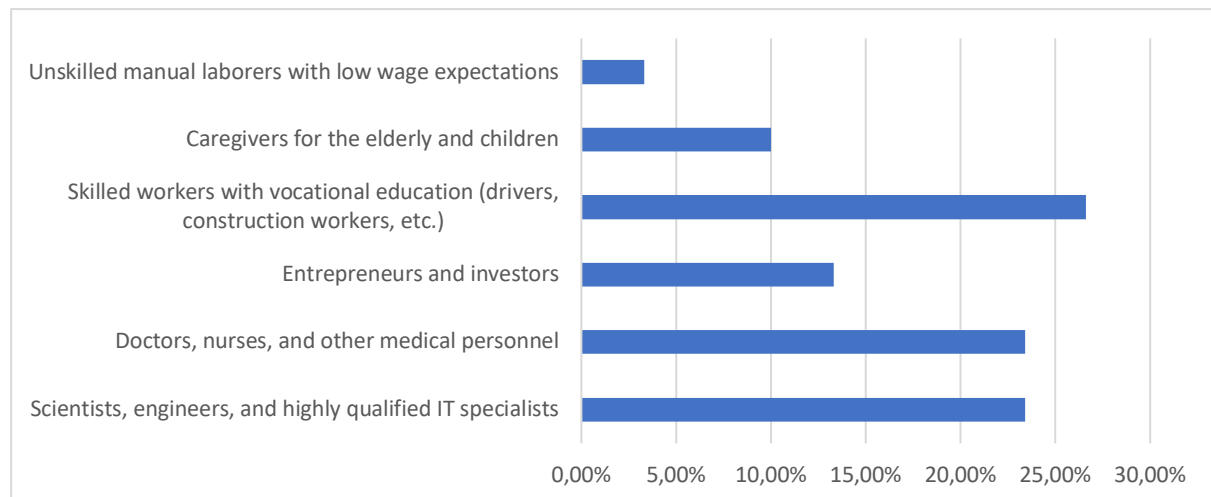
The survey consisted of 10 questions, all of them were adapted from the report prepared by the Committee for Migration Research of the Polish Academy of Science . his initial survey was commissioned by the Polish government and developed by academic experts in Poland to inform the Polish Migration Strategy 2025–2030. We believe that, with appropriate adaptation, this publicly available questionnaire can be valuable at the broader EU level, which is why we chose to use it in our poll. The first question addressed the overarching philosophy behind migration policy at both the EU level and within individual member states. Specifically, we asked what should be the primary motivation for recruiting foreign labor. Participants were allowed to select only one answer from a set of predefined options. The most common response (50% of participants), was that immigration policy should primarily respond to economic needs and labor market demand (Fig. 1).

Figure 1. In the area of immigrant recruitment strategies and the admission of foreigners, the EU and EU member states should be guided by



Source: Own elaboration.

Figure 2. What types of immigrants should be admitted to the EU

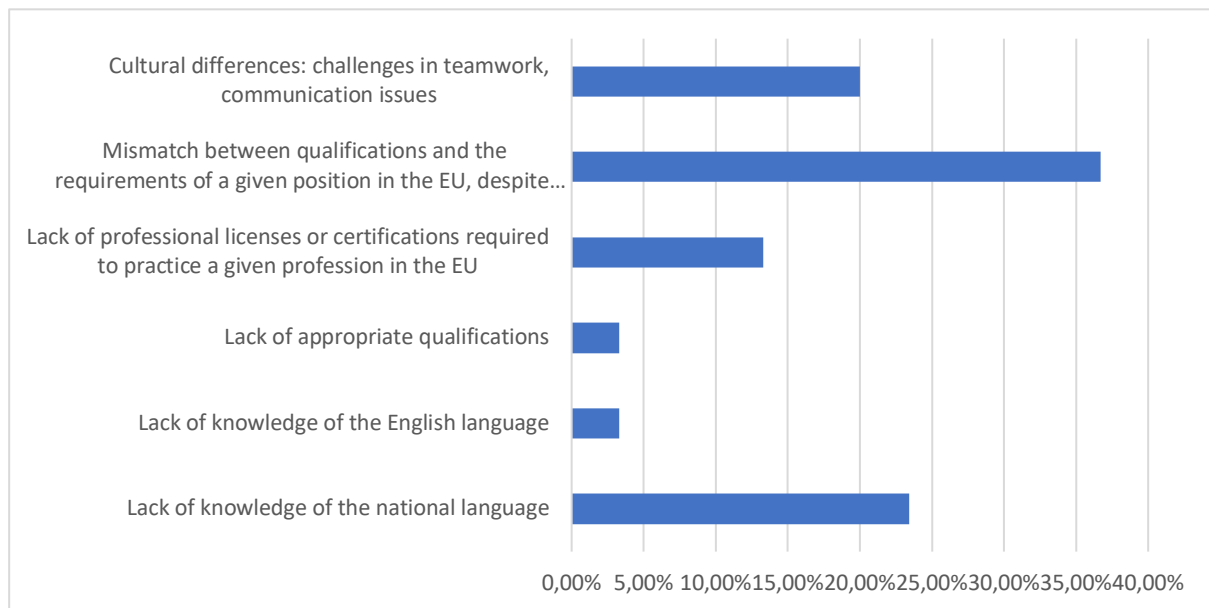


Source: Own elaboration.

Then, the respondents were asked what categories of immigrants should be recruited to Europe in the first place. The most popular responses indicated skilled workers with vocational education, medical staff and highly-skilled specialists (Fig 2).

When looking for potential most common obstacles in immigrants' integration in Europe, the respondents indicated qualification mismatches, lack of language proficiency of the host country and the cultural differences (Fig. 3) Figure 3. What are the main barriers to the integration of immigrants into the national and the EU labor markets

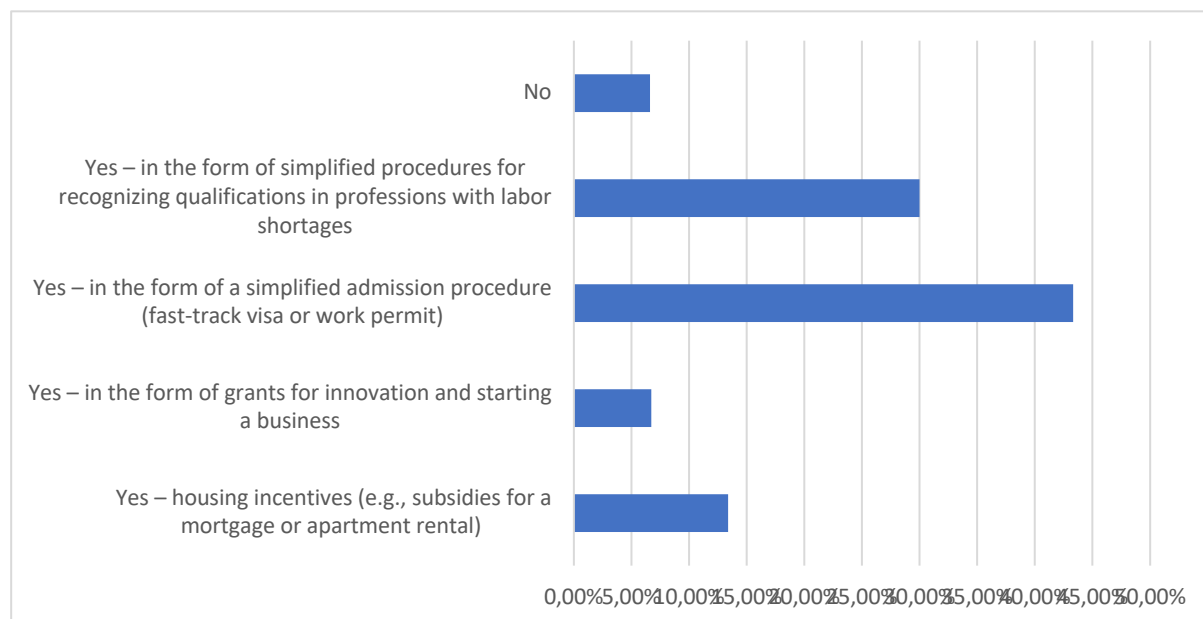




Source: Own elaboration.

Some highly developed economies are pursuing selective immigrant policies, that mostly encourage the admission of selected categories of foreigners. Consequently, we have asked whether such special incentives should be applied in Europe, and if yes – in which form. Our respondents indicated a fast-track simplified admission procedure for visa and/or work permit as the most popular policy tool. Also the introduction of simplified procedures for qualification recognition was signaled as important (Fig. 4).

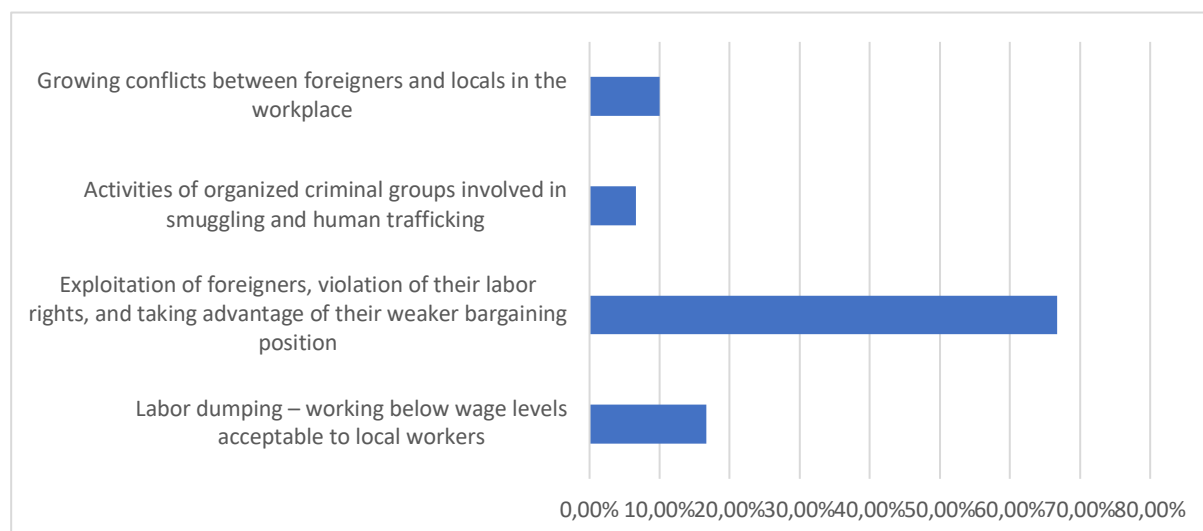
Figure 4. Should additional incentives be used to attract needed workers nationwide or in specific European regions



Source: Own elaboration.

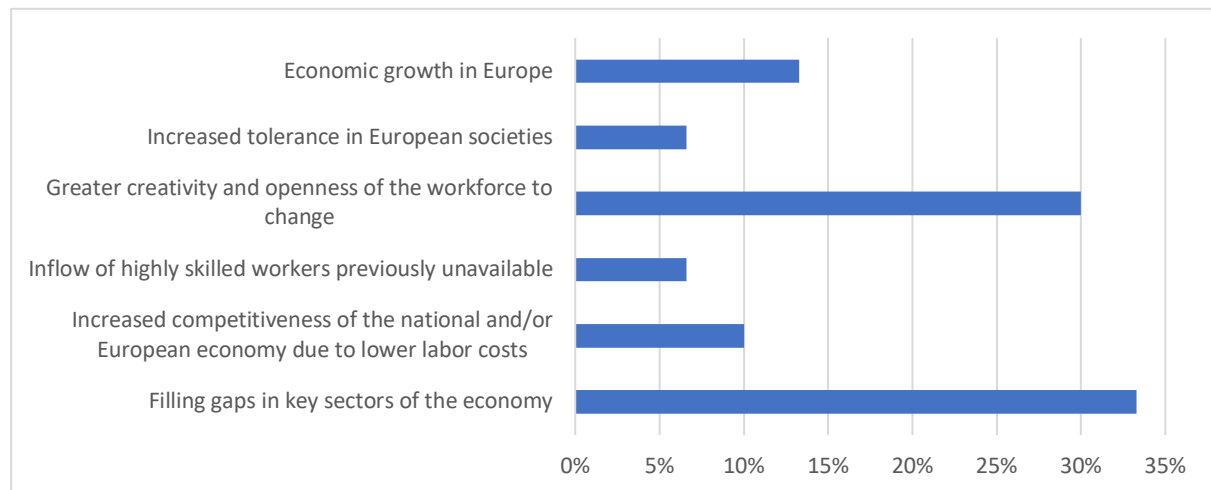
Then respondents were asked about pros and cons of large-scale inflow of foreigners into Europe. When it comes to risks, the respondents mostly underlined the threat of immigrants' exploitation by unfair employers and intermediaries. When naming the possible benefits, survey participants indicated the economic gains when specific shortages on labor market are addressed, and also the increase of creativity and flexibility of workforce (Fig. 6).

Figure 5. What risks do you see associated with the mass influx of foreign workers into the EU?



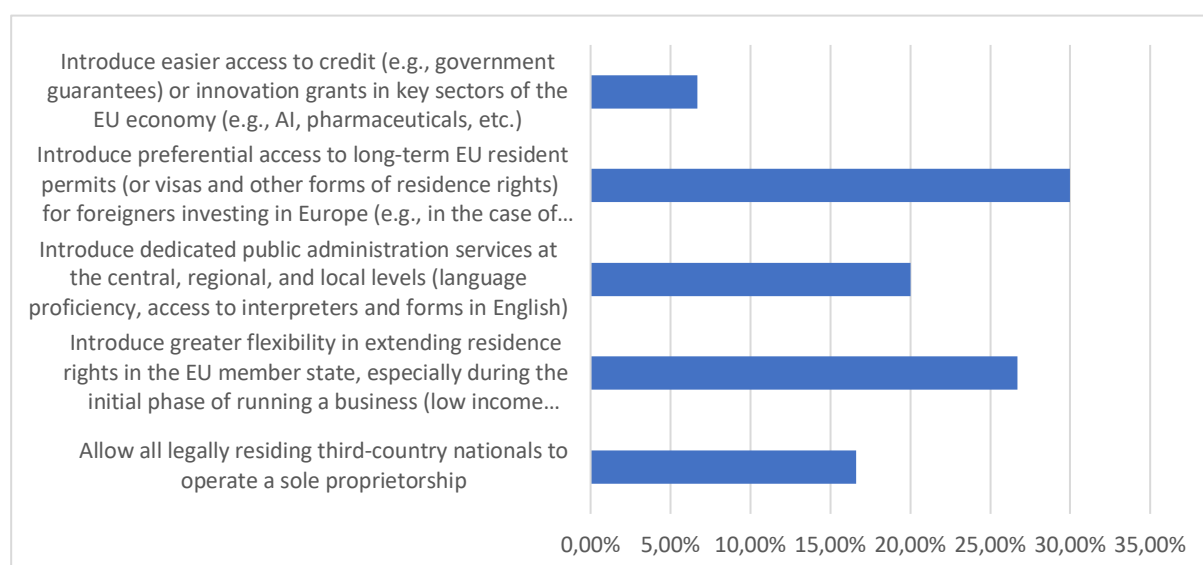
Source: Own elaboration.

Figure 6. What benefits do you see from the mass influx of foreign workers into the EU?



Source: Own elaboration. Immigrant entrepreneurship is often highlighted in public debate as one of the key positive outcomes of immigration. Accordingly, we asked respondents whether national governments should implement specific measures to support this form of economic activity among foreigners. Most respondents emphasized the need to provide residence preferences and more flexible residence conditions for investors and entrepreneurs—including those who have only recently started their businesses and are not yet generating high income. Additionally, respondents stressed the importance of dedicated public administration services, including access to essential information on regulations, taxation, and related matters in foreign languages (see Fig. 7).

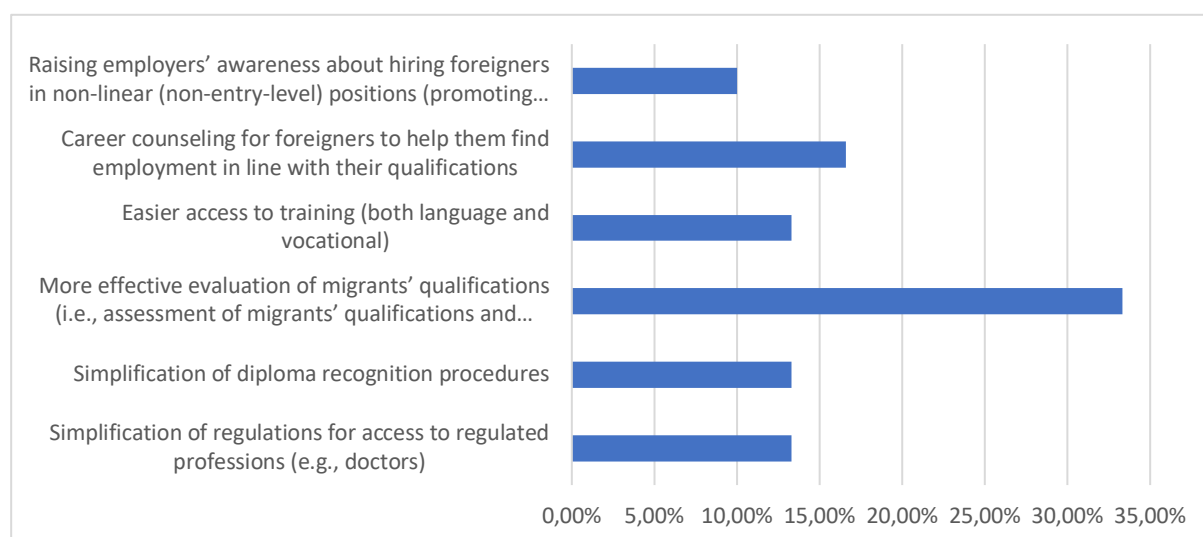
Figure 7. How should foreign nationals who start and run businesses in the EU be supported?



Source: Own elaboration.

As the qualification mismatch has been identified to be the largest obstacle to successful economic integration, the respondents have been asked how to improve the usage of migrants' skills and competences (see Fig. 8). The respondents indicated that a public system of qualification screening and evaluation should be made more effective.

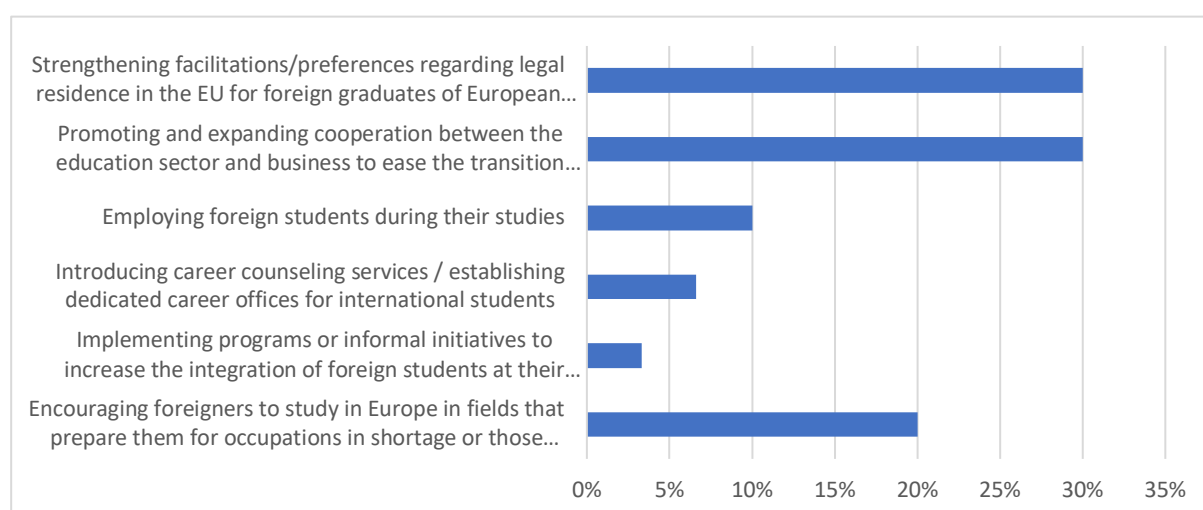
Figure 8. In your opinion, what should be changed to make better use of migrants' qualifications in Europe?



Source: Own elaboration.

According to Eurostat, there were 1.66 million international students in the European Union in 2022. Europe's attractiveness as a higher education hub has grown since Brexit and, more recently, due to funding cuts to higher education in the United States under the Trump administration. International students represent a clear potential pool of future economic migrants. Therefore, our survey asked which measures should be taken to support their transition from academia to the European labor market. The most commonly selected responses included facilitating legal residence in the EU after graduation and strengthening cooperation between academia and the business sector to help retain foreign graduates (see Fig. 9).

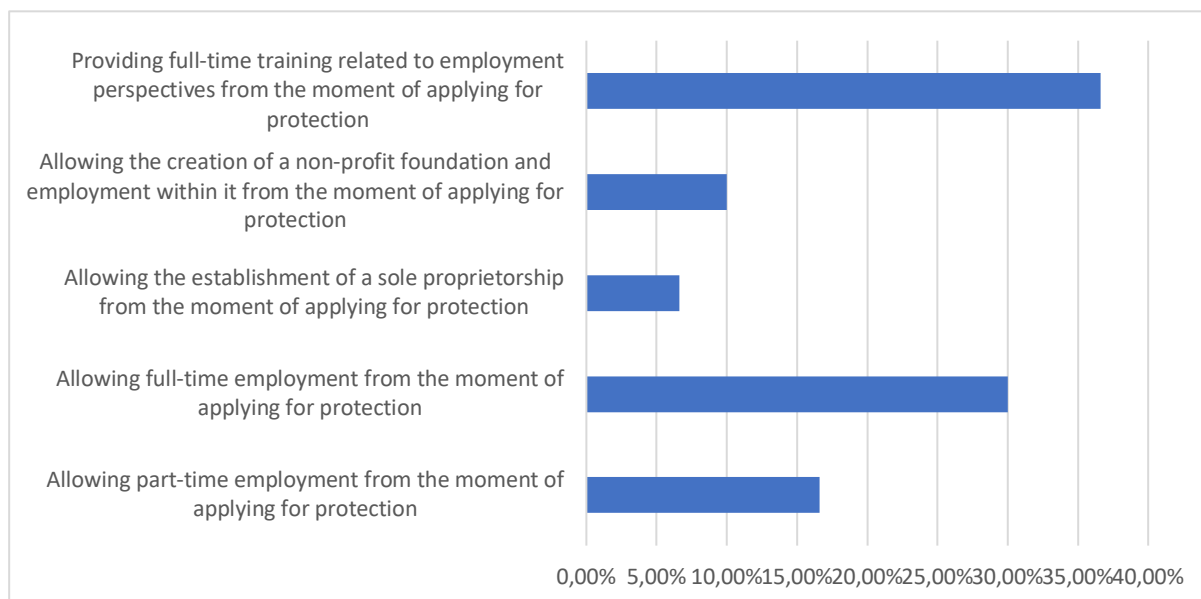
Figure 9. In your opinion, what measures should be taken to facilitate the entry of foreign students/graduates of European universities into the European labor market?



Source: Own elaboration.

Finally, the group of migrants that raises the greatest concern is forced migrants. For obvious reasons, their economic integration tends to be more challenging than that of economic migrants. Therefore, we asked which measures would best support the socio-economic integration of refugees in the EU. The most important finding is that respondents emphasized the need to grant refugees access to the labor market as early as possible. They also stressed that vocational training and employment-related support should be provided from the outset—that is, from the moment an individual applies for international protection (See Fig. 10).

Figure 10. What actions should be taken to ensure fuller economic integration and better utilization of the potential of individuals applying for international protection (asylum) in the EU?



Source: Own elaboration.