

ETF Research forum for Evidence-based Policies on Skills and Migration

9-10 June 2026





Thon Hotel EU, Brussels

Do Remittances and Migration Foster Entrepreneurship?

Jakhongir (Jak) Kakhkharov — Australian Catholic University (ACU)
Shuhrat Yarashov — The University of Adelaide



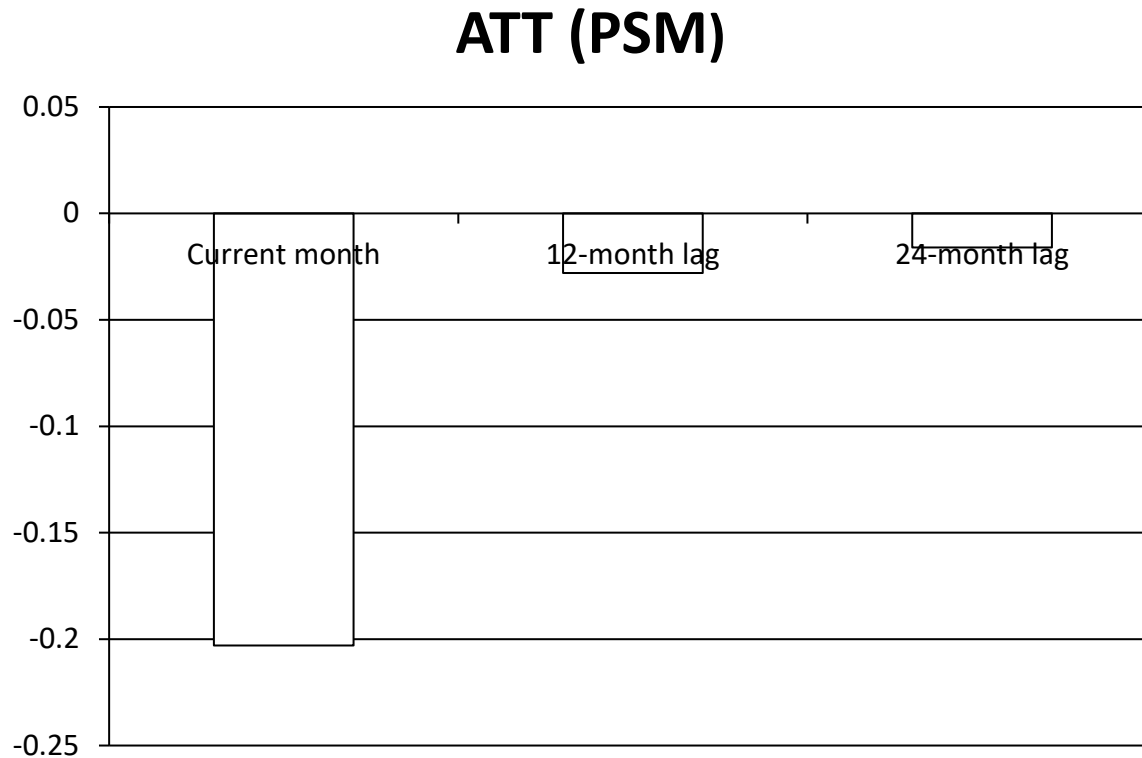
Remittances are expected to finance enterprise — but often do not

-  Remittances ease household budget constraints
-  Predicted to support business start-up
-  In practice: consumption smoothing & insurance
-  Policy puzzle: when do remittances translate into firms?

Research question

Do remittances and return migration foster entrepreneurship in Uzbekistan?

Estimated impact of remittance receipt on entrepreneurship



Interpretation
 The short-run effect is strongly negative.

Dynamics
 The negative effect weakens over time but remains below zero.

ATT < 0 means lower probability of entrepreneurship among remittance recipients

Source: L2CU 2018–2025; Propensity Score Matching (ATT), baseline controls (Table 4).

What this means for policy

Key findings

- ❖ Remittances are associated with lower entrepreneurship (short term).
- ❖ Return migration is also linked to lower entrepreneurship.
- ❖ When income & savings are accounted for, the gap disappears.
- ❖ Implication: capital accumulation and financial depth matter.

Policy levers

- ❖ Financial inclusion products for micro-entrepreneurs.
- ❖ Matching grants tied to business plans.
- ❖ Returnee reintegration (training, mentoring, networks).
- ❖ Reduce regulatory risk; improve business climate

Takeaway

Remittances are not self-executing development finance: they need complementary policies.

ETF Research forum for Evidence-based Policies on Skills and Migration

9-10 June 2026

Thon Hotel EU, Brussels

Return Migration and Brain Circulation Comparative Policy Reflections from Türkiye, Serbia and Morocco

Prof. Dr. M. Gökay ÖZERİM

Director - Jean Monnet Center of Excellence on Diversity

Jean Monnet Chair on Migration

Yaşar University | İzmir, Türkiye



Research Questions & Methodological Framework

Moving beyond brain drain - treating skilled emigration as a multidimensional, dynamic process shaped by individual trajectories and institutional contexts.

RQ 1

How do Türkiye, Serbia and Morocco conceptualise and operationalise brain circulation within their return migration policies?

RQ 2

Which policy instruments are prioritised across skills recognition, entrepreneurship support, diaspora engagement and reintegration?

RQ 3

What structural gaps and good practices emerge from the comparison, and what policy lessons can be drawn for other ETF partner countries?

Research Design

Comparative qualitative - structured meta-analysis of secondary sources (2005–2025)

Sources

Peer-reviewed articles + institutional/policy documents (ETF, IOM, OECD, UNDP, ICMPD)

Databases

Scopus · Web of Science · National policy portals

Approach

Deductive - theoretical frameworks on brain circulation applied to cross-country policy analysis

Validity

Triangulation: academic sources + international organisation reports

Analytical Framework: Four Dimensions

across Türkiye · Serbia · Morocco

01

Skills Recognition

- › Credential recognition systems
- › Assessment of prior learning
- › Matching diaspora skills to domestic needs

02

Entrepreneurship Support

- › Access to finance & investment incentives
- › Diaspora business networks
- › Mentorship & start-up programmes

03

Diaspora Engagement

- › Diaspora ministries, councils & databases
- › Dual citizenship & overseas voting
- › Cultural & educational outreach

04

Reintegration Policies

- › Job placement & vocational training
- › Psychosocial support services
- › Social security portability

Case country responses and strategies matrix

Dimension	Türkiye (Candidate EU Neighbour)	Serbia (Western Balkans EU Candidate)	Morocco (Southern Mediterranean Partner)
Skills Recognition	Blue Card for ex-citizens; EU-aligned qualifications framework; TÜBİTAK “reverse brain drain” programmes; bureaucracy remains a barrier.	National Qualifications Agency; Returning Point platform; Law on Professions; improving EU alignment, limited administrative capacity.	Skills mapping ongoing; diaspora skills database planned; informed by 2014 National Skills Recognition project; no unified certification mechanism yet.
Entrepreneurship	FDI and innovation incentives (Technoparks, TÜBİTAK grants); limited diaspora-specific schemes; remittances less central today.	Diaspora Business Council; Link Up! Serbia mentoring; tax breaks and grants; bureaucracy and trust issues persist despite reforms.	FINCOME forum connects diaspora entrepreneurs; high self-employment among returnees; “Moroccans of the World” strategy supports diaspora investment, slow implementation.
Diaspora Engagement	YTB (since 2010); proactive transnational ties; Blue Card rights; diaspora voting since 2012; politicisation concerns.	Law on Diaspora (2009); Assembly & Council of Diaspora; Office within MFA; annual forums; focus on trust-building and symbolic inclusion.	2011 Constitution guarantees diaspora rights; MDCMRE ministry & CCME council; strong cultural programmes; coordination challenges among multiple agencies.
Reintegration	Türkiye’s Scientific and Technical Research Council of Türkiye (TÜBİTAK) 2232 fellowships for returning scientists; social security portability; limited general reintegration support; ad hoc programmes.	Comprehensive approach; Returning Point one-stop platform; Carta Serbica permits & tax incentives; EU/IOM vocational training projects.	NSIA & EU Mobility Partnership projects; training via ANAPEC; focus on skilled returnees; no central reintegration system yet.

ETF Research forum for Evidence-based Policies on Skills and Migration

9-10 June 2026

Thon Hotel EU, Brussels

Unlocking the Development Potential of Skilled Return Migrants in Nigeria's Labour Market

Author & Presenter: Nkiru Perpetua Duru

Co-Author: Victor Aihawu

Affiliation: Centre for Youths Integrated Development (CYID), Nigeria



To what extent do Nigeria's current reintegration systems enable skilled return migrants to contribute to labour market development and inclusive growth?

SUB-QUESTIONS



How do institutional arrangements shape reintegration outcomes?



How does labour market structure affect skills utilisation?



How do gendered experiences influence reintegration trajectories?



Where are the gaps between policy design and implementation?

Methodology: 25 qualitative interviews + documentary policy review

Systems and Labour Market

1 Reintegration is institutionally dense, but structurally fragmented

Evidence: Overlapping mandates, weak federal–state coordination, fragmented data, short donor cycles

Core Insight: Fragmentation — not funding is the primary systemic barrier

2 Labour market barriers are structural, not individual

Evidence: Returnees possess skills and entrepreneurial exposure but face weak labour absorption; no effective Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL); employer preference for formal certification

Key Takeaway: Less a skills deficit, more a system deficit

Gender and Policy Implications

3 Gender significantly shapes reintegration outcomes

Women face stigma, restricted capital access, occupational segmentation and trafficking-centred support models

Female returnees are often positioned as vulnerable beneficiaries, not economic actors

Core Conclusion: Return migration is a conditional development opportunity

Developmental gains depend on governance coherence + labour market alignment + social inclusion

Policy Question: *How can reintegration evolve into a labour-market-oriented national strategy?*

ETF Research forum for Evidence-based Policies on Skills and Migration

9-10 June 2026

Thon Hotel EU, Brussels

Reintegration Pathways and Skills Utilisation Among Qualified Albanian Return Migrants

Bresena Kopliku

University of Shkodra "Luigj Gurakuqi" | Albania

Erka Çaro

University of Tirana | Albania

Swisscontact | EAE



Under what conditions does highly skilled return migration translate into brain gain — and when does it risk becoming brain waste?



Professional profiles & motivations

Who returns, and why?



Barriers to reintegration

What institutional & social obstacles do returnees face?



Policy interventions

What enables qualified returnees to contribute to development?

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

RESEARCH DESIGN

Approach	Qualitative — in-depth interviews
Sample	15 highly skilled Albanian returnees
Period	January – April 2024
Locations	Tirana, Shkodra & online
Duration	60–90 min per interview
Analysis	Inductive-deductive thematic coding

SAMPLE PROFILE

15

returnees
interviewed

9

countries
returned from

40%

women in
sample

5–35 yrs

time spent
abroad

Sectors: Entrepreneurship · IT & Digital · Academia · Civic & Cultural · Freelance

MAIN FINDINGS

01 Return is Transnational, Not Terminal

Most returnees maintain hybrid identities and dual economic lives — working remotely for international employers while living in Albania. Brain circulation, not permanent return, is the dominant pattern.

02 Skills Underutilised in Public Sector

Academia and public administration offer the most barriers: non-meritocratic hiring, bureaucratic opacity and institutional inertia block qualified returnees. IT and entrepreneurs face far fewer constraints.

03 Informal Networks & Self-Reliance Substitute for Policy

Returnees act as their own reintegration agents, relying on personal networks and 'making-do' strategies. Without state support, they redirect energy to civic, entrepreneurial and transnational channels.

04 Policy Must Move Beyond 'Return vs. Drain'

Effective policy requires transparent recruitment, credential recognition, structured diaspora platforms and support for digital/remote workers — treating transnationalism as a structural feature, not a transitional phase.

Key takeaway: Brain circulation is already happening — policy must catch up to support it.

ETF Research forum for Evidence-based Policies on Skills and Migration

9-10 June 2026

Thon Hotel EU, Brussels

Estimating the Impact of Emigration on Labour Force Replacement Demand in the Ukrainian Labour Market

Volodymyr Sarioglo, Mykhailo Rozbytskyi

Ptoukha Institute for Demography and Life Quality Research

National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine



RESEARCH QUESTION

How does war-induced mass emigration reshape the structure of labour demand in Ukraine, and how can we quantify occupational losses to inform recovery policy?

Context & Motivation

Since February 2022, over **6.7 million people** have left Ukraine and at least **5 million** became internally displaced persons.

The labour force lost approximately **18.7%** of its pre-war composition by 2023 — corresponding to about 3.2 million persons from the economically active population.

Purpose of the article

The article discusses a methodological approach to determine the impact of large-scale labor migration processes on labor demand, in particular those caused by the war, which allowed to estimate the occupational and qualification characteristics of emigrants and the scale of employment replacement demand in Ukraine.

Multi-level Microsimulation Model

1

Estimation of emigration scale & characteristics

Total economically active emigrants; gender, age, occupational, regional distribution (UNHCR, IOM, State Border Service)

2

Pre-war labour force microlevel model creation

Microdata model based on LFS 2021 — age, gender, education, occupation, economic activity status, etc.

3

Labour force microlevel model updating after February 2022

Align with war onset; adjust for mobilisation effects and initial population structure changes

4

Simulation of the impact of emigration on the quantitative and qualitative composition of the labor force in Ukraine

Monte Carlo method with multiple replications; assign migration probabilities based on observed macro-trends

5

Analyse residual labour force & replacement demand

Estimation of the occupational composition changes; quantifying the number of workers needed to offset population outflow

MAIN FINDINGS

Labour Force Losses by Occupational Group, 2023

~2.9M

Employed persons lost

18.7%

Labour force reduction

~2.3M

White + blue collar losses

Occupational Losses

Managers, professionals & specialists:
over 1.1 million people lost

Skilled workers, equipment operators & elementary occupations:
about 1.2 million people lost

Trade & service sector:
up to 0.5 million people lost

Total loss: ~13–14% of pre-war economically active population (~17M persons)

Key Insights

Gender asymmetry: Female emigration in top groups (16–17%) far exceeded male rates (5–6%)

Brain drain: ~71% of working-age emigrants are women; ~70% hold higher education degrees

Most vulnerable sectors: engineers, IT, medical workers, educators, managers

Geography: concentrated in EU — Poland, Czech Republic, Central and Eastern Europe