

Migration for Development in the Western Balkans (MIDWEB): Final Evaluation

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List of Abbreviations	
BAMF	German Federal Office for Migration
CISO	Youth Employment Resource Centers Centri Za Informisanje Savjetovanje I Obuku
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISCO	International Standard Classification of Occupations
LFS	Labour Force Survey
M&D	Migration and Development
MARRI	Migration, Asylum, Refugees Regional Initiative
MIDWEB	Migration for Development in the Western Balkans
MSC	Migrant Service Centre
NES	National Employment Service
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
PDOS	Pre-Departure Orientation Seminar
SC	Steering Committee
TOR	Terms of Reference
TRQN	Temporary Return in Qualified Nationals
TVR	Temporary and Virtual Return
WAPES	World Association of Public Employment Services
WB	Western Balkans
wiiw	The Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies
YERP	Youth Employability and Retention Programme

Executive Summary

The Migration for Development in the Western Balkans (MIDWEB) Project ran from the 1st February 2011 until the 30th November 2012. The main countries of interest under the MIDWEB project were Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo under UNSCR No 1244, Montenegro and Serbia.

The overall objective of the MIDWEB project, as specified in the project TOR was:

“To support informed migration from the Western Balkans to the EU Member States and to contribute to the positive impact of labour migration on socio-economic development in the Western Balkans.

The specific purposes are:

- 1) To strengthen the capacity of Migrant Service Centres in the Western Balkans in order to facilitate the entry of potential migrants to the labour markets in the EU and reinsertion of returning skilled migrants.
- 2) To provide opportunities for return of skills and human capital and foster partnerships between countries of origin and destination” (IOM, TOR).

The specific objectives of this evaluation are:

1. To assess the extent to which the project implementation was effective with regard to expected results and indicators, and achieved its objectives/project purposes.
2. To examine the relevance of the selected target group and if the project reached them effectively as planned. The evaluation will also examine if the project reached any indirect beneficiaries and if it was relevant and effective.
3. To analyse the effectiveness of the collaboration between main stakeholders in meeting the expected results.
4. To evaluate the support received by local institutions and its integration within local social and cultural conditions.
5. To assess the efficiency of the project implementation.
6. To evaluate the durability of the project's results once external support ceases.

The results have been organized according to the key areas of focus of the project:

- Migrant Service Centres
- Temporary and Virtual Return
- Project Partners and Collaboration
- Efficiency of the project
- Sustainability of the project

Summary of Key Findings:

Objective 1: To assess the extent to which the project implementation was effective with regard to expected results and indicators, and achieved its objectives/project purposes.

Expected Results 1: Information on legal migration opportunities for work or study disseminated to potential migrants, including students.

- It is clear that information on legal migration opportunities for work or study has been disseminated to potential migrants, including students through the MSC networks in all project sites.

Expected Results 2: Potential migrants' ability to access adequate employment abroad improved.

- There is discontent regarding the extent to which potential migrants' ability to access adequate employment abroad has been improved. In general, it is not felt that MIDWEB has significantly increased opportunities for potential migrants to access adequate employment abroad.

Expected Results 3: Institutional capacity of information services strengthened and consolidated.

- The trainings provided to MSC staff and consular staff was recognized by both groups as useful, and served to increase the institutional capacity of information services.

Expected Results 4: Information on skills shortages gathered and disseminated to potential migrants as well as relevant institutions.

- A database on skills shortages has been disseminated to relevant institutions and is available online for access by potential migrants.

Expected Results 5: Links to diasporas and skilled migrants abroad created.

- Outreach was conducted by IOM offices in Europe to create links to the diaspora and skilled migrants abroad. The primary purpose of this outreach was to attract participants for TVR. It is evident that the TVR component has led to the establishment of some links between the diaspora and skilled migrants abroad.

Expected Results 6: Skills transfer facilitated through temporary return

- Through the 71 TVR assignments, in the majority of cases, skills were transferred from the diaspora to home country institutions. The extent to which skills have been transferred through the TVR assignments depends on the nature of the placement.

Expected Results 7: Best practices in institutional partnerships between countries of destination and origin highlighted and promoted.

- The project has incorporated institutions in both destination and origin countries that have worked collaboratively and effectively together through the project duration. The International Conference Fostering Partnerships for Return of Skills and Human Capital to the Western Balkans took place in Budapest from October 19th – 20th 2011. A total number of 68 governmental and non-governmental stakeholders from the Western Balkans and the EU Member States came together to discuss challenges and constraints to the permanent return of qualified nationals in the countries of origin. However, it is not clear in how far some of these created sustainable networks.

Expected Results 8: Capacity of WB consular services to support labour migrants strengthened.

- A total of 67 consular staff have been trained to date and the most commonly cited benefit of the trainings were knowledge acquisition on a range of topics including labour migration, migrant rights, the role of a labour attache; and how to assist irregular migrants. Focus group participants unanimously agreed that the consular trainings had increased their ability to do their jobs.

Expected Results 9: Best practices in skills transfer programmes identified and promoted.

- A workshop entitled Skills Transfer Programmes and their Contribution to Development was held on 13-14 November in Sarajevo that discussed best practices in skills transfer programmed by bringing together key actors from all of the countries involved in the project.

Objective 2: To examine the relevance of the selected target group and if the project reached them effectively as planned. The evaluation will also examine if the project reached any indirect beneficiaries and if it was relevant and effective.

Target groups of the project are defined in the Terms of Reference as: "a) potential migrants from the region, returning skilled migrants and migrant communities abroad; b) policymakers, National Employment Services, and EU MS institutions dealing with migrants from the WB". Each group will be assessed in this section.

- *Potential Migrants from the Region*- The evaluation has shown that the project has effectively engaged with both potential migrants from the region, including both labour migrants and students.
- *Returning Skilled Migrants*- Returnees have not been effectively reached through the project. This is not necessarily due to any action or inaction on the part of MSCs since information is available should a returnee require it, however, in different project locations there are different reasons why returnees do not come to the MSCs in general. Possible reasons for this are a lack of demand due to limited returnees in an area, the fact that other programmes (by some governments) are addressing returnee's needs in the WB (often the MSCs refer returnees to these service), and some returnees have strong familial and social ties and need less support.
- *Migrant Communities Abroad* - Migrant communities abroad have been effectively reached through information sessions, meetings with Diaspora groups, the networks of diasporas in embassies, as well as through advertisements online, in magazines and on Albanian Speaking TV/Radio stations.
- *Policymakers*- Policymakers in the WB have been effectively reached through the project. This is evidenced by the fact that MSCs have been embedded into the National Strategy's on migration in Serbia, Albania, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia .
- *National Employment Services* - The MSCs operate within the NES, who have thus been effectively reached through staff trainings and consistent information flow to the NES.

- *Indirect Beneficiaries:*
 - Family and friends of MSC Users
 - Immigrants: In both Albania and Montenegro work permits were issued by MSCs.
 - High School Students: In Bosnia & Herzegovina, cooperation CISO and MSC staff has facilitated an extensive campaign in high schools across the country.

Objective 3: To analyse the effectiveness of the collaboration between main stakeholders in meeting the expected results

- Coordination between the main stakeholders appears to have been effective and well managed. There were almost no complaints regarding collaboration highlighted during the fieldwork.

Objective 4: To evaluate the support received by local institutions and its integration within local social and cultural conditions

- Under the TVR component local institutions received support in terms of having a TVR participant at their institution. TVR participants worked well within local social and cultural conditions and host institutions were positive regarding hosting a TVR participant. The MIDWEB project also partnered with other local institutions and projects where appropriate.
- The main support received by local institutions under the programme related to capacity building through trainings and regional events bringing together different stakeholders. Policy makers were indirect beneficiaries. The topic of labour migration (and through this M&D) (and a shift from security/border management) has been talked about a lot more in the region because of the events organised under the project.

Objective 5: To assess the efficiency of the project implementation.

- It is difficult to make concrete observations about the efficiency of project implementation as many of the expected impacts are long term in nature. Nevertheless, the overall implementation of the MIDWEB project seems to have been executed in line with key objectives and targets. The management structure seems to have worked efficiently and key stakeholders raised no concerns regarding the collaboration between or with IOM Budapest, IOM the Hague and the IOM offices in the 6 project sites. Despite what is arguably a limited budget for such an ambitious project, it seems that the budget has been used appropriately and, where the goals overlapped with other projects, partnerships (such as with CISOs in Bosnia) increased efficiency. For equipping MSCs efforts were made to source further financing and MSC staff were happy to receive some new equipment or office space to allow them to function better.
- The TVR component could have been managed more efficiently as a lot of time was spent in searching for suitable host institutions. This was voiced in different interviews stating that they spent so long trying to get people on board that they ended up pitching applicants to hosts as opposed to the intended matching making process. Some hosts wanted to browse CVs to have the feeling they are getting the best

candidate because of mistrust in getting an employee for free, not wanting to share company secrets, expectation that they would have to be given employment afterwards and additionally that there is already a highly skilled unemployed population in the country. Nevertheless the project has provided new experiences to personnel in all project sites (with the exception of Bosnia and Herzegovina) and it is thus hoped that these pathfinder experiences will influence the future efficiency of similar projects.

Objective 6: To evaluate the durability of the project's results once external support ceases.

- MSCs are integrated within NES structures across all project locations and, in many cases, have been tailored to specific country needs. This integration shows the political willingness and cooperation for such initiatives within the region. Currently the majority of MSC counselors work part-time on their tasks in MSCs with the remainder of their time spent in NES. It is anticipated that this balance will be tipped towards NES duties after the project is finished which decreases service provision within MSCs. Nevertheless, it is likely that MSCs will continue to exist although their form, focus and service level is not guaranteed.
- Without regular updates, the information that has been consolidated and developed into information guides will quickly become outdated. There is an unanswered question relating to who will ensure that this information remains relevant and useful for MSC users
- Finally, with regards to the TVR component, there is no doubt that there is a will for this component to continue among host institutions, government partners in the WB as well as by IOM field offices. Given other priorities in the area of migration, such as IDPs and permanent returnees, however, it is unlikely to attract domestic funding. For this component to be sustainable, some form of external funding is still required.

Introduction

The Migration for Development in the Western Balkans (MIDWEB) project was designed to strengthen and develop the capacity of an existing network of Migrant Service Centres (MSCs) in the Western Balkans to disseminate information about legal channels for migration to labour migrants and to provide opportunities for the return of skills and human capital. This is intended to contribute towards the development of the Western Balkans and to be of benefit to both the migrant and their country of origin. MSCs were originally established during the EC Aeneas 2006-funded project “Capacity Building, Information and Awareness Raising towards Promoting Orderly Migration in the Western Balkans¹”.

The MIDWEB project ran from the 1st February 2011 until the 30th November 2012. The main countries of interest under the MIDWEB project were Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo under UNSCR No 1244. The primary target groups of the project were 1) potential migrants from the region; returning skilled migrants and migrant communities abroad; 2) policymakers including Ministries of Labour, Interior and Foreign Affairs; National Employment Services, particularly employees of the MSCs; 3) EU MS institutions dealing with migrants from the WB. The majority (90%) of the funding for the project has come from the European Commission IPA 2009 Multi-beneficiary Programme 2. Funding was also been received from the IOM Development Fund, the German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, Centre for International Migration and Development (CIM), and Austrian Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection (BMASK) through priority area 9 of the Danube Strategy (Investing in People & Skills).

Key project partners are the Migration, Asylum, Refugees Regional Initiative (MARRI), the Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies (wiiw) and the German Federal Office for Migration (BAMF). MARRI is an intergovernmental body that promotes cooperation with regard to migration related issues in the Western Balkans. Their involvement primarily involved coordinating governmental authorities from both the Western Balkans and the EU to share experiences and best practices as well as developing institutional partnerships. Together with the IOM, MARRI assisted in organising a roundtable discussion on socio-economic reintegration. They are also involved in exchange meetings between consular authorities in the EU Member States involved and assisted in identifying experts for this. MARRI will also have a key role in the future sustainability of the project by ensuring the continuation of networks established during the project and by providing updated materials and input for the website. wiiw was responsible for developing and programming the database of skill shortages and BAMF worked with Western Balkan diasporas in Germany relating to the Temporary and Virtual Return (TVR) component of the project. MARRI and BAMF were represented in the Steering Committee (SC).

Other associated partners include the World Association of Public Employment Services (WAPES) and country specific partners.²

¹ This project also included the Croatia as a focus country, however Croatia was not included in MIDWEB.

² See Appendix 1

Project Overview

Objectives

The overall objective of the MIDWEB project, as specified in the project TOR was:

“To support informed migration from the Western Balkans to the EU Member States and to contribute to the positive impact of labour migration on socio-economic development in the Western Balkans.

The specific purposes are:

- 1) To strengthen the capacity of Migrant Service Centres in the Western Balkans in order to facilitate the entry of potential migrants to the labour markets in the EU and reinsertion of returning skilled migrants.
- 2) To provide opportunities for return of skills and human capital and foster partnerships between countries of origin and destination” (IOM, TOR).

Key Components

There are two key components within the MIDWEB project: 1) Labour Migration and 2) Return Migration. Component 1 of the project involved the promotion and support of cooperation initiatives between relevant actors in EU Member States and in the Western Balkans to facilitate the entry of potential migrants to the labour markets in the EU and the Western Balkans. Component 2 involved the development of measures to facilitate the return of skilled labour forces, reintegrating them into their home society, and supporting the dissemination of newly acquired skills. The ways in which these components were implemented are outlined below.

Labour Migration

MSCs were established during the EC AENEAS 2006-funded project “Capacity Building, Information and Awareness Raising towards Promoting Orderly Migration in the Western Balkans”. 19 MSCs opened throughout the duration of the MIDWEB project bring the total number to 62. Under the first component, the intention was to strengthen cross border inter-service cooperation to enable the dissemination of accurate and current information on the available channels for legal migration as well as providing warnings on the risks of irregular migration. To achieve this, the focus was on strengthening the capacity of MSCs to ensure their long term sustainability beyond the project duration. The MSCs provide information regarding vacancies domestically and in the EU. Additionally, a database of labour markets needs in both the EU and the WB was created and is available to potential migrants through the projects website. The website also provides country guides and other relevant information to potential migrants. Finally information was disseminated to students regarding study opportunities, paid internships and trainings in the EU.

Return Migration

The second component was, for the large part, implemented through Temporary and Virtual Return (TVR) assignments, which were managed by IOM the Netherlands with the support of field offices in Austria, Germany, Italy, Switzerland and the UK. The MIDWEB project offered 61 temporary assignment opportunities to qualified professions originally from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and UNSC Resolution 1244 administered Kosovo who were permanently residing in Austria, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the UK. Participants returned to their country of origin for up to two months to share theirs skills and expertise to build capacity in selected priority sectors with the goal of supporting the development of the origin country. Participants received an allowance for their time spent in the country of origin. The key approach used was the training of trainers (TOT) method, which involved curriculum development, awareness-raising activities, assessment studies, practical skills courses, management advice and other appropriate methodologies. It was not intended that diaspora members would fill regular vacancies through the TVR component. In addition to this, 10 virtual return assignments were organised which utilised e-learning and video conferencing technology.

A second element of the return migration component was that MSCs would provide support to returning migrants (long-term return migrants, not TVRs) to assist in their reintegration. This support was intended to include information on local job opportunities, reorientation on the countries' institutions and referrals to vocational training courses.

Intended Results

The intended results of the MIDWEB, as outlined in the project TOR were:

- “information on legal migration opportunities for work or study disseminated to potential migrants, including students;
- potential migrants’ ability to access adequate employment abroad improved;
- institutional capacity of information services strengthened and consolidated;
- information on skills shortages gathered and disseminated to potential migrants as well as relevant institutions;
- links to diasporas and skilled migrants abroad created;
- skills transfer facilitated through temporary return;
- best practices in institutional partnerships between countries of destination and origin highlighted and promoted;
- capacity of WB consular services to support labour migrants strengthened;
- cooperation between EU MS consular services in WB and labour institutions in WB enhanced;
- best practices in skills transfer programmes identified and promoted.” (IOM, TOR).

Evaluation Overview

Objectives of the Evaluation

The specific objectives that will be addressed in this evaluation are:

1. To assess the extent to which the project implementation was effective with regard to expected results and indicators, and achieved its objectives/project purposes.
2. To examine the relevance of the selected target group and if the project reached them effectively as planned. The evaluation will also examine if the project reached any indirect beneficiaries and if it was relevant and effective.
3. To analyse the effectiveness of the collaboration between main stakeholders in meeting the expected results.
4. To evaluate the support received by local institutions and its integration within local social and cultural conditions.
5. To assess the efficiency of the project implementation.
6. To evaluate the durability of the project's results once external support ceases.

Methodology

In order to meet the specific objectives of the evaluation, a mixed-methods approach was adopted that included interviews, field visits, focus groups and a documentation review. The documentation used in the documentation review included: MSC client feedback questionnaire results overview, general project documents, the evaluation of the EC AENEAS 2006-funded project, progress reports (7) including annexes with photographs, statistics and other supporting information, trainings summaries and evaluations, lists of TRV assignments and host institutions; and the initial call for proposals from EC. These documents were primarily used to provide background information to the researchers although some use has been made of data included in these documents.

Field visits were conducted in all 6 project sites. On average 2 working days were spent in each project location. Table 1 provides an overview of the number of interviews and focus groups implemented in each country and includes the number of participants in brackets. It should be noted that field visits took place in the capital cities, with the exception of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia where two cities were visited. By only requesting samples of users from MSCs in capital cities we limit the analysis since MSCs often adapt their functions to local needs and therefore may have different regional foci.

In each country, an individual or a group interview was conducted with the national coordinators and other project staff based at the IOM mission in the country as well as with a steering committee member, TVR host institutions and MSC staff. Focus groups with participants in national consular training sessions were arranged in Kosovo under UNSCR 1244 and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. In addition, an interview with project partner MARRI, was conducted in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Table 1: Overview of Project Field Visits

<i>Number of Interviews/Focus Groups (participants)</i>	Albania	Bosnia & Herzegovina	F.Y.R Macedonia	Kosovo under UNSCR 1244	Montenegro	Serbia	Total
National Coordinator & IOM Project Staff	1(3)	1(2)	1 (2)	1 (1)	1 (2)	1(2)	6(11)
Steering Committee Member	1(1)	1(1)	1(1)	1(1)	1(1)	1(1)	6(6)
Project Partners	n/a	n/a	1 (2) MARRI	n/a	n/a	n/a	1(2)
MSC Staff Interviews	1(6)	1(3)	2 (2+2)	1 (1)	1 (1)	1(2)	7(17)
MSC Users Focus Group	1 (2)	1(3)	2 (2+7)	2 (5+6)	1 (8)	1(7)	8 (40)
Return Migrant Focus Group	1 (2)	0	1 (3)	0	0	0	2 (5)
TVR Host Institution	3(1+2+1)	1(1)	1 (1)	2 (1+1)	1(1)	1(1)	9(10)
Consular Staff Focus Group	n/a	0	1(7)	1(4)	0	0	2(11)
Total	8(18)	5(10)	10(29)	8(20)	5(13)	5(13)	41(102)

The focus groups with MSC users varied across the sample. In general, focus groups with MSC users represented students who had been abroad for seasonal work, individuals interested in labour migration (but had not yet experienced migration), and individuals interested in studying abroad. The focus groups with return migrants were poorly attended, as the MSCs serve few return migrants. Incentives for participation were provided for focus group participants in Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia at a rate of approximately €10 euros per participant.

Two focus groups were held with participants of consular trainings implemented as part of the MIDWEB project. The focus group in Skopje, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, involved 7 of the 13 participants of the Consular training on the 28th-29th May 2012 in Skopje. Some of the participants had already been assigned to diplomatic missions abroad. Those present were primarily member of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Consular Services. In Pristina, 3 of 7 participants from the training on 17-18th July 2012 were present. They all belonged to the Department of Employment and Labour. It was regrettable that members of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that had participated in the trainings were not able to attend the focus groups.

Where possible, third party translators were used for focus groups with MSC users and return migrants. This was to limit potential bias and to ensure that participants were able to speak freely about their experiences. All other interviews were conducted in either English or with the translation support of an IOM staff member. In Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, IOM staff provided all translation services where required.

In addition to the field visits in the WB, interviews were also conducted with the Project Coordinator from IOM Budapest, the TVR Component Manager and a Staff Member at IOM the Netherlands, with a representative from the German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) and from the Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies. Additionally 9 telephone interviews were carried out with TVR participants. An additional 4 TVR participants, currently on assignments in the field sites were also met and interviewed.

Table 2: Additional Interviews Overview

Interview	Key Details	Location
Project Manager	1 Participant	Skype (to IOM Budapest)
TVR Component Manager and Staff	2 Participants	Den Haag (IOM Office)
TVR Participants	9 Participants (3 participants were also met during field visits)	Via Skype/Telephone
Project Partner 1 (wiiw)	1 Participant	Via Skype
Project Partner 2 (BAMF)	1 Participant	Email

Results

This section will present key findings from this evaluation in five areas: (1) MSCs, (2) the TVR component, (3) project partners and collaboration, (4) project efficiency, and (5) the future project sustainability.

Migrant Service Centres

This section will provide an overview of the general activities of the MSC, discuss the trainings provided for MSC staff, examine the users of the MSCs and discuss whether the MSCs are achieving the following objectives of the MIDWEB project:

- potential migrants' ability to access adequate employment abroad improved
- information on legal migration opportunities for work or study disseminated to potential migrants, including students;
- institutional capacity of information services strengthened and consolidated;
- information on skills shortages gathered and disseminated to potential migrants as well as relevant institutions

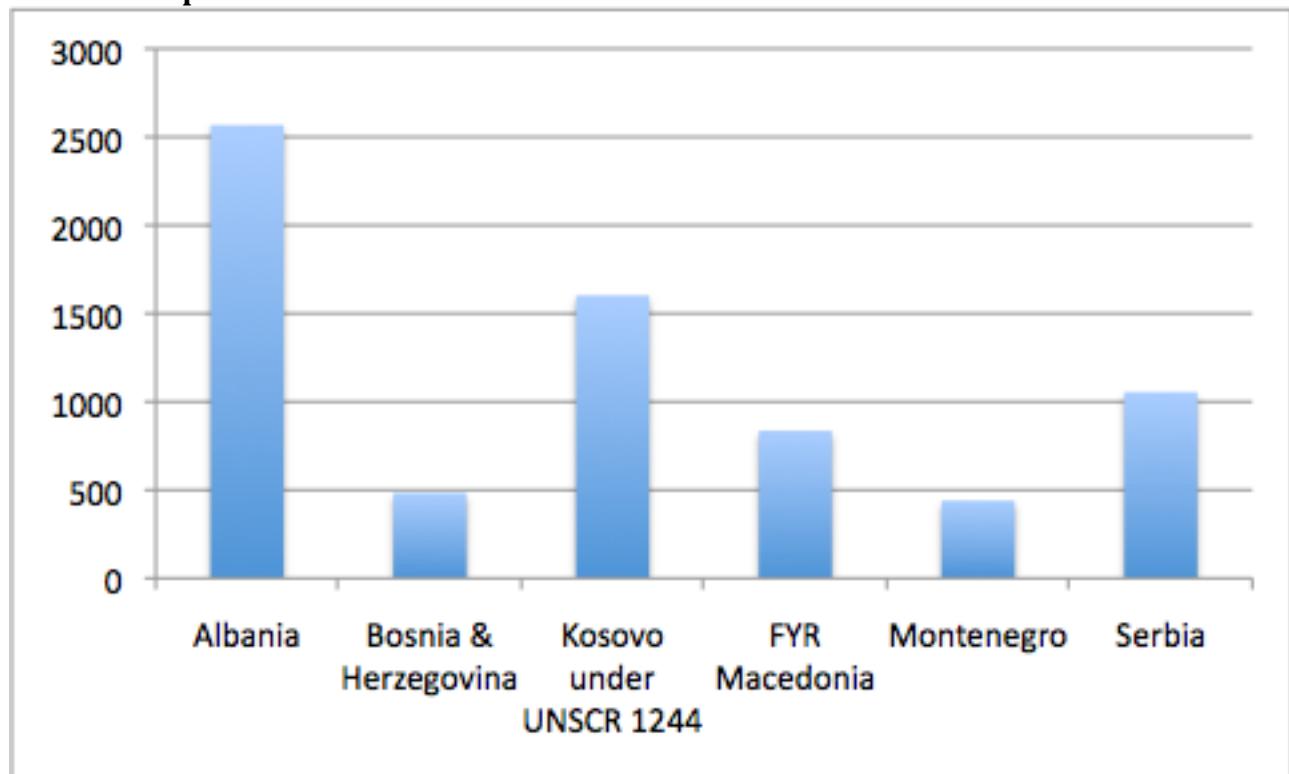
Table 3 provides an overview of the number of MSCs established both under the previous EC AENEAS 2006 project as well as under MIDWEB. It is clear that, in all countries the MSC network expanded under MIDWEB with the exception of Albania, where the MSCs (know as Migration Counters) have existed since 2002.

Table 3: Overview of MSC Network in the Western Balkans

Country	MSC prior to MIDWEB	MSCs at end of MIDWEB
Albania	36 (12 regional centres and 24 local centres)	36 (12 regional centres and 24 local centres)
Bosnia & Herzegovina	2	5
the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	2	4
Kosovo under UNSCR 1244	1	7
Montenegro	1	3 (+1 planned)
Serbia	1	7

It is challenging to gain concrete details on the number of clients using the MSCs. Often visitors to the MSCs do not like to register when receiving information and are thus not included in the MSC user statistics. It is, therefore, expected that the actual number of users is higher than those presented in Figure 1 below. Figure 1 shows the number of clients registered at MSCs per project site from the start of the MIDWEB project up to 15th September 2012.

Figure 1: Number of Clients Registered at MSC per project site during MIDWEB up to 15th September 2012



In Appendix 2 an overview of the reported activities of MSCs across the region is presented by reporting period. Prior to reporting period 3 (July-September 2011) most activities related to the selection, refurbishment and equipping of new MSCs, staff training and some initial preparation work. The following activities have been implemented in all project sites:

- Pre-departure orientation trainings
- Employability training in the area of CV writing and interviewing skills

- Student outreach: to provide information and raise awareness of MIDWEB

The actual provision of services for returnees was limited in the WB region; however, this was not surprising. It was often suggested that returning migrants do not require the same types of information as prospective migrants since many still have family or friends in their country of origin and, as such, may only approach an MSC for additional services such as vocational training or financial resources. There were however actions taken to reach potential return migrants in their respective countries of destination. A specialized leaflet for returning migrants was developed in the framework of the project. The leaflet highlighted services available for returnees in their countries of origin, and were distributed to migrant community groups and organizations, embassies and consulates of the Western Balkans (WB), diaspora focal points and associations in the EU and Switzerland.

It should also be noted that MSCs are often providing services beyond the original framework of MIDWEB. For example, in Montenegro and Albania, MSC staff also issue work permits to immigrants and therefore their profile of clients differ.

MSC Staff Training

Training took place for MSC staff nationally and regionally. Regional training for MSC Counselors on 'Providing a Migration Information Service' was held in Tirana 27-30 June 2012. The general idea of the regional training is based on the 'Training of Trainers' model whereby trainees return to their respective project locations and implement training to transmit the knowledge gained to other members of staff. The most commonly cited benefit of regional training was the chance to network and exchange knowledge and experiences from other countries. Other benefits included increased capacity to perform the role of a MSC counselor and better understanding of the issues that can face migrants in destination countries. National training had been implemented in all project locations. National training was useful for understanding the practicalities of running a MSC and also for increasing general knowledge of migration issues.

There is a will for similar trainings to continue in the future and this is likely to happen in those countries where the MSCs are integrated into the NES. This is important, particularly for new staff. Most MSC staff interviewed for the project had been working in this position since its initiation in 2008. In Albania, MSCs preexisted EC projects in the region, thus many staff in Albania have more experience in the area of labour migration. There were, however, some instances where staff had recently joined the MSC. Where this was the case, the previous MSC counselor was involved in the training of the new MSC staff member. There is a concern that, without future trainings, staff turnover would undo the benefits that have occurred through these trainings.

MSC Users

It is difficult to make generalisations about the types of clients visiting MSCs since regional differences exist within countries. It was often the case that MSCs in border regions report more returnees. This was directly observed in the case of Strumica, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and advised by MSC staff during a focus group with 6 MSC staff members from across Albania in Tirana. MSC Staff members were however asked to give an overview of the types of clients they received in their interviews.

Table 4: Characteristics of MSC Users by Country

Country	Characteristics of MSC Users
Albania	In Shkodra it is estimated that 50% of MSC users are returnees, 20% are potential migrants and 30% are immigrants. In Durres equal numbers of returnees and potential migrants were reported although in 2012 the proportion of returnees has been increasing due to the crisis in Europe. In Korcha and Kruja clients were primarily returnees and in Tirana most clients were immigrants. Details of demographic characteristics were not provided largely due to time constraints during the interview.
Bosnia & Herzegovina	Mostly people between 30-35 who are unsatisfied with the renumeration in their current employment (statistics of registered users: between 20-35, 60% male, 40% highly skilled, 70% unemployed)
the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Primarily those who wish to migrate abroad, often students or newly graduated. Higher numbers of returnees in Strumica but also may young unemployed graduates looking for work or study opportunities abroad.
Kosovo under UNSCR 1244	Mostly young people (average age 24) who want to go abroad for study or work. An evaluation from the AENEAS project found that the average age of a MSC user was between 20-25, mostly single, unemployed people from rural areas of Kosovo and many had previous migration experience as asylum seekers/refugees during the conflict in Kosovo.
Montenegro	Mostly young people who want to upgrade their skills through education or employment abroad and immigrants. From January to October 2012, 18,000 work permits had been issued through MSCs in Montenegro. While not delivered under the scope of the MIDWEB project, this was reported as a key activity by MSC staff.
Serbia	The majority are unemployed (80%) in both Belgrade and Novi Sad, most have no prior migration experience and are generally young and highly skilled.

In general the majority of MSC users looking to migrate are young, unemployed, university graduates looking for employment.

Labour Migrants

Potential labour migrants were the most common type of participant in focus groups across the field sites. With the exception of the focus group in Kosovo, where all respondents had been abroad temporarily through the centre and in Skopje where the participants were interested in information regarding scholarships abroad, the general expectation, when coming to the MSC was to find a job. On average MSC users falling under the category of labour migrants were 32 years old and three quarters of them were unemployed. High unemployment rates were a key issue highlighted in all project sites. Of those who were employed it was common that they were either self-employed or were employed but dissatisfied with the remuneration in their current position. Approximately 65 percent were male. In most project sites, MSCs are physically located in National Employment Centres (NES), and when asked where participants had heard about the MSC, the most common response was through posters or a referral when they were in a NES, although many also found the website while searching for opportunities abroad.

In general people came to the MSC with the expectation of finding employment abroad: “*for every job-seeker, what he likes most is to find a job.*” (MSC User Focus Group). It was also

highlighted in several MSC staff that clients visiting the centre often expected that the MSC staff could provide them direct assistance in procuring a job abroad: “*the majority of MSC users are interested in actual job placement abroad or concrete job offers, this is also what they often assume to get in the MSC*” (MSC Staff interview). Several MSC staff explained that a large part of their job is explaining to people what the function of the MSC actually is. When asked about the services they had received most were content and many MSC users actually praised the MSC staff for taking their time and assisting them as opposed to rushing them (this was reported to be a common experience at other state run institutions in the region). Additionally those who had participated in trainings were generally satisfied. A key observation from these focus groups is that there is a disjoint between the role of an MSC on paper, and what MSC users expected from the service. While there were no complaints about staff and the way in which the services are delivered, there were complaints relating to concrete opportunities to work abroad. A common criticism of the centres was that they provided information on how to legally migrate but that this information often confirmed ineligibility and, as such, it was felt that more had to be done to create opportunities for labour migration from the region either through further visa liberalisation or through bilateral agreements. Entry into the EU was also mentioned as a possible solution for these problems. There was a clear wish for the MSC to act more as an intermediary and to facilitate the job search for potential migrants.

Students

The primary ways in which students have been reached with information about the services offered under the MIDWEB project were information sessions held on campus and fliers, posters and other promotional materials placed around university campuses and in student dormitories. Often information sessions have been targeted at specific student groups but general meetings have also taken place. For example 70 student nurses attended an information session in Albania. The key information delivered in these sessions related to the services of the MSCs, and procedures for a regulated and legal migration as per different countries of destination including details of visa free travel procedures. Additionally brochures and other promotional material were disseminated. In general MSC staff felt that these sessions had been successful.

In Bosnia & Herzegovina, cooperation between CISO and MSC counselors has facilitated an extensive outreach campaign to inform secondary school students in Bosnia and Herzegovina about the dangers of illegal migration. During these sessions secondary school students were also informed about the benefits of legal migration and what is needed to work or study abroad. These activities have been an important focus during the MIDWEB implementation and due to its success these activities are currently planned to continue in the future. In the next few months CISO and MSC counselors will provide all students at five secondary schools with information sessions on legal and illegal migration and opportunities to work or study abroad. Besides presentations the CISO and MSC counselors will show a movie on the dangers of human trafficking. The rationale behind this outreach is to educate young people about both the support available to them through MSCs and to raise general awareness about legal migration routes.



Outreach to Students: Pristina University

Since the MIDWEB project started 351 students have been sent from Kosovo under UNSCR 1244 to do temporary work placements in Germany and they have all been processed through the MSC. All 11 student participants that took part in focus groups had been to Germany through this programme. The average age was 22.2 years old and the majority (63.6%) were male. Most of the participants (72.7%) had previous migration experience and the most common reason for this migration was to seek refuge in Germany during the conflict in Kosovo. This group fit the general profile of MSC users in Kosovo under UNSCR 1244 given by the MSC staff and IOM National Coordinator. The majority of participants had heard about the MSC from advertisements around the university campus (63.6%) and the remainder had heard about the MSC through family or friends. The primary reason for visiting the MSC was to find out more information about the practicalities of working or studying abroad and they were interested in these work opportunities as a way to finance their studies, as there are no opportunities for them in Kosovo under UNSCR 1244.

There was a strong sense of gratitude towards the MSC staff in both focus groups and several examples were given of ways in which the staff member had exceeded their expectations by providing services over and above those expected from the MSC. There was general agreement that the information provided, particularly relating to arranging accommodation in the destination, facilitated their stay abroad. Participants also stated that one of the most useful pieces of information they received prior to departure was cautions that the work would not be easy and that they would need to be responsible and face obstacles in their migration. While the information provided did not determine their decision to go abroad, for many it gave them more secure feelings and therefore reinforced their decision to move. It was also highlighted that, through these temporary placements, many students were able to raise the necessary funds to finance their next year of study in Kosovo, and, if given the opportunity again, would opt to go abroad again for the same reason.

Almost all of the participants had either attended an information session on campus or taken part in PDOS at the MSC in Pristina. For most these sessions provided them all of the necessary information to organise their time abroad however it was explained that '*the door was always open if we had further questions*' (Pristina Focus Group 1). There were no complaints regarding these sessions other than that the session on campus was overcrowded

and noisy and thus that further sessions should be planned to meet demand. When asked for improvements to the services provided at the MSC the majority agreed that it would be better if similar opportunities were available to students with other language skills such as English but such agreements do currently exist between Kosovo under UNSCR 1244 and other EU countries. The MSCs in Kosovo are currently hoping to extend a similar offer for students to go to Switzerland in the future. The participants also suggested that more MSCs be opened in Kosovo under UNSCR 1244 to make the services more accessible to other students.

Returnees

From the outset of the evaluation, it was advised that accessing return migrants would be challenging. This was due to a general perception that MSCs provided fewer services than are required for returning migrants and, therefore, that few returnees come to MSCs. Many return programmes have a financial component that can act as an incentive for returnees, which was not available under the MIDWEB project. In addition to this, the information available for returnees at MSCs did not differ significantly from those given to potential migrants in destination countries. It was suggested that, as many returning migrants still have familial and social ties to the country, this kind of service is not necessary for the vast majority of returning migrants. In addition, many projects already exist (majority managed by IOM) that provide returning migrants with reintegration support. There were also specific reasons cited in each project site regarding the reasons for not be able to arrange return migrant focus groups.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the IOM offices received reports from the MSCs that returning migrants were not using the services. When the MSC staff was asked about this, they stated that they had information available for returning migrants that could be utilized but that it was rare for a returning migrant to approach the employment service, let alone the MSC, and that, in general returning migrants were not visible. In Montenegro no sessions were provided to returnees due to a lack of data on returning migrants. The general impression given was that there were not many returnees, and that those who had returned could not be identified as they possessed normal documents and approached the employment services in the same way as non migrants. In both Serbia and Albania, the MSC acts as a referral point for returning migrants. In Albania this linked to the Strategy on Reintegration of Returned Albanian Citizens 2010-2015 in which Migration Counters (MSC equivalent) form part of the Reintegration Support Mechanism. In this strategy document the Migration Counter provides referrals to different services available for returnees such as psychological and social support, vocational training courses and provides information on their rights. In Albania a high proportion of MSC clients were returning migrants. In Serbia, however, it was advised that few returnees approach the MSC, and those that do are primarily seeking financial support. The MSC staff in Serbia advised that only 2 returnees had made contact with the centre in the previous 6 months. In one case assistance was provided though the MSC counsellor calling to a health insurance provider to obtain information that the returnee was not able to obtain through personal calls to the company. In Kosovo under UNSCR 1244, returnees were also assisted under other programmes and therefore few approached MSCs.

In Albania, a group interview was conducted with a couple that had returned after 5 years in Greece. They returned because of low employment opportunities in Greece and since returning the male had found employment but the female was still seeking stable employment. They first heard about the centre when crossing the border back into Albania but also saw the posters with they went to the National Employment Centre to register themselves. They visited the MSC primarily to get information about employment and

healthcare. The woman had taken a vocational training course after being referred by the MSC. They liked that the MSC staff always helped them as much as they could, accompanied them to other institutions and explained how to do things. They disliked the initial waiting times but after their first visit were able to arrange appointments for subsequent visits. In terms of reintegration, there was the sense that the centre had assisted in reorienting them to life back in Albania, as, from their perspective, much had changed, however, they advised that this process is still ongoing.

In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, a group interview with 3 participants was carried out in Strumica, near to the Greek border. The migration experiences of this group varied. One 20 year old male student had worked in Switzerland as a seasonal worker in the summer of 2012. The other male participant had spent 3 summers working as a seasonal worker in Bulgaria. The female participant had worked in Switzerland for 2 years, 8 years ago. They had all participated in a vocational training course in hospitality management for 8 weeks in May and June of 2012. The training was focused on the basics of hospitality: how to set a table, how to clean glasses, how to manage staff and so forth. All of the participants wanted to set up a business in the area of tourism and this is a potential growth area for this region of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. During the training, IOM delivered a session on reintegration, although, when asked about information regarding reintegration, the participants made no comments. Overall, however, they were generally satisfied with training although would have liked it to be longer and organized at more suitable times. The MSC staff consider this training to have been a success and stated that 9 of 10 participants had found work shortly after the training although, for some, they only found temporary positions, and as such, all of the participants in the focus group stated that they were currently unemployed or had unstable employment.

Skill Shortage Database

Another key aspect of this component was the implementation of a skills shortage database. The Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies was tasked with the creation of a skills shortage database that could be used by potential migrants when considering destination countries. They first established indicators to gain an overview of labour demand and supply. Local IOM offices were then given a template and allocated 5 months to complete it. Data collection from EU member states, and Switzerland, were primarily organised by wiiw. When the data was returned, it was the task of wiiw to harmonise the information provided and to produce the database. The database was fully integrated into the project website translated into all regional languages and has been operational since February 2012³.

Creating a database of skill shortages in both EU and WB countries and Switzerland proved to be a challenging aspect of the MIDWEB project primarily because it was challenging to generate comparable data due to differences in data collection methodologies. The main source of comparable labour market data comes from Labour Force Surveys (LFS) however these are not carried out regularly in the Western Balkans, particularly in Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina where data is collected just once per year. When creating a skills-shortage database, it was hoped that the ISCO methodology could be applied but again this was not possible for WB countries. It was, therefore decided that the database would be split into two parts, one part using comparable data from LFS where available, and the second using WB occupational classifications.

³ <http://www.migrantservicecentres.org/index.php?page=464>

It should, however, be recognised that data challenges were not unique to the WB context. There were also challenges collecting data from EU countries although overall this was more straightforward. For example, in Italy the quality of data was substandard and data on skill-shortages not available. For Switzerland, data collection methods differed from those used in EU member states and therefore there were some challenges in unifying data from different areas of the country. The UK also had a different system and so data was not readily available in a homogenous format.

Aside from the initial challenge of different methodological approaches, there were also challenges relating to the capacity of IOM field offices to complete this task. For many this was a completely new area of work. At the beginning there were some communication issues, however, these were resolved and overall the collaboration between wiiw and the IOM field offices seems to have been satisfactory.

Despite these obstacles, this component of the project was considered valuable since it has been an 'eye-opener' for ministries, public employment services and statistical offices in WB countries with regard to the importance of data-collection. It has highlighted information gaps and created links between the institutions collecting the information and those who wish to use it to inform potential migrants. The IOM field offices were considered valuable partners since their involvement eliminated any challenges that could arise due to language barriers. In addition to this, networks have been created and continued and, as such, the role of IOM field offices could prove to be valuable in the maintenance of the database. It is also evident that the information on skill shortages is being used. With the exception of Montenegro⁴, all MSC staff interviewed for the evaluation stated that they had provided information on skill shortages, to a greater or lesser extent, by using the website and showing clients how to use it. It is, however, too early to observe any concrete impacts of this.

The MIDWEB project has succeeded in bringing the idea of a skills shortage database alive; however, its future sustainability remains an important question. The database is only useful to migrants if it is up-to-date and currently only data from the 2nd quarter of 2010 is available. Almost no MSC users mentioned this database during the focus groups although from MSC staff interviews it is evident that they are using it when providing information to clients. Another potential future challenge relates to how the information is used by migrants. It is argued that, due to data inconsistencies, the interpretation of data may not be clear and users need to receive clear explanations regarding the use of the database, either through a web tutorial or through MSC counsellors. It is evident that this is an area that requires further development if its full purpose is to be realised. This development refers to both the data itself as well as in the actual use of the information. For the skill shortage database to be comparable the entire system of data collection needs to be restructured but this is both time and resource intensive.

Temporary and Virtual Return

Under the TVR component of the MIDWEB project a total of 175 people applied to do a temporary or virtual return assignment and a total of 61 temporary return and 10 virtual return projects were completed. The vast majority of applicants were employed with just 2 (3%) reporting unemployment at the time of their application. The share of male and female participants was almost equal: out of 71 participants, 35 were female. All participants were

⁴ Montenegro, as previously mentioned, has a different client base.

highly skilled and as shown in Figure 2, 22 percent of the participants had a PhD, with 63 percent holding a master-degree and 15 percent a bachelor degree. The TVR participants came from a wide variety of educational and professional backgrounds. Key fields include management, business, finance, accounting, marketing, economy to social science, political science, engineering, ICT, law, health, architecture, agriculture.

Figure 2: Education level of TVR participants

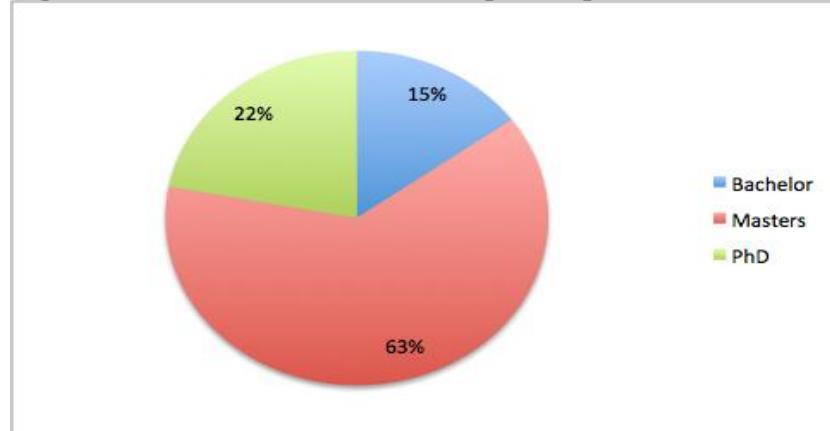


Figure 3 shows the total number of TVR participants per country of assignment and country of residence. Five of the six project sites were able to reach the projects target of hosting 10 participants. In Montenegro, just four assignments took place, however this is explained by the size and location of the Montenegrin diaspora (primarily in Serbia). The most common country of residence was Germany accounting for just over a third of all participants. This could in part be due to large migrant populations from these countries that have relocated to Germany but could potentially also be due to connections made through the partnership with BAMF in the country. The Netherlands (22.5%) and the UK (15.5%) were the next most common countries of residence.

Figure 3: Number of TVR participants by Country of Assignment and Destination

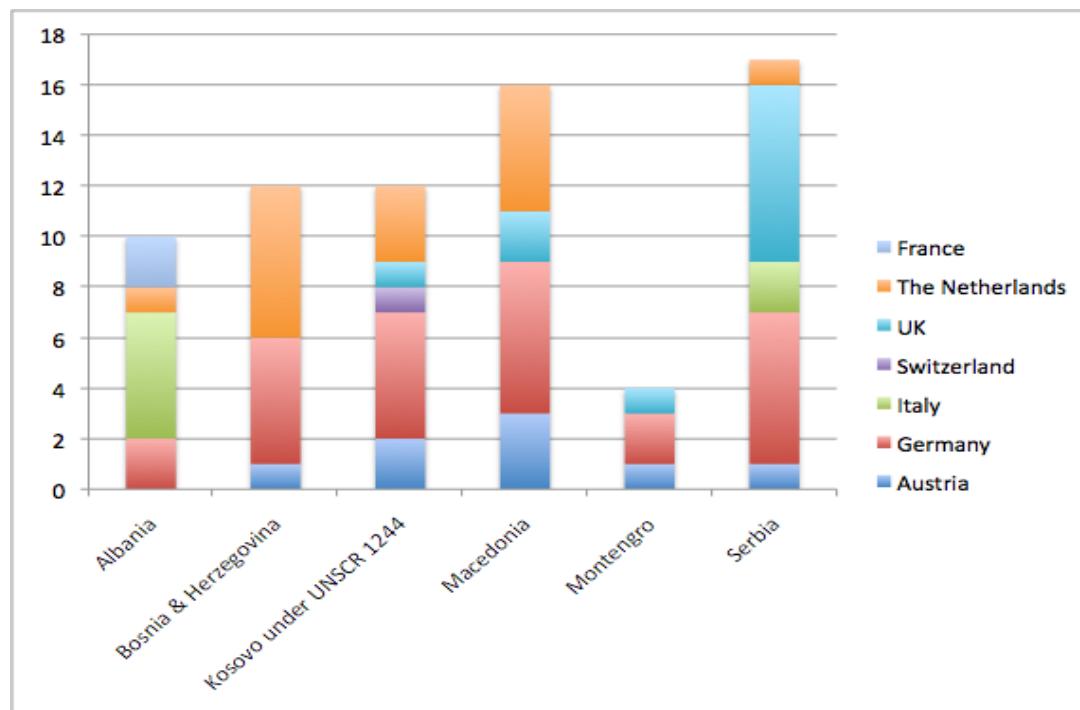


Figure 3 also allows us to make some general observations of patterns emerging in TVR assignments that may reflect underlying migration patterns. In Albania, for example, 50% of the participants were currently residing in Italy. For Bosnia and Herzegovina almost half is living in Germany and the other in the Netherlands. The majority of TVR participants in Serbia are currently residing in the UK and Germany. For Kosovo under UNSCR 1244, the largest share of participants came from Germany reflecting historic ties to the country. This highlights an important aspect of the design of the TVR component, which was also raised during the fieldwork: by limiting the TVR applicants to specific EU countries we exclude diaspora groups living elsewhere. For Montenegro, for example, it was advised that many of its diaspora members currently reside in Serbia but this was not included in the project.

Successes of TVR

Overall the TVR component of the MIDWEB has been well received by all stakeholders. Key benefits of the TVR component can be identified for TVR host institutions, participants, and other stakeholders.

Key Benefits for TVR Host Institutions:

- Creation of contacts within Europe.
- TVR participants are motivated, possess skills and increase capacity of the host institution.
- Organizational capacity is increased through skill transfer.
- Able to overcome budgetary constraints to achieve desired outcomes.

Key Benefits for TVR participants:

- Establishment of relations between country of origin and the EU.
- Knowledge sharing.
- Good collaboration with host-institution and colleagues.
- Contribution to country of origin.
- Obtaining a possibility to return temporarily to their home country.

Key Benefits for Other TVR Stakeholders (i.e. Government partners):

- Exchange of knowledge and expertise.
- A large number of participants still in contact with the host-institutions.
- Establishment of various follow-up assignments without intervention of IOM.
- Established relations between host institutions and European institutions.
- Great way to pilot skills transfer programmes in the region⁵.
- Increased interest for participation amongst diaspora communities in the EU and potential host institutions in the WB region after showcasing a variety of successful TVR assignments and positive experiences.
- The majority of virtual returns were a follow up to physical placements.

⁵ For those countries not previously involved in the TRQN project funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Challenges of TVR

There were also challenges that affected the implementation of the TVR component. The needs assessment was a time-consuming task for IOM field offices. Many institutions did not wish to participate for a number of reasons:

- Highly Skilled Nationals: as there are many highly skilled nationals, high unemployment and regionally the level of brain drain is not as high in other regions, often potential host institutions approached during outreach activities did not see the added-value of bringing in skills from abroad.
- Trust: Although participation was free, host institutions often assumed that an incentive in forms of financial rewards or a job-offer were expected on completion of the assignment. Host institutions were often not willing to share their business ideas and strategies.
- Pride: Institutions did not wish to show their weaknesses, thus were not willing to admit where they would need a TVR participant.

Nevertheless, in many project sites, examples of best practices in the TVR component have softened many institutions perspective and this led to increasing momentum in arranging assignments as the project progressed. In Serbia, the promotion of successful stories is done through national television, magazines and online.

TVR was designed to be needs-driven, where appropriate candidates were found and matched with TORs provided by potential hosts in countries of origin by IOM in the Netherlands. In reality this was a challenging process and many potential hosts indicated that they would prefer to review multiple CVs before considering a TVR candidate. While this was facilitated where possible it did not occur for all potential host institutions. During implementation it has been shown that institutions in for example Bosnia and Herzegovina were more likely to participate when CVs were offered. In Albania, they found it more effective to pitch applicants to potential hosts and then develop a TOR. On the other hand, potential TVR applicants wished to have more extensive information about the needs of institutions. As highlighted in Bosnia and Herzegovina various companies were reluctant to share extensive business ideas during the recruitment-process.

The most common challenge highlighted host institutions and participants related to time constraints. On the one hand, many applicants were not able to take two months leave from their current employment, and, on the other, many host institutions felt that two months was too short to achieve all of the target objectives. The view on this very much depended on the nature of the placement, as well as the ease at which ongoing engagement could continue 'virtually' upon the participant's departure. It was commonly stated that the time frames for TVR assignments should be more flexible i.e. 2 weeks up to 6 months. Occasionally participants highlighted some practical challenges relating to the initial communication and planning of the assignments. It was also suggested that additional information about host institutions would be useful prior to departure.

Finally, there were some comments made regarding the financial aspect of the assignments. This related both to working on an assignment with budgetary constraints and to the financial remuneration given by IOM for the assignment. Many highlighted that the financial compensation given did not recognise their level of experience and expertise and that this would influence their decision regarding further assignments. It should, however, be highlighted that participants were given an 'allowance' as opposed to a salary and made

aware that the assignment was more of a voluntary position from the start. While giving a EU equivalent salary to TVR participants would be likely to attract more participants, it would make the programme extremely expensive to fund. In addition, many participants did highlight that their decision to participate was also rooted in a desire to contribute to their country of origin.

Skills Transfer component

Although each TVR assignment is unique, it can be concluded that TVR assignments did, in general, lead to capacity building. During the evaluation many examples provided by IOM representatives, TVR host institutions and TVR participants have shown that TVR assignments led to skills transfer. These include examples of skills-transfers through teaching at universities and joint research in various fields such as agriculture, law, engineering, technology, media etc. Within private business development employees obtained training, assistance and help in various areas such as business development, strategic planning, investment, management, communication, marketing and export promotion. NGOs in general obtained training in the field of communication, planning, project proposal writing, marketing etc. Within the public sectors there are many examples of skills transfers for example with regard to policy design, communication, European Integration, international relations. Since the assignments are very diverse no concrete results or impacts can be presented however it is clear from the examples visited that the TVR participants did influence institutional thinking, planning and capacity in various ways at different levels and in a variety of sectors.

Best practices in skills transfer programmes identified and promoted

On 13th and 14th November 2012 a conference entitled: "Skills Transfer Programmes and Their Contribution to Development" was held in Sarajevo. This conference brought together many of the project partners and stakeholders as well as experts in the area of skill transfer. The findings of the working groups held at the conference, as well as material presented, will be disseminated through the project website. This has allowed for the identification and promotion of best practices in skills transfer programmes or at least the sharing of experiences between the key stakeholders in the each of the target countries.

Project Partners and Collaboration

This section will discuss the role of the MIDWEB project in regards to different partners including: consular services staff, links to the diaspora, and local institutions.

Consular Services

One of the key objectives of the MIDWEB was to strengthen the capacity of consular services to support labour migrants in the WB. There was a clear need for these types of training in this region. For example, under a previous project in Bosnia and Herzegovina it was noted that often staff within consular departments have limited knowledge on their intended functioning areas such as the creation of bilateral agreements. In Montenegro it was stated that: "*at the end of this training they (the consular staff) actually recognized what their role is*" suggesting that this was not already the case. A similar story was told in other project sites and often explained by the relative newness of nation states. Consular training took place in

all of the 6 MIDWEB project locations. Using data collected during end of training evaluations for Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Kosovo under UNSCR 1244, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, and supplemented with data collected during 2 consular focus groups in Kosovo under UNSCR 1244 and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, this section will review the ways in which the MIDWEB project has enhanced the capacity of the consular services in the WB.

In total, 94 participants took part in consular training and 83 completed the training evaluation. Overall, the general impression among participants of the consular training across all 6 project locations was positive. The most commonly cited benefit of the training was knowledge acquisition on a range of topics including labour migration, migrant rights, the role of a labour attache; and how to assist irregular migrants. Networking was also a commonly cited benefit. In the Macedonian focus group, the benefit of the session on drafting bi-lateral agreements was highlighted. It was, however, explained that, while the consular staff can initiate discussions between countries, it is the MoLSP that has to sign the document and therefore it was useful to have members of different ministries present at the training. Additionally, a participant from the MoFA advised that it was useful to have colleagues from MoLSP present since they often work on a case-to-case basis and it was useful to know who to address with specific requests. The training therefore indirectly contributed to increasing capacity by creating a platform for information exchange between ministries. The benefits of networking extended beyond inter-ministerial contacts. Discussing the role of IOM in Kosovo under UNSCR 1244 since 1999, one participant found it useful that knowledge transfer was taking place between IOM and local institutions and found this to be "the main contribution of IOM to the MoLSA"(Kosovo, M1). Many participants, who were about to be assigned to a diplomatic consular mission abroad, expected the training to be useful to them in their assigned post.

When asked (in the focus groups) whether the training had increased their capacity at work, all participants unanimously agreed. The general view in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is captured in the following:

"We are a young state, building the capacities of our consular affairs. For us it was good to learn from the older, more experienced colleagues. It would be good to replicate the training for all new staff going on mission, even maybe more than one or 2 times per year. More views from EU member states would be useful. We are also willing to share our experiences with new young colleagues."

- Skopje Focus Group, 31.10.12, F3

In Kosovo it was advised that the dissemination of information from the training sessions to other colleagues was already underway:

"After completing the training, we are having morning meetings and sessions in the department and really it was our pleasure to share about the training, what was the objectives and the sessions we attended. Really everyone thinks it was very useful, even those who didn't attend."

- Pristina Focus Group, 30.10.12, M2

It, therefore, seems plausible that the benefits of the consular training will have longer term impacts in terms of the sharing of information and experiences. Nevertheless, from the 67

participants, 36 suggestions were made regarding the further improvement of the training. Just under 45 per cent of these suggestions related to the use of practical examples and best practices to illustrate key points being made. This included the use of examples from EU MS but also from other countries in the WB highlighting the importance of interregional cooperation. Approximately 17 per cent wanted longer or further training, 14 per cent wanted wider participation in the training by other ministries and stakeholders such as NGOs and the 11 per cent wanted trainers from a wider diversity of backgrounds. Notably, it was also highlighted in the Macedonian focus group that trainers from EU MS would increase the ability of state institutions to operate at the level of a EU country. Related to this, it was also suggested in both focus groups that study trips to EU MS would be a beneficial addition to the programme. Other comments on improvements related to better time management during the trainings, more specific information on developing the role of labour attaches and more information on irregular migration as well as potential employment opportunities for migrants abroad.

In Serbia, the steering committee member also attended the training as advised that the knowledge gained on, for example, the Blue Card in Europe has been useful since their current law on the employment of nationals has not been updated since 1978 and they wish to harmonise this law with the EU system. In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia it was advised that criminal law in the area of unfounded asylum claims and human trafficking has already been amended: a new article in the criminal code criminalises the organiser of irregular migration to EU member states. This has involved carrying out the same checks upon exit from the country that are done in EU MS and now allowing exit for those not meeting the requirements.

It is apparent that the consular trainings, as well as regular exchange meetings organised under the project have had significant benefits for the region. Many participants in the focus groups suggest that the effects will be long term since many had not been assigned yet but did have ideas as to how to go about achieving this. Key feedback related to the identification of the role of labour attaches as well as the process of drafting bilateral agreements. There is a clear demand for further training in this area with the key concern being that the sustainability of trainings done to date depends upon staff turnover.

Links to the Diaspora

Outreach to the Diaspora in selected European countries was mainly done by IOM offices in these countries through:

- Information sessions
- Meetings with Diaspora groups
- Through the network of diasporas in Embassies
- Advertisement online, in magazines and on Albanian Speaking TV/Radio station

Additionally outreach was done through private channels such as family members and friends of project partners and implementers.

Many TVR applicants were indirectly informed, often through 'mouth to mouth' stories and contacted IOM to receive further information. Best practices examples disseminated by the Serbian City Club motivated many other diaspora members to apply for the project. During the evaluation it has been highlighted that links between the diaspora and various institutions

in the home-country such as ministries have been strengthened. For example the Serbian City Club did not only play an important role in promoting TVR and creating interest they are also more recognised within the country as a focal point for the Serbian diaspora in the UK.

Under this objective, there have also been requests for diaspora mapping exercises to be done in the region to assist in the development of diaspora engagement policies. There is growing interest in this area in the region.

Support to Local Institutions and Local Cultural and Social Integration

As migration is common throughout the region several other relevant projects were running in parallel to the MIDWEB project. This section will discuss each country case.

In Serbia, it was stated in the first progress report that synergies would be sought with the UN MDG Youth, Employment and Migration Project as well as with the IOM project Capacity Building for Migration Management.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, a Youth Employability and Retention Programme (YERP) has run in parallel with the MIDWEB project (2010-2012) which has been financed by the Spanish Government with the aim of enhancing ownership of the MDGs in the country. This is being jointly implemented by 5 UN agencies (UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, IOM and UNV). In the area of youth migration, UNFPA and IOM have taken the lead. Many prospective MSC counsellors took part in training under the YERP programme. Under the programme, 17 Centres for Information, Counselling and Training (CISO) have been opened and it was anticipated that some CISO counsellors would also take on the role of a MSC counsellor.

In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the MIDWEB project was implemented in synergy with the project 'Prevention of Irregular Migration through the Enhancement of Decentralised Labour Promotion Measures for Vulnerable Groups' which was funded by the Government of Norway. In line with MIDWEB, this project also sought to reduce the level of irregular migration primarily by targeting Roma youth and assisting their entrance into the labour market through skills trainings that meet local labour demand.

In Albania, IOM have also been involved in implementing the project 'Enhancing Albanian Government Capacity to Assist Albanian Migrants Abroad and Upon Return'. Part of this project was the capacity building of Migration Counters through the provision of equipment, training and information. Given the clear overlap, this was something that was also considered by the MIDWEB project. In addition to this the Albanian Government has a Reintegration Strategy. This meant that MSCs often acted as a referral point for return migrants as opposed to directly providing services through MIDWEB.

In Kosovo under UNSCR 1244, the Swiss Development Cooperation funded the 'Diaspora for Development (DfF) Project which aims to support the diaspora in making economic and social investments in Kosovo. In addition to this IOM, in partnership with UNDP, is also implementing a project funded by Finland entitled 'Diaspora Engagement for Economic Development'.

Efficiency of the MIDWEB Project

Overall the MIDWEB project seems to have been delivered in accordance with the project guidelines. The greater part of the first year of the project was spent on developing the key tools for the project implementation such as the collection of data for the skill shortage database, the consolidation and translation of information guides, expanding and equipping the MSC networks and developing trainings. For the TVR component this time was spent carrying out needs assessments in countries of origin and reaching out to potential candidates in destination countries. The momentum of service delivery picked up rapidly in the second year of the project and many fear that this momentum will be lost if future funding is not secured. This was particularly the case for the TVR component where it was advised that many people heard about the project in its second year and wished to participate but only had availability in the summer time and so were unable to do so. A common perception across all project sites was that the project was drawing to a close too soon.

In Bosnia & Herzegovina the incorporation of MSCs into the general legislative framework within the Ministry of Employment was delayed due to governmental issues. After the last election, it took one year for there to be a working government. As this occurred during the MIDWEB project it is important to consider this as a factor that may have influenced project implementation in Bosnia Herzegovina. In Serbia, implementation also occurred at election time.

Sustainability of the MIDWEB Project

Sustainability of the MIDWEB project will be discussed in terms of: 1) MSCs, 2) TVR, 3) Training, and 4) Collaboration.

MSC's

In most project sites the general consensus was that MSCs will continue to exist as they have been institutionalised, usually within the NES. There were, however, concerns that the duties of MSC staff may change in accordance to needs within the centre and that this continuation could potentially exist only on paper. In Bosnia, the question of sustainability is complicated by political structures. In Republika Srpska CISOs (and by default MSCs) have been incorporated into the institutional framework and, as such, the future of MSCs are relatively secure in this region. Brcko has budgetary issues and it could be that MSCs cease to exist after the project although the director of the NES has indicated that some aspects, such as employability training, will be continued on a smaller scale. In other regions management seem to recognise the benefits of the programme and want to continue it although, due to staffing issues, MSC staff are concerned that other tasks within the employment agencies will take over. In Montenegro there is also a concern regarding the sustainability of MSCs due again to staffing issues and other priorities for staff at the centre.

Further issues for sustainability is the effectiveness of information provided at the MSC. The information must be current on the labour situations in the countries of migration. As stated previously, there are currently challenges in maintaining current information on skills shortages. In addition, at present IOM assists to ensure that information disseminated at MSCs, such as the destination guides and visa information, is current. MSC staff must now take on this role, which is essential to ensure sustainability of relevant information at the MSC. While this has been taken into consideration during a regional workshop in Tirana in June 2011, this was attended by just a few MSC staff and, as such, the success of this will depend on how much information is transferred between MSC staff or through future trainings. It is not

clear what will happen after the conclusion of MIDWEB since many MSC staff raised the concern that their time would be allocated to other priority areas.

TVRs

Despite being warmly received, without further financial support it is unlikely that this component will continue to operate post MIDWEB. In a region with high unemployment rates, and rising numbers of returnees, it would be hard to justify allocating budgets to these types of programmes despite the potential benefits that they can bring. Governments also have other priorities areas in the field of migration, such as border management, problems with regard to asylum seekers and IDPs.

It has also been suggested that the benefits of the TVR programme are just temporary and that their longevity is very much dependent on the nature of the assignment. In situations where the TVR participant acted as a “Trainer of Trainers”, common in assignments in academic institutions, it is possible that there will be long lasting impacts.

Training

The sustainability of trainings given during the MIDWEB project depends on two key factors: staff turnover and the extent to which information is passed from employee to employee (i.e. training of trainers). These are factors that impact the sustainability of any project and are not unique to the MIDWEB context. Due to the success of the consular trainings in fostering networks between consular departments and imparting key information to trainees that was previously unavailable (i.e. on the role of labour attaches and on the drafting of bilateral agreements), many participants in both the consular staff focus groups as well as in other interviews highlighted that there would be great benefit in continuing to deliver these types of training in the future (as discussed in section 3). The same applies to the training of MSC staff. In Tirana the MSC counsellor had only been working at the centre for 2 months, however, the previous staff member also attended the focus group and has been working with the new member of staff to impart knowledge about the centres operation. This is one example of a way in which the sustainability of trainings can be facilitated. Further trainings would also be of benefit since they allow not only for the transmission of new updated knowledge in the area of labour migration, but also allow MSC counsellors to meet one another and exchange experiences and best practice. Particularly in the countries in which MSCs are not institutionalised, but also when they are, it is likely that further support would be necessary to facilitate such trainings, especially for regional trainings.

Collaboration

The MIDWEB project has succeeded in creating networks of links between different stakeholders working in the area of labour migration. Their longevity will depend, in part, on the will to maintain partnerships. With regards to regional collaboration, there is a strong will for these to continue to keep reaping the benefits of experience and knowledge exchange around the region however this will likely come down to whether there is funding available to facilitate such meetings.

One major concern, which has been discussed throughout the project, is the question of who is going to maintain the website and ensure that the information being delivered by MSCs continues to be accurate and up to date. During the last meeting of the Steering Committee, it was suggested that MARRI play a bridging role between MIDWEB and any potential follow up projects although as the MARRI director highlighted: there is hope for, but no guarantee, of future funding. MARRI are financed through annual donations from 6 member countries: Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia⁶. Without some kind of funding stream, it is argued that MARRI does not have the capacity to play a significant role in the ongoing process of ensuring that MSCs are delivering updated information on labour migration and study opportunities to potential migrants. The sustainability of both the information flows, as well as the website, therefore depends upon ongoing collaboration and information exchange between all stakeholders in the region which will also be challenging.

There were also some other general concerns raised regarding the sustainability of project outputs once the MIDWEB project concludes. These primarily came down to the question of future funding. Questions over the future of the skill shortage database were also raised. It is self evident that, for this component to be useful, the data must be up to date. It is already the case that the information, that went live in February 2012, was already outdated. Given the challenges involved in putting this database together it is likely that further work needs to be done in the area of data collection for this to be a viable and efficient option for the future. This is clearly a time and resource intensive task and it is therefore likely that further funding would be required in this area.

Key Findings and Recommendations

This report has sought to provide an overview of the ability of the MIDWEB project to meet its defined objectives and anticipated results. This section will summarize the key findings of the evaluation and make recommendations.

Key Findings:

Objective 1: To assess the extent to which the project implementation was effective with regard to expected results and indicators, and achieved its objectives/project purposes.

Expected Results 1: Information on legal migration opportunities for work or study disseminated to potential migrants, including students.

- It is clear that information on legal migration opportunities for work or study has been disseminated to potential migrants, including students through the MSC networks in all project sites.

Expected Results 2: Potential migrants' ability to access adequate employment abroad improved.

- There is discontent regarding the extent to which potential migrants' ability to access adequate employment abroad has been improved. In general, it is not felt that

⁶ It is noteworthy that Kosovo under UNSCR No 1244 are not an independent member of MARRI

MIDWEB has significantly increased opportunities for potential migrants to access adequate employment abroad.

Expected Results 3: Institutional capacity of information services strengthened and consolidated.

- The trainings provided to MSC staff and consular staff was recognized by both groups as useful, and served to increase the institutional capacity of information services.

Expected Results 4: Information on skills shortages gathered and disseminated to potential migrants as well as relevant institutions.

- A database on skills shortages has been disseminated to relevant institutions and is available online for access by potential migrants.

Expected Results 5: Links to diasporas and skilled migrants abroad created.

- Outreach was conducted by IOM offices in Europe to create links to the diaspora and skilled migrants abroad. The primary purpose of this outreach was to attract participants for TVR. It is evident that the TVR component has led to the establishment of some links between the diaspora and skilled migrants abroad.

Expected Results 6: Skills transfer facilitated through temporary return

- Through the 71 TVR assignments, in the majority of cases, skills were transferred from the diaspora to home country institutions. The extent to which skills have been transferred through the TVR assignments depends on the nature of the placement.

Expected Results 7: Best practices in institutional partnerships between countries of destination and origin highlighted and promoted.

- The project has incorporated institutions in both destination and origin countries that have worked collaboratively and effectively together through the project duration. . The International Conference Fostering Partnerships for Return of Skills and Human Capital to the Western Balkans took place in Budapest from October 19th – 20th 2011. A total number of 68 governmental and non-governmental stakeholders from the Western Balkans and the EU Member States came together to discuss challenges and constraints to the permanent return of qualified nationals in the countries of origin. However, it is not clear in how far some of these created sustainable networks.

Expected Results 8: Capacity of WB consular services to support labour migrants strengthened.

- A total of 94 consular staff have been trained to date and the most commonly cited benefit of the trainings were knowledge acquisition on a range of topics including labour migration, migrant rights, the role of a labour attaché; and how to assist irregular migrants. Focus group participants unanimously agreed that the consular trainings had increased their ability to do their jobs.

Expected Results 9: Best practices in skills transfer programmes identified and promoted.

- A workshop entitled Skills Transfer Programmes and their Contribution to Development was held on 13-14 November in Sarajevo that discussed best practices in skills transfer programmed by bringing together key actors from all of the countries involved in the project.

Objective 2: To examine the relevance of the selected target group and if the project reached them effectively as planned. The evaluation will also examine if the project reached any indirect beneficiaries and if it was relevant and effective.

Target groups of the project are defined in the Terms of Reference as: "a) potential migrants from the region, returning skilled migrants and migrant communities abroad; b) policymakers, National Employment Services, and EU MS institutions dealing with migrants from the WB". Each group will be assessed in this section.

- *Potential Migrants from the Region-* The evaluation has shown that the project has effectively engaged with both potential migrants from the region, including both labour migrants and students.
- *Returning Skilled Migrants-* Returnees have not been effectively reached through the project. This is not necessarily due to any action or inaction on the part of MSCs since information is available should a returnee require it, however, in different project locations there are different reasons why returnees do not come to the MSCs in general. Possible reasons for this are a lack of demand due to limited returnees in an area, the fact that other programmes (by some governments) are addressing returnee's needs in the WB (often the MSCs refer returnees to these service), and some returnees have strong familial and social ties and need less support.
- *Migrant Communities Abroad -* Migrant communities abroad have been effectively reached through information sessions, meetings with Diaspora groups, the networks of diasporas in embassies, as well as through advertisements online, in magazines and on Albanian Speaking TV/Radio stations.
- *Policymakers-* Policymakers in the WB have been effectively reached through the project. This is evidenced by the fact that MSCs have been embedded into the National Strategy's on migration in Serbia, Albania, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia .
- *National Employment Services -* The MSCs operate within the NES, who have thus been effectively reached through staff trainings and consistent information flow to the NES.
- *Indirect Beneficiaries:*
 - Family and friends of MSC Users
 - Immigrants: In both Albania and Montenegro work permits were issued by MSCs.
 - High School Students: In Bosnia & Herzegovina, cooperation CISO and MSC staff has facilitated an extensive campaign in high schools across the country.

Objective 3: To analyse the effectiveness of the collaboration between main stakeholders in meeting the expected results

- Coordination between the main stakeholders appears to have been effective and well managed. There were almost no complaints regarding collaboration highlighted during the fieldwork.

Objective 4: To evaluate the support received by local institutions and its integration within local social and cultural conditions

- Under the TVR component local institutions received support in terms of having a TVR participant at their institution. TVR participants worked well within local social and cultural conditions and host institutions were positive regarding hosting a TVR participant. The MIDWEB project also partnered with other local institutions and projects where appropriate.
- The main support received by local institutions under the programme related to capacity building through trainings and regional events bringing together different stakeholders. Policy makers were indirect beneficiaries. The topic of labour migration (and through this M&D) (and a shift from security/border management) has been talked about a lot more in the region because of the events organised under the project.

Objective 5: To assess the efficiency of the project implementation.

- It is difficult to make concrete observations about the efficiency of project implementation as many of the expected impacts are long term in nature. Nevertheless, the overall implementation of the MIDWEB project seems to have been executed in line with key objectives and targets. The management structure seems to have worked efficiently and key stakeholders raised no concerns regarding the collaboration between or with IOM Budapest, IOM the Hague and the IOM offices in the 6 project sites. Despite what is arguably a limited budget for such an ambitious project, it seems that the budget has been used appropriately and, where the goals overlapped with other projects, partnerships (such as with CISOs in Bosnia) increased efficiency. For equipping MSCs efforts were made to source further financing and MSC staff were happy to receive some new equipment or office space to allow them to function better.
- The TVR component could have been managed more efficiently as a lot of time was spent in searching for suitable host institutions. This was voiced in different interviews stating that they spent so long trying to get people on board that they ended up pitching applicants to hosts as opposed to the intended matching making process. Some hosts wanted to browse CVs to have the feeling they are getting the best candidate because of mistrust in getting an employee for free, not wanting to share company secrets, expectation that they would have to be given employment afterwards and additionally that there is already a highly skilled unemployed population in the country.

Objective 6: To evaluate the durability of the project's results once external support ceases.

- MSCs are integrated within NES structures across all project locations and, in many cases, have been tailored to specific country needs. This integration shows the political willingness and cooperation for such initiatives within the region. Currently the majority of MSC counselors work part-time on their tasks in MSCs with the remainder of their time spent in NES. It is anticipated that this balance will be tipped towards NES duties after the project is finished which decreases service provision within MSCs. Nevertheless, it is likely that MSCs will continue to exist although their form, focus and service level is not guaranteed.
- Without regular updates, the information that has been consolidated and developed into information guides will quickly become outdated. There is an unanswered question relating to who will ensure that this information remains relevant and useful for MSC users
- Finally, with regards to the TVR component, there is no doubt that there is a will for this component to continue. Given other priorities in the area of migration, such as IDPs and returnees, however, it is unlikely to attract domestic funding. For this component to be sustainable, some form of external funding is still required.

Recommendations:

- **Provide a platform or regular meetings where MSC counselors can share their experiences, best practices and challenges.** MSC counselors often work in isolation in their MSCs. The opportunity to meet other MSCs at a national and regional level provides a unique opportunity to exchange ideas and experiences to further enhance and improve services at the MSCs.
- **Consider developing 'Consular Academies' for the training of all new consular staff.** Consular staff highly regarded the trainings provided under the MIDWEB project, however with the end of the project there is a legitimate fear that the knowledge from these trainings will not be transferred to new staff. Therefore, the establishment of 'Consular Academies' would allow for the continued training of new consular staff to ensure that knowledge is continued to be transferred and maintained.
- **Increase the number of trainings for MSCs counselors for example MSC refresh or advanced courses.** MSC staff also found that the trainings they received through the MIDWEB project were highly useful to their work. Staff turnover also prevents knowledge continuation in these roles. Continued training is essential to ensure staff maintains knowledge provided under the project trainings. It is also recognized that there is a need offer new trainings as new conditions arise in the destination countries to ensure that MSC staff are updated on current conditions. Therefore, refresh or advanced courses would also be useful.

- **Integrate a mechanism in project locations in the WB region to manage data and information updating.** A key challenge for the sustainability of the MSCs is continuing to provide current information to migration seekers. Therefore, one party must be allocated with the task of maintaining current information and disseminating this information to the various MSCs. It does not appear practical to do this at a regional level as, without project funding, neither IOM nor MARRI have the capacity to take on this task. It has been argued that regional cooperation is only something that has been facilitated through the project and, due to different national interests, may not continue without a unifying funding stream. Similarly from the perspective of MSC staff, capacity to achieve this may not be there both due to time constraints as well as due to a lack of required skills such as language skills. It therefore seems to be more realistic, in the absence of future external funding, to develop this at a national level however this also requires political will and the ability to allocate funding within a context of competing demands and budgetary constraints. Our next recommendation builds upon this.
- **Further funding and support is temporarily required to establish a concrete management structure and different mechanisms to create sustainable regional coordination of MSCs.** During this funding period, mechanisms and structures should be established to ensure information will be regularly updated, interaction platforms between NECs and MSCs in the different countries established, maintenance of the website ensured and training manuals for MSC staff developed. This is needed to enhance sustainability and the independence of regional MSC coordination. If this does not occur, there is reasonable concern that the MSCs will become redundant if they cannot provide current information.
- **Expand the focus of country destination guides to other countries, such as in the Middle East⁷.** The high unemployment rates in the WB continue to drive the need for migration and opportunities outside the country. The destination guides provided on the EU states were helpful to those seeking to migrate. Providing more guides on other destinations would arguably be useful to individuals seeking to migrate.
- **Develop bilateral agreements between WB countries and countries in the EU.** There is a strong need for labour migration opportunities from the WB to the EU countries. In order for this to occur bilateral agreements should be developed, where applicable, both within WB and the EU countries and within the WB region. This may require further work in developing regional networks within the WB; and between the WB and the EU, to enhance relationships in the interests of establishing agreements.
- **Expansion of the number of MSCs to ensure countrywide coverage.** It is evident that the MSCs have been useful in disseminating information to potential migrants and the model has been greatly expanded by most countries in the WB. Despite their expansions, MSCs still do not have countrywide coverage. The model should continue to be expanded to generate countrywide coverage where institutionally viable. This should be accompanied by institutional embedding such as the incorporation of the MSC job description in the job structure and organigram of the National Employment Services and the creation of a platform for information sharing as outlined above.

⁷ United Arab Emirates is already available.

- **Engage in diaspora-mapping exercises.** It has been recognized that the diaspora have contributions to make to their country of origin. The engagement with the diaspora in the EU countries has been beneficial, but the majority of the diaspora for some of the WB states may not reside in the EU. Therefore, a diaspora-mapping exercise to identify the diaspora of each WB state and their skill capacities would be useful to identify the contributions that the diaspora can make to the country. This form of mapping has been done by states such as India and proved highly useful to generating ties with the diaspora. In addition to this Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina have already started this process by conducting surveys with their diaspora members and, therefore, further cooperation in the region could allow knowledge and experience exchange.
- **Extend and widen the scope of the TVR Component.** Despite the successes, increased awareness in the region, best-practice promotion and willingness to participate, TVR is unlikely to continue without funding. Continued funding from the EC would be useful in this area. Since this evaluation has shown that the majority of assignments led to skills transfers, institutional capacity building and establishment of contacts and relations with institutions in Europe, an extension of this project is recommended. It is also suggested that this pool of potential participants is widened to recognise the diversity of destinations for migrants from the WB. To ensure local ownership it is important that local authorities have a key role and stake in the implementation of the extention.
- **Include more flexibility with regard to the implementation period of TVR assignments.** It is essential that TVR assignment durations are flexible to meet the needs of the particular assignment and the availability of the participant. Thus, assignment durations should not be fixed, but should be flexible to occur within a two week to six month time period.

Appendix 1: Country Specific Partners

Albania

Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities
National Employment Service
Ministry of Foreign Affairs (activity 2.5 on reinforcing consular cooperation)

Bosnia & Herzegovina

Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Policy
State Agency for Labour and Employment
Federal Employment Institute
Ministry of Foreign Affairs (activity 2.5 on reinforcing consular cooperation)
Ministry of Civil Affairs
Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees (Sector for Diaspora)
Employment Services of the Republika Srpska
Employment Service of Brcko District
Ministry of Labour, War Invalids and Welfare of the Republika Srpska

F.Y.R Macedonia

Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and the Employment Service Agency
Ministry of Foreign Affairs (activity 2.5 on reinforcing consular cooperation)

Montenegro

Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and Labour Agency
Ministry of Foreign Affairs (activity 2.5 on reinforcing consular cooperation)

Serbia

Ministry of Economy and Regional Development and National Employment Service,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs (activity 2.5 on reinforcing consular cooperation)
Commissariat for Refugees

Kosovo under UNSCR 1244

Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
Ministry of Foreign Affairs (activity 2.5 on reinforcing consular cooperation)
Ministry of Internal Affairs

Appendix 2: MSC Activities

The following table provides an overview of the activities implemented by MSCs across all project sites during the MIDWEB project. This data has been provided by IOM and crosschecked with progress reports and MSC staff where possible. There were some problems in doing this due to different understanding of what each activity constituted and, while some countries reported numbers of events, some reported number of clients.

Number of Sessions	Albania	Bosnia & Herzegovina	Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Kosovo under UNSCR 1244	Montenegro	Serbia
Pre-Departure Orientation Seminars (PDOS)	12	8	7	3	2	9
CV and Interview Training	12	14	7	1	9	Planned weekly from mid Sep 2012
Information Sessions for Return migrants	5	0	4	0	No indication of Need	2
Student Outreach	10	959 high school students ⁸	3	8	19	12

⁸ 959 high school students were reached by MSC/CISO staff through out-reach activities during the MIDWEB project. There are no concrete figures on the total number of events which took place during the MIDWEB project.