

## Project „Regions benefitting from returning migrants“ starts in Wernigerode with success and want to help to find and use skills of returning migrants

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From the 13th to the 16th of July 46 people have joined the kick-off meeting of an important initiative to support the return of European migrants to their territories of origin.

In Wernigerode, in the Region of Saxony Anhalt, with the effective cooperation of the local administration and all authorities the project Re-Turn has officially opened its activity plan.

European Union has decided to support innovative measures to retain its human capital through this project, approved in the framework of the cooperation programme CENTRAL EUROPE and financed by the European Regional Development Fund with 1,77 mln. Euro.

The project title, “Region benefitting from returning migrants”, evokes the core idea developed by 12 partners that is to create positive conditions for retaining human capital and to counter brain drain.

In fact nowadays the European citizens have the right to work in any other EU country, they can move looking for jobs in the more competitive areas of the Continent. It means that, pushed by economical motivations, young well educated people from the weakest regions often move away causing serious brain drain processes.

As an example it is significant to notice how between 2003 and 2007, about 2.2 mln. people moved from the New Member States towards the countries of the old EU. This phenomenon affected but not only Eastern Europeans but also other citizens. In fact, in 2006, e.g. 20.000 Germans moved towards Switzerland and 12.500 to Austria - most people due to better work options than in their home countries.

It is estimated, that about 50 % of these out-migrants should return to their home countries within 10 years - a huge potential for regional development as these people gained new social, cultural and professional competences while being abroad.

Thanks to Re-Turn project universities, local and regional authorities, innovation and education centres from Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland and Slovenia as well as NGO’s aimed at migration have joined to propose solutions and invert this tendency creating positive conditions for people that aim to come back and want to be reintegrated.

From 13-16 July 2011 representatives of 7 case study regions and scientific experts from the involved countries have met to agree on joint initiatives to promote return migration and foster regional development in some of the weakest regions in Central Europe.

### *Project information:*

*Number of partners: 12*

*Countries involved: Germany, Poland, Czech Republic, Austria, Hungary, Slovenia, and Italy*

*Main outputs: CE remigration online visualisation platform, Toolkit with methods and instruments of success stories, Handbook with Transnational joint planning and management tools, Tools and services to re-attract emigrants, Transnational Strategy for attracting and reintegrating migrants*

*Project duration: 5/2011 – 4/2014*

*Case Study Regions: Ústí Region (CZ), Görlitz Region (DE), Harz Region (DE), Mid Pannon Region (HU), Lodz Region (PL), Swietrzykie Region (PL), Piemonte Region (IT), Podravska Region (SL)*

*ERDF funding: 1.774.160,56 €*

The project, coordinated by the **Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography** from Germany, will have duration of 3 years, will develop, share, test and implement new support policies, tools and services in participating regions to promote return migration to the benefit of regional knowledge development.

The actions implemented by Re-Turn partners will be suited to attract educated emigrants back to their home regions and thus compensating for losses of human capital in earlier periods.

In particular **Association for Social and Labour Market Integration** from Germany and **UNCEM Piemonte** from Italy will develop tools to re-attract migrants.

The **Ministry of health and social affairs Saxony-Anhalt** from Germany, **Mid Pannon Regional Development Company** from Hungary and **Marshall's office of Swietokrzyskie Voivodship** from Poland will create tools to re-integrate migrants.

Finally **Requalification and Information Centre** from the Czech Republic and **Lodz Region - Marshall Office** from Poland will create tools to support returning migrants to become entrepreneurs.

Ambitious goals for an exciting challenge that all together the partners can reach trough active cooperation and innovation.

For further information contact project manager Dr. Thilo Lang ([t\\_lang@ifl-leipzig.de](mailto:t_lang@ifl-leipzig.de), +49 341 255 6559) or contact persons from partner organisations (see [www.re-migrants.eu](http://www.re-migrants.eu)).