

**INTRODUCTION TO THE SPECIAL ISSUE
ABOUT RETURN MIGRATION**

EGIDIJUS BARCEVIČIUS

This article presents a special volume on return migration. Firstly, it briefly overviews the key theories of return migration that are relevant to this volume. Then, it introduces the research project “Friends or Foes: The Integration of Return Migrants into the Labour Market and Society of Lithuania” (funded by the Lithuanian Science Council) and lists the key sources of evidence. Finally, it summarises the arguments developed by the four articles published in this volume.

**DO THE SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE GAINED ABROAD
HELP THE INTEGRATION OF HIGHLY QUALIFIED RETURN
MIGRANTS INTO THE LITHUANIAN LABOUR MARKET?**

EGIDIJUS BARCEVIČIUS, VAIDA GINEIKYTĖ

The paper analyses whether the human capital gained abroad helps returning migrants to integrate into the labour market of Lithuania. The analysis focusses on highly qualified migrants defined narrowly as people with high education who held qualified jobs when working abroad. We found that professional aims were among the key reasons for return, although they worked in parallel with broader family and homeland-sickness motives. The data also showed that most of the returnees in our target group were able to find employment without major difficulties. The majority of respondents indicated that skills and knowledge they gained when working abroad were very useful both for finding a job and pursuing a further career in Lithuania. We also identified a number of structural factors that sometimes helped and

sometimes hindered the integration of the returnees. These include: the expectations concerning returnees in the society and among employers, the quality of public services and the quality of life in Lithuania, and public policy in the field of migration.

**BEING A RETURN MIGRANT – ADVANTAGE OR
DISADVANTAGE IN THE LITHUANIAN LABOUR MARKET?**

DOVILĖ ŽVALIONYTĖ

The paper explores how the integration of return migrants into the labour market of their home country is influenced by the migration experience – does it give an advantage to returnees? While migration scholars tend to focus on individual level factors behind the success of the integration of returnees, the paper argues that an important, although somewhat neglected, element is how the home country society in general and employers in particular perceive returnees and their migration experience. The paper draws on an empirical study of the Lithuanian case which is based on three representative surveys carried out in late 2013 among three different audiences in Lithuania: 1) adult population; 2) employers, and 3) returnees. The research revealed that almost all return migrants have acquired valuable knowledge and skills while abroad, which they expect to use in advancing their careers in Lithuania. Yet, many returnees feel that their new knowledge and skills are undervalued in Lithuania. Indeed, a somewhat unfavourable attitude towards return migrants and their migration experience exists in the Lithuanian society: more than half of employers in Lithuania and almost half of the population of Lithuania perceive return like a signal of failure, and employers who support this opinion are more likely to assess the migration experience as a disadvantage rather than an advantage. The returnee-unfriendly environment leads not only to the loss of potential benefits of the human capital, but also to the unsuccessful reintegration of returnees and, eventually, to their repeat migration. Therefore, the Lithuanian migration policy which aims mainly at encouraging return migration, instead of focusing largely on the migrants themselves and their migration decisions, should devote much more attention to the integration process of returnees and include measures for making the labour market more returnee-friendly.

WELCOME HOME? PARENTS' AND TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES IN EDUCATING RETURNEES' CHILDREN IN LITHUANIA

IRMA BUDGINAITĖ, RŪTA MAŠIDLAUSKAITĖ

This article is based on a research project, funded by the Lithuanian Research Council, conducted in Lithuania with a focus on the challenges of integrating children that are coming back with parents from abroad into Lithuanian schools. The article raises such questions as: How the educational opportunities for children make impact on decision to return to Lithuania? How educational institutions are chosen and how the pupils' knowledge is evaluated? What are the main challenges that teachers face while educating returnees' children? The research revealed that the desire to start family and raise children in a Lithuanian cultural environment and children's education and other family-related reasons may be important aspects when deciding to return. It has also showed that Lithuanians are returning not only to bigger cities, but also to small towns, and not all policy measures for the integration of children with the migrant background are relevant in these cases. It is difficult to implement such policy measures as additional language or other subject classes for a group of pupils in schools that have a smaller number of children with the migrant background. The qualitative interviews have disclosed that teachers from smaller towns face difficulties in getting relevant information and participating in training courses that are organised in the cities. They often search for individualised creative solutions to educate returnee pupils. According to the interviewees, such measures as individualised course materials, specific training courses, allocation of additional funding for the Lithuanian language or other subject classes could contribute to a better integration of returnees' children.

LITHUANIAN CIVIL SERVANTS AT THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION: A LOOK THROUGH THE FRAMEWORK OF DIASPORA NETWORKS

VAIDA GINEIKYTĖ

The article is an attempt to analyse the conditions for Lithuanian civil servants at the European Commission to contribute to the development of their home country by participating in the expatriate knowledge networks.

Discoveries of different authors are combined to create a theoretical tool which is invoked to evaluate the engagement with the home country. Four preconditions of diaspora engagement are analysed: the structure of expatriate social networks; their involvement in the home country; motivation to involve stemming from identity and values; and expatriates' reaction to the policies of the home country. Quantitative and qualitative approaches are combined to answer the research question. The results demonstrate that even though the majority of respondents can be characterised by pride in their nationality, national networking and national affiliations, there is a lack of other preconditions for successful transactions with tangible outcomes for the home country: the national networks of Lithuanian civil servants of the European Commission cannot be characterised by the necessary diversity and lack connections with other diaspora organisations; the current character of their engagement with the home country is rather sporadic and small-scale; finally, there is a lack of incentives for a greater involvement from Lithuania through targeted policy measures.