DIASPORA AND GOVERNMENT:
CASES OF IRELAND, ITALY AND SLOVENIA

Tbilisi
2014

The report is published in the framework of the Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development and the Georgian Young Lawyers' Association joint project "Promoting well managed migration between the EU and Georgia" funded by the EU.

The paper is prepared by Irina Badurashvili. The content of the publication is sole responsibility of the author and does not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.



Project funded by the European Union





ISBN 978-99928-37-43-6

© The Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development, 2014

72, Tsereteli Ave, 2nd floor 0154 Tbilisi, Georgia
Tel.: 2355154, Fax: 2355754
www.cipdd.org

Content

Executive Summary **5**

1. Ireland **7**
Migration trends in Ireland 7
Migration policy in Ireland 8
Relations with Diaspora 10
Challenges to Diaspora relations – experts' opinion 19
Recent initiatives related to new Diaspora Strategy in Ireland under wide discussion 22

2. Italy **30**
Historical migration trends in Italy 30
Migration policies on Italy 32
Relations with Diaspora 34
Italian Diaspora in Australia, as a best practice example 38

3. Slovenia **43**
Migration profile of Slovenia 43
Migration policy in Slovenia 48
Assessment of the systems/models, official statistical data. Success stories. 56
Key challenges and policy recommendations for different actors – experts' opinion. 58
Measures to attract diaspora investments to Slovenia 61
Sources: 62

Executive Summary

With assistance and advise of international donors, the Georgian government is looking at more efficient migration management and diaspora engagement policies. In this context, Georgia can greatly benefit from learning the experience of other countries, which can provide valuable information on how to improve the Georgian migration policy, foster stronger diaspora engagement and widen opportunities for Georgian migrants living abroad to participate in their homeland's economic development. In other words, Georgia can use best practices and success stories of other countries as an important resource to develop an efficient diaspora engagement strategy and better employ the Georgian diaspora's potential in the country's development.

The given publication describes the diaspora engagement practices of three European countries, Ireland, Italy and Slovenia, chosen – in consultation with the office of the state minister for diaspora – as best examples of successful migration management and diaspora engagement policies. Ireland and Italy both have a long and extensive history of emigration, among the longest in the world. Nearly 25 million Italians left Italy since 1861 (adoption of Constitution) – roughly equal to the entire population of the country at the time. As to Ireland, some 70 million people of Irish descent live currently in various parts of the world as a result of the centuries-long massive Irish emigration – 3.1 millions of them, including 800 thousand Ireland-born migrants, have Irish citizenship and hold Irish passports. Slovenia, a country smaller than Georgia (its population is only 2 mln), became EU and NATO member in 2004, after gaining independence, for the first time in its history, in 1991. Close ties and engagement with the diaspora, aiming to utilise the diaspora's potential for the country's economic development, has been one of the top priorities of the Slovenian government's post-independent policy. Just Slovenia's successful effort to engage with its diaspora makes the Slovenian case so interesting for Georgia.

The three above-described cases are anlysed separately, using the same format and technique, in order to enable a comparative analysis of the obtained results. Each case begins with the description of a respective country's migration profile: main migration trends and migrants' social-demographic data. It is followed by the analysis of the national migration policy, on the one hand, from the perspective of migration manage-

ment and, on the other hand, in the context of recent initiatives to strengthen the homeland-diaspora relationship and integrate returned migrants. It describes which governmental institutions and levels of government (central or local) are involved in these processes, explains their roles and coordination mechanisms, pros and cons of the system, and provides examples to illustrate the best practices. There are also experts' opinions and recommendations on how to improve the existing policies. One of the primary focuses of the publication is the diaspora engagement strategy – whether a respective country has a specific policy document on such strategy; and, if no, which documents outline the country's strategic vision of relations with the diaspora and what experts say about the need to adopt or revise such documents.

Analysis of the available research data showed that all these countries share a common approach to the relations with the diaspora, giving priority to equality, partnership and mutually beneficial relationship. These principles and mechanisms of their implementation are integrated in national strategy documents (if adopted), while public discourse and expert debates on the issue are dominated by deliberations on how to strengthen them. Just internationally acknowledged best practicies should become an example for Georgia to develop and implement an efficient diaspora engagement strategy.

1. Ireland

Migration trends in Ireland

Over much of its history Ireland has been a country of emigration. In 1841 the population of what is now the Republic of Ireland stood at over 6.5 million[1]. By 1901, mainly because of emigration and the deaths that followed the Great Famine of 1847, it had fallen to about 3.25 million. Population decline continued, although at a slower pace, and in 1961 the population level reached its lowest recorded level ever: 2.82 million. The majority of Irish emigrants who left in the XIX century and in the early XX century went to North America. These flows ended abruptly with the onset of the Great Depression in the 1930s. From this point onwards most Irish emigrants travelled to the United Kingdom particularly during and after the World War II, as large numbers of Irish men sought employment in the British war effort and the subsequent reconstruction. Estimates indicate that between 1946 and 1951 nearly 83% of Irish emigrants went to the United Kingdom.

During the 1960s increased domestic economic growth slowed the pace of emigration and the population of Ireland began to rise. The 1970s were remarkable in that a positive net immigration was recorded for the first time. This trend could not be sustained, however. Poor global economic conditions in the early 1980s impacted severely on the Irish economy, resulting in a recession that lasted well into the second half of the decade. By 1986 the unemployment rate had soared to more than 17%, significantly higher than that in the United Kingdom, and prompted large-scale emigration. In 1988/89 net emigration reached 45 thousands, or 13 per thousand of the population.

In the beginning of the 1990s outward and inward flows were more or less balanced. Economic growth from around 1996 resulted in increasing immigration. Employment rose almost 30% between 1996 and 2000, causing widespread labour shortages which attracted large numbers of immigrants, dominated by returning Irish nationals. There were also dramatic increases in the number of other nationals entering Ireland to stay and work.

[1] Here and further in analysis if not otherwise indicated the source of used statistical data is:Quinn, E., (2010): *Country Profile for Ireland,* available at Focus migration information portal: http://focus-migration.hwwi.de/typo3_upload/groups/3/focus_Migration_Publikationen/Laenderprofile/CP_19_Ireland.pdf

In the period 2002-2004 new peaks were reached in non-EU immigration flows and in the numbers of asylum applications. But asylum applications quickly fell from a 2002 peak and stabilised at a much lower level from 2004. Between 2004 and 2007 a substantial part of non-EU immigration flows converted to EU flows after the 2004 EU enlargement. New highs were reached in overall immigration, driven by nationals of the enlarged EU. Reduced but still significant net immigration has been experienced since 2007/2008, the fall largely resulting from economic contraction and associated decreased flows from new EU member states.

In the most recent years emigration from Ireland has increased significantly: the figure for 2012 represents more than a 240% increase from the low of 2002, when less than 26 thousand people left the country[2]. In contrast, the scale of immigration to Ireland has decreased significantly: in 2010 it was at its lowest level since 1994, when just around 30 thousand immigrants arrived in the country. In all, in the 11 years since 2002, over 860,000 people migrated to Ireland, while over 550,000 people moved abroad. The net figure for inward migration is thus just over 310,000 or: if averaged out over the 11-year period, this equates to around 28,400 more people moving to Ireland than leaving the country every year.

Migration policy in Ireland

Most of the existing Irish migration policy has been developed in the last two decades. The recent immigration increase in Ireland has been driven mainly by workers moving to Ireland to fill labour shortages and, therefore, many of the policy documents and regulations relate to labour migration, asylum, citizenship and general immigration.

There are three main policy areas:

1. to curb a rising number of asylum applications, the government created a list of safe countries of origin and began prioritizing applications accordingly.
2. following the 2004 referendum, an Irish-born child's automatic right to citizenship, when the parents are not Irish nationals, was eliminated

[2] Here and further in analysis if not otherwise indicated the source of used statistical data is: Gilmarti, M., (2012): *The changing landscape of Irish migration, 2000-2012,* National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis (NIRSA), p.2.

3. with regard to labour immigration, Ireland moved away from its more liberal work permit system as it sought to meet most of its low-skilled labour needs from within the enlarged European Union. Ireland, along with the United Kingdom and Sweden, agreed to allow citizens from the 10 countries that joined the European Union in May 2004 to work in the country immediately. This contributed to acceleration in immigration flows from the new member states. At the same time Ireland restricted access to its labour market for non-EU nationals, except highly-skilled and experienced professionals, often available only outside EU. In recent years the Irish government has adopted a tougher immigration policy on migrants from new EU member states too. Namely, it imposed employment restrictions for migrants from Bulgaria and Romania.

So, Ireland's migration policy has been largely shaped by increasing numbers of arriving migrants and the booming economy. It is characterized by openness towards highly skilled workers and restrictions on non-EU low-skilled labour, coupled with tighter border control and measures against irregular migrants.

In September 2009, the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform announced the introduction of a scheme (sometimes referred to as 'bridging visa') for foreign nationals who have become undocumented through no fault of their own. This is a temporary scheme, for a maximum duration of six months, for work permit holders who have been living and working in Ireland for less than five years; after this period the non-EU national will be required to leave the Irish state unless an employment permit is secured. The scheme is not a regularization campaign and each case is considered separately. Recently, Ireland instituted stricter policies that favour highly skilled immigrants from outside the European Union.

Now, in the context of economic recession, Ireland is facing a new set of policy issues with reduced but still high immigration rates and a substantial population of legal foreign residents. These issues include rising unemployment rates among immigrants and Irish nationals that put additional strain on the social welfare system.

According to the 2006 census, there were 419,733 people living in Ireland who were born outside the state and came to the country from across the world, including a large number of (East) Europeans (163,227), Asians

(46,952) and Africans (35,326). This figure represents 9.93% of total population (4,172,013) and was almost certainly an undercount at the time and has continued to grow since then, especially from new EU members (particularly Poland and Lithuania)[3]. These so-called 'New Irish' have established their own Diaspora organizations in Ireland.

Relations with Diaspora

For much of the past two centuries Ireland has been a net emigration country. As a result of Ireland's two centuries long emigration history, it is estimated that approximately 70 million people worldwide can presently claim some level of Irish ancestry. 3.1 million Irish citizens (passport holders) currently live overseas and 800,000 of them are Irish born (around 500,000 in the United Kingdom, 156,000 in the US, 50,000 in Australia, 22,800 in Canada, 16,000 in France, 16,000 in Germany, and 8,000 in Spain).

Many of these Irish citizens and the generations of former Irish citizens who started a new life in a foreign country have successfully organised themselves into clubs, centres and networks centred on their national identity. These Diaspora endeavours have provided and continue to provide important functions on behalf of the Diaspora and also the Irish state.

There are many Irish Diaspora organisations and networks around the world. They vary in size from small, local clubs (such as Irish dance schools) to branches of global networks (such as the Ancient Order of Hibernians). It is important to note, however, that the nature of the Irish Diaspora differs from place to place, depending on the size of the community, and the strength of its patriotism/interest/commitment to Ireland varies across time and space, being influenced by:

- life in Ireland prior to departure
- conditions in a destination region and problems (or conflicts) caused by integration/assimilation
- political conditions in Ireland over time
- wider cultural processes fuelling interest in Irish heritage and memory.

[3] See footnote 1, p.6

Some Irish Diasporas are well organised, while others are not. And even in places where Diaspora identity and cohesion is considered to be strong many people are little, if at all, involved in the Diaspora groups or activities.

It should be noted that the Irish Diaspora has largely self-organised through natural processes, not least with the help of the Catholic Church. This is not to say that these organisations and networks have not been supported by the Irish state, as in fact they received substantial assistance most notably through the network of embassies and consulates, but rather that the Irish state has traditionally not sought to manage and organize the Diaspora in an overly determined way.

More recently, the state has become more proactive, creating a number of schemes specifically designed to help Irish Diaspora organisations, such as, for instance, the Task Force on Policy Regarding Emigrants (2002), Enterprise Ireland, the Dion Advisory Committee, and the Irish Abroad Unit of the Department of Foreign Affairs, which provide funding and support to individuals and organisations overseas that assist Irish citizens.

Ireland has a wide range of Diaspora engagement programmes and schemes. The Government has invested significantly in Diaspora communities: €60 million by the Department of Foreign Affairs alone over the past five years[4]. For some countries, Ireland is a role model in this area. The Irish Diaspora has always maintained strong links with Ireland – that is it has always operated as a transnational Diaspora.

The Irish Diaspora's relationship with Ireland has been diverse, complex, and at times contradictory. In recent years the number of emigrants leaving Ireland and joining the Diaspora has fallen remarkably and many of those who left in the late 1980s have returned. Despite the recent downturn, the economic position of Ireland has been radically transformed and the need to provide remittances and philanthropy has dissipated. Today, Ireland's relationship with Diaspora is entering unchartered waters. It is understood that the Diaspora is a vital aspect of Ireland's history and has an important part to play in Ireland's future.

The Diaspora constitutes both an obligation and a huge potential resource. It is an obligation because, on the one hand, Irish citizens always remain

[4] Aikins, K., Sands, A., White, N., (2009): *A comparative review of international diaspora strategies*, The Ireland Funds, Dublin, p.3

Irish citizens and, on the other hand, because many of them have served and continue to serve Ireland while overseas[5]. The Diaspora is a massive potential resource because millions of people worldwide who claim some Irish ancestry possess an abundance of skills, knowledge, contacts, business acumen, and financial and political resources that could help Ireland in its efforts to rebuild national economy.

Ireland does have a wide range of programmes and schemes to engage with its Diaspora. Taken together, these programmes and schemes provide a broad range of services to, and partnerships with, the Irish Diaspora across the globe and constitute a constellation that few other countries can match in terms of scope and reach. Ireland currently undertakes activities in the following areas with regard to the development and enhancement of relationship with its diaspora populations:

1) rolling out new administrative structures to support Diaspora strategy making;
2) building infrastructure connecting Diaspora and the homeland;
3) widening citizenship to the Diaspora in certain key ways, not least in the provision of welfare services;
4) building diaspora patriotism through support of cultural activities, education and language learning;
5) promoting philanthropy;
6) building business networks to attract investments;
7) nurturing return migration, supporting integration process
8) promoting the idea of affinity Diasporas.

1) Administrative structures in support of Diaspora strategy making

The first bridge between the Irish state and the Irish Diaspora is Ireland's consulate and embassy services. Ireland has 56 embassies and 8 consulates around the world that are staffed by the Department of Foreign Affairs and offer a full range of diplomatic and consular services. In addition, it has another 93 consulates staffed by honorary consuls who may not be in a position to offer the full range of consular services, or have an out of hours service. Services include passport and citizenship enquiries; advice and support in the case of an accident, serious illness

[5] Dual citizenship is accepted in Ireland (author)

or death; advice and support to victims of serious crime overseas; help to financially distressed or destitute citizens; legal advice or advocacy for those arrested or detained; aid during crises, such as civil unrest and natural disasters; welfare issues. These services are offered to all Irish citizens and passport holders. As part of their brief, embassies and consulates regularly engage the Diaspora, attending local Diaspora events, and providing advice, in-kind support and funding to local Diaspora organisations. The Irish Abroad Unit of the Department of Foreign Affairs has recently received a mandate to coordinate engagement with the Diaspora. Enterprise Ireland and the President's Office have a proactive interest too.

2) Infrastructure development, building new bridges: creating and fostering information flows and portals

The development of broad-based information portals for the Diaspora has been delegated to independent organisations, though some of them receive financial support and advice from governmental agencies. Through the Emigrant Support Programme, for example, funds are allocated to support a number of online information services, including Crosscare Migrant Project (www.migrantproject.ie), the Irish Network of Great Britain (www.in-gb.co.uk), and (before it was disbanded), EAN, the Emigrant Advice Network, (www.ean.ie). The Department of Social and Family Affairs has also provided funding to support Crosscare Migrant Project. Emigrant News, an independent organisation, publishes a weekly news summary at its website (www.emigrant.ie) and its database includes more than 30,000 subscribers. Irishabroad.com and EuropeanIrish.com offer a wide range of information about Ireland, the Diaspora, and links to other Irish-related websites, as well as a range of social networking options, including blogging, discussion forums, public groups, community forums and dating. Irishabroad.com has over 240,000 registered users. In addition, RTÉ and other national and local radio stations broadcast across the Internet, and most national and local Irish newspapers are available online. There was some recent discussion about RTÉ purchasing a satellite channel in the UK to broadcast to the Diaspora there, but these plans seem to have been shelved due to cutbacks in funding.

3) Extending citizenship: offering welfare assistance to diasporas living abroad

Since 1984, under the auspices of the Díon Committee, the Irish Government has provided grants to Irish community and non-profit organisations offering advice and practical assistance to disadvantaged members of the Irish community. In addition, since 1989, Government funding has been allocated to support Irish community organisations in the United States. The transfer of responsibility for emigrant services funding in Britain from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment to the Department of Foreign Affairs in February 2003 centralised the coordination of emigrant services funding worldwide. The Irish Abroad Unit was established within the Department of Foreign Affairs in September 2004 to coordinate the new centralised programme (Emigrant Support Programme). The emphasis of the Emigrant Support Programme is on supporting culturally sensitive, frontline welfare services, targeting the most vulnerable members of Ireland's overseas communities. Elderly Irish emigrants, including those who emigrated in the 1950s, are among the major beneficiaries of this support. However, funding is also directed to support other vulnerable or marginalised groups, including the undocumented Irish in the US, the homeless in Britain, and those suffering from particular problems, including alcohol addiction or mental health issues. The programme also provides funds for the Irish Commission for Prisoners Overseas, which supports Irish citizens incarcerated abroad. While its focus remains on welfare services, the expansion of the Emigrant Support Programme since 2003 (it has grown five fold since then, from €3 million to €15 million) has also enabled the Government to invest in a range of community and heritage projects, which aim to foster a greater sense of Irish identity, as well as capital projects. These grants, which have been an increasing feature of the programme in recent years, are a key part of the Government's approach to developing links with Irish communities overseas and to securing the long term future of these communities. In addition, the Department of Education and Science supports a number of schemes designed to investigate and redress past abuse of Irish children in state agencies who subsequently emigrated, supplies outreach services to such citizens, and until recently provided an educational grant scheme for former residents and their families.

4) Building Irish mindedness and diaspora patriotism

Supporting cultural activities and language learning

Culture Ireland was established in 2005 as a state agency to promote the best of Ireland's arts and culture internationally and to assist in the development of Ireland's international cultural relations. Its main objective is to create international opportunities for Irish artists and cultural practitioners. Its other goals are to promote Ireland and Irish-mindedness, and many of the Culture Ireland's projects and initiatives relate to engagement with the Diaspora, as well as other cultures. The network of embassies and consulates also supports the cultural activities of the Diaspora through the hosting and attendance of different cultural events, including the worldwide celebration of St Patrick's Day. Similarly, the Ireland Funds also hosts numerous cultural activities targeted at the Diaspora that reinforce Irish identity and Irish-mindedness. Ciste na Gaeilge of the Irish Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs is a foundation which supports the teaching of Irish at third institutions outside of Ireland. Students sit the TEG exams upon completing the course, and the most successful students are provided with scholarships for intensive summer courses in Carraroe, Co. Galway.

Creating, facilitating and maintaining Diaspora social networks

In the main, social networking activities are organised by the Diaspora for the Diaspora. For example, the Ireland Funds provides financial assistance to various business networks, societies and clubs, all host events and in some cases virtual platforms that help members of the Diaspora find and interact with their peers. In general, the Irish state's involvement is limited to helping to facilitate such social networks through some in-kind or financial aid. As noted above, funding is also allocated to Irish community organisations overseas under the Emigrant Support Programme to support a broad range of community and heritage projects, including strategic, flagship heritage initiatives, like the GAA Development Programmes in Britain and the United States, and smaller, community programmes in Irish centres and organisations throughout Britain, the United States, Canada and elsewhere.

Facilitating short-term and tourist home visits by the Diaspora

While Bord Failte seeks to market Ireland as a destination to as many people as possible, it has specifically targeted the Diaspora as a group

with a higher propensity to visit. Similarly Aer Lingus in its marketing is relatively unique as an airline, as over its history it has traditionally marketed itself by reference to where it flies from (Ireland) as opposed to where it flies to. Both have worked to encourage the Diaspora to visit Ireland. A different type of scheme is that run by The Aisling Return to Ireland Project, financed under the Emigrant Support Programme, which provides annual supported holidays to Ireland for long-term, vulnerable Irish in Britain who cannot afford to visit Ireland.

5) Encouraging philanthropy to support Ireland

Ireland has a very poorly developed indigenous philanthropic set-up, but has been very successful in cultivating philanthropy in the Diaspora. The Ireland Funds, International Fund for Ireland (IFI), and Atlantic Philanthropies (AP) are prime examples. Over the past thirty years, the Ireland Funds have raised more than €300m to spend on projects in Ireland, IFI more than €850m, and AP more than €1.2 billion. The Ireland Funds are currently going through a period of introspection as the Peace Process in Northern Ireland and the economic success enjoyed by the Republic of Ireland has largely removed some of the rationale for expenditure in Ireland. It is likely that the Ireland Funds will increasingly seek to position itself in terms of a number of global responsibilities and will channel donations to trouble spots and needy regions.

6) Developing business networks for attracting diaspora investments

The Irish state has invested heavily and successfully in seeking inward investment and building business partnerships with the Irish Diaspora globally. The Industrial Development Agency (IDA) with 14 offices outside of Ireland is responsible for the attraction and development of foreign investment in Ireland. While it targets any company which might potentially invest in Ireland, it has a successful track record of recruiting businesses owned and/or run by Irish or Irish-descent entrepreneurs and managers. With 31 offices outside of Ireland, Enterprise Ireland is the state agency responsible for the development and promotion of the Irish business sector and in assisting international companies and entrepreneurs who are looking for Irish suppliers or are interested in investing in Irish companies. At present, Enterprise Ireland supports, through in-kind

or financial aid, over sixty Irish business networks around the world with over 30,000 members in total. These networks are used to support the work of these members whether they are located in Ireland or not, but are also used strategically to help market Irish business and products and to enable Irish companies to expand into new territories and markets, and to encourage inward investment into Ireland. An example of the latter is the recently established Irish Technology Leadership Group (ITLG), comprising Irish people in senior positions in the high tech world of Silicon Valley, who are seeking to invest in Irish companies, partly because they want to make a contribution to Ireland's development but also because they see this initiative as a good and profitable enterprise for their members as well. Unlike other countries, such as Scotland and Chile which have placed emphasis on developing a single elite business network of high-level achievers among the Diaspora, Ireland has adopted a much more plural approach that aims to foster a number of business networks and to grow a wide base of contacts and expertise. Some of these were initially seeded by Enterprise Ireland. For instance, Techlink-UK and Biolink Ireland-USA and others were started by the Diaspora. On the whole, networks are owned and run by their members and function as social/business networking sites, many of whom also organise regular face-to-face meetings. In addition, there are numerous Irish business forums and chambers of commerce. For example, the Asia Pacific Business forum links 11 Irish business groups in the Asia Pacific and the Gulf to facilitate an exchange of ideas and resources and to leverage reputation and connections, while the Irish Chamber of Commerce USA is a transnational economic network with 13 chapters across the USA. The Ireland Funds events also provide an important business networking function. Given the size of Ireland, the breadth and depth of these business networks is exceptional, although there are still many possibilities for expansion, especially with respect to both general and specialised networks.

Ireland's governing Republican Party (Fianna Fail) launched the Global Irish Economic Forum in Dublin on October 7-8, 2011, to discuss opportunities and priorities for economic recovery and engagement of the Global Irish Network. The primary purposes of the 2011 Forum were**:**

– Engage fully with the Irish Diaspora in developing Ireland's global business and trade relations;

– Discuss face-to-face the Government's priorities for economic renewal with key members of the international business community;
– Strengthen ties with the Irish Diaspora as a key part of the Government's efforts to restore Ireland's international reputation abroad.

The Forum was a huge success as it produced a number of ideas regarding how to involve the Irish Diaspora in the country's economic development.

7) Encouraging return migration, supporting integration and providing return facilitation services

Since 1993, approximately 40% (more than 200,000) of all migrants to Ireland have been returnees[6]: primarily those who left Ireland in the 1980s and to a lesser extent the 1950s. During the years of the Celtic Tiger, given the strength of the Irish economy and the lure of well paid jobs, proactive programmes were perhaps not needed to entice Irish people to return to Ireland. Consequently, Irish returnees were treated in the same fashion as other desirable skilled migrants. For example, from the mid-1990s, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and Department of Social and Family Affairs organised a series of overseas trade fairs aimed at attracting talent to Ireland. These fairs also encouraged Irish diasporas to consider returning home. To aid those considering a return, a number of organisations that provide advice to returnees are funded under the Emigrant Support Programme. For example, Crosscare Migrant Project (formerly Emigrant Advice) provides information through its 'Returning to Ireland' service on the statutory services and entitlements available to 'homecomers'. The Emigrant Support Programme also provides grants to support the Safe Home Programme, a registered charity which advises and counsels older Irish emigrants thinking about return to Ireland and assists those who decide to do so. Safe Home also works closely with the Department of the Environment, Local Government and Heritage, which provides funding to voluntary housing bodies to make up to 25% of accommodation available to elderly returning emigrants who satisfy eligibility criteria.

[6] Ancien, D., Boyle, M., Kitchin, R.,(2009): *Exploring Diaspora Strategies: Lessons for Ireland,* National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis (NIRSA), p.12.

8) Developing an affinity Diaspora

Ireland has no official policy of seeking to develop an affinity Diaspora[7], but it does undertake some initiatives that create a partial, de facto affinity Diaspora. This is achieved through the creation and fostering of country-to-country business networks that seek to build mutual cooperation and dependencies. For example, the Ireland Turkey Business Association (ITBA) creates links between Turkish business people in Ireland and Irish businesses and also helps Irish businesses seeking to do business in Turkey. A number of these networks are supported by IBEC's (Irish Business and Employers Confederation) Export Orientation Programme (EOP). In addition, in-kind or financial support is given to Diaspora organisations of other countries based in Ireland. A number of these organisations are currently operating in Ireland. Finally, the state undertakes international development work that aims to help a country and its people while, at the same time, creating visibility and new markets and opportunities for Irish businesses.

Taken together, these programmes and schemes provide a broad range of services to, and partnerships with, the Irish diaspora across the globe and constitute a constellation that few other countries can match in terms of scope and reach. So far, however, these efforts have lacked strategic focus and continuity, and in many cases were underresourced, and their scale and impact has been limited as a result.

Challenges to Diaspora relations – experts' opinion

A Diaspora strategy is an explicit policy initiative by the state with regard to developing its relationship with its Diaspora. Since 2009 the need for such document has been a subject of broad discussion by public and experts in Ireland and overseas. In the opinion of experts, Ireland's existing schemes designed to foster linkages and services to its Diaspora should be combined and extended under the umbrella of a larger, overall Irish Diaspora strategy.

[7] An affinity Diaspora is a collection of people, usually former immigrants and tourists or business travellers, who have a different national or ethnic identity to a nation state but who feel some special affinity or affection for that nation state and who act on its behalf, whilst resident in the state, after they return home, or from a third country.

The question why Ireland needs a fully developed Diaspora Strategy, has been raised soon after the Ministry of Foreign Affairs prepared and published the *Report of the Task Force on Policy Regarding Emigrants*[8] in 2009, which set in train the provision of support services to vulnerable Irish living abroad. This report noted that it is certainly the case that existing clubs, organizations, networks and schemes do an excellent job in serving the Diaspora and continue to be of enormous benefit to Ireland. But the membership of traditional Irish Diaspora groups (e.g. Ancient Order of Hibernians, County societies) seems to be in decline and have an increasingly aged population. Three main reasons account for this trend. Firstly, the number of emigrants leaving Ireland and joining the Diaspora has shrunk remarkably in the last few years and some of those who left Ireland, particularly in the late 1980s, have returned. Secondly, the traditional imperative to maintain the Irish Diaspora has weakened. Anti-Irish racism, while still present to a certain extent, has reduced significantly; the economic position of Ireland has been radically transformed and the need to provide monetary support has dissipated; and the need to mobilize in response to the 'Irish question' in the North has lessened given the peace process. Thirdly, while cultural identity remains important for the Diaspora more broadly, existing groups and activities do not appeal to as many emigrants as previously due to changes in lifestyle and worldviews and this has occasionally led to tensions between different members of the Diaspora, for example in relation to who can and cannot march in St Patrick Day's Parades. In contrast, Irish culture – music, literature, theatre, film, comedy – has gained global cache and has cemented Ireland's reputation as a centre of cultural production. In addition, the influx of immigrants to Ireland has significantly changed the landscape of Irish society and led Irish citizens to develop a sense of cosmopolitanism and to reconsider what it means to be Irish. Moreover, just as her predecessor, Mary Robinson, President Mary McAleese, has placed strong focus on the global Irish family in her tenure as President. For instance, she used to include a major Diaspora element to the programme of her every overseas trip.

In the opinion of experts, despite these changes and challenges, there is no overarching policy and associated practices to facilitate the ongoing development of the relationship between Ireland and its Diaspora and there is no doubt that the full potential of such a relationship remains to be realised.

[8] http://www.dfa.ie/uploads/documents/task%20force%20on%20policy%20regarding%20emigrants.pdf

Nor is there any policy to develop relationship with immigrants to Ireland beyond those directed at managing and supporting their new life in Ireland. In other words, there is significant scope for existing Diaspora initiatives to be supplemented and augmented in new ways to extend and realise new benefits for all parties. These mutual benefits will be social, cultural, political and economic in nature.

Ireland's relationship with its Diaspora, albeit until recently typically unidirectional (from the Diaspora to Ireland), has long been the envy of other countries. Extending its Diaspora strategy will maintain Ireland's position ahead of the curve in terms of creating and realising new innovations and initiatives at a time when many other countries around the world have started to formulate their own strategies.

Ireland has an interesting diaspora engagement model which is partly public and partly private. In recent years, Ireland has witnessed a proliferation of interest and innovative initiatives, which are increasingly attracting attention from other countries. Ireland is a strong example of a country that recognizes the power and potential of its diaspora and understands that this is a resource to be researched, cultivated, solicited and stewarded in a comprehensive and strategic way. It also appreciates that it is as much about giving to the diaspora as getting from the diaspora. Consequently, the Irish experiences and the methodologies described above collectively offer some informative tools and instruments in understanding how to make diaspora engagement work. These tools and instruments are useful in probing at the boundaries of how effective diaspora engagement has emerged as a leading component of "smart power" in the networked age.

Presented below are **ten principles of good practice**[9] based on experience of Ireland and other international practice on National Diaspora Strategies, which are particularly important in the experts' opinion.

1. A diaspora strategy should be centralized enough to ensure that a common identity, sense of purpose, collective consciousness, economies of scale, and strategic priorities can be achieved, but loose enough to let a thousand flowers bloom. Coordinated anarchy is not entirely indispensable.
2. A diaspora strategy cannot privilege economic ties over social and cultural networks and still should be sustainable.

[9] Boyle, M., Kitchin, R., Ancien, D., (2011): *The NIRSA Diaspora Strategy Wheel and Ten Principles of Good Practice,* Diaspora Matters, Dublin, p.8.

3. A diaspora strategy needs to be mutually beneficial for both home countries and diaspora populations.
4. Countries that know their diasporas well will be better placed to engage them.
5. Diaspora strategies should define 'diaspora' as broadly as possible to avoid racialising national social, cultural, economic, and political policies – and should include affinity diaspora policies where appropriate.
6. The diaspora needs to be consulted before any diaspora strategy is rolled out; diaspora strategies must be co-authored if they are to work.
7. Diaspora strategies must be transparent and accountable, but given the specificity and the many intangible benefits of policy interventions, distinctive and unique policy impact analysis tools and evaluative frameworks and metrics need to be developed.
8. There is no ideal institutional framework for coordinating diaspora strategies; each country needs to devise engagement forms that reflect its own institutional history, social, cultural, economic, and political needs, and the history, structure and organization of its diaspora.
9. Diaspora strategies should be brought into the growing international conversation about best practice and should pro-actively affiliate themselves with networks involved in policy dissemination.
10. Diaspora strategies need to be underpinned by a philosophically grounded rationale which resonates with the country's deepest social, economic, cultural, and political needs at any point in time. Shallow slogans might lead to short-term gains but will fail over the long term; a meaningful overarching identity will galvanise and energise.

Recent initiatives related to new Diaspora Strategy in Ireland under wide discussion

July of 2013 is known as a time when Senator Mark Daly, the first spokesperson appointed by any political party to represent the Irish Overseas and Diaspora, has launched the first policy paper in Ireland[10] regarding the

[10] FIANNA FÁIL (The Republican Party), *Policy Proposal for the Irish Overseas and Diaspora*, available at: http://senatormarkdaly.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/diaspora-290813md-1.pdf

Irish Overseas and Diaspora. Intensive consultations with organisations involved with the Irish Overseas and Diaspora with the intention of improving and adding to the policy are under way in Ireland. Some key proposals of this Policy are presented below:

Appointment of a Minister for the Irish Overseas and Diaspora within the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade with the intention of promoting the affinity those of Irish heritage have for Ireland. The Minister would protect and promote the rights of the Diaspora and the Irish living overseas as well as stimulate economic, educational and cultural interaction between Ireland and the global Irish community. The Irish Abroad Unit, a small subsection of the Department of Foreign Affairs, is currently responsible for dealing with the Irish overseas and Diaspora. Working hard to maintain and strengthen links with Irish communities abroad, it reflects a growing trend around the world for countries to appoint a Minister specifically for handling their diaspora.

The Irish Diaspora is a national asset because there are millions of intelligent, talented, successful people of Irish heritage living around the world who still feel very passionate about their Irish roots. Therefore it is absolutely essential for Ireland to engage the Irish Diaspora and to foster meaningful relationship with them. The identification and successful engagement of Irish Diaspora around the world will lead to the foundation of a global network in which both Ireland and a host country of the Irish Diaspora will benefit.

The Irish Overseas and Diaspora Minister's duties include fostering trust and meaningful relationship with the Diaspora, which is expected to reinforce Ireland's soft power. Soft power makes other countries more willing to do business with Ireland, and consequently, to increase profits and two-way flow. When both Ireland and a host country of the diaspora benefit, it is referred to as two-way flow. This flow can take shape in many forms such as human, financial, political, social, cultural, and intellectual. By engaging our diaspora, we can significantly increase this "flow" of all forms of capital. A financial flow of capital can be accomplished by selling Diaspora Bonds, Irish Credit Cards, Diaspora Direct Investment and Philanthropy.

Irish Overseas and Diaspora Registry. Fianna Fail would like to establish a comprehensive and properly maintained registry of Diaspora and the Irish overseas, which would be used to establish a continuous two-way commu-

nication with the Diaspora and the Irish overseas. The registry would have a structured list of all organisations associated with Ireland, the Irish overseas and the Irish Diaspora. The registry would be maintained by the Minister for the Irish Overseas and Diaspora with the primary purpose of engaging with the Diaspora.

Crowd Funding is a form of philanthropy in which a group of people pool their money together in order to fund a project in which they all have a mutual interest. Crowd Funding has already begun in Ireland with organisations such as iFund and Fund it. According to Fund it's Twitter Page, in its first 22 months, it has successfully funded 350 projects by over 25,000 pledges. Expanding Crowd Funding to the global stage by using the Irish Overseas and Diaspora Registry will encourage Diaspora from around the world to invest in projects they are personally interested in. By offering a systemised, accessible list of projects, the Diaspora will be more willing to invest in philanthropic projects.

The Ireland Funds is one of the most successful philanthropic Diaspora-related networks in the world. Since 1976 it expanded its operations over 12 countries and achieved a global reach, which helped raise over $450 million for more than 1,200 outstanding organisations.

The Minister for the Irish Overseas and Diaspora would reach out and support the efforts and connections made through the Ireland Funds in support of Irish People away from home and build further upon its growing success as an organisation of the Irish Diaspora.

The Irish Presidential Distinguished Service Award will be introduced in order to provide recognition by the Irish State of the contribution of persons living abroad, primarily Irish Citizens, those entitled to Irish Citizenship and those of Irish Descent, who have provided distinguished service to Ireland and/or Irish Communities abroad. The award is intended as a formal recognition of the on-going efforts of Irish Abroad who have actively contributed to Ireland, its international reputation, as well as those who have a record of sustained support and engagement with Ireland and Irish Communities for a minimum period of five years.

Recognition of Philanthropists. In order to express gratitude for the generosity of the Irish Diaspora who are willing to invest in philanthropic projects involving Ireland and encourage future Diaspora philanthropy, philanthro-

pists working for the benefit of Ireland will be presented with a Certificate of Irish Heritage as acknowledgement of their on-going work.

Connectivity. The Minister for the Irish Overseas and Diaspora will also be in charge of communicating and working constructively with other government departments both in Ireland and around the world. The communication between the Minister for the Irish Overseas and Diaspora and the rest of the Irish government is as important as the two-way communication between Ireland and the Irish Diaspora. Without support from other sections of the government, it will be difficult to properly assist the Irish Overseas and Diaspora. It will also be difficult to assist the Irish Overseas and Diaspora if the Minister does not have an open dialogue with the governments of host countries of the Diaspora. Therefore, one of the primary responsibilities of the Minister for the Irish Overseas and Diaspora will be to interact with the heads of other Irish government departments as well as ministers in other countries.

Disaster Relief. In the event of a major disaster abroad, the Minister for the Irish Overseas and Diaspora will be able to provide assistance to all Irish citizens and Diaspora directly affected by the disaster. A portion of the Minister's budget will be allocated specifically for disaster relief and aid for Irish citizens and Diaspora abroad. The Minister will also be able to use the registry as a forum for encouraging Irish overseas and Diaspora to offer assistance to Irish overseas and Diaspora who have been directly affected by a major disaster.

Voting Rights. Irish citizens living abroad and those in the North of Ireland who wish to vote, the right they are entitled to as members of the Irish Nation according to the Irish Constitution, will be granted this opportunity.

Foreign Direct Investment. The Minister for the Irish Overseas and Diaspora will be able to assist in attracting Foreign Direct Investment. The Minister will also be responsible for engaging foreign governments in order to facilitate Foreign and Diaspora Direct Investment.

Diaspora Direct Investment. Diaspora Direct Investment is a major form of capital flow for the economic development of a large number of countries. In the opinion of experts, "…some diaspora members are interested in investing in their homeland because they expect a financial return; others are driven by the possibility of social recognition from within their

diaspora communities and organizations. The investment interest of other diaspora members may be motivated by the potential emotional satisfaction they will receive when investing in their homelands"[11] . So, the motivation for diaspora direct investment can be vast, but it is the end result that matters. It must be a priority of ours to engage with the diaspora and encourage them to invest in the economic development of Ireland.

ConnectIreland is an innovative organisation which creates new jobs in Ireland. Its mission is to attract foreign companies that are expanding internationally to Ireland through ordinary people – creating jobs and securing the future of the Irish economy. The Irish Government then financially rewards those that attract new, sustainable jobs into Ireland. Innovations such as ConnectIreland should be encouraged as part of Ireland's Foreign Direct Investment and Diaspora Direct Investment.

ChileGlobal is an excellent example of how the Irish Overseas and Diaspora Registry can be used to engage with a diaspora. ChileGlobal is a network of successful Chilean entrepreneurs and executives living and working abroad, which aims to mitigate the effects of the 'brain drain' by linking them to businesses and entrepreneurs in Chile. They promote direct diaspora investment and the mentoring of new businesses.

GlobalScot is a diaspora direct investment organization which could be used as a model for Ireland. It is a network of successful business leaders from Scotland or with a connection to Scotland living and working around the world. Their goal is to support ambitious Scottish companies to compete in the global marketplace, to help build Scotland's competitive sectors and directly benefit the Scottish economy.

Diaspora Bonds. In 2010, Minister for Finance of Ireland announced the introduction of National Solidarity Bonds in Ireland. The National Solidarity Bonds are regulated by The National Treasury Management Agency and they are offered as four-year and ten-year bonds. National Solidarity Bonds are offered by the Government of Ireland to make it easy for residents of Ireland to help fund the Government's capital investment programme, develop important infrastructure, stimulate economic recovery and create employment. In 2011, the selling of National Solidarity Bonds raised net revenue of €265 million. Solidarity Bonds are limited to residents of Ireland however. But it could be expanded to include the Diaspora

[11] Kingsley, A., White, N., (2011): *Global Diaspora Strategies Toolkit: Harnessing the Power of Global Diasporas*, Diaspora Matters, Dublin, p. 99.

as well. Diaspora bonds are a viable option for economic recovery as Ireland has a very large and successful diaspora, many of whom would be interested in investing in Ireland's future. Selling diaspora bonds to the Irish Overseas and the Diaspora is one way of increasing capital flow into Ireland.

Irish Credit Card. In a similar vein, Ireland could introduce an Irish Credit Card for the Diaspora, an idea which was first proposed in India's 2002 Report of the High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora. A token sum from each transaction through the card could be credited to the account of selected national projects, thus creating a sense of identification with nation-building efforts.

Citizenship. Under the current Foreign Births Registration Requirements, it is quite difficult for persons of Irish descent and heritage to become citizens of Ireland. It is necessary to design a new legislation, which will simplify the naturalisation process for the Irish Diaspora who deserve to get the citizenship.

Certificate of Irish Heritage. The Certificate of Irish Heritage represents an acknowledgment and appreciation by the Irish State of the strong and enduring connection to Ireland felt by millions of people around the world. The Certificate recognizes descendants of previous generations of Irish citizens and is a practical expression of the sense of Irish identity felt by many around the world. The Certificate is available upon application for anyone who can prove an ancestral connection to Ireland and their Irish roots. It is necessary to increase the number of Certificates of Irish Heritage presented annually to members of the Irish Diaspora in various government, business and cultural contexts as a means of showing the Diaspora how deeply we value their connection to Ireland.

Irish Card will be offered to any person of Irish heritage who is not eligible for an Irish passport. This would offer an opportunity to those of Irish heritage to be officially recognised by the Irish State. The Irish Card will also provide immeasurable financial, cultural and political benefits for Ireland as well as for the Irish Diaspora.

Honorary Consuls should be appointed globally as advocates for the Irish Overseas and Diaspora in every country, state, city and province with an Irish presence. All the Irish Overseas and Diaspora deserve equal representation regardless of what country they reside in or how many of them

live there. Representation of the Irish Overseas and Diaspora is currently handled by the Department of Foreign Affairs, and the representation of the global Irish community is far from equal. The appointment of a Minister for the Irish Overseas and Diaspora is crucial. Once this has taken place, the Minister for the Irish Overseas and Diaspora will set an 18-month deadline for the appointment of Honorary Consuls in areas Ireland does not have representation currently or locations with an expanding Irish presence. Honorary Consulates would be a fiscally viable investment, as the cost of establishing the Honorary Consulates will be insignificant in comparison to the return from engaging with the Irish community around the world.

International Education. Many countries have recognised the major asset of returning diaspora. A great way to encourage diaspora to return to their home country is to use third level education to offer students the opportunity to travel, to gain an education and to form invaluable connections which will benefit their homeland. Irish Universities Association and Education in Ireland are two organisations which specialize in promoting Irish higher educational institutions abroad. These organisations actively seek out and recruit international students around the world. The Minister for the Irish Overseas and Diaspora will make it a priority to assist organisations such as Irish Universities Association and Education in Ireland in promoting Irish higher education abroad. The Minister will be able to use the Irish Overseas and Diaspora Registry as well as his contacts with foreign governments around the world to promote Irish education and recruit international students. To begin with, it is necessary to put greater emphasis on improving the global image of Irish universities.

It is proposed to expand the Ireland Homecoming Study Programme. The current Ireland Homecoming Study Programme offers a 40% reduced 'Irish Diaspora tuition fee' to non-European Union resident Irish Diaspora to study at Irish Institute of Technology. It is proposed to offer the programme at Universities and Colleges. The reduced Irish Diaspora tuition fee will be offered to all students eligible for an Irish Card.

Educational travel programs are a fantastic way of encouraging young diaspora to fully immerse themselves in the culture of the home country. The Cultural Section of the Promoting Ireland Abroad Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs currently works with the Department of Education and Science to promote educational exchanges in foreign coun-

tries as well as with the Fulbright Commission to promote educational exchange between Ireland and the US. It would be very beneficial to create cultural travel programs similar to those offered by India and Israel.

In order to attract Diaspora to Ireland, it is important to increase global support for *Irish culture, sports, music, dance and art* overseas.

Encouraging the Diaspora to visit Ireland for *tourism* is important in many ways. It is of course an especially significant source of revenue, as The Gathering 2013 is expected to bring in additional €170 million and more than 325,000 additional tourists throughout the year. But even more importantly, events like The Gathering provide an opportunity to remind the Diaspora of the beauty and culture of our country, especially for the first time visitors. It is a chance to make a great first impression. Enabling Diaspora to visit Ireland and experience what makes Ireland such a great country opens more economic, cultural, political and social doors for the future. It allows strengthen relationship with Diaspora, most of whom will return to their host countries with an increased affinity for Ireland, which will prove invaluable in future when Irish citizens are looking to do business with or travel to a foreign country.

2. Italy

Historical migration trends in Italy

From its constitutional creation in 1861 until the late second half of the 20th century, Italy experienced one of the biggest exoduses in modern history. In the time span of only one century, more than 25 million Italians[12] – a number equivalent to the total Italian population in 1861 – left the country. After unification, Italy amassed a huge public debt. In order to balance the country's budget, the government enforced the so-called "corn flour tax" (*tassa sul macinato*), driving lots of peasants and their families to emigrate. It was the first "push" factor that led to ten decades of mass migration caused by economic downturn and poverty. The most common destinations were industrialized countries of North Europe and both North and South America. Between 1876 and 1976, 13 million Italians (52% of total emigrants) expatriated to other European Countries. Most of them went to France (4,317 million), followed by Switzerland (3,989 million) and Germany (2,452 million). Another 11 million Italians (44% of total emigrants) travelled to the Americas: the majority to USA (5,691 million), and the rest to Argentina (2,968 million), Brazil (1,457 million), Canada (637,123), and Venezuela (285,000). About one million Italians emigrated in similar proportions to Australia and Africa. The emigrants were almost equally from both the southern and northern regions of Italy – only a few of them came from the central regions. Around two-thirds of emigrants at that time were male.

Experts[13] have identified four main phases of **emigration** in Italy:

- **1876-1900** Emigration of workforce mainly from North Italy to Europe and South America due to the agricultural crisis and widespread poverty.
- **1901-1915** The Great Emigration (nine million departures; 600,000 annually): due to slow and haphazard industrialization process in Italy, the surplus workforce, mostly from South Italy, opted to move to USA.
- **1916-1944** Decline in the pace of emigration between the two World Wars, due to legislative restrictions in USA and the anti-migration

[12] Here and further in the analysis if not otherwise indicated the source of presented statistical data is: Ruskoni, S., (2010): *Italy's migration experience,* available on portal of Network Migration in Europe e.V.: www.migrationeducation.org

[13] See footnote 1

policy adopted by the fascist regime to ensure positive international image for Italy and strengthen the Italian army.

- **1945-1976** The post-war increase in the emigration flow to South America, France, Switzerland, and Germany. At the same time the internal displacement from rural to urban areas and from South Italy to the more industrialized northern region also increased.

The year **1976** saw the end of mass emigration from Italy and marked a turning point. For the first time in Italian history the volume of inward migration to the country from abroad was almost equal to the outward migration of Italians to other countries. In the following four decades Italy transformed from a typical southern country of emigration to one of the most important European destination countries, alongside Spain, Germany, France and the United Kingdom.

After 1976 Italy faced growing immigration from developing countries and Eastern Europe. The number of foreign nationals in Italy increased from 143,800 in 1970 to more than 300,000 in 1980 and half a million by 1985. The foreign population soared to one million in 1999, two million in 2000 and three million people in 2005[14]. According to the latest available data from the Italian National Institute of Statistics, the number of foreigners living in Italy reached 4,387 million people in 2013, having increased 10% in the last two years alone. Foreign nationals account for 7.4% of Italy's total population at present.[15].

Today migrants need permanent residence permits to live in Italy. The number of migrants from East Europe and third world countries who were granted residence in Italy increased substantially (from one third to 40%) after each of the five regularisation schemes, which took place in 1986, 1990, 1996, 1998 and 2002. As a result, after being a country of emigration for more than a century, Italy has had to cope with a rapid change of role because of the growing immigration flows from various parts of the world.

During the 1990s, a majority of immigrants came from North Africa (most notably Morocco, Tunisia and Senegal) and from the Philippines (most of them were women employed in the domestic labour market). The collapse of the Communist block, first of all of Soviet Union and former Yugoslavia, triggered a massive influx of migrants from eastern and south-eastern Euro-

[14] See footnote 1

[15] http://dati.istat.it/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=DCIS_POPSTRRES1&Lang

pean countries, which in the 2000s finally outnumbered immigrants from North Africa and Asia. Albanians and Romanians became the most numerous groups of immigrants in Italy in late 2000s, followed by Ukrainians and Moldovans. According to the data of the Italian National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT), about half of the foreigners living in Italy today arrived from Eastern Europe: half of them from new EU members and the other half from non-EU countries. The biggest foreign groups come from the following countries: Romania, Albania, Morocco, China, Ukraine, Philippines, Moldavia, Poland, Tunisia, India, Macedonia, Ecuador, Peru, Egypt, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo, Senegal, Pakistan and Nigeria. They constitute over 80% of the total number of foreigners in Italy[16].

Migration policies on Italy

The Italian transition from being an emigration to an immigration country brought to the fore the need for efficient immigration policy. Italy's experience within the European migratory system is now consolidated fairly well. Immigration is at an advanced stage, as shown by the presence of a large and growing share of foreigners who can be considered as second generation immigrants. Consequently, Italy has got enough competence and experience in formulating migration policies.

The period between 1976 and 1986 is identified by experts[17] as a period of migration without a legal framework. The first attempt to develop a comprehensive migration policy was the Act 943 of 1986. It was accompanied by the first large-scale regularization scheme, designed to settle the legal status and rights of immigrants. It regulated the status of foreign workers on the basis of "equal work for equal pay" principle and granted paid foreign workers access to all social and welfare services. Yet it failed to address the important issue of self-employment which was widespread among new immigrants. However, the act was never implemented and the first (real) legislation dates back to 1990.

The so-called *Legge Martelli* Act. 39 of 1990 was the first legislation to deal with migration. This act introduced visa requirements for migrants from most of the developing countries, streamlined the deportation proce-

[16] See footnote 1

[17] See footnote 1

dure for illegal immigrants, and enforced penalties for those involved in human (labour migrants) trafficking. It also reformed, for the first time, some aspects of the Italian asylum procedure, making it possible for non-Europeans to seek asylum in the country. At that time Italy was involved in the *Schengen* process and the above-mentioned law was, in part, an attempt to comply with membership requirements and assure other European members that Italy was able to prevent the entry of unwanted immigrants into the *Schengen* space.

New reforms in the second half of the 1990s led to the first systematic Italian migration law, the *Turco-Napolitano* law, Act. 40 of 1998, introduced by the centre-left coalition. The law included new repressive measures designed to prevent illegal entries and streamline the repatriation procedure. Among other things, it authorised to set up *Centres for Temporary Detention* of illegal migrants, where migrants could be detained for up to 30 days until their deportation.

In 2001 the centre–right coalition returned to power after an electoral campaign focused on migration. Right-wing parties, first of all the xenophobic *Lega Nord* party, were able to exploit and fuel security worries that were widespread in the public. The new government adopted a new migration-related legislation, *Bossi – Fini* law, in 2002.

The new centre–right act was distinctly restrictive. It not only sought to introduce more effective tools to crack down on illegal entries and unauthorised residence, but also aimed to limit legal migration by imposing tougher rules for obtaining residence permits and employment contracts.

Despite the restrictive provisions of the law, the largest regularization ever granted in Europe occurred in Italy right at that time – in all, 634,728[18] people were regularized during the right-wing government's tenure. It is noteworthy that the entire apparatus of social and family rights of the immigrants (including illegal ones) was left intact.

During its short-lived legislature (2006-2008), the centre-left coalition did not make any substantial amendments to the country's immigration law. In 2008 the centre–right coalition *Popolo delle Liberta*, led by Silvio Berlusconi, came into power again, heralding the adoption of tougher, more repressive components of the immigration policy. On May 2008, the Ital-

[18] See footnote 1

ian Interior Minister Roberto Maroni launched the so-called "Security Package" (*Pacchetto Sicurezza*), including migration legislation in the wider area of public security measures. It had obvious consequences not only in terms of public perception of immigrants as criminals and a potential danger to security but also in terms of spreading worry and distrust among the population.

On the whole, the new regulation substantially curbed foreigners' rights in Italy. Once again, the efforts have concentrated on the (already) ineffective measures to suppress illegal immigration through the control of spatial movements, without giving any attention to internal factors such as the widespread shadow economy which is seen as one of the main driving forces of immigration.

To summarize, the recent economic recession dealt a fatal blow to the legislative framework that has not met any of its objectives, neither preventing illegal arrivals nor satisfying the needs of the employers nor even managing the influx of migrant workers in accordance with a plan to enhance the competitiveness of enterprises and to guarantee social cohesion.

Relations with Diaspora

According to 2011 data[19], 6.8% of the Italians are living abroad nowadays. The biggest part of the Italian diaspora (55%) is scattered throughout Europe, while 39.6% have settled in the Americas. Argentina, Germany and Switzerland have the largest Italian communities, followed by France, Brazil, and USA.

The case of Italian associations abroad is exemplary. They are not only numerous and present in many countries, being in some cases really big players consisting both of ethnic Italians and natives of the host country, but they have also links with the home country that in several cases have been formalized and institutionalized more than a century ago. More precisely, since the last decades of the XIX century the Italian government has officially recognized and in some cases subsidized associative activities of Italians abroad. These formal links have strengthened the ties between the home country and the Diaspora. Besides, in the 70s of the last century, the Italian Government created a register of the Italian associa-

[19] AIRE (Register of Italians living abroad).

tions abroad to make it easier to monitor their operations and compare their activities in different locations and at different times. The register was regularly updated till 2007. According to the abovementioned survey, the total number of Italian associations abroad amounted to 3,755 in 1970. Most of them (1,186) were mutual aid and welfare societies, followed by entertainment (732) and cultural (520) organisations. It is worth noting that there were also 70 business and professional associations (nearly half of them Italian chambers of commerce abroad), reflecting the role Italian migrants had played in their host countries' business sector. Most of the associations were located in countries with sizeable Italian communities, namely in neighbouring Switzerland (1,058), followed by Argentina (637), the United States (410), Canada (273), and France (227).

The table below provides more detailed information about the Italian associations.

Table 1. Italian associations in foreign countries

Specialisation	1970		2005	
	Number of associations	%%	Number of associations	%%
Charitable	1186	31.6	1216	20.8
Cultural	520	13.8	833	14.2
Patriotic	244	6.5	290	5
Religious	195	5.2	186	3.2
Sport	339	9	205	3.5
Business	70	1.9	78	1.3
Political	21	0.6	26	0.4
Regional	427	11.4	2056	35.1
Entertaining	732	19.5	961	16.4
Unions	21	0.6	6	0.1
Total	3755	100	5857	100

The emergence of regional governments in Italy in the 1970s marked a significant milestone in the evolution of Italian emigrants' associations. Since then the regional governments have been entrusted with the task of directly managing the relationship with (and funding of) regional and local associations abroad. At the same time, some host nations, such as the USA, Canada, and the UK, granted foreign communities public spaces and public funding to set up, on a local basis, community centres to promote the culture and values of their countries of origin. Italian associations took

advantage of this opportunity to establish themselves as interlocutors of a host country' authorities, as well as officially recognized representatives of the Italian communities.

Both changes prompted a post-1970 surge of local and regional associations. In 2005[20] the total number of associations had risen 56% from 3,755 to 5,857. The number of regional and local associations increased at a staggering rate, from 427 in 1970 to 2,056 in 2005, or 35% of the total number of associations. In the face of the rise of the total number of association, all types of associations – with the exception of religious and sport societies and unions – increased in absolute terms between 1970 and 2005.

Many Italian associations functioned as a meeting place for people to relax and socialise, helping to pass down the shared customary values of the Italian Diaspora from generation to generation, improve the level of mutual trust among their members, and facilitate their social and economic interactions and links with the country of origin. Moreover, over the course of time several associations launched activities explicitly aimed at promoting business relations between Italians abroad and Italy.

A good case in point is the Italian National American Fountation (NIAF), an association founded in 1975 by a group of prominent Italian Americans which presently has a membership of about 20 million in the USA. NIAF's goals are to help young Italian Americans with education and careers, lobby the Congress and the White House for promotion of Italian Americans in government, encourage the teaching of the Italian language and culture in schools, monitor the portrayal of Italian Americans by the news and entertainment industries, and strengthen cultural and economic ties between Italy and the United States. In 1976 NIAF held its first event, the "Bicentennial Tribute Dinner," in honour of the 29 Italian American members of Congress. In following years NIAF organized conferences on various themes, often including professional subjects such as jurisprudence, ethics and ethnic policy. Scholarship and grant opportunities to young Italian Americans complemented the education agenda. NIAF sought to preserve Italian cultural traditions and heritage and bring the Italian language to schools and universities in the USA. Moreover, in the 1990s NIAF implemented a series of agreements with Italy aimed at building closer relations through student exchange. Reflecting the expanding professional interests of its membership, between the late 1990s and the beginning of the XXI century

[20] This is a latest available data

NIAF established a Medical Council (for Italian American doctors), a Wall Street Council (for Italian Americans involved in the financial sector), a Business Council (for Italian American corporate executives), and an Institute for International Law (for Italian American lawyers).

Italian emigrants have maintained strong links with their home country and substantially influenced some of its institutions. The citizenship law is one of the examples. It confers the Italian citizenship on emigrants of the first generation and their offspring. Another one concerns bilateral agreements between Italy and the main host countries of the Italian Diaspora. Initially, it aimed at protecting the rights of Italian emigrants abroad. Later on, it was used to ease the return of Italian emigrants and their descendants to Italy (for example, by officially recognizing a host country' school certificates and university diplomas). A new law, passed in 2001, empowered Italians residing permanently abroad to vote in Italy's general elections and elect their representatives to Parliament. Another significant example addresses institutional relations between the emigrants' associations and the home country.

It is noteworthy that historically, Italians have always kept strong ties with their homeland. As mentioned above, as a result of the regionalisation process that began in Italy in the 1970s diaspora engagement policies were devolved from the central government to the local level. Since then every region has adopted its own program of engagement with the diaspora and developed/carried out joint educational, professional development and social projects together with the local partner organisations of the diaspora associations. As a rule, these associations (known as the nel mondo – "in the world" – associations) have their headquarters in Italy and branch offices in various countries of the world. Italy's regional governments trust them enough to provide financial support with budgetary funds.

The Committees of Italians Abroad (Com.It.Es) representing the Italian communities permanently residing overseas were set up in the consular jurisdictions with at least 3,000 resident Italian nationals in 1985. Their main objective is to protect and support Italian communities in foreign countries. Committee members are elected by the respective Italian community in regular elections organised by the Italian consulate. The General Council of Italians Abroad (*Consiglio Generale Italiani al Estero* (CGIE) was established in 1989 to consult with the government and the parliament on major topics of interest to Italians abroad. It is an important instrument

by which Italian communities actively participate in Italian politics, and represents a permanent link with Italy. The Council is renewed every five years. Most of its members are elected by Com.It.Es, while several members are nominated by the Italian government.

Italian Diaspora in Australia, as a best practice example

Community Organisation and Structure: Political Associations and Activities

Italia's multi-level structure and organisation is reflected in the Italian community of Australia. The nation, region, province and community represent four levels of administration in Italy and emigrant organizations exist at each level. The kinship- and village-based networks of the first generation of post-war migrants formed tight sub-communities that provided mutual support and assistance. Migrants regularly organised group activities and reinforced social and community ties through the institution and rituals of *compadrazgo* (god parentage and wedding witnesses). Connections to broader provincial and regional networks emerged with the formation of regional clubs in the late 1960s and further expanded in the 1990s. The Italian government has carried out a series of conferences and cultural activities in recent years to promote regionalism.

At the national level there is political representation for Italians overseas through the *Consiglio Generale Italiani al Estero* (CGIE). Delegates from every country with a significant Italian population are elected to this committee to provide representation to the Italian government. Italian government funding for Italians overseas, the bulk of which is spent on Italian cultural and welfare organisations, is administered through this body.

ANEA, a nongovernment association for migrants and ex-migrants from Australia and America, also operates at the national level. Welfare agencies were established in the 1960s. The biggest of them are the Italian Committee of Assistance (Co.As.It), which has financial support from the Italian government, federal and state governments and the Italian community, the Federazione Italiana Lavoratori Emigrati e Famiglie (FILEF), the Associazione Nazionale Famiglie degli Emigranti (ANFE), the Associazione Cattolica Lavoratori Ialiani (ACLI), and the Italian Catholic Federation.

All the regional and most of the welfare associations have separate 'ladies' committees with a focus on social and catering activities that are presided over by all-male management committees. Even in those Italian associations which contain large numbers of female members, women rarely occupy positions of power, with the exception of the National Italian Australian Women's Association. Much like the institution of the family, these associations, although patriarchal in structure, often provide a base of resistance and identity for Italian women. One exception is the state-run Italian Teachers Associations which are well organised and predominantly female.

Class divisions have been prominent since the early years of Italian emigration with inter-class interaction occurring only in formalised settings like the provision of professional services. Aside from the sense of nationalism and patriotism which thrived under the Fascist regime, it was not until the 1970s, the advent of multiculturalism and the growth of the second generation, that identification with an Italian-Australian community began to develop. The clubs and associations of the middle classes, intellectuals and *prominenti*, such as the consulates, Dante Allighieri, Frederick May Association (now defunct) and Italian Cultural Associations (very active in Melbourne), are frequented by professionals and younger generations.

National holidays are usually coordinated by consular services and invitations are extended to prominent members of the local community. Italians have been famous for achievements in the arts but the Italian migrant populations are not easily associated with high cultural pursuits and are better known for their love of soccer and bocce and for their cuisine. The second generation has fuelled a 'wog-revival' in fashion, film and TV. The friendship networks of the second generation comprise people from a range of ethnic backgrounds, although in many cases they are predominantly second generation Italian youth. There are youth groups associated with most national and regional clubs. The Italian-Australian Youth Association (IAYA) was founded in Sydney in 1999. It now boasts about 80 members representing all regional backgrounds and is connected with a radio program, *Movimento FM*. IAYA maintains close ties with a Melbourne-based youth group, *Giovani Duemila,* which also runs a radio program, *Senza Limiti*. IAYA has a lot of email contacts and regularly arranges social and cultural activities. A new migrant association, GIA (Giovani Italiani Australia), was established recently. GIA is a network of organisations which promote Italian language and culture in Australia. It recently launched a web portal for

young migrants to facilitate holiday visits. The website distinguishes between 'giovani Australiani' (young Australians) who are defined as second and third generation Italian migrants and 'nuovi Australiani' who are defined as young Italians who wish to visit Australia.

Transnational Ties

The distance between Italy and Australia was rather big at the beginning. The month-long transoceanic voyage, slow mail delivery, the illiteracy of the migrants, as well as the absence of affordable communication technologies, contributed to a sense of separation and isolation from home. Yet Italian migrants were members of transnational households stretched through time and space and while links with homeland were infrequent and sometimes tenuous, most of them retained connections, not least through a myth of return. In the memories of many migrants, Italy, or more specifically their hometown or region, represented a mix of conflicting images and emotions – a place they felt lucky and yet remorseful for having left it, regretful and yet angry that it had forced them to leave, a *patria* they desired to return to, that defined their identities and shaped their general outlook on the world but which also competed with their sense of settlement and belonging to their new homes. That the hometown is often remembered as a place of *miseria* and poverty does not preclude it from the golden memory syndrome.

Reported cases of prejudice and hostility in the host country contributed to the migrants' sense of nostalgia and fuelled their self-identification as Italians. In both assimilationist and multicultural Australia, the traditional village lifestyle conjured in the memories of the migrants became an example of high morality and communion used as a measure against which life in Australia and their Australianised children could not easily live up to. In recent years, largely thanks to the telecommunications revolution, the relative affordability of air travel and increased wealth of Italians in both countries, the Italian migrants have become able to visit their homeland more often. As a result, they now have a more realistic image of today's Italy, reinforced through access to current affairs as well as the increasing attention of the Italian national and regional governments and most recently through the so called 'new migration' wave of young arrivals. Some migrants are torn between Australia, where their children and grandchildren live, and their ties to Italy.

Aside from kinship and town-based connections, the provinces worked assiduously since the 1950s, in particular through their transnational associations, to preserve the links between emigrants and the homeland, as well as between Italian Diasporas in different countries of the world. Newsletters, magazines, websites and conferences, each with sections devoted to various Italian communities across the world, serve to preserve and cement these connections which support trade and economic ties. The broadening of the migrants' ties from their *paese* to the province and to the region has been consciously promoted in recent years by various regional governments whose increasing interest in the emigrant populations is particularly evident in its focus on the second and subsequent generations and is not unrelated to the 2003 emigrant vote provision, i.e. the right of Italian migrants to vote outside Italy. Like the various provincial *'Nel Mondo'* associations, the regional governments, from the late 1980s, began to organize educational and *riconoscimento* youth tours, which focused on the rediscovery of origins and included tours of the major cities and tourist sites in the region. Following the tour, the participants are given time to visit their relatives. In addition, group tours that take Italians (in Italy) to visit the migrant communities have also become regular and popular events. These visits, along with the clearly increasing number of monuments to the emigrants that are being established in Italy and abroad, as well as the growing number of sister cities or *Gemmellaggio*, and university and cultural exchange programs, are manifestations of the increased status in which Italy is held, the increased acknowledgement of Italian contribution to Australian life, as well as the rising profile in Italy of Italian diaspora communities.

Consular activities have long played an important role in Italian-Australian relations, but continue to be directed largely at the cultural and intellectual elite, apart from support of welfare services.

In the early years, two very distinct Italys characterised Australian perceptions[21]. Despite overt discrimination and hostility towards the typical Italian migrant workforce, including incidents of racialised violence, the Australian public enthusiastically admired Italian culture and the arts, including the public adoration of visiting celebrities. The British colonial elite, like their counterparts in Britain, held in high regard the image of 'Cultural Italy', based on

[21] **The Italian Diaspora in Australia: Current and Potential Links to the Homeland. Report of an Australian Research Council Linkage Project** By Professor Loretta Baldassar, Dr Joanne Pyke, Victoria University,Associate Professor Danny Ben-Moshe, Deakin University.

the notion of an ages old Italy, land of past glory, history and culture. This 'past' Italy was contrasted with modern Italy, which was usually portrayed as a place of poverty and corruption. The distinction could also take the form of a contrast between land and people. Italy was praised as the reservoir of culture and nature, while Italians were denigrated as inferior and unworthy of their inheritance. From the late 19th to the mid 20th Century contempt, on the part of many Australians, for modern Italy and Italians was reinforced by the glaring gap between the failed ambitions of succeeding Italian governments to play the role of a great power and the economic and political realities of the peninsula (Pesman, 1983). These attitudes underlined formal immigration preferences and the condemnation of Italian migrants who were seen primarily as an undesirable element of competition in an already highly competitive labour market.

After the war, despite the influx of massive numbers of Italians, assimilation policies sought to inhibit the development of an Italian-Australian community and even the (Irish-dominated) Catholic Church marginalized Italians.

The last few decades have seen a striking increase in what might be called the popularity of consumer Italy. As with the adulation of Italian artists in the past, the current prestige of Italian consumer products does not necessarily extend to Italian migrants themselves: "…Ferrari cars and Italian fashions, promoted as representing the good life under capitalism, are not dependent on an Italian migrant presence" (Castles et al. 1992 p. 221). While pasta, Pavarotti and patron saints are celebrated icons of Italian culture, the peasant backgrounds, patriarchal family structures and poor English of Italian migrants are associated with the other, much less respectable Italy. Carlton and Leichhardt, the most obvious sites of the comodification and commercialisation of '*Italianità*', have long been abandoned by Italians and are no longer places of significant Italian residence. The marginalisation and disadvantage that characterised the treatment of Italian migrants in the past are still evident in, for example, the aged care sector.

The most significant change in attitudes towards Italians has come via the second and subsequent generations. Their upward mobility and apparent pride in things Italian, facilitated through multicultural politics, has made it somewhat fashionable to be Italian. However it is too early to gauge the impact of the new youth immigration.

3. Slovenia

Slovenia is a small country (located in Central-Southern Europe) with a two million population and labour force of less than one million people. After the World War II Slovenia was part of the Yugoslav Federation until gaining independence (for the first time in its history) in 1991. In May 2004, it became a member of the EU (and NATO) and entered the Euro zone in January 2007.

Migration profile of Slovenia

Main migration trends

External immigration in Slovenia needs to be examined in terms of past and future demographic development. Since the first census in 1857, the population of Slovenia (the current territory) slowly yet continuously increased from 1,101,854 to 1,591,523 in 1961[22].

In 1957, Slovenia became an immigration society for the first time in its history. Immigration reached its first peak in the mid 1960s (positive net migration was around 4,000 people per year), followed by the second, higher peak, between 1976 and 1979, when the annual value totalled around 8,000. Afterwards, immigration slowed down slightly, but remained quite high – about 4,000 per year – until 1988[23]. The reasons for migrating to Slovenia were explicitly economic, just as was the case with migration from the backward South to the developed Western Europe. The Republic of Slovenia was a prosperous and economically successful nation and thus needed labour. At first, male immigrants prevailed, with women reaching the same level only at a later stage. Although it was not an international migration process, it is often viewed as external migration. There was little real international migration from Slovenia to foreign countries, and the flow was negative, at least officially. Namely, some 50,000 people actually left Slovenia for "temporary" work abroad

[22] Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, (2012): *Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Slovenia 2012,* Tables 4.1, 4.3.

[23] Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development (IMAD), (2008): *Social overview 2008.* Ljubljana, IMAD, p.80 available at: http://www.umar.gov.si/fileadmin/user_upload/publikacije/socrazgledi/2008/asocr08_s.pdf.

in the period of 1960-1990[24]. According to the statistical methodology in use at the time, these people were temporarily working abroad and were regarded and recorded as residents of Slovenia. Only with the new definition of population did these people (known as "zdomci" or "migrant workers") disappear from estimates of the Slovenian population, paving the way for a clearer and more accurate picture.

The official positive migration balance of Slovenia between 1960 and 1990 was close to 120,000 and even excluding 50,000 labour migrants the migration still contributed about 70,000 to the total population[25].

The dissolution of Yugoslavia and Slovenia's independence led to individual migration movements.

Up to 2004, positive net migration in Slovenia was not very high compared to the 1960– 1990 period. Prior to 2000, the number of migrants almost never exceeded 10,000, but it reached nearly 20,000 in 2004, 35,000 in 2006 and almost 50,000 in 2009. Migration of foreigners is thus becoming increasingly important. However, according to Slovenian official statistics, inward/outward migration of foreigners to/from Slovenia has significantly decreased over the last three years and its annual level does not exceed 25-26 thousand at present.

According to the latest available data, foreign nationals constitute 4.2% of Slovenia's total population of slightly more than 2 million people. The vast majority of them are from Europe (97%), mainly from the Yugoslavia's successor states, which represent 78.8% of all foreigners who came to Slovenia from Europe and as much as 76.3% of Slovenia's current total foreign population. Only 3% of the migrants come from countries outside Europe, mostly from Asia (60.7%)[26].

For the purposes of our research we will focus primarily on the emigration and return of Slovenian citizens.

---

[24] Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development (IMAD), (2008): *Social overview 2008.* Ljubljana, IMAD, p.81 available at: http://www.umar.gov.si/fileadmin/user_upload/publikacije/socrazgledi/2008/asocr08_s.pdf.

[25] See footnote 2.

[26] Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, (2012): *Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Slovenia 2012,* Table 4.32.

Emigration and re-migration trends in Slovenia since 1990

As mentioned above, the first post-independent period (1991-1997) of Slovenia's history was marked by heavy consequences of the war. A lot of people temporarily moved to Slovenia as refugees. Most of them returned to their homes or at least to their home countries by 1998. Part of the refugees from other Yugoslav republics returned home, another part stayed in Slovenia and gained Slovenian citizenship, while a third group lost all residence rights (the so-called 'Erased' people). It is very hard to estimate the numbers for the three groups. The first official number of the Erased, 18,305 people, dates from 2003 and was officially admitted to be far lower than real. Moreover, the last official number on the Erased, calculated in 2009, is 25,671, which is still close to the first estimations and again said to be hardly accurate[27].

In the second period (1998-2003), the number of Slovenian citizens in other EU countries increased only slightly from about 31,000 to 34,000[28]. However, according to official statistics, the net migration of Slovenian citizens was negative in the last ten years. Still, in the opinion of experts, about two thirds of these migrants returned home after living some time abroad.

In the third period (from 2004 onwards) Slovenia witnessed a massive emigration of Slovenian citizens. According to official data for 2000-2004, about 2,000 Slovenian citizens left Slovenia every year in 2005-2009. This number rose by 60% to 3,300 per year and exceeded 4,600 in 2011[29]. Although these numbers seem insignificant compared to the total population (1-1.5‰ per year), the emigration bears signs of important structural ruptures. Despite some obstacles and the period of transition in employing migrants from new EU member states, the EU membership opened up new employment and career opportunities across EU countries. The number of Slovenian citizens in other EU countries increased further to about 40,000.

---

[27] Mladina, (2012): *Slovenija je 26. februarja 1992 izbrisala 25.671 prebivalcev (On 26th of February, Slovenia erased 25,671 its permanent residents)*. Newspaper Mladina 08, issued 26.02.2012. Ljubljana.

[28] Holland, Dawn, Fic, Tatiana, Paluchowski, Paweł, Rincon-Aznar, Ana and Stokes, Lucy, (2011): *Labour Mobility within the EU: The impact of Enlargement and Transitional Arrangements,* NIESR Discussion Paper No. 379, National Institute of Economic and Social Research, London, p.46.

[29] See footnote 6.

While in Germany it was relatively constant and even decreased in recent years, the number of Slovenians in other EU countries rose and their share reached 70%[30].

Some recent studies of emigration trends show that researchers and scientists left Slovenia more frequently in the last couple of years than ever before. However, it is a specific section of the population which does not fit the aforementioned scheme of presumably well-educated couples predominantly with children. In contrast, "average" researchers aged 35-40 tend to emigrate alone (either single or married). Apart from the USA, their favourite destination countries are mostly the "non-German" speaking EU-member states (UK, Netherlands, Belgium and Australia), and they are more inclined to settle there permanently[31].

In general, there are several important factors which explain why Slovenian citizens do not emigrate en masse. In a nutshell, the main motivation for migrating to other countries is the structural incapacity to offer suitable jobs (or suitable working conditions) to highly educated, young and dynamic population. There is also daily cross-border commuting, mostly to Austria (from North-Eastern Slovenia) and Italy (from western parts of Slovenia), for the same structural reason – the lack of suitable jobs. Another important factor for daily commuting is solid traffic infrastructure of Slovenia enabling people to travel quickly from one place to another[32].

Among "pull" factors, one may note better conditions at work (more competitive environment, beneficial for a successful career) and some other advantages (better accessibility, infrastructure etc.). Another important "pull" factor is the proximity of the border – so, residents of peripheral rural border areas with high unemployment rate can easily commute across the border. Nonetheless, urban border areas in western Slovenia also allow for extensive cross-border daily commuting. It is noteworthy, however, that cross-border commuting to Italy or to Austria was quite substantial already in the Yugoslav period.

---

[30] Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development (IMAD), (2008): *Social overview 2008.* Ljubljana, IMAD, p.86 available at: http://www.umar.gov.si/fileadmin/user_upload/publikacije/socrazgledi/2008/asocr08_s.pdf.

[31] Bevc, Milena, (2011): Spol: moški, starost: 37 let, izobrazba: doktor fizike, ciljna država: ZDA (Sex: male, age: 37, education: PhD in physics, destination country: USA). *Newspaper Delo, supplement*, *13 October 2011*, Ljubljana.

[32] See footnote 7.

According to the 2011 data, there were around 132 thousand Slovenian emigrants abroad. The top five countries with the highest number of Slovenian emigrants are Germany (33,449), Croatia (25,642), Austria (17,757), Canada (11,013) and France (10,860)[33]. These numbers are much higher than the number of Slovenian citizens abroad, as besides the descendants of traditional emigrants they include also Slovenia-born persons living in other EU member states and naturalized as citizens of their host countries.

Main characteristics of Slovenian migrants

Most of the Slovenians who emigrated from Slovenia in the last decade were people with above-average education, training and skills. It is estimated that about 300 to 400 highly educated professionals left Slovenia for good every year in the 2005-2007 period[34].

While foreign migration to/from Slovenia is predominantly male, (e.g. 77% of foreigners living in Slovenia in 2011 were men, while 23% were women), Slovenian migrants have a balanced gender structure[35].

The Governmental Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development (IMAD) issued a publication in 2008 which was dedicated to discussion on different issues of spatial mobility, including emigration in the last two decades. According to this study, the age structure of Slovene emigrants is consistent with the "typical" emigrant pattern: 60% of them are aged between 20 and 50, and only 6% are older than 65. The majority of Slovenian emigrants are from the 25-35 age group[36]. The share of children among emigrants is relatively high and according to the IMAD study, most of the children are from families where the parents manage to pre-arrange their future job in a foreign country before going abroad and know their destination in advance. It

---

[33] World Bank, (2011): *World Bank Factbook on Migration and Remittances 2011.*

[34] Josipovič, Damir / Šumi, Irena, (2007): *Beg možganov – emigracija visoko-izobraženih iz Slovenije* (Brain drain – Emigration of highly educated population from Slovenia). Studio ob 17h. Radio interview. Radio Slovenia, A1, Ljubljana

[35] Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, (2012): *Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Slovenia 2012,* Table 4.28.

[36] Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development (IMAD), (2008): *Social overview 2008.* Ljubljana, IMAD, p.85 available at: http://www.umar.gov.si/fileadmin/user_upload/publikacije/socrazgledi/2008/asocr08_s.pdf.

may be added that the recent data on gender structure support the conclusion that Slovenian citizens move abroad in pairs, or already with children.

Concerning education of emigrants, there is a lack of reliable data. As mentioned above, it may be expected that at least 20% of the migrants hold a degree of tertiary education. A special "Action plan on cooperation with scientists and top experts of Slovene origin living abroad" estimates that at least 10% of Slovenian researchers are working abroad (it is assumed that at least 1,200 out of the 12,000 Slovenian researchers are living outside the country)[37]. The same source maintains that a large number of scientists and top experts are descendants of Slovene emigrants, who emigrated mostly to USA and Canada. It is claimed that as many as 73 top researchers from 30 research organisations left Slovenia in the period from 1995 to 2004, altogether representing 2.4% of the researchers of Slovene research organisations. The profiles of emigrant researchers are mainly natural sciences, mathematics and technical subjects; about half of them have settled abroad permanently.

Migration policy in Slovenia

Before the economic crisis that started at the end of 2008 emigration from Slovenia was lower than immigration. Due to the lack of data on education and qualifications of emigrants, the possible impact of emigration on Slovene labour market was never discussed in depth. The only exception is the question of brain drain which is unanimously assessed by researchers, and policy makers to some extent, as a major obstacle and challenge to the future development of Slovenia, as it leads to insufficient supply of professional workforce and, more generally, lower input to modernisation and innovation of the economy.

Encouragement of circular migration

Slovenia has never had any policies or measures to promote circular migration and there have been no bilateral agreements with other countries on the

[37] Republic of Slovenia, (2011): *Action plan – Akcijski načrt sodelovanja s slovenskimi znanstveniki in drugimi vrhunskimi strokovnjaki v tujini* (Action plan on cooperation with the scientists and top experts of Slovenian origin living abroad). The Government of the Republic of Slovenia, Office for Slovenians Abroad, 2009, revised version 2011, available at: http://www.uszs.gov.si/si/zakonodaja_in_dokumenti/.

issue so far. Slovenia's main experience of circular migration is being a destination country for workers from ex-Yugoslavia republics who are offered short-term (from one to two years) work permits (there are also personal work permits for longer periods). The only exception is the area of mobility of university students and faculty (professors and researchers), who can participate in exchange and mobility programmes (for example ERASMUS programme, short-time placements, etc), as well as top researchers and experts. The strategic documents in the area of research and development specify targets related to circular migration (mobility) of top researchers and experts. For example, the Resolution on National Research and Development Programme for 2006-2010 (Republic of Slovenia, 2006) states that Slovenia should increase the number of guest foreign top researchers and experts to 5% of all researchers and the number of Slovene top researchers and experts temporary working abroad to 5% as well (two-way mobility of top researchers and experts). There is rather general description of measures to reach this goal, including improvements in scholarship policy (to enable student mobility), better integration of Slovene researchers in international, especially European research projects, and better support to research groups by ministries and agencies. Besides, the Programme for fostering the technological development and information society for the 2007-2012 period, adopted by Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology, stresses the importance of international research and development cooperation for Slovenia, including the increased international mobility of researchers.

Diaspora relations

After gaining independence, Slovenia has placed increased political emphasis on the importance of good relations with the Diaspora (as well as with Slovene minority in neighbouring countries) and involvement of Diaspora in the economic development of the country, which went hand in hand with a moral support and enthusiasm among Slovenes in the Diaspora and those living in neighbouring countries for the democratisation and independence of Slovenia. It should be mentioned in this regard that due to ideological and political reasons post-WWII Slovenian migrants (who moved mostly to South America and Australia) had very limited contacts (relations) with Slovenia before its democratisation and independence.

The Governmental Office for Slovenians Abroad (led by the Minister for Slovenians Abroad) is responsible for policy-making, coordination and

implementation of measures to deepen relations with Slovenian Diaspora. The Office has prepared the following three documents addressing the Slovenian diaspora engagement policy:

- the Strategy of relations between the Republic of Slovenia and Slovenians abroad (adopted by the Government in 2008);
- the Action plan on cooperation with the scientists and top experts of Slovenian origin living abroad (2009, amended in 2011) and
- the Action plan on cooperation and support to young Slovenians living in neighbouring countries and abroad (2010, amended in 2011).

All three documents are based on the Act on Relations between the Republic of Slovenia and Slovenians Abroad (passed by the Parliament in 2006, amended in 2010).

The *Strategy of relations between the Republic of Slovenia and Slovenians abroad*[38] (Republic of Slovenia, 2008) has introduced the term 'common Slovene cultural space', denoting not the geographical area, but a 'virtual' identity space of all Slovene people (either living in Slovenia, in neighbouring countries or in countries with Slovene emigration communities), strongly emphasising its cultural and language components. The two main goals of the strategy are: (1) preservation, strengthening and development of a common Slovene cultural space and (2) involvement of Slovene people living outside its borders as key stakeholders in the development of Slovenia. In this framework, the Strategy states that Slovenia should support the Slovene communities abroad, enable active participation of Slovenes living outside the country in the Slovenian social and political life, and encourage young people with Slovene ancestry (second and third generations of emigrants) to learn the Slovene language, the Slovene culture and identity. However, the Strategy does not mention any concrete measures and remains rather general (and short). No report (or assessment) on its implementation is available.

The main aims of the *Action plan on cooperation with the scientists and top experts of Slovenian origin living abroad*[39] are: to establish contacts with Slovene scientists and top experts living abroad, support the networking and communication between scientists and top experts abroad and those in Slovenia on individual and institutional basis, invite the Slovene scientists and top experts living abroad to participate in preparation of strategic

[38] http://www.usefoundation.org/view/561,%20unofficial

[39] http://www.uszs.gov.si/en/legislation/

documents of Slovenia in different areas, ensure the conditions for potential return of emigrated scientists and top experts, and encourage a common Slovene scientific space. Some concrete measures were already implemented or are under way (mostly by the Office for Slovenians Abroad or with its coordination).

A database with contact information of Slovene scientists and top experts living (and working) abroad has been prepared and is available on the web site[40] of the Office for Slovenians Abroad and supposed to be updated annually. In all, the Office for Slovenians Abroad managed to collect data about 350 scientists and researchers, but in many cases it is still waiting for individual approvals to place them in the database. The database currently includes 150 Slovene scientists and top experts living and working abroad that agreed to be listed in the directory of contacts.

The Office for Slovenians Abroad supports the establishment of associations of Slovene scientists and top experts abroad, although this has to be done on their own initiative. The two already functioning associations are Washington-based Slovenian-American Science & Technology Association (SASTA), and Slovenian Business and Professional Association operating in Cleveland.

Besides, the website contains various information specifically intended for Slovenian scientists and top experts living abroad (about Slovene institutes and universities, open tenders for projects etc.).

The so-called Committee of Science was established in Slovenia at the end of 2010, as an advisory body to the Government or ministers responsible for the preparation of strategic documents and the issues related to the development of science, education and research in Slovenia. The Committee for Science consists of nine scientists and top experts of Slovene origin living abroad as well as representatives of four Slovene universities, and four Slovene scientific research institutes. The ministers for higher education, science and technology, for foreign affairs, for development and European affairs, and for Slovenians abroad are also members of the Committee of Science. At its first meeting in December 2010 the Committee discussed the draft National programme of higher education in Slovenia 2011-2020 and the draft Research and innovation strategy of Slovenia 2011-2020.

The main aims of *Action plan regarding cooperation and support to young Slovenians living in neighbouring countries and abroad* are to strengthen and

[40] http://www.slovenija-danes.slovenci.si/

develop the Slovenian culture among the second and third generations of Slovene emigrants, support the networking and cooperation of young Slovenians living abroad in associations and support the connections and networking among young Slovenians living in Slovenia and those living abroad.

Some of the measures envisaged in the Action plan are: public tenders of the Office for Slovenians Abroad for projects to create associations and organisations of young Slovenians living abroad, initiatives (financial incentives) to encourage learning Slovene language and holiday exchange of the youth, youth exchange programs, organisation of thematic seminars for young Slovenians abroad, support for business connections between young Slovene entrepreneurs living in Slovenia and those living abroad. Many of these activities are already under way for several years (public tenders, language courses, youth exchange programs, and financial support to associations abroad for youth activities). Among the latest measures, one should mention a sub-page for youth at the website of the Office for Slovenians Abroad (containing various information, for example on youth associations in different countries and in Slovenia, language courses in Slovenia and abroad, education system and education opportunities in Slovenia, different projects, contacts, forums, various activities). There were also several discussions and round tables in the past years (in different countries) on major challenges to the youth of Slovene origin living abroad.

Young Slovenes living in neighbouring countries (as Slovene minority) and those living abroad (second and third generation of Slovene emigrants) are eligible for public grants (scholarships) to attend Slovene language courses in Slovenia. These scholarships are granted by Ministry of Education and Sports in cooperation with the Office for Slovenians Abroad. The language courses are traditionally organised by University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Philosophy (Centre for Slovene as a second/foreign language). Especially popular are the so-called summer language courses (which have quite a long history), often attended by the youth of second and third generation of Slovene emigrants with the intention to learn (or practice) the language and keep in touch from the perspective of potential return.

The Slovene Human Resources Development and Scholarship Fund carries out annual tenders for scholarships available to young Slovenes living in neighbouring countries and abroad for graduate studies in Slovenia.

The Office for Slovenians Abroad holds annual tenders for financial support of different activities and projects of individuals, associations and

organisations targeting Slovenians in neighbouring countries (Slovene minority) and abroad. The last tender was carried out in 2012: it offered 6.8 million EUR public funds to finance projects, programmes and activities for Slovenians in neighbouring countries, and 850,000 EUR for projects and activities for Slovenians abroad.

Besides the governmental policies, there are some civil associations that aim at preserving the Slovene cultural ties between Slovenians abroad and in Slovenia. The most important (for their activities) of them are Slovene Emigration Society (Slovenska izseljenska matica), and Slovenian World Congress (Slovenski svetovni kongres). The other two are: a catholic Rafael society and (also catholic) emigration association Slovenia in the world (very popular among Slovene emigrants in Argentina).

Slovene Emigration Society was established in 1951 and has played an important role for Slovenians abroad since then, in terms of cultural activities, celebrations, meetings, etc. Among other activities it organises traditional annual 'meetings in my country' (annual summer meetings and picnics in Slovenia for Slovenians living in neighbouring countries and abroad).

The Slovenian World Congress was established in 1991 after Slovenia became independent, with the idea of integrating the part of Diaspora that was neglected before (Slovenians that emigrated due to political and ideological reasons), i.e. overcoming the divisions caused by decades of Communism that hampered efforts to raise the national awareness and promote the needed underlying values for it. The rhetoric used by Slovenian World Congress is very patriotic, emphasising that it is the duty of every Slovenian to contribute to the development of Slovenia.

The Slovenian World Congress was the first to start searching for contacts of Slovene intellectuals (scientists, experts, artists, etc.) living abroad and organising expert conferences for them in Slovenia. At the initiative of these expert conferences, the Slovenian Research Agency (a public agency responsible, among other things, for conducting research tenders) has recently started involving Slovene experts living abroad in the evaluation of research project proposals. The Slovenian World Congress organises specialised expert conferences for the following professionals: physicians (the 7th conference of Slovene physicians from abroad and Slovenia was organised in 2011), scientists and economists (managers) (the 7th conference of Slovene scientists and economists took place in 2011), architects and construction experts (the 4th conference of Slovene architects and

construction experts took place in 2011), musicians (the 2nd conference of Slovene musicians abroad and in Slovenia took place in 2010), and law experts (the first such conference took place in 2010). Slovenian World Congress sees organisation of these conferences as part of the (potential) repatriation process.

Encouragement of return and support for the integration of returnees

Slovenian strategic and policy documents relating to Slovenian people living abroad are mainly focused on the Diaspora, while much less emphasis is placed on the more recent emigration from Slovenia (people who have left – and are still leaving – Slovenia in the last two decades). In the first post-independent years, the general expectation was that many of Slovene emigrants would return with their families. However, the scale of return was not as big as expected.

In 2002, Slovenian Parliament accepted a Resolution concerning Slovenians abroad. It was a rather general document, stressing the need to foster mutual cooperation in different areas between Slovenes living in the country in those living abroad, the need to maintain the Slovene identity, cultural heritage and language among Slovenians abroad and the need to inform Slovenians abroad about the developments in Slovenia and vice versa. It also pointed out that Slovenia was interested in the return of Slovene people and their descendants. Having recognised the need and importance of providing potential returnees with information on different procedures that could ease their return to Slovenia (for example, the procedure of verification of diplomas), the Resolution required that Governmental Office for Slovenians Abroad, Government Communication Office and Ministry of Information Society be assigned to prepare an information leaflet. The Resolution also stated that information relevant for people of Slovene origin considering their return should be available at all Slovene embassies and consular missions abroad.

The Act on regulating relations between the Republic of Slovenia and Slovenians abroad was passed in 2006. It introduced the status of a 'Slovene without citizenship', which could be granted to an individual of Slovene origin, who takes active part in associations of Slovenians abroad or is involved in any other programs related to Slovenia. Office for Slovenians Abroad is responsible to review and approve/reject applications for the status. It entitles a holder for certain rights, including the right to conve-

nient enrolment conditions to tertiary education in Slovenia, the right to compete for public funds for research and science projects on equal terms with Slovene citizens, the right to register ownership on equal terms with Slovene citizens (the right to buy, own and sell the property in Slovenia), and the priority right for a job before citizens of third countries (non EU citizens). The Act on regulating relations between the Republic of Slovenia and Slovenians abroad also addresses the repatriation of Slovene people from abroad. Repatriation is defined in the Act as a return of Slovene people that is organised and financed by Republic of Slovenia. It can be used, for instance, for Slovene people (and their family members), who live in countries affected by severe economic and political crisis that endangers their lives and for the Slovenians who are expected to contribute substantially to the development of Slovenia. Eligibility for repatriation is decided by Office for Slovenians Abroad, while the decision to designate a country as dangerous is taken by Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Repatriated persons are granted the same rights as persons with the status of Slovenes without citizenship. In addition, they are entitled to free basic health insurance, a Slovene language course (if needed), and a personal (individual) work permit. Repatriated persons and their family members are provided with housing (for up to 15 months) and can get the minimum income (financial social assistance) if they have no other means of subsistence.

So far, however, there have been no cases of repatriation to Slovenia of Slovene emigrants and their descendants. The most obvious time for such repatriation was the 2001-2002 period (i.e. before the Act on regulating relations between the Republic of Slovenia and Slovenians abroad was passed in the Parliament in 2006), the time of severe economic and social crisis in Argentina when many Slovene emigrants living in Argentina (who left Slovenia mostly for political reasons during the 1950s) lost their jobs (and could not sell their property or recover their savings from banks). At that time Slovenia offered support to the families that were willing and ready to return to the country from Argentina. According to Emigration association Slovenia in the world (*Slovenija v svetu*), 73 families of Slovene origin living in Argentina applied for repatriation to Slovenia in the period from mid-2001 to mid-2002. Until April 2002 only 71 persons actually returned to Slovenia.

In the last two decades, Slovenia has been perceived by policy-makers as an immigration country rather than an emigration society. This is evident from the Strategy of economic migration, accepted by the Government in

2010. The Strategy of economic migration concentrates on fostering the labour migration to Slovenia, which could be seen as quite awkward in light of the negative public opinion on immigrants. However, the Strategy also addresses the return of Slovene emigrants, proposing two main tasks in this area: (1) creation of a common Slovene intellectual space including the Slovenes living in neighbouring countries and abroad, and (2) streamlining of the procedures and improvement of the work and living conditions for returnees in Slovenia. But concrete measures stipulated by the Strategy include only offering information to potential returnees, building the network of Slovene scientists and managers living in Slovenia and abroad, etc.

By and large, the following measures are deemed to have the potential to encourage the return of emigrants to Slovenia: providing practical information on the legal system, education opportunities, jobs and other arrangements in Slovenia to emigrants (through internet, through the associations of Slovenes abroad, leaflets available at Slovene embassies and consular missions, etc), building the networks of Slovene scientists and experts from abroad and from Slovenia, organising conferences involving Slovenes living abroad, building connections between Slovenians abroad and Slovene research, educational, economic and other institutions. Another significant emphasis is on the integration of young Slovenes living abroad (the second and third generations). There are different measures, such as language courses, holiday exchange trips, summer schools, scholarships, etc, that are popular among and actively used by young Slovenes living abroad. It can be concluded from policy documents (although it is not explicitly stated) that all these measures and initiatives are designed for two main target groups of potential returnees: Slovene scientists and top experts living abroad and young Slovenes (second, third generation) living in foreign countries.

Assessment of the systems/models, official statistical data. Success stories.

It is too early to assess the effectiveness of measures aimed at the first group (scientists and top experts) because most of them have been introduced only recently. Besides, the main obstacle is the lack of employment opportunities and substandard working conditions (including low pay) in

the research institutes and universities of Slovenia. But the measures focused at young Slovenes from abroad (second, third generation) have a longer tradition and seem to function well. Although no statistical data is available, there are quite a few examples of young Slovenes from abroad who decided to stay in the country after studies in Slovenia.

The existing documents and plans provide no concrete employment policy measures to facilitate integration of the returned migrants and their family members. Among the labour-related measures, there is only the possibility to obtain the status of a 'Slovene without citizenship', which gives a priority right for a job before citizens of third countries. However, this option is intended specifically for emigrants (or descendants of emigrants) without Slovene citizenship and is of little help for the already naturalised returnees. There are also no concrete measures in relation to housing, except the possibility for 'Slovenes without the citizenship' to buy property. In the education area, scholarships are available to descendants of Slovene emigrants willing to study in Slovenia. There is a well-established procedure of the validation of formal qualifications acquired abroad. The skills obtained in a practical way or through informal learning can also be assessed and validated through the system of national vocational qualifications (but applicants or their employers have to pay all related fees).

In the opinion of Emigration association Slovenia in the world, the process of return from Argentina in the period of economic and social crisis there (in 2001 and 2002) showed that the returnees faced severe problems regarding accommodation (acquiring a permanent residence which is a necessary condition for obtaining different documents – including citizenship – health insurance, registration at employment office, etc) and employment. The only positive aspect was the opportunity to take a free Slovene language course for the returnees and their family members that needed them.

Another area where some good practice has been established in recent years is cooperation and communication with Slovene scientists and top managers living abroad. Contacts with Slovene scientists and top managers, conferences for them, attempts to involve them in preparation of Slovene strategic documents – all these are relatively recent activities but seem to be very promising, especially because the reaction from Slovene scientists and top managers abroad has been very positive up to now. Although they are unlikely to return (due to unsatisfactory working conditions and lack of research funds in Slovenia's scientific institutions), their involvement helps to

build stronger links with the home country, paving the way for future investments in the economy and in human resources development.

There are some governmental programs at the municipal level intended to support local economic and social development. For example, Act on Development Support to Pomurska region in 2010-2015 includes governmental measures to address labour market problems, including, among other things, programmes to support the establishment of new enterprises and creation of new jobs in Pomurska. According to experts, however, none of them have been sufficiently successful and efficient to be labelled as best practice.

The setting up and activities of PAZU, the Academic and Scientific Union of Pomurska can be cited as one of the examples of best practice at the regional development level. It is a combination of initiative, self-organisation and enthusiasm of highly educated scientists and scholars born in the region (and feeling the need to contribute something to the region's development, even though they do not live there), and cooperation of the local companies and local community (municipality). Therefore it can be described as a bottom-up initiative, embodied in the local/regional environment (without the support or funds from the national policy level). It is important for networking and rethinking of different regional development projects, mobilisation of resources for applications to public tenders for different projects, etc. It is significant also because it helps to offset the negative effects of brain drain from Pomurska region.

Key challenges and policy recommendations for different actors – experts' opinion.

Until recently, Slovenia has been perceived by policy-makers and the public opinion as an immigration country (a traditional destination for migrants from ex-Yugoslavia countries) and in the last two decades (in post-independent Slovenia) the issue of emigration (of Slovene citizens) has not been recognised as a serious concern either by social scientists and experts or policy-makers. As a result, there is little statistical information and research data on emigration from Slovenia and its effect on the economic, labour market and social development of Slovenia are clearly under-estimated. The only exception is the issue of brain drain (which is occasionally emphasised by researchers) but even here there are only some estimation of its scope and broad considerations about its potential negative im-

pact on the country's development. The impression, based on available data, is that the effect of emigration on the labour market (of Slovene citizens) is limited and the social impact is negligible. However, without clear empirical data on the structure of emigrants and their situation before and after emigration, as well as on the structure and situation of those left behind, it is difficult to provide more precise answers to the challenges of emigration. Therefore, the need for more (empirical) research on the issue should be seen as a top priority.

The scale of return from emigration is hard to estimate and little is known about the situation of returnees. Looking into the data on the return of Slovenian citizens to Slovenia, one might presume that, though low in numbers, approximately two thirds of them have returned home. Although the emigration of highly-skilled and educated people does not seem to have serious consequences for the labour market at the moment (due to its current structure), it may be also expected that in the future the lack of well-educated workforce would become a more visible and urgent problem. Thus, concrete policy action to promote and encourage the return of migrants and their families and facilitate their social integration is the area where more has to be done. Since only partial studies, as mentioned above, have been conducted so far to analyse the emigration of well-educated workforce, there is a need to improve knowledge of these issues.

Existing policy documents do effectively address the issue of stimulating the return of highly skilled Slovenian emigrants and of people with Slovenian ancestry and/or the use of their knowledge and experience. However, specific policy measures are mostly focused on persons of Slovene origin who do not hold the Slovenian citizenship (all the way to the fourth sequence in a lineage), while the return of more recent cohorts of emigrants is not considered too large. There are no employment solutions for returnees (i.e. support for job-search, the possibility to share the experience and skills gained while working abroad, etc), no social policy measures (with special emphasis on housing policy) and few opportunities for social integration of returnees and their family members (child care etc.).

In the opinion of some experts, first of all it is necessary to raise the awareness of different aspects of emigration and its social consequences. From documents published by the Slovenian government (or other administrative legal bodies), it is obvious that the potential outflow of population is underestimated. The analysis of available data suggests that the

problem is really urgent and serious, especially as it arguably concerns quite a high number of well-educated and skilled persons. Thus, it may be concluded that an increasing number of Slovenian citizens living abroad (mostly in more developed countries of EU, as well as in USA, Canada, and Australia) are likely to settle there permanently.

There is a need for more information, on the one hand, and for more detailed data on emigration issues, on the other hand. Official statistical coverage should range from basic statistical information on employment, education, duration of stay etc. to various socio-demographic data. There should be a greater propensity for supporting and financing research studies on the scope and nature of emigration and its reasons, including the brain drain, the duration of emigration, the problems of returnees. These studies should be supported by public funds and respective initiatives.

Besides, it is suggested that various institutions, which have the responsibility to collect the data, such as the Statistical Office, ministries, other governmental agencies, as well as non-governmental institutions like universities and research institutes, etc., should combine available data resources in a joint database and make it freely accessible to decision and policy-makers, and researchers. Such aggregated data sources are of paramount importance, as they can help manage emigration flows, encourage return, foster circular migration, reallocate resources among various vulnerable groups of population, such as the Roma, the Erased, returnees, unemployed, etc.

Besides, the National employment office should be able to update its data on the employed and, especially, unemployed with valuable "attributive" information or the so-called "soft" data on intentions, aspirations, satisfaction with available support, future job prospects, etc. Other types of additional data could be also used for comparative analysis of the socio-demographic and geographical structures of the unemployed and the overall population. Thus, vulnerable groups could be easily identified and more efficiently supported by the state.

At the national level, specific policies are needed, with regard to employment options, social policy measures (with a special emphasis on housing policy) and social integration of returnees and their family members, to facilitate the return of well-educated emigrants.

Another proposal is to establish information or contact services (centres) for all those willing to return to Slovenia from abroad. These "info-centres" should be more sophisticated than just a simple "mailing" list, acces-

sible via internet and via mobile technology. They should also be more user-friendly and regularly advertised in various places (virtual and physical) to inform interested individuals about their operations. These info-centres could be also used for networking and sharing of information, which is partly unavailable at present.

Encouraging emigrants to return is a difficult task that requires cooperation of various governmental institutions and support of non-governmental organisations.

As second and further generations of Slovene migrants in the Diaspora are well covered in Slovenian policy documents, it is strongly recommended that similar measures be implemented in the context of contemporary emigration (towards first generation emigrants) in order, firstly, to prevent an increase of emigration flows, secondly, to create the local employment and housing opportunities for returnees, and, thirdly, to refocus towards more contemporary issues instead of targeting the so-called third and fourth generations of long bygone political emigration.

Measures to attract diaspora investments to Slovenia

The Slovenian government is well aware that potential investments from the Diaspora into Slovenian economy are crucial for the country's development. From this viewpoint, modern Slovenia represents a really interesting case: its strong Diaspora is an important resource capable to bolster national economy and expand the Diaspora network. The government's first efforts in this direction were far from successful. Since 2004, however, the situation has improved remarkably. Now more and more Slovenians – businessmen and entrepreneurs – living in various countries of the world have become willing to participate in the Slovene Business Network Initiative.

More than 2,000 communications/contacts had been established with the world's leading markets by 2004 and active cooperation began with the Slovenian Diaspora in Austria and Italy. Four business associations were created as a result.

This project increased the quality of information about services, opportunities, and competitiveness of international markets and improved access to this information for potential investors who are now able to get the data

they need in less time and for lower cost. It is expected to boost Slovenian exports, create more opportunities for Slovenian businessmen to participate in join initiatives, attract investments into Slovenian economy from the local and Diaspora networks, help introduce modern technologies to the country, contribute to expert exchange programs, etc.

The project Slovene Business Network Initiative began in 2003 and is implemented by Government Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Structural Policies and Regional Development (SVRP). A special body, Business Development Council for Slovenes from Abroad, was created in Slovenia in June 2004, along with consultative offices in various countries for Slovenian emigrants living there, to facilitate the involvement of the Diaspora in the business sector development in Slovenia.

A special research was carried out at the first stage of the project to assess business capabilities of the Slovenian emigrants abroad and the project website was created. The first stage ended with a business conference in June 2004. Two business meetings in Slovenia and steps to expand the project, including bilateral scientific cooperation, were planned at the second stage. Several examples of this cooperation are described in the main text.

The Slovenian government is pressing ahead with its efforts to attract Diaspora investments, improve communication and strengthen relations with the Diaspora.

Sources:

1. Quinn, E., (2010): *Country Profile for Ireland,* available at Focus migration information portal: http://focus-migration.hwwi.de/typo3_upload/groups/3/focus_Migration_Publikationen/Laenderprofile/CP_19_Ireland.pdf
2. Gilmarti, M., (2012): *The changing landscape of Irish migration, 2000-2012,* National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis (NIRSA)
3. Aikins, K., Sands, A., White, N., (2009): *A comparative review of international diaspora strategies*, The Ireland Funds, Dublin
4. Ancien, D., Boyle, M., Kitchin, R.,(2009): *Exploring Diaspora Strategies: Lessons for Ireland,* National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis (NIRSA)

5. Boyle, M., Kitchin, R., Ancien, D., (2011): *The NIRSA Diaspora Strategy Wheel and Ten Principles of Good Practice,* Diaspora Matters, Dublin

6. Kingsley, A., White, N., (2011): *Global Diaspora Strategies Toolkit: Harnessing the Power of Global Diasporas*, Diaspora Matters, Dublin

7. Laura Zanfrini, *Immigration in Italy*, *ISMU Foundation, italian Reports on Migration, June 30 2013*

8. Silvia Rusconi, *Itali's migration sxperiences*, *Network Migration in Europe e.v.2010*

9. Hein de Haas, *Engaging Diasporas, international Migration Institute, June 2006*

10. Loretta Baldassar, Joanne Pyke, Danny Ben-Moshe, *The Italian Diaspora in Australia: Current and potential Links to the Homeland*, *August 2012*

11. Teresa Graciano, *The Italian e-Diaspora: Pattents and practices of the Web*, *e-Diasporas Atlas April 2012*

12. Guido Tintorti, *The Transnational Politikal Practices of "Latin American Italians"*, *international Organization for Migration, May 2011*

13. Marina Murat, Barbara Pistoresi, Alberto Rinaldi, *Transnational Social Capital and FDI*, *May 2011*

14. Corrado Bonifazi, Frank Heins, Salvatore Strozza, Mattia Vitiello, *The Italian transition from emigration to imigration country*, *IDEA Working Papers, March 2009*

15. Berjinc, J., (2004): Business Cooperation Among Slovenians from Abroad, in: *Vadnjal, J., Miroslav Glas, M., Szabo, A., Hazl, V., Kokolj – Prošek, J., 6th International Conference Entrepreneurship – the Best Answer to the Future, 23 – 25 November 2004*