

Enhancing Skills Recognition



Recognition of skills is a key factor for the smooth transition to decent work for migrant workers and refugees. Work to improve skills identification and matching should be combined with broader efforts to enhance coherence between employment, skills and migration policies, with the active participation of government institutions and the social partners. These coordinated efforts will also result in a better information exchange between the education system and the labour market, thus providing the basis for up-to-date skills information and forecasting.



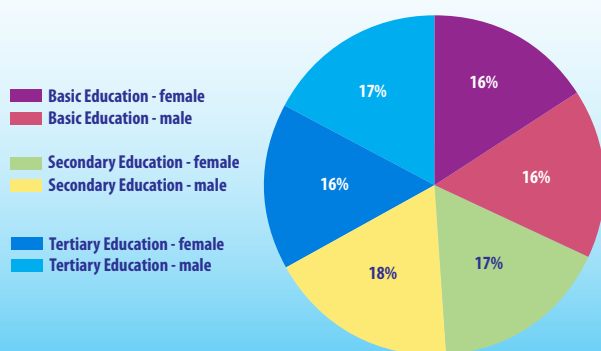
International Labour Organization



Educational attainment of immigrants in Africa

Education level of immigrants in Africa:

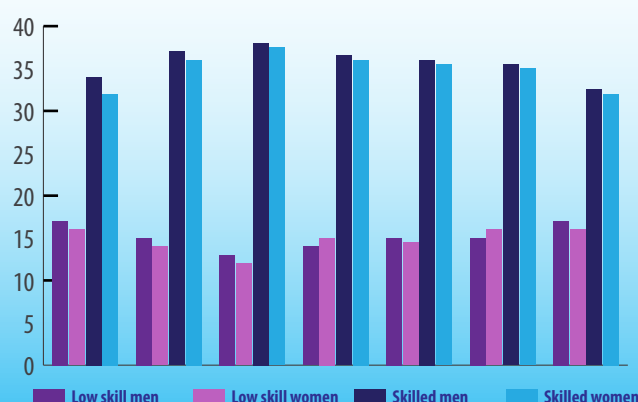
There are roughly equal shares of migrants at all three levels and that this is true for men and women, hence female migrants' are no less educated than male migrants.



Source: ILO, 2019

Education level of immigrants- a comparison:

Across the globe, the number of migrants with secondary or tertiary education is far larger than the number of migrants with only basic education.



Labour market integration and career development are key factors in improving productivity, social cohesion and sustainability. Skills can be an asset for migrants' integration.

Current provisions for skills development and recognition in Africa

The Arusha Convention/Addis Ababa Convention

The AU Commission and UNESCO revised the Arusha Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Certificates, Diplomas, Degrees and Other Academic Qualifications in Higher Education in African States (now known as the Addis Ababa Convention, 12 December 2014). It provides the legal means for fostering mobility of learners and workers and strengthening intra-African cooperation in education, training and research for higher education.

Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Tertiary education in the Arab States 1978

Under this Convention, recognition of a degree or diploma obtained in a Contracting State implies acceptance by the competent authorities of another Contracting State and the granting to its holder of rights enjoyed by those of the first Contracting State.

Regional Qualifications Framework

Some RECs (e.g. ECOWAS Convention on Equivalence of Certificates and the ECOWAS Protocol on Education and Training; the EAC's incipient Qualifications Framework, as well as SADC decision to develop a Regional Qualifications Framework) have already made significant progress on the harmonisation of skills and competencies curricula.

Some examples of labour markets in Africa:

Agriculture remains an important driver of migration to Côte d'Ivoire.

More diversified economies such as Kenya attract labour from other regions.



The ILO's work in Africa with Recognition of skills and prior learning

The report "Migrant Workers' Skills portability in Africa at Regional Economic Community and Continental level- Guidance towards an African Qualifications Framework?" contributes to shed light on the issue of portability of skills of migrant workers in Regional Economic Communities and at the continental level in Africa. It aims to provide a conceptual background and information on the main instruments currently in use internationally, as well as to map current provisions for skills portability in Africa. It then discusses policy pointers for ways to improve skills portability



The ILO's work in Africa with Recognition of qualifications

Enhancing skills/jobs matching, recognition of skills, and labour certification of migrant workers of all skill levels provides them with larger labour market opportunities by supporting their efforts on advancing work on the recognition and equivalence of degrees, diplomas, certificates and other qualifications.



The ILO's work includes the formulation of **Regional Labour Competency Standards** and **Regional Labour Competency Methodologies** in collaboration with Regional (RECs level) networks of Vocational Training Institutions and Public Employment Services, and Education institutions to **improve labour certification and the employability of migrant workers and their family members.**



The ILO contributes to providing more regular pathways to migrant workers by supporting the establishment of a **Continental Skills Accreditation Body** that sets equivalence rules and certifies skills, diplomas and degrees in African relevant institutions and could facilitate skills and competencies mobility and skills matching within RECs and at the Continental level. The Body will also take into consideration the revision of the **Africa Regional Convention for the Mutual Recognition of Degrees and Qualifications in Higher Education (Arusha Convention).**



The AU's Free Movement of Persons Protocol or "Protocol to the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community relating to the Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Right of Establishment", allows for geographical mobility within the continent.

Article 18 'Mutual Recognition of Qualifications' states that:

1. States Parties shall individually or through bilateral, multilateral or regional arrangements, mutually recognize academic, professional and technical qualifications of their nationals to promote the movement of persons among the Member States.
2. States Parties shall establish a continental qualifications framework to encourage and promote the free movement of persons.



Migrants who are fully integrated into the labour market, can boost the income per capita of recipient economies by providing the labour and skills needed in critical occupations and sectors. Upon their return home, migrants at all skill levels also have the potential to make a positive contribution to economic development through financial investments, as well as human and social capital acquired abroad, such as new skills, ideas and know-how.