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EGYPTIAN LABOR MOBILITY SCHEMES AND
EUROPEAN LABOR MARKETS:
THE CASES OF ITALY AND FRANCE

by

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IHEID CAPSTONE: MOBILITIES, SPACES, & CITIES

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report investigates the labor market in Italy and France, providing insights on how mobility schemes with Egypt could bring in required workers and skills in key sectors and professions. Despite issues of unemployment within the domestic population, both European destinations face structural skill shortages due to challenges such as aging demographics, consumer needs related to this phenomenon, and the digitalization of the manufacturing/industrial sector. Migration managed by careful policies and bilateral agreements could partially mitigate such gaps, as well as respond to Egypt's unemployment and economic stagnation. The data gathered through semi-structured interviews confirms most of the findings found in the literature, including some major controversies and potential limitations related to such mobility schemes.

Interviewed parties include representatives from the private sector, trade unions, academia, international organizations, research centers, and the population of potential Egyptian migrant workers. Sectors with the highest needs; due to factors such as expansion, digitization, and lack of interest by the native workforce; consist of healthcare, manufacturing and industry, intensive agriculture, catering, and hospitality. On one hand, major variations among destination countries are found, especially in terms of different cultural and historic ties with Egypt. On the other hand, given similar economic and demographic profiles across certain European Union (EU) countries, some key findings may be generalizable to other contexts. In general, given digitalization and future of work challenges, all European governments and industries face the issue of responding through adequate education, training, and skills matching programs.

Common challenges for a labor migration scheme between Egypt and either Italy or France are language barriers and high administrative obstacles to the recruitment of foreign employees. In the Italian case, diverging training standards are cited as an additional difficulty for the hiring of Egyptians, whereas in the French case, the lack of geo-political and cultural ties between the two countries is a significant limitation for the recruitment of Egyptians. These barriers must be addressed by successful policy proposals, with temporary migration schemes indicated as an especially promising option. However, coordination between employers, the public sector, and other stakeholders remains a major obstacle. In addition, the establishment and funding of training or employment programs that align with demanded skills remains a logistical challenge. Finally, guaranteeing continuity for employers while ensuring flexibility and rights

for the workers also appears a problematic point. Thus, despite urgent labor market needs and enthusiasm on the part of potential employers, several experts with policy or research experience expressed significant skepticism about the possibility for such a scheme, given all these controversies.

Nonetheless, these findings, coupled with lessons learned from other similar schemes, provide evidence supporting the possibility of exploring and investing in well-crafted programs that take into account these challenges. In order to be successful, labor mobility programs, such as between Egypt-Italy or Egypt-France, must build on prior research and concrete program examples, respond to labor market and demographic needs on both sides, respect migrants' rights, and incorporate balanced perspectives from the multiple involved stakeholders.

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GLOSSARY & ACRONYMS

ADEFIM - Association de Développement des Formations des Industries de la Metallurgie (Association for the Development of Training in the Metallurgie Industries)

AICS - Agenzia Italiana di Cooperazione allo Sviluppo (Italian Agency for Development Cooperation)

CeSPI - Centro Studi di Politica Internazionale (Centre for International Policy Studies)

CGD - Center for Global Development

diAir - Délégation interministérielle à l'accueil et à l'intégration des réfugiés (Interministerial Delegation for the Reception and Integration of Refugees)

Enabel - Development Agency of the Belgian Federal Government

Eurostat - Statistical Office of the European Union

GAFI - General Authority for Investment

GDP - Gross Domestic Product

GFMD - Global Forum on Migration and Development

IMIS - Integrated Management Information System

IO - International Organizations

IOE - International Organization of Employers

IOM - International Organization for Migration

INSEE - Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques (National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies)

ITEC - Integrated Technical Education Cluster

ITS - Istituto Tecnico Superiore (Higher Technical Institute)

ITU - International Telecommunication Union

LaMP - Labor Mobility Partnership

LFS - Labor Force Survey

MISE - Ministero dello Sviluppo Economico (Italian Ministry for Economic Development)

MNC - Multinational Corporation

OECD - Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

PALIM - Pilot Project Addressing Labour Shortages through Innovative Labour Migration Models

SMEs - Small and Medium Enterprises

STEM - Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.

UMIH - Union des Métiers et des Industries de l'Hôtellerie (Union of Hotel Trades and Industries)

I. INTRODUCTION

I.A. Project Background

Commissioned by the Egyptian office of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies (IHEID), our capstone project aims to further IOM Egypt's insights on: (a) the labor market needs of select European countries, primarily from a private sector perspective, and (b) the extent to which an Egyptian labor mobility scheme could respond to the supply and skills shortages of select European countries.

With Egypt and Europe currently experiencing opposing demographic trends, this project offers the opportunity to study a very relevant phenomenon – the mismatch between countries' labor market needs and the available labor supply. In fact, whilst Egypt is experiencing a rapid demographic increase with a labor market unable to absorb this new workforce, Europe is going through significant growth in its aging, dependent population and a sharp decline in its labor force. As a result, Egypt is now undergoing net emigration, with both low- and high-skilled workers leaving the country, whilst European countries are facing considerable structural labor supply deficiencies (Zohry, 2009; World Economic Forum, 2019). One method to resolve such market imbalances could be the implementation of labor mobility schemes promoting regular and safe labor migration.

This idea is not new, as IOM Egypt has been working with both European and Egyptian authorities for over a decade with the objective of promoting regular international labor migration. An example of such cooperation is the Integrated Migration Information System (IMIS), which was set up to better coordinate the work of IOM, the Ministry of Manpower and Emigration of Egypt, and the governments of several recipient countries such as Italy (ITU, n.d.). Despite its limitations, IMIS stands to show the willingness of both actors – Egypt and Europe – to collaborate in order to achieve a mutually beneficial solution surrounding these questions. As such, this capstone research and subsequent policy proposals are embedded in a well-established and long-standing effort of promoting co-determined and legal entry pathways for Egyptian labor migrants destined for European countries. Thus, this work represents a small contribution to this ambitious cooperation project across the Mediterranean. Lastly, in order to satisfy both academic requirements and those of the partner organization, the final output is structured as an actionable policy-oriented report.

I.B. Research Question

IOM Egypt initially provided a number of broad research questions, which were revised as following:

1. How could an Egyptian labor mobility scheme respond to supply and skill shortages in the labor markets of select European Union (EU) Member States?
2. What are the perspectives of relevant stakeholders – including the private sector, employers, unions, training platforms, associations, academics and professional interest groups – on the efficacy of establishing a labor mobility scheme between Egypt and the select EU Member States?

This research responds to the need for the implementation of legal migration pathways based on the economic potential of human capital reallocation, beneficial both for the individuals on the move and for the sending and recipient societies. This approach can potentially contribute to Sustainable Development Goals 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and 10 (Reduced Inequalities). The latter highlights the importance of facilitating, “orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies,” and reducing “(...) transaction costs of migrant remittances” (UNGA, 2015). Given that several other countries have similar asymmetries in labor availability, some of the considerations and findings on this specific case could, perhaps, be relevant in other contexts.

I.C. Case Study Selection – Italy & France

As indicated in the above-mentioned research questions, instead of doing an EU-wide analysis, the focus is on two case studies – Italy and France – and how a labor mobility scheme with Egypt could respond to skill shortages in each country. This approach aligns with both the partner’s requests and with a gap in the literature on these countries, since there appears to be a lacuna in both substantive research exploring employment opportunities for Egyptian workers in Italy and France and in the literature on the perspectives of the private sector on this question.

The decision to focus on these two countries is based on a number of factors. Following the first Skype calls with Marwa Mostafa, the IOM Egypt partner, a number of reports and documents containing data on past IOM research on Egyptians in Europe, push and pull factors

for Egyptian labor migrants, and the occupations of Egyptian workers in various European countries were analyzed. This information, together with the initial literature review, provided a general understanding about Egyptian workers and the most popular European destination countries for Egyptian migrants.

Drawing on this information, and taking into consideration the researchers' language skills, the scope was narrowed to four countries: France, Italy, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom (UK). Extensive research was then conducted on each of these countries, particularly considering their demographics, labor markets, unemployment/employment rates, the number of jobs made available to foreign workers, the skills levels required to obtain a work permit, the openness of the labor market to foreign workers, and the presence of Egyptian workers. Following this exploratory phase, the partner was presented with two options: to either focus on all four countries or to narrow down the research to two case studies. Ultimately, the latter option was chosen.

Italy was chosen primarily because the country currently hosts a sizeable Egyptian community; a point which could facilitate migrant integration. Moreover, Egypt and Italy have a history of cooperation in the field of labor mobility. Similarly, France was primarily selected because of its historic openness to labor migration and its status as one of the EU's top destination countries for labor migrants. Furthermore, the team's language skills and ability to leverage pre-existing professional connections to approach relevant private sector stakeholders increased the feasibility of conducting impactful research in these two countries. The UK was excluded as a case study due to the ever-mounting labor market uncertainties caused by the UK's plan to leave the European Union, also known as Brexit. Lastly, Switzerland was not chosen because of the high barriers to non-European migrants entering the Swiss labor market.

I.D. Limitations of the Report

As is the case with many academic research endeavors, the current study's design was subject to several important limitations. Firstly, because there was no budget allocated for this project, it was not possible to conduct fieldwork or engage directly with most of the target stakeholders in Italy and France. Consequently, both e-mail and telephone outreach yielded limited responses, which consequently narrowed the interview sample size. Moreover, since most of the interviews were conducted virtually from Geneva, cost considerations also inhibited the

ability to conduct dynamic and lengthy interviews over paid communication platforms. While it was sometimes possible to arrange calls over Skype and other free platforms, some of the interviewees strictly communicated via secure telephone lines, resulting in a sizeable financial burden absorbed by the researchers.

Secondly, although a number of overlapping themes in the different interviews we conducted were identified, some of the interviewees had divergent opinions on how migration can and should be leveraged to address labor market deficiencies in France and Italy. As such, it was sometimes difficult to weigh their personal opinions against each other and offer encompassing recommendations. Furthermore, because of the limited direct access to the French and Italian labor markets, snowball-sampling was used to gain access to more private sector actors, a method vulnerable to sampling bias.

Finally, this report focuses primarily on a labor market perspective and as a result, the negative side-effects of labor migration discussed are largely economic aspects, such as hyper-competition for native workers and pressure on the welfare system. Furthermore, this research was carried out with the awareness about the existence and relevance of other barriers to immigration policy, including political opposition, cultural differences, fears of terrorism or criminality, and native populist radicalization. However, a deep discussion of these issues is outside the scope of this project.

I.E. Structure of the Report

This actionable report begins with a literature review of academic articles and IOM publications, as well as data compiled by governments, EU institutions, and other relevant international organizations. This review examines labor demand in the EU, the economic effects of labor migration, and the state of the Italian and French labor markets. The use of such an extensive set of resources helped identify gaps within the existing literature and situated this project within the existing work on these themes.

Secondly, the research methodology is discussed. Relying heavily on qualitative methods, primarily interviews, a significant part of the methodology section is devoted to explaining the rationale behind the selection of participants and interview methodologies. Subsequently, the results are presented, first for Italy and then for France. For both cases, relevant information

provided by the interviewees is included and discussed, as well as the main themes that emerged.

Thirdly, an analysis of the results is conducted. Individual country results are expanded upon and evaluated in the context of the research questions and the previously discussed literature. Moreover, a comparison is made between the two case studies to identify common trends that could possibly support the generalization of the results to other European countries.

A conclusion is then drawn based on these results and analysis, taking in consideration the identified limitations and avenues for future research on these questions. Lastly, recommendations are made for how to implement a mutually beneficial Egyptian labor mobility scheme that can respond to Italy's and France's supply and skills shortages.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

II.A The Economic Effects of Labor Migration

While labor shortages may be partly addressed by the greater openness of migration policies, it is advisable to be mindful of the evidence regarding effects on the recipient country. Welfare economics suggest that economic migration will benefit national producers because of the lower equilibrium wage, but simultaneously harm native labor. Some models suggest that if the economy responds to the inflow of workers by proportionally increasing output, then wages will not fall (Heckscher-Ohlin model with Factor Price Insensitivity; Rybczynski Theorem; Card, 1990). Yet most national-level studies seem to agree on the downward pressure on wages, including Hunt (1992), Friedberg (2001), Borjas et al. (1997), Card (2001), Borjas (2003), Borjas (2006) Aydemir et al. (2007). There is also evidence of intra-country resettlement mechanisms of natives in response to the greater job market competition in some areas (Borjas, 2006).

Furthermore, a source of concern is the effect on the welfare state. Boeri's model (2010) analyzes an immigrant's incentives to more generous or leaner public assistance depending on her skill level (used as a proxy of expected income levels): in essence, higher-earning individuals prefer living where taxation (and thus public welfare) are lower, and vice versa. Other evidence seems to confirm such findings: welfare generosity is a strong predictor of the type of immigration flow (Bratsberg et al., 2014; Kleven et al., 2013; Dustmann et al., 2014; Razin and Wahba, 2014). Countries thus face conflicting interests in establishing measures that assist citizens in need while avoiding 'welfare shopping' immigration.

Due to imperfect substitutability between native and migrant labor (caused by language barriers, unavailability of information on the job market, cultural differences, frictions in the transferability of skills, and outright discrimination), fear of immigrants 'stealing jobs' is often misplaced. The evidence suggests patterns of skill downgrading, i.e. of allocation of migrants at lower skill levels with respect to their actual capacity (Dustmann et al., 2013; Bruegel, 2018) and in skill-biased selection at out-migration, i.e. of the tendency of the national labor market to retain the most skilled and let go of the least skilled (Lubotsky, 2007; Abramitzky et al., 2014; Borjas, 2014; Dustmann et al., 2016).

II.B. Labor Demand in the EU

Job vacancy rates¹ are a useful indicator to partially sum up “unmet demand for labor, as well as potential mismatches between the skills and availability of those who are unemployed and those sought by employers” (Eurostat, 2019). Notably, they are not as severe in Italy and France as in other areas of the EU (Bruegel, 2018). In terms of policy response, Eurostat research recommends bolstering labor market institutions such as employment services, improving mobility across Europe, better assessments of market shortages, improved management of economic migration, and increasing workers’ flexibility so that they can adapt to shifting requirements and social change as viable solutions for addressing job vacancies in Europe (Eurostat, 2019).

While the EURES portal facilitates skills matching for EU nationals (plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland), the EU Immigration Portal targets economic migrants providing information on legal entry channels, legal advice, definitions of smuggling and trafficking, rules and procedures to follow, and advice for prospective students, according to the desired country of entry. The Skills Panorama portal is also useful when assessing what sectors are predicted to grow most and what competences to be in demand.

Qualification recognition, nonetheless, remains problematic since it is not automatic, even though an assessment can be requested to the ENIC/NARIC. Guidelines exist for comparisons among EU nations (plus Norway and Switzerland) through the Commission Regulated Professions Database. Egypt, Italy and France are among the signatories of the *Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in the Arab and European States Bordering on the Mediterranean* (1976), which was conceived to improve cultural, educational and professional exchanges in the region, in a declared effort to harmonize certificates and conditions, to improve transferability of terminology and subjects, and to increase flexibility in mutual recognition of certificates. Part of the commitment was to ensure a competent authority would take charge of assessing comparability and ensuring reciprocal recognition. An Intergovernmental Committee was set up to facilitate collaboration between the parties to the convention.

¹ Computed as total job vacancies over demand for manpower.

II.C. Snapshot of the Italian Context

With its recessionary threats, perilous public debt at 133%, North-South development divide, high youth unemployment, high precarious work rates and underwhelming expansionary economic reform attempts, Italy remains a problematic economy in the Eurozone. The current stagnation calls for migration policy with even greater urgency, given the importance of targeting labor in line with market needs to avoid further pressuring unemployed categories or languishing sectors. Despite having relatively low vacancy rates, Italy still must address the issue of aging demographics and the predicted growth of some sectors (Skills Panorama, 2019). As also strongly confirmed by our findings, some vacancies remain hard to fill (11% of vacancies remain hard to fill, 19% of which are in the industrial sector), also due to rigid collective bargaining rules that limit wage adjustments (Monti et al., 2019). Technical workers in particular are hard to find in 36% of cases, higher than the general average of 26.6%. Workers specialized in the installation and maintenance of electrical and electronic equipment are hard to find in 53.5% of cases, followed by welders at 49.8% and blacksmiths (49.6%) (Barbieri, 2019).

Despite the shortages, there is a huge ‘brain waste’ of human capital²: immigrants earn 35% less than the average worker and face an extraordinary educational mismatch. Indeed, among non-EU nationals with a degree in a Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) related discipline, only 26% works in a position adequate to their qualifications (against 90.2% of Italians) and 47.5% is in a low-skilled job (Direzione Generale dell’Immigrazione e delle Politiche di Integrazione, 2018). As suggested by the low percentages of retained second-generation migrants (Eurostat and LFS, 2019), Italy is a relatively unattractive destination, even though the average length of stay has increased in the past years and economic migration outweighs humanitarian and family reunification purposes (Stranieri in Italia, 2014; Giuffre, 2017; Interno.gov.it, 2019).

Economic migrants that do not enter into humanitarian or family reunification categories can enter via an employment contract and a permission granted after submission of the request of the employer to the competent authority (the “Prefettura”). Socioeconomic integration of regular immigrants follows dedicated policies delegated at the regional or even municipal level;

² Meaning that immigrant labor is underused, placed in sectors that do not match actual individual competences, and faces significant skill downgrading (i.e. on average immigrants take up occupations that are below their actual education and training levels).

local projects are submitted to the review and approval of the *Ministero dello Sviluppo Economico* in order to obtain national funds. For an overview of some of these programs, see Appendix II.

As emerged from our research, significant Egyptian migrant communities in the territory and the strong ties among the two countries call for further mobility policies, as attempted by the Integrated Migration Information System (IMIS) project that improved vocational training and allowed some recipients to relocate to Italy for work, though the benefits and later developments remain rather limited.

II.D. Snapshot of the French Context

According to data from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), France has the third-largest economy in the EU, behind Germany and the United Kingdom, in terms of nominal GDP. Like many EU countries, however, the stability of France's labor market faces a precarious future, not least because of the country's aging population. According to the latest OECD data, France's 'elderly population' – defined as people aged 65 and over – stood at 17.5% in 2013 (OECD, 2019a). Béland and Viriot-Durandal (2012) estimate that this number will likely reach 25% by 2030 and about 30% by 2050. Similarly, Bruni's estimates show that between 2000 and 2015, France's net working age population has increased over time due to immigration, as opposed to by growth in the native-born population (2017). Given the prevailing demographic trends in France, there is clearly a case to be made for labor migration as a potentially viable solution for maintaining a sustainable working age population within the country.

This reasoning is echoed by Labaye et al. (2012) who predict that the French labor market will have inadequate high skilled workers relative to the jobs available by 2020. In fact, not only is France's labor market predicted to have insufficient highly skilled and highly qualified workers in subsequent decades, but it is also likely to have too many low-skilled and low-qualified workers to fill the available positions (Labaye et al., 2012). Interestingly, 2019 survey data from France's national unemployment office (*Pôle Emploi*) also noted that employers have had difficulties with recruiting qualified individuals across several non-seasonal sectors over the last three consecutive years (*Pôle Emploi* BMO, 2019). These sectors include home health aides, other domestic workers, engineers, IT experts, and drivers (Ibid). However, despite these

needs in certain key sectors, the French National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies' (INSEE) 2018 summary of the French economy reported a 9.1% unemployment rate among the active working population aged 15-64 years old, with a much higher level of approximately 21% reported among the active youth demographic aged 15-24 (INSEE, 2018). These structural contradictions may help explain popular resistance to labor immigration, despite clear needs in certain high- and low-skilled sectors.

France has historically been one of Europe's most frequent destination countries, with arrival rates accelerating throughout the late 20th century. However, French migration policy has become increasingly strict through the 20th and 21st centuries, particularly towards labor migrants, as the majority of French immigration today stems from family reunification (OECD, 2008; D'Albis et al., 2015). In addition, while regular labor migration to France can be linked to an employment offer, critiques of this system include its inconsistent application across the country and its lack of flexibility towards employer needs (OECD, 2017). Further, although France does host a relatively important number of labor migrants, who often fill complementary positions in the economy to domestic workers, migrants and those of migrant origin in France suffer from relatively high levels of unemployment, with a 2016 estimate showing that 20% of foreigners are unemployed, compared to the national average of approximately 9% (INSEE, 2018; OECD, 2008). These migrants are often divided between low-skilled sectors, frequently manual laborers, and higher skilled positions such as salespeople, artisans, or company leaders (Ibid).

From the literature, it also emerged that France is a destination for intra-regional migrant flows, as the country also hosts high levels of non-European migrants, including many from former colonies across the world's regions. North Africans from contemporary Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco were long the largest non-European migration flow, but Sub-Saharan African migrants have arrived more and more frequently (D'Albis et al., 2015; OECD, 2008). Although some studies have found a somewhat sizeable Egyptian immigrant population living in France relative to other European destinations (Zohry, 2009b), the 2015 French census did not list Egypt as among the top 15 African countries of birth within the migrant population, perhaps reflecting the prevalence of irregular migration for the Egyptian diaspora in France, as well as the relatively small size of this population compared to other migrant groups in France (INSEE, 2015).

III. METHODOLOGY

III.A. Base Methodology

The literature review identifies broad labor market characteristics, employer needs, and migration flows in the case countries, Italy and France. Based on these findings, interview participants were identified, and semi-structured interviews were conducted, primarily via telephone³.

The sampling of the interviewees occurred through personal contacts and contacts derived from secondary sources found in the literature review. Snowballing was also used to contact people believed to be equipped to offer interesting insights on employment, labor and migration issues in the two case countries. To gather a broader understanding and offer a more comprehensive analysis of the issue, people from a number of different, yet relevant, sectors were interviewed, including from the private sector, academia, international organizations (IOs), research centers, migrant communities, and trade unions. These multifaceted perspectives allow for a nuanced discussion on the strategies and challenges surrounding the development of labor mobility schemes.

The semi-structured interview methodology permitted flexibility and customization of the interviews depending on the interviewee's sector and expertise. This approach facilitated an understanding of different stakeholders' perspectives on opportunities and interests in hiring migrants, as well as perceived barriers, whether legal or administrative. Due to time constraints and in order to maximize the number of interviews, the team split into two groups and each pair was primarily responsible for identifying and interviewing people for either the case study of Italy or France. These groups were formed primarily based on language skills. To ensure that all group members would always be kept up to date with the relevant findings obtained from the interviews, detailed notes in English were compiled following every interview (regardless of the language that the interview was conducted in). Subsequently, they were all coded into a table⁴ in order to identify significant trends and themes across interviews within each case. Notably, the sampling procedure was not identical for both cases, explaining in part the slightly different pool of interviewees for the two countries.

³ See the "Limitations" section for further comments on this.

⁴ See Appendix

In addition to the interviews for each case study, several interviews with experts in the domains of labor mobility and the integration of migrants into the labor market were also conducted. These experts, who are predominantly researchers and practitioners, gave concrete examples of general sectors and trends that informed the country case-specific investigation. This discussion also provides complementary models for how labor mobility schemes in Italy and France could be formulated.

III.B. Italy

For Italy, initial personal contacts provided information on employment and foreign labor issues at the regional level, specifically Veneto and the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the industrial/manufacturing sectors in the North-East. Although not representative of the national context, these insights gave an initial understanding of these dynamics in practice.

A number of people from the literature review were also contacted, particularly academics and professionals that had worked on projects whose focus greatly resembles that of this research. These interviewees include several actors that participated in the IMIS Project, financed by funds of the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, *Agenzia Italiana per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo* (AICS), and for which Italy was one of the recipient countries.

Even though the mandate of this research is to focus on the labor market of the recipient countries, the sampling also includes perspectives on the barriers to labor migration from the point of view of potential Egyptian migrants.⁵ Key themes from these stakeholders include how Italian and technical subjects are taught in Egypt and some personal or indirect migratory experiences, which inform the obstacles that a mobility policy should address.

III.C. France

As with the Italian case, the initial sampling for the French case took place through a snowball methodology. However, the absence of personal connections in France created an additional challenge, initially leading to ‘cold-calling’ and ‘cold-emailing’ contacts of interest. An additional dilemma for the French case was that unlike with Italy and Egypt, there are fewer

⁵ Through the name of a woman that started an online petition to create an Italian-Egyptian cultural association in Cairo, we reached out to several teachers and students (snowball sampling).

migratory, business, and cultural ties between France and Egypt, making it more difficult to identify key interviewees who could speak comprehensively on these questions. Nonetheless, several interviews were conducted with representatives from the French government and the private sectors of hospitality and metalworking, as well as an expert researcher on the labor market and migration in France.

This group of interviewees from a diverse set of sectors provided a range of complementary perspectives on the research questions, which coupled with the findings from the general experts and the Italian case, allowed the mapping of a potential Franco-Egyptian labor mobility scheme.

IV. RESULTS & ANALYSIS⁶

IV.A. General Findings

Interviews with experts from a variety of organizations and speaking from a range of perspectives provided broad insights on the challenges and opportunities of matching migrants or refugees to labor market needs in a host country. Several interviewees highlighted the importance of considering the private sector's labor needs and of simplifying the bureaucratic hurdles in the hiring process. At the same time, rights-based employment practices and local integration were reiterated as key elements of successful mobility programs. Furthermore, most of these interviewees emphasized the challenge in communicating with relevant stakeholders across public and private sectors. Interestingly, many of the sectors mentioned by these experts were noted across the literature as sectors of interest for labor mobility schemes. Other common findings include the difficulty in overcoming negative public perception of migration, the need to better recognize migrants' existing skills and qualifications, and the importance of considering brain drain when designing such schemes. Although these expert interviewees do not work in France or Italy, and one focused on employment opportunities for refugees whose legal status in the receiving country differs from that of labor migrants, these specialists nonetheless provided valuable examples and lessons learned that can inform our cases.

Labor Mobility Schemes: Key Challenges

In general, these expert interviews revealed that the private sector is often interested and willing to hire migrant employees who correspond to their needs. However, existing policy schemes and government or public resistance to immigration constrain businesses' recruitment foreign labor. For instance, Stéphanie Winet, Head of Stakeholder Engagement at Global Forum on Migration (GFMD) - Business Mechanism (housed at the International Organization for Employers (IOE)) highlighted that one of the IOE/GFMD's migration-related goals is advocacy for the private sector's pro-mobility perspective during international policy negotiations. However, she also emphasized that this stance is not uniform across individual countries or even within sectors, as individual firms may hold diverse views towards or having

⁶ Please refer to the Appendix for more detailed notes about each interview, as well as the major themes that emerged.

differing needs for migrant labor. Similarly, Grégoire Douchamps, Project Manager in Migration and Development programs at the Belgian Development Agency (ENABEL), cited backlash from the Flemish public against the idea of Moroccan labor immigration, even as Flemish employers in the targeted IT sector were eager to hire Moroccan employees through ENABEL's labor mobility scheme - the Pilot Project Addressing Labour Shortages through Innovative Labour Migration Models (PALIM).⁷

Another related barrier to effective labor mobility policies is a mismatch of information across, or even within, sectors. Sayre Nyce, Executive Director of Talent Beyond Boundaries⁸ (TBB), explained that this coordination process represents one of the biggest challenges in her work matching refugees to employers in countries of resettlement. TBB must ensure that employers are informed about the possibility of hiring refugee candidates and about their existing skills and qualifications, but the organization must also facilitate effective collaboration among representatives from different host government agencies. These sentiments about the need for effective knowledge-sharing and representation of all key actors' interests were echoed by Mr. Douchamps in his discussion of the challenges faced in coordinating with Moroccan and Belgian government and private sector stakeholders.

Temporary Mobility Schemes

These obstacles can be potentially mitigated by the use of temporary labor mobility schemes, which are tailored to the labor market characteristics of both sending and receiving countries. One example of this approach is the Global Skills Partnerships model developed by researchers at the Center for Global Development⁹ (CGD) and currently being explored by Helen Dempster, Rebekah Smith, and Anita Vukovic, experts at the CGD's Labor Mobility Partnerships (LaMP) program. This new project will serve as a service provider for stakeholders interested in formulating labor mobility programs. Accordingly, researchers have already designed, evaluated, and analyzed several pilot programs following the Global Skills

⁷ The PALIM is an ongoing labor mobility scheme supported by ENBAEL connecting Moroccan IT workers with Belgian employees. The project incorporates a training program in Morocco and subsequent integration support for the Moroccan migrant workers. Part of the trained cohort will remain in Morocco and gain employment in the domestic IT sector.

⁸ Talent Beyond Boundaries is an American NGO that connects refugees to competitive labor market opportunities in resettlement countries such as Canada and Australia.

⁹ The Center for Global Development (CGD) is a non-profit think tank that focuses on international development.

Partnerships model.¹⁰ Examples include ENABEL’s scheme, as well as programs between Kosovo-Germany and the Asia-Pacific region and Australia. Sectors of interest for the LaMP project echo the commonly cited sectors in both the literature and case-specific interviews for this research, including tourism, health, construction, and IT.

While this approach, which also entails domestic, anti-brain drain training and employment components, holds huge potential to facilitate mutually beneficial labor mobility, temporary migration schemes have been criticized for violating participants’ rights. On such a note, Ms. Winet and Ms. Nyce both echoed the importance of ensuring that labor migration incorporates equitable recruitment practices, particularly when interest in emigrating is particularly high, such as in the PALIM, which received far more applicants than the program was able to receive. The PALIM is currently still in its initial stages, but the program’s outcomes could eventually serve as a model for similar schemes, including in terms of the efficacy of the language training and other integration support, the working relationships between the Moroccan IT employees and their employers, and successful strategies overcoming administrative hurdles to hiring. The LaMP program and cases such as PALIM provide examples of labor mobility schemes that can be replicated in other contexts.

An additional crucial component to consider when designing such policies is the role of gendered migration flows and employment patterns. For instance, Radwa Abo Shady, researcher at the Egyptian General Authority for Investment, emphasized the importance of facilitating women’s mobility by exploring opportunities in sectors where women’s work is more prevalent or accepted, as well as by establishing cultural networks to ease reception in host communities.

IV.B. Italy

The first contacts from Italy included business representatives. Roberto Baldo of Fòrema,¹¹ Luca Innocentini of Confindustria Veneto,¹² and Giorgio Spanevello of the Higher Technical Institute (ITS) Meccatronica Veneto¹³ confirmed the existence of “hard to fill” positions in SME industrial base in the Triveneto region (Veneto, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Trentino Alto

¹⁰ The LaMP is currently under the CGD, but it will eventually break off and become an independent entity.

¹¹ Firm involved in on-the-job training; placement; managerial, HR and security consulting (Padova and Vicenza areas).

¹² The major industry representative association.

¹³ A technical post-diploma qualification school, with a both theoretical and practical curriculum.

Adige). The manufacturing and industrial sector of this geographic region is undergoing a rapid digitalization process, which is revolutionizing its operations and human capital needs as well. However, despite attractive salaries, some technical professions are scarcely pursued by Italian nationals, in part because of stigma and in part because of the structural problems of the ITS. For instance, this training system is underfunded by the public sector, therefore graduates from the program are not enough to cover the demand for skilled technicians. The private sector could intervene and contribute to financing yet has limited incentives to do so because of daunting training costs. In addition, there are insufficient guarantees that the employee, once trained, will be retained by the firm that performed the investment. All interviewees recognize the potential to tackle the structural weakness of the Italian job market through migration schemes, but point to the possible unwillingness of governments, language barriers, low convertibility of skills and recognition of qualifications, and the preference of employers towards people they can train, test and verify in terms of skills. At any rate, it is clear that the rapidly digitizing Industry 4.0 has little space for unskilled manual laborers, since technical expertise is often required. Identical conclusions about digitization were reached by Raffaele Maiorano of *Giovani di Confagricoltura*¹⁴ for the agricultural sector, with the additional complexity added by the seasonal nature of some agricultural positions.

Pierfrancesca Solinas, Corporate Social Responsibility Manager for Filmar Network,¹⁵ provided insights on the textile sector. Discussing young Italians' low interest for this field of work, she also highlighted the necessity to fill this gap given the sector's current growth. This view further highlights the inadequate matching of demand and supply of labor, and its concrete repercussions on the economic growth of important sectors. Filmar Network, directly faced with this problem, is thinking of adopting a labor mobility scheme in the near future. This program would offer young Egyptians already employed at Filmar Egypt the opportunity to come to Italy for a specific period of time to increase their competences in the sector, as well as to help Filmar Italy in moments of high productivity. Importantly, this plan further supports the claim that the private sector is willing and needs to establish labor mobility schemes. The need to have a wider perspective on the issues of skills mismatch and labor demand was also discussed. Ms. Solinas emphasized the importance of focusing on people's fundamental skills as opposed to only on sectors. It is these basic skills, in fact, that enable workers to have some

¹⁴ Major agricultural sector representative association in Italy.

¹⁵ A company with offices both in Italy and Egypt, producing and selling cotton yarns purchased directly from Egyptian cotton farms and cultivations.

degree of flexibility and to adapt to different work environments, which in turn helps them better navigate the labor market. The growth of Industry 4.0 is leading industries to re-evaluate themselves and the skills they need, providing an important window of opportunity to re-align the labor market with the evolving needs of industries such as textiles and manufacturing.

Training & Technical Schools

In addition to this sector-specific information, Ms. Solinas also mentioned the training programs for Egyptian workers put in place in Egypt by Filmar. The rationale behind these training programs is quite straightforward; the international market is experiencing an increasing demand for Egyptian cotton, which in turn requires an equally growing and well-trained workforce in order to maintain productivity and ensure the sector's continued growth. Notably, participants not only responded positively to the trainings, but also found them motivating, indicating the potential of private sector-led trainings.¹⁶ The added value of technical trainings for potential Egyptian migrants also emerged by investigating Integrated Technical Education Cluster (ITEC) schools. These institutions are located in Egypt and teach technical subjects in Italian; however, the programs' quality has in some instances been reported as substandard.¹⁷ It is therefore uncertain whether these workers' potential to fulfill employment requirements in Italy can be fully achieved. In addition, potential migrant workers perceive strong barriers to emigration due not only to language requirements, but also to stringent visa conditions that encourage wealthy tourists, but attempt to discourage overstays by setting high costs and rejection rates, even for highly-skilled aspiring students with proven abilities.¹⁸ Overall, given these obstacles to migration, the most promising employment opportunity for Egyptian students of the ITEC schools currently seems to be in-company transfers to Italian headquarters, or placement in Egyptian companies that use Italian engineering systems or are subsidiaries of Italian firms.

¹⁶As mentioned by Flavia Mavellia and Ossama Fawzy as well, both teachers in Egyptian technical schools.

¹⁷ As specified by Ms. Mavellia and also by an anonymous student at an ITEC school.

¹⁸ As testified by students that could not stay after having completed their language training, even if employment possibilities would have been promising, and even in instances where they had been offered an undergraduate course in Italian universities. These young graduates also expressed a lack of confidence in the Italian employment market due to hyper-competition, and a preference for staying in Egypt.

Another interesting finding were the multiple references to the Giulio Regeni¹⁹ case as a potential limiting factor to cooperation opportunities between Egypt and Italy. Mr. Ossama Fawzy in particular mentioned that he had multiple conversations suggesting that there could be concerns about tense relations between the countries resulting from this event, even if these concerns were later proven to be unfounded.²⁰ Nonetheless, it is worth considering potential frictions when crafting bilateral migration scheme proposals.

Researchers & Practitioners

There appears to be a difference between the perspective of the private sector, willing yet unable to hire foreign labor, and that of experts and practitioners that have worked on and/or researched labor mobility schemes between Egypt and Italy. Speaking with Ugo Melchionda of the OECD on his work with the IMIS project,²¹ he mentioned that many Italian entrepreneurs did not demonstrate any particular enthusiasm for the initiative. This stance was further supported by Ms. Solinas, at the time IOM Project Manager for IMIS, who recalled that the actual matching of supply and demand achieved by the project was not particularly impactful. Mr. Melchionda also expressed skepticism for online matching systems more generally, noting that in the case of Italy, they do not really work because Italian employers do not trust the system and because of problems of skills matching. Notably, both interviewees mentioned the standardization of skills as a key element for any labor mobility scheme's correct functioning and also recommended systems that are not automated.

Researcher Andrea Stocchiero²² also expressed skepticism when discussing the potential implementation of labor mobility schemes. He started with the premise that this research project, or anything similar, is not really viable, classifying it as "*wishful thinking*." It was mentioned that one of the main difficulties comes from the fragmented nature of the Italian

¹⁹ This case involved the murder of an Italian PhD researcher in Egypt; Italian and Egyptian authorities collaborated poorly on the investigation, accusations and speculations grew out of control, with severe diplomatic consequences.

²⁰ Ms. Mavellia also mentioned these perceptions of tension. Mr. Fawzy offered a concrete example of how this crisis may have affected cooperation among the two countries; please refer to Appendix III for further information on his experience.

²¹ Mr. Ugo Melchionda worked on the IMIS Project for IOM Rome. His role was informing Italian entrepreneurs on the existence of the data set and platform created by IMIS, and on encouraging private sector actors to sign up to the platform.

²² Area coordinator for Centro Studi di Politica Internazionale (CeSPI), produced a working paper on the IMIS Project (2005).

labor market, and he noted that if the Italian government is unable to find jobs for its own citizens, it cannot be expected to do so for foreign workers. Dr. Stocchiero also mentioned how, ironically, an informal irregular labor mobility scheme between Egypt and Italy already exists in practice. The few regular options that exist for labor migrants are few, costly, and restrictive. Moreover, most existing entry paths are directed to high-skilled workers, despite the fact that Egyptian migration to Italy is mostly low-skilled. The latter is more in line with Italian labor market needs, highlighting once again the mismatch between regular pathways and labor needs.

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IV.C. France

In the French case, the pool of interviewees included employees from international organizations and government agencies, as well as private sector enterprises. For the most part, they provided complementary insights on the needs of the French labor market and the state of migrant integration efforts in France's economy and society in general. For example, all the interviewees agreed that private sector employers and the general public tend to have divergent opinions on labor migration and that any viable policy should seek to address the negative perception of migrant labor harbored by many, particularly low-skilled, French citizens. The conversations also touched on general migrant flows from North Africa and the specific conditions that have facilitated and hindered migrant recruitment to date.

Sectors in Need of Workers

Marc Bouscasse, Head of the Employment Observatory Department at *Pôle Emploi*, provided several key insights on the main labor deficiencies in France based on his department's research and experience producing the annual *Besoins en Main-d'Œuvre* (BMO) report. This publication identifies specific jobs and sectors in need of labor ("*métiers en tension*"), based on data from a survey sent annually to over 1.6 million work establishments across France (Pôle Emploi, 2019a). According to the 2019 BMO, approximately 50% of employers experienced recruitment difficulties in the past year (Ibid). Mr. Bouscasse highlighted that

²³ This is somewhat in contrast with what was mentioned by the industry representatives, who underlined that low-skilled labor barely exists anymore in the secondary sector, since nowadays most workers must have familiarity with more complex technical competencies.

these sectors which currently have an insatiable need for workers within the French labor market can be placed into three general categories:

1. Sectors where candidates lack specific technical skills, notably the Information Technology (IT) and Health sectors;
2. Sectors with high turnover rates, particularly the hospitality sector, and;
3. Sectors entailing physically demanding work, especially the construction and public works (*Bâtiment et travaux publics*) sectors.

In fact, these sectors were also flagged by several interviewees and correspond with those identified in the initial literature review. Mr. Bouscasse further noted that labor deficiencies in the IT sector can partly be attributed to the French education system, which he believes is not adapting fast enough to keep up with the needs of the rapidly shifting IT sector. Similarly, he highlighted that labor shortages in the French health sector are partly the result of historical policies that limited student access to medical schools through the use of strict and conservative enrollment quotas. While these deficiencies could potentially in the long term through policies targeting the native population, Mr. Bouscasse believed that recruiting talent from foreign markets could be a viable short- or medium-term solution to meeting several sectors' labor needs.

In a subsequent interview, Saïd Isaack, Project Manager at the Inter-Ministerial Delegation for the Reception and Integration of Refugees (diAir), discussed his experience with refugee integration in the French labor market. Despite his initiative's focus on refugees, he was still able to comment on the successes and challenges of integrating migrants into both the French economy and French society more broadly. Through diAir's work, which involves coordinating the efforts of different actors involved in refugee integration, Mr. Isaack identified the automobile, construction, and agriculture industries as sectors that have been particularly receptive to employing refugee workers. This openness, he noted, is due in part to the 'low-skill nature' of many of the jobs in these sectors; skills that many refugees and other migrant workers can easily acquire in their home countries. This hiring is further facilitated by the fact that refugees already have a legal authorization to work in France upon hiring. Mr. Issack cited the region of Brittany and the cities of Lyon, Bordeaux, and Paris as localities that have recruited a high number of refugee workers in recent years.

Lorenzo Dri, Head of Training and Employment at the Union of Hotel Trades and Industries (UMIH), was particularly optimistic about the capacity and willingness of the hospitality sector (and others) to hire foreign workers. His union is responsible for representing and advocating for the interests of businesses including hotels, thermal baths, spas, cafes, restaurants, and the food industry more generally. When asked about the specific skills that are deficient within his sector, Mr. Dri emphasized the need for soft skills rather than technical skills. These characteristics include customer service and conflict resolution; transversal skills that are not unique to the hospitality sector in France and that are easy to validate across international borders. This perception aligns with a greater emphasis on soft skills during the hiring process across sectors, as 56% of surveyed employers stated in 2019 that a formal diploma was not as necessary for a candidate as possessing the necessary soft or technical skills (Pôle Emploi, 2019a). Mr. Dri highlighted that although some regional variation exists in terms of specific labor needs within France, the country as a whole has sizeable personnel needs in this sector. As such, many employers represented by the UMIH are open to – and often welcome – the idea of hiring qualified and motivated migrants from abroad. In fact, he mentioned that his organization is currently initiating new partnerships to hire Tunisian and Moroccan labor migrants to try and satisfy some of the needs in the hospitality sector. However, he did note that such partnerships may be more challenging to implement for Egyptians, since Egypt has fewer linguistic, cultural, and historical ties to France.

Arnaud Mahieu, Director of the Normandy branch of the Association for the Development of Training in the Metallurgy Industries (ADEFIM-Normandie), gave some useful insights on the labor needs in an additional sector, France’s metallurgical industry. His association supports businesses that deal in metalwork through assistance with employee recruitment and skills training, among other activities. He estimated that nationally, ADEFIM works with around 68,000 enterprises that employ more than 1.5 million people, including those who work in both the manufacturing and repair of automobiles, aeronautics, and electronics.

When asked about the specific labor needs in his sector, Mr. Mahieu highlighted that employers across the country are constantly searching for personnel such as qualified welders, general factory employees, drivers, routine maintenance workers, and quality control officers. He noted that his industry’s high demand for workers from across the ‘skills spectrum’ is linked to the fact that both the French economy and the metallurgical sector have been doing well in recent years. This trend has led many businesses to actively expand their operations. Indeed, the 2019

BMO cites several professions in the metalwork industry as among the top *métiers en tension* nationally (Pôle Emploi, 2019b; L'Observatoire de la métallurgie, n.d.) Unlike the labor shortages in France's IT sector, which were attributed to deficiencies in the country's education system by several interviewees, Mr. Mahieu believes that labor shortages in France's metallurgical industry stem largely from a general lack of awareness about the sector and the employment opportunities within it. As such, ADEFIM also works on raising the sector's public profile within France to attract qualified domestic candidates.

With regard to recruiting foreign workers, Mr. Mahieu highlighted that most migrants who are recruited to work in France tend to be high-skill workers who fill roles requiring advanced certifications and/or university-level degrees, such as engineers. He also noted that unlike the hospitality sector, which requires its labor needs to be met in France, the metalwork industry is able to create and utilize international value chains by outsourcing production to foreign markets where qualified labor is abundant. Consequently, instead of recruiting migrant workers or advocating for labor mobility schemes, big companies in the metalwork industry sometimes opt to open factories and office branches abroad. In fact, Mr. Mahieu emphasized that because the EU's single market has made it much easier for French companies to establish new factories in other EU Member States, many of the jobs that remain in France when a company outsources its operations tend to be high-skill and value-adding.

In conclusion, all of the interviewees agreed that significant labor needs exist in the French market and that the nature of the skills needed varies according to the sector in which a particular job is situated. While the hospitality industry seems willing to hire foreign workers who possess transversal soft skills such as customer service and conflict resolution, the more technical sectors such as France's metallurgical industry tend to recruit foreign workers who have advanced degrees and/or specialized qualifications. These qualitative data support the findings of the 2019 BMO and other studies on the French labor market. Moreover, the private sector interviewees agreed that there seems to be a keen interest within the business community to hire qualified labor migrants, albeit, with some legitimate concerns. The next section will discuss some of these salient barriers to migrant recruitment.

Barriers

Jean-Christophe Dumont, Head of the International Migration Division at the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), provided useful commentary on the possibility of establishing a labor mobility scheme between Egypt and France. Overall, he was pessimistic about such a proposal, particularly compared to alternative schemes with countries that can send labor migrants who would integrate better into the French labor market and French society in general. He emphasized that in contrast to countries such as Morocco and Tunisia, Egypt lacks the key social, cultural, and political ties with France that would facilitate the establishment of a labor mobility scheme. For example, he noted that Egypt does not have as large a diaspora network present in France as most countries in Francophone West and North Africa do, and that this would impede the meaningful social and economic integration vital for all migrant workers.

Furthermore, Dr. Dumont also noted that because most Egyptians do not speak French, their ability to take up formal jobs in France would be severely limited in comparison to migrants from Francophone West and North Africa. The importance of French language proficiency was also echoed by Mr. Isaack from diAir, who emphasized that language remains a key barrier to migrant and refugee integration in France. He noted that even when migrants gain access to French language programs within France, many are not taught the language required for employment in technical and specialized sectors like IT. Without this fundamental linguistic knowledge, migrants or refugees face more barriers to meaningful economic integration in well-paid positions and can thus be denied the ability to pursue healthy and fulfilling livelihoods in the host society. A lack of adequate language capacities was also cited by Mr. Dri of UMIH as a challenge for non-Francophone migrants aiming to join a service-oriented sector such as hospitality. Similarly, Mr. Mahieu of ADEFIM-Normandie noted that for ‘third-country nationals’²⁴ such as Egyptians hoping to be recruited for most positions within the metallurgical industry, mastery of the French language would be essential.

A second recurring theme across the interviews was that different stakeholders within France have divergent opinions on labor migrants and the extent to which migration should be used to address labor market deficiencies. For instance, informants agreed that on the one hand, public opinion in France on labor migration is generally negative. They noted that these views tend to

²⁴ In this context, ‘Third country national’ refers to any foreigner who has the nationality of a non-EU country.

inform political discourse and ultimately, French policy. On the other hand, they also highlighted that private sector employers are often less worried about candidates' nationalities and more concerned about the skills they possess. For example, Mr. Dri stressed that if France's domestic labor force is unable to provide the skills needed by private sector firms, employers are left with no choice but to source qualified talent from abroad. The French government would thus be left with the burden of juggling these vastly divergent interests when designing labor migration policies.

Thirdly, the interviewees agreed that there are several significant legal and administrative hurdles which impede the recruitment of foreign workers in general, and Egyptians in particular. For example, Mr. Dri highlighted that before French employers hire a non-EU citizen, they first have to register the job opening with *Pôle Emploi* to ascertain whether any French or EU worker can fill the vacancy. Employers then have to wait for a predetermined period of time, after which they can proceed with recruiting third-country nationals such as Egyptians. However, because France also has several bilateral economic agreements and special partnerships with countries in Francophone North Africa, it is easier for employers to recruit Moroccan or Tunisian workers than it is for them to recruit Egyptians. Moreover, even if firms do find a qualified Egyptian national, employers need to facilitate their recruit's application for a residence permit ("*titre de séjour*") – a process which takes time and requires sizeable human resources. Mr. Dri emphasized that since many of the employers in his sector are SMEs, some with as few as 10 workers, they simply lack the resources and personnel needed to undertake this long process, particularly if they are looking for low-skilled laborers. As such, recruitment of third country nationals in general, and Egyptians in particular, is mostly viable for professions which require highly specialized skill sets and within firms that have the capacity to undertake the complex administrative procedures.

Finally, Arnaud Mahieu of ADEFIM-Normandie highlighted that some companies in France's metallurgical sector are finding it more convenient to outsource production to foreign countries that have an abundant supply of qualified labor than to recruit labor migrants in France. This fact further complicates the efficacy of establishing a labor mobility agreement between France and Egypt, since proponents of such a proposal would need to convince enough employers that hiring foreign workers is less burdensome than opening factories abroad and relocating production processes. Interestingly, this challenge also creates an opportunity for the Egyptian

government to lobby French companies to consider outsourcing their production to Egypt. While relevant, this possibility is outside the scope of this research project.

V. Conclusions

V.A. Summary of Findings

This project aimed to analyze if and how an Egyptian labor mobility scheme could respond to the current supply and skill shortages of the Italian and French labor markets. Having initially intended to focus exclusively on the private sector perspective, it soon became clear that in order to develop a comprehensive understanding of the issue at hand and produce relevant and possibly implementable recommendations, it is crucial to also understand the perspectives of other relevant stakeholders, primarily labor unions, academics, professional interest groups, migrant workers, and training instructors. The main conclusions that emerged from this research were a) the diverse opinions on the possibility of establishing a labor mobility scheme between Egypt and select EU Member States, namely Italy and France, and b) the potential impact of such a scheme on the labor markets of the two destination countries.

In both the cases of Italy and France, private sector actors generally demonstrated enthusiasm towards the possibility of hiring foreign labor, especially given the serious supply and skills gaps currently characterizing the labor markets of both countries. Notably, these gaps have serious economic repercussions, as the lack of qualified personnel and manpower affects, to varying degrees, a number of key sectors in both EU countries; the manufacturing, construction, agriculture, hospitality, and health sectors in France and the textile, manufacturing, health, and agricultural sectors in Italy. As a result, private sector employers are left with the challenge of trying to fill, or at least reduce, these labor gaps. Recruitment of migrants represents a possible solution to this challenge but many interviewees highlighted how these labor needs continue to remain largely unmet at least in part because of the numerous and complex administrative barriers that prevent firms from hiring non-European migrant workers. However, not all actors in the private sector possess the necessary resources to embark on the lengthy and costly bureaucratic process required to hire foreign labor. As such, recruitment of third country nationals in general and Egyptians in particular is mostly viable for professions which require highly specialized skill sets. The private sector thus appears to be more interested in the skills possessed by the workers rather than in their nationality.

Interestingly, the interviewed experts and academics tended to have a more realistic, and at times critical approach, to the possibility of implementing an Egyptian labor mobility scheme. Cumbersome Italian and French bureaucracy were once again mentioned as being key

obstacles to the implementation of such a scheme, although experts viewed this inefficient and inflexible administration as an extremely difficult barrier to overcome, in contrast to the more positive outlook of the private sector in both countries. Other relevant points mentioned by experts, practitioners, and researchers include the need to respect rights-based hiring practices, establish skills frameworks so that private sector employers can be assured of the skills possessed by the foreign workers, the importance of emphasizing local integration, and the lack of communication among the relevant stakeholders, notably the private sector, public sector, and IOs. Lastly, it was interesting to note how many of the sectors mentioned by this group of interviewees were noted as sectors of interest for labor mobility across the literature.

Another salient issue mentioned by the experts and academics was the question of funding. Simply put: who is going to pay for the development and implementation of such schemes? From the perspective of some interviewees, neither the private nor the public sector of both the sending or receiving states would be willing to invest resources in a labor mobility scheme with Egypt. Despite their enthusiasm for hiring migrants generally, the private sector employers of the receiving countries appear to be unwilling to finance such projects. This hesitation seems particularly due to the high costs and numerous risks associated with such a scheme, including information asymmetries and the lack of guarantees that workers will not simply leave following the completion of the training. Differently, both the French and Italian public sectors were described as not having the necessary resources to support such a labor mobility scheme. The public sector of the country of origin, Egypt, also appears not to have a real interest in training its labor force. Rather, it dedicates far greater efforts trying to find ways to send its workers abroad. Untrained workers, however, are far less competitive on the international labor market, and the failure to provide Egyptian labor with up-to-date training seriously undermines the success of any labor mobility scheme. Funding thus appears to be an extremely contested point and one that necessitates further discussion in order for such a scheme to be put in place.

Despite the many similarities in the two case studies, a number of differences also emerged. The most significant, which had also been anticipated by the literature review, is the different relationship between Egypt and Italy, and Egypt and France. Whilst Italy has relatively strong historical, cultural, economic and political ties with Egypt, this is not the case for France. In fact, Italy continues to represent a major country of destination for Egyptians, further fostered by the existence of important Egyptian diasporic networks present on the Italian territory. Additionally, the IMIS Project proves the existence of a past interest in improving, legalizing,

and safeguarding the large movement of Egyptian workers to Italy and possibly indicates, despite its limited success, the willingness to implement something similar in the near future. Differently, France does not have such strong ties with Egypt, as reiterated by a number of interviewees. The implementation of a labor mobility scheme between the two countries may thus represent a more far-reaching possibility.

V.B. Generalizability of Findings & Future Research

As previously mentioned, in order to reach a more comprehensive understanding of the issue, interviews with stakeholders from different fields were carried out to gather diverse and complementary perspectives. This approach enabled the composition of a report that not only includes the perspective of the private sector, but also that of other actors that may be affected by such a scheme and/or who may be able to contribute to its implementation, such as Egyptian workers, academics, researchers, and public sector employees. As discussed above, the implementation of a labor mobility scheme is not a simple and unilateral process, but rather an intricate and complex negotiation requiring compromises among different interests. Several secondary effects, such as the risk of brain drain and the possible exacerbation of stagnant production in Egypt, must also be considered. However, if well carried out, it holds the potential to benefit the countries of origin and destination, as well as the migrant workers themselves.

The inclusion of different perspectives provides a well-rounded view of the topic, but also presents a number of limitations that must be mentioned. With regards to the methodology, the absence of funding for this project eliminated the possibility of conducting fieldwork and thus from discussing in person with all but one of the informants. As a result, direct access to the Italian and French private sectors was limited, leading to a reliance on snowball sampling, which can be vulnerable to sampling bias. In addition, much of the information obtained represented the personal opinion of the interviewees, which provided divergent ideas on how migration can and should be leveraged to address labor market deficiencies. It was therefore sometimes difficult to weigh these individual views against each other in order to offer encompassing recommendations. As such, generalizing all the findings to the wider European context could be problematic.

Importantly, however, the results obtained in this study do have some degree of generalizability and could especially be used as a baseline for future country analysis. The existence of labor supply and skills gaps due to aging demographics and digitizing economies is not unique to the labor markets of Italy and France; on the contrary, it appears to be the norm in Europe rather than the exception. These demographic and economic commonalities across Europe thus indicate the possibility for migrant labor mobility schemes to respond to these needs in other contexts. For instance, Germany and the UK emerged during the research process as additional destination countries of particular interest to Egyptians, and thus represent a potential field for future research and policy exploration. However, other European states like these would likely face similar administrative challenges as Italy and France in implementing a labor mobility policy with a non-EU country such as Egypt. These similarities call for policies such as the simplification of the bureaucratic process surrounding the hiring of non-EU labor, the provision of longer and improved language training for foreign workers, and the establishment of a credible international skills framework fostering informed recruitment.

VI. VI. Recommendations

The combination of the literature review, interviews with a diverse range of stakeholders in both cases, and analysis has produced key insights about labor market needs that can inform policy-makers and practitioners aiming to design a labor mobility scheme between Egypt and Italy or France. Furthermore, although the qualitative approach was not intended to produce systematic, generalizable results, some of the findings are relevant to the design of these policies more generally.

A. Recommendations for Future Research

- i. Further this research with a complementary quantitative methodology: Snowball sampling methodology and qualitative interview data could be complemented with more quantitative data collection and analysis, particularly on labor market characteristics and trends in both receiving country cases.
- ii. Add additional country cases to the project: Several interviewees cited that a labor mobility scheme between Egypt and Germany or the UK might be more feasible due to commonalities in language skills (English in the UK) or a more amenable labor market structure for the recruitment of foreign labor (Germany). Therefore, it could be useful to explore these possibilities using similar research questions or approach.

B. General Policy Recommendations

- i. Facilitate cohesion and communication among relevant actors across sectors: Due to the multi-faceted nature of labor mobility schemes, the engagement of diverse actors from the public and private sectors is necessary for effective implementation of such a policy. For instance, different agencies or departments within the sending and receiving national governments, local authorities in host communities, IOs, different members of the private sector, civil society, and migrants themselves may all hold different understandings about labor market needs, visa requirements, and the possibility to hire migrant employees. In order to be successful in promoting a

mutually beneficial mobility scheme, these disparate stakeholders must be brought together to dialogue and understand one other's perspectives.

- ii. Consider gendered aspects of mobility schemes: Many pre-existing or proposed mobility schemes are in traditionally male-dominated fields (such as agriculture or manufacturing), which thus excludes the participation of many female migrants. In addition, these policies may not consider gendered vulnerabilities or social norms surrounding the division of labor within and outside the household. More equitable mobility policies should consider these dynamics.
- iii. Integrate multiple forms of support for integration: Support for migrant workers' integration in the host community and workplace is essential; however, this integration should not be limited to the workplace. Firms and/or governments should provide assistance for housing, language training, and cultural understanding for newly arrived labor migrants. This assistance will ease the transition period for migrants as individuals, while also ensuring more effective professional performance in the longer term.
- iv. Ensure rights-oriented recruitment and hiring practices: International recruitment and hiring must ensure that migrants' rights, such as access to adequate working conditions and basic services, are respected. This is particularly important when considering temporary mobility schemes, which may be more attractive to host governments and populations, but are more susceptible to violating the rights of migrant workers. The Global Skills Partnership model from the CGD and the LaMP provides an example of a promising system, particularly given its emphasis on countering brain drain and encouraging targeted recruitment based on the sending and receiving countries' labor market needs and demographics.

C. Italian Policy Recommendations

- i. Promote cultural exchange and knowledge sharing between Italian and Egyptian populations: Fostering knowledge about cultural similarities and differences on both sides can be a useful tool for both employers and potential migrants. A heightened understanding of these characteristics would lower information

asymmetries for potential Egyptian migrants while also painting a fuller picture for potential Italian employers. One strategy to enhance this understanding could be to create new or strengthen Italian-Egyptian cultural associations and Egyptian diaspora groups present in Italy.

- ii. Seek partnerships with the Italian private sector: Greater engagement with the Italian private sector, particularly with firms already present in Egypt, could facilitate labor mobility. These companies are already familiar with the institutional and cultural context in both countries, which would ease their recruitment of Egyptian employees. This type of partnership could take the form of on-the-job training programs in key sectors to help Egyptian employees gain experience and skills needed in Italian firms.
- iii. Align Egyptian technical training programs with international standards: Strengthening existing technical training programs in Egypt would be a useful strategy to allow for better recognition of professional qualifications internationally. This support must be coupled with heightened funding and awareness campaigns, as many potential students are not aware of these programs or their value. However, these changes should be accompanied by a recognition of diplomas in host countries such as Italy.
- iv. Strengthen diplomatic ties to promote confidence between the two states: It is important to assess the potential long-term damage following deteriorating diplomatic relations after the Giulio Regeni crisis in order to understand whether the obstacles to cooperation are more perceived than real. Greater trust between the two countries could consequently facilitate Egyptians' access to Italian universities, employment opportunities, and visas more generally.

D. French Policy Recommendations

- i. Reform administrative barriers to hiring migrant employees: Access to visas for non-European workers and other bureaucratic hurdles are the largest challenge to French firms looking to hire Egyptians, even when there is substantial need for personnel in several sectors. Greater flexibility in this area would greatly facilitate such a labor mobility scheme. For instance, shorter waiting periods for jobs listed

at Pôle Emploi in the most important métiers en tension would allow companies to hire non-European employees more easily. In addition, reforms making the renewal of titres de séjour more aligned with contract length and individual firm policy would incentivize firms to take on the costs of hiring workers from Egypt.

- ii. Encourage the French state to pursue ties with Egypt: Weaker relationships between France and Egypt (particularly in comparison to other Maghreb countries) seem to be a challenge for prioritizing the hiring of Egyptian labor migrants. Bilateral agreements, such as those with Tunisia and Morocco, would allow French employers to more easily hire Egyptian workers.
- iii. Strengthen language training opportunities for foreign employees: Knowledge of the French language is essential for migrants' effective professional and social integration in France. Furthermore, a lack of language skills is considered one of the biggest barriers to employment in certain sectors, particularly in service sector jobs. Enhanced access to subsidized language training for non-Francophone migrant workers, such as many Egyptians, would facilitate access to the French labor market.

VII. Appendices

VII.A. Appendix 1: Table with Summarized General Interview Findings

	Interviewee	Summary of findings	Key themes
1.	<p>Helen Dempster: <i>Asst. Director & Snr. Associate for Policy Outreach for Migration, Displacement, and Humanitarian Policy</i> at the Center for Global Development (CGD)</p> <p>Rebekah Smith: <i>Visiting Policy Fellow – Center for Global Development (CGD)</i></p> <p>Anita Vukovic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research initiative currently under the auspices of CGD but will later become its own independent initiative (Labor Mobility Partnership (LaMP)) • LaMP’s goal is to provide models and services for states and other actors interested in implementing temporary labor mobility schemes • Use of anti-brain drain labor mobility model developed by CGD researcher (Global Skills Partnership Model) • Currently “mapping the market” to identify key actors and sectors, shared examples including Germany-Kosovo (construction), Belgium-Morocco (IT), and several Asia/Pacific countries- Australia (hospitality) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary labor mobility; • Stakeholder coordination; • Impact assessment; • Key sectors; • Skills and needs matching; • Viability of labor mobility schemes.
2.	<p>Gregoire Douxchamps: <i>Intervention Manager – PALIM Project</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PALIM is a pilot project aimed at understanding the process of recruiting migrant workers; • The project targets unemployed and semi-skilled entry-level IT workers in Morocco who are trained for the Belgian and Moroccan labor market; • IT sector was chosen primarily due to labor shortages in both markets, ease of skill testing, and limited language requirements; • Private sector employers in Belgium were extremely enthusiastic about hiring through the program, while the Belgian public response was negative at first due to fear of job losses to foreign workers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labor mobility; • Recruitment; • Integration; • Language training; • Skills training; • Divergence between private sector needs and. public sentiment on migration; • Key sectors.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project includes a training and integration element for chosen workers; • Project can be replicated in other countries and within different sectors. 	
3.	<p>Sayre Nyce:</p> <p><i>Executive Director – Washington DC Branch at Talent beyond Boundaries</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization matches displaced people with employers abroad; • It coordinates with the private sector to connect skilled refugees to markets with corresponding needs by assisting with the application process and other burdensome administrative processes; • They focus on non-EU countries (Canada and Australia) since EU countries are reluctant to absorb these types of workers (they cite difficulty in tracking recruited workers due to ease of inter-Schengen mobility); • Program focuses on high-skilled labor and “white-collar jobs” due to more receptivity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refugee integration; • Skills and needs matching; • Labor mobility; • Process facilitation; • Need for stakeholder coordination.
4.	<p>Stephanie Winet:</p> <p><i>Head of Stakeholder Engagement – the International Organization of Employers (IOE)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IOE represents private sector employer interests at intergovernmental fora (ILO, G20 etc.); • Highlighted that there is diversity of opinion within the employer community regarding labor migration; those MNCs differ from SMEs; • Sectors with interest in migration include hospitality, construction, mining; • Migration is being politicized to elicit protectionist reactions from the general public; • Employers tend to be pro-migration since at the end of the day, all they need are qualified and competent workers; • There is a need to coordinate the responses of different governmental ministries to the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private sector representation; • Stakeholder coordination; • Divergence between private sector needs, state regulations, and public sentiment on migration.

		needs of private sector enterprises.	
5.	<p>Radwa Abo Shady: <i>Researcher</i> at the General Authority for Investment and Free Zones (GAFI)</p> <p>NB. The views and opinions expressed by this interviewee are his own and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position GAFI.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restricted access to labor markets for Egyptian women (public and informal sectors mostly) despite high education levels; • Migration is mostly a male phenomenon, except for family reunification; • Skills and language barriers; • Potential for highly educated women and for some sectors (textiles); • Need for information networks about jobs; • Need for cultural networks to be welcomed and “protected” by the migrant community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women and migration; • Gender gap; • Cultural needs; • Language barriers.

VII.B. Appendix 2: Table with Summarized Italy Interview Findings

	Interviewee	Summary of findings	Key themes
1.	Anonymous 1: <i>Officer</i> at the Ministero dello Sviluppo Economico (Italian Ministry for Economic Development).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office in charge of granting permission to exercise some professions, based on qualification conversion; E.g. mechanics, installation technicians, hairdressers; Almost no applications from Egypt in the past couple of years, many more from Morocco; Mentions that she suspects that the alternative to recognition procedures could be irregularity or business through an Italian citizen as official supervisor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills transferability; Self-employment; Irregularity.
2.	Anonymous 2: <i>Student</i> at an ITEC school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Went to an ITEC (14-21 years old); Italian course in Italy for 6 months when he was 20 with the MAECI scholarship; Mentions lack of available information about these programs; Mentions that some students are admitted because of personal contacts rather than merit; Now enrolled in an engineering university program in Italy; Thinks that his education will reap higher returns in Egypt than in Italy; Mentions unfair behavior of an Italian university that did not refund enrollment fee when visa was denied to a friend of his; Complains about Egyptian professors at the ITEC, that ask for bribes, don't teach adequately, don't know Italian well; Mentions that of his initial peers, only 10 graduated, and only 3 have actually learnt Italian. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language education; Low-quality teaching; Lack of opportunities for exchanges in Italy; Corrupt teachers; Barriers of Italian job market; Visa/legal barriers.
3.	Roberto Baldo: <i>Project Area Manager</i> at Forèma (Veneto region)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forèma engages in on-the-job training; placement; managerial, HR and security consulting; Mentioned an economic integration project carried out in collaboration with SPRARs (asylum seeker host facilities); How labor markets have changed in Veneto: once unskilled (1990s-early 2000s) labor was needed in great numbers, now only specialized technicians are useful due to Industry 4.0 challenges; Welder example: well-paid job but Italians are not attracted to it. Difficult to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industry 4.0; Hard to fill positions; Language; Skills transferability; Italian labor market; Training is underfunded;

		<p>recruit participants. Of 10 trainees in a course, 8 were non-Italian;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrepreneurs and employers don't discriminate based on nationality, but are skeptical about qualification convertibility; • Importance of language skills; • Importance of on-the-job trial/training phase; • Firms invest little in direct training: expensive and risky; • ITS programs are underfunded (both by public and private money); • Italy does not invest enough in training potential migrant labor on its territory, projects are underfunded; • Italy should have avoided the recent reforms (Decreto Dignità) that in combating job insecurity has limited temporary contracts; • Italy should make better use of its immigration quotas to import needed labor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stigma towards technical education; • Key sectors.
4.	<p>Ossama Fawzy: <i>Italian Language teacher at Helwan High School.</i></p> <p>Concurrently pursuing a master's degree in Italian Language at Ain Shams University.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Italian teacher in Helwan high-school; • Popularity of Italy in terms of culture and language; idealization of Italy probably due to difficult city life in Cairo; • Mentions German model, that invests in education and exchanges for young Egyptians; • Third language (after Arabic and English) is taught for 2 years only, 2.5 hours a week; • Explains what university degrees are most in demand; • Explains that there are too many graduates, low quality of education and saturation of labor markets; • Thinks MAECI scholarships and links it to deterioration of diplomatic relations after the Regeni case; • In his experience, Italian institutions are every favorable to exchanges (mentions a collaboration he set up with the Università per Stranieri di Siena and his school): both director and Italian ambassador were very proactive²⁵; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excess of labor supply; • Shortage of cultural exchanges and work opportunities; • Private sector collaboration; • Stigma towards technical education.

²⁵ When discussing this possibility of establishing this partnership between his school and an Italian one, he mentioned other sources of concern caused by the Regeni case. Despite the Italian headmaster's enthusiasm (as

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He tried founding an association in collaboration with the Italian embassy, whose purpose would have been cultural exchanges, courses, internship opportunities; but had no way to fund it; • Remembers investment in development of local communities by Italcementi in his hometown, symptom of firms' engagement; • Sectors of great cooperation due to presence of Italian firms in Egypt: textiles, tourism, marbles, oil and gas; recommends trying to set up courses and exchanges through the Istituto del Commercio Estero del Cairo. 	
5.	Rofael Gerges: <i>Student at the Al-Faiyum ITEC school</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MAECI scholarship for a 3-month C1 Italian course at the Università per Stranieri di Perugia after graduating from ITEC (7 years); • Course completed with another ITEC peer and 6 Cairo University students of Italian; • Was very satisfied with the experience and how much he improved; • Underlines importance of conversation as most essential practice; • Has no idea about the skill level of his peers from ITEC; • Jobs he is applying for in Egypt: science/math/econ teacher, or technical subjects in Italian in an ITEC, or technician in a company (he prefers the latter option because he is specialized in industrial automation); • Fairly optimistic about his chances: Italian is a great competitive advantage even in Egypt because there are several Italian firms (e.g. steel); machinery, managers and instructions are in Italian; • Not optimistic about employment in Italy: residence permit needed (chicken and egg problem), would have to be there to prove his skills in interviews and trial periods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits of Italian in Egyptian labor market; • Language training.
6.	Luca Innocentini: <i>Responsible for school, education, early training and SMEs at Confindustria Veneto</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skill shortage in Italy; • Lack of adequate higher education and professional orientation for students in Italy; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STEM subjects; • Technical education;

well as the Ambassador's), there was some skepticism that it could work given the tense situation. Yet fortunately permission from Rome for the partnership was heartily granted within a few days only, perhaps suggesting that perception of distance may be greater than distance itself, and that well-crafted and funded programs would be taken up very gladly.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of STEM college path or technical training; • Latter provided by the ITS (Istituti Tecnici Superiori) which as of now prepare 10k students yearly; very low figure with respect to other European countries; underfunded in Italy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stigma technical education; • Key sectors.
7.	<p>Raffaele Maiorano: <i>Agricultural entrepreneur;</i></p> <p><i>Professor of Agribusiness</i> at the University of Camerino.</p> <p><i>President</i> of <i>Giovani di Confagricoltura (Anga)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for seasonal workers to suit the agricultural productive cycle; • Need for permanent workers, yet entrepreneurs see it as a risky/costly training investment; • Due to digitalization and automation: need for multifunctionality, technical skills, flexibility; • Issue of seasonality and lack of continuity in year-by-year contracts; • Recommends subsidizing investment in training; • Mentions benefits of harmonization of seasonal work contracts by (Directive 2014/36/EU): should provide guarantees of continuity for employer while defending labor rights. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural sector; • Technical education; • On-the-job training; • Labor rights; • Guarantees for employers; • Training subsidies; • Key sectors.
8.	<p>Eslam Magdy: <i>Former teacher</i> at the Faiyum ITEC school;</p> <p>Currently an Italian language teacher at a local high-school</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overrated university, too many graduates, often just symbol of status; • Gradual yet far from complete change of mindset towards technical schools (stigmatized); • Admission: brief preparatory course in Italian (basics), then test; • 3 + 2 + 2 years system with different certificates obtained; • Students start after middle-school (aged 14); • ITEC schools: project co-funded by Egypt (EDF: Education Development Fund) and Italy (that finances specific elements, such as machines and labs). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stigma towards technical education; • Excess labor supply.
9.	<p>Flavia Mavellia: <i>Former teacher</i> at the Faiyum ITEC school;</p> <p>Italian woman with Egyptian mother;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taught at an ITEC for some time: complains that the quality of education is abysmal, thinks parents are “being tricked” into high fees for no returns; • Mentions that teachers are complicit and do not admit the poor job they are doing; • Tried helping her friend Ossama Fawzy in opening an Italian cultural association in Egypt, but failed due to lack of funding options; • Mentions a migration experience of an Egyptian friend to Italy: despite Italian 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for Italian cultural association in Egypt; • Issues with Egyptian education in/of Italian; • Low-quality teaching; • Opportunity from in-company transfers;

		<p>course in Italy was not re-issued a visa to go back there for work;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentions that Egypt is more favorable towards migration to Arab destinations; • Mentions irregular migration of young men that avoid military service (and wait out until age 30); • She has heard of in-company transfers of staff from Egypt to Italy; • Hard to get visas, must prove great wealth and intention to return in Egypt; • Complains about violence, inequality, lack of political freedom, unemployment and social unrest in Egypt. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visa/legal barriers.
10.	<p>Ugo Melchionda: <i>Italian Correspondent</i> for the International Migration Outlook at the OECD.</p> <p>Previously worked at IOM Rome on IMIS Project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IMIS is a project of the Egyptian government for which IOM Egypt provided technical assistance and Italy part of the funds; • Goal of IMIS project was to ultimately reach an automated matching system; • IOM Egypt IT consultants set up an online platform with the professional skills of Egyptian workers willing to work abroad. Employers also had to sign up in order to access the data. Mentioned the difficulty of setting up something similar with Europe’s latest privacy laws • Concluded that the data set was largely unutilized, since in the last 10 years there have been no policies incentivizing or facilitating the migration of foreign workers to Italy; • Why was IMIS greatly unsuccessful? Italian entrepreneurs don’t trust this system; in Italy less than 5% of workers find a job through job agencies, its mainly through connections, networking and word of mouth. This is even truer for migrants; • It may very well be the case that the migrant worker possess the skills for the job, but these are not as updated as those required by the entrepreneurs (especially the case for jobs involving machineries); • One way to solve this could be to do standardized international tests to understand and place the skills level of the worker – <i>standardization of skills</i>; • Possible solutions for a LMS between Italy and Egypt: (1) Organizing training courses in the sending states; (2) workers move to the receiving country but not 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problems with ‘cold recruitment’; • Skills and needs matching; • Precedent successful labor mobility schemes (Albania).

		directly with a work contract, but rather to receive training.	
11.	<p>Pierfrancesca Solinas: <i>CSR Manager at Filmar;</i></p> <p>Previously worked as <i>Project Manager</i> for the IMIS Project (IOM)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A key element of the second phase of the IMIS Project (IMIS Plus) was to align not only the professional profiles, but also the skills that fall under the profiles. The ETF helped with this part, and also helped Egypt develop its National Qualification Framework; • Results of the project not ‘<i>eclatanti</i>’ (egregious); • Filmar is considering adopting in the near future labor mobility schemes for young Egyptians already employed in Filmar Egypt so that they can come to Italy for a limited time period to be formed but also to help in moments of high productivity; • The feedback from Egyptians receiving training by Filmar in training schools is very positive and encouraging. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem of skills mismatch; • Industry 4.0; • Viability of labor mobility schemes; • Stakeholder coordination • Key sectors.
12.	<p>Giorgio Spanevello: <i>Director of the ITS Meccatronica Veneto</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ITS Meccatronica Veneto: private-public foundation (roughly 75% of capital is public, i.e. from the Ministry of Education and the Region; the rest is from funding from the firms and from a small fee charged to students); • It’s a 2-year post-diploma school; • Area of operation is the Triveneto: Alto Adige, Trentino, Veneto, Friuli Venezia Giulia, where there are many automatizing/digitalizing SMEs (also in the manufacturing sector) and huge skill shortage; • Stigma towards this type of education i.e. low demand from students; • Fragile system: school has to re-apply for funds every year; teachers change constantly; tradeoff between flexibility and scalability; difficult model to export at this stage; • Importance of STEM education in the classroom + on-the-job experience (his students do half and half); • Skeptical about transferability of experience from Egyptian to Italian firms given structural difference; • Important to guarantee continuity for employer if they invest in training, e.g. through apprenticeship contracts that lead to employment; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry 4.0; • “Hard to fill” positions; • On-the-job experience; • Training is underfunded; • Skills transferability issues; • Key sectors.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommends having partnership with Confindustria/Camere di Commercio; • Envisions possibility of creating an education pathway in collaboration with the ITS for Egyptian students specifically. 	
13.	<p>Andrea Stochiero: <i>Area Coordinator for Centro Studi Politica Internazionale (CeSPI)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Started with the premise that our project, or anything similar, is not really viable - at least not nowadays; • One problem is the ‘fragmented’ nature of the Italian labor market; • Also worked on the case of Albania (mentioned above by Melchionda as well) - described as relatively successful, but because there had been a substantial investment of capital and time in the project by the Italian Ministry of Labor and Ministry of Interiors; • Projects of demand and skills matching that have been relatively successful have always involved a few hundred people – not more; • In Italy we are trying to do something similar with the so called ‘Navigators’ (decreto dignità) - very skeptical of this; • Emphasized the cost of setting up a labor mobility scheme of this kind, and the cost-benefit analysis and whether the benefits would actually outweigh the costs; • The few options that exist are usually made for high skilled workers, rather than low skilled workers, even if in Italy we also need them (crisis this summer for the lack of personnel in the public hospitals). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investing in human capital; • Irregular labor mobility patterns; • Viability of labor mobility schemes.

VII.C. Appendix 3: Table with Summarized France Interview Findings

	Interviewee	Summary of findings	Key themes
1.	<p>Saïd Issack:</p> <p><i>Project Manager – The Inter-ministerial Delegation for the Reception and Integration of Refugees</i></p> <p>(Délégation interministérielle à l'accueil et à l'intégration des réfugiés – DiAir)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The delegation was formed primarily to coordinate refugee integration efforts at a ministerial level; • It works with the France's Labor Ministry, local authorities, and private sector enterprises to help promote the economic integration of refugees; • Industrial sectors including the car, construction, and agriculture industries are particularly receptive to low-skilled refugee labor; • Many French employers maintain a legalistic outlook towards employment and recognize that documented refugees have a legal right to work in France; • Language is a key barrier to hiring non-French speakers and traditional language schools do not teach technical language; • Regions of France that have hired refugees with the help of DiAir include Brittany, Paris, Lyon, Bordeaux; generally western France; • Employers are generally open to hiring migrants but public opinion on the matter tends to be negative. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refugee integration; • Economic integration; • Stakeholder coordination; • Language training; • Key sectors.
2.	<p>Marc Bouscasse:</p> <p><i>Head of the Employment Observatory Department – Pôle Emploi</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pole Emploi is a public service provider that works with unemployed people as well as employers seeking workers; • They collaborate with the Labor Ministry within each region to find sectors in need of labor; • Their main output is the annual Besoins en Main-D'œuvre (BMO) report which details the hiring needs of specific companies and sectors; • This information is used to map specific jobs and sectors candidates are likely to get work permits for; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills and needs matching; • Labor market characteristics; • Key sectors.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sectors with needs: IT (sector where candidates lack skills), Hospitality & service industry (sectors with high turnovers), Construction and BTP (sectors with hard working conditions); • Cites the French education system as being partly responsible for the lack of native skills in certain sectors. 	
3.	<p>Jean-Christophe Dumont:</p> <p><i>Head of the International Migration Division – The Directorate for Employment, Labour and Social Affairs at the OECD</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pessimistic towards potential labor mobility between Egypt and France, due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characteristics of the French labor market; • Complex administrative barriers for labor migrants arriving in France; • Lack of linguistic or cultural ties between the two countries; • Lack of Egyptian diaspora community in France or high flows between Egypt and OECD countries in general. • Highlighted that labor market needs in France tend to either be in relatively high-skilled sectors or relatively low-skilled sectors; • Provided critique of temporary labor mobility schemes (ex: in Italy) due to challenges in implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labor market characteristics; • Divergence between private sector needs, state regulations, and public sentiment on migration; • Viability of labor mobility schemes.
4.	<p>Lorenzo Dri:</p> <p><i>Director – Employment & Training at Union des Métiers et des Industries de l'Hôtellerie (UMIH)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The hospitality industry is a significant sector in France and it hosts many migrant workers (both seasonally and longer-term); • In the hospitality sector, transversal and language skills are extremely important. Technical skills are more easily learned with work experience, whether employees have been trained in France or abroad. Consequently, transferal of skills and qualifications may be relatively easy for labor migrants in this sector; • Employers in this sector have many needs that are not satisfied by French labor, so they are open to hiring qualified and motivated labor migrants; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private sector perspective; • Labor market characteristics; • Skills and needs matching; • Professional training; • Key sectors.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • However, they must first prove that they cannot find a qualified French candidate via <i>Pôle Emploi</i> before hiring a non-European candidate (whose visa will then be linked to this position). • Their federation is currently initiating new partnerships to hire Tunisian and Moroccan labor migrants to satisfy these needs (facilitated by existing accords between France and these countries); <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This type of scheme may be more challenging to implement for Egyptians, as Egypt has fewer linguistic, cultural, or historical ties to France. 	
5.	Arnaud Mahieu: <i>Director</i> – Association de Développement des Formations des Industries de la Métallurgie (ADEFIM), Normandie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADEFIM works with business in France’s metallurgical sector and helps with employee recruitment and training efforts, among other activities; • The most common jobs sought out by employers include welders, general factory employees, drivers, and quality control personnel; • Labor shortages in his industry stem from a general lack of awareness about the sector and the employment opportunities within it; • Most migrant workers in this sector originate from EU member states; third country nationals in the industry tend to be high-skilled; • Employers in France’s metalwork industry frequently outsource production to foreign markets where qualified labor is abundant; • Temporary recruitment in the sector is usually facilitated by a third party service (such as Adecco). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private sector perspective; • Labor market characteristics; • Key sectors.

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