

# Attracting Highly Qualified and Qualified Third-Country Nationals

## *Synthesis Report*

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# Study objectives

- Analyse national policies and practical measures aimed at attracting (highly) qualified third-country nationals
- Examine relations and labour migration agreements with third countries
- Examine national evaluation methods and available evidence
- Highlight good practices
- Identify challenges which are still to be addressed.

# European context

## Policies / strategies

- 'Europe 2020' Strategy
- Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM)
- "Entrepreneurship 2020" Action Plan

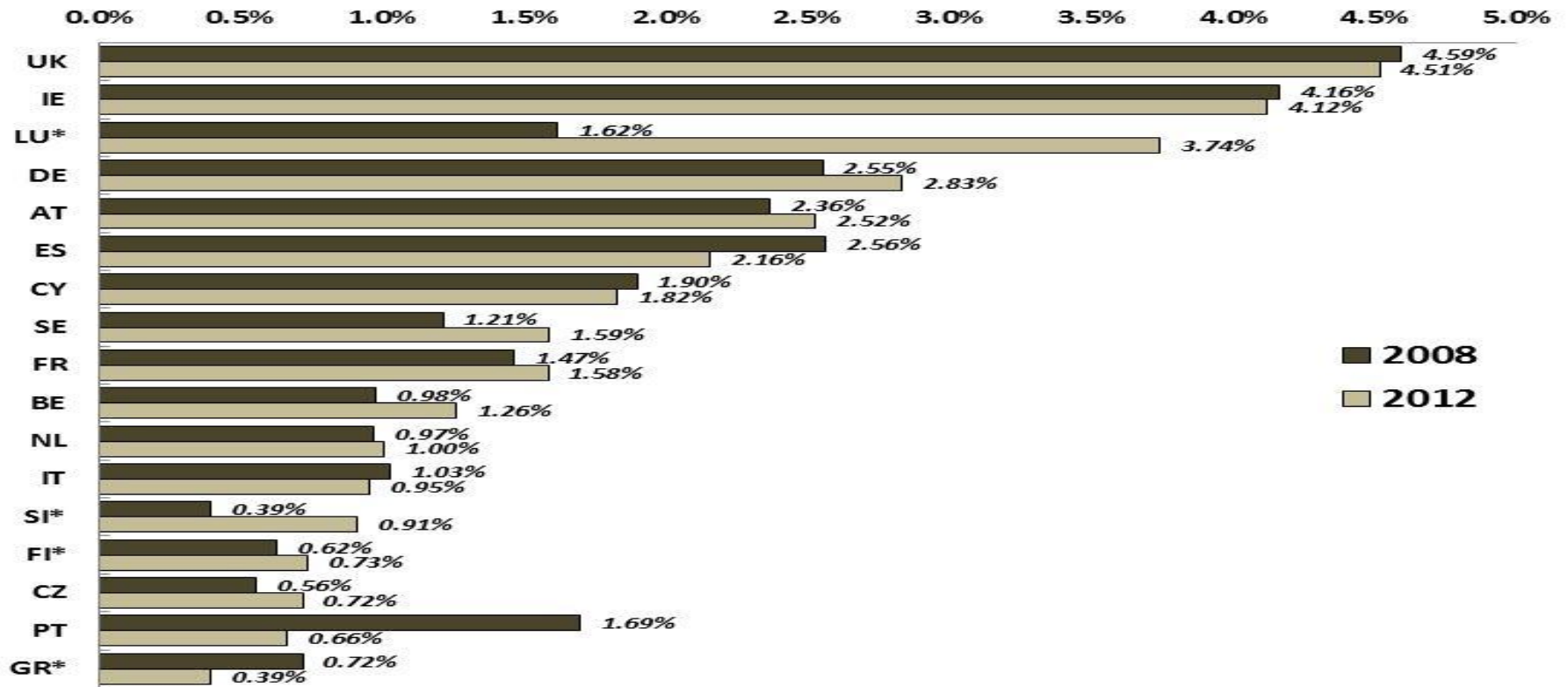
## Législation

- Directive 2009/50/EC – Blue Card
- Directive 2005/71/EC – Researchers.



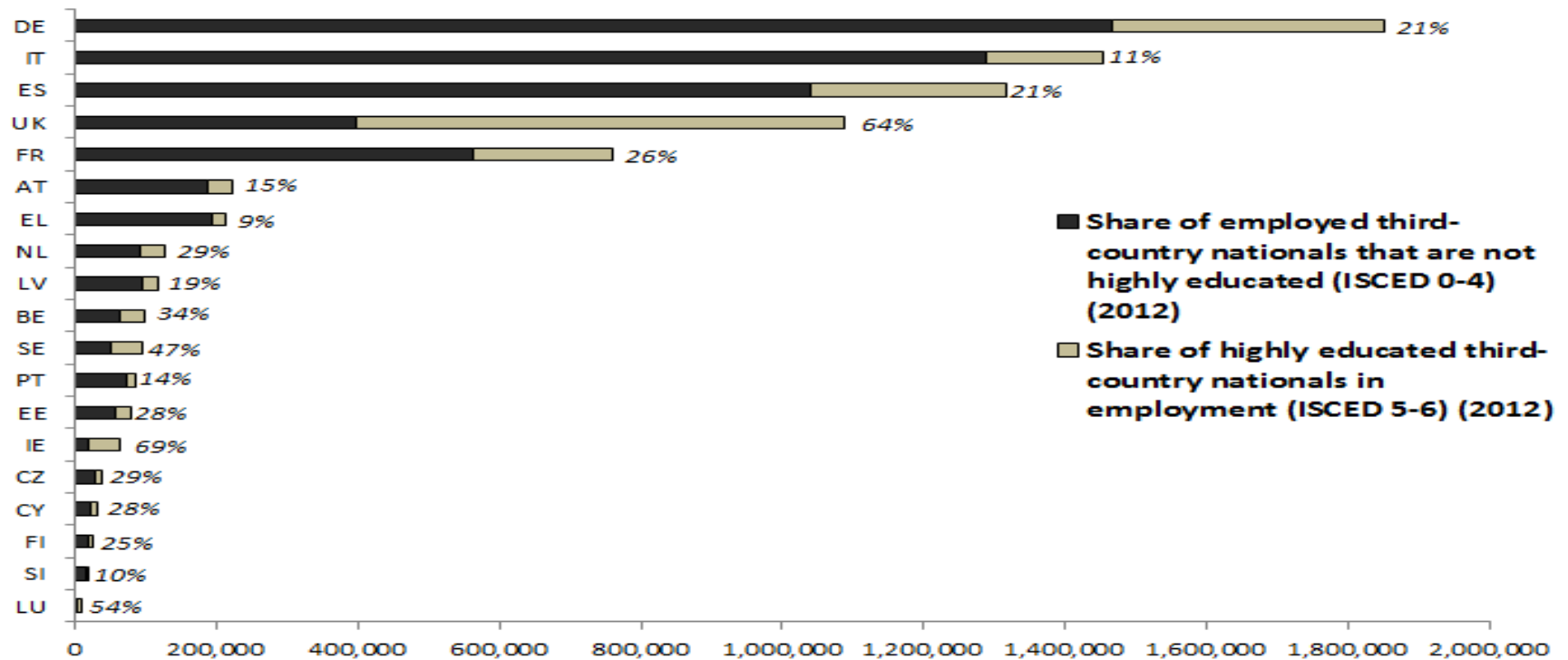
# Statistics

**Figure 1** Proportion of employed third-country nationals working in high-skill occupations (ISCO 1-3) among the total employed population, selected



# Statistics

**Figure 2** The total number of employed third-country nationals and the share having reached the highest educational attainment level (ISCED 5-6) (2012)



# Definitions and Concepts

- International Standard Classifications by type of occupation (ISCO) and by education level (ISCED)
- Different national concepts used in the Member States
- Criteria used:
  - Education;
  - Salary;
  - Experience.
- Directive 2009/50/EC (Blue Card) has introduced common concepts and definitions



# Policies / Strategies

- Some Member States have specific policies in place to attract (highly) qualified third-country nationals
- Objectives of policies:
  - Strengthen the competitiveness of Member States' economy
  - Make Member States an attractive destination country
  - Satisfy current and future labour market demand
- Policies focus on certain groups of individuals (students, researchers, entrepreneurs) as well as on individuals working in precise areas of occupation
- Some Member States work with quota

# Approaches

- Points-based systems
- Employer-led: employers are expected to 'preselect' the third-country national they wish to hire and, in most cases, have to prove that both they and the third-country national are meeting certain conditions
- Forecasting of labour demand, often in consultation with relevant parties
- Drawing up of occupational shortages lists.



# Specific measures to attract (highly) qualified workers

- Accelerated procedures / fast-tracking
- Unrestricted access to the labour market
- Provision of information and information campaigns
- Employer sponsorship
- Networking
- Participation in recruitment fairs
- Cooperation with third countries.



# Measures to influence the migration decision

- Offering improved rights, incentives and benefits, for example:
  - Family members of highly qualified workers can directly accompany them to the Member State
  - Family members benefit from unrestricted access to the labour market or under similar conditions as the main card holder
  - Tax incentives / social security arrangements.
- Exemptions (e.g. of language competence, recognition of higher education degrees).



# Measures to attract entrepreneurs / investors

- Several Member States have specific measures in place to attract this group of third-country nationals
- Focus on entrepreneurs is increasing
- Admission conditions:
  - Expected economic potential / job creation
  - Proof of secured funding: €60 000 (EL), €232 000 (UK)
  - Investment capacity, e.g. €500 000 (ES)

# Agreements with third countries

- Mainly as part of wider agreements to facilitate legal migration
- Some Member States have signed agreements specifically focusing on (highly) qualified third-country nationals
- In most cases, the main objective is to attract (highly) qualified workers for specific roles / to address labour shortages, independently of their country of origin
- To some extent, Member States are competing for talent.

# Effectiveness of policies and measures – good practices

- Information provision on migration process and opportunities
- Adaptation of migration procedures, e.g. fast-tracking, offering 'premium services', 'open' admission
- Customisation of labour market practices to better match demand and devising 'talent routes'
- Use of evaluation.

# Effectiveness of policies and measures – challenges

- Characteristics which are inherent to a Member State:
  - Language
  - Public debates / views
- Economic and social factors:
  - Economic crisis
  - Wage levels
  - Working conditions / career development opportunities
- Immigration rules and procedures:
  - Complex application processes
  - Bureaucracy / lengthy procedures
  - Recognition of qualifications



# Impact of the EU acquis

- Numerous advantages were identified:
  - Family reunification
  - Mobility
  - Providing the possibility to change jobs
  - Possibility of temporary unemployment
  - Access to long-term residence



# Conclusions

- Policies focusing on (highly) qualified workers have developed considerably in recent years, mainly in EU-15
- The Blue Card has had a positive impact, particularly in EU-12
- Member States have recognised the importance of additional incentives to attract and influence the migration decision of third-country nationals
- The focus on attracting self-employed persons, entrepreneurs and investors is increasing
- Some important issues:
  - There is scope for further simplifying immigration rules and procedures to further facilitate access of (highly) qualified third-country nationals
  - Further use of agreements with third countries could be considered
  - More effective monitoring and evaluation of both the labour market and the impacts of national and EU policies is necessary
  - The opportunities of the Blue Card could be further exploited.



*The European Migration Network (EMN) is co-ordinated by the European Commission with National Contact Points (EMN NCPs) established in each EU Member State plus Norway.*

***Thank you!***

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