

EU Labour Migration Policy: Time to Move From a Skill-based to a Sector-based Framework?

BRIEFING PAPER EMN – JRC – DG HOME ROUNDTABLE ^[1]

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In 2020, the European Commission updated the Skills Agenda for Europe and published the New Pact on Migration and Asylum. These developments recognised the crucial role that migration plays in filling existing and future labour and skills shortages, calling for a “more strategic approach to legal migration, oriented towards better attracting and keeping the talent” (EC 2020). **The first European Migration Network (EMN) Roundtable organised in collaboration with the Joint Research Centre (JRC) and DG HOME took place on 5 November 2020 in a virtual setting.** It provided the opportunity to discuss EU labour migration policy and possible benefits as well as challenges arising from a more sector-centred versus a skill-centred approach. This document provides a summary of the discussion without references to individuals or organizations, respecting Chatham House Rules as set-out during the event.

The roundtable brought together key thought leaders from academia, think tanks, intergovernmental and international organizations as well as Member States to discuss the extent to which the current EU labour migration policy responds to the labour market in terms of current and future skill and sectoral needs, questioning whether it is time to move from a skill-based to a more sector-based framework. The event drew on past experiences with a specific focus on the needs which emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic, and practices at the national level. **Besides the general panel discussion, the Roundtable hosted three parallel break-out sessions that focused on three specific sectors, notably: i) agriculture, ii) health and long-term care, and iii) information and communications technology (ICT).** These are the sectors where labour shortages have been identified most prominently with the onset of the pandemic and represent a mix of regulated and non-regulated sectors, with high and low skills professions.

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Links

[1] https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/docs/pages/00_labour_migration_roundtable_briefing_paper.pdf