Re-Turn Migrant Survey Report:

The Migrants' Potential and Expectations

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Re-Turn
Re-Turn is an acronym of the European project 'Regions benefitting from returning migrants'.

This document was prepared by the consortium of the Re-Turn project. For more information, please visit www.re-migrants.eu.

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0. Executive Summary

Since migration in general is becoming more common and especially more circular in Central Europe, return migration can no longer be seen as a marginal phenomenon. Due to the fact that the share of nationals among immigrants is above average in EU-2004 states the survey area and Re-Turn project partners are located in seven Central and Eastern European countries.

The purpose of the project is to determine the questions concerning the decision and probability of return and the attributes which remigrants are dealing with. Further the project wants to evaluate how such remigrants can impact regional development in their respective target regions. Rounding off the Re-Turn project also tries to implement a measurement tool for remigration. This stems from the previous lack of research on transnational labour mobility, with all of this studies differing methodologically. To achieve the mentioned goals several working hypotheses were developed out of the theoretical framework of the study.Before starting data collection the target groups had to be defined. In this process two groups were identified. One being emigrants that had already returned and the other one being emigrants who are living currently abroad who or who don't consider a return. The study areas were chosen from the fact that they all are rural and peripheral regions in New EU-Member states that experienced strong emigration since 2004 and are dealing with weak labour markets.

Because of the target group being spread internationally and due to restrictions regarding the projects resources an Online Survey was chosen to sample data. To increase the popularity and therefore number of participants the survey was linked to websites that are frequently visited by members of the target population and promoted via newspapers, radio stations and social networks. Since internet based data collection has several shortcomings, the results have to be interpreted in context to it.

During a period of eight month between December 2011 and August 2012 over 3000 cases were collected. After data evaluation almost 2000 cases remained in the sample, providing valid information for the main data. Although the sampling population shows big differences in the number of participants concerning their nationality and has a well above average educational background important information regarding the motives, prerequisites and labour market performance was provided.

The results of the Re-Turn survey are, among others, that the return of emigrants results out of differing qualifications, experiences in the host country and motives of staying resp. leaving. The survey also shows that most of the emigrants return successfully and consider the return easy. Another exemplary conclusion is that return is less driven by economic reasons than private motives.

Country-Reports

Definitions:

- Emigrants: People who currently live outside of their home country.
  - Permanent Emigrants: Emigrants without considerations to return to their home country.
  - Potential Returnees: Emigrants with considerations to return to their home country.

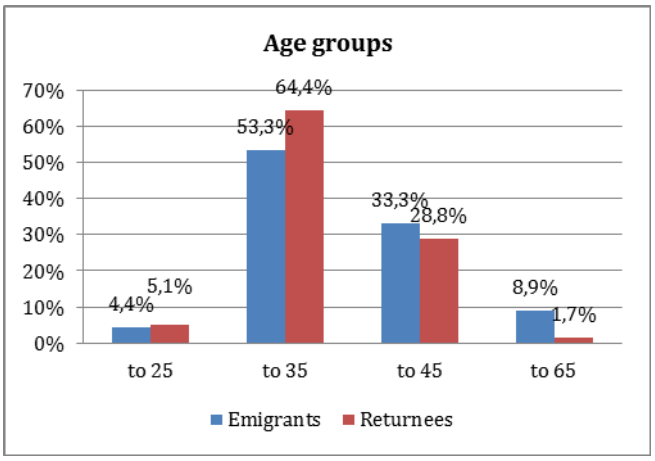
- Returnees: People who returned to their home country after they had been abroad for at least 6 months.
  - Country Returnees: These are return migrants who have moved back into a different region than their home region.
  - Region Returnees: These are return migrants who have moved back into their former home region.

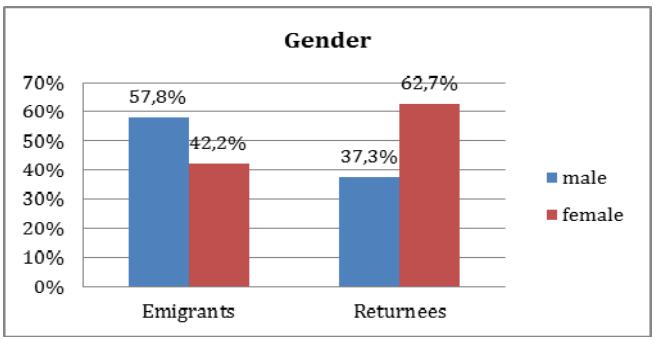
- Host Countries
  - EU15: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom
  - EU (new member states): Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia
  - Remaining Europe: Countries on the European continent but outside of the European Union.

4. Poland

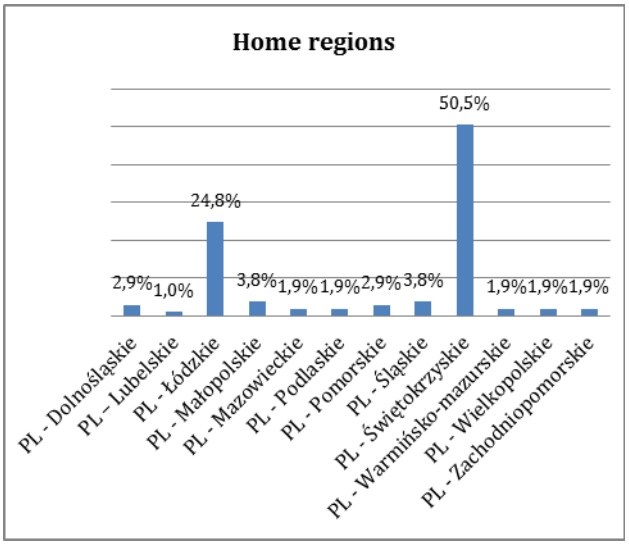
4.1. Populations, geography and key descriptors

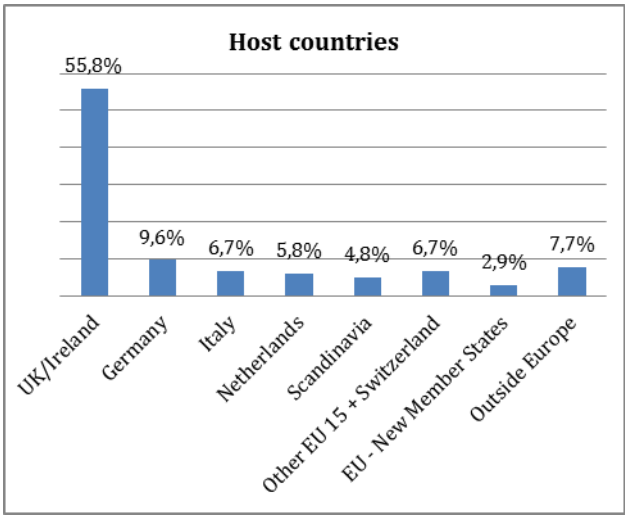
	n	%	out of which	n	%
Emigrants	45	42,9	Potential Returnees	24	55,8
			Permanent Emigrants	19	44,2
Returnees	60	57,1	Region Returnees	59	98,3
			Country Returnees	1	1,7
Total	105	100,0			

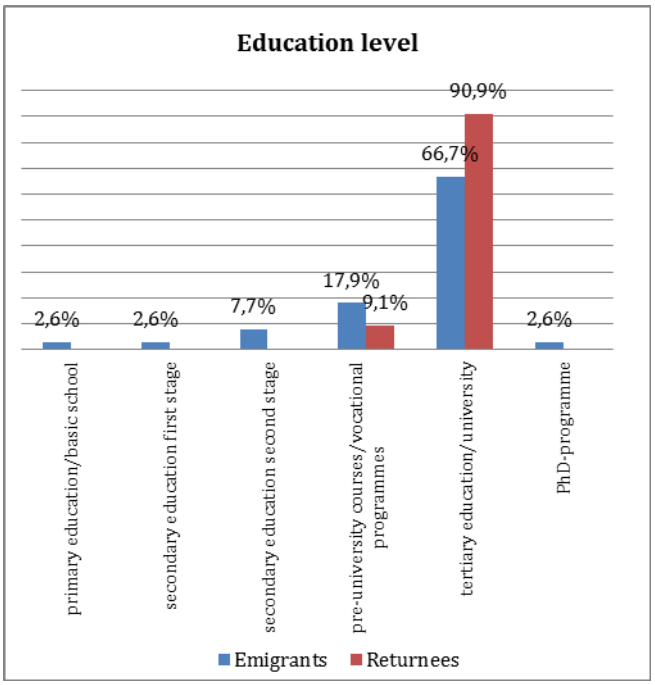


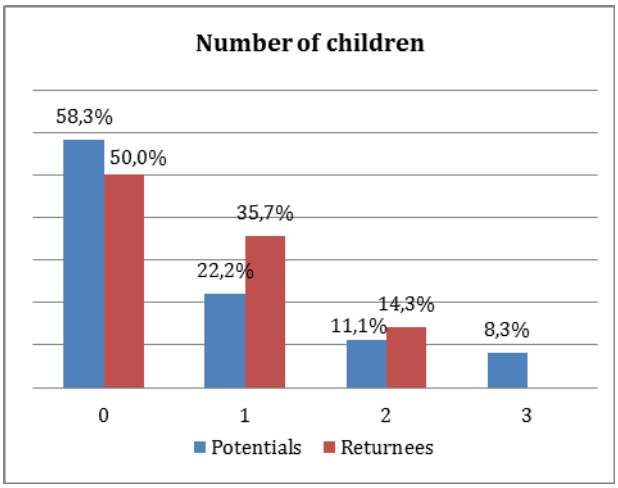


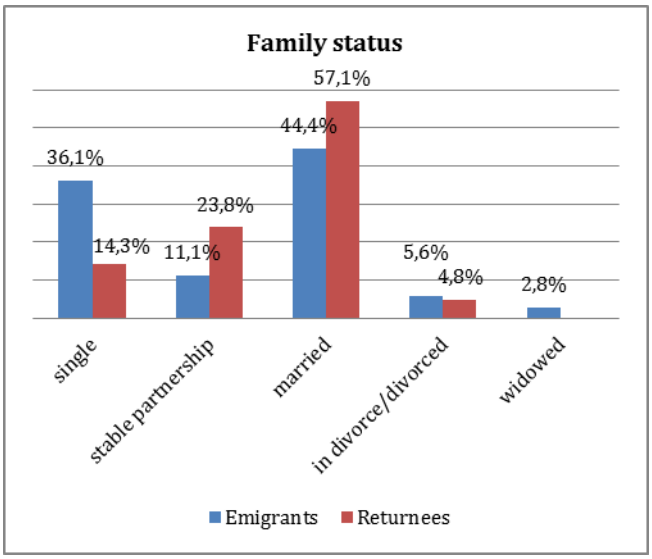
- The Polish sample consists of more women than men (~54% Women vs. ~ 46% Men).









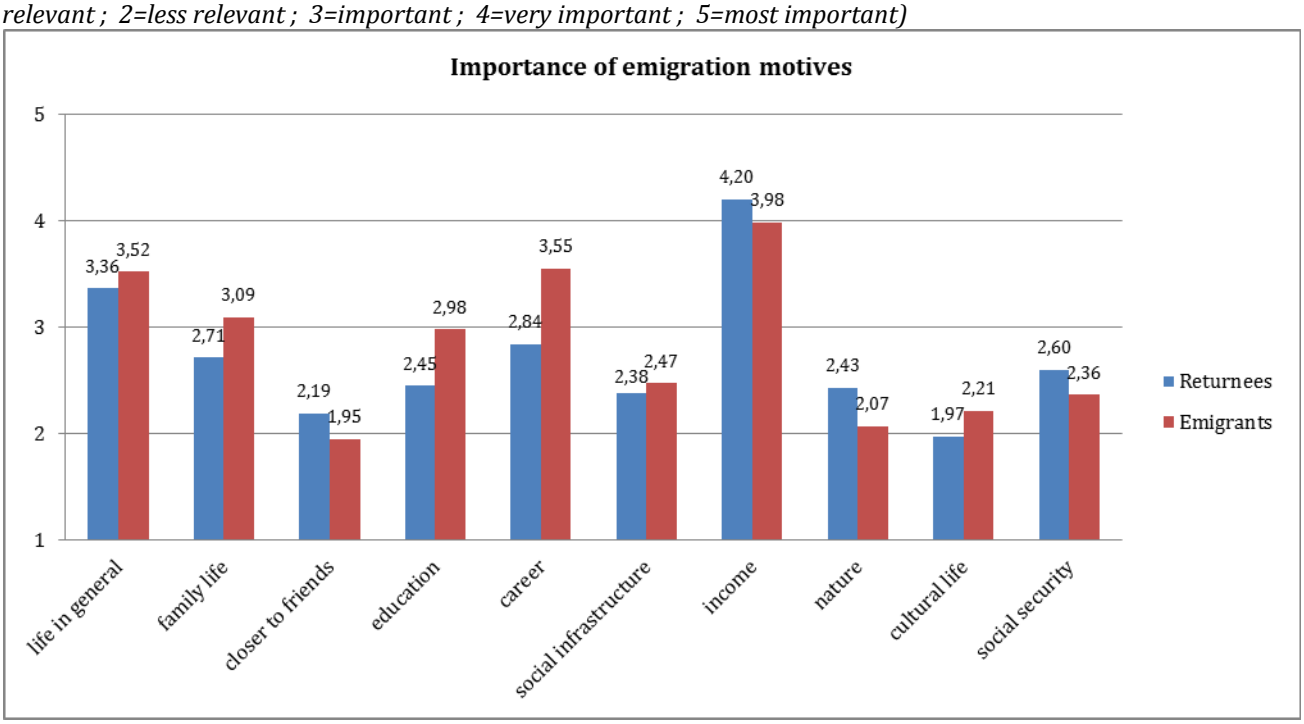


➢ There is a difference between Emigrants and Returnees concerning the family status. Returnees are far more engaged in stable partnerships or marriage. Emigrants are more often singles.

4.2. Thematic Analysis

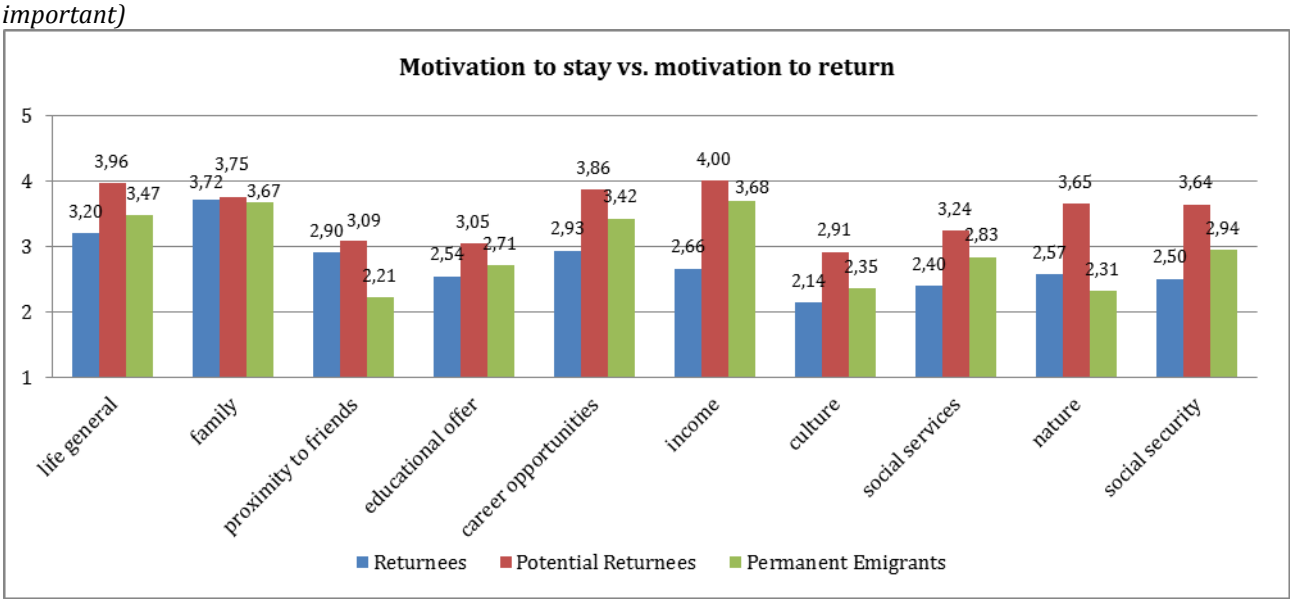
4.2.1. Migration Motives and Satisfaction abroad

„How important was it to improve the following factors when you decided to move abroad?" (mean values; 1=not relevant ; 2=less relevant ; 3=important ; 4=very important ; 5=most important)



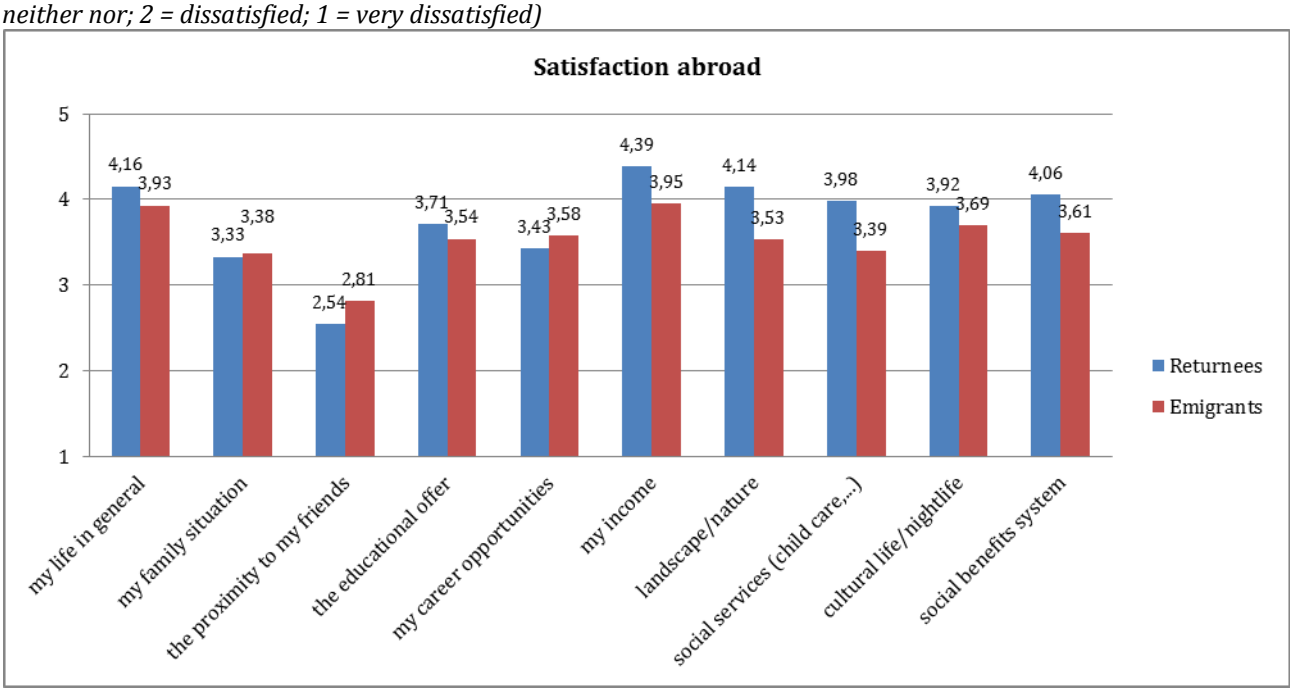
➢ There are no statistically significant differences between Emigrants and Returnees in the importance of most motives except for ‚education' and ‚career', which seem to be more important as a motive for Emigrants.

Returnees: "How important are the following factors in your decision to move back to Poland?"; Potential Returnees: "How important is it for you to improve the following factors with your return to Poland?"; Permanent Emigrants: "What factors are important in your decision to stay abroad?" (Mean values; 1=Not at all important; 5=Most important)



- The three groups share the view that the family situation is one of the most important aspects for decision making. For Returnees the proximity to friends was a main aspect influencing their motivation to return home. Permanent Emigrants appreciate the income as the most important factor for their decision to stay abroad. For Returnees this aspect is less important.

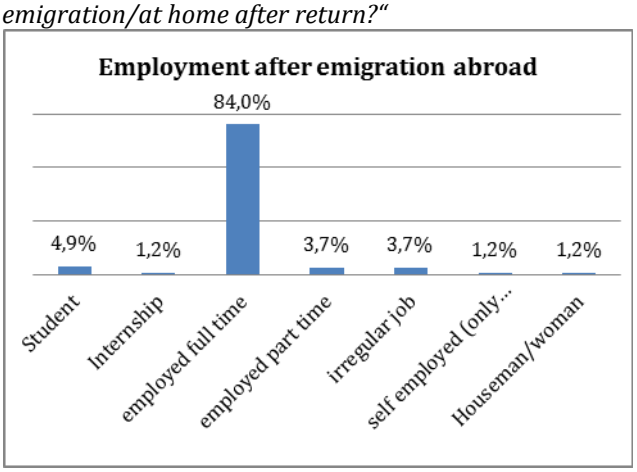
Returnees: "How satisfied have you been with the following factors abroad once you had moved there?" Emigrants: "How satisfied are you today with the following factors abroad?" (Mean values; 5 = very satisfied; 4 = satisfied; 3 = neither nor; 2 = dissatisfied; 1 = very dissatisfied)

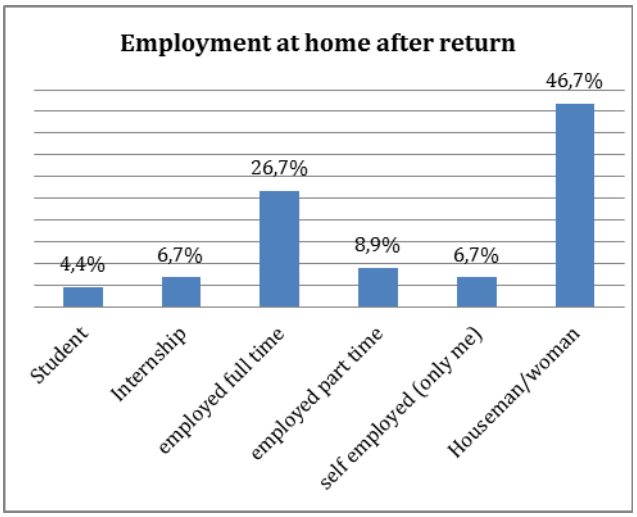


- Statistical significance is found for Emigrants being less satisfied than Returnees with their income, nature and landscape, social services and the social benefits in the host country.

4.2.2. Employment and Income

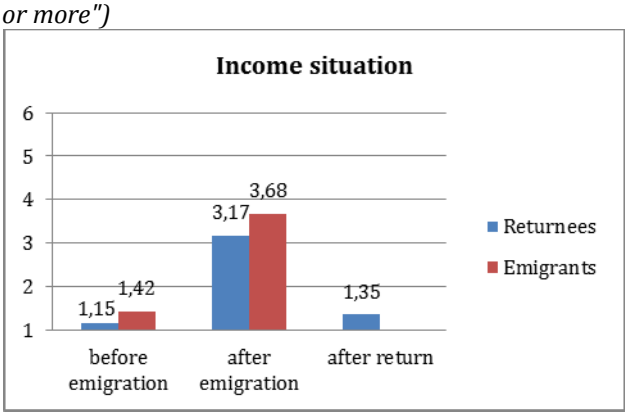
„What was your employment situation abroad after emigration/at home after return?“





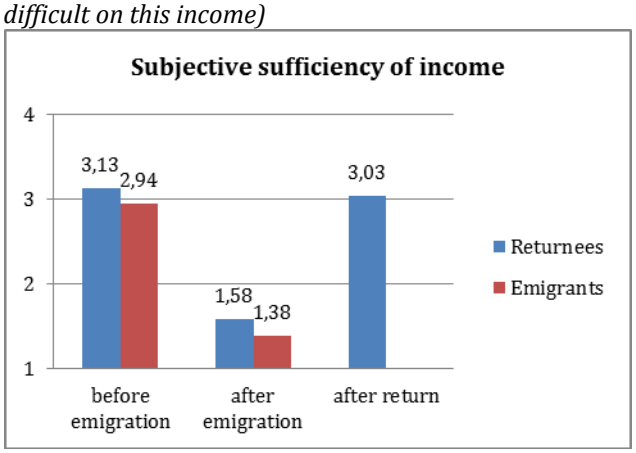
- ~47% did/does housework after return → Returnees are less active on the home job market after return.

„What about your average monthly household income before emigration, after emigration and after return?“ (Mean values; 1="<500€"; 2="500-999€"; 3="1000-1999€"; 4="2000-2999€"; 5="3000-4999€"; 6=" 5000€ or more")



- Returnees earned less money after emigration → could be an evidence that people with less success in host country returning to Poland. However, the importance of emigration motives has shown that career and education weren't so important for Returnees. Returnees already earned less money before emigration.

„How good could you live on your income before emigration, after emigration and after return?“ (1=living comfortable on this income; 2=coping on this income; 3=finding it difficult on this income; 4=finding it very difficult on this income)



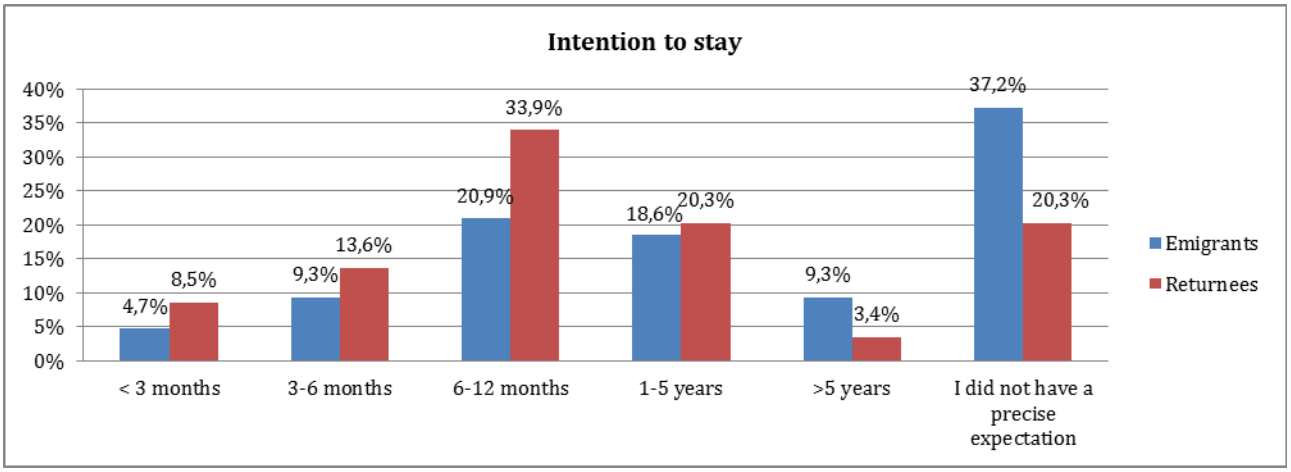
- There is a statistically significant difference for the subjective sufficiency of the income abroad after emigration → Returnees lived more comfortable in the host region.

„While being abroad, were you working in a relatively/completely new professional field compared to your previous jobs or education?“

yes	90,9%	no	9,1%

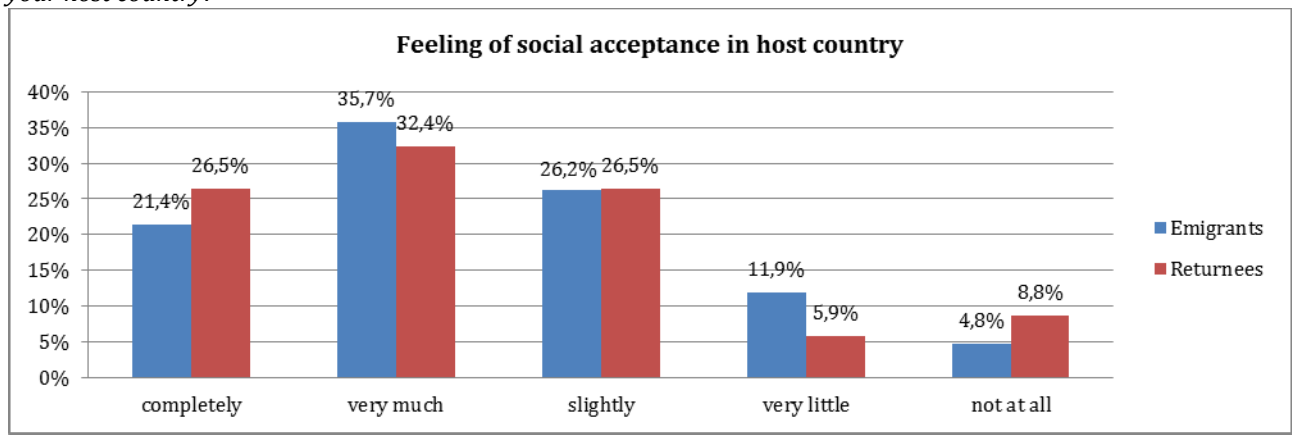
4.2.3. Intention to stay and social acceptance abroad

„Before your emigration, how long did you intend to stay abroad?“

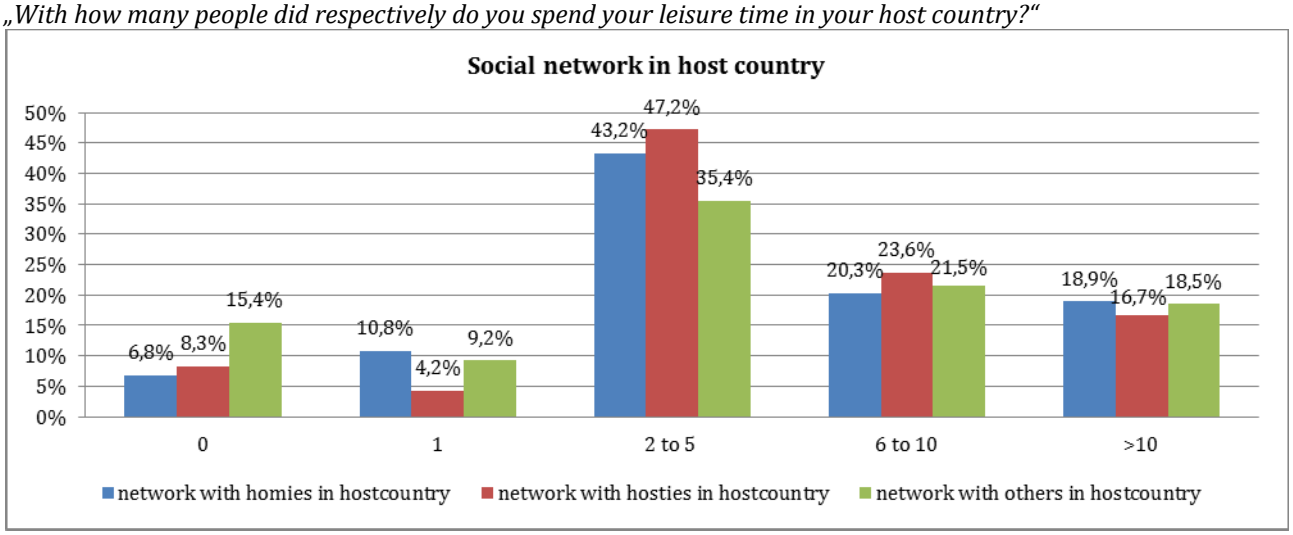


➢ Emigrants were far more vague in their intended length of stay abroad.

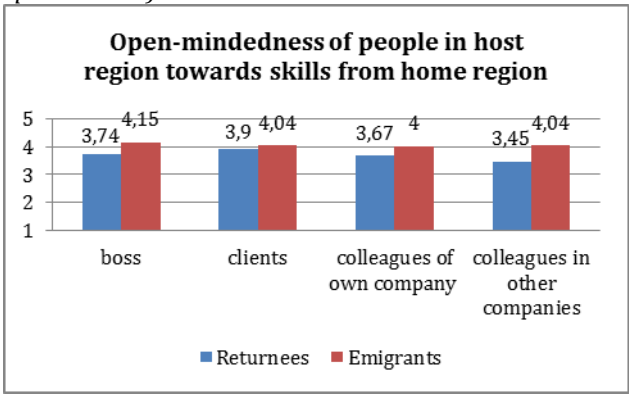
Returnees: “How much did you feel being accepted as a member of the society in your host country abroad?
Potential Returnees and Permanent Emigrants: “How much do you feel being accepted as a member of the society in your host country?“



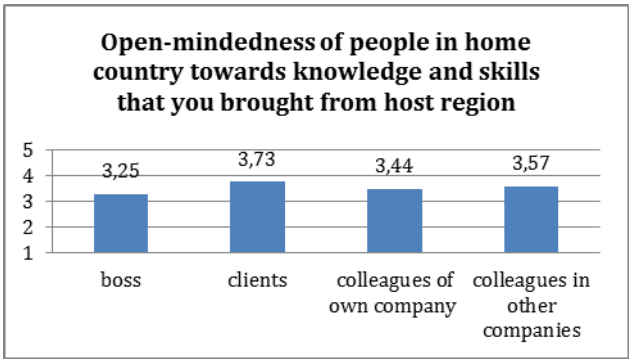
„With how many people did respectively do you spend your leisure time in your host country?“



„How open-minded are/were people in your professional environment towards knowledge and skills that you brought in?" (Mean values; 1 = very rejecting; 2 = rejecting; 3 = neither nor; 4 = open-minded; 5 = very open-minded)

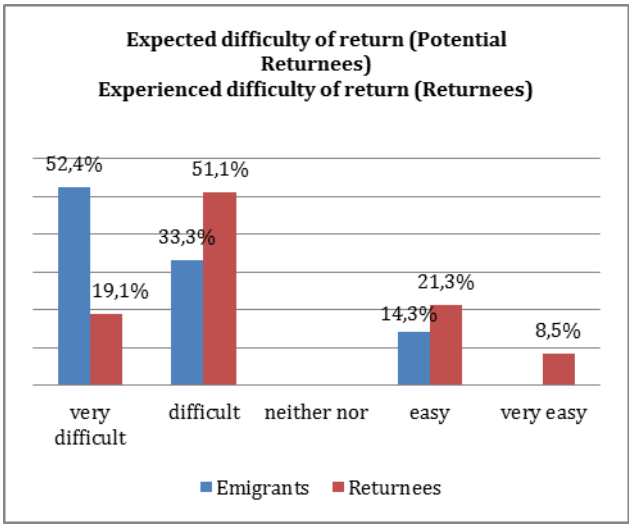


➢ There is statistical significance in the difference between Returnees and Emigrants for the boss and colleagues in other companies.

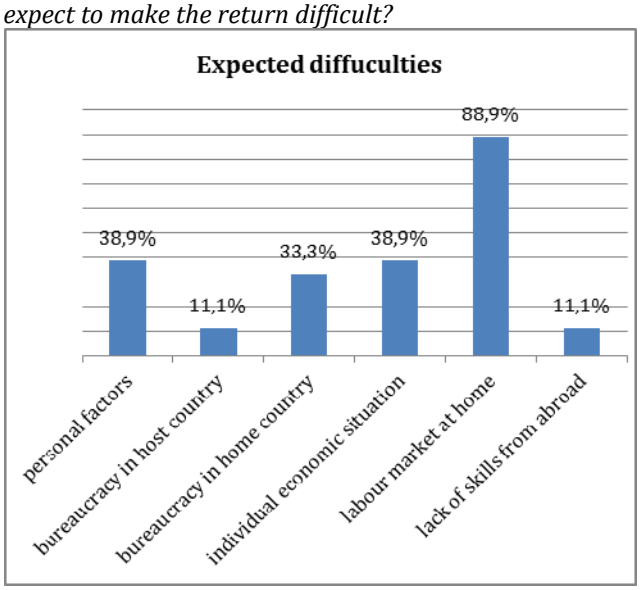


4.2.4. Obstacles of a (potential) return

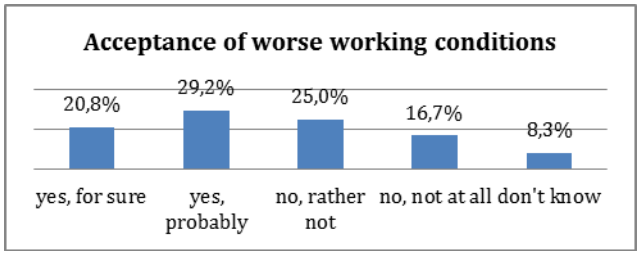
Returnees: "How easy was it for you to return home?"
Potential Returnees: "How easy do you expect the return to be?"



Potential Returnees (those who expect the difficulty of return very difficult or difficult): "Which factors do you expect to make the return difficult?



Potential Returnees: "Would you accept worse working conditions (e.g. a lower salary, a less skilled position, a different profession) in order to realize your wish to return to Poland?"

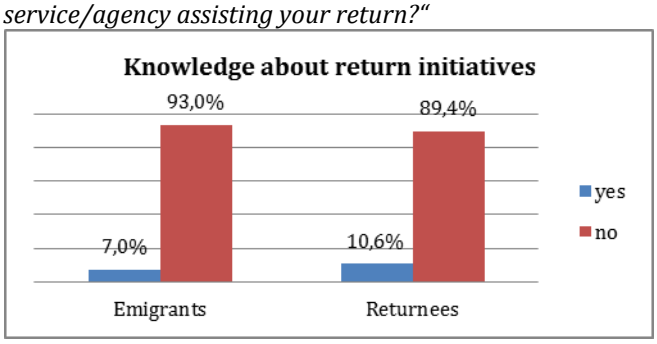


➢ 50% of those Potential Returnees who indicate a positive consideration to return to Poland would also accept worse working conditions at home.

Potential Returnees: "Have you already made plans for your return?"

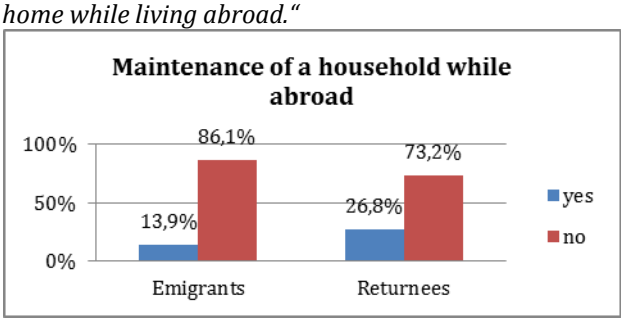
yes	43,5%	no	56,5%

„Did/do you know about any initiative/support service/agency assisting your return?"

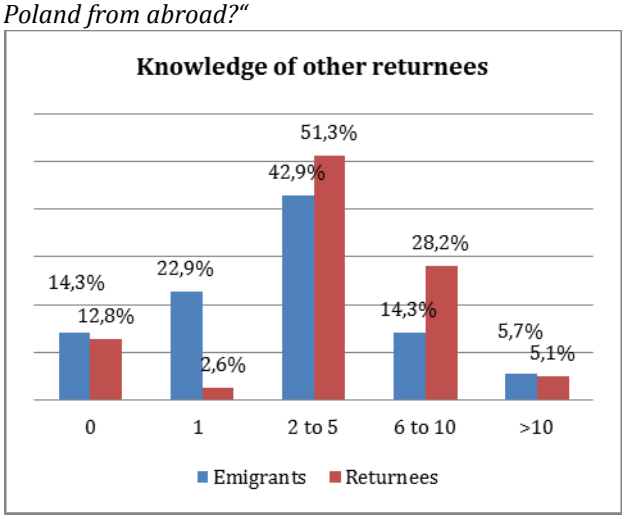


4.2.5. Social factors and the decision process

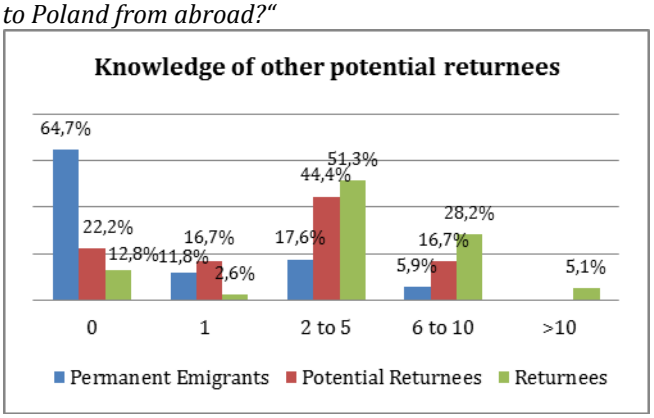
Returnees: "I maintained a household home while living abroad"; Emigrants: "I am maintaining a household home while living abroad."



„How many people do you know that have returned to Poland from abroad?"

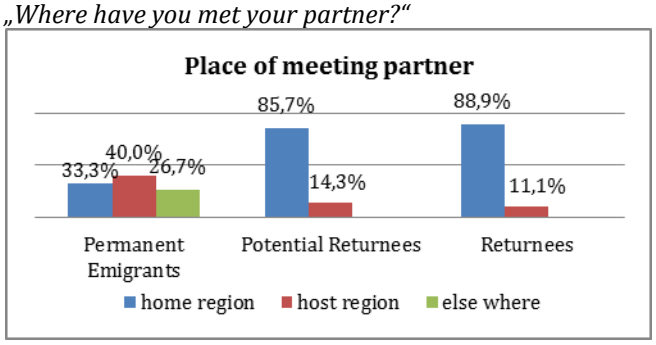


„How many people do you know who consider to return to Poland from abroad?"



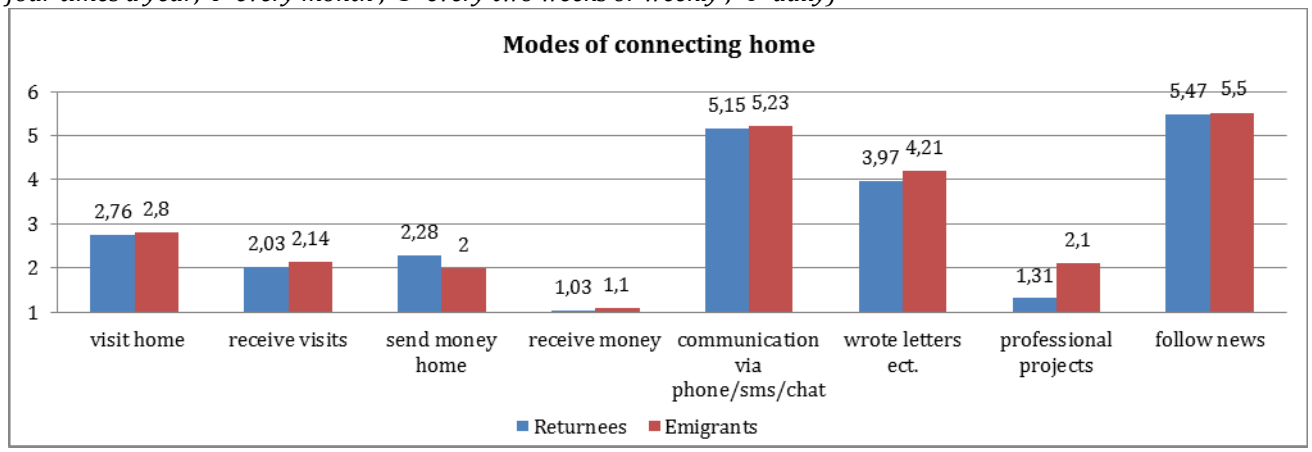
- Returnees know more other Potential Returnees. ~65% of the Permanent Emigrants know no other Potential Returnee who is willing to return to Poland.

„Where have you met your partner?"



- There is a statistically significant difference between the groups concerning the place of meeting partner. Returnees and Potential Returnees having met their current partner most often in the home region. ~67% of the Permanent Emigrants in the host region or elsewhere.

„How did/do you connect home during your stay abroad?" (Mean values; 1=Never ; 2=once a year or less ; 3=up to four times a year; 4=every month ; 5=every two weeks or weekly ; 6=daily)



Regions benefitting from returning migrants

After 1989 Central Europe has gone through important political, economic and social changes. The entry of many CE countries to the European Union during first decade of 21st century enhances the European integration. Joining European space accelerated economic growth of these countries and opened work migration flows, mainly from Central Europe to North-Western Europe.

Economically motivated migration of in particular young and well educated people from the New Member States to high-income countries is currently dominating international migration flows in Europe thanks to the free right to work in any other EU Member State. This is intensifying a brain drain process for many regions in Central Europe and certainly for the Re-Turn case study regions.

On the other hand statistics show the willingness of these people to come back to their countries. However, this process is often associated with significant problems of reintegration. Often the home regions neglect the returning migrants' contribution to regional economic development of these countries, and they do not support migrants in their return. It is estimated, that up to 50% of these outmigrants would return to their home countries within 5 years after emigration – a huge potential for regional development as these people gained new social, cultural and professional competencies while being abroad.

Project message:

"Re-Turn perceives returning migrants as a key factor for innovative regional development and therefore it creates new services and tools in order to facilitate their return and reintegration in their home region."

Re-Turn's main objectives are linked to the development and implementation of services needed to support migrants in their wish to return, the promotion of returning migrants as a human capital resource for innovative business development, the creation of framework conditions for reintegration into their home countries' labour markets and social communities. The project aims at developing, testing and implementing joint strategies, new support policies, tools and services in the participating regions.

Target groups:

1. decision takers, senior officers from regional authorities and labour market organisations
2. training and qualification organisations
3. business associations and economic development organisations
4. social groups representing migrants
5. returning migrants

The project seeks to gather original knowledge on the specific situation of returning migrants. Therefore an online survey has been conducted between December 2011 and July 2012 addressing emigrants and returnees. This knowledge will be used to raise awareness about 'return migration' at the political agenda, providing an account of the specific motivations and problems of returning migrants, and offering solutions for regional stakeholders to support them in their return.

Further information:

www.re-migrants.eu

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Project information:

Project partners:

Countries involved: Germany, Poland, Czech Republic, Austria, Hungary, Slovenia, and Italy

Case Study Regions:

Ústí Region (CZ)

Görlitz Region (DE)

Harz Region (DE)

Mid Pannon Region (HU)

Lodz Region (PL)

Swietkrzykie Region (PL)

Piemonte Region (IT)

Podravska Region (SI)

Main outputs:

1. *CE remigration online visualisation platform*
2. *Toolkit with methods and instruments of success stories*
3. *Handbook with Transnational joint planning and management tools*
4. *Tools and services to re-attract emigrants*
5. *Transnational Strategy for attracting and reintegrating migrants*

Project duration: 5/2011 – 4/2014

ERDF funding: 1.774.160,56 €