

# Toolkit on talent retention – activities and services for welcoming, receiving and integrating talents in cities and regions in the Baltic Sea Region



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# **Toolkit on talent retention – activities and services for welcoming, receiving and integrating talents in cities and regions in the Baltic Sea Region**

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# Introduction

The ‘war for talent’ became a hot topic in the business world at the end of the 1990s, due to an increasingly competitive landscape for attracting, developing and retaining talented employees. Now this competition for talent is poised to become one of the most defining economic issues of the 21st century.

In Europe, low birth rates and an aging population increasingly lead to talent shortages. A turning point was marked in 2010: it was the first year with labour market entrants falling lower than retiring workers. This development is also present in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) countries; a study that has laid the foundation for this toolkit shows that all the BSR countries face – sometimes severe – talent shortages in key sectors of the economy. The study also clearly shows that even though discussions about the need to become more attractive for talents have been intensified in many of the BSR countries during the last few years, very few of these countries have implemented concrete efforts aimed at retaining talent. In the same vein, only a few efforts based on multi-stakeholder co-operation were identified in the study. In addition, an analysis shows there is a widening gap between the eastern and

the western part of the BSR with respect to brain drain, which is a challenge for the cohesion of the region<sup>1</sup>. Against this background, cities and regions in BSR need to take action to deal with this new landscape – but what can they actually do to stay competitive? This is the topic of this toolkit on talent retention.

This toolkit has been commissioned by the Swedish Institute as a part of an engagement in the project ONE BSR<sup>2</sup>. An EU-supported project for transnational co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region, it aims to increase the BSR’s competitiveness by branding it as one unity by pooling resources to attract investors, tourists and talents to the region. The specific aim of the talent oriented part of the project is to increase multi-stakeholder co-operation in talent retention by facilitating better policy-making processes and providing tools that will make cities, development agencies, businesses, universities and ministries work better together.

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<sup>1</sup> ScanBalt, 2014

<sup>2</sup> More information: <http://onebsr.eu>

## PURPOSE OF THE TOOLKIT

The purpose is twofold:

1. To inspire mainly local and regional public sector actors to take steps to enhance efforts to welcome, receive and integrate international talents, as well as provide them with concrete tools supporting them to do so.
2. To increase multi-stakeholder efforts to retain local talents.

This will be achieved by:

1. Arguing that active measures are needed to better retain talents.
2. Suggesting a strategic roadmap/checklist that can be followed when planning and implementing different measures.
3. Outlining what measures and tools can be undertaken and by who.

In the longer term, this toolkit and other outputs from the ONE BSR project's talent-oriented work aim to spur BSR-wide co-operation in promoting attraction, retention and mobility of talent.

## TARGET GROUP

Primarily officials and policy makers at city or regional government level, as these are considered to be key facilitators and co-ordinators of broad collaboration efforts to retain talent. In addition, the 'quadruple helix' stakeholders that are essential partners in such a co-operation: apart from the public sector also business, academia and the civil society sector<sup>3</sup> are also in focus, as these are considered to play an important role as catalysts, initiators and/or co-financers of initiatives to retain talent.

## DEFINITIONS

*Talents* are here defined as skilled professionals with at least a tertiary education. The talent group is broken down into three categories:

1. *Expats* – those who have moved to another country for work or living, either as 'free-movers' or as a part of corporate or academic relocation programmes.
2. *Local professionals* – those that live in their home country.
3. *Students* (both local and international).

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<sup>3</sup> The third sector here refers to the economic sector consisting of non-governmental organisations and other non-profit organisations

## TALENT RETENTION AND TALENT ATTRACTION MANAGEMENT

In a broader perspective, talent retention efforts implemented by local and regional organisations can be seen as a part of *talent attraction management*, which has been defined as a *holistic, integrated approach to efforts aimed at attracting, welcoming and integrating talents*<sup>4</sup>. Talent attraction management can be categorised in four different types of components and supporting activities:

1. *Talent attraction* (which can be influenced by marketing activities for example).
2. *Talent reception* (which can be influenced with welcoming and soft landing activities and services).
3. *Talent integration* (which can be influenced by social and professional networks).
4. *Talent reputation* (which can be influenced by efforts aimed at branding the location, but is mainly built by providing a successful reception and integration).

*Talent retention* is mainly about the reception and integration of talents, even though *talent attraction* activities (such as honest marketing and relevant pre-departure information) are

arguably important for retention prospects because the expectations a person has before coming to a new place will influence their satisfaction with the stay. Along the same lines, the *reputation* of a place in the eyes of its residents, both local and expatriate, play a role in the retention prospects; places with a positive reputation will find it easier to retain talents.

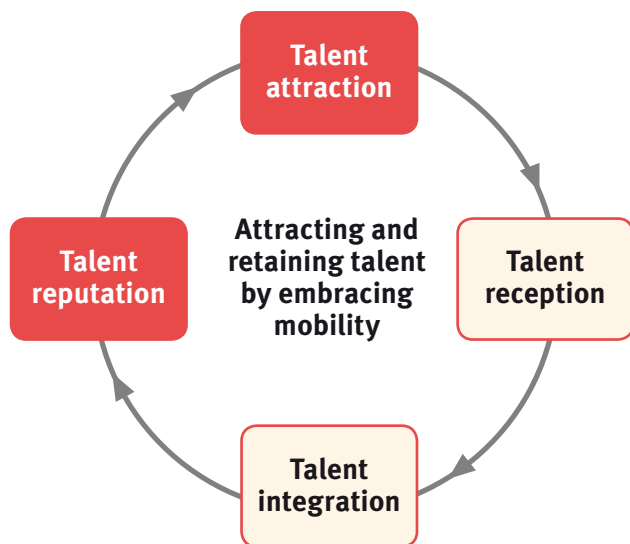
Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between the four different cornerstones of talent attraction management, with talent reception and talent integration highlighted, as these are deemed the most significant for talent retention.

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<sup>4</sup> Tendensor, 2014



**Figure 1: The cornerstones of talent attraction management**



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## FOCUS AND STRUCTURE OF THE TOOLKIT

The tools, activities and services for retaining international talents are the main focus of the toolkit, but tools for retaining local talent will also be included.

It should be underscored that the focus of the toolkit is on tools, activities and services that can be implemented hands-on by local and regional actors. The tools do not, however, substitute more long-term efforts to improve the general competitiveness and quality of life in a region to raise its overall attractiveness for talents.

The toolkit has the following structure (also outlined in figure 2):

1. First, a strategic roadmap that can be followed as a check-list when planning and implementing different measures is described.
2. Second, the main best practices identified in the situation analysis *Talent retention policy and initiatives in the Baltic Sea Region* that preceded the toolkit are described. These can be seen as general principles that to some extent should permeate the use of all tools/activities.
3. Third, an overview of the tools, services and activities is outlined.
4. Fourth, the extent to which different target groups have different needs is discussed.

5. Fifth, the tools and activities, their purpose, main target group or user, who needs to act to implement them, success factors and examples are described. Case descriptions are used to illustrate some of the examples given.
6. Finally, even though it has not been part of the explicit focus of this toolkit, it ends by discussing ideas for future opportunities for transnational BSR collaboration in talent retention that have emerged in work leading up to the creation of the toolkit.

The tools identified in the situation analysis *Talent retention policy and initiatives in the Baltic Sea Region* (categorised as five types: pre-arrival information, welcoming and soft landing, social and professional integration, labour market readiness and 'leaving support') form the basis for the structure of the actual toolkit of concrete activities and services.

## MATERIAL

The advice on tools and activities addressed and case illustrations come primarily from four sources that all focus on talent retention in the BSR or Nordic countries:

1. The report *Talent retention policy and initiatives in the Baltic Sea Region: a situation analysis*, commissioned by the ONE BSR project and the Swedish Institute and car-

**Figure 2: Structure of the toolkit**



ried out by Tendensor. The analysis focuses on the nine BSR countries and their main city regions. This document will henceforth be referred to as ‘the situation analysis’.

2. Two case studies also carried out within the frame of the ONE BSR project: 1) on how Finnish language learning can improve employability of highly-educated immigrants in the Helsinki region and 2) on challenges for attracting and retaining talents within the life science and health sectors in the Stockholm-Uppsala region.
3. *The EXPAT project*, a Central Baltic Sea Region Interreg project focusing on developing and improving services that facilitate expats in the central Baltic Sea Region (Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Sweden) and improving their access to social and professional networks.
4. *Tools and Strategies for Innovative Talent Attraction and Retention – a Handbook on Talent Attraction Management for Cities and Regions* published by Tendensor for a consortium of 17 Nordic cities and regions that have been members of the project *Talent Attraction Management in Nordic Cities and Regions* during 2013-14. It comprises tools and cases mainly from the Nordic countries and Europe, but also Asia and North America.

In addition, the ONE BSR Talent Retention Advisory Board has provided comments and general advice during the production of the toolkit.







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# A strategic roadmap for planning and implementing talent retention activities

Here an overview of the essential steps to consider when forming a strategy for talent retention is given. It can be used as a strategic roadmap or 'checklist' when planning and implementing new measures as well as linking up existing activities and services for talent retention. The strategic roadmap rests on the idea that most activities should be carried out based on multi-stakeholder co-operation, ideally on a platform that include the 'quadruple helix' stakeholders.

It should be underlined that the checklist does not necessarily need to be followed in a sequential fashion. For example, it may well be that a city or region has already carried out the necessary research but needs to mobilise the formation of a partnership of stakeholders.

Table 1: The Talent Retention Strategic Roadmap

**1. MOBILISATION**

- Stakeholder analysis – who do we need to mobilise?
- Create recognition of need for change among local/regional stakeholders – find arguments for why we need to work with talent retention activities.
- Engage in open dialogue with key stakeholders (in the quadruple helix – business, academia, public sector and third sector/civil society) about their needs and motivations for collaborating.

**2. ANALYSIS**

- Identify target groups.
- Take steps to understand target group needs.
- Based on target group needs, assess where improvements might be needed: are new services or activities needed? Can we better link and co-ordinate existing initiatives?
- Are there areas where BSR/transnational collaboration would be mutually beneficial?

**3. STRATEGY AND BUSINESS PLAN**

- Organise partnerships and networks and secure financing based on existing or new co-operation models. That said, it is important to allow time for experimenting and discovery in work before organisation modes are finally agreed on.
- Decide on tools and actions for improving reception and integration talents, and on who shall do what.

**4. ACTION AND MONITORING**

- Initiate projects and actions to execute strategy and business plan.
- Communicate results and success stories.
- Monitor and follow-up; make sure that feedback is given to all stakeholders and the work is continuously improved; ensure continued enthusiasm among existing stakeholders by providing clear and measurable results.
- Mobilise and engage more stakeholders in the work.

FUTURE

INNOVATION

VISIONARY

VISIONARY

OUTRAGEOUS

VOLVO







# Best practice approaches to talent retention

In this chapter, four best practice approaches that should characterise talent retention work are highlighted. These stem from the situation analysis that preceded the compilation of this toolkit.

## 1. Professionalise talent attraction management

Today, talent retention work among government agencies and regional and city government usually falls under the auspices of different policy areas or functions such as: investment promotion; regional and business development; innovation and cluster development; human resources; or culture, integration, education, labour market or research policy. Often there seems to be confusion about who will be responsible for talent attraction and retention efforts and the ‘talent issue’ runs the risk of falling in between different functions. Also, talent oriented activities are often organised in temporary projects rather than in more permanent structures.

**Figure 3: Four best practice approaches to talent retention**



In order to underline the importance of the talent retention issue, it is here proposed that every larger city in the region should institute a Chief Talent Officer. Just as cities have senior management functions for other policy areas, it would be natural to also have one for talent attraction management. Along the same lines, the EXPAT Project proposes that every city region should institute an Expat Liaison Officer or Office to improve soft landing information accessibility and visible expat service.

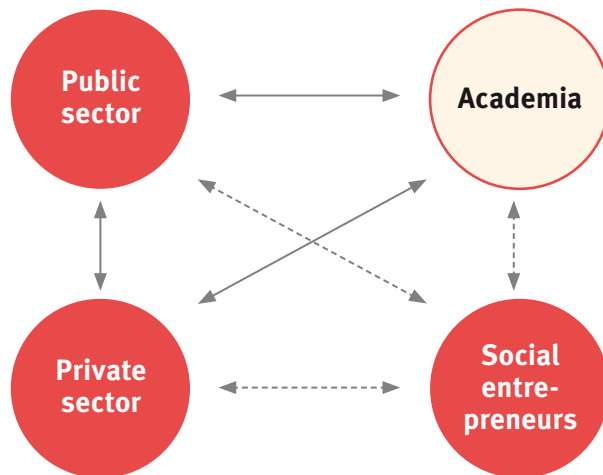
## 2. Involve the third sector in talent retention – ‘from the triple helix to the quadruple helix’

Social entrepreneurship can help tackle many of the needs talents have when it comes to welcoming and social and professional integration. Especially by involving the talents themselves in service provision, understanding needs and designing services and support measures naturally become easier. One best-practice initiative in this regard is found in the Global Expat Centre Stockholm, which started as a social venture (Global Expat Centre Stockholm is described in case 2 in the toolkit).

Figure 4 illustrates the addition of the third, social entrepreneurship, sector to the triple helix, forming a quadruple helix partnership.

## Best practice approaches to talent retention

Figure 4: Illustration of quadruple helix partnerships

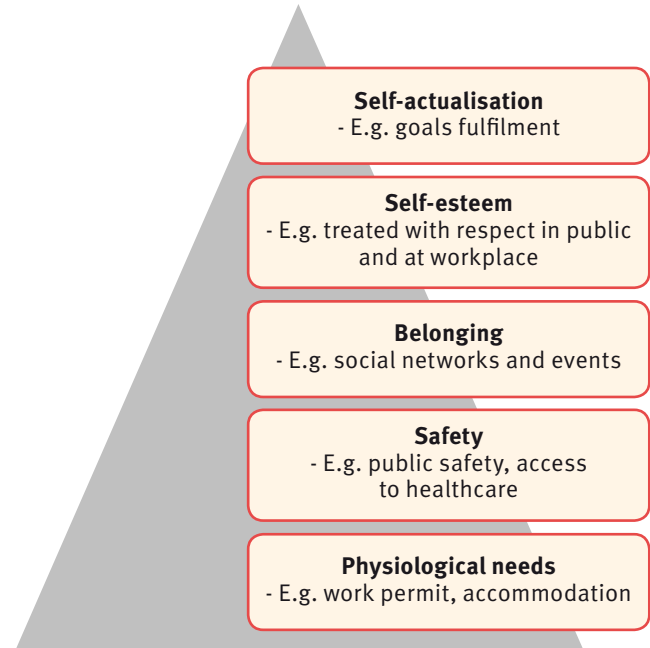


### 3. Take steps to understand talent needs

One key aspect of catering to talent needs is to systematically analyse what needs they have. A frontrunner in this regard is the *EXPAT Project*, which has used innovative approaches to understanding talent needs. The project used Maslow's hierarchy of needs as a framework to understand talent needs at different stages in the relocation and settling-in process of talents. See figure 5 for an illustration of how Maslow's hierarchy of needs can be applied to understanding different talent needs.

Other tools to understand talents' needs and wants include using focus groups, direct interviews or 'social media listening', so called 'talent intelligence'<sup>5</sup>.

**Figure 5: Maslow's hierarchy of needs pyramid as applied to talent needs**



<sup>5</sup> Tendensor, 2014

#### **4. Create one-stop-shop solutions for talent services**

International talents arriving to a new place need, among other things, to get paperwork in order; register their address, for civic registration number and with tax authorities; find accommodation, and find social events and networks. Often this is a time-consuming process as different public authorities, at both national and local level, are in charge of different services, and, at its worst, a burdensome, illogical and bureaucratic process, as described by interviewees of the situation analysis. At later stages, talents need access to services such as social events and networks, cultural awareness and language courses, and these can ideally also be provided in the same building as the welcoming services.

Gathering services in one physical place can help streamline the access to services, both by offering the services in one location and by facilitating that public authorities and their private, academic and third-sector partners package their service offering in a co-ordinated and comprehensive way.

A best-practice initiative in this regard is International House Copenhagen, described in case 1 in the toolkit.









# The Talent Retention Toolkit: an overview of tools, activities and services

Strategies and tools for retention of talents can take many forms. In this toolkit, services and activities for talent retention have been categorised as follows:

1. *Pre-arrival information and marketing*, aimed at providing relevant information and creating sound pre-arrival expectations, through for example honest marketing.
2. *Welcoming and soft landing*, aimed at making the first point of contact with and impression of a new location positive and to help newcomers to settle in smoothly.
3. *Social and professional integration*, aimed at helping international talents and students (both national and international) to integrate into society and work life.
4. *Labour market readiness*, aimed at preparing labour markets for taking on talents and, vice versa, preparing talents for labour markets.

5. *Leaving support* aimed at preparing talents for mobility and for making their departure from a location positive.

Table 2 outlines the five categories, alongside the services and activities that will be addressed in this toolkit.

Each tool is written under the category/type to which it mainly belongs and under which type heading it will be explained in the toolkit, but the horizontal colour coding indicates what other roles the tool can fulfil. As an illustration, information portals mainly play a role for providing pre-arrival information, but these also provide information to talents who have already moved and who are in need of a welcoming/soft landing, for example by providing information on public services, housing and schools.

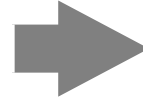


### Table 2: The Talent Retention Toolkit

1. Pre-arrival information and marketing	2. Welcoming and soft landing	3. Social and professional integration
Information portals		
Marketing and branding		
	Easy access to public services	
	Easy access to housing and schools	
	Dual career assistance	
	Introductory events/programmes	
		Social networks
		Professional networks
		Student-business links
		Open innovation and co-creation efforts
		Promote cultural understanding
		Internal branding and profiling
		Opinion forming and awareness raising in society
		Language training

4. Labour market readiness

5. Leaving support



Build HR capacity and awareness of companies

Tailored work training programmes

Career advice and events

Ambassador networks

Alumni networks



# Different needs of different target groups?

No studies on how needs differ between different types of talents when it comes to specific types of services have been identified. However, one can, based on different indications, make a few general observations – albeit slightly fragmented ones – of what factors seem most important to different groups. In the following, needs for expats and students are discussed, based on these sources.

## EXPATS

General factors that can influence the retention prospects of expats are<sup>6</sup>:

- Lack of jobs for accompanying partners.
- Lack of social and personal integration for the talent and his/her family.

- Language barriers, both when it comes to finding ways to learn the local language as well as obtaining corporate and public information in English.
- Practical problems and red tape when it comes to issues such as official paperwork, finding housing and bank and insurance matters.
- Lack of career opportunities and low salary.

More specifically, age, gender and family situation, as well as the origin of expats might explain differences when it comes to service needs.

### Age, gender and family situation

*Age:* When it comes to *pre-arrival information*, a Swedish study of expats residing in the country indicated that younger people have less need than those over 30 years old to visit the place they intend to move to obtain information about living and working at the location. This is probably explained by the

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<sup>6</sup> ONE BSR and Tendensor, 2014

fact that those over 30 to a larger extent have a family. In addition, the ones under 30 to a larger extent prioritise access to international environments/other foreigners and open/social people than those over 30 do<sup>7</sup>. As a result, in terms of concrete services, access to *social networks* of other expats may be more important to those under 30 than those over 30.

*Gender:* The above-mentioned Swedish study<sup>8</sup> concluded that women to a larger extent prioritise help from the employer with practical issues such as *introductory programmes* and access to *language* and *cultural awareness* courses.

Women also prioritise the possibility for the partner to get a job, access to international schools, cultural life and open and social people at the host location higher than men. As a result, one assumption in terms of concrete services/tools would be that women prioritise *welcoming/soft landing* and *integration* assistance with finding schools, dual career assistance and access to social networks (through which open people can be met and cultural activities can be attended) to a larger extent than men.

## Different needs of different target groups?

*Family situation:* When it comes to the family situation, those talents that move to a place with a family will naturally need more assistance with finding accommodation, jobs for spouses and of course day-care and schools for children than those who move without a family.

### Origin

The origin of the talent can also give indications for what services they need. The previously mentioned study<sup>9</sup> shows that Asian expats value *introductory programmes* and *cultural awareness* courses to a higher extent than Europeans and North Americans. Europeans seem to value '*leaving support*', this is, support around repatriation to their home country, lower than other expat groups.

## STUDENTS

General factors that influence the staying intentions of students are:

1. Lack of professional and social networks.
2. Local language skills.
3. Cross-cultural skills<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Oxford Research, 2009

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

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<sup>9</sup> Oxford Research, 2009

<sup>10</sup> Tendensor, 2014

A study<sup>11</sup> of how five EU countries<sup>12</sup> retain international students concluded that there was room for improvement when it comes to what higher education institutions (HEIs) can do to support international students. Among the deficiencies highlighted were:

- 1. Information provision before and during studies.

<sup>11</sup> Migration Policy Group and German Foundations on Integration and Migration, 2012

<sup>12</sup> France, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK

- 2. Language support.
- 3. Study guidance.

Another study<sup>13</sup> among international students in Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Sweden found that students in the cities studied<sup>14</sup> often face difficulties finding accommodation and physical meeting places where they can meet other students.

<sup>13</sup> EXPAT project, 2013

<sup>14</sup> Stockholm, Helsinki, Turku, Tartu, Tallinn and Riga

**Table 3: Examples of needs for welcoming/soft landing and social/professional integration activities and services based on the origin of students**

	Introduction to HEI	Courses on cultural awareness	Mentor/buddy programmes	Ambassador networks	Language courses
Asia	X	X	X	X	
Europe		X			X
Africa	X	X	X	X	
North America		X			X
Latin America		X			

Source: Modified from United Minds, 2007

More specifically, the origin and field of study of students may determine service needs.

### Origin

A study among international students in Sweden<sup>15</sup> showed that when it comes to *pre-arrival information*, students from different regions have different information needs. In addition, the study made an attempt to illustrate the different needs also when it comes to what in this toolkit is categorised as *welcoming/soft landing* and *social and professional integration* activities and services. This is illustrated in table 3.

### Field of study

The field of study may influence the needs when it comes to *welcoming/soft landing*, *social and professional integration* and *labour market readiness*. A survey among international students studying in Sweden mapped reasons for studying abroad and grouped them into two categories: *career related* and *experience related* reasons.

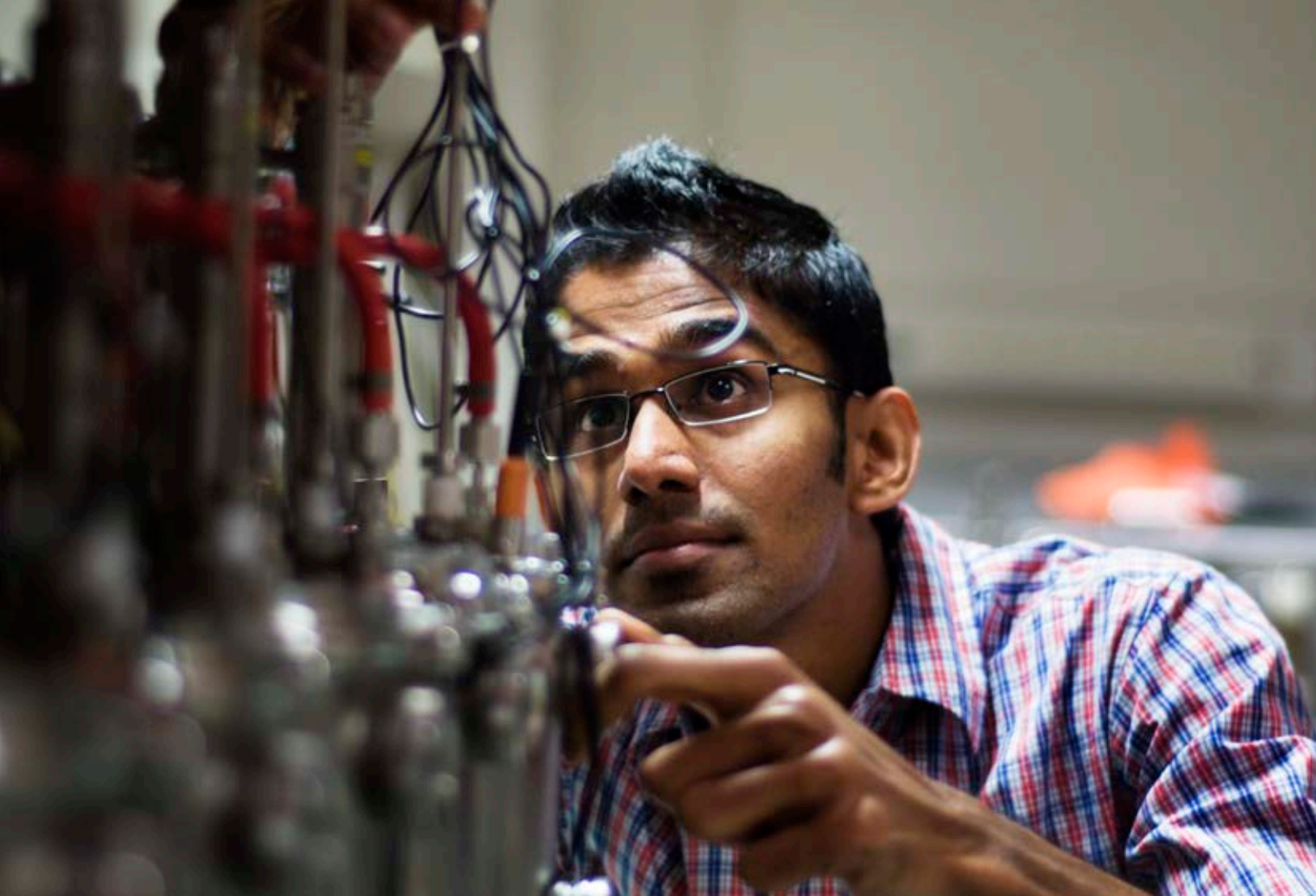
The survey showed that among students studying technology and health related programmes, the majority, 71 per cent, stated career-related reasons as reason for studying abroad. Among business and social science students, 58 per cent stated career-related as a reason, while for those studying humanities and art, experience related reasons (such as experiencing a new culture or country) was the most important reason for choosing to study abroad. One conclusion, then, is that technology/health students and to some extent business/social science students may demand more career-related support and be more prone to use the activities aimed at linking students with businesses than the humanities/art students. The humanities/art students, on the other hand, may need a more comprehensive introduction to cultural activities and social networks for the experience of their stay to be enhanced (and thus their retention prospects). This difference also influences the *pre-arrival communication* that may be given to the two different groups.

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<sup>15</sup> United Minds, 2007







# The Talent Retention Toolkit

Here all the tools, activities and services that are outlined in table 2 are described, following the five categories used in the table. The goal and potential user/target group of each tool, who needs to act to initiate and co-ordinate the provision of the service, what activities that are required and the main success factors for each tool are described. Finally, concrete examples illustrating the tools are included. The most interesting examples are described in case boxes.

## 1. TYPE OF TOOL/ACTIVITY: PRE-ARRIVAL INFORMATION AND MARKETING

Providing relevant pre-arrival and to some extent welcoming/soft landing information to talents, so that they are informed about job opportunities, rules and regulations, amenities, services and the like of the place.

### 1.1 TOOL: INFORMATION PORTALS

#### 1.1.1 Goal

The purpose of information portals is to provide user-friendly information to talents about, among other things, how to find a job in the location, apply for work permits, register with the authorities, find accommodation and information on health care and social services. These are typically labelled ‘Work in ....’ portals. They can also be targeted to students (typically called ‘Study in ....’).

#### 1.1.2 Potential users/target group

The users of these services are mainly international students and professionals, even though people moving within a country can make use of some of the information; for example how to find jobs or accommodation. Many smaller cities run portals in the local language targeting mainly people from their own country.

### 1.1.3 Who needs to act

City governments and national government agencies carry the main responsibility for setting up these types of portals. If job search functions are to be included, individual employers, employment agencies and/or business associations need to be involved in setting up and running/updating the portals.

### 1.1.4 Activities required

Activities include gathering information from stakeholders; for example, government agencies, universities, employers, relocation firms, event organisers, taking steps to understand target group needs and designing and setting up the portal.

### 1.1.5 Success factors

- Understanding target group needs.
- Providing relevant information so as to tackle information needs and create sound expectations.
- User-friendly and appealing design of portal.
- Planning capacity for implementation and regular updating, so that information is up to date and relevant.
- Long-term commitment from stakeholders.
- If including job search portals: create awareness among employers.



### 1.1.6 Examples

- For students: <http://www.studyinfinland.fi/>
- For international professionals: <http://work.sweden.se/>
- For international professionals (including job search portal): <https://www.workindenmark.dk/>

## 1.2 TOOL: MARKETING AND BRANDING

### 1.2.1 Goal

Persuading talents to come to the location, but without creating too high or false expectations that are difficult to meet, is a key aspect. One such example concerns the need to learn the local language. Many people arrive thinking that English will be enough to master work life in a location, but later find out that there is a need to learn the local language. Thus, *honest marketing* is a key factor.

In addition, providing *authentic marketing* should be a key factor; that is, pushing those features of the location that are somewhat in line with how the location is perceived by outside target groups (image) and by its residents (identity) today.

### 1.2.2 Potential users/target group

All external talents.

### 1.2.3 Who needs to act?

Everyone responsible for marketing the location, which is mainly city governments and universities, and to some degree their business counterparts.

### 1.2.4 Activities required

Agreeing with major stakeholders on marketing messages that are appealing without stretching the 'truth' too far.

Internal and external perceptions analysis; that is, analysing how the place is seen today by its own residents and by external target groups in order to determine how marketing messages can be formed that resonate with people's expectations about the place.

### 1.2.5 Success factors

Finding a good balance between expressing the strengths and appeal of the location in an attractive, positive way, but at the same time not creating too high expectations that are difficult to live up to.

Finding out what features of the location that are seen as authentic, and finding ways to build on them in the marketing.

### 1.2.6 Examples

No concrete examples have been identified, but there is an on-going debate among talent attraction stakeholders in Denmark that one needs to be honest about the difficulties that international talents can meet in the country, such as language barriers, difficulties to get to know locals and so on. Likewise, in Finland there has been much debate on how at an early stage one can inform foreign students about the need to learn Finnish to be more employable in the country.





## 2. TYPE OF TOOL/ACTIVITY: WELCOMING AND SOFT LANDING

The purpose of welcoming and soft landing activities is to make a first point of contact with, and impression of, a new location positive and to help newcomers to settle in smoothly.

### 2.1 TOOL: EASY ACCESS TO PUBLIC SERVICES

#### 2.1.1 Goal

Make sure that arriving talents can get their official paperwork such as work permits, register their address with the authorities, tax papers, health insurances and so on in order in a seamless, efficient way.

#### 2.1.2 Potential users/target group

All international talents.

#### 2.1.3 Who needs to act?

Mainly city governments and national government agencies need to co-ordinate and align their different services. In some cases also private service providers, such as banks, need to be involved in a dialogue (for example, in some countries one cannot get a bank account unless one has a permanent ad-

dress, and it is difficult to find permanent accommodation without having a bank account).

#### 2.1.4 Activities required

Building a logical, transparent and comprehensible process that arriving talents can overview and follow. This necessitates that different public service providers engage in dialogue and take steps to align their activities (which is easier said than done many times. As an example, public records can be difficult to integrate and may be built on different electronic platforms that are incompatible).

#### 2.1.5 Success factors

*One-stop-shop solutions*, such as International House Copenhagen, where different public service providers are co-located, are considered a success factor for efficient service delivery. If co-location is not feasible, a transparent, sequential and logical process, where those arriving to the location can easily comprehend what steps they need to take and in what order, is a success factor.

#### 2.1.6 Examples

- One-stop-shop: International House Copenhagen: <http://subsite.kk.dk/sitecore/content/subsites/internationalhousecopenhagen/subsitefrontpage.aspx> Read more about International House Copenhagen in case 1.

### **CASE 1: INTERNATIONAL HOUSE COPENHAGEN – A ONE-STOP-SHOP FOR WELCOMING AND SOFT LANDING**

The International House Copenhagen is a good example of the ambition to create a ‘one-stop-shop’ for talents arriving in Copenhagen.

Inaugurated in June 2013, it is a collaboration between the national government, City of Copenhagen, universities and private companies. Initiated by the City of Copenhagen and the University of Copenhagen, in one centrally located physical space, international newcomers get co-ordinated assistance with all the neces-

sary official paperwork and an array of offers of services including advice on job hunting, introduction to Danish working and living conditions and help to create a social network.

Other services include various help to accompanying spouses, relocation help, CV-writing and more. The International House is also a hub for visiting professors, PhD students and researchers, providing services, a social network and a researcher hotel. The House is thus a tool for both assisting with welcoming/soft landing and integration of international talent. International House Copenhagen is financed through its tenants and the rent they pay.

**INTER-  
NATIONAL  
HOUSE  
COPEN-  
HAGEN**

**WELCOME**





## **2.2 TOOL: EASY ACCESS TO HOUSING AND SCHOOLS**

### **2.2.1 Goal**

Help especially expat families and international professionals to find housing and schools and day-care for their children when arriving at the destination. Especially finding international schools is an important task.

As for housing, both providing temporary housing (both to facilitate short-term mobility and soft landing for newcomers) and more long-term solutions are key factors.

### **2.2.2 Potential users/target group**

Housing: expats, with or without accompanying partner/families. International, and to some degree national students. Schools/day-care: expat families.

### **2.2.3 Who needs to act?**

City governments or university relocation centres as service providers or as facilitators of a platform that is formed and provides seamless access to commercial or non-profit relocation services.

Collaboration with real estate and letting agents may be advantageous to make sure that the talents can be offered hous-

ing that meets their needs (and it is in the interest of the agents that the demand for the property they sell or rent out increases).

### **2.2.4 Activities required**

Housing: engaging in dialogue with rental and letting agents and relocation firms, creating a database with rental opportunities and possibly setting up a portal where those who want to sublet to internationals can register.

Schools: mapping schools and engaging in dialogue with them to learn about their profile and availability to take on new students.

In both cases: engage in dialogue with employers to understand their current and future needs for assistance.

### **2.2.5 Success factors**

Close dialogue between employers and service providers/facilitators. One-stop-shop solutions; that is, that the service is offered at the same location as other types of services, such as access to public services.

### **2.2.6 Examples**

Again, International House Copenhagen is a good example, which offers both commercial relocation services helping with

more permanent housing solutions as well as a researcher hotel offering temporary housing to researchers in the house.

## 2.3 TOOL: DUAL CAREER ASSISTANCE

### 2.3.1 Goal

The goal of dual career assistance is to help partners/spouses of incoming talents to find a relevant job corresponding to experience and qualifications. This assistance mainly plays a role in the welcoming/soft landing phase, but can also play a role in the integration phase and for increasing labour market readiness.

### 2.3.2 Potential users/target group

Partners of expats being recruited to work at the location.

### 2.3.3 Who needs to act?

City governments or university relocation centres as service providers or as facilitators of a platform that provides seamless access to commercial or non-profit dual career services.

### 2.3.4 Activities required

- Initiate a dialogue with employers to get in touch with couples that need dual career assistance.
- Map companies that may have needs to recruit and build a network among HR professionals in those companies.

- Build a database of HR contacts and expats looking for job, and possibly also a portal for matching these.
- Organise matchmaking activities.

### 2.3.5 Success factors

Close dialogue between service providers/facilitators in the public sector and at universities and the employers. One-stop-shop solutions; that is, that the service is offered at the same location as other type of services, such as access to public services and housing/schools.

### 2.3.6 Examples

- **Spousal support services:** The *Global Expat Centre Stockholm* offers ‘spousal support’ services, both when it comes to finding a job and social support. Read more about Global Expat Centre Stockholm in case 2.
- **Career programmes for partners:** Also, *International House Copenhagen* (described in case 1) is a good example, which offers access to a career programme open to spouses of expats as well as a specific spouse programme in the house. Read more here: <http://subsite.kk.dk/sitecore/content/Subsites/InternationalHouseCopenhagen/SubsiteFrontpage/OurServices/SearchingForAJob.aspx>

## **CASE 2: GLOBAL EXPAT CENTRE STOCKHOLM – SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR GLOBAL MOBILITY AND SOFT LANDING**

The Global Expat Centre Stockholm provides post-relocation support for expats and their families to settle into the new home city, as well as preparing them for global mobility. The services provided at the non-profit organisation are financed by income generated through professional language and cross-cultural services; member fees from partnering companies, university members and individual members, who can apply for different levels of membership with different benefits, as well as the investment promotion agency of Stockholm, Stockholm Business Region Development. Besides the qualified professional staff, who facilitate the cross-cultural, language and spousal support-related services, over 20 volunteers carry out many of the activities related to social networking.

It is thus an example of *social entrepreneurship*. One of the most interesting features of the Global Expat Centre is that it involves both the expats themselves and locals in design and carrying out services, as well as the City of

Stockholm, private employers and higher education institutions (HEIs). It could therefore be described as a ‘quadruple helix’ initiative (rather than a triple-helix initiative).

The centre has four cornerstones:

1. **Cross-cultural awareness and communication:** composed of workshops of which the ultimate goal is to build ‘cross-cultural competency’ between expats and the host country.
2. **Language training:** tailored Swedish, but also Chinese and English courses are offered.
3. **Spousal support,** comprised of workshops related to well-being, addressing topics such as ‘parenting third culture kids’, ‘global identities’ and ‘beating the winter blues’ and job support, facilitating dual career couples, by providing training on Swedish business culture, CV writing and interview training. Support to spouses has been identified by the centre as one of the major issues for facilitating retention of expats.
3. **Social and business networking:** activities such as intercultural exchange and embassy visits, company visits, international coffee mornings and outdoor family activities.

## **2.4 TOOL: INTRODUCTORY EVENTS/ PROGRAMMES**

### **2.4.1 Goal**

Facilitate a positive welcome to newcomers to a location and give them relevant information about accommodation, jobs and leisure and social activities. Many international students are also interested in introductions to the scientific traditions of the universities they study at.

### **2.4.2 Potential users/target group**

Students and expats.

### **2.4.3 Who needs to act?**

For larger events/programmes encompassing several issues (such as Helsinki Region Welcome Weeks given as example below): ideally a ‘quadruple-helix’ partnership between business associations, universities, city/regional governments and NGOs as organisers.

For more focused events/programmes: larger organisations/ employers such as universities and larger companies can launch their own activities. Chambers of commerce, business associations or cluster organisations that gather many small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) can launch introductory events or programmes for their member firms.

### **2.4.4 Activities required**

Organising events or programmes that showcase what a region (or university) has to offer in terms of social events, culture, food, sports, accommodation, language courses and more, and to give opportunities to newcomers to meet other newcomers as well as locals.

One prerequisite is to create new or co-ordinate existing databases with contact details to talents, or to proactively use social media such as Facebook or LinkedIn, to be able to invite them to introductory events and programmes. These databases can be used at later stages to invite people to social or professional networks (read more in chapter 3), career-related events (read more in chapter 4) and to support the creation of alumni or ambassador networks (read more in chapter 5).

### **2.4.5 Success factors**

Involving international talents themselves in the planning and execution of introductory events or programmes is key, as they best know the needs of newcomers. Also involving locals, for example volunteers, in the execution so contacts are promoted between internationals and locals. Being able to communicate effortlessly with talents to invite them to events/programmes.



## The Talent Retention Toolkit

### 2.4.6 Example

**Helsinki Region Welcome Weeks:** The purpose of Helsinki Region Welcome Weeks is to open up all the opportunities the region has to offer while bringing the new and existing residents closer together. Initiated in 2010, the Welcome Weeks gathers events, service providers and networks that showcase art and culture, career, education, language learning, accommodation and sports opportunities in the Greater Helsinki Region. In 2013, a total of 39 events saw more than 10,000 participants. Read more: <http://www.welcomeweeks.fi/>







### 3 TYPE OF TOOL/ACTIVITY: SOCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL INTEGRATION

Activities aimed at helping international professionals, expats and students (both national and international) integrate into society and work life.

#### 3.1 TOOL: SOCIAL NETWORKS

##### 3.1.1 Goal

Facilitate the social well-being of talents and their social and cultural integration into a place.

Even though social networks mainly play a role in enhancing social and professional integration, they can also be utilised in facilitating welcoming and soft landing for talents. The GameCity cluster network described in examples below is a good example of a network filling both roles.

##### 3.1.2 Potential users/target group

Mainly internationals, but also nationals who have moved within a country.

##### 3.1.3 Who needs to act?

NGOs and civil society play an important role as service providers for network building and organisers of social events. City governments and universities can act as initiators/catalysts, facilitators and/or sponsors. Businesses can function as sponsors, and business associations can create or utilise existing networks (an example being a cluster network for a specific business cluster that uses its network for social activities). Hence, ideally a 'quadruple-helix' partnership should help in promoting social networks.

Ambassador networks, that is appointing talents to be part of a location-based network of ambassadors, is a concrete example of a network that can serve social purposes, alongside more professional or business-oriented ones. Some networks also include elements of *co-creation* and *open innovation* (read more under 3.4). These types of networks are often initiated and run by city or regional governments or universities.

##### 3.1.4 Activities required

City and regional governments and universities can take a range of steps to promote social networks:

- Awareness: create a platform for dialogue with and between existing networks and induce them to take a more proactive role in welcoming internationals, for example sports clubs.

- Capacity building: support networks in building capacity for including internationals, for example by giving information in English or using new communication channels such as social media.
- Financing: sponsor networks or the creation of new networks with financial assistance.
- Initiate their own networks, for example *ambassador networks* or *family friend networks* (read more under examples in 3.1.6).

### 3.1.5 Success factors

Involving international talents themselves in setting up and running networks, as they know the needs of newcomers. Also involving locals so that contacts are promoted between internationals and locals.

### 3.1.6 Examples

- **Social network building for students:** Family Friendship programmes managed by Finnish universities. An example is the *Aalto University Student Family Friend Programme* in Helsinki, connecting international students to local families (often alumni of the university). Read more here: <https://alumninet.aalto.fi/Palvelut/Student-FamilyFriendProgramme.aspx#How%20to%20apply>
- **Social network for expats:** *International Women's Club of Stockholm*, which has the purpose to welcome newcom-

ers to Stockholm and provide them with a platform for creating networks among the foreign and local communities. Read more here: [www.iwcstockholm.se](http://www.iwcstockholm.se)

- **Business networks promoting social networking:** the *GameCity Hamburg* computer games cluster that organises social activities such as after-work evenings for members and newcomers is a good example.
- **Ambassador networks:** *Youth Goodwill Ambassadors of Denmark* (YGA) is a global network of talented international students. All members of the network study in Denmark while taking part in a unique talent development programme and working with key Danish stakeholders within business, culture and academia. Hence, it is both a social and professional network, and well as a network for making leaving a place positive (read more about this aspect in chapter 5). Read more about YGA here: <http://ygadenmark.org/> and in case 7.

## 3.2 TOOL: PROFESSIONAL NETWORKS

### 3.2.1 Goal

Facilitate the professional integration into a place of international talents, expats and their partners and students (both national and international ones) and promote contacts to businesses and employers.

Even though professional networks mainly play a role in enhancing social and professional integration, they can also be utilised in facilitating welcoming and soft landing for talents. The *Otaniemi International Network* in Finland or *Network for Future Global Leaders* in Sweden, both described in examples below, are good examples of networks fulfilling both roles.

### 3.2.2 Potential users/target group

Mainly internationals, but also nationals who have moved within a country.

### 3.2.3 Who needs to act?

Business associations and business development agencies play an important role in setting up and running professional networks, but NGOs and civil society can also play a role as service providers for network building and organisers of professional events. City governments and universities can act as catalysts, facilitators and/or sponsors.

As is the case for social networking, ambassador networks can also be important tools for professional networking. Some networks also include elements of *leaving support*, *co-creation* and *open innovation* (read more under 3.4). These types of networks are often initiated and run by city or regional governments or universities.

### 3.2.4 Activities required

City governments and universities can take a range of steps to promote professional networks:

- Awareness: create a platform for dialogue with and between existing networks and induce them to take a more proactive role in opening up to internationals (many professionally oriented networks are usually quite closed and difficult to access for newcomers, Rotary clubs being one of the most obvious examples).
- Capacity building: support professional networks in building capacity for including internationals, for example by giving information in English or using new communication channels such as social media.
- Financing: sponsor networks or the creation of new networks with financial assistance.
- Initiate their own networks, for example ambassador networks (read more under examples in 3.2.6).

To run networks: the use of social media, such as LinkedIn, and digital platforms can help run professional networks and connect them with international networks.

### 3.2.5 Success factors

Making sure that the professional networks are perceived as adding value for talents is a key factor. For example, networking activities may not be enough. Inviting interesting speakers

to events, dissemination of news and other information that adds value to talents' professional life and communication of job opportunities are examples of value-adding activities. Involving international talents themselves in the setting up and running of networks, as they know the needs of newcomers, is an important aspect.

### 3.2.6 Examples

- **Professional networks (general):** *Otaniemi International Network* is a network of 1,200 international professionals in the Helsinki Greater Region. In addition to linking people to social and professional networks, OIN is also an entry point to information, services and events related to welcoming and soft landing. Examples of professional activities include matchmaking and recruitment events. Read more: [www.otaniemi.fi](http://www.otaniemi.fi)
- **Professional networks (issue-specific):** *The Diplomatic Economic Club* in Latvia is a network for diplomats, entrepreneurs, businesspeople and scientists interested in economic diplomacy. Established as an informal association, it aims to develop and strengthen mutually beneficial relations between the business people of Latvia, organisations and enterprises abroad. Read more: <http://www.dec.lv/>
- **Professional network building for expats:** The *Global Expat Centre of Stockholm* organises activities aimed at

promoting professional and business networks for its members, such as business visits. Read more here <http://www.globalexpatpartners.com/social-business-networking/> and in case 2.

- **Ambassador networks:** *Youth Goodwill Ambassadors of Denmark* (YGA), described under 3.1.6 and in case 7. Also, the *Network for Future Global Leaders* (NFGL) managed by the Swedish Institute (SI) is a good example. The network aims to build long lasting relationships between Sweden and various internationals who hold scholarships from SI, such as MA and PhD students, post docs and researchers, as well as to deepen this group's knowledge about the country. This is done through workshops, conferences, seminars and study visits around Sweden and aims to provide the scholarship holders with improved goodwill and knowledge about Sweden. There is also a direct link between this network and the alumni network run by SI as NFGL members are offered membership in the alumni network after finishing their studies or research in Sweden (described under 5.2, alumni networks). Read more about NFGL here: <https://eng.si.se/areas-of-operation/scholarships-and-grants/si-network-for-future-global-leaders/>









### 3.3 STUDENT-BUSINESS LINKS

#### 3.3.1 Goal

Promote contacts between students and businesses and employers.

The aim is both to promote professional and social integration of students into the region in which they study, but also to enhance their readiness for the labour market and the labour market's readiness to employ them.

#### 3.3.2 Potential users/target group

International and national students.

#### 3.3.3 Who needs to act?

Universities, especially career service functions, play an important role in facilitating internships, student projects that solve business cases and mentoring programmes.

Regional trainee programmes are usually initiated and run by triple-helix partnerships and cluster organisations.

#### 3.3.4 Activities required

For internships/business projects/mentoring: reaching out to businesses and collecting internship, project opportunities and mentors in a database/portal that can be accessed by

students. Organising, for example, cross-cultural training for companies that want to take on an international intern or mentee is also an opportunity that may be worth considering.

For regional trainee programmes: making sure that employers have processes in place to welcome and give meaningful tasks to talents. Establishing a presence at universities and marketing opportunities to students.

#### 3.3.5 Success factors

Making sure that internships, business projects and trainee-ships involve meaningful tasks that help students develop their skills and add value to firms' operations. For mentoring it is key that both mentor and mentee are motivated and prioritise meeting and learning from each other.

#### 3.3.6 Examples

- **Internships and business projects:** *Aalto CareerWeb*, linking students to internships and projects (and also jobs); [http://www.aalto.fi/en/cooperation/career\\_services/recruit\\_student/careerweb/](http://www.aalto.fi/en/cooperation/career_services/recruit_student/careerweb/)
- **Mentor programmes:** *The Unipoli co-operation* between the four main HEIs in Tampere, Finland, has launched two mentor programmes for international graduate students. Read more in case 3 and here: <http://study.unipolitampere.fi/working/mentoring.html>

- **Regional trainee programmes:** *Skåne Food Innovation Network's* (SFIN) Trainee Programme and Innovation Trainee Programme are good examples of regional trainees programmes aimed at promoting student-business links. The regular trainee programme runs for 15 months. Trainees are recruited from broad educational backgrounds and they spend 15 per cent of their working hours in joint programme activities (university mini-courses, visits to participating member companies, visits abroad, etc.). The programme has given the trainees a network and a push in their careers, and helps solve skills shortages for the firms involved, and thereby helps retain students in the region. Initiated in 2014, the Innovation Trainee Programme focuses on the food industry's need for renewal and innovation in the face of major challenges such as health, quality of life and sustainability. The innovation trainees will, during a 15-month period, move between short but defined innovation projects in several SFIN member firms, both large and small, and innovation projects initiated by the SFIN itself. The programme is also an example of an *open innovation* activity, described in 3.4.

Read more here: <http://www.livsmedelsakademin.se/jobb-karriar/open-innovation-training-programme> (in Swedish).



### **CASE 3: MENTORING PROGRAMMES IN THE TAMPERE CITY REGION**

In the Tampere city region, Finland, two mentoring programmes targeting international students are active:

- *The Unipoli Tampere Mentoring Programme* is tailored to international degree students at the three main universities in the region. Its overall purpose is to offer international students better access to working life by bringing employers and students together. The programme has gained nationwide popularity and has been used as a benchmark by other universities around Finland.
- *The Unipoli Tampere Entrepreneurship Programme* is a newer pilot project introduced in 2013 that also targets international degree students. The program consists of three mentoring days in which the students get help in understanding

their personal readiness to become an entrepreneur. They also get familiar with the process of setting up a company and what is needed to start operating and creating value in a business. Mentors are local entrepreneurs whose role is more like a sparring partner and someone to share experiences with than a trainer or adviser.

The working language of both programmes is English. As for retention effects, there are indications that many of the mentees have stayed in the region and found qualified career paths after the programmes. In addition, the programmes provide a range of benefits for mentors that are important to keep in mind when recruiting mentors: networks, developing intercultural skills, getting to know another culture, fresh views on one's own job and self-confidence.





### 3.4 OPEN INNOVATION AND CO-CREATION EFFORTS

#### 3.4.1 Goal

Promote contacts between talents and businesses through involving them in platforms for open innovation and co-creation. Open innovation and co-creation activities increasing talents' sense of community and affinity with the place and its firms, thus enhancing social and professional integration.

In addition, these platforms can also help in promoting labour market readiness.

#### 3.4.2 Potential users/target group

Mostly international and national students, but potentially other talents.

#### 3.4.3 Who needs to act?

City and regional governments, cluster organisations and universities can initiate activities and platforms for open innovation and co-creation.

#### 3.4.4 Activities required

Making sure that the business challenges taken on by students are meaningful, inspiring and have real value for place or business, and that they can be formally incorporated into

studies. Establishing presence at universities and market opportunities to students.

#### 3.4.5 Success factors

Success factors that have been underlined by the Demola concept (described under examples and in case 4) are:

- The establishment of Demola as neutral ground, not dependent on any one partner or university, has allowed flexibility in growth and given confidence to potential new partners joining.
- Focusing on producing concrete demo results has helped to lead a change in the mind-set of innovation thinking in local environments.
- Demola operates on a region-wide basis, and has an international network.
- To ensure sustainability and growth of Demola, steps are being taken to integrate innovation projects in the university curriculum and offering dedicated Demola courses.
- The companies/organisation who define the project goals need to be properly involved.

#### 3.4.6 Examples

- **Open innovation platforms:** *Demola* is a university-business co-operation and open innovation concept. It start-



#### **CASE 4: DEMOLA – RETAINING STUDENTS THROUGH OPEN INNOVATION AND CO-CREATION**

Demola is a university-business co-operation concept. It started in Tampere, Finland, and is now present in other locations in Finland, Sweden, Lithuania and a few more countries. The idea of the Demola concept is to facilitate concrete projects that test new ideas and mobilise university student talent. Multidisciplinary teams of university students, in collaboration with companies, produce demonstrations of new products, services and social practices, and gain the ownership of IPR that makes entrepreneurship possible.

Demola engages about 350 students in 80 projects in Tampere every year. More than 40 per cent of the students are international students, illustrating the potential of talent retention through the initiative. There are five potentially strong effects that can help retain students:

- **Contact to employers:** participating students (both international and local students) receive valuable contacts to employers. More than 10 per cent of the students in Tampere were headhunted by participating companies, which helps ensure that they are retained in the region.
- **New jobs:** the Demola work often results in IPR or other ideas that result in the students creating new jobs in a firm or setting up their own business in the region.
- **Cultural effect:** international students get to work closely with local companies, giving them a chance to get to know the local business and work culture.
- **Social network effect:** a common complaint (and a reason why many leave after finishing their studies) among international students is that it is difficult to get to know local students. Through working in mixed teams with local students, and solving problems and creating something together, the likelihood that inter-

national students will get to know local students increases.

- **Co-creation:** the fact that students get to employ their skills and contribute to business and community development may increase their affinity with the place.

On the flipside, for many SMEs that traditionally have no exposure to the academic sector, the contacts with students have become an effective route to engage with academia. Many smaller companies may not be able to commit to receive a trainee or intern for a longer period, and for them the Demola collaboration becomes a convenient way to get academic input to their innovation work and get to know potential employees. Demola, thereby, also promotes the readiness of these employers to take on talents.

ed in Tampere, Finland and now present in other locations in the BSR and Europe. The idea of the Demola concept is to facilitate concrete projects that test new ideas and mobilise university student talent. Many people who engage in the work get recruited or start their own business in the region. Read more about Demola in case 4 and here: <http://tampere.demola.fi/>

- **Co-creation platforms:** *Youth Goodwill Ambassadors of Denmark* (YGA). In addition to social and professional networking and ‘leaving’ support, YGA also includes elements of co-creation. Students are engaged in several creative projects, where they help co-create actionable content for place development. For example, in October 2013 a City Branding Battle was organised in which students, with the help of professional guidance, competed against each other in creating marketing material for Danish cities. Read more: <http://ygadenmark.org/> and in case 7.

### 3.5 PROMOTE CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

#### 3.5.1 Goal

Promote mutual cultural understanding between those who are new to a place and the host population and thereby improve the integration and satisfaction of newcomers.

#### 3.5.2 Potential users/target group

Both locals in general, employers and university staff, and international talents.

#### 3.5.3 Who needs to act?

City and regional governments, employers, universities and civil society actors, individually and in collaboration; that is, in the quadruple helix partnership configuration.

#### 3.5.4 Activities required

Organising events and training and creating meeting places where locals and hosts can meet.

#### 3.5.5 Success factors

Reciprocity is a key factor: both those who move to a place and the local population and those who are hosts at universities and employers need to improve their cultural intelligence.

#### 3.5.6 Examples

**University career services:** best practice examples of university career services promoting mutual cultural understanding have been found outside the region, in Ireland. In the annual International Student Barometer, Irish universities score above average. The institutions surveyed performed especially well in the areas of language support, host culture, career services and employability. Many Irish HEIs organise training courses for both academic and support staff in cultural awareness and teaching and learning skills for working in a cross-cultural environment. The incoming students also get chances to learn about Irish culture and society.

### 3.6 INTERNAL BRANDING AND PROFILING

#### 3.6.1 Goal

The purpose of internal branding and profiling, or identity building, is to make talents residing in the location more proud of the place and, hence, more inclined to stay.

#### 3.6.2 Potential users/target group

Both local and international talent.



### 3.6.3 Who needs to act?

Ideally a triple helix partnership of city and regional governments, employers and universities. In many cases, city or regional governments take a lead role in catalysing and forming a platform for joint action.

### 3.6.4 Activities required

Agreeing between different stakeholders on what values the region wants to promote and communication – launching activities, projects and campaigns that convey values and messages to the target group.

### 3.6.5 Success factors

Using both rational and emotional arguments are key factors in branding the place to talents.

### 3.6.6 Example

- **Internal branding and profiling:** *mv4you* in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Germany, communicates what the region has to offer in terms of both jobs and quality of life with internal branding to local talents. When it comes to quality of life, the focus is more on appealing to emotions by using attractive imagery and storytelling to communicate the region's qualities. One ad for the region begins by asking the question 'Homesick?' (Heimweh) against the backdrop of beautiful beaches in the region. (Read more about mv4you in case 5 and here (in German)): <http://mv4you.de/de/>

**CASE 5: MV4YOU IN MECKLENBURG-VORPOMMERN – COMMUNICATING JOBS AND BRANDING THE REGION TO TALENT**

mv4you is a project-based agency under the Ministry of Employment, Gender Equality and Social Affairs of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. The purpose is twofold: to attract skilled professionals with roots in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern back to the region, and to ensure that skilled professionals are retained.

One key activity is to communicate what the region has to offer in terms of both jobs and quality of life with 'internal branding'. Job opportunities are communicated on an online platform, where job seekers can register their profile and employers can post job advertisements. When it comes to quality of life, focus is more on appealing to emotions by using attractive imagery

and storytelling to communicate the region's qualities. One ad for the region begins by asking the question 'Homesick?' (Heimweh) against the backdrop of beautiful beaches in the region. The agency also aims to create awareness among and train smaller firms in the region on how to modernise and use new technology, work with business ethics and equality and employer branding, in order to help them become more attractive to young talents. Projects, events and conferences are used to mobilise companies in this regard.

One success factor for the mv4you initiative has been to appeal to people's emotions and affiliation with Mecklenburg-Vorpommern by communicating images of the landscape and quality of life of the region to both those they want to re-attract and those they want to retain.





### 3.7 OPINION FORMING AND AWARENESS RAISING IN SOCIETY

#### 3.7.1 Goal

The purpose of opinion forming and awareness raising activities is twofold:

1. Making policy and legal frameworks more ‘talent friendly’.
2. Changing attitudes of the host location and employers to international expats and immigrants.

If this is achieved, the stay of international talents in a country will be more positive and, therefore, the retention prospects improved.

#### 3.7.2 Potential users/target group

All international talents.

#### 3.7.3 Who needs to act?

Ideally a triple helix or quadruple helix partnership of city and regional governments, employers and universities. Business associations and development agencies play a key role in opinion forming activities with the goal of influencing policy makers to make policy more talent-friendly. NGOs can play a key role in creating awareness around the need to change attitudes to immigrants.

#### 3.7.4 Activities required

Opinion forming and policy advocacy activities such as compiling and communicating facts and figures on immigration, media relations/PR for publicity and influencing policymakers and thought leaders/influencers.

#### 3.7.5 Success factors

Finding common ground with other influencers from the triple/quadruple helix: if reports, letters to the editor, press releases, etc. can be published with broad support, for example from representatives of employers/business, policymakers and HEIs, they become more legitimate and, hence, have more impact (see example under 3.7.6).

#### 3.7.6 Examples

- **Large employers forming opinion and creating awareness:** The *Consortium for Global Talent* (CGT) is a consortium of 18 of the most recognised, high profile employer brands in Denmark, which functions primarily as an opinion-forming body, striving to influence the framework conditions for international expats in Denmark and the way society views immigrants and the effects they have upon society. Issues that CGT tries to influence are, for example, that authorities should provide more information in English, the availability of international schools, the opportunities for spouses to find jobs and social net-

works and, perhaps most importantly, that the government should develop long-term strategies for attracting and welcoming immigrants. Read more about CGT here: <http://consortiumforglobaltalent.dk/>

- A concrete, **good example of opinion forming activities with a broad, triple-helix support** is when the CEO of *Copenhagen Capacity* (public development agency), CEO of *Microsoft Development Centre Denmark* and the Vice Rector for *Copenhagen University* published a joint op-ed in one of the largest Danish newspapers, calling for more focus on attracting and retaining international talents in the Copenhagen area. Find it here (in Danish): <http://www.b.dk/kro-nikker/manglen-paa-talent-bremser-vaekst-i-koebenhavn>

## 3.8 LANGUAGE TRAINING

### 3.8.1 Goal

Make sure that international talents get access to language training and the support needed around language learning that serve their social and professional purposes and, in the longer run, settling in and integration prospects.

Introducing opportunities for language training naturally also plays a role in the welcoming/soft landing phase.

### 3.8.2 Potential users/target group

All international talents.

### 3.8.3 Who needs to act?

Ideally a triple helix partnership of city and regional governments, employers and universities.

### 3.8.4 Activities required

The case study on language learning for international graduate students in the Helsinki region carried out within the frame of the ONE BSR project offers, among others, these recommendations:

1. Develop language learning in a more working life oriented direction by combining teaching in the local language with a student's own field of study.
2. Language studies should cater to different needs and be offered at different times of the day.
3. Students should be offered opportunities to improve their language skills even after completing their degrees.

### 3.8.5 Success factors

- Meeting the individual professional and social needs of each talent to as large extent as possible.
- Flexibility: offering language studies that correspond to the person's educational background, profession and current level of language knowledge.





- Co-operation with employers in offering internships in working environments where the local language can be practiced and ensuring that language training can continue after a person has been employed.

### 3.8.6 Examples

- **Information portal on a language course meeting different needs:** The *Finnishcourses.fi* course search service gathers together information on courses for immigrants in the Helsinki region. The course search includes information on courses that are open to all.
- **Flexible language training for expats:** *Global Expat Centre Stockholm* (GECS) offers tailor-made programmes that meet the linguistic and communicative needs of the participants and focus on the main topics that are important in day-to-day life situations. For example, courses that give expats a basic level of Swedish enough for getting around in society are offered, based on the realisation that many expats will stay for a limited period of time and will not need to learn fluent Swedish. Read more here: <http://www.globalexpatpartners.com/swedish/> and about GECS in general in case 2.

## 4 TYPE OF TOOL/ACTIVITY: LABOUR MARKET READINESS

Efforts aimed at preparing labour markets for taking on talents and, vice versa, preparing talents for labour markets.

### 4.1 BUILD HR CAPACITY AND AWARENESS IN COMPANIES

#### 4.1.1 Goal

The purpose of these activities is to help employers, especially small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) to become better employers for talents in general and to become more aware of the potential that lies in hiring international talents.

#### 4.1.2 Potential users/target group

All talents, but perhaps mostly international ones.

#### 4.1.3 Who needs to act?

City and regional governments can play an important role in helping employers to raise their capacity and become more aware of opportunities offered by hiring international talents.

Ideally, however, a triple helix or quadruple helix partnership of city and regional governments, employers and universities can form the basis for sustainable co-operation in this field.

#### 4.1.4 Activities required

- *Opinion-forming and awareness-raising activities* to create awareness among employers (see examples from the VALOA project below).
- *Capacity building* for employers can be done through training workshops and conferences and producing handbooks and guidelines (for companies in general or, perhaps especially, for those participating in mentoring, trainee or internship programmes for international talents).

#### 4.1.5 Success factors

Making sure that activities targeting SMEs have a clear value proposition; ‘just’ sending invitations to networking for the simple reason of raising awareness, where the value proposition is low and where a concrete proposal for action or concept is lacking, will not draw SMEs’ attention.

#### 4.1.6 Examples

- **Developing human resource tools for SMEs:** The *Copenhagen Talent Bridge* project has launched activities that help develop human resource tools for international talent management in companies and at universities and

helped prepare and guided 40 small and medium-sized enterprises for international recruitment. Read more here: <http://talentcapacity.org/copenhagen-talent-bridge>

- **Raising employers’ awareness:** The *VALOA project* in Finland aimed to increase employability of international students with, among other things, activities aimed at raising employers’ awareness about the possibilities and benefits of recruiting international graduate students. This was done by publishing surveys and facts and figures (find the VALOA survey here: <http://www.helsinki.fi/urapalvelut/valoasurvey/#/18/>) and through the BeGlobal campaign, which communicated success stories and facts and figures to the media (read more here (in Finnish): <http://www.beglobal.fi/>). Another innovative part of this project was the Culture Coaching programme implemented in Oulu, which linked international graduate students with local SMEs (read more here: <http://www.oulu.fi/english/culture-coaching>).
- **Awareness and training on becoming attractive talents to young employers:** The development agency *mv4you* in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Germany, creates awareness among and trains smaller firms in the region on how to modernise and use new technology and work with business ethics, equality and employer branding,



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in order to help them become more attractive to young talents. Projects, events and conferences are used to mobilise companies in this regard. Read more about mv4you in case 5.

## 4.2 TAILORED WORK TRAINING PROGRAMMES

### 4.2.1 Goal

Efforts explicitly aimed at retaining local and international talents by matching them with and/or retraining them for labour market needs.

### 4.2.2 Potential users/target group

All talents, but perhaps mostly local talents.

### 4.2.3 Who needs to act?

Ideally a triple-helix partnership of city or regional governments, employment agencies, employers and universities can form the basis for sustainable co-operation in this field.

### 4.2.4 Activities required

- Forming a partnership between employers, public sector (development agencies or employment agencies) and HEIs.

- Mapping the needs of employers.
- Setting up training efforts that cater to the needs of employers.
- Identifying and attracting potential students, and train the students.

### 4.2.5 Success factors

Ensuring that employers' needs are satisfied through finding candidates with the right skills and by making sure that the training is relevant and adequate.

### 4.2.6 Example

- **Tailored local talent development to match businesses' needs:** to meet the Business Processing (BPO) Industry's need for skilled labour in the Polish *region of Pomerania*, the *Invest in Pomerania* agency, higher education institutions, the regional employment agency and several of the main BPO firms launched a '*BPO College*'. It is a six-month training course targeting unemployed university graduates, tailored to meet the needs of the rapidly expanding BPO industry. Read more in case 6.

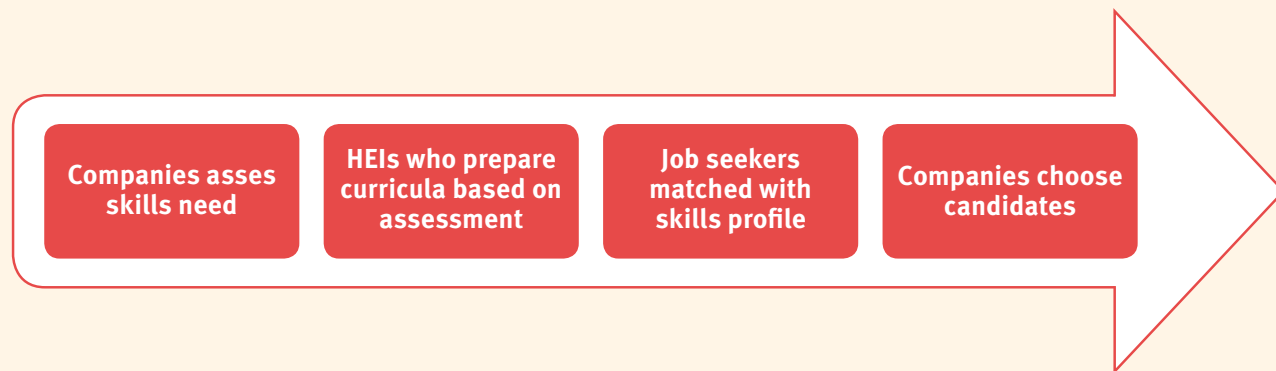
### **CASE 6: BPO EDUCATION COLLEGE IN REGION OF POMERANIA – TRIPLE-HELIX TALENT DEVELOPMENT TAILORED TO EMPLOYERS' NEEDS**

Business process outsourcing (BPO) is a rapidly growing industry in Poland and many BPO centres experience challenges in finding candidates with right set of skills. The regional investment promotion agency, Invest in Pomerania, has therefore taken steps to together with major compa-

nies in the BPO industry, higher education institutions and government institutions to train and educate unemployed people so that they meet the skill requirements of the companies in the sector.

Initiated in 2013, and funded by national labour market funds, the programme is based on a process of selecting candidates in four steps (also illustrated in figure 6):

**Figure 6: Process for matching job seekers with needs of BPO firms in Pomerania, Poland**



1. In the first step, the industry is asked to assess their skill needs.
2. These are then presented to the HEIs involved who prepare a curricula based on the assessment.
3. The regional labour agency then matches the skills profile with their database of job seekers, and then presents a list of, in this case, of more than 120 potential candidates,
4. From this list the companies who have signed up for the partnership can choose 40 people that they would like to see trained.

The 40 candidates then go through four to five months of training; both classes and in-service training in companies. Of the 40 people that started the college in 2013, 92 per cent have been employed directly after finishing the course, which is considered a tremendous success by the involved partners. The programme is now to be scaled up, to both hire more people in BPO services training and to two other sectors; customer care and logistics.



## 4.3 CAREER ADVICE AND EVENTS

### 4.3.1 Goal

Efforts aimed at giving international and local talents appropriate career advice, and organising events where they can meet employers.

### 4.3.2 Potential users/target group

All talents, but perhaps mostly international talents.

### 4.3.3 Who needs to act?

University career services play an important role in matching career advice with current and forecasted labour market needs and trends.

As for career events, mainly city or regional governments and/or universities play an important role as organisers of career events and matchmaking. Business associations and cluster organisations can also fill this role.

### 4.3.4 Activities required

- Establishing a close dialogue with employers about their needs for recruitment.
- Mapping the needs of employers and attracting them to events.
- Marketing services and events to talents/students.



#### 4.3.5 Success factors

For career services: ensuring that career service professionals have the right skills and tools at their disposal (which the VALOA project described under examples addressed).

For events: ensuring that employers that have a real need are attracted to career events, and that those who are looking for a job are matched to these needs.

#### 4.3.5 Examples

- **Career services for students:** The VALOA project in Finland has worked to increase the competence of university careers services in relation to international students, where the main output is the Toolkit for HEIs, a portal advising on ‘orientation and integration’, ‘career guidance’ and ‘employer collaboration’ (read more here: <http://www.studentintegration.fi/>). Among the results have been that components of co-operation with businesses have become part of the curricula of master programmes to a greater extent than before and concrete

concepts that put companies and students in direct contact have been developed, such as the Culture Coaching concept in Oulu, Finland.

- **Career events and career advice for talents – re-attracting the diaspora through career advice and matchmaking:** an example from outside the BSR comes from Bavaria in Germany. A ‘re-attraction’ initiative, most comprehensive activity of the Return to Bavaria initiative, has been to organise a conference, to which 100 top talents living abroad were invited. Once the 100 candidates had been selected, companies looking to recruit were invited to the conference, where a job fair and matchmaking activities were organised, facilitating meetings between the companies and the prospective talents. The companies were selected based on the profiles of the talents so as to make matchmaking as customised and efficient as possible. Once someone shows interest in moving back, they receive career advice from the Return to Bavaria secretariat and help to find a specific job opportunity.





## 5 TYPE OF TOOL/ACTIVITY: LEAVING SUPPORT

Support around *leaving* a place that helps make the leaving experience more positive, such as ambassador and alumni networks, which makes their mobility experience more positive (and hence arrival to next place a better experience), can be used to maintain contact with talents after they leave and make them ambassadors of the place they leave.

That said, both ambassador and alumni networks also help fulfil several other functions, which already has been touched upon earlier in the toolkit and which will be further explained in the following.

### 5.1 AMBASSADOR NETWORKS

#### 5.1.1 Goal

The goal of ambassador networks can be to make the leaving of place a smoother and more positive experience and to maintain contact with the talents after they have left, ideally by continuing to provide them with value-adding communication or services.

As already touched upon in several instances of the toolkit so far, ambassador networks can play a role in promoting social and professional integration. In addition, they can also play a role in creating labour market readiness (for example through matchmaking between network members) and providing welcoming and soft landing. Finally, they can play a key role in communicating pre-arrival information and marketing, especially in terms of honest/authentic marketing and branding. Word-of-mouth is one of the most credible forms of marketing, and people giving word-of-mouth testimonies about living, working or studying in a location may form one of the most important channels for marketing and branding.

#### 5.1.2 Potential users/target group

All talents, but perhaps mostly international talents.

#### 5.1.3 Who needs to act?

Ambassador networks are often initiated and run by city or regional governments or universities.

#### 5.1.4 Activities required

Make sure that there is long-term commitment and funding to maintain the network, and establish a clear understanding of what motivates ambassadors/target groups to join networks. Set up a database and communication channel to reach network members.

In addition, it is important to decide if the network should:

1. Be open to many or more exclusive?
2. Include people in their professional or private role?
3. Include only international talent or also local talent?

#### 5.1.5 Success factors

Long-term commitment from network co-ordinators and that ambassadors perceive a value of being part of the network.

#### 5.1.6 Examples

**Youth Goodwill Ambassador Network of Denmark (YGA)** is an example of a network that creates value for international students both when they are in Denmark (through, as explained in chapter 3, providing opportunities for both social and professional networking as well as co-creation activities) and when they leave and have left the country, thereby making them ambassadors of studying in Denmark. As it is possible to continue being a member of the network even if after one leaves Denmark and continue receiving benefits from being a member, it makes the leaving process more ‘soft’ and positively viewed by students, it is argued here. Read more about YGA in case 7.



### **CASE 7: YOUTH GOODWILL AMBASSADOR NETWORK OF DENMARK**

Youth Goodwill Ambassador Network of Denmark (YGA) is a global network of talented international students. They brand Denmark as an attractive study destination while working to increase the job opportunities for the appointed youth ambassadors as well as international talents in Denmark. All members of the network study in Denmark while taking part in a unique talent development program and working with key Danish stakeholders within business, culture and academia. At the beginning of 2014, the network consisted of 350 international students from more than 50 countries worldwide.

Founded in 2010 by Copenhagen Capacity and Wonderful Copenhagen, in partnership with the Danish Agency for Universities and Internationalisation, the network is

managed by Copenhagen Capacity's Talent Department. It is modelled after Copenhagen Goodwill Ambassador Corps, active since 1996. It receives approximately 95 per cent of its funding from public sector funding, with the remaining 5 per cent coming from private funding by corporate strategic partners of the programme. The long-term goal is to move towards greater private funding.

Many of the activities of the network are based on the ideas of co-creation and idea generation through crowdsourcing and 'crowd-marketing', harnessing the engagement and creativity of the network members. For example, in October 2013 a City Branding Battle was organised, in which students, with the help of professional guidance, competed against each other in creating marketing material for Danish cities. In 2013, the youth ambassadors created international PR in more than 20 countries.

## 5.2 ALUMNI NETWORKS

### 5.2.1 Goal

The goal is to maintain contact with the talents after they have left, and support mobility, for example by providing welcoming and soft landing into the new place.

For example, many alumni networks have chapters in other parts of the world and a talent who moves from the place where they have studied to another place can, through their alumni network, find people who have studied at the same university in the new location, something that will help with social and professional settling in into the new place (and, it is argued here, the better the settling in is perceived, the more positive the leaving process is seen as, and the more positive the reputation of the location/university that has helped with providing the network will become, that is, the networks function as a branding vehicle).

As applies to ambassador networks, alumni networks can also play a role as providers of word-of-mouth testimonies about living, working or studying in a location, that function as a channel for marketing and branding.

### 5.2.2 Potential users/target group

All talents, but perhaps mostly international talents.

### 5.2.3 Who needs to act?

Alumni networks are typically initiated by universities, even though more place-bound networks can be initiated by city and regional governments or national government agencies.

### 5.2.4 Activities required

Make sure that there is long-term commitment and funding to maintain the network, and establish a clear understanding of what motivates alumni to join networks. Set up a database and communication channel to reach network members.

### 5.2.5 Success factors

Long-term commitment from network co-ordinators and that alumni perceive a value of being part of the network.

### 5.2.6 Examples

**University alumni networks for students:** The *KTH Alumni Community* of the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm serves as good example of an extensive alumni network that gives value to the alumni by providing career opportunities and a social and professional network. Nearly 16,000 members are found in the network's database, accessible to all members. Read more here: <http://www.kth.se/en/alumni/alumnicommunity/kth-alumni-community-ett-ovarderligt-natverk-1364762>

An example from outside the BSR to seek inspiration from could be the *London School of Economics and Political Science Alumni Network* that has over 50 officially recognised groups worldwide. The network co-ordinators say that ‘just about wherever you are in the world, you’ll be able to find LSE alumni to meet up with’, illustrating how the network can help create value for talents when they move to a new place, facilitating that they become ambassadors of the LSE institution. Read more here: [http://www.alumni.lse.ac.uk/olc/pub/LHE/aag/aag\\_6.html](http://www.alumni.lse.ac.uk/olc/pub/LHE/aag/aag_6.html). In addition to joining a relevant country group, alumni can become part of special interest groups to focus on their professional areas of expertise and network with fellow alumni. Read more here: [http://www.alumniconnections.com/olc/pub/LHE/aag/aag\\_14.html](http://www.alumniconnections.com/olc/pub/LHE/aag/aag_14.html)

**Country alumni networks:** Another good example of an alumni network is *Swedish Institute’s (SI) Alumni Network*. The Swedish Institute seeks to establish co-operation by maintaining relations with former international students or researchers who have studied in Sweden as well as Swedish language students abroad. The network promotes that the

alumni stay in touch with both each other and with Sweden, which is meant to be both socially and professionally rewarding. At the time of writing, the network includes around 7,000 alumni from over 50 countries. SI keeps in touch with alumni through a blog and local chapters in a few countries. There is also a *welcoming and soft landing* component to the programme, with alumni sharing their experiences from their time in Sweden with new scholarship holders through activities and social media networks. Finally, the programme also plays a role in providing *pre-arrival information and marketing*, as the alumni can be expected to communicate opportunities to study or research in their circles and sometimes also participate in organised information activities. The alumni are also invited to alumni gatherings or events like ‘Sweden Days’ after having returned to their home countries, which are activities aiming at maintaining a sustainable and value-adding network.

Read more here: <https://eng.si.se/areas-of-operation/scholarships-and-grants/alumni-network/>





# Baltic Sea Region collaboration in talent retention?

What are the future opportunities for collaboration around talent retention between locations (and relevant stakeholders) in the BSR?

It is clear that the area of talent retention needs to be further developed, on a sub-national and national as well as on a Baltic Sea regional level – in order to create a basis for a competitive region. A sustainable multi-stakeholder, cross-border approach to talent retention is considered key to creating long-term competitive advantage for the BSR, since there is a strong interdependence between the different countries and cities in the region.

However, competition for talents between locations in the BSR will pose a challenge to regional collaboration in the field and needs to be kept in mind when forging new co-operation.

Yet there are many opportunities for further exchange within, as well as between, BSR countries – for example through knowledge sharing and activities aimed at raising awareness of talent retention practices and tools. Sharing experiences would help cities and regions to become better equipped to actively work with talent retention and for policymakers to be more aware of what policy steps are needed to make the region's countries more attractive to talents. The toolkit itself can form the basis for identifying themes for exchange of experiences as well as joint projects.

In the work leading up to the situation analysis and the toolkit, the following possible areas for future collaboration have also been identified:

- *Creating a regional platform of key quadruple helix stakeholders* in order to further highlight the importance of

talent retention. One key requirement for a sustainable regional collaboration in talent retention is that organisations that enjoy credibility as well as institutional power can be identified and persuaded to take the lead in developing such a platform. The focus (of such a platform) would be to identify key areas for development within the area of talent retention on a Baltic Sea regional level. Ideally, national as well as regional/city stakeholders would be part of such a platform, as they would contribute with different and complementary perspectives on talent retention.

- *Joint strategic projects aimed at targeting policymakers and policy implementation*, for example through experience sharing and identifying tools for inducing policy to become more ‘talent friendly’.
- *Targeted (thematic) projects*, which strengthen the individual location and the BSR, such as working with the linkages between talents and investments, open innovation and talent attraction and BSR labour-market matching.

- *Networks of networks*: there are opportunities to link up different place-based networks, such as local, social or professional networks or alumni and ambassador networks to each other across the Baltic Sea Region. This way, a more comprehensive service offer can be forged. For example, an ambassador network functioning as leaving support in one city can be linked to a local network in other locations, which can function as welcoming and soft landing support for a talent moving from one place to another.
- *Making mobile talents change agents*: mobile talents have different experiences and learnings in their migration process that can be useful to understand for the next location they come to (irrespective of if they move back to the home country or on to another new location). Therefore, cities and regions and their partnerships for talent retention can involve these talents as a resource in their development work by drawing on their experiences and, possibly, their will to help make their new home city more talent friendly.







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