

Thematic framework

Facts & figures

- 304 million **international migrants** (2024)
- Work as the main driver of international migration
- Projected **skilled workers shortage** in Germany in 2028: 768,000
- 2/3 of OECD countries: **immigrants more likely to start their own businesses** than native-born employed population
- Migrant entrepreneurship **created** almost 4 million **jobs** (2011-2021)



Sources: Migration Data Portal; OECD (2024); Institut der Deutschen Wirtschaft (2025)

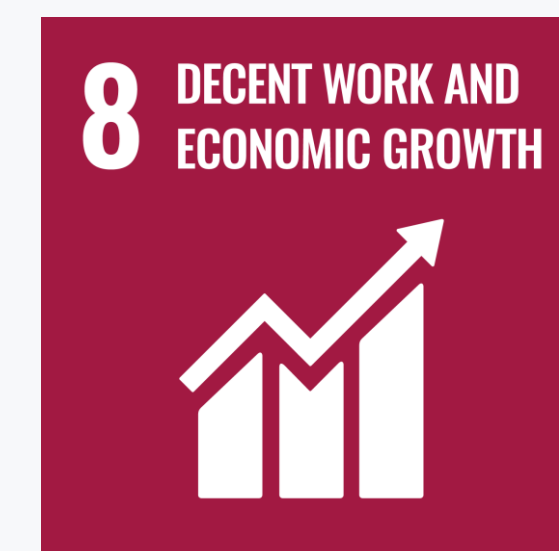
Thematic framework



Local economic development and migration

- **2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals:**

- **8:** Strengthening local labour markets, entrepreneurship and economic growth
- **10:** Fostering inclusive economic participation; facilitate safe & responsible migration
- **11:** Local governments as key actors for local economic development and successful migration
- **1:** Reduce poverty in migrant communities and among job seekers
- **4:** Facilitate professional training and skills recognition; capacity development in countries of origin
- **17:** Collaboration with national authorities, businesses, and institutions; international partnerships for skilled immigration



A global look: Different local realities

- Some world regions face (skilled) labour shortages, others labour surpluses
 - **High-income countries: Labour shortages**
 - #1: Demographic change → shrinking working-age population
 - Key sectors affected by skills shortages: healthcare, education, IT and comm. tech.
 - **Lower and lower-middle-income countries** (esp. SSA & South Asia):
labour surpluses
- Expanding working-age populations but labour markets cannot absorb all new entrants

Thematic framework

New initiative:

- BMZ: **WE-Fair** – Business and Development Policy for Fair Recruitment of Skilled Workers (03/2026)
 - The goal is to combine private-sector expertise with development cooperation networks
- **“Triple win”**: for Germany as a business location, for skilled workers and for their countries of origin



Where does this leave us?

- **Intersection** of migration and (local) economic development
- **Economic opportunities:** Skilled worker immigration and migrant entrepreneurship can be important drivers of local economic development.
- **Ethical questions:** How can we ensure labour migration does not harm countries of origin? How can we best consider individuals and not just their economic value?
- **Migration policy may be national – but success or failure is local.**
- How can municipalities use their **room for manoeuvre** to successfully advance local economic development through migration?

References



Acosta, P. et al. (2025). Matching skills across borders: Are global skill partnerships a win-win solution for sending and receiving countries?, World Bank Blogs. <https://blogs.worldbank.org/en/developmenttalk/matching-skills-across-borders--are-global-skill-partnerships-a->

BMZ (2026). WE-Fair: Wirtschaft und Entwicklungspolitik für faire Fachkräftegewinnung, BMZ Homepage. <https://www.bmz.de/de/fachkraefteallianz-we-fair-288174>

Feist, L. (2024). Imbalances between supply and demand: Recent causes of labour shortages in advanced economies, ILO Working Paper 115 (Geneva, ILO). <https://doi.org/10.54394/LUTY2310>

Institut der Deutschen Wirtschaft (2025). Arbeitsmarkt: 2028 fehlen 768.000 Fachkräfte, Pressemitteilung IW 14.07.2025. <https://www.iwkoeln.de/presse/pressemitteilungen/alexander-burstedde-jurek-tiedemann-2028-fehlen-768000-fachkraefte.html>

Migration Data Portal (2025). Migration and human mobility, Key figures. <https://www.migrationdataportal.org/key-figures>

OECD (2024). International Migration Outlook 2024, OECD Publishing, Paris. <https://doi.org/10.1787/50b0353e-en>