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- Investing in people, by investing in higher education and skills in Africa -



Enhancing Tunisian youth employability through professional internships in Belgian companies

International Organization for Migration (IOM/OIM)

Project Presentation

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) supported 31 Tunisian students and university graduates with concrete opportunities to build up their skills and increase their chances of finding an adequate job, or to create their own opportunities through a 20-month project linking Belgium and Tunisia.

Launched in March 2018 and running through October 2019, the project Enhancing Tunisian Youth Employability through Professional Internships in Belgian Companies, backed with the financial support of the Government of Belgium through the Immigration Office, has sought to address the dual challenge of the high rate of unemployment among young Tunisians and the persistent risk of youth resorting to dangerous, irregular migration.

Through IOM support and the creation of a solid network of public organizations and private enterprises in Belgium and Tunisia, the young people landed six-month internships at 12 different companies in Belgium. All project participants have completed their six-month internship in Belgium and are now back in Tunisia, where 80 per cent of them have already found a job in a local enterprise.

The remaining participants will receive five months of support to find employment in an enterprise matching offers currently available in the Tunisian labour market as well as through additional trainings to further enhance their professional skills.

Please take a look at the video

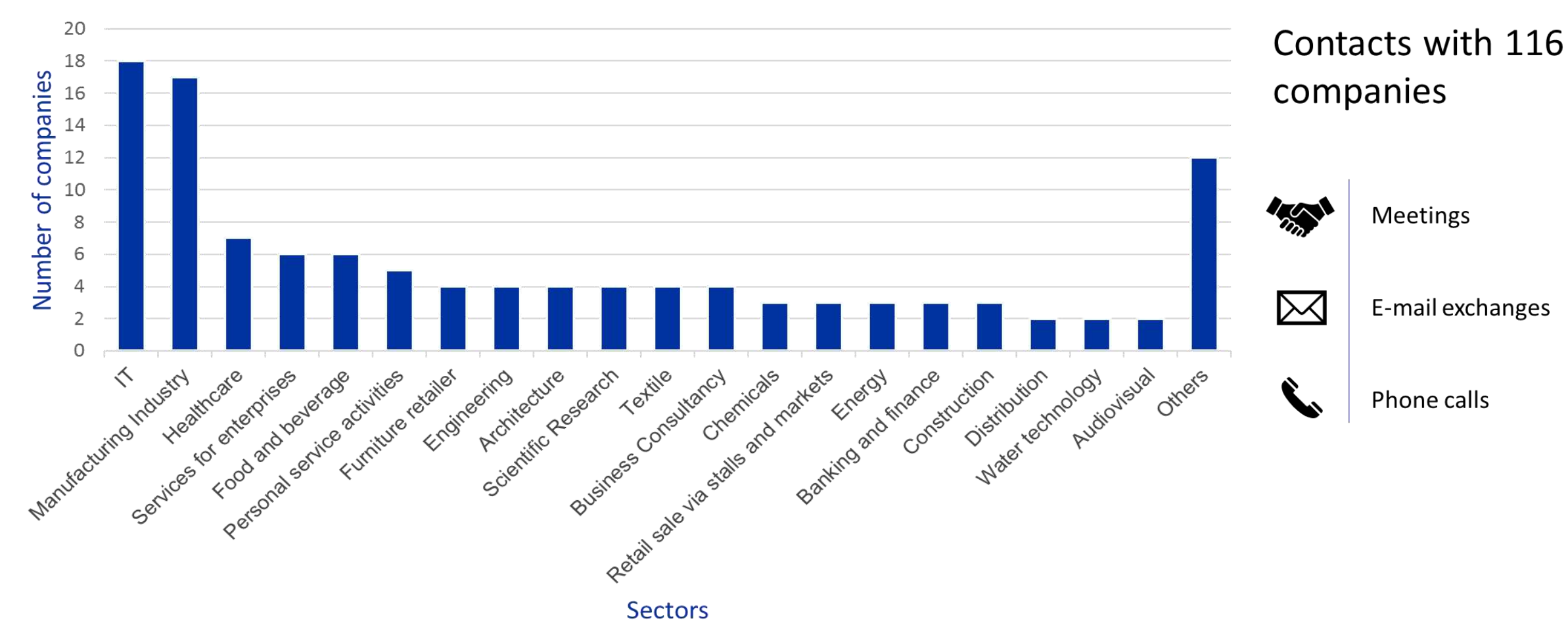


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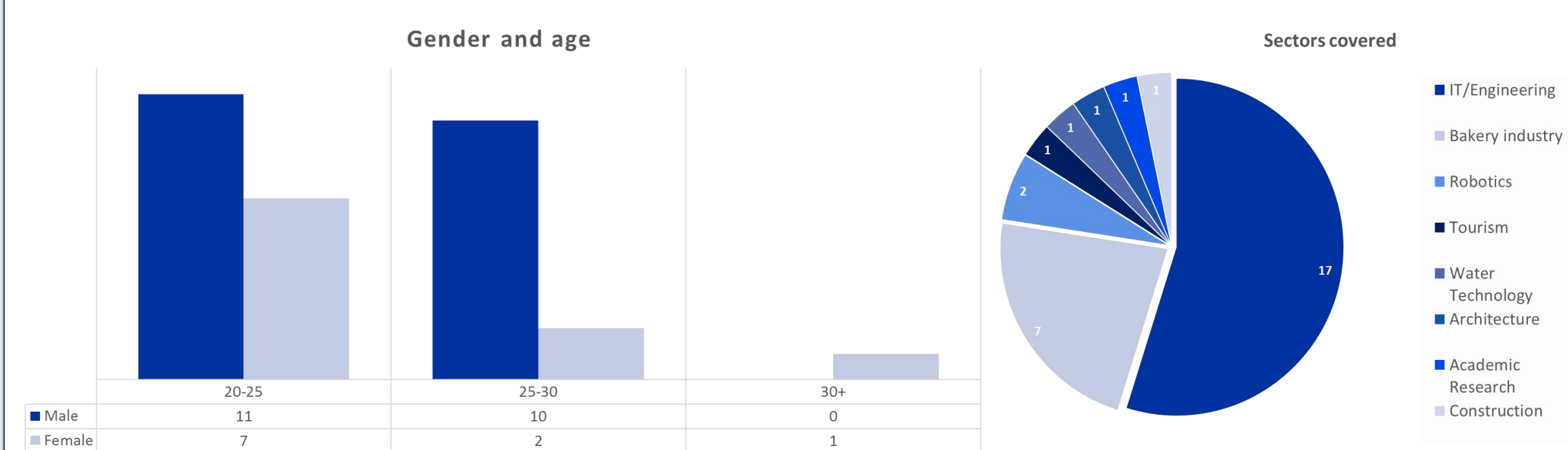
Project Activities

The project was implemented through three main activities:

1. Private sector outreach



2. Selection of the 31 interns



3. Monitoring and evaluation of the action

- Pre-departure survey for interns
- Two interim evaluations for interns and companies
- Final evaluation of the internship for interns
- Final evaluations of the interns and the program for companies
- Post-return survey for interns

Project Results

- 29 interns completed their internship in Belgium
- 25 out of 29 interns are now employed in Tunisia
- 12 Belgian enterprises participated to the project
- 15 Tunisian enterprises available to hire the interns upon return
- 11 Belgian enterprises would participate again in similar initiatives
- Hard and soft skills of interns improved during the 6-month placement according to companies in Belgium
- 4 companies hired one or more interns
- 4 companies are investing or exploring investment opportunities in Tunisia after the project

Lessons learned

- ✓ The implementation of labour migration projects can only work if all stakeholders, public and private, are on board
- ✓ Regular migration allows the involved parties to control risks and adopt countermeasures in case of problems
- ✓ Demand in the host country and offer from the country of origin should be matched in order to attain success without causing brain drain to the country of origin
- ✓ Monitored and managed labour migration can be beneficial for all involved parties and can change the discourse on migration
- ✓ Every stakeholder should ideally take ownership of the project by investing a part of its own resources in the action
- ✓ Similar initiatives can pave the way for effective comprehensive approaches to migration. Labour migration from third countries will become increasingly relevant in the coming decades

Sustainability & Synergies

The high rate of unemployment in Tunisia is one of the main challenges to be addressed by the Government according to its National Development Plan for 2016-2020. This is particularly relevant for higher education Tunisian graduates, who are the category most affected by unemployment. This situation contributes to internal instability and is also a strong driving factor of regular and irregular migration towards Europe. Through this project, IOM aimed to support the Tunisian Government efforts to reduce high unemployment rates among young Tunisians and promote an alternative model for regular migration toward Europe. The mobility model will be a reference for future similar initiatives.

Information

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<https://belgium.iom.int/labour-migration-and-migrant-integration>

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