

Circular migration from the Eastern neighbourhood to the EU

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Valorisation addendum

1. Societal relevance of the research and findings

This PhD research is not only academically interesting but also policy-relevant. The concept of circular migration has been on the agenda of international organisations and the EU for more than 15 years and is currently part of the Global Compact for Migration,²⁰ as well as the Legal Migration Fitness Check evaluation of the European Commission.²¹ The societal relevance of this study is that it contributes to the understanding of the meaning of this concept in general, in the EU context, as well as more specifically with regards to the Eastern neighbourhood. It sheds light on the different legal and policy instruments that have been adopted to implement circular migration policies and their consequences for the rights of migrant workers. Therefore, the study has the potential to improve the treatment of migrant workers and reform migration policy models in line with the international standards, such as those promoted by the ILO. Furthermore, it provides a new approach for the assessment of such policies on the basis of the developed benchmark framework. Finally, it contains information on the implementation dynamic of different circular migration policy options that can also be applied in the context of the “refugee crisis”.

2. Intended audience of the research and findings

Along with its academic value, the research can be used by policy makers at the EU, international and national level. It can serve as a background material for the understanding of the meaning of the term of circular migration and the relevant issues that are at stake with regard to the application of such policies. Its bench-

20 Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, Zero Draft, 5 February 2018, p.9 and p. 20, accessed on 5 May 2018 at https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/sites/default/files/180205_gcm_zero_draft_final.pdf.

21 European Commission, Evaluation and Fitness Check Roadmap for REFIT - Legal Migration Fitness Check, 1 September 2016, p. 8.

mark framework can be used by policy makers to assess national instruments in different countries. Finally, international organisations and NGOs can use its findings to continue to advocate for a rights-based approach to circular migration.

3. Innovative aspects of the research

The innovative aspects of the research lie in the focus on implementation of EU's approach to circular migration, the plurality of methods used and the case study selection. This PhD research fills a gap in the academic and policy literature by providing a comprehensive picture of the formation and implementation of the EU's circular migration approach that has developed on the basis of both EU and national instruments, which was missing hitherto. Furthermore, by applying legal empirical research methods, such as interviews and focus groups, it draws conclusions about policy outcomes from the implementation of the various migration instruments falling under the circular migration umbrella. It shows the consequences for the rights of migrant workers as a result of the application of different policy options.

Last but not least, an innovative feature of this study is its focus on Central and Eastern Europe. This region is understudied both in terms of issues related to the legislation and policy of these new countries of immigration, as well as in terms of implementation of the EU's circular migration at the national level. Furthermore, the CEE currently comprises both EU and non-EU countries and is characterised by increasing cross-border migration, especially after the latest EU enlargement.

4. Output, outreach and dissemination of research findings

The findings of the research have already been disseminated and discussed at various occasions, both in front of policy and academic audiences. Parts of the research and its findings have been presented before relevant policy makers, such as representatives of the International Centre for Migration and Policy Development (ICMPD) in Vienna, as well as at the Danish Institute for Human Rights in Copenhagen. Furthermore, the gathered empirical data, some of the research results, as well as the developed analytical (benchmark) framework have been used in the study for the Directorial General for Parliamentary Research Services of the European Parliament "The Cost of Non-Europe in the Area of Legal Migration".

Different parts of the research have also been presented in academic forums, including at the Centre for Migration Research at the Warsaw University, at the Centre for Migration Law, Radboud University Nijmegen, at the University of Neuchatel, Switzerland, at the Ius Commune Master Class at the University of Amsterdam and KU Leuven, at the Annual IMISCOE conference, which took place in Rotterdam in 2017, and at several occasions at Maastricht University, e.g., the MACIMIDE Workshop on Citizenship, Migration and Development and ‘The World of Interdisciplinary Research’ Conference. Some of the research findings were also part of the final TRANSMIC conference at the European University Institute (EUI) in Florence. Parts of the research have also been published or have been submitted for publication (see the bibliography).

In February 2017, the candidate co-organised a workshop on the External Dimension of EU Social Security Coordination in cooperation with the University of Antwerp as part of the TRANSMIC project. The workshop featured the presentation of some of the research findings in front of senior academics working in this field, as well as policy makers from the EU and national level. The presentation of the research findings of this study in this field became part of a special issue of the *European Journal of Social Security*, which will be published in May 2018.

5. Implementing research valorisation

During the implementation of the PhD project, the author significantly expanded her expert network with both academic and policy contacts. Therefore, in order to further disseminate the research results, policy events will be organised for Bulgarian and Polish policy-makers. The final results will also be presented at an outreach conference as part of the TRANSMIC project. Furthermore, the thesis will be distributed among policy makers at the EU, international and national level, as well as through the author’s academic networks. The author also plans to seek funding in order to continue to engage with research on the implementation of the legal migration directives, and more specifically the Seasonal Workers’ Directive, the Students’ and Researchers’ Directive and the recast of the Blue Card Directive. Finally, the consequences of the EU visa liberalisation with Georgia and Ukraine for circular migration patterns in the Eastern neighbourhood is another important topic that requires further research.