



CORDIS Results Pack on migration and migrant integration

A thematic collection of innovative EU-funded research results

March 2020

Enabling knowledge-based approaches to migration policy



Research and
Innovation

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Enabling knowledge-based approaches to migration

Issues surrounding migration have become increasingly important across Europe over the past ten years due to the arrival of tens of thousands of refugees fleeing unrest in the Middle East and other regions of the world. This CORDIS Results Pack highlights innovative EU-funded social sciences research that helps us to better understand the complex challenges and opportunities surrounding migration and migrant integration into European societies.

Despite the fact that between 19 and 20 million legal migrants arrived into the EU-27 between 2009 and 2018 (Eurostat data), irregular migration and asylum have been at the top of the news agenda in Europe for much of the last decade. Issues surrounding migration have caused major electoral shocks and redefined the political space of several EU Member States. Migration was also one of the major cited reasons as to why British voters chose to depart the EU in their 2016 Brexit referendum. And as we step into the new decade of the 2020s, migration as a major political, social and economic challenge will not disappear anytime soon.

A vitally important policy area for the EU

The European Commission recognises that migration and migrant integration are an important concern for European citizens and is committed to a sensible, knowledge-based approach that also firmly addresses the importance of migrant integration into host societies. Successful integration of migrants maximises the opportunities to host societies afforded by legal migration and helps to unleash the potential that migration has for the EU's wider development.

Alongside policies to exploit the very real benefits of legal migration and migrant integration, the Commission also recognises the need for effective policies to address the politically divisive issue of irregular migration into the EU. These include measures targeting employers who hire undeclared migrant workers, as well as human smuggling and trafficking networks that take advantage of undocumented persons. There is also the aim of developing a humane and effective return policy in line with the EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights and of promoting dialogue and cooperation with non-EU countries, based on solidarity and shared responsibility, both essential pillars in the EU's approach to migration.

A solid research-focused framework for better understanding and policy outcomes

To develop the fairest and most robust migration policies, innovative social sciences research that provides evidence, analysis and an accurate depiction of the situation 'on the ground' is absolutely essential. This is why the EU's Horizon 2020 programme has made migration research a priority, with EUR 200 million being dedicated through 2018-2020 to support the investigation on the drivers of migration, migration management and migrant integration, with EUR 29 million alone being allocated to the latter.

In this CORDIS Results Pack, we introduce 13 EU-funded projects from across the Horizon 2020 research family, from large multi-member consortia to single ambitious and driven researchers supported through either the European Research Council (ERC) or Marie Skłodowska-Curie programme. All of these projects have been driven by a dedication to expand our understanding and knowledge of migration and migrant integration with the hope that their research will help support future policy-making.

There's the catch: The EU migrant crisis and the CEAS

At its height, the 'EU migrants' crisis' became a fertile ground upon which political debates could blame the technical weaknesses of the Common European Asylum System for the problems faced at local and national level. A political shortcut? The CEASEVAL project aimed to find out.



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A work in progress since 1999, the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) was put to a severe test in 2015. Migration had then become one of the main topics of conversation in Europe. Some Member States were having

a hard time dealing with immigration pressure, and the unnoticed cracks in the EU's seemingly harmonised migration and asylum policies had suddenly started to look like massive gaping holes.

In this context, the EU-funded CEASEVAL project is akin to a diagnosis and repair mission. Its goal: to assess the functioning of the CEAS, as high numbers of asylum seekers arriving in Europe since 2011 had been putting it under considerable stress.

“We were under the impression that research on the CEAS was lacking an integrative perspective. Thanks to our multidisciplinary consortium with expertise in law, political science, sociology, ethnography and human geography – and being located in 13 countries – we felt like we could significantly enhance knowledge about the functioning of CEAS, its shortcomings, the reasons why it malfunctioned, and the possible avenues for further

development,” Birgit Glorius, Professor of Human Geography with a focus on European Migration Research at Chemnitz Technical University and coordinator of the CEASEVAL project, recalls.

CEASEVAL research encompasses the analysis of regulatory patterns at national and EU level, the mobility trajectories of asylum-seeking migrants, local practices in the face of their

applications for asylum, as well as relevant politicisation processes. This thorough assessment was conducted in 16 countries, with a total of 500 interviews with state and non-state actors and 100 interviews with refugees.



While concepts such as ‘safe country of origin’ have proliferated in national systems, crucial provisions such as guarantees for vulnerable groups have not been uniformly introduced.

Centralised decision-making, clashes with local communities

Soon enough, the main drawbacks started to filter through and come to attention. Centralised decision-making at state level, although effective, had generated conflicts with local communities. The degree of internal heterogeneity in national reception systems grew and, where convergence was indeed achieved, it was generally at the local level and on a small scale.

“We found that Member States have often transposed Directives – and incorporated implementation aspects of Regulations – selectively, thereby leading to disparate domestic frameworks on asylum procedures, reception conditions and so on. While concepts such as ‘safe country of origin’ have proliferated in national systems, crucial provisions such as guarantees for vulnerable groups have not been introduced uniformly,” says Glorius.

The project consortium identified three main limitations of harmonisation through legislation: divergences in transposition due

to the discretion offered by directives, the ambiguity and discretion inherent to regulations, and the ‘enforcement deficit’ in EU legislation. The latter is specifically due to the European Commission’s reluctance to initiate infringement proceedings against violations of the *acquis*, as identified by the project consortium.

“This discrepancy was particularly evident in our empirical research, which demonstrated a mismatch between the first country of arrival principle and the reality of migrants’ lived experiences. Migrants indeed engage in secondary movements largely due to family and perceived employment opportunities elsewhere,” Glorius explains.

It’s not all down to the CEAS

So, is the CEAS to blame? Not according to the project’s analysis of political debates at the time. Instead of focusing on the facts, discussions often instrumentalised immigration for other political purposes. As Glorius says, the question of whether the CEAS is stress-resistant is not so much a technical one, but rather a political one.

The project consortium is hopeful that the newly established European Commission will use its recommendations in a potential reform of the CEAS. These include the creation of a ‘coalition of the willing’ if the CEAS remains to be shaped at state level, as well as the strengthening of local agencies if it can be shaped on alternative governance levels. Last but not least, project results integrate various scenarios for possible policy futures in the context of the CEAS.

PROJECT

CEASEVAL – Evaluation of the Common European Asylum System under Pressure and Recommendations for Further Development

COORDINATED BY

TU Chemnitz in Germany

FUNDED UNDER

H2020-SOCIETY

CORDIS FACTSHEET

cordis.europa.eu/project/id/770037

PROJECT WEBSITE

ceaseval.eu



Migration and climate change in the eyes of Sardinians

Climate change-induced migration may be a global issue, but there is little arguing the fact that its consequences are and will primarily be felt at the local level. The CLISEL project focused on this local angle to help contextualise the processes of migration and climate change.

Sardinia is no stranger to the effects of climate change. Over the past few decades, flooding, coastal erosion and increased desertification in parts of the island have become a growing

problem. But there is another consequence of climate change that the locals have been witnessing first-hand: migration and the security concerns it poses.



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This status of primary witness (being the first to witness a major event or occurrence) is generally acknowledged, but undocumented. Studies and press articles tend to focus on more impacted regions. As Ilenia Ruggiu, Professor of Constitutional Law at the University of Cagliari and coordinator of CLISEL puts it: "Sardinia is a region where climate and migration are important phenomena, without being particularly emblematic. No large-scale flows of migrants, no melting glaciers."

This is precisely the reason why Ruggiu and the CLISEL team chose Sardinia as the project's first case study. It's a perfect place to find out what happens when climate change and migration hit a region without much media attention. Moreover, CLISEL widens current debates on the link between climate change and security by adding a complementary angle: the role of local authorities.

"CLISEL has investigated how the impacts of migration and climate change on security are determined also by processes taking place 'down to earth', in local contexts, cities and at sub-national institutional levels," Ruggiu explains. "We asked ourselves two questions: how can cities, local authorities and communities face the challenges posed by climate change and migration, and what is the role of 'local contexts' in producing insecurity."

Emphasising local administrations and actors

In the case of Sardinia, it turns out that local administrations have a very different perception of security than that being spread by dominant narratives at European and national level. Rather than the 'clash of cultures', terrorism and political disorders, local actors focus on increased competition for dwindling welfare and resources.

This local angle had completely been overlooked by earlier studies. "Our interactions with local authorities and communities confirmed that migration and climate change tend to accentuate already existing tensions related to the urban rural divide, problems of depopulation, ecological vulnerabilities, and the relationship between Sardinia and the mainland. Should new arrivals be seen as a resource and distributed across depopulated rural areas as a means of rejuvenation? How do migrants affect attempts to preserve rural Sardinian culture? How will the fragile agricultural sector withstand the

pressure exercised by the impacts of climate change? These are the types of questions really occupying people's minds," says Ruggiu.

From Sardinia to other European regions

In this context, CLISEL's mission consisted in breaking the feeling of isolation and disconnect felt locally. Over 3 years, the project has been providing relevant courses to local administrators and helping them reach out to higher levels of governance. It also created the Climate-Change Security Toolbox containing a geo-archive, interactive maps, a travel app, and definitional frameworks.

"You could summarise the problem in this manner: local authorities are on the frontlines, with big responsibilities and little power. Yet, they show a great willingness to address the challenges they face," says Ruggiu.

Besides unveiling local authorities' own 'map of security' focusing on welfare and financial insecurity and making the voice of the smallest communities heard, the project also came up with a list of dos and don'ts for policy-makers willing to apply the CLISEL method elsewhere. "The CLISEL tools are open source and can be freely used by other scholars and local administrators. We certainly hope that our research will be extended to other European regions as well, to see whether similar or different results emerge," Ruggiu concludes.

PROJECT

CLISEL – Climate Security with Local Authorities (CLISEL) From insecurity takers to security makers: mobilizing local authorities to secure the EU against the impacts of climate change in Third Countries

COORDINATED BY

University of Cagliari in Italy

FUNDED UNDER

H2020-SECURITY

CORDIS FACTSHEET

cordis.europa.eu/project/id/700385

PROJECT WEBSITE

clisel.eu



Local authorities are on the frontlines, with big responsibilities and little power. Yet, they show a great willingness to address the challenges they face.

Meet the online hub for migration research



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The recent boom in migration research has proved to be both a blessing and a challenge for experts in the field. It means they potentially have more information about the issue than they could have ever imagined, but that's only if they can actually find specific articles of interest. The Migration Research Hub developed under the CROSS-MIGRATION project will make this much easier.

Think of it as a Google Scholar or ResearchGate lookalike, strictly focused on research related to migration. The Migration Research Hub is the answer to a long-standing problem in the field: whilst there are many different migration research databases out there, none of these has gone so far as to bring all publications, projects and experts under the same roof.

"Our Migration Research Hub will provide a broad range of actors with access to migration knowledge. This is important especially in these times of migration urgency that can spark emotional discussions and facilitate the spreading of alternative facts. It is also important for academia as it facilitates systematic knowledge accumulation. It encourages scholars from all career stages to build on each other's work," explains Peter Scholten, Director of IMISCOE (the largest European network of scholars in the field of migration and integration) and coordinator of the CROSS-MIGRATION project.

A valuable tool for migration research

The platform, which was built by experts for experts, currently includes some 90 000 articles and books, 2 500 projects, 600 doctoral dissertations and around 350 expert profiles. With

these come an extra layer of resources and tools developed specifically for the Research Hub, including methodological issue briefs, a synthesis of migration policy indicators and an overview of migration scenarios. Interactive tools for the last two will be launched soon, along with a textbook on migration studies.

To understand how the platform can help advance research in the field, we can take the example of student mobility. "The person can go to the portal, and either click directly on the dedicated taxonomy or search by using keywords in the database. This leads to a list of relevant entries from publications, databases, projects and experts working on this subject, along with a very brief definition of student mobility," Scholten explains. "The results can then be sorted or made more precise, for instance by entering a specific country, discipline, period, etc."

Eventually, the platform is expected to help research and evidence find its way into the policy-making process. Policy-makers can browse through relevant knowledge and expertise, before taking new measures and designing new strategies.



Our Migration Research Hub will provide a broad range of actors with access to migration knowledge.

Still a work in progress

Since CROSS-MIGRATION came to an end, IMISCOE has been and will keep maintaining and developing the Migration Research Hub. IMISCOE is notably collaborating with the ReSOMA project to bring together their expert databases, as well as developing an interactive textbook on migration studies that connects introductory texts produced by leading scholars with online sources collected in our Migration Research Hub.

“The Hub is designed to be sustainable over the long term,” Scholten explains. “Not only will it continue to automatically capture new publications and research projects that appear on specific websites, but it will also allow users to submit their own research and maintain their own expert profiles.”

PROJECT

CROSS-MIGRATION – Current European and Cross-National Comparative Research and Research Actions on Migration

COORDINATED BY

Erasmus University Rotterdam in the Netherlands

FUNDED UNDER

H2020-SOCIETY

CORDIS FACTSHEET

cordis.europa.eu/project/id/770121

PROJECT WEBSITE

crossmigration.eu



Equality for immigrant job seekers: How this would benefit us all

Discrimination is still very real in Europe when it comes to landing a job. The EU-funded GEMM project looked into its main patterns to identify potential countermeasures.



The 'migration crisis' is easily one of the biggest storms the EU has had to weather over the past decade. It has brought to light the limits of cooperation between Member States, lifted the veil on the horrors faced by migrants seeking refuge, and become fertile ground for a divisive 'us vs them' rhetoric across Europe.

But there is another side effect of this crisis. While some 80 million workers in Europe lack the proper qualification for the

job they have been hired to do, discrimination towards migrants, even highly skilled ones, is depriving the labour market of a significant resource and solutions to a rapidly ageing society and skills shortages.

"Discrimination is not only problematic in terms of fairness, but it also limits a society's capacity to employ and attract human resources most effectively. It is a major barrier to growth,"

explains Neli Demireva, Senior Lecturer in Sociology at the University of Essex and coordinator of the GEMM project.

The GEMM project studied this barrier between 2015 and 2018. It collected field experiment data, analysed existing survey data and built its own understanding of real-life motivations behind migration decisions. Its objective: methodically fact-checking some of the most repeated myths around migrants' role in society and how these impact the labour market.

The prevalence of job-related discrimination

In the UK for instance, Demireva and her team revealed some of the main trends related to job quality: "We found little evidence of migrants undercutting white Britons' job quality. However, second-generation minority men, particularly Black Caribbean and Black African minority men may be vulnerable to a race-to-the-bottom facilitated by the competition with migrants. Our results are consistent with an ethnic hierarchy that places majority members on the top,



Our results are consistent with an ethnic hierarchy that places majority members on the top, non-white migrants at the bottom, and second-generation minority members somewhere in between.

non-white migrants at the bottom, and second-generation minority members somewhere in between."

Considering European societies at large, the project found that Muslim migrants and their children are particularly likely to see their qualifications and training discarded. Overall, the differences between the majority population and minority groups are systematically in favour of the first group: in all five countries in the GEMM field experiment – Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain and the UK – ethnic minority applicants have a lower probability of being called back for a job interview than majority group applicants.

"The GEMM field experiments show that the gap in call-back rates varies widely across countries," Demireva notes. "Norway

and the United Kingdom are the countries in the field experiment with the highest ethnic discrimination. We also see different trends as to which ethnic groups suffer the most: Nigerian or Pakistani-sounding names in the United Kingdom, Pakistani and Somali-sounding names in Norway, Turks and Lebanese candidates in Germany, for instance appear to be associated with high levels of penalty."

Recommendations to tackle inequality

To bridge these gaps, the GEMM consortium issued a list of recommendations. These include, for instance, a focus on production-relevant information from migrants, and institutional support for the translation of educational credentials into the local language (degree certificates for example) on the part of the receiving society.

"Policy-makers need to tackle inequality if they want growth and innovation. More resources should be devoted to facilitating the recognition of credentials and supporting individuals in their labour market decisions," Demireva concludes.

PROJECT

GEMM – Growth, Equal Opportunities, Migration and Markets

COORDINATED BY

University of Essex in the United Kingdom

FUNDED UNDER

H2020-SOCIETY

CORDIS FACTSHEET

cordis.europa.eu/project/id/649255

PROJECT WEBSITE

gemm2020.eu



From security to human rights: the much needed shift in media narratives around climate-induced migration

Media coverage of climate change in the United Kingdom is missing out one of its major consequences: migration. The latter is rather presented as a security issue, with serious implications for policy and public understanding of the issue. The IKETIS project has been aiming to revert this trend.



IKETIS essentially revolves around one question: Is there a bias in the way the media perceives and discusses climate-induced migration? Looking at daily headlines, it would be tempting to say so. On Google News for instance, the association of 'migration' and 'security' leads to four times as many results as the association between migration and climate change.

Changing the narrative on climate-induced migration

"People migrating in the context of climate change are understood as victims of a changing climate, but relatively little coverage is given to the human aspects of climate change. The fact that developing countries, the least responsible for climate change, are most affected is mostly ignored, and the media in developed countries rather emphasises how immigrants' statelessness can become a security threat to host countries," explains Maria Sakellari, whose project IKETIS was funded under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowship scheme.

This is shaky ground to say the least. First, there is currently no evidence to support this line of argument. Then, the press plays a critical role in constructing public narratives. The emergence of progressive migration policies is not only hindered by the focus on security aspects, but there is a serious risk of these narratives working in favour of xenophobic sentiment, nationalism and populism. Even climate action NGOs – which rely heavily on the media to convey their messages – have been mimicking their framing of climate change-induced migration to maximise impact.

There is also very little research on the topic, which explains how the IKETIS project came to be. "The project focused on capacity building of journalists, NGOs and

policy-makers. My objective was to help raise public and policy awareness of the issue in the UK, and ultimately to change how climate change-induced migration is perceived" comments Sakellari.

To do so, the IKETIS project investigated the interplay between media narratives, policy and societal trends and tried to identify the best possible angle to change its course. Interviews and behaviour surveys revealed, for instance, that journalists, NGOs and policy-makers in the UK do not believe that audiences would react positively to a campaign on climate change-induced

migration. They are, however, willing to engage the public in new ways to raise awareness about this issue.

New tools for better public engagement

Sakellari developed e-learning tools with this objective in mind. The tools can be summarised in a five-point guide which will help communicate the story of migration in the context of a changing climate. The first four points cover the use of fact-based communication, avoiding the victim/threat oversimplification, considering the circumstances leading to migration and allowing migrants to express themselves. The last point is more of a paradigm shift: it requires letting go of the 'us vs them' dichotomy in favour of social justice, fairness and human rights for all.

"As media coverage of climate justice slowly emerges, I hope that IKETIS outputs will help shift the media discourse towards protection and rights. The idea is to counter anti-migrant narratives and break ground for fair and inclusive policies," Sakellari explains.

IKETIS research was completed in April 2019, and Sakellari now intends to pursue her work by focusing on education: "My follow-up plans notably consist in integrating knowledge about social movements related to climate change into climate change education and putting climate justice at the centre of its programmes."



The idea is to counter anti-migrant narratives and break ground for fair and inclusive policies.

PROJECT

IKETIS – The Mediation of Climate Change Induced Migration. Implications for meaningful media discourse and empowerment of key intermediaries to raise public awareness

COORDINATED BY

University of Brighton in the United Kingdom

FUNDED UNDER

H2020-MSCA-IF

CORDIS FACTSHEET

cordis.europa.eu/project/id/748295

PROJECT WEBSITE

iketisblog.wordpress.com



Exploring the media's influence on how European citizens think and feel about immigration

Immigration has become a hot topic across Europe in recent years but how citizens think and feel about it can be influenced by how the media 'frames' immigrants themselves. The IMMIGRANTS project set out to unravel the underlying mechanisms.



Despite wide acceptance that the mass media influences attitudes to immigration, there is little empirical evidence. Macrosocial studies that have documented the effect of mass media on acceptance of immigration, correlate news about immigrants (how often and in which tone?) with data on people's attitudes. Yet their results struggle to evidence direct causation.

This research carried out by the IMMIGRANTS project, undertaken with the support of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie programme, pursued a more individual-centred approach by exposing people to particular immigration news and then recording their reactions – in terms of their attitudes and emotions.

Sylvie Graf and Sabine Sczesny, professors at the University of Bern, found that language used to describe immigrants (e.g. nouns vs adjectives), the tone of the news (positive vs negative), who was talking about immigration issues (migrants vs experts), and the presence of accompanying images, influence attitudes toward immigrants and immigration.

Revealing the underlying mechanisms

One method the IMMIGRANTS team used was to create fictitious newspaper reports inspired by real news. For example, they prepared various versions of an article about either positive or negative behaviour of Italian immigrants in Switzerland – one including descriptions of nationality with only nouns ('immigrated Italians') and another only with adjectives ('Italian immigrants'). Participants were randomly divided into four groups, one for each report.

After reading the fictitious article, participants were asked how they felt about Italian immigrants, about their attitudes toward immigrants and immigration. The team compared the results

from the four groups, surmising that any differences would be the result of the experimental manipulation. The evidence suggested that mass media news about immigrants can alter attitudes toward the immigrant group at stake after only singular exposure.

Regarding labels, when ethnicity or nationality of immigrants was described with nouns, people felt more negative about the given

immigrant group than when it was described by adjectives, independent of whether they read about immigrants' positive or negative behaviours.

"We cannot avoid labelling when describing other people's group membership. We search for information about where others come from or belong to in order to make sense of our social environment. But we should choose our words carefully as our descriptions may polarise attitudes of our audiences," says Graf, a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow.

Preliminary evidence on the effect of images in news reports (increasingly prevalent with online news) on immigration suggests that reports with an image depicting an immigrant evoked greater empathy than reports without and subsequently led to more positive attitudes to immigrants and immigration. However, according to Graf: "The specific role of pictures accompanying news reports on immigration needs further investigation."

Towards inclusive and harmonious societies

In order to create inclusive and harmonious societies, the goal defined within the European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion, residents of European countries must come to terms with people from different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds. "Better understanding of the factors that fight or enhance intolerance can inform tailored interventions to improve relations between groups in society," states Graf.

While the team have shared their results in workshops for professional communicators about immigrants and immigration (journalists and NGO employees), they are now seeking to reach a larger audience. They also plan to extend their research into the impact of images, as well as into behavioural intentions towards people from different groups.

PROJECT

IMMIGRANTS – The Effects of Media News about Immigrants on Majority's Attitudes and Behaviors towards Immigrants

COORDINATED BY

University of Bern in Switzerland

FUNDED UNDER

H2020-MSCA-IF

CORDIS FACTSHEET

cordis.europa.eu/project/id/703495

PROJECT WEBSITE

immigrants-project.eu



Better understanding of the factors that fight or enhance intolerance can inform tailored interventions to improve relations between groups in society.

Tackling inequality through inclusive education and social support

Inequality is a growing problem in the European Union. That's why a group of researchers are developing methods to increase educational equality and social inclusion for those at risk of marginalisation.

Social cohesion is the bedrock of the EU. However, many argue that this foundation is beginning to crack. That's because factors such as migration, cultural diversification

and segregation all contribute to growing inequalities in education, the labour market, income and welfare systems, amongst others.



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To strengthen the social bond, initiatives across Europe are working to increase intercultural contact and facilitate a respect for different cultures. One of these initiatives is the EU-funded ISOTIS project. The project's overarching aim is to contribute to the development of effective practices and policies for increasing educational equality and social inclusion for those who face persistent disadvantages and risk of marginalisation.

"In Greek, ισότητα means equality, evenness, fairness and parity," says Paul Leseman, a researcher at Utrecht University in the Netherlands and ISOTIS project coordinator. "In alignment with the Greek term, ISOTIS builds on the strengths of culturally and linguistically diverse families, many of them migrants, giving them a voice in how to adapt early education systems and support services."

A focus on education

To combat inequalities and increase inclusiveness, researchers set their sight on early childhood and primary education, along with family support and health services, and community programmes. "Education is important for a range of outcomes later in life," explains Leseman. "It is also about establishing a common ground, sharing and co-creating norms and values, supporting interethnic interaction, and fostering democratic citizenship."

Research was done at both the macro and micro levels. As to the former, researchers compared educational systems across Europe. "We identified a number of system characteristics that consistently reduce education gaps, including early childhood education, small class size and a late tracking age," says Leseman.

At the micro level, the project conducted observational research on how individual classrooms create and promote intercultural cohesion. For example, in Portugal, the *Mãcheia de Chaborrilhos* initiative is increasing the inclusion of Roma children in primary schools with non-Roma children. "This programme focuses on promoting intercultural dialogue in classrooms through identity activities like making self-portraits and family trees, discussing family stories using heritage languages, and playful group activities," says Leseman.

Another key aspect of the project was an interview study. Here, researchers worked with local providers and NGOs to interview thousands of parents across Europe and learn about their personal experiences living within a multicultural society.

"We learned that parents have high educational aspirations for their children, a positive relationship with teachers, and infrequently experience incidents of being treated unfairly or openly discriminated at the local level," adds Leseman.

A practical tool for inclusion

From this research, the project developed effective interventions for tackling the mechanisms of inequality. One such intervention is the online Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). The VLE includes over 100 multimedia learning activities on such topics as identity, language awareness, bridges between home and school, cultural differences and social justice.

"Our goal was to create culturally safe, welcoming places for children in early and primary education, regardless of their background, with easy-to-cross boundaries between home and school, and trusting relationships between parents and professionals," says Leseman. "The VLE encapsulates many of the project's findings, creating a practical tool for intercultural education and multilingual support in classrooms and within family-focused interventions."



ISOTIS builds on the strengths of culturally and linguistically diverse families, many of them migrants, giving them a voice in how to adapt early education systems and support services.

PROJECT

ISOTIS – Inclusive Education and Social Support to Tackle Inequalities in Society

COORDINATED BY

Utrecht University in the Netherlands

FUNDED UNDER

H2020-SOCIETY

CORDIS FACTSHEET

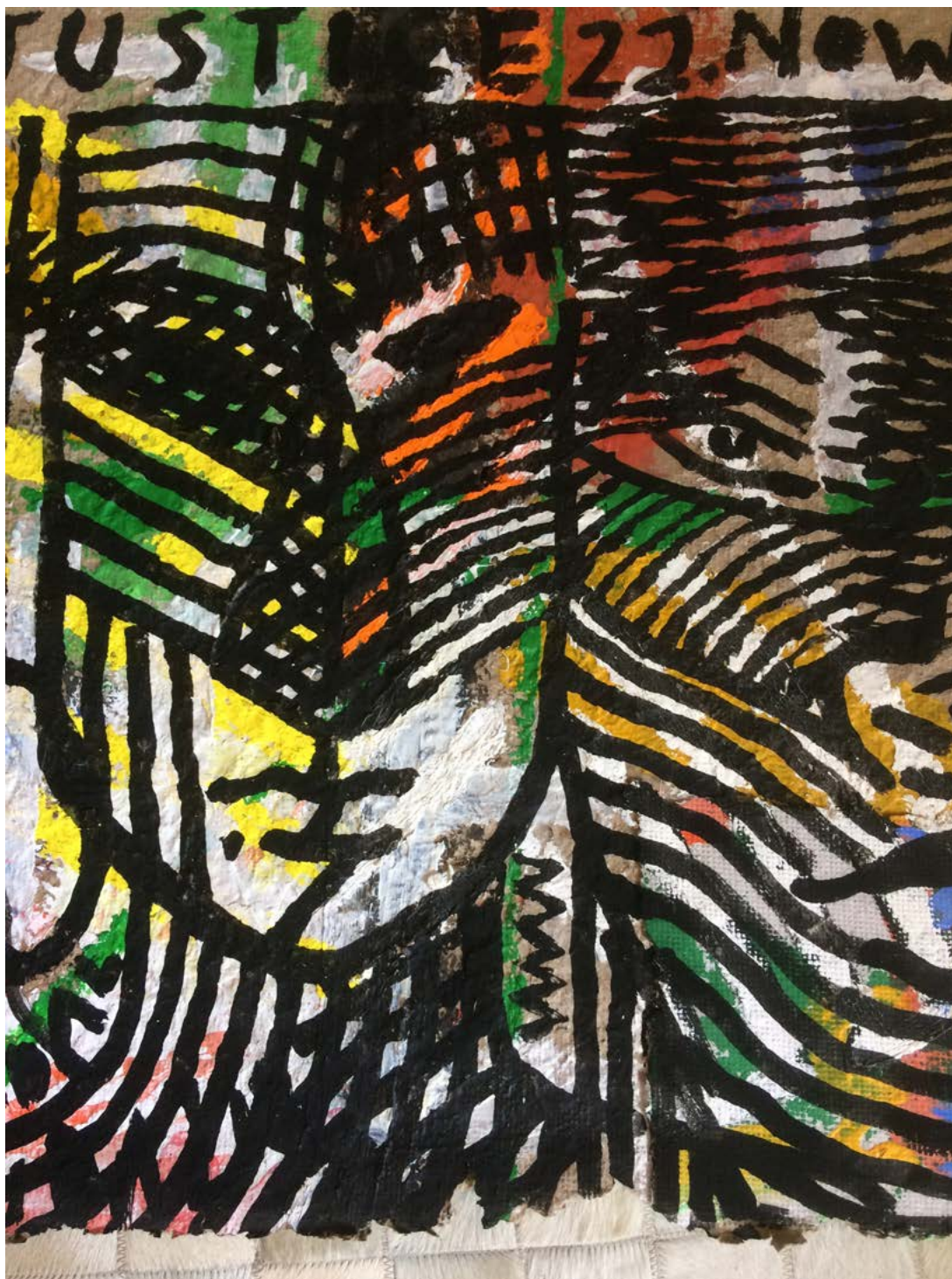
cordis.europa.eu/project/id/727069

PROJECT WEBSITE

isotis.org



Framing Europe's post-colonial self-awareness



© Margarida Calafate Ribeiro ("Justice" by Francisco Vidal)

Through extensive fieldwork, interviews and comparative analysis, EU researchers are understanding how Europe's colonial past affects the children and grandchildren of those involved in the decolonisation process.

The former African colonies of Belgium, France and Portugal may be gone, but the aftermath of colonisation is still very much a part of the European fabric. This is particularly true for those coming from Algeria, Angola, Cape Verde, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and São Tomé and Príncipe. Do memories from colonial times, which have

been passed from generation to generation, have an ongoing impact on Europe today? How do these memories manifest themselves socially and culturally?

These are the types of questions posed by the European Research Council-funded MEMOIRS project.

"At the heart of the project is a desire to understand the challenge of living in post-colonial Europe, a multicultural society marked by strong – although often latent – residues of apparently

forgotten empires," says Margarida Calafate Ribeiro, a senior researcher at University of Coimbra's Centre for Social Studies and the project's principal investigator.

With a focus on covering the intergenerational memories of the children and grandchildren of those involved in and affected by the decolonisation process, researchers set out to interrogate Europe's post-colonial inheritors. Through extensive fieldwork, interviews and comparative analysis, what they discovered was

that for those who are 'children of the empires', the colonial fact is not relegated to the past but is something that defines present-day Europe.

A part of Europe's history

During the project, researchers conducted over 160 interviews with second- and third-generation descendants of both colonisers and the colonised living in Belgium, France and Portugal. They also analysed over 200 artistic activities and more than 300 artistic works to understand the important contribution of these memories to the visual and performing arts, literature and cinema.

Whereas past research focused on the testimony of those who lived during colonial times, the MEMOIRS project stands out as being one of the first to contemplate colonial heritage in post-colonial times. "These interviews were more than exercises in data collection, they were a chance for the interviewees to see themselves as European social and political subjects," explains Ribeiro. "Often for the first time, they saw how their transnational family histories are integrated into the history of Europe."

For the artists involved, these interviews were an opportunity for critical reflection, sharing and creativity. In several instances, new collaborative projects developed to shed light on the significance of colonial encounters in framing Europe's post-colonial self-awareness.



Our goal is to keep the conversation going at the political, social and cultural levels, ensuring that these post-colonial stories become seen as part of Europe's contemporary history.

Keeping the conversation going

In addition to providing the kindling needed to light important discussions on post-colonial identity in universities, associations and cultural centres, the MEMOIRS project has also made waves at the political level. For example, not only are many museums reinterpreting their collections to better reflect this identity, some states (i.e., Belgium, France and Germany) are taking responsibility for their often-violent colonial pasts.

“Our goal is to keep the conversation going at the political, social and cultural levels, ensuring that these post-colonial stories become seen as part of Europe’s contemporary history,” adds Ribeiro.

To do so, the project is working with the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in France and Portugal, the Museum of European and Mediterranean Civilisations in France, and the Africa Museum in Belgium to organise a special exhibition that uses the visual arts to reinterpret colonial heritage in post-colonial

times. The project is also looking to launch a data base on post-colonial artists in Europe and a podcast based on the interviews of the project.

PROJECT

MEMOIRS – Children of Empires and European Postmemories

HOSTED BY

Centre for Social Studies, University of Coimbra in Portugal

FUNDED UNDER

H2020-ERC

CORDIS FACTSHEET

cordis.europa.eu/project/id/648624

PROJECT WEBSITE

memoirs.ces.uc.pt



Understanding the impact that opinion has on migration policy

EU researchers shed light on how a policy-maker's view of migration shapes the possibilities and limitations of migration regulations.



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Whether it be Europeans crossing the Atlantic in the early 20th century, refugees fleeing war-torn Syria or highly skilled professionals moving to the West for work, migration has been – and always will be – an important part of the human story. Today, 214 million people, or 3.4 % of the global population, are migrants (according to the UN). As such, migration is a very contested issue – and one that policy-makers around the world continue to grapple with.

Research on the reasons why people move and the policy responses to this movement is abundant, yet we know surprisingly little about how policy-makers reach those responses. To find out, MIGPROSP – an EU-funded project granted by the European Research Council – is working to understand how policy-makers view international migration and how this view shapes the possibilities and limitations of migration regulations.

“We need to know more about how key individuals within governance systems, institutions and organisations understand the issue of international migration,” says ERC grantee Andrew Geddes, Director of the Migration Policy Centre at the European University Institute in Italy. “What we learned is that how a policy-maker makes sense of migration will ultimately determine which migrants are allowed to enter a country, on what basis, and for how long.”

Getting from A to B

Whereas most migration research tends to focus on understanding why people move, MIGPROSP studied how governance systems make sense of migration. “We aimed to show that migration is not simply some kind of ‘external’ challenge to governance systems,” explains Geddes. “Instead, we wanted to show how governance systems, through their actions and inactions, inclu-



We need to know more about how key individuals within governance systems, institutions and organisations understand the issue of international migration.

sions and exclusions, judgments and misjudgments, play a key role in defining the challenges they as decision-makers face.”

Researchers studied migration governance within Europe, North and South America, and the Asia-Pacific region, conducting over 400 interviews across

27 countries. Work included analysing European responses to the 2015 refugee crisis and the displacement of the Rohingya people in South-East Asia. Researchers also studied the surge in child migration along the US-Mexico border and the Trump administration’s response to the crisis. In South America, their work focused on the effects of Venezuelan displacement.

“We tend to see crises like these as drivers of change when, in fact, responses to crisis are embedded within more everyday understandings of the causes and effects of migration,” says Geddes.

For example, in Europe, the ‘normality’ of migration is understood as the potential for large-scale and potentially uncontrollable migration – an understanding that has played a key role in the development of EU policy since the end of the Cold War. In South-East Asia, where formal governance structures are not as developed as in the EU, migration is viewed as ‘temporary’, such as temporary ‘foreign’ workers or temporary protection for the displaced. “Whether accurate or not, these understandings have powerful effects on migration governance,” adds Geddes.

From research to action

With the project now finished, researchers are working to convert their findings into policy actions.

“I hope that from our work we will develop a research agenda that is focused on the causes and consequences of cognitive bias in migration governance,” says Geddes. “Thanks to the understanding of how policy-makers make sense of migration obtained in this project, we are now better positioned to contribute to the global migration debate.”

PROJECT

MIGPROSP – Prospects for International Migration Governance

HOSTED BY

European University Institute in Italy

FUNDED UNDER

FP7-IDEAS-ERC

CORDIS FACTSHEET

cordis.europa.eu/project/id/340430

PROJECT WEBSITE

migrationpolicycentre.eu/migprosp/about



Why migration solidarity groups could herald a new politics

Who could forget the images from what was dubbed the ‘migration crisis’ of 2015? But less documented were the practices and spaces of solidarity that emerged during that time. MigSol investigated these in pursuit of a new community-based politics.

The ‘Balkan route’ is a migration path towards central and northern Europe. It gained attention in 2015 when the number of people using it rose significantly due in part to the conflict in

Syria, but also to the increased policing of the Mediterranean Sea, thus increasing the dangers of reaching Europe from Libya or Tunisia.



While European states deployed measures to control the mobility of people along the Balkan route, grassroots groups and individuals mobilised in solidarity with the migrants. The EU-supported MigSol project observed and assessed how displaced people could undertake political actions that served their goals and values within these solidarity spaces.

MigSol showed that while these sites cater for the daily needs of migrants (providing food and shelter for example), they also crucially offer a useful starting point for rethinking inclusive politics across Europe.

Alternative political spaces

Displaced people are often seen as outside the political realm. As non-citizens, they tend to be denied agency (the right to make key decisions about their own life), and they are frequently regarded with either suspicion or humanitarian compassion.

“These issues are particularly pressing at a time when ultra-nationalism and the far right are on the rise all over Europe. MigSol proposed ways to rethink the meanings and future of politics and community,” explains Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow Celine Cantat.

The Fellow undertook ethnographic fieldwork based on participant observation and interviews with a range of solidarity groups and spaces, such as occupied buildings and alternative accommodation sites, in three places: Greece, Hungary and Serbia.

MigSol found that practices and communities of ‘migration solidarity’ allow displaced people, along with those in solidarity, to meet their daily needs by organising themselves in non-hierarchical ways based on participation. “For example, in some city centres, several hundred people lived together, using rotas to organise activities such as cooking, running classes or clinics and social events. This was in sharp contrast with the isolated and depressing experiences usually found in official reception facilities,” says Cantat.

These spaces also allowed communities to be forged beyond the statuses that usually set people apart (such as asylum seekers, refugees, residents and citizens); for members to get involved in political actions such as protests and campaigns for their rights and those of others.

Inclusion from below

MigSol evidenced existing ways in which migrants are already meaningfully included in society through local solidarity politics. These represent concrete alternatives to policies that isolate both symbolically (through discourses which posit migrants as ‘outsiders’ to be integrated) and spatially (by hosting people in camps and reception centres).

The project proposed that these alternative political practices should be supported as spaces offering answers to what some conceive as the political and democratic crisis that Europe is currently witnessing.

“The first step would be that the EU and Member States stop the criminalisation of migrants and their supporters, which we documented during the project,” says Cantat. “This means, firstly, halting the encampment, detention and deportation of non-citizen residents and, secondly, providing legitimacy and support for solidarity activities.”

Cantat intends to continue researching these solidarity spaces to further explore their potential: “Against a backdrop of reduced state welfare support, more people are relying on self-organised structures for basic services like healthcare and education.”



MigSol proposed ways to rethink the meanings and future of politics and community.

PROJECT

MigSol – Migration Solidarity and Acts of Citizenship along the Balkan Route

COORDINATED BY

Central European University in Hungary

FUNDED UNDER

H2020-MSCA-IF

CORDIS FACTSHEET

cordis.europa.eu/project/id/751866

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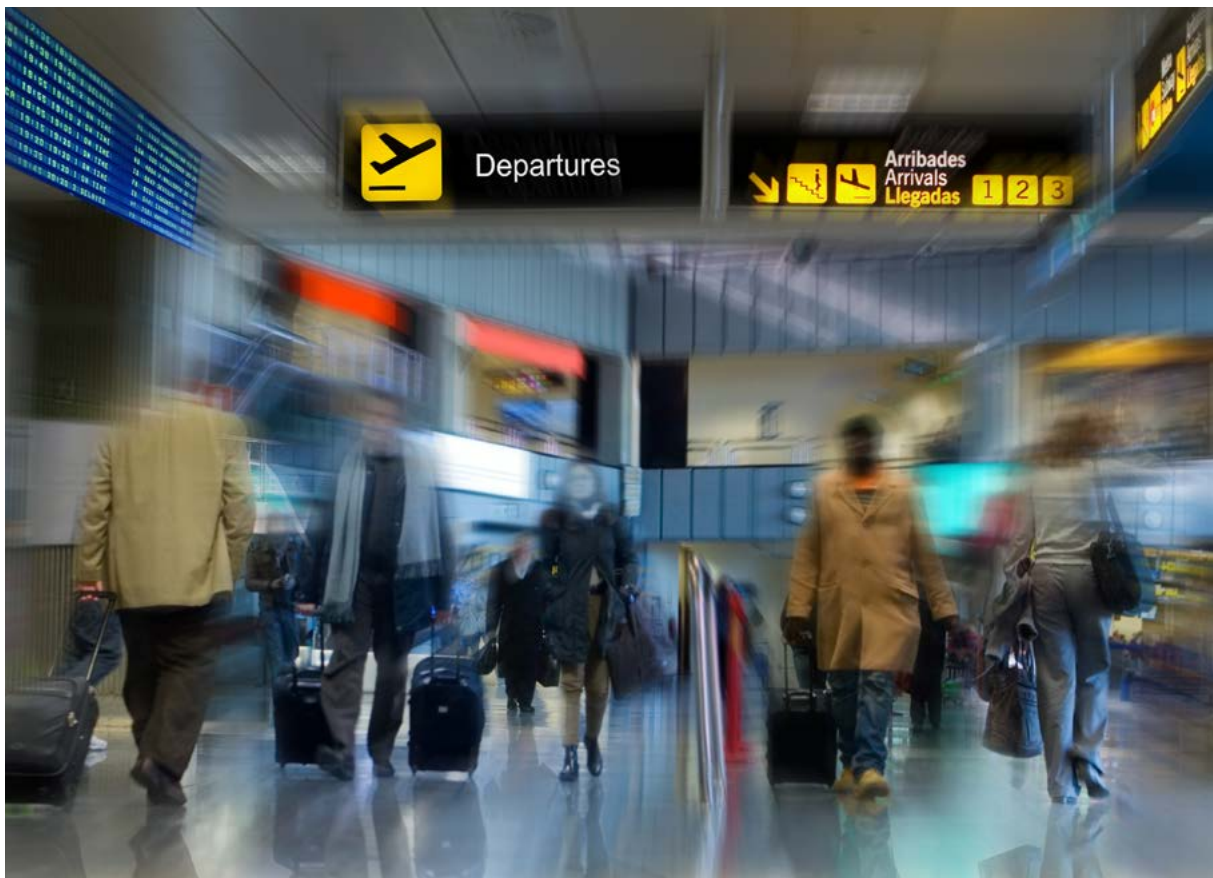
cps.ceu.edu/research/migsol



Unravelling the actual and perceived impact of intra-EU migration

With the EU's freedom of movement often targeted by populist parties, there is a need to unpick fact from fiction. REMINDER investigated the social and economic consequences of intra-EU migration (or 'mobility') and how these relate to the media, public opinion and policy.

If 'free movement of persons' – one of the EU's four pillars – is to remain fundamental to the European project, then what people both value in and fear about it has to be better understood.



While the EU-funded REMINDER project's interactive website provides a comprehensive overview of the range of intertwined mobility issues explored, some findings stand out as offering unique insights into the numbers, impacts and public debates underpinning what we know, or think we do, about European mobility.

Telling stories

When the researchers looked at intra-EU mobility flows, based on EU Member States' official statistics available in REMINDER's 'Database of Databases', the data revealed the significance of return to country of origin migration. The biggest single flow was of returning Romanians (approximately 90 000 in 2016), a finding which challenges narratives representing intra-EU mobility as one-way (in this case, East to West).

Regarding mobility's impact on public finances, REMINDER found that while EU migrant workers tend to have an overall positive net fiscal effect on the public finances of EU immigration countries,

they tend to generate a net negative effect on host states' unemployment benefit system. The researchers did however point out that this 'fiscal burden' was small.

"This gets to the heart of areas where policies, in this instance how we structure welfare systems,

need to reassure critics of 'free movement' that mobile populations are not simply taking without contributing. The need for a sense of reciprocity is clearly important for people," explains Carlos Vargas-Silva, Director of COMPAS, Associate Professor at the University of Oxford and consortium leader for REMINDER.

On the media's role, surprisingly little attention had been paid to intra-EU mobility by the press in most countries (compared to that of third-country national migration). The exception being the former EU Member State the UK, where national media was preoccupied with intra-EU mobility due to the Brexit debate and the levels of migration following the EU's eastward expansion in 2004 and 2007.

Multidisciplinary research techniques

To explore public opinion, amongst other methods, REMINDER conducted a public panel survey (repeated three times,

over 11 months) with 7 000 people, as well as an online experiment consisting of a test for short-term effects where respondents were shown different migration-related news articles and were then asked about their approval of free movement.

The results suggest that there is a relationship – in particular circumstances – between negative media coverage about migrants and free movement, but there is little differentiation by the public between EU and non-EU flows.

Analysing the influence of traditional media, social media, political party and civil society communications, across Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Romania, Spain, Sweden and the UK presented a daunting quantity of information, in multiple languages.

REMINDER used a combination of computer assisted techniques to translate around 140 000 news articles into one target language (typically English). The results were cross-checked by native speakers in each of the source languages, who added country- and culture- specific context.

A go-to resource

"This research comes at a critical time, as the international rise in populist and nationalist politics means that the European project as a whole faces challenges it has never before had to contend with," says Vargas-Silva.

With much of REMINDER's work already featured in academic journals, the team are promoting their results, as an evidence-based go-to resource, for policy-makers, the media and civil society organisations.

PROJECT

REMINDER – Role of European Mobility and its Impacts in Narratives, Debates and EU Reforms

COORDINATED BY

University of Oxford in the United Kingdom

FUNDED UNDER

H2020-SOCIETY

CORDIS FACTSHEET

cordis.europa.eu/project/id/727072

PROJECT WEBSITES

reminder-project.eu

understandfreemovement.eu



Research collaboration helps deliver evidence-based migration and integration policy-making

Built by a unique partnership of European civil society, local authorities, think tanks and research networks, the ReSOMA virtual community facilitated expert consultation for evidence-based European policy recommendations on migration and integration.

While evidence-based knowledge of asylum, integration and migration issues is increasing, synergies among different groups of experts remains underdeveloped. Researchers and

stakeholders are well-connected within their own communities, but despite an interest in wider collaboration, there are few structured opportunities.



The EU-funded ReSOMA project developed a platform to connect experts working on asylum, integration and migration topics, so that synergies could generate evidence-based EU policy-making.

Over the 2 years of the project, ReSOMA engaged more than 1 200 experts working on these issues to consult on 18 high-impact policy topics on which EU-level decisions were likely to be taken. Two annual rounds of consultations resulted in 80

publications that looked at the implications of European decisions on national and local policies and practice, while also offering recommendations.

Amongst the topics that the project explored, one that attracted particular attention was that of the criminalisation of humanitarian assistance to migrants. "ReSOMA research found that between

2015 and 2019 at least 158 individuals were investigated or formally prosecuted for offering humanitarian assistance to migrants and refugees across 11 European countries, mainly as a result of the EU Facilitation Directive. Our evidence was widely echoed in several European news outlets," explains project coordinator Guia Gilardoni.

The project's 'criminalisation of solidarity' report, which outlined further the team's research results in this area, gained coverage from 17 international and regional media outlets, including CNN, Politico Europe, TIME, EUobserver and openDemocracy.

A platform for identifying and responding to policy issues

At the beginning of both years of the project – with input from EU and national stakeholders, researchers and policy-makers – ReSOMA identified nine urgent topics for investigation.

Project partners took these topics and collated evidence through consultations with specialist researchers, policy-makers and practitioners from European civil society and local authorities. The consultations mapped available policy options, investigated policy perceptions and proposed recommendations, all collated in Final Synthesis Reports.

At the heart of the project was the interactive ReSOMA Platform, coordinated by ISMU and designed by Ernst&Young, which

enabled the virtual community of practitioners, policy-makers and researchers to collaborate online.

The make-up of the consortium, with partners well-networked in both research communities, ensured wide outreach at different levels of governance, with evidence-based recommendations likely to attract broad support among policy-makers.

In some cases, the groundbreaking results raised great interest among the public and fed into the wider European political debate, as reflected in workshops held by ReSOMA with different policy-makers.

Continuing to inform policy

While the ReSOMA team will continue to support collaboration between academics and stakeholders, at the end of the project the platform (and its community) will be integrated into IMISCOE, Europe's largest network of scholars in the area of asylum, integration and migration, so that it can continue to respond to emerging evidence-based policy needs.

"The project provided migration stakeholders with opportunities not only to challenge each other through structured dialogue, but also to work together on specific topics and come up with solutions to real-life, urgent problems," says Gilardoni. "ReSOMA has championed a new way of gathering evidence that is both multi-stakeholder, context-specific and policy-relevant."

PROJECT

ReSOMA – Research Social platform On Migration and Asylum

COORDINATED BY

ISMU Foundation in Italy

FUNDED UNDER

H2020-SOCIETY

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cordis.europa.eu/project/id/770730

PROJECT WEBSITE

resoma.eu



Migration status and the dynamics of urban diversity

In what ways can a migrant's status, whether refugee or temporary worker, influence a city's diversity? While investigating this question, StatusCities also explored worrying trends in the production and use of migration statistics.



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While many of the rules and regulations that determine migrant status (such as refugee, visiting students, etc.) are made at the national level, at the local level, status determines which resources can be accessed, while also directly influencing the diversity of local populations.

The EU-supported project, StatusCities, investigated how urban diversification is tied to the interplay between who gets to move through a particular immigration track (conditionalities of entry) and how being a migrant is linked to what a person can and cannot do with a particular status (parameters of presence).

With analysis still ongoing, the qualitative work conducted so far suggests that many individuals rarely identify with their immigration status – unless problems arise. Individuals typically feel that their reasons for migration are legitimate and not reducible to a simple status. The project also traced how migration status influences the quality of neighbourhoods that migrants inhabit.

Additionally, the work led to research, outlined in a 2019 paper, which looked at how the ‘crisis narratives’ surrounding Europe’s 2015 migration influx fuelled the ‘datafication’ of migration through demands for new data-led ways of tracking, mapping and predicting human mobility. The article outlines how this demand for migration statistics presented a market opportunity for technology and data analytic firms which consolidated narratives that present migration as a risk.

Geographic patterns and perspectives of legal status

The StatusCities Marie Skłodowska-Curie researcher focused on urban areas as the destination of choice for the majority of international migrants. “Urban diversity used to be about how many different countries people came from – a very static conception. Recently, focus has shifted to how different origin groups are highly differentiated, partly due to their different legal statuses,” explains Marie Skłodowska-Curie fellow, Fran Meissner.

To understand legal status from a migrant’s perspective, interviews with 39 individuals representing a range of legal statuses were conducted in a mid-sized German city. The interviews were complemented with photos taken by the participants that were placed on a mobile map to represent an individual’s interaction

with the city. The interviews focused on the respondent’s experience of arrival in the city, finding housing and keeping or changing their legal status.

The data revealed some instructive patterns. For example, those granted refugee status were more likely to have an ‘entry’ into the housing market via housing

corporations. This had the potential knock-on effect that these migrants could then be found clustered in certain areas of the city.

Additionally, at the time of the interviews in 2016 many rules and regulations were changed, resulting in those awaiting refugee status being prohibited from looking for housing while their case was pending. This meant that once they were able to enter the housing market, they did so at a time when the pressures in the housing market were steadily rising (the beginning of a new university term), which exacerbated their difficulties in finding somewhere suitable.

Implications for migration policy

“Debates about regulating migration almost always focus on controlling migration flows. By highlighting the implications of these regulations, StatusCities offers insights into some of the social considerations that should be considered when deciding to put (aspiring) resident foreign nationals in legal limbo,” says Meissner.

Currently, Meissner is working with Dutch Register data to develop visualisations of migrant housing trajectories over many years, to show both those from different status groups, and also trends in upward and downward mobility.



StatusCities offers insights into some of the social considerations that should be taken into account when deciding to put (aspiring) resident foreign nationals in legal limbo.

PROJECT

StatusCities – Migrant legal STATUS diversity and diversity dynamics in European CITIES

COORDINATED BY

Delft University of Technology in the Netherlands

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RESEARCH*EU MAGAZINE ISSUE 89

NEW SOLUTIONS TO SOOTHE CHRONIC PAIN

Chronic pain is a condition that affects up to 100 million Europeans, or around one in six adults. In this issue of Research*eu magazine, meet seven Horizon 2020-funded projects that are harnessing the latest medical technology breakthroughs to develop new and innovative treatments to help alleviate and manage chronic pain and increase the quality of lives of all patients affected.



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