EU Citizens, Legal Residents
Urban Implications and Governance of Central and Eastern-European Migration (project IMAGINATION)

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Since the Schengen Treaty, member state borders have opened up for Central and Eastern European citizens. This has caused varied effects. The research project IMAGINATION (Urban Implications and Governance of CEE Migration) has started in June 2013 and focuses on the international migratory differences in the receiving urban regions. The project includes urban regions in The Netherlands, Austria, Sweden and Turkey. Finally it should lead up to insights for partners and stakeholders within this field to improve policy solutions.

Migration from Central and Eastern-European (CEE) countries has evolved into one of the main migration flows within Europe. CEE migrants are EU citizens and their mobility can be seen as a form of socio-economic participation on the European labour market. This project raises the question what the consequences are of this type of mobility for urban cohesion and urban policies.

Latest studies show that migration patterns of CEE migrants are diversifying beyond seasonal labour migration to more permanent forms of migration. This has raised questions concerning how to deal with primarily urban social consequences of temporary and more permanent forms of CEE migration. The aim of this project is to enhance our theoretical and practical understanding of how urban regions can cope with the implications of CEE migration. This involves:

(1) an identification of types of migration from CEE countries,

(2) an analysis of social implications of these types of migration for the receiving urban regions

(3) an analysis of governance approaches by local governments in the receiving urban regions to these social implications.

The project focuses on urban regions in Austria, the Netherlands, Sweden and Turkey and includes the perspective of the CEE countries themselves as well.
The impact of differential social security systems and personal income taxation on the welfare of frontier workers in the EU

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This is a synthesis of the main results from my PhD thesis entitled: “Challenges and perspectives of frontier work in the European Union. The welfare of cross-border workers across different types of welfare state”. Benefits and taxes vary greatly across European Union countries due to differences in legislation and welfare systems. Residing in one country and commuting daily to another country for work is a task that a relatively small group of people undertake everyday in Europe, however, frontier workers present a special interest in social policy due to their daily interaction with two different social and fiscal systems.

The legislation of the European Union regulates the conditions of entitlement, duration, and overall portability of social benefits for almost 50 years. Nonetheless, the existent legal framework of coordination leaves unaffected the procedural differences between the national social security systems. At the same time, the wide variation of fiscal rules and social benefits schemes procedures present administrative challenges. The EU institutions’ scientific reports illustrate a reduced level of contentment of people moving for work within the EU, due to discrepancies in social and fiscal systems (Bonin et al., 2008). As Hansen et al. (2012) mentions, considerable difficulties are faces by cross-border workers in particular from different social security and taxation laws, different pension schemes and also from different education systems.

Welfare systems are primarily designed for the needs of the state or region to which the system applies. Yet in the “age of migration”, as Castles S. (2009) refers, the cross-border working and mobility between jurisdiction place pressures on the functioning and flexibility of these systems in relation to the portability and mobility of social benefits across different types of welfare states. “For responding to the big social risks of the life-cycle, the broad-based national insurance schemes remain today the most efficient and equitable institutions at our disposal. But these schemes need to be updated and modernized”, argues Ferrera M. (2010). The current “patchwork of EU social policies” does not sufficiently address the differences between fiscal and social systems across the Member States.

Synopsis
The paper intended for the presentation aims to empirically assess the impact of the differences between social security schemes and personal income taxation in the country of work and country of residence on the welfare of cross-border workers and pensioners. It discusses the policy implications of these impacts, namely the outputs of social security coordination EC Regulation 883/2004 and
bi-lateral tax agreements. When examining the welfare of pensioners and active earners, the study refers to few key areas: insurance, redistribution and income smoothing.

Valorization

The current PhD thesis aims at researching the implications of cross-border work mobility on social security and fiscal systems, particularly focusing on the cases of Luxembourg-Belgium. The results that planned to be discussed at the conference are based on 3 papers which aim to assess the impact of free movement for work, else expressed through frontier workers, by examining the short-term and long-term benefits along with tax concessions. The research design consists of the methodology that can model different entitlements as a result of different labour market and migration entitlements. For this, we utilize a tax-benefit micro simulation modelling approach. It is based on major findings of previous work. One of the main syntheses is:

• The existent tax and social policy instruments are not coherent in the country of employment and of residence and tax deductions, allowances, end-of-year bonuses for old-aged pension play a crucial role in determining the amounts of pension and other benefits. These are one of the main components differentiating between the incomes of residents and frontier workers;
• Two welfare states’ systems that follow similar welfare objectives produce different impacts on welfare of its domestic and frontier earners;
• Similarly, for active frontier workers, mobility tax deduction plays a key role in smoothing the commuting costs and it is crucial when differentiating between the income of the residents and frontier workers;
• Cross-border working and mobility between jurisdiction place pressures on the functioning and flexibility of these systems in relation to the portability and mobility of social benefits across different types of welfare states.

While it may be interesting to focus on countries with very different welfare regimes, selecting two countries with similar welfare regimes can help us to assess the impact of cross-border working as opposed to differences in regime. We thus select two closely similar cases, as Belgium and Luxembourg that have a long tradition in cross-border cooperation and have relatively similar welfare objectives. These are also countries with significant numbers of cross-border movement of labour. Luxembourg is one of the receiving countries with the highest number of cross-border workers, and Belgium is one of the sending countries with the highest rate of cross-borders. However, considering the commonality in application of EC Regulation 883/2004 provisions for all EU Member States (with few exceptions for Luxembourg) and the persistent difference in average wages in country of employment and of residence, the results can refer to the general discussions on all dynamic cross-border regions in EU countries.


Life Paths of Migrants: a Sequence Analysis of Polish Labour Migrants’ Family-life Trajectories

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Polish migration to the Netherlands has increased substantially over the past decade and is one of the main origins of migrants settling in the country nowadays. Nevertheless, still little is known about this large and growing group of migrants. In this study, we examine to what extent migration affects the timing (“when?”) and sequencing (“in what order?”) of family-life transitions and how this relates to return migration of Polish migrants in the Netherlands. The majority of studies on family-life transitions of migrants exclusively focus on one transition only, which is unfortunate as different events in the life course are not separate experiences, but are linked to one another. Therefore, we apply a more holistic approach by using sequence analysis followed by optimal matching (OM) analysis to assess (dis-)similarities between individual life trajectories. We then use standard clustering algorithms to group the different individuals into predominant life paths. In this way, we can include multiple transitions in the family domain (migration, union formation, childbirth, divorce) simultaneously and study life-courses as meaningful units. Our analyses focus on young adult (aged 20-30 at migration) Polish labour migrants who came to the Netherlands between 2004 and 2007. We follow the life courses of these migrants for a period of five years on a monthly time base. Data come from a rich individual administrative panel database that covers the entire population of the Netherlands: the Social Statistical Database (SSD) housed by Statistics Netherlands. Preliminary analyses reveal that about 40 percent of the Polish migrants leaves the Netherlands within our five-year observation window. In particular men who migrated at relative young ages have a high likelihood to leave the Netherlands, which seems to be related to the fact that these migrants more often remain single.
The tendencies of managing legal migration in the European Union and considering the way forward

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The so-called Free Movement Directive (Directive 2004/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council) summarized and re-regulated earlier Union acquis, and integrated into a single Directive all prior legal instruments relative to the admission and residence of EU citizens staying in other Member States for whatever purpose, including the declaration of their right to, and the conditions of long-term residence. In contrast to this the regulation of the admission and residence conditions of third-country nationals is far from comprehensive. Way back in 2001 the European Commission tried to regulate the entire range of economy-driven migration, with both the employees and the self-employed inclusive. Having learnt from the failure of this draft directive and relying on the results of the public consultation pioneered in this area in 2005, the next initiation of 2007 at the Union level was already based on a sectoral approach.

The currently applicable union-level harmonized system, therefore, uses a set of regulations in the case of predefined categories and purposes – such as family reunification, pursuing studies, research, highly qualified employment – as well as in the case of long-term residents from third-countries. This system, however, applies different regulation, if any, when it comes to intra-EU mobility. Furthermore, taking into account the fact that at the Union level the regulatory instruments used for classifying stays exceeding three months are typically the system of directives, this practice offers a certain level of flexibility for the Member States when transposing the provisions of these directives into the legislation of the specific countries.

The presentation intends to reveal what tendencies dominate in managing legal migration at a European level, for example what groups of migrants are targeted, what types of migration are preferred, how we tend to legislate equal treatment clauses, what forms of intra-EU mobility schemes have emerged. My approach would not only simply taking a look at the legal framework but evaluating the situation from a practical point of view.

The research dares to ask questions for which we might not be able to provide a clear answer based on the present European legal acts, such as who is considered a migrant worker, as e.g. the Single Permit Directive opens up the scope of workers, while the recent recast proposal of the Students and Researchers Directive seems to exclude certain categories. We should also deal with the question whether we really want common equal treatment clauses for all groups of legal migrants, or whether justified reasons provide basis for much differentiation.

Finally the main question is: do we want to continue the sectoral approach that even Mr Manservisi called old-fashioned in his opening speech at the Metropolis 2013 conference, or is there a better way forward, namely the mutual recognition? While considering all these questions we might end up
finding a vision for managing legal migration after the Stockholm Program, as presently there is no recent Policy Plan concerning these issues such as the one launched in 2005 on legal migration.