

**ON-THE-MOVE – "The reality of free movement for young
European citizens migrating in times of crisis"**

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Comparative Report and Recommendations
SYNTHESIS REPORT

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The Project ON-THE-MOVE

The project ON-THE-MOVE - "The reality of free movement for young European citizens migrating in times of crisis" was a joint initiative of the Centre for European Constitutional Law – Themistocles and Dimitris Tsatsos Foundation in cooperation with the European Training and Research Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (AT), the Centre for Sociological Research, Catholic University of Leuven (BE), the Center for the Study of Democracy (BG), SYMFILIOSI (CY), the Institute of Baltic Studies (ET), the French Institute for Human Rights and Civil Liberties (FR), the European Forum for Migration Studies at the University of Bamberg (DE), COSPE (IT), Art.1 (NL), the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights (PL), CESIS (PT), the Association Institute for Public Policy (RO), Comillas Pontifical University (ES) and the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies at the University of London (UK). The project was co-funded by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union and was implemented in the period from November 2015 to October 2017.

The project aimed to address the reality of free movement from the viewpoint of young European citizens who exercise their right. It aims to deepen the knowledge and understanding of the barriers that occur when young people exercise this right, whether 'real' or 'perceived', legal, administrative or social in nature, to identify their root causes and propose solutions to make free movement a reality accessible to all.

To achieve this unique perspective the project conducted qualitative field research in 15 EU Member States that have experienced increased outgoing or incoming flows of movers in the last 4 years. Namely, 567 young European citizens, aged between 25 and 35 years, and 67 representatives of authorities competent in the field of free movement were interviewed and provided input on:

- ❖ current trends in the movement of young European citizens
- ❖ drivers and barriers that occur when young people exercise their right to free movement
- ❖ recommendations to make free movement an accessible reality

Desktop research and legislation analysis presented the patterns and current challenges for young people and the authorities competent on free movement, based on legislation, statistics and academic literature. The project outputs include:

- ✓ 15 national reports on the experiences of young movers (accessible at <http://euonthemove.eu/national-research/>)
- ✓ 4 cross national thematic reports on

- the views of authorities and other stakeholders in sending and receiving countries (<http://euonthemove.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Views-of-authorities-and-stakeholders-in-sending-and-receiving-countries-on-free-movement.pdf>)
- Drivers and barriers to free movement in sending countries (<http://euonthemove.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Drivers-and-barriers-to-free-movement-in-sending-countries.pdf>)
- Drivers and barriers to free movement in receiving countries (<http://euonthemove.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Drivers-and-barriers-to-free-movement-in-receiving-countries.pdf>) and
- a closer look to overcoming barriers (<http://euonthemove.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/A-closer-look-to-overcoming-barriers.pdf>)
- ✓ A Report on individual experiences of young people on the move (<http://euonthemove.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Report-on-individual-experiences-of-young-people-on-the-move.pdf>)
- ✓ Best practices manual addressed to local, regional and national authorities (<http://euonthemove.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Best-practices-manual-for-authorities.pdf>)
- ✓ A manual addressing ‘myths’ and stereotypes common among young people moving in Europe (<http://euonthemove.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Manual-for-young-people-on-the-move.pdf>)
- ✓ A comparative report synthesizing the findings of the research and presenting recommendations to make free movement an accessible reality in the EU.

Detailed information on the project is available at the project website: <http://euonthemove.eu/> and the project facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/onthemoveProject/>

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The present report aims to synthesize the data collected in the framework of the project ON THE MOVE, analyse the extent to which the fundamental right to free movement is exercised effectively and provide concrete recommendations for national and EU authorities.

The existing knowledge on free movement (Chapter 1) shows that although Europe appears to be an area where citizens take advantage of the opportunity to live, study, or work anywhere they wish, this general observation does not necessarily hold true for young people. The movement of young citizens remains unaccounted for in statistics and has received limited attention in research. Thus, the knowledge on the independent movement patterns of young people is relatively episodic and *ad hoc*.

Directive 2004/38/EC reaffirmed the fundamental right of citizens to move and reside within the EU, enjoying equal treatment and non-discrimination and consolidated the rights, obligations and national policies for EU citizens on the move. Although all countries have transposed the Directive, problems remain and areas of resistance are still present, especially with regard to 'grey' areas of the Directive (burden on welfare, threats to public order). At national level, legislation on free movement interacts with an important number of laws in areas like social security, health care, labour etc and forms a complex web which is difficult to penetrate. Areas where legislative problems were reported include labour and health issues, vocational qualifications systems, restrictions in freedom of movement, family rights etc. Moreover, a big number of institutions and authorities at different levels of national or sub-national government are competent on issues related to free movement. This makes the institutional mandate on free movement fragmented and with limited visibility (Chapter 2).

The free movement patterns of young EU citizens (Chapter 3) are difficult to study in detail as they are unaccounted for by official statistics and the data available is not comparable. From the data collected during the project, there is an intense mobility of young European citizens between all the 15 participating countries, but in varying terms compared to each other. A first group of countries (BG, EE, GR, RO, PO, PT) present a negative human flow balance and function mainly as sending countries. A second group of countries (BE, FR, DE, NL, UK) have a positive balance and function mainly as receiving countries, while a third group of countries (CY, IT, ES, AT) enjoy relatively balanced outflows and inflows (mixed countries). The nationalities of EU movers differ from country to country, because of historical relations, proximity or economic reasons. The research shows that the mobility of young EU citizens is closely influenced by the economic crisis and the shrinking labour markets, but at the same time it represents more than a simple consequence of the crisis or economic problems in some countries.

The experience of free movement from the perspective of young European citizens (Chapter 4) was revealed through qualitative research conducted in the

15 member states that took part in the project. The key question was whether the right to free movement in practice corresponds to its initial concept and whether it is effective as far as young EU citizens moving independently are concerned. In a total of 575 interviews the project captured the views of young Europeans in different phases of the free movement cycle (young citizens who wish or plan to move, who moved and reside in another EU country, who moved and returned to their country of origin). The interviewees were between 25 and 35 years of age at the time of moving and planned and executed their move independently, i.e. not assisted by a university (in the context of study) or by an employer (in the context of work).

The main *drivers* that young movers reported were work, love and adventure. Finding a job or improving job prospects was the most common driver for moving. Reuniting or joining partners of family living abroad was a second important driver, while changing environment and acquiring new experiences was a third. The most common *barriers* reported by young movers related to language, difficulties in accessing information; bureaucracy; discrimination eg in the housing market but also issues like the high cost of living in the host country; competition in the labour market; adjustment to the host culture; building a network of friends etc. Barriers appeared to have *regional variations* in terms of intensity. Incoming movers (regardless of the region) together with movers (of all types) interviewed in Eastern countries seemed to perceive the barriers with a higher intensity. Prospective movers and returnees (for all regions), as well as most types of movers interviewed in the North-Western countries, were more prone to minimise barriers. Finally, interviewees from Southern countries think that barriers are of medium intensity. Young movers overcome barriers mainly through the assistance of personal contacts and networks. Therefore barriers, although existent, might make parts of the experience of moving more difficult, but do not appear to prevent people from moving.

Representatives/experts of national/local authorities competent on free movement (65 were interviewed) emphasised that Europeans on the move have diverse backgrounds being both very young as well as older, some with little formal education, others highly educated. On a general level, they confirmed the predominance of the 'East to West' and 'South to North/West' movement patterns in the EU, however they also observed that the numbers of movers from particular countries vary across different time periods and the characteristics of movement have changed over the years, acquiring new dimensions, eg those who move now are in their majority well educated while in the early waves of movement they were mainly unemployed. Overall, young people are well informed in general terms about their right to move but they are not aware of specific aspects of this right. Several practices were reported to promote the mobility of young Europeans.

Chapter 5 concludes that although free movement is indeed an accessible reality for young Europeans several aspects can be improved. Recommendations to EU institutions include the following:

- Monitor closely the transposition of the Directive to ensure that national legislation is fully aligned with the rationale of the Directive with special focus on the 'grey' areas of the Directive
- Collect statistical data on the intra-EU movement of young people
- Make European networks and projects to support free movement more visible
- Create a pan-european platform/website with online information on all aspects related to free movement and life in EU countries
- Establish and coordinate networks of competent national/local authorities from across the EU to discuss and address barriers
- Explore in more depth the experience of young people when moving within the EU
- Launch information campaigns to address negative perceptions against free movement
- Make available educational and informative material

Recommendations to national/subnational authorities include:

- Address bureaucracy and red tape in procedures for EU citizens
- Facilitate communication
- Make complaint mechanisms for reporting discrimination known and accessible

The present report is the result of collective work and contributions of all project partners. The Centre for European Constitutional Law (GR) was responsible for the overall coordination and editing of the report and the writing of the conclusions and recommendations. Chapter 1 was written by the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, University of London (UK). Chapters 2 and 3 were written by Cooperation for the Development of Emerging Countries (IT). Chapter 4 builds on the cross country papers developed by Art. 1 (NL) on the experiences of young movers, the Centro de Estudos para a Intervenção Social (PT) and the Center for the Study of Democracy (BG) on drivers and barriers in sending countries, the Institute for Baltic Studies (EE) and the European Forum for Migration studies (DE) on drivers and barriers in receiving countries, the Centre of Sociological Research at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (BE) and COMILLAS University Institute of Studies on Migration (ES) on overcoming barriers and the Helsinki Foundation of Human Rights (PL) and the Institut Français des Droits et Libertés (FR) on the views of authorities.

Chapter 1. EU citizens on the move: literature and existing research

1.1 Introduction

Intra-EU movement is certainly not a new area for research. The close geographic proximity of European nations-states and their changing borders (mainly as a result of wars) meant that Europeans often moved to neighboring - as well as further away- countries in order to escape conflict, study, be with family and, of course, work. The creation of the EU coincided with a more general movement/recruitment of guest workers from Europe's southern states to the northern states which was mainly regulated by bilateral agreements. Thus, the creation of the freedom of establishment (free movement within the EU, always with a view to work) in the original Treaty of Rome came not as a surprise move but rather as a natural consequence of this South to North movement of workers. The free movement of workers was later dressed in the theoretical robes of European integration theory and, following the institutionalization of the concept of EU citizenship with the Maastricht Treaty, was expected to extend beyond work to free movement akin to that of citizens in federations. These aspirations never actually materialised, despite a short respite during the EU's economic boom. It looks like we have now gone back full circle and rather than free movement of citizens we are back to the conditional free movement of workers – as envisaged in the original Treaty. After 60 years we are back where we started!

While intra-EU movement has been well researched over the years, specific aspects of it, such as youth movement, have not been subject to close scrutiny, hence the importance of the “On the Move” project. In part this was due to the lack of data, ie before the digital revolution collecting statistics was arduous and linear. However, it was also our lack of focus and lack of understanding of the importance of the free movement of young people to the concept of a united Europe. So early studies of migration of workers within the EU concentrated on the basic concept of the southern European coming to work in northern Europe.¹ There was no distinction between long-term and short-term migration nor was there any concern about long-term consequences, eg pensions, healthcare etc.

1.2 Distinguishing between different approaches

Let us start by saying that there is no general theory on intra-EU migration. The theoretical concepts used are borrowed either from general (macro-) theories of integration or from sectoral (micro-) theoretical perspectives based on the concept of citizenship.² When looking at the issue of intra-EU migration most

¹ See for example W.R. Böhning, *The migration of workers in the United Kingdom and the European Community*, OUP, London.

² See for example, F. Romero (1993) 'Migration as an issue in European interdependence and integration: The case of Italy' in A. S. Milward et al. (Eds.), *The frontier of National Sovereignty: History and theory 1945-1992*, Routledge, London (pp.33-57); A. Favell (2014) 'The fourth freedom. Theories of migration and mobility in 'neo-liberal' Europe', *European Journal of Social*

experts seem to distinguish between three eras or between different thematic approaches. Both are valid ways of approaching the topic and focus on similar issues but from a different angle and with differing degrees of emphasis on quantitative or qualitative data.

➤ ***The time-line historical approaches***

These approaches tend to distinguish between three different periods:

- a) The early post-war era of South to North migration of guest workers: From postwar to Maastricht

After the end of the Second World War, the desolated from war industrial northern European states needed workers to help them restructure and re-established their industrial base. Thus, workers from Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece were invited to come to northern European states, eg Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Austria and Switzerland to work.³ These were formal requests regulated by formal bilateral agreements. At the time the aim was to re-industrialise quickly and the long-term consequences were not really lingered on. It was seen in many respects as a short term solution to a short-term pressing problem. It should be noted here that the requests for guest workers were extended to countries outside Europe, eg Turkey and North Africa but for our purposes it is the European element which is important.

The Treaty of Rome took into consideration these existing arrangements (Article 45 TFEU Free Movement of Workers) and suitably allowed for the conditional but non-discriminatory movement of workers within the Member States (such rights were further strengthened by Regulation (EEC) No 1612/68). The emphasis at the time was on being part of the economic activity of a country, ie worker, something which was thought to be compatible with the economic aims of the Treaties, ie market integration. The invitations to guest workers were slowly dropped throughout the 1960s as economic recovery was achieved.

“Envisaged as temporary programmes, guest worker schemes led instead to the permanent settlement of the postwar migrants. Rather than triggering a large-scale return migration of the postwar workers, worsening economic conditions made migrants remain in the country and bring their families.”⁴

Theory, Vol. 17 (3), (pp.275–289); R. Bellamy & A. Warleigh (Eds.) (2005) *Citizenship and governance in the European Union*, Continuum International Publishing Group, London; C. Joppke (2010), *Citizenship and Immigration*, Polity, Cambridge.

³ See the important works of: S. Castles & G. Kosack. (1973) *Immigrant workers and class structure in Western Europe*, Oxford University Press, NY; T. Hammar (Ed.) (1985) *European immigration policy: A comparative study*. Cambridge, CUP, Cambridge; M.I. Piore, (1979), *Birds of passage: Migrant labour and industrial societies*, CUP, Cambridge; A. Messina et al. (Eds.) (1992), *Ethnic and racial minorities in advanced democracies*, Greenwood Press, NY; A. Messina (2007) *The logics and politics of post-WWII migration to Western Europe*, CUP, NY.

⁴ See R. Barbulescu, ‘From International Migration to Freedom of Movement and Back? Southern Europeans Moving North in the Era of Retrenchment of Freedom of Movement Rights’ in Jean-

However, by the start of the petrol-induced economic crisis of 1973 Germany stopped the invitations. The economic crisis hit the migrant workers very hard as European economies had to move from manufacturing and heavy industry - the traditional areas for guest workers-to services. There was a need for the welfare state to protect the guest workers, something that the developed northern European welfare state systems were able to do. The economic crisis ended the migration of non-EEC workers. However, by then, at least for workers from EEC Member States, the concept of guest worker had been strengthened. There was an implicit agreement that the benefits of Treaty-based rights should go beyond the narrow concept of market integration. Indeed, this was confirmed by a series of Court of Justice decisions (see for example cases *Levin* 53/81, *Steinmann* 196/87, *Kempf* 139/85 and *Antonissen* C-292/89) which extended and strengthened Treaty-based Free Movement rights which to include the right to seek employment.

It is under these favorable conditions (in spite of the economic crisis) which were strengthened by the activism of the Court of Justice that we reach the second period which coincides with the coming of the Maastricht Treaty.

b) The elevation of the guest worker to European “citizen”: from Maastricht to economic crisis

Despite economic adversity and a general lack of progress in expanding Freedom of Movement,⁵ the mid-1980s saw a first attempt at reforming the Treaties, which ended with the meagre Single European Act. However, the momentum was in favour of further integration and in the early 1990s three Directives extended Free Movement and offered rights of residence to categories of people who were never mentioned in the Treaties:

- Directive 90/365 – retired workers
- Directive 93/96 – students
- Directive 90/364 – others (the so called ‘playboy directive’)

Essentially what we witnessed was the progressive expansion of groups of people who were added to the Free Movement. Thus, from workers we moved on to families of workers and then to economically non-active people who, though, had sufficient means to support themselves. The Maastricht Treaty became a very important milestone in the Free Movement process as it introduced the concept of EU citizenship which placed Free Movement beyond narrow interpretations of the common market and straight into the further integration and democratic deficit debate. Essentially the goalposts were moved. Suddenly,

Michel Lafleur and Mikolaj Stanek (Eds) (2017) *South-North Migration of EU Citizens in Times of Crisis*, Springer Open Access, p.17.

⁵ See this interesting article. Premature for the 1990s but perhaps relevant for today's economic crisis? S. Castles (1986), ‘The guest-worker in Western Europe – An obituary’, *International Migration Review*, Vol. 20, pp. 761–778.

Free Movement became synonymous with further integration and pro-European attitudes.⁶ Freedom of Movement expanded quite rapidly till the mid-2000s finding reaching a high point in the Citizenship Directive 38/2004⁷ which encouraged EU citizens and their families to move and freely reside within the EU. The Citizenship Directive has been the peak of Free Movement as it also required Member States to reduce formalities which discouraged EU citizens from exercising the right to Free Movement. It was, in some ways the victory of the, so-called, europeans over the, so-called, eurosceptics. Yet, even this activist directive contained elements of old-fashioned intergovernmentalism as it allowed the removal of residence permits of EU citizens under certain conditions, mainly public order. In other words, even at its peak the federalist-style free movement of citizens had limitations, indeed the kind of limitations one would expect to see from nation-states which want to ensure that their sovereignty is not impinged.⁸ Nevertheless, the attempts to move towards further integration and perhaps the creation of a Political Community were aided by the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) which in a series of cases displayed blatant judicial activism in the area of citizenship aiming to make it the centrepiece of integration within the EU.⁹ In fact, in the landmark *Grzelczyk* case the CJEU specifically stated that 'Union citizenship is destined to be the fundamental status of nationals of the member states'.¹⁰

This was a time of expansion and economic boom for the EU and the citizenship debate had become central to EU political development, certainly in the area of internal migration. As one might expect there were two ways this argument could be resolved. Either there would be tacit acceptance by the Member States that sovereignty has been lost to the EU or a resurgence of the nation state aiming to recover lost sovereignty. As the economic boom came to an abrupt end in 2008, the resurgence of the nation-state seemed inevitable.

c) The economic crisis of 2008 and the backtracking to guest-worker

⁶ R. Bauböck (2007) 'Why European citizenship? Normative approaches to supranational union', *Theoretical Inquiries in Law*, Vol. 8 (2), pp.453-488.

⁷ Directive 2004/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States amending Regulation (EEC) No 1612/68 and repealing Directives 64/221/EEC, 68/360/EEC, 72/194/EEC, 73/148/EEC, 75/34/EEC, 75/35/EEC, 90/364/EEC, 90/365/EEC and 93/96/EEC.

⁸ On these points see: W. Maas (2007), *Creating European citizens*, Rowman & Littlefield, Lanham.

⁹ See for example Case C-85/96 *Sala v Freistaat Bayern*; Case C-152/03 *Ritter - Coulais v Finanzamt Gernersheim*; Case 209/03 *Bindar v London Borough of Ealing*, Case C-465/02 *Trojani v CPAS*; Case C-258/04 *Office national de l'emploi v Ioannis Ioannidis*. Also see the excellent analyses in: M. Dougan, 'The Constitutional dimension to the case law on Union citizenship' (2006) 31 *EL Rev*, pp. 613-641; D. Kochenov (2013) 'The Right to Have What Rights? EU Citizenship in Need of Clarification', 19 *European Law Journal*, pp. 502-516.

¹⁰Case *RudyGrzelczyk v Centre public d' aide sociale d' Ottingnies -Louvain- la Neuve*, C-184/99, para 31.

While the origins and causes of the economic crisis are complex and probably lost in the various narratives, the effects on internal movement are quite evident. From a practical point of view, the economic crisis resulted in Member States essentially denying the right of residence to EU citizens who did not have funds to support themselves. The main concern was the use of social security systems - usually in northern Europe - as a means of remaining in the country. The logic was that individuals who have not made an economic contribution to the host Member State should not expect benefits from that Member State. This goes right back to the concept of 'worker' under Article 45 TFEU and the meaning of 'establishment' under Article 49 TFEU¹¹ as well as limitations to the right of establishment on the basis of public order.¹² Thus, in the *Dano* and *Alimanovic* cases¹³ the CJEU essentially confirmed that social security rights for EU citizens can be refused if they lose their status of 'worker'. Strictly speaking, the rulings are in line with Articles 5, 6 and 7 of the Citizenship Directive. The reason these cases are regarded as a departure from the CJEU's approach has to do with the rise of anti-immigration rhetoric by some political parties and by an apparent end to the CJEU's activism in the area of citizenship. Moreover, these cases came at a time when there was considerable concern about the ending of the free movement restrictions to Bulgarian and Romanian citizens (ending in 2014). In fact, it is worthy to note that the Interior Ministers of 4 EU Member States (Austria, Germany, the Netherlands and the UK) wrote formally to the EU Commission complaining that their countries and national security systems were being put under pressure by immigrants from other Member States.¹⁴ As the four Ministers put it:

"While Article 35 of Directive 2004/38/EC does generally permit the Member States to adopt the necessary measures to combat abuse and fraud, it does not spell out what measures these could be and how the failure to comply should be sanctioned.

...we need practical measures to address the pressures placed on our social welfare systems. Arrangements at national or EU level that allow those who have only recently arrived in a Member State and have never been employed or paid taxes there to claim the same social security benefits as that Member State's own citizens are an affront to common sense and ought to be reviewed urgently."¹⁵

¹¹ See the excellent short analysis in L. Woods, P. Watson and M. Costa (2017), *Steiner & Woods EU Law*, 13th Edition, OUP, Oxford, pp. 445-468.

¹² See for example Case C-375/98, *R v Secretary of State for the Home Department, ex Parte Yiadom*, where the UK was able to refuse entry to a suspected people smuggler who was a Dutch national.

¹³ See Case C-333/13, *Elisabeta Dano and Florin Dano v Sozialgericht Leipzig*; Case C-67/14, *Alimanovic et al. v Jobcenter Berlin Neukoeln*.

¹⁴ Ministers of the Interior of Austria, Germany, the Netherlands and the UK. (2013, April). Letter to the Irish Presidency, http://docs.dpaq.de/3604-130415_letter_to_presidency_final_1_2.pdf.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 3.

Although other Member States were quick to respond,¹⁶ the die was cast against what was by then termed as ‘welfare tourism’ – even though there was precious little evidence to support its existence.¹⁷ Even the European Commission’s much quoted study, which indicated that migrants from other Member States represent between 0.7-1.0% of non-active population in the EU¹⁸ was largely ignored as the Northern Member States proceeded to place constraints and restrictions to the number of internal migrants coming from the East and South.

Essentially what this chronological trip around movement inside the EU shows is that we have gone full circle. From guest workers to guest workers. The only criterion being economic prosperity. In times of plenty there is free movement; in times of recession there are restrictions. The EU seems to have made little difference to this circle.

➤ **The Thematic approaches**

It should be noted here that although they are thematic in character, in practical terms they do mix and match almost freely and at random, depending on whether or not they can be used as evidence. So, for example, policy imperatives will be strengthened by economic paradigms even using individual states or economic data from individual states as examples. The main themes are:

- a) The economic causes and consequences of migration.

While conflict (usually war) has always been the main cause of migration within Europe, in the 20th century and in times of peace economic crisis seems to be the main cause for intra-EU migration. This isn’t surprising and the guest workers South to North postwar migration is a very good example. Of course, defining economic crisis is always difficult.¹⁹ In fact, intra-EU migration and international migration are sometimes seen as the two different sides of the same coin.²⁰ However, the conduct of Member States and the type of migrations we have witnessed after 2008, especially the international migration crisis of 2015

¹⁶ Letter from the EU Affairs Ministers of Sweden, Finland and Norway, *Financial Times*, ‘In times of crisis, we must safeguard free movement ...’ 16 January 2014.

¹⁷ D. Casciani, ‘Is there benefit tourism in the UK?’ BBC News, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-25127344>; I. Preston, ‘Free Movement, Welfare Tourism and Refugees’, *openDemocracy*, 15-10-2015, <https://www.opendemocracy.net/can-europe-make-it/ian-preston/free-movement-welfare-tourism-and-refugees>; R. Marangozov, ‘The true cost of “welfare tourism”’, Institute for Employment Studies, 11 February 2016, <http://www.employment-studies.co.uk/news/true-cost-welfare-tourism>.

¹⁸ DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion via DG Justice Framework Contract, Final report submitted by ICF GHK in association with Milieu Ltd, ‘A fact-finding analysis on the impact on the Member States’ social security systems of the entitlements of non-active intra-European migrants to special non-contributory cash benefits and healthcare granted on the basis of residence’, ICF GHK (2013), file:///C:/Users/IALS%20Admins/AppData/Local/Packages/Microsoft.MicrosoftEdge_8wekyb3d8bbwe/TempState/Downloads/20131212%20GHK%20study%20web.pdf.

¹⁹ D. Nohrsted & C. Weible (2010), ‘The logic of policy change after crisis: Proximity and subsystem interaction’, *Risk, Hazards, & Crisis in Public Policy*, 1 (2), pp. 1–32.

²⁰ R. King & R. Skeldon (2010), ‘Mind the gap! Integrating approaches to internal and international migration’, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, Vol. 36 (10), pp. 1619–1646.

indicate that perhaps it is the EU economic crisis that is the major contributor to intra-EU migration (as argued by Kaczmarczyk²¹ and by Zaiceva and Zimmermann²²). The most recent changes in intra-EU migration can be traced to high unemployment and changes in the labour markets. The 'neo-poor' southern and eastern Europeans move to the North where the labour market has slightly different needs but nevertheless enough new jobs to satisfy the needs of the migrant workers albeit in alternative markets.²³ In the context of economics and economic causes we occasionally have individual country studies, however this is rather rare.²⁴ One word of caution, the words mobility and migration are not always used interchangeably. Mobility tends to indicate intra-EU movement (changes of residence from one Member State to another); migration tends to indicate movement of third country nationals into the EU.²⁵ Not all authors adhere to this practice, though.

b) the political consequences of migration and free movement

The emphasis here is on politics and policy. The politics and policy of the EU as well as individual Member States. Some experts concentrate on familiar aspects of policy making, eg policy making in times of crisis, EU enlargement²⁶ but most concentrate on free movement, which is predictably linked to citizenship. The main approach targets the process of integration and the failure to federise Europe, and therefore to remove restrictions to free movement.²⁷ The obvious link is citizenship of the Union, a concept dear to Europhiles but anathema to eurosceptics, and the inability to progress to Union citizenship with complete and unrestricted free movement not just for workers but for all citizens of the Union.²⁸

Inevitably the emphasis on politics and policy leads to comments on party political developments at the national level which affect a Member State's position on free movement. For example, Britain's Conservative party position received a lot of attention as did Geert Wilders' position on immigration and

²¹ P. Kaczmarczyk (2014), 'Labour mobility in the EU: Dynamics, patterns and policies: EU enlargement and intra-EU mobility – Lessons to be drawn from the post-2004 migration of Poles', *Intereconomics*, Vol. 49 (3), 128-136.

²² A. Zaiceva & K.F. Zimmermann (2016), 'Returning home at times of trouble? Return migration of EU enlargement migrants during the crisis' in M. Kahanec & K.F. Zimmermann (Eds.), *Labor migration, EU enlargement, and the great recession*, pp. 397-418.

²³ European Commission (2017), Employment and social developments in Europe 2017, <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=8030&furtherPubs=yes>

²⁴ C. Dustmann & T. Frattini (2013), 'The fiscal effects of immigration to the UK', *Discussion paper Series CReAM*, CDP, 22 (13).

²⁵ B. Glorius, I. Grabowska-Lusinska & A. Kuvik (2013) 'Introduction' in B. Glorius, I. Grabowska-Lusinska, & A. Kuvik (Eds.), *Mobility in transition. Migration patterns after EU enlargement*, Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam, pp. 7-17.

²⁶ R. Black, G. Engbersen, M. Okólski & C. Panfíru (2010), *A continent moving west? EU enlargement and labour migration from Central and Eastern Europe*, (IMISCOE Research Series) Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam.

²⁷ C-U. Schierup, P. Hansen & S. Castles (2006) *Migration, citizenship, and the European welfare state: A European dilemma*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

²⁸ E. Recchi & A. Favell (2009), *Pioneers of European integration: Citizenship and mobility in the EU*, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham.

intra-EU movement from East to the North. It is, of course, the politics and policy at national and EU levels which have recently allowed a major deviation in the interpretation of Directive 2004/38. As Lafleur and Stanek note:

‘Following the terms of Directive 2004/38/EC on the free movement of EU citizens, Member States have, however, recently started to pay particular attention to the provision allowing the removal of residence permits from EU nationals in need of social assistance, i.e. those who represent a “burden” on the public finances of the host state. As several states are now aiming to reduce the number of foreigners receiving benefits in times of crisis, this practice is gaining traction. At the same time, a likely consequence of this practice is that numerous EU migrants will refrain from making use of their right to social protection, due to a lack of knowledge about these benefits or for fear of losing their right to residence.’²⁹

C) Individual Member States accounts for internal emigration and immigration.

This is the last type of thematic narrative: individual Member State accounts of their experiences in intra-EU movement. Until recently it was quite difficult to find because such studies require quantitative data which was often difficult to find in the EU Southern Member States and later in the EU Eastern enlargement Member States. Such narratives are very important quantitatively and qualitatively. Not only do we get a better idea of the profiles of the guest workers but we also get narratives about how such movements were received by the host Member States. The bibliography for this type of thematic study is still being developed and we have yet to develop a consistent paradigm which will provide us with definitive criteria or benchmarks. In this sense such works are often *sui generis* or rely on quantitative data to build a case.³⁰

1.3 Conclusion

From what we have seen so far, the main characteristic of works in this area - which is also their main strength- is the almost inherent interdisciplinarity. It is obviously difficult to avoid the sociological connotations of the south to north movement of workers even when only concentrating on quantitative data to prove economic points. Similarly, it is impossible to comment on national or EU policies without looking at party politics or even theories of integration.

²⁹ J-M. Lafleur and M. Stanek (2017), ‘EU Migration and the Economic Crisis: Concepts and Issues’ in Jean-Michel Lafleur and Mikolaj Stanek (Eds) (2017) *South-North Migration of EU Citizens in Times of Crisis*, Springer Open Access, p. 8.

³⁰ See for example: M.I Baganha (2003), ‘From closed to open doors: Portuguese emigration under the Corporatist Regime’ *E-Journal of Portuguese History*, 1 (1), 1–16; P. Simon & E. Steichen (2014), *Slow motion. The labor market integration of new immigrants in France*, MPI; G. Mavrodi and M. Moutselos (2017), ‘Immobility in Times of Crisis? The Case of Greece’ in Jean-Michel Lafleur and Mikolaj Stanek (Eds) (2017) *South-North Migration of EU Citizens in Times of Crisis*, Springer Open Access, pp.33-48.

As the field is still in the process of increasing its bibliography and attempts to generalise under specific but yet unidentified contexts we are still looking for a general theory or even sectoral theories which can provide a theoretical superstructure. Until this happens or until we have a credible theory for intra-EU movement most works will remain episodic and *ad hoc* or *sui generis* attempts to address the issue.

Chapter 2. Rights, obligations and national policies for citizens on the move: the legislative panorama

This chapter looks at national legislation on free movement and its relation to Directive 2004/38/EC. It is divided into three parts: the first part briefly presents the free movement Directive; the second part presents the main features of national legislation and policies related to free movement and their application; and the third part focuses on the main issues and challenges identified in the analysis.

2.1 European legislation on free movement of European citizens

The European Economic Area (EEA) entered into force in 1994 and provided for the free movement of persons, capitals, goods and services. The current 28 EU MS and Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland are part of this area and have to make the application of free movement effective.

The Directive 2004/38/EC aimed to reinforce European citizenship and to reaffirm the fundamental right of citizens to move and reside within the EU, enjoying equal treatment and non-discrimination. Called the “Citizenship Directive”, this law aimed to consolidate and unify the citizenship status, which was fragmented by case law and pre-existing Regulations and Directives.

The Directive on free movement of EU citizens lays down the conditions for the right of free movement and residence (both temporary and permanent) for EU citizens and their family members, sets out the limits to those rights on grounds of public policy, public security or public health, clarifies the status of people who are employed, self-employed, students or not working for payment³¹. The purpose of the Directive was to ensure that EU citizens, with a valid identity card or passport have the right to move and reside freely in any other Member State. Furthermore the Directive seeks to ensure the right to free movement for EU citizens’ family members whether they are EU citizens or not, with the least possible administrative procedures.

According to article 1 the Directive lays down: (a) the conditions governing the exercise of the right of free movement and residence within the territory of the Member States by Union citizens and their family members; (b) the right of permanent residence in the territory of the Member States for Union citizens and their family members; (c) the limits placed on the rights set out in (a) and (b) on grounds of public policy, public security or public health. The Directive intervenes by allowing EU citizens with a valid identity card or passport to³²:

- Enter another EU country with their family members - whether EU citizens or not - without requiring an exit or entry visa
- Live in another EU country for up to 3 months without any conditions or formalities
- Live in another EU country for longer than 3 months subject to certain conditions, depending on their status in the host country (employed, self-

³¹ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=URISERV:l33152>

³² <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=URISERV:l33152>

employed, students etc). Conditions related to the availability of sufficient resources and sickness insurance cover so as not to burden the host country's social assistance system

- Register with the relevant authorities if living in the country longer than 3 months. Their family members, if not EU nationals, require a residence card valid for 5 years.
- Be entitled to permanent residence (with their family members) if they have lived legally in another EU country for a continuous period of 5 years
- Be treated on an equal footing with nationals of the host country. However, host authorities are not obliged to grant benefits to EU citizens not working for payment during the first 3 months of their stay.

The Directive also specifies the procedures to expel a citizen from an EU MS. Automatic expulsions are forbidden and expulsion has to be justified demonstrating that an EU citizen or his family members represent a threat to public policy, security or health.

It needs to be noted that the choices of member states in the transposition of the Directive are not always aligned with the basic rights promoted by it. In 2006, the European Commission published a Report where the transposition of the Directive was considered neither correct nor exhaustive and various points were raised by the Commission to demonstrate how transposition failed to produce a homogeneous framework. A recent comparative analysis by the European Parliament³³ confirms the persistence of many obstacles to the freedom of movement and residence for EU citizens in EU countries other than their own.

2.2 National legislation and policies

➤ ***Implementation of European Legislation on freedom of movement***

All countries participating in the 'On the move' project have transposed Directive 2004/38/EC in their national legislation. Some countries chose to transpose the Directive through a single act, while others transposed through several acts. For example, in France, the Directive was gradually transposed into French law by different laws and decrees, which are integrated into the Code CESEDA. In Germany there is an independent and conclusive regulation for EU movers. However, transposition has been far from smooth and uneventful as several areas of concern are identified. To mention few examples, in 2011, the European Commission expressed concern about the implementation of the Directive in Cyprus, as it did not respect all the articles (excessive deportation, obstacles placed by the national authorities, absence of coordination of social security system). In Belgium, the legal basis for free movement of citizens at the beginning was complicated partly due to the complex institutional setup of the Belgian state, but things improved in particular after a reasoned opinion from the European Commission in 2013 stating that Belgium had not correctly transposed certain provisions of the Directive. In the UK, there are the evident difficulties in

³³Directorate General for Internal Policies. Policy Department C: Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Petitions, Obstacles to the right of free movement and residence for EU citizens and their families. Comparative Analysis - 2016.

the implementation of the Directive, this is due to the particularities of the UK's approach in immigration and free movement.

Another issue reported by many member states are the frequent amendments of national legislation in order to include all the requirements of the European Directive. This has been the case in Italy, Austria, Spain among other countries. These successive modifications have complicated the regulation on the right of free movement and made it less accessible and understandable.

➤ ***National Authorities***

The authorities at national level competent on issues related to free movement are usually governmental institutions and they are in charge of implementing legislation that regulates free movement and social and civil right on national territory. These institutions are Ministries (usually Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Ministry of interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Agency). Several other actors are involved such as NGOs, Trade Unions, organization of employers, civil society, although in an indirect way. In federal states, like for example in Austria, some or all competencies might belong to the federal provinces.

➤ ***Labour***

On issues related to the labour market and labour rights there are three recent specialised directives: Directive 2004/38/EC (about the right to pursue a profession in a self-employed or employed capacity in a Member State other than the one in which they have obtained their professional qualifications), Directive 2014/54/EU (about the freedom of movement of workers) and Directive 2014/36/EU (on the conditions for entry and residence of third-country nationals for employment as seasonal workers).

The freedom of movement for EU citizens is closely linked to employment and the exercise of the right to free movement in practice often relies on economic activity, as residence is conditional upon the requirement to have sufficient financial resources to support oneself. Therefore the link between legislation on free movement and employment is close.

The research findings suggest that in many cases EU movers take up jobs with lower educational and professional requirements than those held in their countries of origin (eg such cases were reported by Estonia, Bulgaria, Romania, among others) either due to lack of information about recognition of qualifications or due to the better pay in comparison to the home country. The recognition of qualifications appears to be an important (unsolved) issue in practice as in several case it was reported that receiving countries do not recognise qualifications and consequently EU movers are excluded from many vacancies.

Another obstacle reported in relation to labour legislation was the lack of information on rights, obligations and procedures especially in the receiving countries. For example, movers from places with less protective labour laws did not know the specificities and rights in France which has a complex but well organized administrative structure and as a consequence often failed to claim their rights.

Some practices for facilitating access to information on labour rights were reported. For instance in Belgium the Federal Public Services of Foreign Affairs, the FPS of Justice and FPS of Labour provide basic information for those wishing to come to Belgium to live and work and deal with employment issues relevant to EU citizens in Belgium. However, most practical competences in these areas are delegated to community and regional authorities, especially in relation to civil integration and employment. Furthermore, the FPS Social Security provides useful (online) information on social security rights and obligations and retirement in Dutch, French, German and English. In Germany, the main labour institution is the Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit und Soziales, BA) while information and knowledge about labour market are provided by Labour offices. As the largest provider of labour market services in Germany, the BA offers a variety of services for citizens as well as companies and institutions in the labour – and training market.

➤ **Youth policies**

An overview of youth related policies in sending countries show that these focus mainly on students rather than young workers. Although differences are notable among different nationalities, no specific policies oriented to facilitate free movement appear to be in place.

In all receiving countries, youth mobility is very important and local authorities are supported in their action from national and European authorities. In the Netherlands, for example, there are specific acts: the 'Youth Act' and the 'Participation Act' to support and care for children and adolescents (18-23 years old), and aim at improving the employment opportunities for people with some form of labour limitation, but they don't have a great impact on the situation of young EU citizens. In France, there is a specific governmental scheme to increase the mobility of young French people within the framework of international voluntary schemes and the civil service. In Germany, there is a specific programme, "MobiPro-EU". In Belgium there are some problems regarding the non-coordination from the national level all the way down, so that there is a gap between Brussels and the French and Flemish communities.

The programs that promote mobility for young and workers within the mixed-countries are mainly the ones of the European Union such as Erasmus+ or the European Voluntary Service. The European Employment Service (EURES) is also a valuable tool for EEA nationals as it supports the mobility of workers through counselling and support. Several countries, like Austria, that do not have any special policies or programmes fostering young people's mobility, rely on EU initiatives like EURES. By contrast, Spain have a national youth program which aims to improve the integration of Spaniards abroad by ensuring them access to EU labour market or access to medical care.

➤ **Healthcare**

EU citizens enjoy the right to access health services despite the different structure and organization of national health systems. The European Health Insurance Card allows access to medical assistance during a temporary stay in any of the 28 EU countries, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland, under the same conditions and at the same cost (free in some countries) as

people insured in that country. The European Health Insurance Cards are issued by national health insurance providers. Although it is possible to use the European Health Card in all European countries it does not guarantee free access to all citizens.

The research findings show that healthcare is important for movers but a number of (legal) problems arise, partly due to the specificities of the national systems and the difficulties in coordination. An issue reported was the extension of the right to health care to the movers' family. Several problems were also noted in relation to social assistance and pensions.

For example, in Germany, nationals of other member states may be refused certain social benefits in the first three months of residence. EU citizens in Belgium are treated the same as the Belgians on conditions of residence, counter trends in the living wage and social services have recently come about, Union citizens gradually received the same rights to social assistance as Belgians. Access to healthcare is an important issue for EU citizens that move to France because health care services are not universal and free. Health care services are not free for unemployed people. In Cyprus, following the economic and financial crisis of 2008 the healthcare system was reformed to make public healthcare available to those who contribute to its cost rather than to those who need it most. Thus, it affected Cypriots and other Union citizens in varying degrees. In Italy, EEA nationals without the status of worker have less chance than workers to obtain access to the national healthcare system.

➤ ***Right of residence of EU citizens and their families***

Permanent residence is another issue that depends to a great extent on EU legislation. In most countries conditions of the EU Directive are respected. In Poland, for instance, EU citizens and their family members can stay in Poland for a period up to three months without special conditions and formalities. EU citizens if they stay in Poland longer than three months are obliged to register their residence. In the same way, in Portugal, there are no particular requirements until three months. For a period of longer than three months, people need to register provided they comply with the following conditions: if they are employed or self-employed; if they have sufficient resources to support themselves and their family members; if they are enrolled at an officially accredited private or state educational establishment; if they are family members accompanying or joining a Union citizen who satisfies the requirements set out in the conditions mentioned above.

In France, European Union nationals can stay for 5 years, a European national who has resided in a legal and uninterrupted way in France for the five previous years acquires the right to permanent stay on the whole of French territory.

In Germany the Freizüg/EU Act regulates the right to entrance and residence of EU movers and their family members. It is an independent and conclusive regulation for this group of movers. The Freizüg/EU Act only contains regulations regarding the right to residence (family reunification norms, family members of third country nationals, the freedom of movement for unemployed persons – sufficient resources for EU citizens). Social rights and regulations are

defined in the respective benefits laws. There is no translation in English of the Act.

In Netherland, EU foreigners have lawful residence in the Country for longer than three months after entry if they are workers, self-employed or job seekers. However, the Dutch legislation sets out additional conditions under which such job seekers have lawful residence for over three months: they are required to prove that they are seeking work and have a realistic chance of obtaining work.

Italy, as other EU MS, had imposed a “sufficient resources” condition but a 2011 Law prohibited discriminatory conditions that could have impede the right of residence. The right to permanent or long-term residence for EEA nationals and their family members was sometimes reported to be associated with problems. For example, in Italy where the offices take away residence certificates too. In Spain, long-term residence certificate are not delivered automatically and EEA nationals and their relatives have to pay fees to obtain their certificate of registration and residence card.

The application of the right of free movement to EEA nationals’ family members (EEA or third-country nationals) changes according to the countries. Often, third-country family members have to deal with several obstacles that are often in violation of the Directive. In Italy, obtaining a visa or an answer to the request of family reunification usually take long time for non-EU family members. In Spain, EEA nationals’ family members from a third country are obliged to request and receive a Residence card of a family member of a Union citizen. Moreover, they have to pay an amount of money according to the number of people joining the EEA national. As a Spanish NGOs has highlighted, there is a discrimination for people coming from countries where relations are often informal and so more difficult to prove, which could impede family reunification.

Violations to the right of free movement are numerous concerning same sex partners. As the legislation concerning same-sex marriage or civil unions is very heterogeneous within the EU, same-sex partners married in a country where such union is recognized, cannot assert it in countries that do not recognize it. Thus, same-sex partners of EEA nationals could not get residence card in Italy or Cyprus until same-sex marriages have been recognized, respectively, in 2016 and 2015. Regarding the disparities of the concept of family in Europe, gays and lesbians, in those countries, were discriminated on the grounds of their sexual orientation in comparison to other citizens and their right to free movement was also affected.

➤ ***Restrictions to the freedom of movement***

The common factor in sending countries is that migration policies became only lately a political priority and there has been a rapid increase in strategic programmes. However, several sending countries (as Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Estonia, Poland, Portugal) improved norms and laws about incoming people but with a particular orientation towards refugees coming from Middle East and North Africa countries.

Other restrictions and limitations were reported in other member states. Germany made use of the right to restrict the freedom of movement for EU-citizens from new accession states, such as Romania, Bulgaria, and Croatia, and

there is a serious requirement for integration in Germany. Foreign citizens have to attend language courses to facilitate easier access to the labour market, however EU nationals do not have a legal entitlement to attend those courses. In France, as de facto in all the other EU countries, the NGOs report that the legal provisions are not observed in the case of Roma people and the French law on foreigners is enforced in a different way with this population group. In Belgium too there were restrictions of movement and different administrative procedures and social condition and rights for people coming from Romania, Bulgaria, and Croatia which are the new access countries. No explicit barriers and restrictions to the right of movement of European citizens were reported in the Netherlands. The main 'obstacle' is the language used and the possibility to find information and to understand administrative procedures. The United Kingdom "Brexit" process leave space for new perspectives and creates insecurity around what might happen in the coming years in relation to the freedom of movement. Before the Referendum there were no important restrictions for European citizens who wanted to move to UK. Information provided and administrative material were accessible.

Regarding the expulsion of EU nationals, some violations of the Directive have to be highlighted. All countries have transposed the provision of the Directive that an EU citizen or his family members can be expelled if they represent a threat to public policy, security or health, that are nation's fundamental interests. But some countries have broadened this conditions of expulsion. Since Cyprus entered the EU in 2004, the Cypriot authorities deported over 2000 Union nationals, which is a rather high number. In most cases, the practice of deporting Union nationals concerns people that have conducted, or that are supposed to have conducted, false marriages. In Austria, EEA citizens and their relatives, can be expelled from Austrian territory in case the requirements for having the right to reside are no fulfilled anymore. In Belgium the number of EU citizens being expelled from the Country for being an unreasonable burden to the state, has been steadily growing, as the right of residence for more than three months and the retention of this right for economically inactive persons is conditional upon the citizens having sufficient resources for themselves and their family members so as not to become a burden on the social assistance system of the host Member State (Article 7(1(b)) and Article 14(2) Directive 2004/38). Belgium had expelled 343 EU citizens in 2010. In 2011, their number grew to 989, and in 2012 it doubled, reaching 1,918. In the first nine months of 2013, another 1,130 EU citizens were expelled for this reason.

2.3. Conclusions

The legislative and institutional panorama in relation to the right to free movement is quite complex. All countries have transposed Directive 2004/38/EC in their national legislation, yet not without problems or resistance in several cases. Legislation on free movement interacts with an important number of national laws in areas like social security, health care, labour etc and often forms a complex web which is difficult to penetrate. Areas where legislative problems were reported include labour and health, vocational qualifications systems, restrictions in freedom of movement for minorities, family rights etc. Restrictions to free movement remain a grey area. Moreover, a big number of institutions and authorities at different levels of national or sub-

national government are competent on specific issues related to free movement. Overall, the institutional mandate on free movement is fragmented and there is limited visibility of the role of the institutions involved. Specific policies targeting EU movers were rare.

Chapter 3. Free movement patterns of young EU citizens

This chapter compares intra-EU movement patterns, demographic aspects of youth mobility and their underlying reasons as reported in the 15 National Reports of the ON THE MOVE project. Three points need to be highlighted in advance:

- Firstly that available literature on migration now focuses mainly on immigration from third countries;
- Secondly that the 'real' mobility of EU citizens seems heavily underestimated in the statistical data; and
- Thirdly, that there is more to EU mobility than consequences of the economic crisis or problems in some countries.

The chapter is divided in two sections: the first presents the movement balance in the 15 countries (split into 'sending countries', 'receiving countries' and 'mixed countries'). The second presents the key movement patterns for EU youth and briefly outlines the main trends, challenges and perspectives related to their mobility.

3.1 Current situation and challenges for young people

The National Reports elaborated in the context of 'On the Move' prove that the mobility of young EU citizens is heavily influenced by the economic crisis, but at the same time it represents more than a simple consequence of the crisis or economic problems in some countries. For example, Spain and Italy, both countries with very high youth unemployment rates, are at the same time receiving and sending countries, while Estonia, a country with quite low unemployment rate, is a sending country. Many young people move in other European countries in order to find better job opportunities but also for self-development in education, knowledge, culture, or they move for family, love, medical treatment.

As of 1 January 2016, 35.1 million people born outside the EU-28 were living in an EU Member State. On the same date, 16 million persons were living in one of the EU MS with the citizenship of another EU MS, while there were 19.3 million persons who were born in a different EU Member State from the one where they were resident. Citizens of Romania, Poland, Italy, Portugal, UK and Germany were the six biggest groups of EU-citizens living in other Member States in 2016 (Eurostat, data updated in March 2017).

Tab.1: Mobility and unemployment rates in the 15 target EU countries (data referred to 2015)

	Country total population (b)	Immigration from other EU Countries (c)	Immigration from non-EU Countries (c)	Unemployed rate of the population in the Country (a)	Youth unemployment rate (15-24 years) in the Country (a)
SENDING COUNTRIES					
Bulgaria	7,178,000	1,400	12,900	9,2%	21,6%
Estonia	1,312,000	3,200	3,700	6,2%	13,1%
Greece	10,820,000	16,500	17,500	24,9%	49,8%
Poland	38,000,000	29,400	103,900	7,5%	20,8%
Portugal	10,350,000	6,400	8,600	12,6%	32,0%
Romania	19,830,000	8,200	9,000	6,8%	21,7%

RECEIVING COUNTRIES					
Belgium	11,290,000	61,800	65,800	8,5%	22,1%
France	66,810,000	84,200	148,500	10,4%	24,7%
Germany	81,410,000	460,100	967,500	4,6%	7,2%
Netherlands	16,940,000	60,100	61,400	6,9%	11,3%
United Kingdom	65,140,000	269,200	278,600	5,3%	14,6%
MIXED COUNTRIES					
Austria	8,611,000	68,800	86,500	5,7%	10,6%
Cyprus	1,165,000	6,100	5,900	15,0%	32,8%
Italy	60,800,000	63,500	186,500	11,9%	40,3%
Spain	46,560,000	106,200	183,700	22,1%	48,3%

Sources:

- (a) Eurostat, [Unemployment statistics](#) (Data 2015, extracted by Eurostat in March 2017); in coherence with the data analysed in the *National Reports* of each country, here we do not report the data of year 2016.
- (b) The World Bank, Population total: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL>
- (c) Eurostat, [Migration and migrant population statistics](#) (Data 2015, extracted by Eurostat in March 2017)

3.2 EU Movers balance in sending countries

There is mobility of young European citizens between all the 15 countries participating in the project, but in varying terms compared to each other. All sending countries (BG, EE, GR, RO, PO, PT) present a negative human flow balance.

➤ **Inflows**

All sending countries have also incoming flows of EU movers, but the percentages are not relevant for the analysis. However, in some countries, like Estonia, the number of EU nationals moving there is on the rise. In Portugal on the other hand incoming flows originate from former colonies (eg Brazil and African Portuguese-speaking countries) but also from East European Countries (in particular Ukraine and Moldova).

➤ **Outflows**

Among the sending countries, the reasons for which an increasing number of young EU citizens exercise their right to free movement are mainly related to the economic crisis and its impact on the labour market. For some countries, such as Greece, the crisis led to an increase of the outflow, whereas it led to waves of return in Poland, because the economic crisis also hit Western European countries where immigrants had previously settled.

As the economic crisis hit hardly most of the sending countries, the economic factor justifies to a great extent the departure of young movers. Indeed, the high level of youth unemployment can be considered as the main cause of movement. The position of young people within their national labour market became precarious and career prospects and opportunities became rarer. In Bulgaria, the socio-economic situation led to an increase in the number of vulnerable young people, more than half of whom belong to ethnic minority groups (Roma and Turkish). With little perspective at home, young people turned to their right to free-movement as they are no longer subjected to restrictions on movement and settlement since 2014 (the same for Romania). The crisis also affected wages, so the search for high salaries abroad appears to be the main economic reason for

the Polish to move. Other reasons put forward to explain movement included education, medical treatment, family, culture, better possibilities of self-development (Estonia).

The majority of highly-skilled movers work below their qualifications but are better paid compared to their home country (Bulgaria, Poland). This situation especially happens during the first year abroad, while after this, movers tend to find work corresponding to their qualifications.

This important outflow of high-skilled movers reveals the challenges of the 'brain drain', which concerns primarily Greece, Bulgaria and Poland. From the Bulgarian point of view, such a tendency has negative impacts on the country, as it does not contribute to the development of human capital at home. However, the ties are not broken. Higher or lower-skilled workers, as they earn better wages abroad, bring money back to their country. The growth of remittances is particularly important in countries such as Portugal, where it represents 1.8% of the GDP.

3.3 EU Movers balance in receiving countries

The receiving countries (BE, FR, DE, NL, UK) have a positive balance, both from other European countries and non-European countries.

➤ **Inflows**

The positive balance both from non-EU countries and from other EU countries consists in young people that flee high youth unemployment rates in their home countries. The wage available in some receiving countries is considerably higher than what young unemployed EU movers may find at home and very often, this serves as an economic incentive to leave even average paying jobs to take up minimum paying jobs in receiving countries.

It is interesting to notice that the number of Roma minority movers coming from Romania and Bulgaria in the receiving countries is not quantified, instead their percentage on the total of movers is considered when they leave their countries.

➤ **Outflows**

People who move from receiving countries are less than those who move to these countries: the main key word for this part of the cross-country analysis is 'brain drain' / 'brain circulation' and high qualified youth mobility.

Brain drain is not a new phenomenon. For centuries highly-educated professionals and scientists have been travelling the world seeking better work conditions and new opportunities for study. In recent years, many EU young citizens chose to leave their home country both to increase their international experience and qualification and to explore their talents in other countries that can provide them with financial and technological means needed for them to reach their full intellectual capacities.

3.4. EU Movers balance in mixed countries

➤ **Inflow**

Mixed countries enjoy outflows and inflows. The economic crisis affected and reduced this flow in countries such as in Cyprus or Spain, whereas it increased

them in Austria and Italy. The latter remains one of the main European receiving countries, with 5.026.153 foreign residents, out of which 1.517.023 were born in an EU MS. In Austria and Spain, the majority of immigrants originate from EU MS. In Austria their number doubled between 2010 and 2016.

The nationalities of EU movers differ from country to country, because of historical relations, proximity or economic reasons. In these mixed-countries, there is a predominance of Eastern-EU movers, but the presence of movers from central and southern countries is significant as well. For example, the three largest foreign communities in Italy are the Romanian, the Polish and the Bulgarian ones. In Austria, a distinction can be drawn between East and West and movers from 'new' and 'old' EU MS. The latter tend to be better qualified and earn better incomes than the Austrians, whereas the former tend to be younger, less qualified and earn lower wages.

The increase of flows may be associated to the last wave of EU enlargement and the lift of restrictions for countries like Romania and Bulgaria, as their proportion increased within the flow of movers.

With regard to gender, we can notice a global balance between women and men in the inflow, with some exceptions. In Spain, the importance of autonomous female movers in the current youth migration panorama increased, as Polish and Finnish women are overrepresented in the flow of movers. Also in Cyprus, the same pattern emerged with other nationalities. It can be seen as a sign of women's emancipation but it should be put in perspective as many of them take household related jobs.

In countries who suffered the consequences of the economic crisis, such as Cyprus, Italy and Spain, the level of unemployment raised whereas the employment conditions became worse. EU nationals, as well as third-country nationals were hit hard by the degradation of the employment market. Both are more exposed to short-term contracts which can impede them to renew their residence permits.

➤ ***Outflow***

The financial and economic crisis deeply affected all EU MS from 2008 until today. However, in countries such Italy, Spain and Cyprus, the consequences have been more tangible as they led to an increase of the outflow and to a switch of the balance in countries like Spain and Cyprus, where it became negative. For Italy and Cyprus this negative net was accompanied by negative rates of increase.

Spain and Cyprus, which were traditionally "receiving countries", became "sending countries" because of the repercussion of the economic crisis on youth employment. Italy always had a high flow, confirmed by the fact that Italian citizens were among the top 5 citizenships of foreigners living in EU MS in 2014, but this flow increased further. As Austria was not affected by the crisis in terms of youth unemployment, the outflow did not increase. The presence of young people in the outflow depends on the country. In Spain, youth moving to EU MS only represents 16% of the total flow, of which 84% are young foreigners that move to other EU MS or return to their origin country.

In Cyprus, Italy and Austria, moving mainly concerns young graduates that cannot find a job corresponding to their high-qualifications. Austria also highlights the fact that typical Austrian movers are male. This kind of high-skilled movers worries Italian and Cypriot authorities that fear a 'brain drain' which could have negative impact on the GDP. By contrast, in Austria, this phenomenon is seen as a 'brain circulation', as most of the highly qualified movers come back in Austria. Among these young movers, we can establish a correlation between their socio-economic origin region and their tendency to move. Thus, in Cyprus as in Italy, the departure region are the most distant ones from where unemployment rates are higher (Paphos and Famagusta for Cyprus, and the South of the country for Italy).

The main reason for which young people move is, also in mixed countries, work either seen as career opportunity or an economic necessity. Family reunification is another important reason that justifies youth EU mobility, even though a large part of young people moves abroad exactly because they don't have family responsibilities. In Cyprus, the crisis led to an important reduction of the GDP and employment. The unemployment rate was particularly high for the young people in Cyprus. Moreover, the income position of the young (aged 18-29) has deteriorated over time (from 2009 to 2014), while the relative status of the elderly in the distribution of income has improved. This reduction of incomes also concerned highly educated persons, whereas the incomes of low-educated persons increased. Thus, the risk of social exclusion increased for the young population. Furthermore, the austerity measures imposed on the country affected the employment quality, as it led to the flexibility and the deregulation of the labour market. Thus, part-time employment increased and mainly concerned young and women.

For the mixed-countries, the main destination of movers is the EU zone. The Austrian case reflects this tendency as 96% of the flow move to EU MS. Most of the EU movers go to 'old' EU countries, such as the UK, France or Germany but also to Eastern and Southern Europe. In Spain, as foreigners compose 84% of the emigrant flow, many of them return to their home country, due to the reduction of the work opportunities in the Iberian Peninsula. In 2015, Spain reported the highest number of movers in Europe, of which the 86% were foreigners and the 14% Spanish nationals. In Italy and in Cyprus, the "brain drain" became a matter of concern as it could reduce potential growth, especially if young are overrepresented among the emigrants, as it could affect – in the idea of many EU receiving countries citizens – the sustainability of the social security system. However, it could also be source of remittance, and thus contribute to the increase of the GDP.

3.5. Conclusions

As the transitional period limiting free movement from Bulgaria and Romania ended in 2014, Europe formed an area where citizens from the EU-28 and EEA countries can live, study, or work anywhere they wish. Crossing borders within this area has been facilitated by policy, technology, the travel industry, and globalization and statistics show that EU citizens are taking advantage if the possibilities offered to them.

Nevertheless, some forms of cross-border movement, like the movement of youth citizens, remains unaccounted for by official statistics. At the same time, statistics at national level are not always available or comparable. Thus, what we know about the independent movement patterns of young people is relatively limited. Generally speaking, in the 15 EU MS participating in the project free movement of young people remains a topic rarely discussed in the media, with the exception of the 'poverty immigration' from Eastern European States.

Three main trends are observed: a trend from southern countries (GR, BG, PT, RO) that have been affected by the crisis towards central or northern countries. The main reason behind this trend is the economic crisis and its impact on the labour market and especially the very high figures of youth unemployment. Countries like Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Germany and the UK have a positive balance of incoming movers, both from other European countries and non-European countries who move in order to find work. A third category of countries includes those that enjoy more or less balanced outflows and inflows (Austria, Cyprus, Spain, Italy).

The National Reports indicate that the mobility of young EU citizens is closely influenced by the economic crisis and the shrinking labour markets, but at the same time it represents more than a simple consequence of the crisis or economic problems in some countries.

Chapter 4. The experience of free movement for young European citizens

One of the objectives of ON THE MOVE project was to capture the reality of free movement and the way the right the Directive is applied in practice. To achieve this qualitative research was conducted in the 15 member states that took part in the project. The key question to be answered was whether the right to free movement enshrined in European law and the Directive is implemented in practice and whether and to what extent this right corresponds to its initial concept and whether it is effective for young EU citizens.

The purpose of the research was to address the reality of free movement from the viewpoint of young European citizens who exercise their right to free movement, namely young Europeans who wish or plan to move, young Europeans who moved and resided in another EU country and young Europeans who moved and returned to their country of origin. In addition, the viewpoints of representatives of national authorities competent with movement or/and youth issues as well as representatives of relevant NGOs were recorded.

The research aimed to deepen the knowledge and understanding both of the drivers of the movement of young EU citizens and the barriers that occur when young people exercise this right, whether they are 'real' or 'perceived', legal, administrative or social in nature, to identify practices that may promote or hinder the right to free movement, to examine the ways young people address any barrier, to identify root causes and propose solutions to make free movement an accessible reality.

4.1 Methodology and sample of the research

For the qualitative part of the research, all participating countries followed the same approach, albeit adjusted to the specific countries' position in the study. At the outset, the objective was to interview 30-50 young movers and around 5 representatives from public authorities per country. In constructing the sample, the underlying aim was to cover the experiences of movers in all phases of movement: those planning to move, those who have moved and are staying in the host country and those who returned to their home country after a period of movement. This led to a twofold categorisation in the sample: a categorisation of countries and a categorisation of interviewees.

Young movers were categorised in order to construct a sample that adequately reflects different experiences and covers the entire cycle and phases of free movement. The most relevant distinction between movers was in relation to the phase of movement, as this directly influenced the experiences of an interviewee and possibly the value judgment attached to these experiences. This led to three categories:

- Young people who wish or plan to move;
- Young people who have moved to another EU country and remain there;
- Young people with experience of moving who have returned to their home country.

Since the focus of the research is on the drivers and barriers influencing movement, the assumption at the outset was that the phase of movement

significantly impacts the drivers and barriers experienced by the movers. Interviewees planning to move might be facing several barriers without knowing how to overcome them or alternatively might not be aware of barriers they are likely to face when actually moving. Young people who already moved to another country are most likely aware of drivers and barriers and ways to overcome them, but might be inclined to emphasise positive aspects of their moving in order to keep themselves motivated. Those that moved and returned could be expected to have the most objective view of movement but at the same time, they might be more negative in cases where the return feels like the outcome of a failed project.

The combination of country clusters and mover categories led to a sample construction in which the emphasis in the sending countries was placed on interviewing young citizens who wish or plan to move and young citizens who moved and returned, the emphasis in the receiving countries was placed on interviewing EU citizens who moved and resided there, and the emphasis in the mixed countries was distributed evenly across the three different categories. In addition, in the group of those who remain in an another EU country, a weighted distribution across the countries of origin was agreed, whereby young movers from all participating countries were included, with a larger representation of movers from the main groups of EU citizens moving to a specific country. Other exclusion criteria that were applied were the following:

- Interviewees were between 25 and 35 years of age at the time of moving;
- Interviewees planned and executed their move independently, i.e. not assisted by a university (in the context of study) or by an employer (in the context of work).

The approach to recruiting the interviewees was the same in all the participating countries. Most interviewees were recruited through public calls for participation on websites and social media, invitations sent to organisations working with EU citizens, personal contacts of researchers and in some cases distribution of information material on paper in communities of EU citizens. Furthermore, the snowball method was applied by asking interviewees to suggest further contacts for interviews. In some cases, the country research teams could point other country teams to possible interviewees. Especially the recruitment of those who wished or planned to move, *i.e. people still thinking about or planning to move*, proved difficult, just as the recruitment of some specific country samples in the receiving countries. An even stronger emphasis on personal networks of researchers was the main solution to this issue. In the end, this approach resulted in the following sample composition:

Table 1: Sample composition

Sample of the research				
	Nationals who wish or plan to move	EU nationals who moved and reside	Nationals who moved and returned	
				All categories
Sending	97	47	73	217

countries				
Receiving countries	20	180	-	200
Mixed countries	47	75	28	150
Total	164	302	101	567

The total sample of movers interviewed about their personal experiences consists of 567 persons. While the group of interviewees is divided according to the criteria used, the absence of other criteria led to a certain bias in the sample. Thus, in all three categories and across the different countries, highly educated movers were overrepresented, as were interviewees from urban areas. This bias is probably due to the method of recruitment, especially the strong reliance on personal networks of researchers themselves. In addition, many low-skilled EU movers are assisted in their move by employment agencies, and therefore fall outside of the scope of this research. This bias in terms of level of education and background is important to take into account when interpreting the results.

The interviews with young movers were structured by means of a simple topic guide. This topic guide included the following main parts:

- Views on free movement
- Drivers for free movement
- Obstacles and barriers to free movement
- Suggestions and solutions to issues identified

4.2 Results of the research from the perspective of the countries

This part of the report presents the findings of the research taking into account the country from which the interviewees come from or in which they live, according to the categorisation of the countries as sending, receiving or mixed. For the analysis of the results, mixed countries are perceived either as sending (concerning nationals who wish to move and nationals who moved and returned) or as receiving (concerning EU citizens who moved there).

4.2.1. Drivers and barriers in sending countries

The present part summarises and compares the experiences of young people from 'sending' countries (Bulgaria, Estonia, Greece, Poland, Portugal, Romania), who mainly 'export' (young) movers as regards drivers and barriers to their movement to other EU Member States. It also examines the experiences of young people from mixed countries (Italy, Austria, Cyprus, Spain) to the extent that these countries are perceived as 'sending'. Specifically it presents the viewpoints of young people from the sending countries who wish or plan to move to another EU country and of those who moved to another EU country and returned to their country of origin. Furthermore it compares the experiences of young Europeans who moved and resided in the 'sending' countries.

○ **Drivers**

The motivation that drives young Europeans from sending countries to think about moving to another EU Member State may differ. For some, motives are different depending as much on their personal circumstances, ambitions and

career goals as on their previous experience of living and working abroad or lack thereof.

Those who have no experience of free movement whatsoever are largely driven by a desire to escape from the reality in their own country and seem to have a more idealistic vision on what 'abroad' is like, especially nationals from the newest EU members. In comparison, those with some experience of living in another country and those who have spent a longer period of time abroad justify their choice by focusing on one or more aspects of living in their selected destination country. However, some participants (especially some young Romanians) pointed out that the connection between living abroad and living a better life might be 'premature'. For others, motivation varies depending on whether they wish to discover the world and get new experiences, where they would work at jobs requiring no or little previous experience and would move back in a year or two, or they would move specifically because of work (factors that were mentioned especially from young Estonians). A variation of that dichotomy is displayed by those desiring to leave on short term for economic reasons to save money for a better life and then go home and others who opt for definitive departure due to unpleasant experiences in their own country and believing that they would live better anywhere (Romania). Another division is between those who would leave as soon as they are offered a job and those who will leave if they had access to a secure position (Romania). The main drivers for young Europeans from sending countries to move to another EU country might, in general terms, be:

- ***Economic and job-related drivers***

Economic reasons are closely related to professional motivation. A main driver mentioned by participants was the wish for better professional opportunities combined with better salaries (Greece, Romania, Portugal).

Lower wages for the same job resulting in income reduction at their own country and more broadly in deterioration of their families' standard of living was an important driver (Greek participants), while for many, lower wages at home are seen as factor together with high (youth) unemployment rates (Portugal). Other participants mentioned the low income for employment in their countries (especially Poland, Bulgaria, Romania) and a desire for immediate improvement of their financial situation by finding a job with higher salary in another country.

Conversely, higher wages abroad are directly linked to the expectation of a better life (Portugal), better financial security (Greece) and a more adequate remuneration for the same work and qualifications one has at home (Bulgaria).

The financial crisis is mentioned as a specific push factor in Greece, where income decreased while taxes and social security payments increased and professional effort and qualifications were depreciated.

Wages, both as pull and push factor, are intrinsically linked with professional prospects and opportunities for better professional development which stand somewhere in between interviewees' economic and non-economic considerations. For some, there is frustration over the fact that despite high education and qualifications they cannot find financially and professionally satisfying employment at home (Poland).

On a related note, people's negativism and dissatisfaction with environment stemming from low standard of living is mentioned as highly demotivating to stay in one's own country (Bulgaria).

Like those wishing to move, returnees were motivated by major economic factors to leave their home country – financial difficulties, work positions abroad (Greece, Estonia, Portugal), lack of promising prospects, wishes for more professional experience to improve career prospects (Greece). Not having employment after university graduation is mentioned and many wanted any kind of job, while other sought specific employment opportunities (Poland).

- ***Better professional opportunities***

Better professional prospects are sought on many levels. For many, these are the prospects of finding a job better suiting to their qualifications (Estonia). In particular, such considerations are heard from those whose field is still new and not so popular and well developed in their home country or those wishing to grow professionally in the non-profit sector. In the view of the respondents, specific areas of work particularly developed in some Western European country are management consulting, international trade law, EU law and politics. Lack of opportunities for career advancement due to the state of the national healthcare system is pointed at as motivator in particular by two final year medical students (Bulgaria). IT, communications, (digital) marketing, international studies and political sciences, human rights, consultancy, etc. are also mentioned as fields where opportunities for professional advancement are fewer at home than in other countries (Greece). Young Polish respondents also want to develop professionally in an international environment, or be able to set up their own business activity, or have better long-term professional opportunities.

Others seek foreign work experience which will help advance their careers (Estonia). The need to acquire specialised professional experience would sometimes even precede the economic crisis in the list of motivators to move to another EU Member State (Greece).

Conversely, for a number of respondents (Greece) moving is not unconditional and they would not leave their country to do any job or a low paid job. Finding employment first is also one of the conditions for moving (Greece).

- ***Non-economic drivers (political conditions, desire to enrich knowledge/education, way of living and conditionsetc)***

Being young EU citizens, respondents show keen interest in current political and societal affairs in their home countries, including as motivation for them to move to another EU Member State.

Respondents in more than one country cite general political instability and lack of trust in institutions (Bulgaria), combined with high levels of bureaucracy as one of the drivers for moving. Some highly educated urban youngsters feel fundamental rights in their country are threatened as a result of policies introduced by the government and are afraid of growing nationalism and xenophobia (Poland).

Respondents unanimously point to better quality of life and a higher standard of living as a non-financial, more far-reaching expression of their expectations when moving. Expectations, however, depend on the length of experience interviewees have had abroad and those with some experience already know that higher wages in Western Europe go with higher prices and a busier and more stressful life. Quality of life can, however, be both a push and pull factor that would lead some respondents to return if life abroad does not turn out as expected (Greece).

Mirroring the criticisms towards institutions and jobs at home, respondents praise the reliability of state institutions abroad and the better work morale and conditions and the more rewarding atmosphere (Bulgaria). Young Romanians elaborate on destination countries' societies as 'very functional mechanism' in terms of valorisation of labour, medical system/health insurance and educational system.

Education also proves to be a decisive factor for potential movers. Some respondents emphasise its better quality abroad and aim to pursue studies to secure better employment prospects ahead (Bulgaria) while for others, although not excluding the better professional prospects motive, it may be a 'transitional' solution especially if they have not found jobs yet (Greece).

Many wish to move to another EU country to learn/improve their language skills (Estonia, Poland).

Other lifestyle pull factors mentioned include the culture of the destination country and the more favourable climate (Bulgaria, Estonia). Culture and climate justify preferences towards destination countries in the Mediterranean for the Greek and some Polish potential movers and some Greeks' dislike towards Northern and Scandinavian countries.

On a more abstract psychological scale, many young respondents talk about aspirations like personal growth and sense of exploration (Bulgaria), the need to experiment and live in different environments (Greece, Romania), especially when it comes to children (Greece).

Young Cypriots and Italians elaborate in detail on institutionalised mobility programmes funded by the EU, such as the Erasmus programme. The internationalisation of higher education is also an important topic for them.

- ***Personal/family reasons***

Family drivers, being together with spouses and partners, are cited as the main reason for moving in a number of cases. Often, one partner has found a job abroad and the other moves even though they might have a stable job at home. Cases of joining partners who are citizens of another EU country are also not uncommon. Having family abroad sometimes serves as an important motivator for the respondents. On the other hand, not having a family of their own could be a facilitator for young respondents to decide to leave; and having family in another country can help the choice about where to move.

Relatives and friends play an important role in the choice of destination country as a support network for movers' first steps (Greece, Poland, Romania, Portugal).

One very particular personal case mentioned was sexual orientation, where an LGBT person feels he cannot yet live in his home country as he would live in other EU countries.

As with those wishing to move, family ties played a varying push/pull role as a driver in respondents' decisions to move to another EU country. Respondents were unable to provide for their families at home, or used relatives' ties abroad in their dealings with authorities (Bulgaria), or joined their parents or partners (Estonia, Poland). However, the main reasons even for those accompanying family members were found to be economic and professional. Friends and acquaintances already settled in the respective EU Member States are also cited as initial drivers and sources of support (Bulgaria, Greece, Portugal, Romania). On a more abstract level, respondents mentioned the lack of concrete plans at home and the need for independence (Portugal) and personal development was also elaborated upon as an issue of importance (Romania).

➤ **Barriers**

○ **Language**

In all countries (sending and mixed) young interviewees mention the need to use a different language and the lack of sufficient skills regarding the language of the receiving countries as a perceived barrier.

This barrier seems to be more evident when there is the wish to move to a non-English-speaking country (as it was specifically mentioned from Polish, Estonian and Romanian respondents). In countries where the main language is different, English skills help but may not be enough (Estonia).

It is also perceived that the lack of foreign language skills could affect the general integration process and create difficulties in everyday life (Estonia). That is why, in some cases, language is a factor that influences the choice of the destination (Portugal, Greece).

As a matter of fact, the free movement experiences of the 'returnees' group allows us to expressly state that lack or insufficient knowledge of the local languages is a real obstacle for movers (Portugal, Greece, Estonia, Poland and Romania) and a driver for returning to their home country. Even if overcome, it was reported as an important barrier in everyday life, in establishing relations with locals (Greece) and in dealing with administrative issues (Poland).

Language was reported as a major barrier for interviewees originating from Bulgaria, Greece, Estonia and Poland, especially in the interaction with authorities - either because movers do not speak the local language or because authorities did not speak any English. Further, language is a barrier to find satisfactory employment but also having social relations or enjoying a sense of independence (Poland). In some countries (like Estonia) courses to learn the language are not on offer.

○ **Living conditions**

Living in countries with different lifestyles and culture is seen as a challenge that could become a barrier in what concerns the building of a social life and a social network (Portugal, Bulgaria, Poland) and the sense of belonging to a new society.

The (high) cost of living in the receiving countries was also a common concern and a perceived barrier to the exercise of the right to free movement.

- ***Accommodation***

For most of the young individuals from all sending and mixed countries who are thinking about moving the difficulties with the cost of living are mainly related with difficulty in finding accommodation.

High prices and unsatisfactory quality of accommodation are problems reported specially by those who wish to move to London, Paris or Berlin. For Bulgarian, Polish and Greek respondents however, mentioning those difficulties is also used to point out another barrier: the “selective attitude” of the landlords in what concerns the choice of a tenant giving preference to local people.

- ***Bureaucracy and lack of information***

Among the other cited barriers were administrative difficulties strongly connected lack of information on the destination countries (laws and customs). The lack of information is a barrier to integration process (specifically for people from Romania, Portugal and Poland) and access to the labour market, health, social security or recognition of qualifications.

- ***Fear of discrimination and integration***

Connected to the fear of the “selective attitude” of landlords, there is also the fear of discrimination, when applying for jobs. This is present in the interviewees’ narrative of countries such as Bulgaria and Poland.

There is also the perception that some nationalities are seen in a negative perspective. In Greece several respondents refer to the negative image of Greek people particularly after the crisis.

For others like the Romanian movers the way they will be perceived by the citizens of the host country plays an important role in their adaptation. This concern maybe similar for those Portuguese for whom the possibility to move back is not excluded, in case they do ‘not fit in a new society’.

Even if people are moving for economic reasons, searching for a better or more qualified and adequate job, the strong competitiveness in the job market in some EU Member States is perceived as an important barrier (Portugal, Bulgaria).

Apart from the discriminatory attitudes reported in the search for accommodation, some (Portuguese, Greek and Polish) interviewees also pointed out that insufficient knowledge of the language of the host country (or a foreign accent) was also a reason for feeling discriminated in their social entourage. According to some young Polish interviewees, even good command of English and the local language was not sufficient to allow them to fully integrate into host societies. Romanians who returned to their home country reported that linguistic difficulties restricted and made harder access to the labour market, health care or education system in host countries.

Discriminatory attitudes in the labour market were reported to a limited extent specifically by young participants from Bulgaria who reported that people with foreign name were hardly accepted; had to work longer hours, had access to less qualified and lower-paid jobs (especially in agriculture) and were subjected to disrespectful attitudes.

The educational level was mentioned as an important variable relevant to experiences of discrimination: more educated people in host countries were more open to social diversity and less prejudiced, while less educated movers were more exposed to discrimination, particularly in the labour market.

In general, discriminatory practices in the labour or house renting market were not translated into society's attitudes as a whole. With the exception of some (basically Bulgarian movers), most of the respondents did not feel cut off from the communities where they lived in host countries despite the fact that in several cases they had to deal with negative images and prejudices.

Discrimination did not emerge as a major issue or obstacle to free movement, even though some interviewees reported direct experiences of discrimination and negative attitudes. The research also points to the fact that nationality (such as Romanian, Polish, Bulgarian, Greek) might be a ground for prejudice and discrimination in host countries and a negative image of these countries affects the integration of young movers in host countries.

4.2.2. Drivers and barriers in receiving countries

The present part of the report summarises and compares the experiences of young EU citizens who moved and are living in receiving countries (Belgium, Germany, UK, the Netherlands, France) as regards drivers and barriers to their movement. It also examines the experiences of young EU citizens who are living in mixed countries (Italy, Austria, Cyprus, Spain) to the extent that these countries are perceived as 'receiving'. It also presents the viewpoints of young people from receiving countries who examine the possibility of moving to another EU country.

➤ *Drivers that led EU citizens to move to the receiving countries*

This part examines the drivers for movement within the European Union by young EU nationals. It explores the situation of EU nationals who have already moved to another country, the factors that played a role in their decision and the motivations of nationals of receiving countries who are considering to move.

In the majority of cases, a combination of push and pull factors contributed to a young person's decision to move to one of the receiving or mixed countries examined. The most important drivers by far are work and employment-related issues.

○ *Economic and job related drivers*

For the majority of movers reasons related to employment drove them to move to a receiving country. This concerns both push factors in the home country (unemployment and lack of career opportunities, low wages, poor working conditions etc.) and pull factors in the destination country (the prospect of employment, job opportunities, higher wages etc.).

Work was also one of the key drivers in mixed countries. As it is clearly indicated in the findings of the research economic drivers are always relative to the mover's country of origin.

Work was also the major driver for nationals of receiving countries who are planning or considering to move abroad. Prospective movers expressed the hope that working abroad would improve their skills and lead to new career opportunities. Looking for sector-specific employment opportunities was also noted. For several interviewees from Belgium and Germany, moving was also an opportunity to learn a new language.

- ***Drivers related to the prospect of improving the quality of life***

The hope for a better life, higher living standards and more opportunities is in most cases closely linked to economic factors such as employment and income.

In Spain, interviewees from Bulgaria, Romania, Italy and Portugal all shared the same primary reason for moving to Spain, namely the economic situation and a better life than in their home countries.

However, when talking about "a better life" it was not always clear whether participants were referring to their personal work and financial situation or to the economy of their home country in general or both. *This was, for instance, the case in Italy, where 11 out of 12 incoming movers said they were primarily motivated by the prospect of better life opportunities in Italy, but did not further specify what they meant by that.*

Meanwhile, in some receiving countries 'a better life' was mentioned as a separate driver and in relation to things such as the environment, infrastructure and children. A number of interviewees in the Netherlands and the UK stated that they moved to the Netherlands/the UK in order for themselves and their children to have a better future and more opportunities.

- ***Non economic drivers***

The desire to have new experiences, to learn or improve language skills, along with the opportunity to get education appeared to be the non-economical drivers that led young movers to the receiving countries. Also (in a lower extent) the will to escape the political and social situation in their country of origin emerged as a push factor.

The wish to travel and experience different cultures and mentalities as well as enjoy a better quality of life were contributing factors in the decision to move abroad for many prospective movers.

- ***Acquiring new experiences***

The desire to leave one's home country and travel, be adventurous and explore new cultures, start a new life chapter and experience something different were all factors which contributed to the decision of many young respondents to move to another country.

With the exception of movers to the UK, Austria and Italy (who did not explicitly mention it), one or several of these drivers were cited by interviewees in all receiving and mixed countries. Several movers believe that the challenges of

moving abroad and the experiences gathered in the process would improve their job and life prospects if they ever were to return to their home countries.

However, in Spain, it was only movers from Italy and Portugal who cited the wish to travel and explore new countries as a driver. Also, in Cyprus, it was mainly successful or highly skilled Western Europeans who were motivated by the above-mentioned drivers. These “hyper-movers” stand in stark contrast to the ones described as “force of circumstance mobile workers” in the sense that they consider moving a choice and a way to further their self-development.

- ***Language***

Prior knowledge of the destination country’s language and/or the opportunity to learn was a driver for EU citizens to move to Germany, France and the UK.

Learning the German language was mainly mentioned in relation to gathering new experiences and getting to know the German culture.

Of the 15 people who moved to France partly because of the language, several had studied French in school in their home countries and some had a good enough grasp of the language to be able to find work in France or be accepted into a French university.

The situation in the UK is slightly different. As English is considered a universal language and a good command of it crucial skill in the job market, it was an important driver for many young Europeans to move to the UK. However, 24 of 38 interviewees spoke no or very little English when they came to the UK and said that one of the reasons why they moved to the UK was to improve their English.

- ***Education***

While education was a contributing yet secondary factor for EU movers to Germany and UK, it was mentioned as an important factor by movers to France (34%), Belgium (12%) and Austria (28%).

In France, 12 of 35 interviewees said their move was partly due to a lack of educational opportunities in their home country on the one hand and the good French education system and low tuition fees on the other. In Belgium, 4 interviewees had initially moved to the country to study and ended up staying after completing their studies.

University studies were cited as a key driver by German movers to Austria. German universities tend to have strict application requirements and admit students based on their grades. German students who fail to be accepted by a university in their home country therefore sometimes choose to study in Austria instead, where university admission criteria are less restrictive and the same language is spoken.

- ***Family reasons***

Family members, partners and spouses may not appear as a main driver but were a frequent pull factor for EU movers.

The wish to join one’s partner in the destination country was the primary reason for movement for 20% of EU movers to the Netherlands and a contributing

factor for many others. These movers either moved to the Netherlands to join their Dutch partner or followed their non-Dutch partner who was living in the Netherlands. In the case of the Netherlands, it was mainly women who joined their male partner.

Family members and partners were mentioned as a driver by over half of all EU movers to Belgium, while in France 30% of incoming EU citizens moved because their partner was French or living in France.

Family members, partners and friends residing in the destination country were also an incentive for EU citizens to resettle to the UK and Germany, albeit not as often as in the other three receiving countries. In Austria, relationships were the main driver for 4 of 14 movers and were also cited by movers to Spain. In Italy, merely one interviewee moved in order to reunite with their family. In Cyprus, several interviewees said that they had family members or a partner who was living in Cyprus and were therefore inclined to move there. This was particularly the case with movers from Greece.

Family and relationships were another important drivers for many but not all prospective movers from receiving countries. As reported, several interviewees would choose to move to another country to be close to their families, would move with their family, would follow their partners or would chose to move to a place where family members are present.

- ***Corruption and social injustice as push factors***

Corruption, social injustice and political reasons were mentioned as factors driving people away from their home countries almost exclusively by nationals from Bulgaria and Romania, who had moved to Germany and the Netherlands.

- ***“Real” and “perceived” barriers***

- ***Language***

The most common barrier experienced by incoming EU citizens in receiving and mixed countries was language. Difficulty to learn a new local language or getting around in the new and different linguistic environment is one of the major barrier in almost every country under study. As somewhat paradoxically in the UK, where language is seen as one of the main drivers, it also appears to be one of the main barriers reported. Not knowing the local language is a major common ‘perceived’ barrier among the people who wish to move, most notably mentioned by the people from Germany and Belgium.

- ***Employment***

Besides language, another most common barrier faced by the movers is the trouble finding a suitable employment.

In Germany, around one third of the interviewees reported having problems finding a job despite having applied for numerous openings. They found it even more difficult to find a job which aligned with their professional background. This was most probably due to the lack of language skills as well as long recognition processes for papers and qualifications. In contrast to these negative

experiences, the rest of the movers in Germany interviewed indicate that they had no difficulty finding a job or received help from family and friends.

In Belgium, finding work is also difficult for a quarter of the movers from the Mediterranean countries, although it does not seem to be a problem for movers from the newer EU member states. People moving to Netherlands do not generally experience difficulties in finding a job, but in a very limited extent there are exceptions, such as work-related discrimination. However, those reporting troubles in finding a job in Netherlands frequently also report communication difficulties with the public authorities, suggesting cumulative barriers.

In the UK, most of the interviewees report that they faced challenges finding a job. Some of them accepted the first job they came across irrespective of their qualifications and personal goals, mainly in order to "survive". More than half of the participants were in low paid jobs or part time jobs.

Almost a half of the movers to France had similar problems finding work. By and large it came down to the realisation that in many cases French workforce is preferred over the foreign labour. In addition, some interviewees referred that their work qualifications had to closely match the local criteria to get a specific job. In Cyprus, matters seem to be worse, as the widespread practice of work-related discrimination and even exploitation was mentioned in the interviews. Such treatment has befallen on mainly the movers from Eastern Europe, and mostly the private job searching companies can be blamed for this kind of situation. Thus, a problem might not be even finding a job, but what kind of situation one might eventually land on.

Nationality-based discrimination in the labour market was also reported in Italy. As for Spain, many people from Bulgaria and Romania had difficulties with work connected with their countries' former restrictions in accessing the labour market of certain EU countries. However, movers also from old EU member states complained about the job insecurity in Spanish labour market.

- ***Dealing with bureaucracy and having access to information***

There are various bureaucratic issues related to the process of moving: e.g. residence registration procedures or recognition of diplomas/qualifications. This confirms the fears or perceived barriers of those planning of wishing to move, who already before moving rightly identify these as the issues that may come up during their process of moving. Specific concerns were mentioned with regard to dealing with taxes, although it was assumed that specialised services in the destination country would assist. Bureaucratic barriers reported included difficulties with official documents that are necessary for different applications and their translation. Concern was also expressed on procedures linked to everyday life, e.g. opening a bank account etc.

- ***Discrimination and integration***

Although the issues of experiencing some sort of discrimination do not constitute a major aspect among the all listed barriers, it was nevertheless the feature that was brought out in almost every country. In many cases, it included discrimination based on ethnicity, but also gender based discrimination,

discrimination while finding a job; or feeling general negative attitudes of otherness or some other form of discomfort.

What was observed was that EU citizens from Northern and Western countries are more sensitive to discrimination than those from the Southern and the Eastern EU countries.

- ***Accommodation***

Troubles of finding housing or a place to stay were brought out in several interviews in several countries such as Germany, Netherlands, UK, Belgium and Italy.

- ***Cost of living***

Furthermore, the high cost of living is another commonly perceived barrier, which was mainly described in Belgium, France, and Italy.

- ***Personal / family related barriers***

Another sizeable cluster of barriers can be termed as a "cultural shock", which entails feelings of homesickness, feelings of leaving family behind, difficulties making local friends, difficulties being accepted into a host society, and other various cultural differences. Also, although brought out in only a few countries, so called natural phenomena related issues such as weather were mentioned as a barrier when moving to another country.

The vast majority of interviewees do not recognize cultural or other differences between different EU Member States.

- ***Child care/schooling and health insurance***

In comparison with all countries under study, less emphasis was placed on the child care, schooling and health insurance issues.

These were mentioned in a more detailed manner by the Dutch interviews. For example, the interviewees describe that one of the obstacles were the mistakes made by the movers is taking out health insurance. Several interviewees point out that they only found out by coincidence or after attaining a job that they were even obliged to take out health insurance for themselves. While other obligations such as a delayed registration at the municipality are impractical and frustrating, lacking health insurance is not only a great risk with regard to being uninsured, but also carries with it a fine that can even lead to severe financial problems. Interviewees with children also report some difficulties in relation to enrolling their children in school or pre-school. Again, it is not so much of the access to children care or education itself that forms the problem, but finding the right information about how to go about it.

The UK report, too, identifies troubles in enrolling a child to a school. One of the interviewee explains how she had to spend three months at home before she was able to get a school placement for her child. Case-studies in Belgium mention troubles with health insurance very briefly.

4.3 Experiences compared

While it was logical to structure the sample in terms of sending, receiving and mixed countries, it transpires that in the analysis of the experiences these categories are too broad. Other, smaller clusters emerge, especially with regard to the drivers behind movement. Groups of interviewees emerge that differ most significantly in two respects: the negative or positive framing of drivers on the one hand (push or pull) and the emphasis on economic and financial or political and social aspects on the other hand. Thus, as has already been noted, economic drivers are behind the movement of many, but whereas Austrian and Spanish movers are motivated by career-strategic considerations, interviewees from Greece, Cyprus, Portugal and Poland are pushed by the lack of opportunities in their own country. Movers from Bulgaria and Romania share this negative outlook, but are additionally driven by stifling political and social conditions in their home country. Interviewees from Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom are motivated by romantic ideas about the social environment in other countries, e.g. 'kind-hearted people'. This distribution can be seen in the graph below.

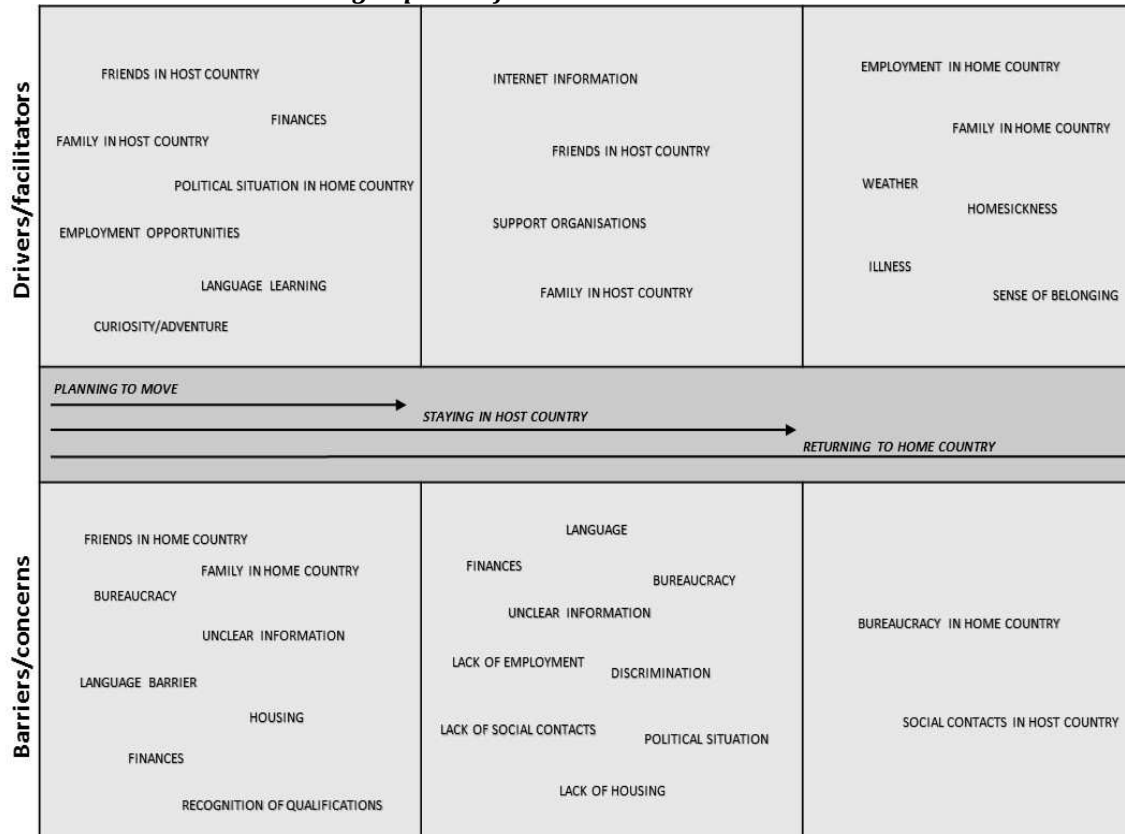
Country clustering according to drivers



The second categorisation we applied to the sample and to the analysis so far concerns the phase of movement, as we are talking about people who plan to move, people who moved and remain to another country and people who moved and returned to their countries. While there are some differences between these groups, no clear contradictions have been identified, for example between the expectations of the potential movers and the actual experiences of the movers (both those remaining in another country and those returning to their country). It is important to keep in mind that there is a clear overlap between these groups, but that this is not a necessity: potential movers may turn into movers, but may also stay at home; movers may return to their country, but may also stay in the host country; only those returned have certainly gone through all the three

phases of planning, staying and returning. This makes it still more interesting to notice that there is no clear difference even in the overall outlook of the categories: the assumption that the ones returned may look back on a ‘failed’ experience is not confirmed, neither is the idea that the ones who plan to move have naïve views of the process of moving. The differentiation between the three categories does enable us to plot the different factors identified as drivers, facilitators and barriers across the entire moving process.

Drivers and barriers according to phase of movement



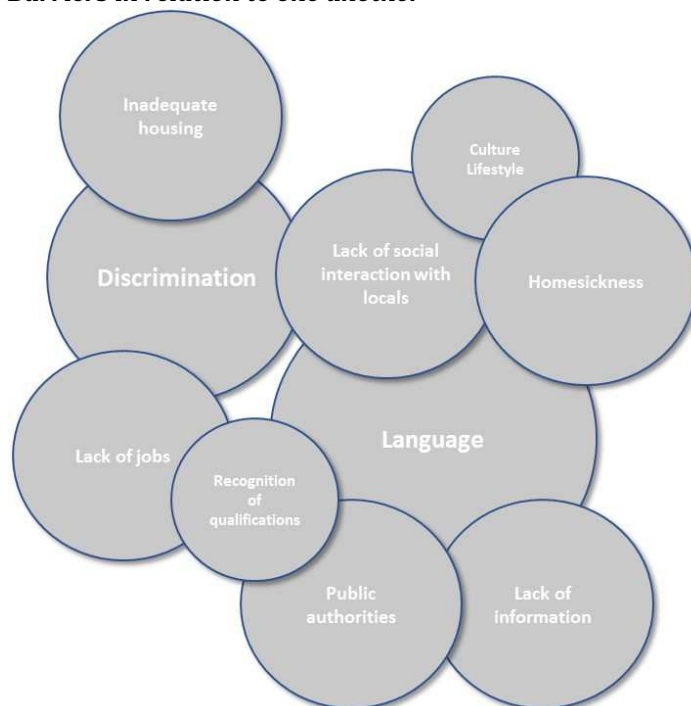
As this graph shows, several factors influence the experience of young people throughout the process of moving. Language (both driver and barrier) is the most obvious example, but it also applies to the administrative burdens which even affect the return to the home country. Also, family and friends, in both home and host country, have an important influence on the situation of movers in all different phases. Interestingly, a driver in one phase can turn into a barrier in another phase. This applies to the pull factor of promising employment opportunities in the host country, which may turn into a push factor to leave against once this employment position is terminated or the opportunities do not materialise as expected. The curiosity displayed by those who plan to move may in the end be satisfied after a period of movement and turn into homesickness or a realisation of a sense of belonging in the home country.

Are there other background characteristics, next to nationality and phase of movement, that influence young persons’ experience in moving? We have already stressed the fact that the sample for this study is biased towards highly educated movers, resulting from the personal recruitment methods and from the exclusion of organised movement assisted by employment agencies. This bias

may explain the significance attached to the mismatch between education and employment opportunities in the home countries, and in some other countries the emphasis on specialised career development. It also explains the frequent mentioning of Erasmus exchange experience as an underlying factor of movement. At the same time, this bias towards highly educated interviewees does not prevent the different barriers from figuring clearly, including lack of preparation, information, bureaucratic difficulties and the language barrier.

Leaving the personal characteristics of the young movers aside, it is important to note the barriers identified are not all equal, and more importantly not isolated in the impact they have on the individual experiences. As has already been noted, the language barrier is one barrier that clearly influences and accentuates other barriers. This is true for different barriers which are either related to one another and thereby overlap or are even parts of the same overall issue. Again, we try to capture these relation in the below graph.

Barriers in relation to one another



We hereby not only see that language is connected to different obstacles, but also for example that the issue of recognition of qualifications which is frequently encountered, is accentuated by the language barrier and the unhelpful public authorities, and in itself has an impact on the availability of adequate employment. Discrimination plays a role on the labour market, in the search for housing, and in the (lack of) social interaction with locals, which again can lead to homesickness. This interconnectedness of barriers also has implications for possible solutions. Removing one barrier may not be possible without addressing other barriers as well.

Another interesting perspective would be to relate the drivers of movement to the barriers experienced by the young people, i.e. to treat the motivation of the movers as a background factor influencing the experience. While we cannot trace individual movers from the first stages of their plans to the actual experience of

living in another member state, we can make some connections between the drivers and barriers identified.

- Most clearly, the motivation of following or joining a partner in another country (who may or may not be a national of that country) has a positive impact on overcoming barriers of bureaucracy, accommodation and, in some cases, social isolation.
- Conversely, purely economically driven movement, whereby family is left behind in the home country, is likely to lead to return movement in the end.
- Where push factors are the main reason for leaving the home country, this can contribute to a feeling of forced movement. Involuntarily leaving one's social environment, culture and general way of life behind may contribute to a higher level irritation with obstacles encountered in the host country and increase feelings of homesickness and isolation.
- However, where pull factors are based on romanticised ideas of other countries, the reality of barriers encountered may lead to quick disillusionment. At the same time, individual curiosity and enthusiasm, especially amongst the younger parts of our sample, appear to increase people's willingness to put up with issues such as low quality housing or inadequate information provision.

The question of whether movement is framed in a positive or negative light and to what extent this influences the overall experience, could be worth following up in research, especially in relation to the assumptions underlying policy and legislation on free movement at EU level. In EU terms, the right to move and reside freely is still at its core tied to ideas of worker mobility and balanced labour markets. From this perspective, movement inspired by economic push factors and qualitative labour market mismatches is a desirable outcome. However, the results of our research show that in the experience of young movers, this kind of movement can be experienced as a forced decision, thereby causing anxiety rather than satisfaction. This relationship between the overall systemic dynamic and the individual experience is an interesting field to discover further.

4.4 Overcoming barriers

Having identified the main barriers to the free movement of EU citizens above, this part considers the facilitators for overcoming these barriers. Additionally, in this part of the report, apart from the initial categorisation of participants (in those who wish or plan to move, those who moved and reside in another EU country and those who moved to another EU country and returned to their home country), an effort was made to organise the barriers on the basis of the nationality of the participants. For this purpose the participating countries were separated into regional groupings of Eastern, Southern and North Western countries. This grouping will show if there are differences in patterns between the Southern and Eastern European Union countries when 'exporting' young movers to North-Western receiving countries.

As mentioned above, the major barriers reported by informants (in order of frequency) are bureaucracy, language, discrimination, integration and everyday life, employment, info, cost of living, housing and family (See figures 1, 2 and 3).

Figure 1: Main barriers to movement by region for incoming EU citizens

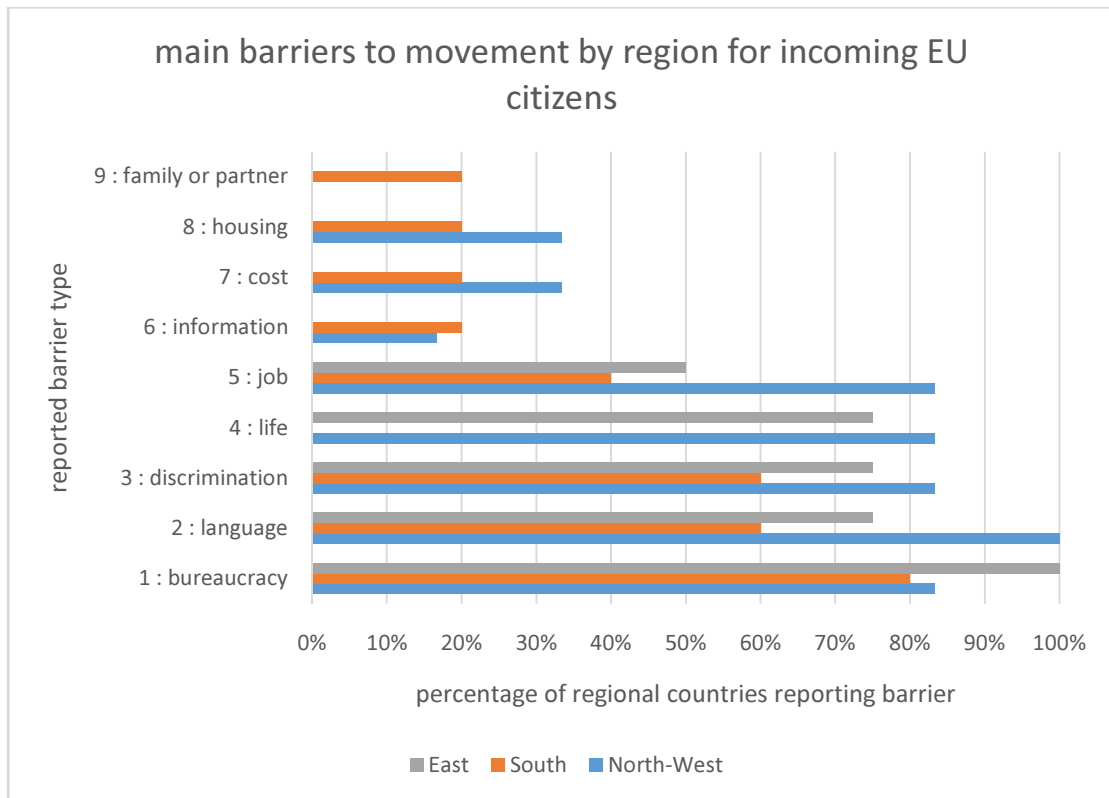


Figure 2: Main barriers to free movement by region for outgoing nationals

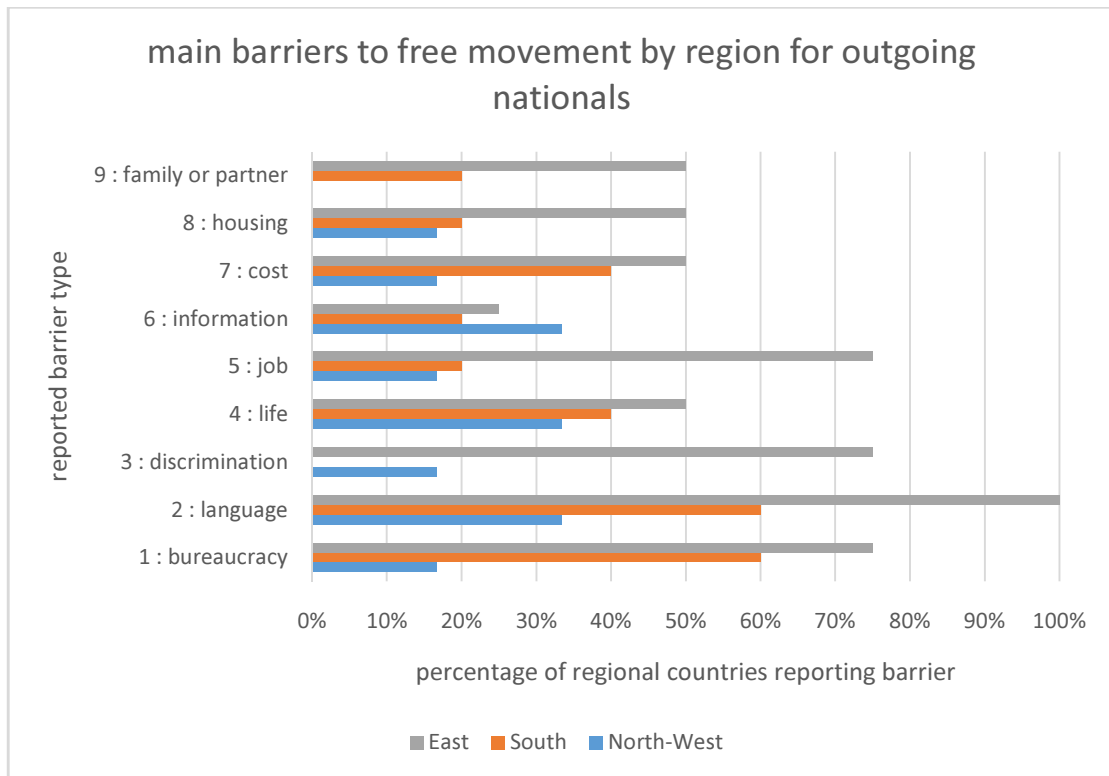
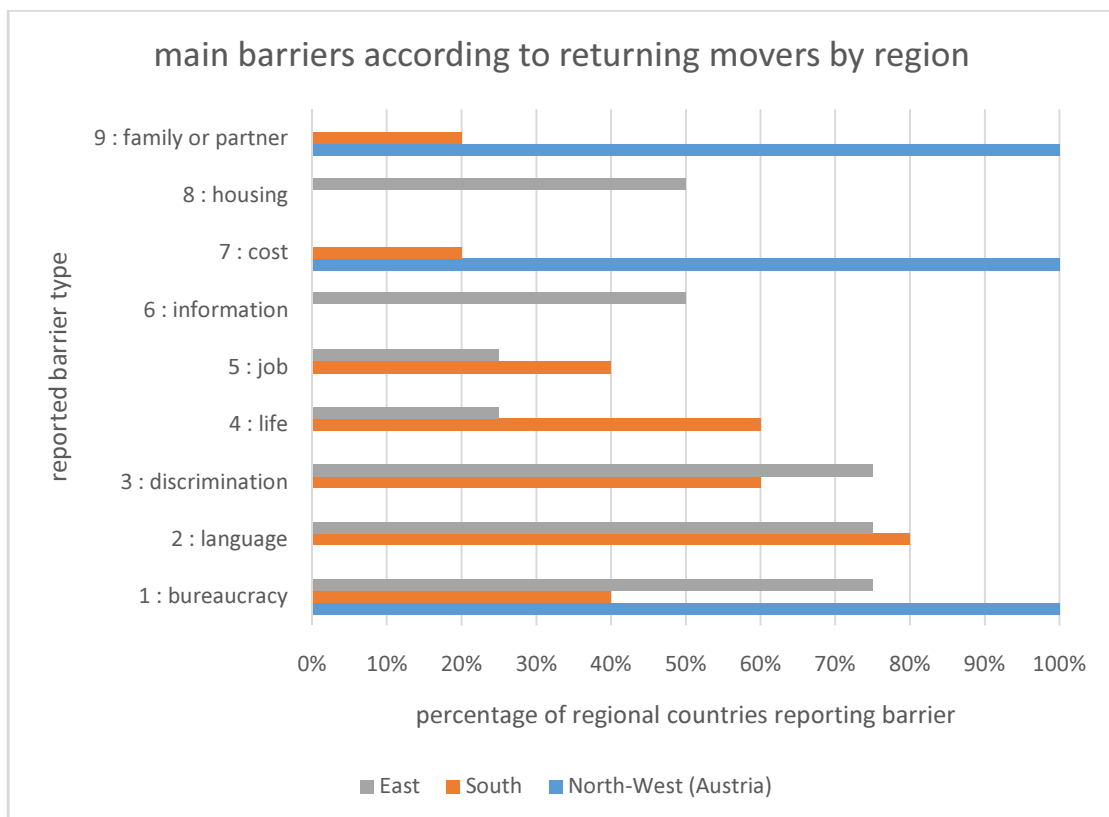
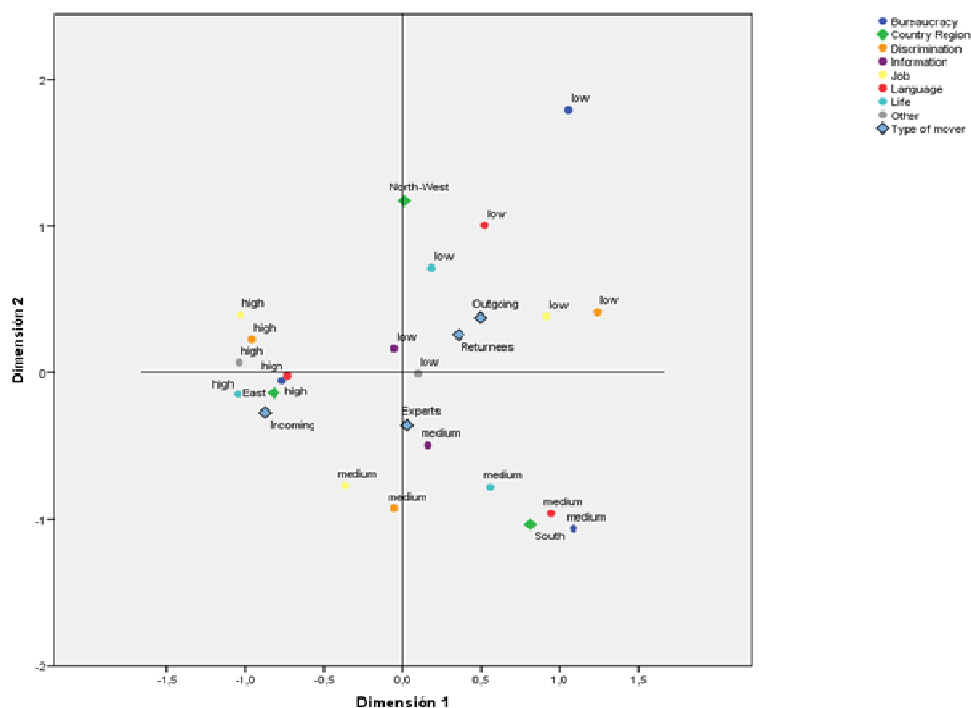


Figure 3: Main barriers according to returning movers by region



Another fact that emerges from the research is the way the young movers perceive the barriers identified.

Incoming movers (regardless of the region) together with movers (of all types) interviewed in Eastern countries seem to perceive the barriers with a higher intensity. Prospective movers and returnees (for all regions), as well as most types of movers interviewed in the North-Western countries, are more prone to minimise barriers. Finally, it is noticeable how those interviewed in the Southern countries (most of them belonging to the sending-receiving category) think that barriers are of medium intensity. These are shown in the figure below (figure 4).



➤ ***Overcoming the barriers to free movement as reported by EU citizens who wish or plan to move to another EU country***

In general terms, the main facilitators for overcoming barriers to free movement as perceived among prospective movers are personal contacts in the destination country, access to information and the appeal of moving as a value itself. Many from the poorer countries reported their feeling that the prospect of improved pay and living standards helps to overcome barriers.

North-Western outgoing nationals

For the nationals from the North-Western areas of the European Union, the following were presented as the main facilitators that help overcome barriers:

- ✚ More jobs and a stable economy was identified as a factor that can facilitate free movement as it helps open up the minds. Furthermore, having an employer in the destination country can facilitate with dealing with bureaucratic obstacles.

- ✚ Having relations in the destination country (family, partners, friends or acquaintances) or friends who are also planning to move. They are already familiar with the language and bureaucratic requirements of the host country.
- ✚ Information, social networks in the destination country (eg . internet forums where people who have experience with moving to another country share their story).
- ✚ Previous migratory experience. The mover already knows where to find the necessary information and speaks the language or in case of movement to a different destination, the previous experience gives confidence and familiarises with what to expect elsewhere.

Southern outgoing nationals

For nationals considering moving from one of the countries in the South of the EU, the following were identified as the main facilitators towards overcoming expected barriers to movement:

- ✚ The moving experience itself. Most of the participants share a positive point of view on mobility experiences. Difficulties are expected; but these are considered as a part of the moving process and an element of personal development.
- ✚ Networks/relationships in the destination country. One of the main methods for promoting movement abroad was the utilisation of their own networks: social circle, family and professional contacts. The internet was not used much, but many movers sought accurate and updated information from their trusted networks. Would-be movers thus address potential problems by asking advice from relatives or friends who live in the destination country.
- ✚ Access to information: Many mentioned the internet as the main route to accessing the necessary information. This is a particularly valuable resource for those lacking more personal connections in the destination country.

Eastern outgoing nationals

The last group we consider from the outgoing prospective free movers are those from the Eastern group of countries. The main facilitators of movement from the interviews with this group are as follows:

- ✚ Access to information: Prior to moving they try to inform themselves on how their life would be abroad, what opportunities they might have and the possible problems and on how to address them. Their main source of information, is the internet. The second most commonly mentioned source of information are friends or family members.
- ✚ Pull factors – better pay and living standards: The simple fact that there is the possibility of a better life abroad helps to overcome potential barriers.

- ✚ The moving experience: This group also highlights the intrinsic value of exercising their right to free movement. They point out the positive aspects of learning a new language, experiencing a new culture personal growth and the strong desire to feel as a global citizen as well as the opportunity to expand one's horizons.
- ***Overcoming the barriers to free movement as reported by incoming nationals to other EU countries***

There are differences in the facilitators experience by incoming EU citizens into the three regional groups. While social networks and diaspora organisations are important for all, EU citizens moving into the North-Western and Southern countries of the EU apparently have more recourse to state organised resources, such as integration and job centres. Otherwise, the economic and social features of the countries themselves act as facilitators. Similarly, just the opportunities for free movement within the EU provide are by themselves facilitators.

- *Incoming EU citizens to the North-Western region*

The first group we look at are the EU citizens that have come to live in the North-Western group of countries. They report the following as the main facilitators in overcoming barriers to their stays:

- ✚ Inclusion and integration policies. (*The UK government, for instance, promotes the inclusion of movers with policies and legislation that foster equality. Another initiative by the UK government is the provision of English classes. Likewise, in Belgium, language courses are offered at the Agency for Social and Civic Integration*).
- ✚ Social networks: The formal and informal networks of the young people moving to the receiving country turns out to be the main recourse when it comes to overcoming barriers related to practical, administrative and legal matters. *Another form of more professional support is provided by migrant self-run organisations and support groups.*
- ✚ Labour market: support and help from the workplace, family and friends, partners. Employment is a driver and a barrier of movement at the same time if the qualifications are not usable in the destination country.
- ✚ The country itself (previous experiences).

Incoming EU citizens to the Southern group of countries

EU citizens that have come to live in the Southern countries of the European Union report the following as the main facilitators in overcoming barriers to their stays:

- ✚ Welcoming/integration policies.
- ✚ The Eastern condition: Romanians and Bulgarians feel that now there is now more freedom of mobility and that people can move to have new experiences and not only for economic reasons.

- ✚ The free circulation system itself: Most of the interviewees generally share a positive point of view on mobility experiences arguing that it opens one's mind, and it's helpful to live in another scene, with a different culture.
- ✚ Social networks, local contact.
- ✚ Labour market: The capacity of the tourism industry to absorb seasonal workers was the reason motivating young Western Europeans to seek temporary work in Cyprus.

Incoming EU citizens to the Eastern EU countries

EU citizens that have come to live in the Eastern countries of the European Union report the following as the main facilitators:

- ✚ Social network/diaspora organisations.
- ✚ Labour market conditions: Working in multinational companies that can provide “experience exchanges” has often been mentioned as the best practice to promote the right to move freely.
- ***Overcoming the barriers to free movement as reported by EU citizens who moved and returned***

The nationals returning from a stay in another EU member indeed do not report much in terms of available resources beyond the use of social networks for facilitating their stays abroad.

4.5. The viewpoint of national authorities

In addition to young movers, 67 experts representing a variety of institutions dealing with matters related to free movement were interviewed in the 15 participating countries. The authorities and institutions approached across the 15 countries included national ministries, non-governmental organisations, municipalities, migrant self-organisations, private companies and other organisations.

As a result of this diverse construction of the sample, no explicit comparisons between the countries are possible. Expert perceptions of phenomena related to mobility are influenced by their professional involvement with selected groups of movers, and thus does not necessarily reflect the importance of that particular issue in the country. Furthermore, some national experts dealt with issues relating to the freedom of movement of EU citizens of all ages and education groups (e.g. both high-skilled and low-skilled), not exclusively young movers who left after the crisis, and referred to their broader experience when identifying existing problems and shortcomings.

➤ *Trends and challenges*

The experts interviewed were asked about their assessment of current movement trends they observe in their country and across the EU. They emphasised the fact that Europeans on the move have diverse backgrounds: they are very young as well as older, some with little formal education, others highly educated. On a general level, experts confirm the predominance of the ‘East to West’ and ‘South to North/West’ movement patterns in the EU, however they

also observed that the numbers of movers from particular countries that they come into contact with vary across different time periods.

Some experts stated that the characteristics of movement have changed over the years, acquiring new dimensions, given the fact that most of those who leave now have a bachelor's degree or higher, and most likely gave up the job they had in the country of origin. In the early waves of movement, the people who left were mainly unemployed, or had been unemployed for a long time due to deindustrialization. Now many young, qualified people decide to leave the country because they either cannot find a job, are not satisfied with their wages, or want to look for employment corresponding to their field of education. These changes were identified by interviewees from Poland, Romania, Portugal and Greece. They also reported a tendency of movement gradually becoming more long-term, as opposed to temporary.

➤ *Awareness and information about free movement*

The experts of all EU countries interviewed consider that in general young people are well informed about the fact that they have the right to move. Although information on movers' rights is widely available on the internet, which young people are competent in using, it appears that many young people are however not aware of specific rights linked to their right to move, such as labour rights or social rights. This can have very dramatic consequences, such as labour trafficking. Usually, it is only when movers face difficulties after arriving in the destination country that they realize they are not aware of their rights and look for information. For instance, movers can have difficulties finding a job because they did not anticipate issues in recognizing qualifications between EU countries, according to the experts interviewed.

The internet seems to be the main source of information for movers, as well as friends and families. On social networks, an important source of information are nationality groups where expatriates from the same country exchange information, e.g. a Facebook group: "Estonians in Finland". However, the information gathered through these networks may not always be accurate and can be contradictory. What is interesting to note is that though experts think that the information exists and is widely available, and that young people are aware of their right to move, they nonetheless advocate better sharing of information and an increase of awareness.

➤ *Practices hindering and supporting mobility*

Experts mentioned two specific legislative practices that can hinder the mobility of Europeans:

- ✓ According to Austrian experts, a practice that hinders the right to move freely concerns unmarried couples. Unmarried partners who live and move together face difficulties. Their relationship is not acknowledged if they have not been living together in the destination country for 10 or more months. This problem particularly affects couples where one partner moves because of a job offer and the other partner moves without yet having a job offer.

- ✓ In Belgium, legislation on free movement is applied in a stricter way than in other EU countries. Here, movers need to find work within three months, otherwise, s/he faces expulsion from the country.

Several positive examples of practices carried out to foster mobility were described. These refer to helpful legislation and programmes to support movers and include the following examples:

- ✓ The experts interviewed think that provisions in EU legislation such as Directive 2014/54/EU which imposes upon the member states an obligation to provide legal advice for EU citizens and to carry out research on barriers to free movement, can be a valuable instrument to provide a better identification of systemic barriers, and improve the provision of services related to free movement.
- ✓ A liberal application of the law promotes free movement, for example in Austria. Firstly, residence registration certificates are issued by settlement authorities to EU movers as soon as they start working in the country, regardless of the number of working hours in the contract. Secondly, Austrian experts describe the legislation on marriage and family reunification as favourable for EU movers who are married to third country national.
- ✓ European student exchanges (such as Erasmus) were also listed as practices facilitating free movement through early exposure of students to diversity and living abroad. Such programmes are also set up on the national level, e.g. a Bulgarian internship programme which offers a number of long- and short-term internships both abroad and in Bulgaria. Experts also mentioned other European networks, including EURES and EuroDesk as examples of helpful solutions that facilitate free movement.
- ✓ In Germany, there are migration advice centres (Migrationsberatungsstellen) available in almost every large city. Although these are not dedicated specifically to EU movers, they are a first contact point offering a broad range of services giving support and advice on questions.
- ✓ Among good practices of non-state actors, experts in Poland indicated the role of British trade unions (General Municipal Boilermakers - GMB) in providing English language classes and thematic meetings to movers where a person can, among others, receive information about registering with a trade union.
- ✓ In Estonia, in recent years, different institutions have developed websites for specific target groups, e.g. "Work in Estonia" for people who move to Estonia for work, or "Study in Estonia" for people who move to Estonia to study.
- ✓ To raise the awareness of young Europeans who have not moved yet, campaigns are run by NGOs or institutions that provide information on European programmes and opportunities.

4.6. Conclusions

The main drivers reported by young movers are work, love and adventure! The main driver for moving is related to economic reasons, the lack of opportunities in countries of origin, high rates of unemployment, low wages. The second driver

was reuniting with partners or family already living in another country. The third driver related to the wish to explore and experiment while looking for better quality of life.

The most common barriers reported in the research concerned language and communication; difficulty in accessing information; bureaucracy and to a limited extent also discrimination.

Even when young people move for different reasons, they encounter similar barriers. Incoming movers (regardless of the region) and all movers in Eastern countries perceive the barriers with a higher intensity while prospective movers and returnees (for all regions) & movers in North-Western countries minimise barriers

Chapter 5. Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter synthesises the findings of the research and attempts to address the main research questions of the project. It is structured in two parts: the first part looks at the reality of free movement for young EU citizens as 'coloured' by the findings of the research. The second part makes recommendations for EU authorities and national institutions on how to lift the main barriers and make free movement an accessible reality to all.

5. 1. The reality of free movement for young EU citizens

The Directive 2004/38/EC consolidated the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States by laying down the conditions for free movement and residence. The purpose of the Directive was to ensure that EU citizens and their family members have the right to move and reside freely in any Member State but also that they can move with the least possible administrative procedures. Is this the case? And does this apply in particular to young movers who move independently, hence without organised backstopping support?

In response to this question, the project came up with some interesting findings:

Firstly, specific knowledge and empirical research on young EU movers is limited. While intra-EU movement has been well researched over the years, specific aspects such as youth movement have not been subject to close scrutiny. This means that specific in depth knowledge on this particular group is missing.

Secondly, statistical data on EU citizens living in other EU Member States shows that a large number of Europeans exercise their right to free movement. Europe appears to be an area where citizens take advantage of the opportunity to live, study, or work anywhere they wish. However, this general observation does not necessarily hold true for young people as the movement of young citizens remains unaccounted for by official EU and national statistics. Thus, what we know about the independent movement patterns of young people is relatively circumstantial and ad hoc.

Thirdly, it is clear that there is mobility of young European citizens between all the 15 countries participating in the project, but in varying terms compared to each other. Countries like BG, EE, GR, RO, PO, PT present a negative human flow balance and function mainly as sending countries. Countries like BE, FR, DE, NL, UK have a positive balance and function mainly as receiving countries. Countries like Cyprus, Italy or Spain enjoy outflows and inflows (mixed countries). The nationalities of EU movers differ from country to country, because of historical relations, proximity or economic reasons. The research shows that the mobility of young EU citizens is closely influenced by the economic crisis and the shrinking labour markets, but at the same time it represents more than a simple consequence of the crisis or economic problems in some countries.

Fourthly, the legislative framework related to the exercise of the right to free movement is quite complex. Despite the fact that the Directive 2004/38/EC has been transposed, grey areas remain and national legislation is often complex or not fully aligned with the spirit of the Directive. Further, free movers are affected by several other national laws in areas like social security, health care, access to

employment etc which are difficult to access and understand. Specific areas where legislative problems were reported include access to health and welfare, recognition of vocational qualifications, family rights and specific grey areas are restrictions in freedom of movement for minorities especially the Roma.

Fifth, a big number of institutions and authorities at different levels of national or sub-national government are competent on issues related to free movement. Overall, the institutional mandate on free movement is fragmented and there is limited visibility of the role of the institutions involved.

Within this context, is free movement a reality for young EU citizens who move on their own? If so, what drives them to move? And what barriers do they face? Drawing from the personal experience of 575 young people from 15 EU countries interviewed in the course of the project, the following major conclusions can be drawn with regard to the reality of free movement:

- The right to move and reside freely is part of the reality of young Europeans. For the large majority of young Europeans that took part in the project their right to move is something natural. However, the level of specific knowledge about what the right entails is low and usually comes ad hoc, after they have moved.
- To a great extent the awareness of young Europeans on their right to move is linked to their previous experience of moving, especially as university students and to a great extent through their participation in student exchanging programmes, such as Erasmus.
- The main reasons that drive young Europeans to move are primarily economic and job related. The main driver for moving is related to the lack of opportunities in their home country, high rates of unemployment, low wages, poor social care and the prospects of finding a job or a better job. The second main driver relates to following or reuniting with their partner or family who have already moved to other EU countries. The third driver relates to looking for better quality of life, acquiring new experiences, learning new languages, acquiring new skills. These barriers were common in all three groups of movers (those wishing to move, those who moved and those who returned) and for movers from all groups of countries (sending, receiving, mixed).

Table 5.1. Drivers reported by young people on the move

Sending countries (included mixed)										
	Greece	Bulgaria	Romania	Poland	Portugal	Estonia	Austria	Cyprus	Spain	Italy
Employment related drivers										
Better professional opportunities	√	√		√						
Unemployment		√	√	√						
Low income in their country		√	√	√						
Higher income	√ Better	√			√ Better				√	

Sending countries (included mixed)										
	Greece	Bulgaria	Romania	Poland	Portugal	Estonia	Austria	Cyprus	Spain	Italy
abroad	financial security				life					
Job corresponding to qualifications	√					√				
Lack of opportunities	√	√	√	√	√			√		
Career development							√		√	
Non economic drivers										
Political reasons / corruption / social injustice		√	√	√						
Better quality of life	√	√	√		√					√
Learn/improve language skills	√			√	√	√				
Educational reasons		√	√			√				
Adventure	√	√	√		√					√
Personal / family reasons										
Follow partners/family	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Relatives and friends in the destination country	√		√	√	√					
Need for independence					√					
Personal development			√							

Receiving countries					
	Germany	Netherlands	UK	France	Belgium
Employment related drivers					
Specific professional opportunities	√	√	√	√	√
Non economic drivers					
Learning an new language	√				√
Experiences	√	√	√	√	√
Increase of racism		√		√	
Better quality of life / climate	√		√	√	
Personal / family reasons					
Follow partners/family	√	√	√	√	√

- Despite the general awareness of young Europeans on the opportunities offered in terms of free movement, free movement does not come without barriers. A number of barriers were reported both 'perceived' (ie barriers that movers fear they might face) or real ones (ie barriers they actually encountered when moving).
- The main barriers reported related to language, lack of access to detailed information on specific aspects of life in the destination country; bureaucracy; adaptation to the different way of life and the culture of the host country, integration in local society and building friends and social networks, discriminatory attitudes and access to housing.
- Even when young people move for different reasons, the barriers they encounter are similar. Incoming movers (regardless of the region) and all movers in Eastern countries tend to perceive the barriers with a higher intensity while prospective movers and returnees (for all regions) and movers in North-Western countries tend to minimise barriers.
- Although young movers appear to be well informed about the general aspects of their right to move, access to detailed and specific information about employment, social security, health is reported as an important barrier. It needs to be noted that almost none of the interviewees was aware or reported having used services set up for this purpose (EURES etc). Information results being inaccessible because it is scattered, too technical and not user-friendly. On the other hand, young movers do not seem to look for detailed information until after they have moved to the destination country.
- Instances of discrimination (eg nationality, gender etc) were sporadically reported but did not appear to be particularly widespread. EU citizens from Northern and Western countries were more sensitive to discrimination than those from the Southern and the Eastern EU countries.
- Bureaucratic barriers involved registration procedures, social security issues, difficulties with the recognition of qualifications and related administrative obstacles. The lack of information and guidance on what is required, what to do and how, appear to lie behind many of these barriers.
- The experiences of the young people interviewed show that most of them manage to overcome the barriers they encounter. This means that obstacles might make moving more challenging but do not prevent people from exercising their right.
- The main facilitators for overcoming barriers were friends, family and networks in the host country. Overcoming the lack of language skills or the lack of information usually takes place through informal networks that assist.
- Representatives/experts of national/local authorities competent on free movement emphasised that Europeans on the move have diverse backgrounds being both very young as well as older, some with little

formal education, others highly educated. On a general level, experts confirmed the predominance of the 'East to West' and 'South to North/West' movement patterns in the EU, however they also observed that the numbers of movers from particular countries that they come into contact with vary across different time periods. It was also noted that the characteristics of movement have changed over the years, acquiring new dimensions, given the fact that most of those who leave now are well educated while in the early waves of movement, they were mainly unemployed. Overall, young people are well informed in general terms about their right to move but not aware of specific rights. Several practices were reported that can hinder and promote the mobility of young Europeans.

- Overall, the opening of borders in Europe, the development of exchange programmes, and the increased learning of foreign languages has had a very positive effect on the movement of young Europeans. However, this has not been supported by close cooperation between national authorities, mainly concerning the recognition of skills and qualifications, health care, and taxes which would have made the movement between European countries more effortless.
- From this perspective, the major challenge for national authorities consists in finding the correct balance between promoting free movement, informing of possible difficulties when settling abroad, and preventing brain drain. To reach this balance and tackle the issues mentioned above, improving access to information on free movement and movers' rights, enhancing cooperation between authorities, and involving local authorities more closely to foster integration are key factors to be considered.

The synthesis of the research findings shows that free movement is indeed an accessible reality for young EU citizens. However, a number of challenges remain especially in removing barriers that make the experience of moving more difficult or challenging. The recommendations to address these challenges are addressed to EU institutions and national/local authorities.

5. 2. Recommendations

The research shows that although free movement is a reality for young EU citizens, a number of areas can still be improved to facilitate the experience of moving. As the EU and national/subnational levels are intrinsically linked in this effort, the recommendations formulated through the project address these two distinct levels.

5.2.1. Recommendations to EU institutions

- *Monitor closely the transposition of the Directive to ensure that national legislation is fully aligned with the rationale of the Directive with special focus on the 'grey' areas of the Directive*

A number of problems reported in relation to the Directive were connected to its transposition in the national legal order and especially 'grey' areas like the conditions under which someone is a 'burden' to national welfare systems, the conditions for expulsion etc. These issues require more attention. It is recommended to monitor closely the transposition in these grey areas and to conduct studies to look in depth the conditions established by member states to ensure that no discriminatory practices are hidden there and that these do not annul the purpose of the Directive.

- *Collect statistical data on the intra-EU movement of young people*

It is recommended to enhance statistical data to include more data sets on how young people move within the EU. This will allow to identify movement patterns but also to study in more depth the specific obstacles relevant to them.

- *Make European networks and projects to support free movement more visible*

The research showed that although young people were overall aware of their right to move freely, information on the specific aspects of this right was one of the main barriers reported. This goes hand in hand with the fact that participants were not aware of networks, bodies or platforms operating in all member states (like EURES or Europe Direct or SOLVIT) which aim to provide information to facilitate movement and residence. These institutions appear to be relatively invisible to those that need them most. Since these are already in operation and deal with aspects related to free movement, it is important to make them visible and known to the target audiences.

- *Create a pan-european platform/website with online information on all aspects related to free movement and life in EU countries*

Information was an important barrier reported by young people. Despite the information available on the internet etc, young people rarely reported having had sufficient information to prepare themselves for moving or for being clear about their rights and obligations once they had moved. Ensuring that this information is easily accessible is an important task that the EU can support through a common platform/website. This specific recommendation originated from several young people interviewed in the participating countries. They recommended an interactive platform/website that would cover all EU MS and would offer updated and reliable information on free movement and important aspects of life in all countries (eg employment, health care, education, social security, taxation etc).

The platform could include user-friendly apps offering updated information and a user-friendly interface on various aspects of living in all member states.

- *Establish and coordinate networks of competent national/local authorities from across the EU to discuss and address barriers*

Many of the barriers reported were relevant to bureaucracy and administrative burdens in the destination countries. Many issues eg translations, non acceptance of documents from other countries etc could be solved through a closer cooperation between the competent national authorities. It is recommended to the EU to set up and organise a network of national/local authorities competent on free movement to ensure that there is a forum for discussing (and potentially solving) these problems.

- *Explore in more depth the experience of young people when moving within the EU*

More research is required to understand in more depth how the different barriers that young people experience affect the implementation of the right to free movement (through EU programmes) both at EU / comparative and at national level.

- *Launch information campaigns to address negative perceptions against free movement*

Due to a number of factors, free movement is sometimes seen as the cause of evil in specific circumstances. It is important to react to these incidents at EU level and launch wide ranging campaigns to the general public that can –in cooperation with national authorities and EU networks etc in member states–reverse these negative attitudes that lead to discriminatory attitudes.

- *Make available educational and informative material*

Make available educational and informative material translated in all EU languages and available to all EU citizens to help understand what the right to free movement really means

5.2.2. Recommendations for national/subnational authorities

Although several aspects of free movement can be best addressed at EU level, the main responsibilities remain with the member states. These broadly include offering clear and sufficient information, ensuring that no unnecessary bureaucratic burdens are in place, facilitating integration and ensuring that legislation applies on an equal basis to all EU citizens without discrimination on the grounds of nationality. The research proved that these are the main challenges when it comes to enjoying their right to free movement.

- *Improve access to information*

Access to information about the practical aspects of living and working in a country other than your own was a barrier noted by the majority of interviewees in the countries that took part in the project. Information, even if available, as representatives of national authorities claimed, is not accessible or user-friendly enough for young EU citizens to easily understand their rights and obligations.

Article 34 of the Directive includes an obligation for Member States to disseminate information concerning the rights and obligations of Union citizens

and their family members on the subjects covered by this Directive, particularly by means of awareness-raising campaigns conducted through national and local media and other means of communication. As this appears to be an important gap, it is recommended to be a main focus in the efforts of member states especially in making available comprehensive and updated information (not only in the national language) on the administrative procedures and other essential requirements that mobile EU citizens need to comply with. This information can be available online in multiple languages. One stop shops were another solution proposed by interviewees. These could provide information about the steps to be taken by new arrivals, from registration to tax obligations, health or social security and bodies for complaints.

Depending on the administrative organisation of member states, a contact point at local level eg within local authorities and municipalities could be a feasible solution.

➤ *Address bureaucracy and red tape in procedures for EU citizens*

Apart from the difficulties associated to acquiring information on administrative obligations young EU citizens reported that complying with these obligations eg registration, taxation, social security, health insurance, schooling for children etc. in many cases involved a lot of bureaucracy and unexpected problems due either to difficulties in communication (eg competent officers could not communicate in english or another language), because paperwork and certificates or translations from other EU countries were not accepted etc. Dealing with unnecessary bureaucracy, ensuring that documents are useable or that there are clear rules and information about what is accessible and reducing the administrative burden related to fundamental registration requirements for EU citizens needs to be addressed by the member states. This could involve setting up contact points or specialised one stop shops or selecting officials in competent authorities to act as contact points and providing training.

➤ *Facilitate communication between EU citizens and national authorities*

Language was another important barrier reported by young mobile citizens. Language in fact qualifies as two separate barriers: a) the lack of language skills or the lack of possibility for MS officials to communicate in another language and b) the lack of language skills by mobile EU citizens. Offering easier access to language courses for movers and their family members (even existing ones) is an important measure to facilitate integration.

➤ *Make complaint mechanisms for reporting discrimination known and accessible*

Discriminatory and hostile attitudes were reported in the research, although not as a very widespread phenomenon. Prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of nationality but also on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation etc are fundamental pillars of the Treaties and equality bodies are in place to deal with complaints. It is important for EU citizens to be aware of discriminatory practices and to know what and where to report.