

Migration and labour mobility





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Author: György Lajtai

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Illustrated by: © Klaus Puth, Mühlheim/Main, www.klausputh.de

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Foreword

Dear Readers and Friends,

In the 2014 education year, EZA co-ordinated several projects on “Mobility and migration: co-ordinating social security systems - an element of stabilisation for life and work in Europe”, which had drawn up concepts for social safeguarding of cross-border work and recommendations for greater co-operation of workers’ organisations in the country of origin and of destination for helping migrants.

The big refugee movement to Europe in 2015 and 2016 caused EZA to co-ordinate projects again on the issue of migration only two years later. The aim of the six seminars held in different regions of Europe was to flag up in which areas and ways workers’ organisations could assist refugees, in many a regard defenceless, in exercising their rights in the labour market.

There was agreement that the wide-ranging forms of exploitation to which refugees are exposed in the labour market must be actively combated. In particular, workers’ organisations should focus on health and safety at work, ensuring that working hours and wages are calculated properly, as well as equal opportunities for women, and feel responsible for informing refugees about labour law and about their rights and duties at work.

In the seminars, several times politicians were called on to open up possibilities of an early entry of refugees into the labour market – even during the asylum procedure – in order to prevent exploitation and promote regular employment. Some examples of best practice made it evident that integration efforts and initiatives on a local level – involving the local government and in conjunction with local companies – were especially promising.

The project co-ordination seminars also cast an eye on the causes of the refugee movement: for instance, there was criticism of the role of some multinational companies whose unregulated activity in the refugees’ countries of origin deprived them of their livelihood. This is why participants called for a rethink.

It is with serious concern that I see populist and extreme people and tendencies in Europe trying to exploit social abuses and distortions in the labour market resulting from the European economic crisis and the globalisation against people of another origin and religion. As a Christian and a democrat, I condemn this in the strongest terms. It is the responsibility of European society, politicians and social partners to create a social Europe and enable participation in the labour market. But this cannot be at the expense of refugees. It is also imperative to separate questions of regular labour migration from questions relating to refugees.

I would like to thank the EZA member centres that were involved in the series of projects – ACLI-ENAIP, Beweging.academie, CSDR, H+D, KSI, UNAIE – for their active participation and commitment. In addition, my special thanks go to György Lajtai, who led the project co-ordination, contributed input on content, evaluated the results, and drew up the Final Report you have here.

The European Commission's Directorate-General of Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion supported our activities with content and finance.

Our aim with the results and recommendations for action of this brochure is to document the European debate in the EZA network on the issue of integrating refugees in the labour market, and to give suggestions for the work of workers' organisations to politicians. It is the task of all of us to shoulder our responsibility of solidarity. We are glad to receive feedback, proposals and comments on these pressing questions for Europe. Our contact details are on the back of this brochure.

I hope you enjoy reading it!

Sigrid Schraml
Secretary-General EZA

The summary report consists of two parts. The first part gives an overview of the key topics and the main conclusions of the seminars. The second part provides a detailed report on each of the seminars, including dates, venue, speakers, participants, the content of presentations and the discussions.

PART I: OVERVIEW AND MAIN CONCLUSIONS

The following six seminars were implemented during the 2016/2017 seminar years on the issue of “Migration and labour mobility in Europe”:

- CSDR (Confederația Sindicatelor Democratice din România / Departamentul Educare - Formare al Confederației Sindicatelor Democratice din România): Labour force migration – different legal positions in the EU member states
- KSI (Katholisch-Soziales Institut): The refugee problem and possibilities of a new European migration policy
- UNAIE (Unione Nazionale delle Associazioni degli Immigrati ed Emigrati): A new European migration policy: ethics and politics in the approach to migration
- Beweging.academie: Migration policy in Europe: challenges and opportunities for employment policies and workers
- ACLI – ENAIP (Associazioni Cristiane Lavoratori Italiani - Ente Nazionale ACLI Istruzione Professionale): A new EU migration policy
- H + D (Fundación Humanismo y Democracia): Migration phenomena and the EU’s migration policy: analytical considerations and prospects in the framework of the European social dialogue

Of the six seminars, one was organized in an Eastern European member state and three in Southern Europe. This seminar year was particularly important as it was the first to follow the refugee crisis in 2015. The 2015 crisis left its imprint both on the topics selected and on the conclusions of the seminars.

One of the conclusions of the seminar year were the differences in the approach and in the evaluation of the refugee crisis between the representatives of Eastern and Southern Europe. Participants from Eastern Europe questioned the rationale of directing migrants into regions where they would not go themselves. The lack of financial resources and the unresolved problems of integrating the numerous Roma minorities into the region's labour markets were also raised as an argument against the quota system for distributing refugees. Others, however, mentioned the deepening demographic crisis, and the increasing labour shortage in some key economic sectors of the Eastern European countries, which supports considering the integration of migrants into the local labour market.

Other participants, especially colleagues from Southern Europe, underlined the importance of the solidarity principle and practice, first of all with the refugees, but also between the countries in the forefront of the work with migrants. They reminded seminar-goers that the past practice was gravely unjustified and inequitable, leaving the solution of the migrant crisis to a few countries, on account of their geographic location. A positive change in the attitude of the European Union is that the financial aid to both Italy and Greece has been significantly increased to deal with the refugee crises. This also shows that the issue of refugees and migrants has grown from a matter of the EU border countries to a pan-European case.

Another important consideration of the seminars was that increasing xenophobia against migrants is caused by the coincidence of the economic recession in Europe and the destabilization of Europe's neighbouring regions. In this situation, the unemployed or low-income local population is competing with migrants for social benefits. This process is more and more apparent in the Southern European countries, such as Spain and Italy. But even in Austria there is increasing concern about the negative impact of migrant workers on

the labour market and the costs of refugees burdening the state budget. In Portugal, competition between migrant workers from Africa and from Eastern Europe is causing tension in the relationship between the two groups of migrant workers.

There are, however, also new and positive initiatives for accelerating the integration of the large number of refugees arriving in Europe. A thousand mayors of Italian small towns and larger cities have joined an initiative to organize a legal integration programme for undocumented migrant workers. Authorities should fight not only against illegal migrants, but also against the illegal status they are forced to have. The new German integration policy is also promising. It is the most thoroughly prepared and organized system we have so far in Europe. There is no perfect model of integration, but we have to keep searching for a better one and better solutions, was one of the conclusions. There are several issues demanding urgent solutions, such as to:

- simplify and speed up the process for granting refugee status and citizenship to refugees or to migrants,
- provide more public work and useful activities for refugees and migrants,
- observe the rules of labour regulations at the workplace in order to protect the human rights of vulnerable, defenceless migrants,
- acknowledge the inevitability of migration and to create the social infrastructure required to manage the migration flow.

Trade unions have to focus on both the humanitarian and the employment aspects of integrating migrant workers. They have to concentrate their support on the poorest migrants, with mentoring, language training, compliance with health and safety regulations, ensuring that working time and wages are calculated correctly. Safeguarding gender equality is also key. The positive result of such measures is reflected in statistics: trade unions in Italy, France and Spain have a significant number of migrant workers amongst their members.

The refugee crisis in 2015 clearly demonstrated the limits of Europe's capacity to receive and integrate the huge inflow of refugees. The new situation has highlighted the importance of finding solutions for the root cause of the migration process. In the case of migration, a more efficient policy is needed to improve the economic and social conditions in the countries of origin. The availability of natural resources and the present environmental situation of those countries do not explain the continuous migration flow from these countries to Europe. Political instability, corruption and inefficient public administration are the key issues to tackle. In the case of the refugee flow to Europe, the European Union has to follow a more efficient and coherent foreign policy approach, focusing on the conflict zones and taking into account the potential consequences for Europe of non-EU countries intervening in these conflicts.

PART II: DETAILED REPORT ON THE SEMINARS

1 Labour force migration – Different legal positions in the EU member states

12-14 May 2016, Baile Felix, Romania, organized by CSDR

Iacob Baci (CSDR) presented the CSDR organization in the framework of its international activities and its co-operation with EZA. He touched upon the main problems regarding migration in Romania: the integration of migrants from abroad, costs of training Romania's own citizens who emigrate, wage cuts by the government. The introduction of a minimum wage resulted in too many people being paid only the minimum wage.

Silviu Ispas (IFES, Institutul de Formare Economică și Socială, Romania) presented two types of migration – intra-EU migration that we called “labour mobility” – we are struggling to make it just, which is not always the case. Migration from outside the EU is a recent topic, but has existed for a long time. On the one hand, we want a certain level of migration, but we are not always willing and do not always take the necessary measures to integrate migrants.

Positive sides of migration: migrants usually take work that is not appreciated by locals; the country of origin benefits from remittances (Romania experienced economic growth due to the money sent home to the families). The negative side is that a whole “generation” of children grows up with their grandparents because their parents work abroad.

Members of workers' organizations and trade unions must be prepared to reach out to migrants who often do not get involved in these organisations in the host country. However, it would help them a lot to integrate in society. In order to actively integrate foreign or different ethnic groups, we need a programme at European level.

Antónia Antunes (CIFOTIE, Centro Internacional de Formação dos Trabalhadores da Indústria e Energia, Portugal) gave a detailed presentation on the legislation relating to migration and refugees in Portugal. The Portuguese administration has implemented reforms and worked a lot on ensuring equal and fair opportunities, while keeping the social costs to a minimum. Portugal is prepared for immigrants but does not receive that many, as it is considered a “poor country”.

Katrin Stancheva (PODKREPA Confederation of Labour, Bulgaria, and European Platform for Young Workers, EZA) spoke about emigration from Bulgaria and demographic problems using impressive data and examples. Important questions of migration policy:

- How to prevent young people from emigrating;
- How immigration can be used as a possible solution to the demographic problem.

The most successful integration projects are those in which local government takes the lead. It is very important that central and local government work together – a special institutional model of shared responsibilities. It is a positive development that trade unions also have a seat in the new National Council on Migration and Integration. Integration costs are planned annually and adopted by the national council:

- The services provide support in various important social, economic and educational fields that enhance the integration of immigrants in Bulgarian society.
- Immigrants have a voice and play an active role in the development of policies relating to them.
- Networking is important: there are two new national organizations representing them in Bulgarian society, e.g. “Women from Iraq”.

- The biggest challenge: making it easier for them to participate in the democratic process.

Trade unions are aware of the positive aspects of emigration, such as 2 billion euros sent home by migrant workers to the families as remittances, but this is not sustainable; trade union members are more interested in economic growth, an increase in the number of jobs.

The discussion following the presentations showed that citizens in Spain and Portugal have a different attitude to refugees than those in Eastern European countries. We can ask Eastern Europeans to uphold European values, that are mostly unwritten and are what European society is built upon, but many Eastern Europeans are too desperate or frightened to be able to uphold these values.

2 The refugee problem and possibilities of a new European migration policy

25 – 27 May 2016, Bad Honnef, Germany, organised by KSI

Migration today is a key question of European politics and public debates. Migration policies can strongly influence the outcome of elections both in Eastern and in Western Europe. There is considerable concern among the people of Europe about migration, but it is also very easy to manipulate the public mood, abusing the fears and emotions of the population.

There are several unanswered questions about migration:

- How to transform it into a more transparent and regulated process?
- What are the limits of the welcoming capacity of Europe and the European labour market?
- How to make the integration of refugees more efficient and more secure?
- How to maintain the cultural and religious heritage of Europe and how to combine it with respect for the culture and religion of others?
- How to co-ordinate the divergent national interests?

The KSI seminar programme prepared by Udo Huett, project manager of KSI, was a timely and responsible contribution to the above questions and to the perhaps most important one: how to shape a migration policy that is favourable to migrants and the host countries at the same time?

The participants came mostly from Southern and Eastern Europe. These two regions of Europe had very different experiences with migrants in terms of

numbers, integration efforts and integration results. This made the discussions at the seminar even more vivid and open.

Mirja-Hannele Ahokas, from the regional representation of the EU Commission in Bonn, gave a historical overview of the initiatives and resolutions of the European Commission concerning migration to Europe from non-EU countries. She emphasised that the most urgent task of the present policy is the elimination of human trafficking. The distribution of refugees among the member states, will be achieved via a clear and reasonable procedure, hopefully with the unanimous support of the national governments. If unanimity is not possible, however, a majority decision will prevail.

The Spanish colleagues from EZA were very critical of the slow progress made in the distribution of refugees. In mid-2016, only five refugees had been sent to Spain in the framework of the quota system. Spain could and is willing to receive more migrants.

The presentation of **Frank Burgdörfer**, a member of the national board of the European Movement, outlined the evolution of the legal framework of refugee rights in the EU. He demonstrated in a convincing way that the difficulties in handling the refugee crisis mostly result from the shortcomings of the Dublin Regulation. This regulation was not drawn up to manage mass migration via the sea route and concentrated only on a few member states as entry points to the EU. This phenomenon caused such a huge burden on these few countries in terms of the administration and accommodation of refugees that the violation of the Dublin Regulation was inevitable. If Germany and Austria had not intervened on a voluntary basis to take in hundreds of thousands of refugees, this would have created a humanitarian disaster in the countries where the refugees entered the EU. The experience with refugees in 2015 also proved that the member states' lack of solidarity with those countries (Italy, Spain and Sweden e.g.) that have borne most of the burden of migration in recent years was mistaken. The clear conclusion of this past experience is that common issues should be addressed as early as possible and with maximum co-operation of the member states.

Special interest was shown in the presentation of **Dr. Kenan Engin**, researcher at the Institute for Migration Research and Intercultural Learning, who came to Germany as a refugee from Turkey seeking political asylum in 1980s. The speaker gave information on the causes and historical evolution of the migration crisis in the Middle East. Following an introduction to the political and military background of the conflict parties in the region, he highlighted the specific interests of the foreign powers intervening in there. In indicating the diverging interests, he underlined the importance of the potential route of a future pipeline to Europe via the region from one of the largest gas fields in the world in the Red Sea.

Speaking about the integration of refugees coming to Europe, he made a plea to look at the situation without illusions. Integration is a long and costly procedure. His experience showed that, even after ten years, only around one third of non-EU immigrants are able to find a permanent job in the labour market.

Klara Fóti, research manager of Eurofound presented the first results of a survey examining the measures and the new initiatives in the member states aiming to facilitate the labour market integration of migrants. The survey will help to share among the parties the different solutions and institutions used for this purpose. The questionnaires already processed clearly demonstrate the large difference in the practices of the member states, influenced primarily by past experience with migrants. With this background, the dissemination of the collected integration tools and methods will be especially useful for the social partners in the less experienced Eastern European member states.

3 A new European migration policy: ethics and politics in the approach to migration

14-16 October 2016, Trento, Italy, organized by UNAIE

The focal point of the seminar was the role of ethics and politics in managing the wave of migration to Europe. The seminar programme gave a complex review of the root causes and consequences of migration, including both a scientific analysis and the emotionally moving personal aspects of the phenomenon.

One example of a more subjective approach was the presentation of the personal tragedies of Italian women and their children undergoing mass resettlement during World War I from the Trentino region to the territories of the then Austro-Hungarian Empire. Although the resettlement was carried out between regions that are geographically relatively close, it still caused deep suffering and miserable living conditions for the vulnerable population affected.

Another other example was the report of a Somali-born refugee on his emigration from his homeland to Italy. He highlighted the double pressure forcing people to flee from the region and intending to settle in Europe. It is not only the violence and the wars, going on for many years between different ethnic groups and forcing the population to leave their home. The other reason that is less mentioned is the severely damaged natural and human environment, destroyed by the unlimited and unregulated activity of some multinational companies. These firms are bribing local government officials to neglect their duties in protecting healthy living conditions in the towns and in the countryside.

Martine Cesar, Refugee Commissioner of Malta, gave a critical evaluation of the aftermath of the Valetta summit held on 11 November 2015 with the involvement of the European and African heads of state and government. The key target of the summit was to remedy the root causes of mass migration from the African continent to Europe. The agreed solutions included

facilitating investments in job creation, a more efficient fight against human trafficking, increasing the administrative capacity of processing asylum applications, and common agreement on returning migrants who are not granted refugee status to their country of origin. The biggest challenges in implementing the above strategic targets are corruption contaminating major parts of the political life in Africa, threatening the loss of the financial resources offered by the EU for job creation, and the reluctance of some national governments to take back migrants who are refused refugee status.

A unique approach to survey the less visible motives and channels of migration in Europe was presented by **Dora-Olivia Vicol**, a PhD student at Oxford University. The young researcher highlighted the personal networks organizing mobile labour from the rural areas of Romania to travel and work in London. The presentation described the vulnerability of the young Romanian mobile workers vis-à-vis those organizing their travel, work and accommodation abroad and how the UK regulations are contributing to maintain their dependence via the loose and obscure interpretation and regulation of self-employment.

Juan Carlos Barcia Barrera, representing the Fundación Humanismo y Democracia in Madrid, gave an insight into the activity of his department, aiming at the socio-cultural integration of migrants in the Madrid region. In order to achieve their lasting integration in Spanish society, a wide range of support is given, including professional training, language training, psychological aid, family counselling, and seeking a job. Co-operation with company owners and managers in finding jobs for migrants proved to be a very efficient way of labour market integration. Opinion polls taken among migrants in Spain demonstrate the openness of Spanish society towards migrants: 87% of migrants questioned in a recent study responded seeing themselves as integrated. These compelling statistics should invite the rest of Europe to study and follow the methods applied in integrating migrants in Spain.

Michele Battisti, researcher at Munich University, presented the findings of recent research carried out among refugees coming to Germany during last year's huge immigration wave. He reported that, of the 610,000 applications

processed, refugee status was granted in 60% of the cases. To facilitate the integration process, an important regulatory change was made, allowing refugees to enter the labour market already during the processing of their asylum request. It is an important step, as past experience shows that integration in the labour market is much more time-consuming in the case of refugees than economic migrants. Refugees approach the employment level of the local population after only 15 years, whereas economic migrants reach the same level after 3-5 years. Labour market integration is supported by the favourable conditions of the German economy and by the positive approach of German employers to accepting migrants as employees. 55% of them would hire refugees in their company, mostly in the tourism, hotel and restaurant sector and in the retail trade. Well-known brands such as McDonalds, Aldi, Deichmann, Holiday Inn, but also Intel, were among those employers. The biggest obstacle in finding a job for refugees, however, is the lack of language skills, so this is the first task on the road to integration. Refugees have been convinced of the importance of language skills, as 70% of them are already learning German.

The debate that followed the presentations was active and emotional. The participants expressed the opinion that nowadays people's ethics are more and more dominated by individualism and selfishness. What is ethical is what is good for me, there are no common principles, and this thinking is being easily adopted by some politicians, raising hostile emotions against refugees.

Senator Aldo Degaudenz commented on behalf of Associazione Trentini nel mondo in his closing remarks: fear and sensationalism are on the rise in Europe, solidarity is weakening. But civilization should not be egoistic and self-interested. We need principles, social deliberation, honesty, trust, faith, and morality. Humanitarian channels should be organized for refugees to escape from war zones instead of human trafficking. The responsibility of international businesses for destroying living conditions in the underdeveloped world should be recognized and their activity controlled in an internationally co-ordinated way.

There are, however, encouraging signs as well. Many migrants are integrated successfully in Europe, they are valuable members of society: in the Italian economy, migrants produce a value equal to the total output of the German automotive industry. We have to learn and support the successful integration of migrants in Europe.

4 Migration policy in Europe: challenges and opportunities for employment policies and workers

15-16 November 2016, Brussels, Belgium, organized by **Beweging.academie**

Sofie Put, **Beweging.academie**, reported on remarkable recent news from Sweden. Economic growth in the Scandinavian country is expected to be at a record rate of 4.5% for the current year, and according to the experts the high growth rate is closely connected with the large proportion of the migrant population in Sweden. The increasing government expenditure on housing, schools and healthcare is one part of the boom factors, increasing consumption another. Migrants, however, not only receive public money, they are also working and paying taxes, according to national statistics.

The presentation of **Dr. Mahmood Messkoub**, Senior Lecturer at the International Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus University of Rotterdam, came to very similar conclusions as the above-mentioned Swedish experience. Before that he gave an impressive historical and geographical overview of the causes and consequences of mass migration to Europe. He reminded the audience that the post-war reconstruction and subsequent long period of increasing living standards for the vast majority of people in Europe would be inconceivable without the contribution of migrant workers from outside the continent.

Lately the demographic trends, i.e. the rapidly ageing population of Europe, has created demand for additional manpower in the health and social care sector that cannot be met without migrants and/or mobile workers from Eastern Europe.

The key problems with migration and the recent increase in xenophobia against migrants are caused by the coincidence of the economic recession in Europe and the destabilization of Europe's neighbouring regions. In this new situation the unemployed or low-income local population are competing with migrants for social benefits.

A survey organised recently in four big European metropolises showed, however, that the application rate for social benefits was not higher among migrants than among the locals. Taxes paid and social benefits received were also in balance among the migrant population. The number of refugees in Europe, even with the recent mass inflow, is not more than three million people, i.e. less than 0.5% of the total population. The expenditure on aid to refugees is 0.1% of the GDP of the European Union. The speaker suggested to transfer part of the economic growth package to integrating refugees into the labour market, which would also incentivize economic growth.

Gyorgy Lajtai (MOSZ), highlighted the role of migrants in the Hungarian labour market and the different interpretations by labour market experts and politicians regarding the prospects of migrants in the labour market. He outlined the proposals of the trade unions for migrants or guest workers playing a bigger role in the labour market. The speakers' conclusion was that the demographic trends, the ageing workforce and the increasing emigration of young blue-collar workers and healthcare employees from Hungary are creating an increasingly serious deficit in the labour market. One option to attenuate the imbalances could be to increase the involvement of migrant or guest workers in the labour market. Last year's unexpected and uncontrolled inflow of the mass number of refugees, however, created an unfavourable public and political atmosphere around refugees, which does not help turning this option into a reality in the near future.

Following the historical-theoretical and statistical presentations, a profoundly different aspect of migration was introduced through the personal experience of two Romanian migrant workers. They both left Romania before the country joined the EU, one of them as a student, the other as a blue-collar worker. Eduard, a highly qualified technical scientist, started his life in Austria as a manual worker. His professional skills and diligence made it possible for him to advance his career including a Master's degree and a PHD from Western universities and a secure work contract with a Belgium research institute. Horatiu, the blue-collar worker, has experienced a more adventurous labour market history with times spent in France, Spain and Belgium, several job changes and unexpected dismissals, but also new job opportunities, finally securing a better salary and living standard. Both reports showed the emotionally stressful life of migrants, the difficulty of

being separated from the rest of their family, their relatives, friends and the culture of their home country.

Pedro Roque, representing *Trabalhadores Social Democratas (TSD)*, Member of the Portuguese Parliament, presented the recent trends of inward and outward migration in his country. After the economic recession, out-migration has become more dominant. The main target countries of emigration have traditionally been France, Germany, Sweden, Luxembourg, and the UK. The net out-migration is exacerbating the demographic problem created by the ageing of the population. In order to strengthen economic growth, in-migration could be an important tool. Portugal had positive experiences in the past with migrants coming to Portugal. Integration was successful not only among those of Portuguese nationality, but also among the black people arriving from the former African colonies. These people were integrated in a balanced way; there is no sign of xenophobia in Portugal. The country is looking forward to the increasing role of migrants in the economy and in society. The return of part of the 2 million Portuguese nationals now living abroad is, however, also important.

Bernd Schulze-Waltrup (CDA, *Christlich-Demokratische Arbeitnehmerschaft Deutschlands*) approached the mobility issue from a special aspect, comparing physical mobility with the new opportunities of virtual mobility. New communication technologies are making labour mobility possible without actually traveling between different locations, allowing huge savings in costs, time and effort, and protecting the environment. At the same time, telework and the increasing role of impersonal organization of services (see Uber, Airbnb and others) make it much more difficult to control and regulate these activities. The main promise of digitisation for Europe is that the continent can regain its lost cost competitiveness against the global production centres that took over many industrial capacities from Europe in the last century.

Hester Houwing (CNV, *Christelijk Nationaal Vakverbond*, Netherlands) and **Tom Deleu**, (BIE Int., *Bouw-Industrie & Energie International*, Belgium), presented the tasks of trade unions challenged by the increasing number of mobile workers in the labour market in Belgium. Trade unions in Belgium strongly advocate amending the Posting of Workers Directive, still debated

by the majority of Eastern European employers and governments. The Posting of Workers Directive aims at clarifying what is genuine posting and temporary agency work, and what is not. Posting should be limited to a shorter time than now, and wages and fringe benefits of posted workers should be increased to the wage level of locals doing the same job. Social security contributions paid by the foreign employer and agencies in the posting countries should be adapted to the actual wages paid in the host countries. Without these changes in the directive, there is unfair competition and local, mainly small and medium-sized companies in Western Europe will face wage and tender dumping by the posting and agency companies exporting manpower from Eastern Europe to the West.

In the debate, another aspect of the topic was raised, namely the huge disparity in wages paid for the same job in Eastern and in Western Europe. Without reducing the prevailing huge gap in wages (4-5 times differences), the fight against using Eastern European mobile workers for wage dumping will be futile. The multinational companies with subsidiaries in both Western and Eastern Europe could be pioneers in implementing the target of closing the wage gap, at least in part.

Antonio di Matteo (MCL, Movimento Cristiano Lavoratori, Italy), gave a comprehensive review of the recent migration situation in Italy. In 2015 and 2016, one million refugees and migrants came to the country, but only 160,000 of them remained in Italy. This is an important difference compared with the other EU border country serving as a gateway to the EU, i.e. Greece, with 450,000 refugees staying on the Greek islands and on the mainland. A favourable change in the attitude of the European Union is that the financial aid to both Italy and Greece is being significantly increased in order to tackle the refugee crisis. This also shows that the issue of refugees and migrants has developed from a matter of the border countries to a pan-European case. This policy change was urgently necessary, as the Mediterranean has become an unprecedented mass grave of migrants and refugees, the speaker reminded with this dramatic, but very realistic metaphor.

He also recalled the position of Pope Benedict PP. XVI on migration, underlining the right of refugees to live in their homeland, while Pope Francis is

stressing the unconditional support of refugees, wherever and whenever it is needed.

The debate following the impressive presentation showed that a differentiation is needed in managing the migration flow and the refugee crisis. Refugees predominantly come to Europe via Greece, while migrants use the travel route to and via Italy. In the case of migration, a more efficient policy is needed to improve the economic and social conditions in the countries of origin. The natural resources and the present environmental situation of these countries do not explain the continuous migration flow from there to Europe. Political instability, corruption and inefficient public administration are the key issues to tackle. In the case of the refugee flow to Europe, the Union has to follow a more efficient and coherent foreign policy, focusing on the conflict zones and taking into account the potential consequences of non-EU countries intervening in these conflicts for Europe. The past foreign policy in the case of the Middle East conflict (see the situation in Iraq and Syria) and the foreign intervention in the civil war in Libya lacked this dimension.

5 A new EU migration policy

25–27 January 2017, Rome, Italy, organized by ACLI - ENAIP

The Rome seminar, following the keyword in the title, investigated the reasons why the EU needs a new migration policy, what the deeper reasons for it are, and what requirements this new policy has to meet.

In his spiritual reflections, **Daniele Rochetti** (ACLI) highlighted the key questions to answer with regard to migration. What do we in Europe want? A fortress which is closing out migrants, or a living, empathic community which is receptive and protects? We have to defend the humanistic and cultural aspects of migration against politicians, who are striving to expropriate it and subordinate it to the struggle for power. In our view, to save human lives it is worth making every effort and challenging the egoistic behaviour of some politicians. We have to be aware that in 30 years, our successors will ask: where were we, how did we behave when facing the present tragic events? What did we do to help those in need, those running away from coercion, famine, exploitation? Unfortunately, the unity of Europe has vanished in the migration policy. There are leaders representing the open-minded, empathic approach, but there are others who want to close the doors and turn a blind eye to the suffering of refugees.

Andrea Pecoraro, UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), condemned those public players who treat refugees escaping with small children and women like potential terrorists. The biggest institutional problem of migration was that the legal channels supporting migrants and refugees are not working, or working only very slowly. Similarly, there are not yet effective, proven integration models.

The speaker drew attention to a new experimental model of integration in Sweden. Here the municipalities are organizing preparatory awareness-raising events among the local population prior to the arrival of the refugees. The main goal of these meetings is to give a realistic depiction of the refugees expected to come, to reduce prejudices and the lies often circulating nowadays via social media.

Considerable interest was shown in the presentation of **Don Mussie Zarai**, founder and president of Habeshia, an organization whose aim is the integration of refugees from the Horn of Africa. There is no strict distinction between refugees and migrants, he stressed. Life in Eritrea or Sudan under military dictatorships and corrupt political regimes is not much easier than in war zones. These regimes do business with multinational companies and conclude commercial agreements to the detriment of the population. The flower producers are clearing vast and fertile lands from the original inhabitants and converting the land used for food crops into flower fields. Other multinational companies are accumulating huge food reserves merely for speculative purposes, while millions of people on the continent are starving. Chinese, European and American multinationals compete for licences to extract the rich natural resources, but nobody cares about the population displaced from their homeland. For decades it has been said that living conditions should be improved in Africa to stop the increasing migration flows, but almost nothing has happened in reality. There are strong lobby groups not interested in real change, in the functioning of independent governments and democratic political systems, because then they would lose their easily acquired economic gains. The truth is that the biggest support for the ordinary people of Africa is the money sent back by family members who managed to migrate to the developed countries. The financial support they provide to the family staying at home is often used not only for living expenses, but also to finance the education of the young family members in order to help them leave their country of origin sooner or later as well.

Antonio Russo, Paola Vacchina, Marco Calvetto and Paola Villa summarized the experiences of ACLI in the field of integrating migrants in Italy. They explained that Italy has no real tradition or model for integrating migrants, as most of the migrants considered Italy only as a transit country in the past. Moreover, it had to be realised that migrants need very different training from refugees. It is very difficult, however, to provide labour market training for migrants owing to the high unemployment rate. Even Italian nationals are facing difficulties obtaining sponsored training, or retraining. As a consequence, the government has recently limited the arrival of migrants in Italy, and only refugees have a chance to stay.

Agnese Papadia, representing DG Migration and Home Affairs of the European Commission, presented the legal aspects of integrating migrants. The new approach of the Commission is to highlight the complexity of the integration procedure. It has to include not only acquiring professional competence and language skills, but also housing, healthcare, and employment opportunities. The new concept of integration policy focuses on the involvement of local communities, and on the co-operation with the countries of origin to prepare the refugees for the move to Europe already before the journey. In the area of education, pre-school education in kindergartens is crucial. It is also important to promote entrepreneurship and on-the-job training.

Giovanni Maria Bellu representing Charter of Roma, and **Paolo Ruspini**, Senior Researcher at the International Migration University Lugano, discussed the role of the media in forming public opinion on migration and refugees. A group of Italian journalists initiated the preparation of a code of conduct for interpreting information and conveying news about migrants and refugees in Italy and in Europe. They have prepared the Charter of Ethical Journalism on Migrants and Refugees, and are constantly monitoring the news and articles published. An important step in their work was to raise public awareness that the notion of „illegal“ migrants is false wording, as in the end 40% of the migrants arriving in Italy obtain refugee status. The Charter activists request corrections in the event of news not reflecting the reality, e.g. the number of refugees in Italy, which is often exaggerated. They are also publishing information on the basic definitions used in this debate, such as what citizenship or refugee status means, or what the conditions for obtaining refugee status are.

There is a flood of news about refugees in the media and the reason is that politicians are interested in keeping the issue on the agenda, because negative comments can easily gain them popularity. There are, however, much fewer cases of refugees themselves having the opportunity to speak, to report about their background, the reasons for leaving their home, and the ordeal they experienced en route to Europe.

The lecture of **Emma Bonino**, former European Commissioner, former Minister of Foreign Affairs in Italy and a Member of Parliament, attracted

the greatest interest. She reminded the seminar-goers that the debate on migration is a bigger threat to the unity of Europe than the financial crisis. It is misleading to interpret that there is a migration crisis in Europe today. The problem arises from the lack of a systematic solution needed to manage the situation, and unfortunately some politicians are not interested in finding a co-ordinated solution. The walls and wires, however, only divert attention from real solutions. Illegal migrants are not criminals. The lack of channels of legal migration routes and the lack of well regulated, visible procedures force them into the present inhuman situations.

Many migrants are working illegally in Italy because there is no way to send them back safely, but they are not allowed to do declared work either, because they are not given a work permit. So, they are forced to work in humiliating conditions, although they are doing jobs which society needs. If we tried for just one day to forego the work of these undeclared workers, everybody could see that entire cities would be paralyzed. 1,000 mayors of Italian small towns and larger cities have joined an initiative to organize a legal integration programme for undocumented migrant workers. These municipalities have a lot of work to do that is presently not being done because of a lack of labour. Italians should fight not against illegal migrants, but against the illegal status they are forced to have. Emma Bonino expressed her hope for the success of the new German integration policy, which is very promising. It is the most thoroughly prepared and organized system so far in Europe. There is no perfect model of integration, but we have to search for better solutions.

Unfortunately, those supporting the integration of migrants are in a difficult situation; they are perhaps in a minority today in Europe. This is why this minority should communicate in a proper way. She cited a video prepared in the US recently about migrants from Mexico working in the States. The video confronted the viewer with what would happen in one day without the Mexicans working in North America. The effect on the audience was dramatic.

The situation in Africa is also very dangerous. There is a demographic explosion without the necessary economic and political development. The tragic

situation there cannot be solved without the emancipation of African women. There are too many children born because of excessive poverty and because of the lack of education for girls in Africa. Another much missed benefit is good political leadership on the African continent. The present situation is not inevitable, because there are positive exceptions. There are countries in Africa with capable statesmen or -women, but they are too few in number. The African people should also put more pressure on the governments, or replace them with better alternatives. But this is very difficult owing to the weapons and the oppression they have to face.

Roberto Rossini, President of ACLI, reminded the audience that uncertainty is spreading all over Europe. The commitment of the USA to guaranteeing safety in the world is diminishing; the influence of the European Union is also decreasing. The number of competing regional powers is on the rise, and with this the number of military conflicts with the potential to force more and more people to flee. In this situation there are several issues demanding urgent solutions, viz.:

- to elaborate strong and efficient integration mechanisms,
- to simplify and speed up the procedure of granting refugee status and citizenship to refugees or migrants,
- to provide more public work and useful activities for refugees and migrants,
- to observe the rules of labour regulations in the workplace, to protect the human rights of the vulnerable, defenceless migrants,
- to acknowledge the inevitability of migration and to create the necessary social infrastructure that can manage the migration flow.

The position of ACLI on migration has been clear for years. There are, however, new challenges that call for new answers. It is important to follow new experiments, new good practices, to unmask false information, to highlight the deliberate distortion of facts. ACLI is organizing meetings, conferences in schools and universities to enlighten the public, the young generation about the real facts. ACLI is facilitating co-operation between different cul-

tures, it is giving the opportunity to demonstrate the positive values inherent in them. The present seminar was also aiming at better understanding of this complex topic, to enable the exchange of information, to transmit best practices and to facilitate co-operation among stakeholders.

6 Migratory phenomena and the EU's migration policy: analytical considerations and prospects in the framework of the European social dialogue

24-25 February 2017, Melilla, Spain, organized by Fundación Humanismo y Democracia

This seminar was a very special because of the context created by the venue and by the topic discussed: Melilla, the Autonomous City of Spain situated in North Africa, on the Mediterranean coast. Its border is one of the few borders of the European Union on the African continent. The Melilla border is the closest to one of the origins of today's migration and refugee flow targeting Europe. There are 40,000 people commuting each workday from neighbouring Morocco to Melilla, equating to half the permanent population of Melilla. In this way the participants were able to personally experience the key aspects of the present migration phenomenon creating so much controversy and political conflict on the old continent. The location was unique, however, in the sense as well that this city demonstrated not only the problems, but also the solutions to the dilemma of migration.

Juan Jose Imbroda, Mayor-President of the self-governing city of Melilla, introduced the key nationalities living in the city. These – namely the Arab, the Spanish, the Jewish, the Hindu and the Roma communities – were unanimously praised for their peaceful, perhaps no exaggeration to say harmonious, coexistence, despite their different nations and religions. The key to this harmonious coexistence is the neighbourhood, living beside one another, the openness to each other's traditions, culture and religion. It is an everyday practice and not exceptional to visit one another on holidays, for Muslims and Christians to celebrate together Christmas Day, or the Muslim and Hindu holidays, to invite one another to family events, to talk regularly with one another, to enter into partnerships in business, in labour relations etc. Even the Roma, so often segregated in many countries in Europe, are fully integrated in the city life and in the economy of Melilla.

The other key factor keeping together this well integrated city society is education. The children of Melilla learn from early childhood about the cultural background of their fellow citizens, including basic information on the religions present in the city. The Hindu speaker told the audience that there are parents who let their children decide which religion to choose from those taught at school. And there are some who have chosen not one, but two religions, the Christian and the Hindu; they visit both places of worship and celebrate the holidays of both religions.

The representative of the Muslim community, however, mentioned some worrying developments. There is an increasing influence of the more aggressive, Salafi ideology among young, less educated Muslims. The community leaders are paying special attention to this phenomenon and are trying to identify the voices and counteract their ideas.

The afternoon of the first seminar day was spent on an introduction to daily life in Melilla and a visit to the border guard and the Temporary Immigrant Shelter Centre - CETI of Melilla.

The fruitful coexistence of the citizens in Melilla is one side of the coin. The other side, however, are the strict, powerful border controls that defend the peaceful life of the town's inhabitants. There is a strong, 6-metre triple-wire wall that separates the town from surrounding Morocco. The wall creates an obstacle, hard to overcome, to entering the city illegally. There are still thousands of migrants, mostly from the Sub-Saharan African region, who try to climb the wall and enter the territory of Melilla illegally.

These people, together with those applying for official refugee status, are sheltered in a transitional immigration centre. A visit to the centre was part of the seminar programme. The Spanish authorities are providing all the basic services needed to live a modest, but dignified existence in the centre. The average living period in the facility is 1-2 months; this is the usual period for granting or refusing refugee status. Those receiving refugee status can travel on to Europe. Those who do not, face expulsion to the country of origin if the home country is willing to accept them back. If not, they stay in the centre until a solution is found for them. There are families that have

been living in the centre for years. The inhabitants receive all the basic services they need free of charge: a living room, for families separate ones, food, clothing, sanitary facilities, medical checks, education for the children and for the adults as well.

The barriers around the town are indispensable, however, for keeping the operation of the centre viable, as the capacity is limited; it can accommodate a maximum of 450 people at a time.

On the second day, the participants listened to and commented on an overview of the migration and refugee issue in some selected regions of the EU, in Southern Europe (Spain, Portugal, Italy and France) and in Central and Eastern Europe (Austria, Hungary and Poland).

Starting with Southern Europe, in Portugal the issue of migration has not been part of the public debate for some time, as migration has had a rather positive impact on the Portuguese economy. With the financial support of the EU, large investments were made in the infrastructure that created additional jobs, and the demand for labour was met by migrant workers, mostly from the former colonies in Africa. Since the Eastern enlargement of the EU, migrant workers from Eastern Europe have arrived in the country in large numbers, and for now their number exceeds that of the Africans. This new situation is also creating tension between the two different migrant groups, as local employers are giving preference to the Eastern Europeans owing to their better educational background and cultural traditions that are closer to the Portuguese. After the refugee crisis, Portugal was willing to receive refugees in the framework of the redistribution system. The problem is that only few refugees are willing to come to the country. They prefer Germany and Northern Europe. The long-term solution for the refugee crisis, according to the Portuguese speaker, is a more transparent, better regulated intake of refugees. Much more effort should also be devoted to resolving the causes of excessive migration from the Middle East and from Sub-Saharan Africa.

In Italy, migration is described nowadays as “migration in chaos and chaos in migration”. For now, it has become clear that the relocation of refugees is

not working in Europe. Political responsibility for solidarity should be strengthened in Europe. It is not sustainable to concentrate migrants and refugees in Melilla, or in Italy. The positive practice of the small Italian towns and villages is very important: these small communities receive refugee groups sometimes amounting to 10% of the local population, and almost every resident takes part in the efforts to provide a better life for refugees.

In Spain, the migration balance is now close to zero. The number of emigrants is the same as the number of immigrants. The structure of the two groups, however, is very different. Immigration consists of persons with lower qualifications, or higher ones but willing to take low-prestige jobs. The emigrants are highly skilled young Spanish people. Competition in the labour market is increasing; there is more concern that Romanians, Bulgarians and Moroccans could take away jobs from local low-skilled employees. The unemployment rate is high both among migrants and locals; it is close to 20%.

In order to fight racism and xenophobia, a separate department was set up in the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs to monitor the public mood in this respect. The director of the department reported on the results of recent surveys done among the population on the prevalence of negative feelings about foreigners. The position of the ministry is that cultural diversity is inevitable in the era of globalisation and migration. In a European comparison, the statistics on how foreign workers are seen in Spain is favourable. The relatively low rate of racism and xenophobia is partly due to the long tradition of accepting migrants. But the initiatives of the government and of civil society organisations also play an important role. The school curricula cover knowledge of cultural differences, the origins of the main religions, and the importance of acceptance and helpfulness towards foreigners. The ministry is organising regular seminars for teachers to exchange experiences about education, about best practices to discourage the negative phenomenon with respect to racism and xenophobia. The government ministries (Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Justice, and Ministry of the Interior) themselves meet several times a year to review the situation and to co-ordinate the actions needed in this area.

Turning to Central and Eastern Europe, in Austria the majority of the population supports a more restrictive migration and asylum policy. The migration and refugee issue is the most important one in the public debates before the parliamentary elections due this year. Society is strongly divided on asylum policy, but the main trend is: less financial support, a stricter handling of illegal migration, the relocation of economic migrants to the country of origin, adaptation of the Canadian migration policy based on quantitative limits and on the selection of economic migrants according to the needs of the labour market.

The unemployment rate in the Austrian labour market has increased and Austrian citizens also face difficulties finding a job. Therefore, a special subsidy will be granted to employers giving a job to unemployed people of Austrian descent.

The Austrian trade unions are active in integrating refugees in the labour market. Trade unions are participating in the training and in informing migrant workers about labour law and their rights and duties in the workplace.

In Hungary, unlike most countries in Europe, the labour shortage is becoming the key obstacle to increasing the performance of the economy. Because of this, trade unions in Hungary are not against labour mobility, either coming from inside Europe or from outside the EU territory. The key issue for the trade unions in this respect is to eliminate the serious deficiencies in the field of labour relations and to remedy shortcomings that are damaging the interests of both foreign and Hungarian workers. Trade union bargaining rights have been severely restricted in recent years. Therefore, Hungarian trade unions expect from the government that employee representatives should be consulted on the employment of foreign workers both on company and on sectoral level.

In Poland, the public mood rejects Muslim immigration but is positive on Ukrainian immigrants. The more than one million Ukrainians in Poland are not refugees from the conflict zones in Ukraine. The vast majority of them are economic migrants playing a useful role in filling the gaps in the Polish

labour market created by Poles emigrating to Western Europe, especially to the British Isles. The speaker underlined that moderation of the refugee crisis in Europe demands not only the erection of barriers, but also the support of the countries of origin from where the refugees are emigrating. Poland has recently increased financial aid to Syria and to Lebanon.

In the final part of the seminar, trade union representatives discussed the role of the trade unions in facilitating the integration of refugees and migrant workers in the labour market.

CFTC (Confédération Française des Travailleurs Chrétiens) in France is focusing on the humanitarian aspects of integration. They support the poorest migrants with mentoring, language training, observing labour safety regulations, ensuring that working time and wages are calculated correctly. Safeguarding gender equality is also a key task. The positive result of this work is reflected in statistics: CFTC has a significant number of Muslim trade union members.

CIFOTIE in Portugal is focusing on the professional training of migrant workers and on seeking jobs for them in co-operation with the official labour market institutions.