

# Maximising support for migrant youth across the EU

August 1 2018

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Credit: Thomas Faist

A large-scale study offers important insights into the main features of youth mobility within Europe. Policy and action recommendations include migrant support initiatives at national and regional levels for cultural and labour market integration as well as enhanced public awareness.

EU-funded research teams on the YMOBILITY project delved into wide-ranging aspects of youth migration within the EU. As Professor Thomas Faist, coordinator for the project's German case study, notes, the project's "main aim was to study the role of intra-EU mobility in the transition from youth to adulthood for young mobile people." It examined the causes and effects as well as short- and long-term

implications of this process, exploring also scenarios and offering policy recommendations.

## **A comprehensive study**

A total of 840 interviews were conducted in all consortium countries with young intra-EU migrants (Sweden and United Kingdom), migrants and returnees (Germany, Ireland, Spain and Italy), and returnees (Latvia, Romania, Slovakia). The team also conducted an online experiment involving 511 individuals (262 students and 249 young employed people) in all YMOBILITY countries. Participants were asked to take fictional migration decisions based on incomplete information about the characteristics of destination countries.

Primary data and the results of secondary data analyses helped build future scenarios concerning youth mobility in European countries and regions. YMOBILITY also analysed existing migrant support policies at the EU and national levels, as well as national and regional good practice examples for migrant support.

The research considered different migrant categories with respect to skills and education, age groups (16 to 36), gender, geographic origin (9 European countries) and [migration](#) patterns (migrants, returnees, circular migrants). The findings reveal that individual outcomes of youth mobility comprise both material and non-material aspects such as human capital building, quality of life and social inclusion. The effects of youth mobility on population development, labour markets and regional development were also assessed in terms of territorial outcomes for source and destination countries.

## **Optimisation of opportunities for migrant youth**

"The analysis of existing policies at the EU and Member State levels showed that many EU flanking policies are indeed reasonably successful in supporting intra-EU mobility," says Prof. Faist. However, these policies often represent a piecemeal approach due to low levels of coherence between EU and national-level policies. Also, "different institutions at different scales operating in different sectors in migrants' countries of origin and destination are often not well connected and also frequently not well prepared to address the particular needs of migrants and returnees."

Research results clearly hint at young intra-EU migrants' needs for greater information about their rights and access to sources of support. To redress such shortcomings, YMOBILITY policy recommendations target more efficient use of existing support measures. These are relevant to labour market and cultural integration, access to housing and improved use of social benefits. More benefits can also be gained by strengthening civil society efforts in combination with national and supra-national government policies.

## **Collaboration and dissemination**

Project work has been presented in academic publications and newspaper articles, at conferences and workshops, and through radio and TV interviews. "Another important means of knowledge exchange was YMOBILITY's interaction with secondary school and university students," the coordinator reveals. Collaboration with civil society organisations and related projects also advanced work in the field.

Finally, YMOBILITY has published a series of 15 short movies. Titles include "My home and my family is now in Rome," "I feel discriminated when I go back home" and "Goodbye Rome, I go back to Bangladesh."

Partners have planned at least one more special issue publication and

intend to continue exchanges with civil society representatives. Insights gained during YMOBILITY are also pegged to live on in a newly proposed Horizon 2020 project on the integration of migrant children in the EU.

Provided by CORDIS

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