

'Mobility and Migration: A Crisis for Europe's Citizens?'

A Workshop Held on 21–23 January 2016 in Bologna, Italy¹

The workshop 'Mobility and Migration: A Crisis for Europe's Citizens?' took place at the University of Bologna at the end of January and was organised by Europaeum, an association of ten European university institutions designed to serve as an 'international university without walls', in which future scholars have an opportunity to share common learning and confront common concerns together. Charles University Prague is one of the members of Europaeum.

The workshop hosted in Bologna was dedicated to the very current subject of migration and set out to explore a range of themes and concepts including: Does Europe face a new crisis from migration? Does migration affect concepts of European and national identity? Does migration boost Euroscepticism and right-wing populism? Can Europe rebuild a coherent policy on migration issues? How does external migration affect intra-EU mobility? How are migration flows changing in the 21st century? What next for the EU? The event that lasted three days gathered graduate students from all over the Europe together with the best academics and practitioners in the field of migration. The workshop was a useful combination of lecture panel sessions and group activities. Different themes emerged during the workshop: the meaning of crisis itself, the need for legal reform, the division into 'old' and 'new' Europe; the response of public opinion, the rise of populist movements, the reform of freedom of movement, the difference between irregular and illegal migrants, the trafficking of human beings, and the role played by specific migration agendas such as EUNAUFOR MED, FRONTEX, Operation Sophia, and Mare Nostrum.

The opening speeches were delivered by Dr Paul Flather, Secretary-General of the Europaeum, and Professor Daniela Piana (University of Bologna). The first panel session, 'Migration in Europe', was devoted to the issue of migration policy and a political overview of the current situation in Europe. This was followed by the keynote speech, 'Refugees and Migrants at Europe's Door: What Sort of Crisis Is It?', by professor Guy Goodwin-Gill of Oxford University, who is also a founding editor of the *International Journal of Refugee Law*. His broad and extensive experience in the field includes holding the position of Legal Adviser in the Office of UNHCR (1976–1988) and serving as President of the Media Appeals Board of Kosovo (2000–2003), which was reflected in his lecture on the current political crisis around migration. He pointed out that in EU primary law, Member States agreed to cooperate and form a Common European Asylum System based on solidarity and the fair sharing of responsibilities, although there is no legal obligation

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to accept refugees. He argued that the European legal system is well prepared and ready to deal with a large influx of people, but there is not enough political will to use it. According to Goodwin-Gill, the current numbers of migrants and refugees are not exceptionally high when compared to the past (he looked back at the Spanish refugees in 1939 or the 6 million people repatriated after the Second World War). He stated, 'Numbers are neutral, what counts is the context.'

The papers discussed and presented during the workshop focused mostly on legal, economic, and political issues connected to the migration situation in Europe. The graduate session 'Ethics, Law and Identity' included an interesting presentation from Gulia Raimondo (Graduate Institute Geneva) about the responsibility of Frontex, the body that manages the EU's external borders. In her presentation Raimondo claimed that the role of supra-national actors, such as EU agencies dealing with controlling the migrant influx, should be reworked towards protecting human rights, as should migration law discourse, and the values of rule of law should be asserted. Konstantin Kleine (Graduate Institute Geneva) analysed the relationship between the right of citizenship procedure and social cohesion. Kleine argued that the inclusive function law plays in society by granting equal rights to its citizens could also be seen in the context of citizenship law. This is the law that declares who belongs to a certain society as a citizen and who is granted only temporary and limited residence status. The law on citizenship influences cohesion within society. The more liberally it is designed, the more integrating a function it can play, as only by obtaining the equal rights of citizens can a person perceive him or herself as equal.

The question of free versus unfree movement across the European Union has given rise to a profound debate over migration policies in Europe. Dr Martin Ruhs (Centre for Migration, Policy & Society, Oxford) brought up the British perspective on the question of closed and opened internal European borders, leading to the very urgent question: does the UK have a point when it talks about a policy of restricting migrants? Ruhs focused mostly on the British case, where he stated that, if it comes to reducing the number of migrants, reducing the right to access to social benefits will not itself reduce the numbers. He also described the phenomenon of institutional differences between EU countries that could be responsible for the different positions countries adopt. One dimension of these institutional differences is the flexibility of the labour market, which affects the scale of migration. He claimed that all institutional differences are relevant for any policy reform and should be given deep consideration.

Another very important issue, human trafficking, was highlighted and described from the Italian perspective by Professor Marco Borraccetti of the University of Bologna. Along with the huge influx of people coming to Europe, the number of trafficking crimes is also growing extremely fast. The problem seems to be overwhelming European agendas and institutions. Professor Borraccetti suggested that changes should be made to the legal system to track down trafficking crimes, especially in the area of the Mediterranean Sea. Supra-national

cooperation is also required, including with countries that are not EU member states—for example, Turkey.

Finally, social and cultural aspects were also raised. Dr Antonietta Cacciani (*Diversa/mente*) presented the perspectives and challenges of applying intercultural psychology and anthropological knowledge while working with migrants from different cultures in Italy. Cacciani described the potential role of applying the social sciences to the field of migration and showed how anthropological knowledge could help to solve everyday problems. She also focused on the fact that that aspect of the migration and integration process is still underestimated and is being developed, but there are already good practices in applying intercultural psychology into working with migrants in Italy.

The graduate students were working for two days in groups to deal with the most complex and challenging aspects of the migration situation in Europe such as: free movement and border controls, legal reforms, adapting European cities and their citizens to the new situation, and, finally, developing a new, coherent migrant policy in Europe. The intensive and rich discussions resulted in some interesting and innovative ideas being proposed. To name only the most striking ones: reforming the Common European Asylum System so that it is better able to deal with the problem of quotas and refugee affiliation; giving migrants the chance to assimilate into the culture they know best most and into the language they already know; establishing one EU body responsible for the partitions system that would build a bridge between ‘old Europe’ and ‘new Europe’, sharing not only responsibilities but also experiences and creating a network of national institutions cooperating on the supra-national level; reducing institutional differences within the EU to a minimum; using existing resources—for example, abandoned buildings, incentive workforce; building a compulsory specialised council through which a city-to-city European network can be created; working on the right media picture of the migrant situation and proper information; inviting representatives of migrant and refugee communities to take part in talks concerning their situation and problems.

The Bologna workshop ‘Mobility and Migration: A Crisis for Europe’s Citizens?’ demonstrated the need for an open discussion of the migration situation in Europe above the polarised media narratives that reflect national policies and interests. The complex situation in Europe requires broad and open debate among multiple academic disciplines and the courage to transcend established discourse borders.

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