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# THE INTEGRATION NEEDS OF MOBILE EU CITIZENS

IMPEDIMENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The right to free movement granted to all European Union (EU) citizens is at the heart of the EU project and the resulting mobility system that has emerged within Europe is a unique experiment in the contemporary history of global migration systems. Those who take advantage of their free movement rights are not considered migrants, but mobile citizens, and have a set of near-equivalent rights to those of native residents in each EU country. The strong rights framework enjoyed by these mobile citizens implies that the process of settling in is easier for those holding EU citizenship than for third-country nationals.

The reality is frequently different; for mobile EU citizens, the rights they have been accorded can be difficult to enforce in practice. In addition, mobile citizens have many of the same integration needs as their third-country national counterparts, not least a need for language courses and orientation information concerning life in their new countries. But integration is also about community and society as a whole, and there is a need to ensure the ready availability of public services for all residents in a particular town or city, and the cohesiveness of increasingly diverse communities.

To date, the integration of EU citizens as a specific target group has not been widely discussed, either at EU or national levels. This discussion paper investigates the broad range of integration needs that exist in Europe—how do the needs of retirees in Spain compare to exchange students in Austria?—and the role different actors, including employers, can play in meeting them. This is particularly relevant with respect to vulnerable groups such as minorities and the poverty-stricken. Not only can the EU and national policymakers play a more hands-on role, but also city authorities, employers, and origin countries themselves.

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*For Europe to prosper, its citizens must have the opportunity to learn, work, and innovate in the Member State that suits their skills and ambitions most closely.*

In order to promote a more fulfilling free movement experience for EU citizens, there is a need to consider how to better implement and enforce free movement rights for all those who move, and more proactively include EU citizens in language and orientation courses (on a voluntary basis). In addition, there is a critical need to improve the knowledge base, particularly for local actors, so that public services such as education and health can adapt according to need. And most importantly, there is a need for policymakers to adopt a coherent approach to the social situation of free-moving citizens, so that mobile citizens don't find themselves in a more vulnerable position than their third-country immigrant neighbours.

## I. INTRODUCTION

For Europe to prosper, its citizens must have the opportunity to learn, work, and innovate in the Member State that suits their skills and ambitions most closely. However, to take full advantage of the benefits of European Union (EU) mobility, policymakers must also consider the integration needs of this population. The dedication to the principle of equality across EU citizens, regardless of nationality or country of residence, has sometimes obscured the fact that those who bravely move to a new Member State—whether to work, study, marry, or retire—may need help to settle in.

Over the past decade, a great deal of energy has been poured into understanding the dynamics of mobility within the European Union; namely, who is mobile, with which skills, across which sectors, and with what wages? Policymakers have also focused on better understanding the economic costs and benefits in each country. Far less research has been undertaken to identify the social impacts of EU mobility, including the well-being of EU citizens themselves.<sup>1</sup>

For many, particularly EU and national policymakers, a strong distinction has been drawn between third-country nationals and EU citizens. EU-level integration policies focus on the integration of legally residing third-country

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<sup>1</sup> For a full analysis of the available research and evidence on EU free movement, see Meghan Benton and Milica Petrovic, *How Free Is Free Movement? Dynamics and Drivers of Mobility within the European Union* (Brussels: MPI Europe, 2013), [www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/MPIEurope-FreeMovement-Drivers.pdf](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/MPIEurope-FreeMovement-Drivers.pdf).

nationals, as stipulated by the Lisbon Treaty.<sup>2</sup> EU nationals find themselves in a strong position compared to many third-country nationals—considering their extensive legal and social rights—and thus, theoretically at least, less needful of support. However, nationality makes little difference to the process of adapting to new languages, institutions, and social norms.

One rationale for focusing integration investments on third-country nationals is the belief that they are more likely than other EU citizens to become long-term or permanent members of the receiving society. Many EU citizens are mobile for only short periods of time, from six months to two years. Furthermore, naturalisation rates of EU citizens living in other EU Member States are far lower than for third-country nationals; more than 90 per cent of those who acquired citizenship in 2009, for example, were previously citizens of non-EU countries.<sup>3</sup> Given the emphasis within the integration policy portfolio on developing paths to naturalisation, there is a portion of integration policy that has far less bearing for individuals already holding EU citizenship.

There is therefore a delicate balance between treating EU citizens as equal members of society and still finding a way to provide assistance to them as newcomers. The goal of this discussion paper is to outline the various social challenges faced by EU citizens living and working abroad, to highlight the integration policies that apply to them—whether implemented by government agencies or private-sector employers—and to suggest ways in which the European Commission and EU Member States can support those citizens who choose to live and work in different locations in the European Union. Given the uneven research to date on the social impacts of EU free movement, this discussion paper should be considered a speculative first look at some of the issues involved.

The paper sets out the formal rights that EU citizens are endowed with, and their implementation in practice, highlighting the barriers that exist for those seeking to exercise pension, social security, or other rights. In addition, it discusses the various other aspects of integration that pertain to EU citizens themselves, in terms of orientation and language needs, and adaptations that policymakers should consider, such as ensuring the availability of appropriate public services from health care to schooling. Finally, the paper highlights the diverse nature of EU mobility—both in terms of nationality and increased circulation of the EU population.

## II. THE RIGHTS OF EU CITIZENS

There are a number of rights, encapsulated in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, which apply to all residents of the EU, regardless of citizenship. However, EU nationals also enjoy a broad range of political, economic, and social rights that derive from EU citizenship itself.

Article 21 of the Lisbon Treaty states that EU citizens have the right to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States, subject to a few specific limitations. This is the clearest difference between EU citizens and most third-country nationals, and thus has a significant influence on the integration of both groups. These rights were first detailed in 1968 for mobile workers;<sup>4</sup> following a significant number of expansions, amendments, and decisions of the European Court of Justice, consolidated legislation was agreed to in 2004.<sup>5</sup>

While third-country nationals must demonstrate their compliance with a range of requirements in order to qualify for a residence permit (in some cases proving that a certain level of integration has been achieved), EU citizens automatically receive the right of residence, which can only be withdrawn in a number of limited circumstances. Beyond this, the Lisbon Treaty also states that EU citizens should not be discriminated against on the basis of nationality in the areas of employment and remuneration. This also places them in an advantageous position compared to third-country nationals, who must rely instead on the Employment Equality Framework Directive, which does not include discrimination based on nationality.<sup>6</sup>

EU mobile workers also have broad access to social security benefits—such as pension, unemployment, or child

2 Article 79.4, Lisbon Treaty.

3 Fabio Sartori, 'Acquisitions of Citizenship on the Rise in 2009' (Statistics in Focus, Eurostat, 24/2011), [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY\\_OFFPUB/KS-SF-11-024/EN/KS-SF-11-024-EN.PDF](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-SF-11-024/EN/KS-SF-11-024-EN.PDF).

4 Council Regulation (EEC) 1612/68.

5 Council Directive 2004/38/EC.

6 Council Directive 2000/78/EC.

benefits—many of which are automatically portable within the European Union.<sup>7</sup> Third-country nationals, by contrast, have automatic access to a far narrower range of benefits, only some of which are portable. The Single Permit Directive, agreed to late in 2011, has addressed some of these discrepancies for third-country national workers, offering them equal treatment, with working conditions, pensions, social security, and access to public services as EU citizens. However, a number of third-country nationals (such as seasonal workers) are excluded from the scope of this legislation.

The portability of pensions and other social contributions is an important benefit for mobile EU citizens. This allows individuals who work in multiple Member States during the course of their working lives to aggregate their entitlements and receive payments from all those countries. This is frequently a complex process, and many observers have criticised the system for being a structural barrier to mobility, including in the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee, and the European Commission itself. However, EU citizens are better positioned than third-country nationals to claim social rights: a third-country national who has worked in the European Union but wishes to return home for retirement must rely on the patchwork of international agreements concerning the portability of pension and other social rights. Some European countries have negotiated agreements with all their major immigrant-origin countries; others have very few bilateral agreements, thus limiting the mobility of third-country nationals in retirement. While an EU national may transfer accrued unemployment benefits to another EU Member State, third-country nationals lose such rights unless explicitly sanctioned by the host country through national legislation or bilateral agreement with the origin country.<sup>8</sup>

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Finally, EU nationals have a guaranteed right to vote in municipal elections, whereas third-country migrants must follow national legislation in the country in which they reside. In Sweden, for example, third-country nationals have voting rights at the local and regional levels, while in a number of Central European countries such rights are only accorded upon naturalisation.<sup>9</sup>

EU citizens are, for the most part, treated equally when living in another EU country. However, there are many instances where EU citizens are subject to different rules, or might find the exercise of their rights somewhat harder than national citizens. In 2010 the European Commission produced a report on the barriers facing mobile EU citizens, which highlighted the gap between rights on paper and the implementation of rules governing property, tax, social security, and pension rights.<sup>10</sup> This is not a new discovery; a range of reports have been published over the past decade, detailing the various issues that EU citizens face.<sup>11</sup> While detailing these issues is outside the scope of this report, it is clear that free movement is still subject to qualification in practice.

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What support exists for EU citizens wishing to exercise their rights? EU nationals can challenge decisions concerning their rights within the national and European court systems. The jurisprudence of the European Court of Justice is large, complex, and constantly evolving, and rulings tend toward expanding—rather than reducing—EU citizenship rights. Because the implementation of free movement, particularly social rights, has become so complex to navigate, EU citizens can also take advantage of EU information services, primarily Your Europe (formerly the European Signposting Service), run jointly by the European Citizen Action Service and SOLVIS. In 2010 Your Europe composed

7 Council Regulation (EEC) No 1408/71 and Regulation (EC) No 883/2004.

8 Robert Holzmann and Johannes Koettl, 'Portability of Pension, Health, and other Social Benefits: Facts, Concepts, Issues' (IZA Discussion Paper No. 5715, Institute for the Study of Labour [IZA], Bonn, 2011), [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=2181333](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2181333).

9 See the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) for details of Member States' policies on access to nationality; British Council and Migration Policy Group, 'Access to Nationality,' [www.mipex.eu/access-to-nationality](http://www.mipex.eu/access-to-nationality).

10 European Commission, *EU Citizenship Report 2010: Dismantling the Obstacles to EU Citizens' Rights*, COM (2010) 603 (Brussels: European Commission, 2010), [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/citizen/files/com\\_2010\\_603\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/citizen/files/com_2010_603_en.pdf).

11 See, for example, European Commission Authentication Service (ECAS), *Mind the Gap: Towards a Better Enforcement of European Citizens' Right to Free Movement* (Brussels: ECAS, 2009), [www.ecas-citizens.eu/content/view/365/353/](http://www.ecas-citizens.eu/content/view/365/353/); and Alain Lamassoure, *Le citoyen et l'application du droit communautaire* (Paris: Présidence de la République, 2008), [www.ladocumentationfrancaise.fr/rapports-publics/084000379/index.shtml](http://www.ladocumentationfrancaise.fr/rapports-publics/084000379/index.shtml).

12,000 replies to questions posed by EU residents concerning residence rights, social security coordination, vehicles, work, study, and tax.<sup>12</sup> Finally, the European Commission has produced a number of factsheets that outline the rights and options for EU citizens who have decided to live in other EU Member States. However, significant challenges remain, not least dealing with the multiplicity of national, regional, and local agencies in a new and unfamiliar country.

Maintaining periodic reviews of how EU citizens' rights work in practice, combined with a stronger structure of redress, may mean that mobile non-nationals can exercise their rights more reliably. Similarly, where individuals are taking advantage of the system (perhaps making double claims, or avoiding tax obligations), stronger EU oversight and coordination can help Member States identify and reduce such abuse.

### III. THE NEEDS OF EU CITIZENS

Integration processes are multi-dimensional and fluid. While the core elements of European integration policy are encapsulated in the 2005 EU Common Basic Principles on Integration, different aspects can and will be prioritised at different times by different actors, and each Member State has formulated integration policies in different ways. One common thread is the emphasis on language learning and access to employment as core to the success of an individual immigrant. In addition, much of the public debate surrounding integration policy over the past decade has centred on how far immigrants can be *required* (as opposed to encouraged) to participate in the process.

An increasing number of EU Member States have put in place programmes that require active participation on the part of the individual migrant, from predeparture orientation and language programmes, to citizenship tests and interviews. European citizens, however, cannot be required to participate in this formal programming, as mobile EU citizens should receive equal treatment to natives. Unlike third-country nationals, residency rights for EU citizens cannot be curtailed by failure to participate in such courses. EU citizens can only lose their right to reside in certain limited circumstances, such as loss of financial independence, or concerns for public security, safety, and health.

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There are a variety of lenses through which one can assess the integration needs of EU citizens, third-country nationals, and receiving communities, and identify potential areas for policy support.

#### A. *Integration needs*

Like third-country nationals, EU citizens may benefit from specialised integration support in the first months and years in a new country. Language learning is central to this, as are orientation programmes that outline government structures, inform migrants of their employment rights, and help them access key services.

Most European countries offer (or support) some form of orientation and language programmes for non-nationals. In many countries—such as France, the Netherlands, and Italy—these programmes are obligatory for particular categories of third-country nationals, and in some cases certain rights are tied to them. In many of the newer Member States, orientation and language programmes are limited to refugee and humanitarian populations, but in western Europe, where such programmes are widespread, many are open to EU citizens. However, few countries proactively promote these programmes to EU nationals.<sup>13</sup>

The German Ministry of Interior highlights that EU citizens may sign up for an introductory German language course if there are enough places in the classroom for them to participate.<sup>14</sup> Meanwhile, in Spain, there is no centralised

<sup>12</sup> European Commission, *Your Europe Advice Annual Report 2010* (Brussels: European Commission, 2011).

<sup>13</sup> European Migration Network (EMN), 'EMN Ad-Hoc Query on Programs for the Linguistic Integration of Immigrants,' requested by EMN National Contact Point (NCP) Germany on 12 July 2012.

<sup>14</sup> EMN, 'EMN Ad-Hoc Query on Language and Orientation Courses for Immigrants,' requested by EMN NCP Slovenia on 13 November

system of provision; access to such programmes depends on the regional and local support framework and available funding. Conversely, in Luxembourg, the Reception and Integration Contract (CAI) is targeted toward EU citizens as well as third-country nationals (though optional for the former group). Launched in September 2011, in its first three months, nearly half (48 per cent) of those signing up for the CAI were EU nationals, particularly from Portugal, France, Belgium, Germany, and Spain.<sup>15</sup> This suggests that even where there are no incentives or obligations, there is a perceived gain for those who participate.

Governments must weigh the perceived benefits of providing widespread introductory and language services against the cost. In a number of countries such services are subsidised (or fully paid) by national or EU public funding. In other Member States, non-nationals may be asked to pay for their own language instruction. In Denmark, free tuition is offered to new arrivals for up to three years, including EU citizens. Municipalities are responsible for providing these services (frequently through subcontractors such as LaerDansk), and an increasing proportion of EU nationals have participated in recent years.<sup>16</sup> In other countries, such as Germany, costs are divided between the provider and the attendee, with a cost of 1.20€ per lesson. In the United Kingdom, after some public debate, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses are means-tested rather than based on eligibility; those on so-called ‘inactive’ benefits can rely on government funding for their tuition.

Over the past few years, governments have come under considerable pressure to make cuts in all areas of social policy, including integration programming. This has two main effects. First, subsidising non-nationals to attend such courses has become more difficult for governments looking to make broad cuts. Indirectly, many of the course providers, from municipalities to non-governmental and non-profit agencies may have difficulty maintaining the same level of service provision. In the United Kingdom, while funding support was ultimately retained for language learners with limited means, public funding for providers themselves was cut.<sup>17</sup> In Spain, the Integration Support Fund—designed to support the reception, integration, and educational development of immigrants—was reduced to zero in 2012, seriously affecting regional and municipal capacity to provide services.<sup>18</sup>

A second consideration is targeted investment. A number of countries focus orientation and language programmes upon those that are more likely to reside in the host country in the long term. Given the increased mobility of EU citizens within the European Union, it may not be appropriate to encourage full participation in such courses for residents who intend to remain for a short stay.

Here, alternative service provision may be considered, such as a condensed orientation course or online courses, which would be a useful middle ground for EU nationals who need essential information from day one, but are not necessarily in need of extensive tuition. Online and mass media have been piloted in a number of countries across Europe. In Germany, a range of tools have been rolled out to support immigrant integration, from e-learning for the training of teachers to learning portals for job training; in Spain, the Instituto Cervantes has created a Spanish Virtual Classroom.<sup>19</sup> These tools can also be used for preparatory distance learning for EU citizens planning a move, or for EU citizens with limited access to a classroom, such as workers in remote locations, those with long working hours, or parents with child-care responsibilities. Even if a computer is not within reach, DVDs and smartphone apps can be accessed by nearly all the population.

While the European Integration Fund (EIF) has been central to the development of introduction programmes for the newly arrived in a number of Member States, it is formally limited to support for third-country nationals. Some countries—including Portugal, Ireland, and Estonia—have made use of the European Social Fund (ESF) to support integration-related services, as ESF funding can include EU citizens.<sup>20</sup> There is an opportunity for the European Union to consider funding dedicated to mobile EU citizens. This would amalgamate priorities from the EIF, ESF, and funding streams for EU citizenship within the Directorate General for Fundamental Rights and Justice, currently

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2008.

15 EMN NCP Luxembourg, *2011 Policy Report on Migration and Asylum* (Brussels: European Migration Network, 2012), <http://emn.intrasoft-intl.com/Downloads/download.do;jsessionid=822568386A649A39C81D1E38BCFB7915?fileID=3135>.

16 Danish Ministry for Refugee, Immigration, and Integration Affairs, *Integration 2009: Nine Focus Areas* (Copenhagen: Danish Ministry for Refugee, Immigration, and Integration Affairs, 2009), [www.nyidanmark.dk/NR/rdonlyres/B3D6D658-B4D2-4879-B63B-D61B58CB2131/0/Integration\\_2009\\_UK\\_web.pdf](http://www.nyidanmark.dk/NR/rdonlyres/B3D6D658-B4D2-4879-B63B-D61B58CB2131/0/Integration_2009_UK_web.pdf).

17 The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE), *Update on ESOL Policy Changes* (London: NIACE, 2011), [www.niace.org.uk/news/niace-update-on-esol-policy-changes](http://www.niace.org.uk/news/niace-update-on-esol-policy-changes).

18 Ines Benitez, ‘Spain Slashes Funds for Integration of Immigrants,’ Inter Press Service news agency, 13 April 2012, [www.ipsnews.net/2012/04/spain-slashes-funds-for-integration-of-immigrants](http://www.ipsnews.net/2012/04/spain-slashes-funds-for-integration-of-immigrants).

19 EMN, ‘EMN Ad-Hoc Query on Media Use in Language Courses for Immigrants,’ requested by the German EMN NCP on 14 June 2010.

20 EMN, ‘EMN Ad-hoc Query on Programs for the Linguistic Integration of Immigrants.’

limited to fundamental rights and the promotion of a European identity.<sup>21</sup> The European Commission could support tailored ‘introduction’ programmes for EU citizens in each country, in addition to predeparture information provided by EURES and the Mobility Portal.

Member States need to learn strategies for managing the balance between smart investment and strategic outreach with respect to EU national language learning. Online learning is one possible solution; bringing in new actors, from employers to social care providers, is another method of reaching out to groups that are willing, but perhaps unable, to access services easily.

## ***B. Adapting public services***

Beyond the question of specialised integration programmes, governments must consider how general public services work for immigrants. All non-nationals, whether EU citizens or third-country nationals, will need to access services ranging from health care and education to transport and refuse collection. There are a number of aspects to public service provision that are relevant for policymakers responsible for the well-being of EU citizens, not least the need to ensure adequate provision for all members of the community, regardless of origin.

Estimating potential demand for services may be a significant challenge for service providers. It is frequently difficult to predict both the number and location of mobile EU nationals in a receiving Member State in advance, particularly following an enlargement or change in policy (transitional arrangements); the United Kingdom and Ireland experienced an unexpectedly large inflow of EU-8 nationals, many of whom were concentrated in particular towns and regions. While third-country nationals receive visas, governments rely on EU nationals registering locally either upon arrival in the country, or after a number of months. Should EU nationals fail to register, their presence in a town or city will not be known until they directly access public services. In many cases, EU nationals spend significant time in more than one EU Member State at a time, particularly in the case of temporary workers, cross-border commuting workers, or retirees (a phenomenon that may lead to both under-counting and double-counting). Finally, EU workers have a tendency to be more mobile within a country than local workers, which means they may switch towns with greater frequency.<sup>22</sup>

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### ***Member States need to learn strategies for managing the balance between smart investment and strategic outreach with respect to EU national language learning.***

For national and particularly local authorities responsible for ensuring adequate services to the whole population, this may be a significant challenge. Not only must agencies ensure sufficient supply from school places to hospital beds, but also ensure that those services are capable of responding to a diverse community. In some regions this is a fairly new phenomenon, as EU mobility has created newly diverse communities. Schools may find themselves with a number of second-language pupils in need of additional teaching support, while emergency and other services may find they need to employ translators.

While this is not a challenge limited to EU nationals, it is one that has proliferated with the emergence of EU mobility, and highlights the paucity of information available to government agencies and departments who are responsible for planning budget allocations and developing services. In a number of countries, such as Spain, allocations of social service budgets depend on an accurate headcount. While there will always be a time-delay linking headcount to fiscal allocation, a deeper knowledge of both the number but the characteristics and public service needs of EU non-nationals is essential to ensuring that services can support communities rather than stretch and potentially divide them. Investing in a broader range of research which can support such planning will be essential in an era of austerity, where the need for services are increasing and budgets are shrinking.

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21 European Commission, *Communication on Progress towards Effective EU Citizenship 2007-2010* COM (2010) 602-FINAL (Brussels: European Commission, 2010), [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/citizen/files/com\\_2010\\_602\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/citizen/files/com_2010_602_en.pdf).

22 IZA, NIRAS Consultants, and the Swedish National Labour Market Board, *Geographic Mobility in the European Union: Optimising its Economic and Social Benefits* (Brussels: DG Employment and Social Affairs, European Commission, 2008), [www.iza.org/en/webcontent/publications/reports/report\\_pdfs/iza\\_report\\_19.pdf](http://www.iza.org/en/webcontent/publications/reports/report_pdfs/iza_report_19.pdf).

## C. *Diversity and community cohesion*

While integration is the dominant narrative for national and EU policymakers regarding non-nationals, policymakers at the local level prefer use terms such as civic citizenship, community cohesion, and social inclusion.<sup>23</sup> This approach places the emphasis on *all* members of a community, not just newcomers and, more often than not, no distinction is made on the basis of legal status and citizenship.

Free movement has led to increased diversity within both large cities and rural villages across Europe. Though mobility overall remains low throughout, some regions and cities have experienced fast-paced change, particularly following the 2004 and 2007 enlargements. Local and regional authorities have had to adapt their policies to respond to the needs of rapidly changing populations and to ensure adequate provision of services for different groups. The sometimes-rapid influx of unfamiliar people and practices has created tensions in many towns and cities. Local and regional authorities are not only responsible for ensuring adequate provision of services (as per the above subsection), but also welcoming non-nationals and preparing host communities for increased diversity. A large number of cities are learning as they go, and have welcomed opportunities to learn from the various city networks that have been formed, from the Eurocities working group on integration to the Council of Europe's Intercultural Cities.

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*Because many mobile workers do not intend to settle for the long term (though they may eventually do so), ensuring social cohesion is a more complex task.*

In addition, local authorities have to develop strategies on the basis of the best available knowledge they have about the population for whom they work, and yet there is often little information to help them do this. Census data can become quickly outdated, and are not capable of highlighting emerging tensions in a community. As a result, some local and regional authorities have developed relationships with migrant and community organisations in order to better understand *who* is in their community, and ensure that they have early warning about potential conflict points. An example here is the city of Delft, which invests both time and money into networking with community organisations, creating a two-way flow of information about the community.<sup>24</sup>

Because many mobile workers do not intend to settle for the long term (though they may eventually do so), ensuring social cohesion is a more complex task, as a section of the population may be transient and less invested in the well-being of the community. Good examples of this phenomenon can be found in expatriate communities across Europe (not least Brussels), where residents may be isolated from the broader community. This is a challenge that is rarely discussed in policy circles, perhaps in part because urban workers are considered to be of economic benefit to the region as a whole, and central to future growth. While this may be true, increasing mobility within urban populations may have a negative social effect on the city as a whole, and existing populations make few distinctions as to the origins of non-nationals.

The European Commission should support existing city networks that focus on exchanging based on the growing wealth of urban expertise within local and regional authorities. These should have a bottom-up focus, relying on cities to set the agenda, rather than a top-down approach focused on national and EU policy priorities that may not resonate with the reality on the ground.

## D. *Minority and vulnerable groups*

Mobile EU nationals are not, for the most part, considered a vulnerable group. However, the European Union's poverty and social inclusion policy highlights a number of groups who are marginalised, from children in poverty to immigrants and minority groups. While it is outside the bounds of this report to analyse the overlap between the European Union's social protection and inclusion policies and mobility within Europe, there are a couple of policy areas

<sup>23</sup> This was a key finding of the European Investment Fund (EIF)-funded Attitudes to Migrants, Communication and Local Leadership (AMICALL) project, coordinated by COMPAS, Oxford University; see COMPAS, 'Attitudes to Migrants, Communication and Local Leadership (AMICALL)', [www.compas.ox.ac.uk/research/urbanchange/amicall/](http://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/research/urbanchange/amicall/).

<sup>24</sup> Han Entzinger, Peter Scholten, and Stijn Verbeek, *Dutch Final Report for AMICALL Project* (Rotterdam: Erasmus University, forthcoming).

that merit particular scrutiny.

Roma populations are among the most marginalised communities in Europe, with respect to both socioeconomic status and unequal treatment. The mobility of Roma EU citizens has raised particular policy challenges in some countries. Rights of residence are not absolute; EU citizens must demonstrate financial independence, and not be a threat to public safety, security, and health. In recent years, a number of countries, including France and Italy, have broken up Roma settlements and returned residents, citing public security and health. At the same time, the European Union has been active in developing a raft of initiatives designed to promote Roma inclusion; within this framework, each EU Member State has developed inclusion policies outlining national initiatives to support Roma inclusion.<sup>25</sup> This two-handed approach suggests that a great deal of work still needs to be done to ensure that enforcing free movement rules (particularly limitations to free movement) doesn't also negatively impact long-term inclusion strategies.

Aside from particular minority groups, the economic crisis has raised the challenge of destitution among mobile EU nationals. The June 2012 *Employment and Social Situation Quarterly Review* highlights that the proportion of foreign nationals who have become homeless has risen over the past few years.<sup>26</sup> In some cases, destitute EU citizens have welcomed support from host governments to return home, but many others do not wish to do so, as they have ties to their adopted country of residence. As with Roma populations above, enforcement of free movement rules may not ameliorate situations of destitution, but rather make them worse, and does little for social inclusion overall.

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*The mobility of Roma EU citizens has raised particular policy challenges in some countries.*

Deportation of EU nationals should be a last resort, rather than a first impulse. All EU Member States have nationals in vulnerable circumstances residing in other countries, so there is no major 'gain' in returning those citizens considered to be a burden to the state. Stronger guidelines on the procedure and decision-making process for deporting EU nationals are needed, along with an EU-wide strategy on destitute mobile citizens (and other foreign nationals).

## *E. Diversity of integration needs*

There is tremendous diversity across the population of EU movers. Just as refugee populations have specific needs, the needs of EU citizens may shift according to their specific characteristics and situation.

First, a number of mobile EU citizens take advantage of the transport networks across Europe and choose to spend their lives in more than one country at a time. Core to this are commuter citizens, who may work in one country but live in a neighbouring one. This is a particular phenomenon in the Benelux region (and including citizens from Germany and France) and in Scandinavia. In addition, a number of citizens choose to spend the working week in one country and reside in another during weekends and holidays, essentially splitting residence across two countries. This raises a number of practical issues regarding social, employment, family, and pension rights, but also raises questions for the communities in which they live. Commuter lifestyles do not conform to current models of integration, despite the high profile of circular migration within policy circles, and the effect this has on both individuals and the communities in which they live.

Second, an increasing number of retirees are choosing to spend their final decades in another EU country; the pattern of retirement mobility from northern Europe to the Mediterranean is well established; retirees often move to Member States where the costs of living are lower. It would seem, from the research available, that this older cohort of EU nationals is less inclined (or able) to learn the host-country language. However, these citizens still need to navigate certain aspects of community life, not least the health-care system. It has been noted by some researchers that mobile EU retirees are sometimes 'gaming the system,' whether for tax purposes or to access preferred health-care services.<sup>27</sup>

Finally, the European Union has developed a number of policies to improve the mobility of students within the Union. This includes exchange programmes to facilitate learning in another Member State, such as Erasmus, which facilitates

25 European Commission, 'National Strategies,' [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/roma/national-strategies/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/roma/national-strategies/index_en.htm).

26 European Commission, *EU Employment and Social Situation*, Quarterly Review, June 2012 (Brussels: European Commission, 2012), <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1389&furtherNews=yes>.

27 Keileigh Coldron and Louise Ackers, 'European Citizenship, Individual Agency and the Challenge to Social Welfare Systems: A Case Study of Retirement Migration in the European Union,' *Policy and Politics* 37, no. 4 (2009): 573-89.

the exchange of up to 200,000 higher education students each year in study abroad programmes. Available evidence suggests that those who are mobile during their studies tend to be more mobile later in life, so it is important to address integration needs at this early stage.

It is interesting that a form of integration strategy already exists for mobile students within Europe through the European Quality Charter for Mobility.<sup>28</sup> Agreed to in 2006, this is a set of guidelines designed to ensure that young and adult learners in Europe have a positive experience while studying abroad. The charter covers a broad range of integration elements from ensuring pre-departure information and preparation, through to linguistic support and recognition of the ensuing qualification. This document may be a useful reference point for policymakers to develop similar charters for other types of EU citizens, not least mobile workers.

## IV. THE ROLE OF OTHER ACTORS

### A. Employers

The majority of mobile EU citizens move to other countries to work. Some migrants are even recruited directly from their hometown by an employer, who thus becomes their first contact with the new country of residence. This puts employers in a privileged position with respect to ensuring the well-being of these individuals. Despite this, employers have yet to emerge as significant actors in the integration process.

Employers can play a variety of different roles in relation to EU workers.<sup>29</sup> At the most basic level, ensuring equal treatment of workers, and developing diversity strategies can ensure that non-nationals are not marginalised at work. Diversity charters have been developed in a number of countries, including France, Germany, and Belgium; these charters commit leading companies to combat labour market discrimination on the basis of ethnicity. Some governments have gone further; in France, the Ministry of Interior has developed partnerships with companies such as Vinci, Manpower, Casino, and Coca-Cola France to test methods of integration for new arrivals.<sup>30</sup>

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*Employers have yet to emerge as significant actors in the integration process.*

Employers can also support the development of work-related skills and competences, not least language. While generic language-training programmes remain the norm in most countries, employers may be best positioned to provide *job-specific* language training (otherwise migrants may learn vocabulary that is not relevant to the company's needs). In Älmhult, Sweden, for example, the local IKEA runs integration programmes for its foreign employees, which run parallel to the municipality efforts of integrating foreign citizens. These programmes include Swedish language tuition and even cultural training.<sup>31</sup> Germany's Deutsch am Arbeitsplatz ('German at Work') programme teaches 'professional German' to migrants, and works with employers to develop language curricula for use in the workplace.<sup>32</sup>

Immigrant groups, including EU nationals, can be overlooked in terms of career development, and left out of vocational and on-the-job training. For example, Ireland's National Employment Survey (covering over 50,000 employees) found that only 41 per cent of EU nationals of New Member States reported receiving training from their employer, compared to 60 per cent of natives, and that mobile EU citizens from newer Member States were at a disadvantage

28 For details see Europa, 'European Quality Charter for Mobility,' last updated 2 February 2007, [http://europa.eu/legislation\\_summaries/education\\_training\\_youth/lifelong\\_learning/c11085\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/education_training_youth/lifelong_learning/c11085_en.htm).

29 For a full discussion, see Elizabeth Collett and Karoline Sitek, 'Making Migration Work: The Role of Employers in Migrant Integration' (EPC Working Paper No. 30, European Policy Centre, Brussels, 2008), [www.epc.eu/prog\\_details.php?cat\\_id=6&pub\\_id=907&prog\\_id=1](http://www.epc.eu/prog_details.php?cat_id=6&pub_id=907&prog_id=1).

30 EMN NCP France, *2011 Policy Report on Migration and Asylum* (Brussels: European Migration Network, 2012).

31 Monica Quirico and Tiziana Caponio, *Study on the Local Implementation of Integration/Introduction Courses for Newcomers* (Brussels: Promoting Sustainable Policies for Integration, 2012), [http://research.icmpd.org/fileadmin/Research-Website/Project\\_material/PROSINT/Reports/WP3\\_CompRep\\_Final\\_Submitted.pdf](http://research.icmpd.org/fileadmin/Research-Website/Project_material/PROSINT/Reports/WP3_CompRep_Final_Submitted.pdf).

32 For more information, see IQ Netzwerk, 'German at the workplace,' [www.deutsch-am-arbeitsplatz.de/english.html](http://www.deutsch-am-arbeitsplatz.de/english.html).

with respect to on-the-job training.<sup>33</sup> This is a particular challenge during a recession, when skills development support is often one of the first things to be cut by a business.

Nonetheless, the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions reported in 2011 that policies to enhance up-skilling (the improvement of a worker's skills through training) were intensified in several Member States (despite the recession), and that in Germany and Latvia the government worked with social partners to achieve this (in Germany, trade unions launched campaigns to support trainees and apprentices).<sup>34</sup> Denmark has piloted 'competence centres'—partnerships between training centres and businesses—to provide language and skills training to low-skilled workers (including immigrants).<sup>35</sup> In Portugal, immigrants (including EU citizens) can access technical language courses for particular sectors, from retail to civil engineering.<sup>36</sup> This can also take place at the local level: in Sweden, municipalities are encouraged to build cooperation with businesses and employers, and some Swedish for Immigrants language programmes incorporate internships.<sup>37</sup>

Why should employers be more involved? Self-interest plays a strong role. The most obvious commercial advantage of investing in migrant workers is so that they can fill job shortages, especially in sectors where there is a need for qualified workers. Some companies have also found that ensuring that their workers are happy in their new environment brings benefits such as lower staff turnover and reduced levels of absenteeism. For example, UK transport operator First Group recruited bus drivers directly from Poland to address local shortages following enlargement, and reported that its retention rate rose to 95 per cent.<sup>38</sup> Other companies—particularly in low-margin industries where the workforce is key to firms' profit levels—have reported higher productivity since they started offering support to their migrant workforce.

Employment laws are also a driver: employers are required to inform workers about health and safety, ensure that the correct paperwork for tax and social security contributions has been filed, and create a 'discrimination-free' environment. Complying with regulations and ensuring that migrants are aware of their employment rights and the implications of their legal status can also reduce the likelihood of legal complaints down the line, and protect a company's public image.

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### *Why should employers be more involved? Self-interest plays a strong role.*

Some companies, particularly those that provide front-line services, recognise that serving the needs of an increasingly diverse client base requires a diverse workforce. This is particularly true of recruitment agencies, which have to be responsive to the changing needs of the labour market. Other examples include banks that put a value on diversity as this reflects their diverse customer base, such as Fortis Bank in Belgium, which has introduced investment funds for Muslim clients based on Shari'ah law, and Lloyds Bank in the United Kingdom, which has introduced Polish-speaking tellers in each of its branches.<sup>39</sup>

However, employers cannot replace governments in the integration process, nor should they. There are certainly pitfalls should a company become the primary means of integration: some employers find and provide housing for non-national employees, help them with banking, health care, and access to services. However, in some cases, the reliance on an employer for housing and access to key services can place an immigrant in a vulnerable position if an employer chooses to exploit its caretaker role.

Many employers have expressed reluctance to get more directly involved. The negative public debate in many countries centres upon private-sector willingness to hire non-national labour instead of the locally available workforce, and companies are concerned about their public image in this debate should they become visibly active in the integration process. Working with employers to overcome this reluctance should be a clear priority for policymakers, as well as

33 Alan Barrett, Séamus McGuinness, Martin O'Brien, and Philip O'Connell, 'Immigrants and Employer-provided Training,' *Journal of Labor Research*, July 2012.

34 European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound), *Industrial Relations and Working Conditions Developments in Europe 2010* (Dublin: Eurofound, 2011), [www.eurofound.europa.eu/pubdocs/2011/50/en/1/EF1150EN.pdf](http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/pubdocs/2011/50/en/1/EF1150EN.pdf).

35 Danish Technological Institute (DTI), *Competence Centres in Learning Regions in Denmark Final Report* (Copenhagen: DTI, 2008), [www.dti.dk/root/media/31307%5FCompetence%20Centres%20in%20Learning%20Regions%20in%20Denmark.pdf](http://www.dti.dk/root/media/31307%5FCompetence%20Centres%20in%20Learning%20Regions%20in%20Denmark.pdf).

36 EMN, 'EMN Ad-hoc Query on Programs for the Linguistic Integration of Immigrants.'

37 Ibid.

38 Taken from a presentation by Austin Birks at a conference hosted by COMPAS, 'The Integration of Migrants: Engaging Employers, Unions and the Voluntary Sector,' July 2006 in London.

39 Collett and Sitek, 'Making Migration Work: The Role of Employers in Migrant Integration.'

establishing dialogue and partnerships between government and social partners with respect to integration processes. In addition, the public-private partnerships that some Member State governments have put in place with respect to vocational training, language learning, and skills recognition is a model that should be encouraged and expanded.

Finally, there is a need for EU Member States to support both EU nationals and employers by investing more in the recognition of informal skills and work experience. While systems for formal education recognition have been developed, including vocational education, there are few mechanisms for assessing the non-formal skills and work experience that many EU citizens possess (beyond guidelines issued in 2009). Here, public employment agencies could be key to developing assessment centres for EU citizens wishing to move across Europe; national agencies could validate the entire skill set presented by each individual, including work experience. This could help reduce skills waste in the chosen country of destination and prepare citizens for the labour market before they depart.

## B. *Origin countries*

There has been too little focus on the integration of mobile EU citizens, and even less on the relationships between Member States who are sending and hosting these citizens. Most of the public discussion has been overtly political, and mostly hostile; expulsions of Roma populations from countries such as France and Italy have led to tensions with major origin countries such as Romania. Websites for denouncing so-called ‘nuisance’ EU workers from Central Europe, launched by far-right parties in Belgium and the Netherlands, were similarly denounced by Polish, Romanian, and Bulgarian officials.<sup>40</sup>

However, there is a more substantive role for origin countries in ensuring the welfare of their nationals abroad. One key element is providing accurate information for mobile EU workers, both before and after their movement within Europe. This can be undertaken by the receiving country, the origin country, and the European Commission. For example, in Ireland, the Training and Employment Authority launched a predeparture information campaign (Know Before You Go) in Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia in order to provide adequate information on living and working conditions in the country, following the 2004 EU enlargement.<sup>41</sup> The European Commission hosts a wide range of information on rights in each country, and what free movers can expect in the country.

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*There is a need for EU Member States to support both EU nationals and employers by investing more in the recognition of informal skills and work experience.*

Partnerships between Member States can also be forged with respect to recruitment and skills. The UK Department of Health actively recruited dentists from Poland, beginning in 2005. Before arriving in the United Kingdom, selected dentists underwent an eight-week Adaptation Training and Language Course provided by a private company. Similar programmes also exist in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark.

The return journey is also of increasing relevance to governments who have seen their citizens emigrate to elsewhere in Europe. In Poland, the government has spent around 1 million euros since 2007 on an information campaign to encourage the return of Polish workers, highlighting attractive job opportunities.<sup>42</sup> Other countries have put in place comprehensive strategies to maintain links with their diaspora and encourage return of the highly skilled: Romania, Lithuania, and Bulgaria have all organised employment or information fairs in key European countries over the past five years, and a minister responsible for Bulgarians living and working abroad was appointed in 2009.<sup>43</sup>

40 Euractiv, ‘Dutch Website Causes Stir in Central Europe,’ Euractiv, 10 February 2012, [www.euractiv.com/justice/dutch-website-causes-stir-centra-news-510729](http://www.euractiv.com/justice/dutch-website-causes-stir-centra-news-510729).

41 ECAS, *Who’s Still Afraid of EU Enlargement* (Brussels: ECAS, 2006).

42 Krystyna Iglicka, ‘EU Membership Highlights Poland’s Migration Challenges,’ *Migration Information Source*, September 2010, [www.migrationinformation.org/feature/display.cfm?ID=800](http://www.migrationinformation.org/feature/display.cfm?ID=800).

43 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), *International Migration Outlook 2010* (Paris: OECD, 2010), [www.oecd.org/els/mig/internationalmigrationoutlook2010.htm](http://www.oecd.org/els/mig/internationalmigrationoutlook2010.htm).

## V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

To date, the integration of EU citizens as a specific target group has not been widely discussed, either at the EU or national level. Despite this, there are a number of opportunities for citizens to participate in integration programmes, and for both the European Union and Member States to extend their support for those EU citizens who exercise their right to free movement.

- ***Rigorously enforce free movement rights.*** The gap between rights on paper and practice is not a new challenge for EU citizens, but more active means of redress for EU citizens need to be considered, so that EU citizens can exercise their rights more reliably. The European Commission has already stated that enforcement of these rights is a priority; however, to do this effectively, the Directorate General for Fundamental Rights and Justice will need similar levels of commitment from Member States.
- ***Include EU citizens in language and orientation programmes.*** There are a number of ways in which the European Union and Member States can expand language and orientation initiatives to the mobile EU community. These include:
  - Proactive outreach to the EU non-national population, to inform them about available language programmes, providers, and costs. This could include partnership with origin countries to inform potential movers before departure.
  - Information packages about each country on the Your Europe website, in addition to existing information about EU rights.
  - The use of information and communications technology and other media to broaden access to language learning and key information for those who may not be able to access courses directly. From online portals to smartphone apps, there is a plethora of means for governments to reach out.
  - Working with other actors, particularly the private sector, to offer language and information support.
- ***Strengthen EU funding for citizen integration.*** At the current time, mobile citizens fall between two EU policy objectives: the integration of third-country nationals, and social inclusion policies for vulnerable groups. Both the European Integration Fund and the European Social Fund have funded integration programming in Member States but, too often, the source of funding has limited the scope of service provision. There is an opportunity in the next budget cycle for the European Union to dedicate funding for the support of mobile EU citizens, amalgamating priorities from both funds, or creating a funding stream for all non-nationals, regardless of citizenship.
- ***Improve the knowledge base.*** It is clear from the paucity of evidence available that few policymakers have a complete picture of the socioeconomic profile of their EU non-national population, or the impact of mobility on labour markets, communities, and public services. There is an urgent need for the European Union to support deeper research into the characteristics and public service needs of EU non-nationals so that policymakers can respond both appropriately and effectively. Efficient policy planning will be essential in an era of austerity, where the need for services is increasing and budgets are shrinking.
- ***Acknowledge the relevance of local and regional authorities.*** Such authorities have a critical role in ensuring the well-being of the communities they serve, including EU citizens, yet frequently lack the tools to do so effectively. Deepening the knowledge base goes some way toward addressing this, but there is also scope for developing emerging city networks that focus on integration and inclusion. There is a burgeoning wealth of urban expertise across Europe; a bottom-up, rather than a top-down, approach is likely to be more effective, as national and EU policy priorities may not resonate with the reality faced by local and regional authorities on the ground.
- ***Develop a coherent approach toward the most vulnerable populations.*** Deportation of EU nationals should be a last resort rather than a first impulse, particularly in a time of economic recession when many are facing an unstable outlook. Strict enforcement of the financial independence rule may come at the expense of social inclusion overall. Stronger guidelines over the procedure and decision-making process for deporting EU na-

tionals are needed, along with an EU-wide strategy on destitute mobile citizens (and other foreign nationals). Policymakers must balance the competing policy goals of promoting inclusion while reducing dependence.

- ***Work closely with employers of mobile workers.*** There is enormous untapped potential for governments to work closely with both public and private employers in augmenting support for mobile workers. Employers can play a role facilitating the arrival of EU citizens (particularly those they have directly recruited), and in the promotion of language and information policies. Similarly, governments can support employers and mobile workers by improving the recognition of non-formal learning and work experience to reduce skills wastage, and work with employers to provide more on-the-job training to EU non-nationals.
- ***Develop a quality charter for mobile citizens.*** The European Commission could consider developing a quality charter, modelled on that established for students, for all EU citizens resident in other Member States. This could be used to improve citizens' knowledge of their rights of free movement, and guide policymakers responsible for developing support services. A similar charter could be produced for employers of mobile citizens, offering them guidance in to how to support their non-national worker both within and outside the workplace.

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