



Call for papers

Workshop, Bremen 6 - 7 October 2022

Tackling emigration in EU member states – the welfare dimension

Heterogeneity in economic development among countries is a major cause for labour migration. In the European Union, rounds of Eastern enlargement have fundamentally increased these differences, and with this development different kinds of labour migration, as (posted) workers or self-employed, have gained importance, eased by the far-reaching rights to equal treatment that the EU's *acquis communautaire* includes. With the increase of intra-European mobility in the richer member states, possible negative repercussions of free movement rights have been discussed more critically. The Brexit process, and the politicisation of intra-EU migration stand out in this respect.

It is only relatively recently, that emigration countries receive more attention in the scholarly and political debate. The extent of intra-EU labour migration clearly has major implications for these countries. Romania stands out here, as about 20% of its working-age population has left the country. Potential negative implications abound: Economically, development may suffer from brain-drain, and over-reliance on remittances could inflict additional harm. Specific sectors, such as health, face severe problems, given the extent of labour migration. Partly, emigration countries transform themselves into immigration countries and compensate their loss of workforce. An example is the migration from Ukraine to Poland. Socially, some regions have lost a significant amount of their population, with consequences especially for rural areas and villages. For families, the so-called Euro orphans, whose parents work abroad and care is provided by the extended family, are an issue. Politically, the migration particularly of well-trained persons has been argued to play into the hands of illiberal regimes, as those supporting democracy may exit more easily, reducing the scope for critical voice. Regarding the welfare state, the demographic repercussions of migration together with the specific skill shortages, particularly in health, are as much an issue as the question of whether return migration as well as the rules of EU social coordination have specific consequences for social services. Consequently, there are increasing discussions in countries and at EU level about the cost of emigration, that partly result in policy measures, such as higher child benefits, higher wages for specific sectors, or tax benefits for certain groups, in order to counteract the development. On a theoretical level, emigration has received scant attention as a variable in theories of EU (dis-) integration and the functioning of the single market. For this workshop, we invite papers addressing the consequences of emigration for EU member states from a range of angles, with a focus preferably on socio-economic issues and the welfare state.

We invite abstracts (app. 300 words) until March, 15 and will notify participants until March 31. Costs for travel (2nd class) and accommodation will be reimbursed. We seek to produce publications from the conference, probably an edited book or a special issue in a journal.

Susanne K. Schmidt, University of Bremen; Martin Seeliger, University of Bremen; Christof Roos, University of Flensburg

Please address queries as well as proposals for papers to:

Susanne K. Schmidt, University of Bremen. skschmidt@uni-bremen.de