

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY ACTION ON WORKERS' MOBILITY

BACKGROUND

As acknowledged by many stakeholders, the European Year of Workers' Mobility (EYWM) raised awareness and highlighted the need for a mobility culture in Europe. The 31 projects, the opening conference and the closing event in Lille that across different disciplines and institutional settings, whether governmental, non-governmental or in the private sector, there is a high amount of convergence on what should be done in the area of workers' mobility. In particular, there has been a consensus that the most advantageous form of labour mobility - circular migration - should be facilitated.

The immediate outcome of the Year is awareness that concrete actions are needed for the follow-up. ECAS wants to keep this momentum for change and continue to work together with different stakeholders who made themselves known during the Year. The first stage of action is to establish a clear set of recommendations towards the EU Institutions on what should be done in the area of workers' mobility. With this purpose, ECAS presented a "Sketch of recommendations on workers mobility" in February 2007. This document summarised the main reflections and recommendations put forward during the activities run in the framework of ECAS project "Workers' Mobility in EU-25", as well as other events during the European Year of Workers' Mobility.

On 16 March, at the seminar "Seeing the wood for the trees after the Year of Workers' Mobility", ECAS assembled a multidisciplinary group of speakers with the aim of developing the initial recommendations and make them more authoritative. It is hoped that this set of recommendations can feed into the Commission's Action Plan on Mobility. ECAS believes this document can substantially contribute to EU policy-making in the area of workers' mobility.

The recommendations are based on the following considerations:

Despite favourable opinions on European free movement rights, there is no European mobility culture

A Eurobarometer survey published in early 2006 (no. 64.1) on geographical and labour market mobility showed the European Union has a strong mandate from public opinion to act in this area. When asked about what the EU represents for them, 53% of citizens say "freedom to travel and work in the EU" - by far the most popular answer, well ahead of the Euro (44%) and Peace (36%). On a more personal level, Europeans have positive views on the benefits of long-distance mobility (46% are in favour, with only 11% against), but they are much more doubtful about its impact on family life. They are also positive about the actual experience if they did decide to move. However, the absence of a European mobility culture is shown by the fact that twice as many people in the more mobile countries (i.e. Ireland and Slovakia) see working in another EU country as an opportunity than in the less mobile countries (i.e. Greece and Cyprus). Contrary to the popular assumption that for economic reasons the New Member States all share an interest in European free movement, opinions are as varied as they are in the old Member States¹.

EU citizens are also confident that the Union has lifted most administrative barriers for those who wish to find a job in another EU country. When asked about the difficulties they would expect to encounter if they wanted to move to another Member State, EU citizens first quote a lack of language skills (approximately 50%), or the difficulty in adapting to a different culture (20%). Relatively few (less than 15%) quote access to social protection or social services as potential barriers, and less than 10% of them believe that they would have difficulty in having their skills and diplomas recognised or that they would have trouble obtaining a working permit².”

Despite high levels of mobility on certain long-distance trajectories or in some border areas, the overall level is low

As a result of the Year, more is known about the contradictions and paradoxes of European public opinion, and also how these are echoing an equally complex economic situation. The overall low level of mobility - less than 2% of all EU citizens live or work in another Member State - has not changed as a result of enlargement. The Commission report on the functioning of the transitional arrangements for free movement of workers from New Member States showed that there had been no massive influx. The ECAS report, “Who’s still afraid of EU enlargement?”, written by Julianna Traser, concluded that the number of EU-10 nationals residing in EU-15 states is only around 0.2% of the total EU-15 population, and that transitional arrangements were not justified. Since economic forecasts of future mobility were unreliable, and could well over-estimate or under-estimate numbers, it would be preferable for the entry of Romania and Bulgaria for Member States to first see what happens in practice, and if necessary apply the safeguard clause rather than a variety of transitional measures. Unfortunately these recommendations were not followed, even though they would have made sense from an economic standpoint.

There is no European pattern of cross-border mobility, commuting or long-distance mobility. It is also becoming clear that classical economic theories of migration as a win-win situation are becoming more nuanced and that broader factors are being taken into account, such as the role of networks between sending and receiving countries³. As one report puts it: “European regions with skills shortages and low unemployment often exist side by side with regions with skill or general labour surpluses and high unemployment⁴.”

At the same time, in other border regions or on longer distance trajectories such as 198,000 Polish and other New Member State communities in Ireland or 447,000 in the UK or roughly equivalent numbers of Romanians and Bulgarians in Italy, Spain or Greece, intra EU free movement is at a much higher level. Such paradoxes led a World Bank report to conclude that:

“While the mobility of factors within and between countries should lead to a more efficient allocation of resources, the gains may not be evenly distributed across territories and the resulting income distribution may not be desirable. This provides for a potential role for regional policy⁵.”

Despite the legal framework and judgements by the European Court of Justice, people are not convinced that European free movement works properly

The gap between the case law of the European Court of Justice, the legislative framework and the way European citizens are treated in practice was one theme of ECAS events during the Year, particularly the Citizens’ Panel on 22 November 2006. On 24 May 2006, an event organized by ECAS on 22 November 2006. On 24 May 2006, an event organized by ECAS on European Citizenship brought together speakers from the European Court of Justice and the European Commission to examine the 30 judgements which have given real substance to Treaty articles on citizenship and equal treatment. The Court is developing free movement as a fundamental citizens’

right, and considers that it is up to Member States to justify any restrictions as proportionate. The Court strengthens the position of the European citizen. The follow-up to the Year also coincides with a period of implementation of new simplified and consolidated legislation on the co-ordination of social security for migrant workers, free movement and residence, and recognition of professional qualifications. There are still areas such as taxation, governed by bilateral agreements rather than European legal framework. The main emphasis during the Year, however, has been on enforcement of existing EU and national law, rather than adopting new measures. The gap between the fine principles and how people are treated in practice is illustrated by a number of examples:

»» **Transitional arrangements.** Despite European citizenship being enshrined in the EU Treaty (with freedom of movement as its principal privilege), transitional periods are still imposed on the New Member States. The Year of Workers' Mobility encouraged some progress towards phasing out the transitional arrangements for New Member States. In addition to the three old Member States - Ireland, Sweden and the UK - which originally opened up their labour market on 1 May 2004, a further five decided to do so. However, this trend was to an extent offset by transitional arrangements being imposed by 15 out of 25 Member States on workers from Bulgaria and Romania after 1 January 2007. A new report for ECAS is likely to show that those who wished to do so left the two countries to work in the EU before accession. Transitional arrangements are a temporary phenomenon and phasing them out or making them more flexible should be encouraged, particularly given the positive economic experience of the UK and Ireland after opening up their markets. There is evidence that transitional arrangements do widen the gap between the principle of free movement as a fundamental right of European citizens and how they are treated in practice. People feel treated or are treated as "second class" citizens, particularly when limits on access to the labour market spill over and create restrictions on other European free movement rights, such as residence⁶.

»» **The new directive 2004/38/EC is not well transposed.** The new directive 2004/38/EC on the right of citizens of the Union to move and reside freely within the Member States should have come into effect on 30 April 2006. The Commission had, however, to launch infringement procedures against several Member States for failure to implement this directive. Changes in the regime for residence - the abolition of residence cards and in visas for family members - also resulted in confusion among citizens, not knowing what their rights were.

»» **Insufficient information and too much red tape.** From the conferences, replies to a questionnaire and evidence from the Citizens' Panel, it has become clear that there is an issue with the exploitation of migrant workers' ignorance of their rights. They often leave without any prior information except for a contract from a temporary employment agency. They complain when it has become too late: the promised job is not available or they are made redundant and owed salary by the employer. Such exploitation raises issues of enforcement of national labour law. It also shows that although the information is available, and increasingly so in migrants' languages, it is not reaching them at the right time or in an easily understandable form.

As pointed out by a member of the ECAS Citizens' Panel, "small things are extremely difficult in a foreign country", especially when you do not speak the languages and you are not properly informed. "Red tape" in translating official documents and having them recognised, delays in recognition of professional qualifications, or persuading often reluctant officials of your European rights are all commonplace for those on the move.

Despite the fact that the overall gains from migration are positive, there is also consensus that there are social problems to be addressed

Economists are now making more nuanced assessments of labour mobility and they acknowledge that hopes and to some extent fears concerning labour migration are justified. The principal point, however, is that the economic impact of migration is generally positive: the reduction in wages of local employees is of a relatively low degree⁷, and the majority of migrant workers are not a burden for social security. Indeed, the result of migration is an increase in GDP⁸.

In the sending countries the fear often pinned to migration is that of “brain drain” and “youth drain”. Economics counterbalance this concern with the fact that migration is most often a short-term, circular phenomenon and with hope that the “success stories” of well-educated people who left may inspire others to invest in their education and acquire new language skills. They also suggest that the New Member States (especially Poland and Lithuania) should anticipate the problems of skills shortages and make their labour markets more flexible by lowering labour taxes and liberalising access to their labour markets for workers from Eastern non-EU countries.

Finally, some economists point out that, in fact, labour migration from New Member States is in fact surprisingly *low* and this is because their nationals have a positive opinion that conditions of life are going to get better in their country.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. MONITORING THE PATTERNS OF FREE MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE ACROSS THE EUROPEAN UNION AND ADAPTING COHESION INSTRUMENTS

A significant result from the Year of Workers’ Mobility and the economic studies is that policy makers can distinguish between different levels of regional mobility and also different types of mobility: more geographical (i.e. North to South) or occupational (East to West) and in terms of workers’ profiles (age, sex, social class), or distance (commuting across borders or temporary but more long-distance or more permanent movement). However, there is still a need for more up-to-date and accurate data to monitor changes, which may be rapid and unexpected, and to prevent scaremongering about “cheap labour migrating from the East”.

Policy makers should have at their disposal “mobility maps” so that they can adapt their policies and decide how to allocate resources where they are most needed. For example, they may decide to concentrate on areas where there are high levels of labour outflow and a brain drain phenomenon. On the one hand, attention should be paid to regions which receive labour flows and experience difficulties in integrating it in the local communities. A similar idea is linking regions which have a high unemployment with those which suffer from labour shortages. Regional policy and cross-border cooperation can help make the interests of exporting and importing regions complementary rather than competing since mobility is largely temporary. Conversely, regional policy in border areas where mobility appears artificially low can help open up visible and hidden barriers. “Cohesion between border regions should be strengthened by means of cross-border investments and may help activate local economies and give an incentive to workers to favour short-distance mobility (or commuting)⁹.” Having identified mobility patterns, national authorities may manage the adverse effects of migration and assist the mobile workers. In this way mobility may not be maximised, but it will surely be optimised.

2. EFFECTIVE INFORMATION SERVICE FOR MIGRANT WORKERS

»»Consolidate and organise the information available, aim at a single starting point that leads to personalised information

It is now widely acknowledged that information - for those planning or exercising their mobility - is abundant but at the same time very scattered, not always relevant and reliable. There is a need to bring it together and systematise. This could be possibly done by establishing a common official source. The idea from the ECAS Citizens' Panel on 22 November 2006 was the "creation of *Citizens-EU*, a single source of legal and practical information agreed between the Commission and Member States which would allow citizens and officials to access to a database on rules and their application". Such a reference point does partially exist on the Europa server and on the EURES website. It should be now further developed in order to create a genuine European information source on mobility - reliable, authoritative, as exhaustive as possible and regularly updated - explaining the European rules governing free movement rights and how they are applied in Member States. From this EU-level source more targeted information tools can be developed for particular audiences or regions. Personalisation of mobility communication can be achieved by providing information in all EU languages and putting in place interactive, web-based systems, accompanied by communications tools.

»»Personalise of the message of mobility

The task of "personalisation" was underlined at the ECAS conference on 16 March 2007. It was acknowledged that the Year was successful in its message to a large extent because its message was personalised. This lesson should be taken on. Good examples of personalisation are websites which deal with the mobility issue according to profession and which orientate people according to their individual situations. One can explain in the same way the success of the publication "*People on the move*" which presented 25 personal stories and images of mobility. Instead of repeating "go mobile because it is good for you", an authentic communication about opportunities, problems and dangers is needed. Information providers should find people on the move and not expect to be found by them.

Furthermore, in order to choose the best methods of communicating with mobile workers, one should consider the exercise of citizens' panel composed of migrant workers themselves. Such an "expert panel" of mobility practitioners could come up with even more tailored and thus more effective solutions to problems they encounter. The ECAS experiment with a citizen panel showed that this technique produces valuable recommendations.

»»Use new, active techniques of providing information in order to reach all groups of migrants

The message from advice practitioners is that traditional ways of providing the information are not sufficient especially while trying to reach low income groups and people on the move who do not have access to the Internet. Alternative methods are proposed such as "snow-balling" by which information is spread in an informal but very effective way. Another option is empowering local communities' members to provide information. It happens quite often in small communities that people of various professions: shop assistants, doctors, teachers, entrepreneurs or leaders of local associations have at their own initiative undertaken the task of helping the migrant workers to integrate into local community. These "first-contact" advisers are trusted and effective; they could be further empowered if their function was recognised and at least partially remunerated.

According to many experts, 80% of the preparatory work is to be done before the departure. Information being paramount at this stage, an active, "hands-on" preparation of departure (and also the return) is an even better solution. The positive experience of the workshops run by the French National Employment Agency shows

that such tools should be used more widely. In the framework of workshops run in France, “mobility candidates” can be confronted with real-life situations by means of games and simulations. They can also be directed to information sources and encouraged to use the Internet in order to complete formalities before their departure¹⁰.

»»Develop a “cascade system” covering the subsequent stages: information - advice - problem solving

The final recommendation on effective information provision is that this exercise needs to be a part of a holistic approach. The whole service is more effective if information is followed by advice and, if necessary, participation in problem solving. There is the basis of such a “cascade system” at EU level. Europe Direct is the first to receive inquiries through e-mail or the single free phone number, and then sends more difficult questions to the citizens’ signpost service (CCS) for advice. Final level - Solvit - is a mechanism functioning as a clearing system among national contact points to solve problems within a specific amount of time. More synergy between these services should be encouraged, and they should work together with others, particularly EURES and more specialised services for researchers or consumers, so that requests are targeted to the right service. These services need to be made better known to the general public.

3. TRAINING FOR MIGRANT WORKERS AND THOSE WHO ACCOMPANY THEM

»»Set up a European training programme for mobile workers

Before enlargement on 1 May 2004, the need for EU policies in this area was less self-evident, with the result that training related to free movement of people is scattered across different Commission directorate generals and often absorbed in larger programmes, administered for the most part at Member State level. Existing resources, both European and national, can be brought together to target different needs:

»»»»Language training for migrant workers and their families is the highest priority. Lack of language ability can be a barrier to knowing one’s rights and pave the way for abuse. It makes integration with the host community difficult and encourages the creation of parallel cultures and tensions. It also appears to be one reason why applicants accept employment well below and often unrelated to their professional qualifications. The Commission Action Plan on Languages should consider workers’ mobility as a distinct situation and call for a tailor-made approach.

»»»»Lifelong learning is the way to capture the potential of the migrant workforce. The role for an active policy on labour migration is to encourage good integration of migrant workers in the host economy by facilitating recognition of their qualifications and diplomas. This should be combined with vocational training in countries of destination in order to ensure that people can use their full potential. In this way migrant workers can contribute even better to the host country’s economy and then, if they decide to return home, they also bring home new skills and contribute to its economic development.

»»Improve law enforcement by training of those who deal with migrant workers

The question of the gap between the principle and practice of European law should be addressed in the following ways:

»»»» **Training of front-line officials** in direct contact with people on the move in town halls, job centres or specialised agencies was identified as a primary task. As a result of decentralisation many services related to migrant workers are carried out locally by the officials who do not follow the latest developments in EU law or best practices, or simply have difficulties in executing complicated national procedures. Front-line officials are those immediately responsible for the delivery or the denial of European rights or entitlements to social benefits and as such play a key role in determining the success to another EU country. Training by means of common seminars and workshops, shared databases and regular communication¹¹ could help significantly in the mainstreaming of good practices and the enforcement of citizens' rights. On the other hand, more financial and human resources should be allocated to EURES and similar undertakings so that they can take some of the responsibilities traditionally held by local authorities or consulates.

»»»» **Training of the legal profession, but also information and advice services practitioners,** both European and more regional, although self-evidently needed, has so far been limited to small-scale programmes or seminars. Now is the time to invest in training of people who shall accompany migrant workers and ensure that their rights are respected.

4. NEW STRUCTURES: MOBILITY SHOPS AND MOBILITY PARTNERSHIPS

»» Create regional one-stop "mobility shops"

The information and training needs of migrant workers are very important. Yet there are also other needs which should be addressed. Firstly, small things matter and so also do more complicated issues of accommodation, access to health and social assistance, personal banking and other commercial services. Secondly, there are the issues of recognition of diplomas and professional qualifications and finally the assistance in integration in the local community. This list of needs could be best addressed by one-stop "mobility shops" - conglomerates of mobility stakeholders working together in the region which want to optimise the potential of migrant workers it receives. Each of the stakeholders would have a role to play: employers and training organisations by ensuring the vocational training, trades-unions by safeguarding the workers' rights, voluntary sector associations by integrating the migrants into local community and thus compensating for the loss of social capital in the home country.

Other services should also be associated. As free movement of people acquires a more regional dimension, the role of decentralised services connected to mobility such as those for the recognition of diplomas and qualifications becomes more and more urgent. There is a need to establish common quality criteria for such services, which currently perform to highly variable standards, depending on resources and the extent of political support from the government or local authorities.

As stressed in "The Principle of Partnership in the new ESF programmes (2007-2013)¹²", produced by a group of managing authorities for EQUAL in some areas, grouping together diffuse services and disciplines is not just an issue of added value, it is the best way to operate. "Building bridges," "interfaces" or "one-stop shops" that bring together different and uncoordinated services and support structures can resolve difficulties that, in isolation, individual organisations would be unable to deal with."

The lessons of the Year of Workers' Mobility and economic studies published in 2006 came too late to influence negotiations on the future cohesion funds for 2007-2013, even though much points in the direction of more responsibility for regional authorities to achieve a better distribution of migration and matching of supply and

demand for labour across borders. Considering the strong regional dimension of the labour mobility and its potential for creating growth and jobs, the projects of regional mobility shops and their networks (see below) could find their place in the framework of Regions for Economic Change.

»»Create European partnerships and networks of “mobility shops”

During the Year many different stakeholders of mobility have made themselves known. It has been recognised that all these actors should work together in order to ensure that mobility is a well-informed choice, it happens in the optimal conditions and the return is facilitated. A call was made by a Polish foundation during the Year for a migrants’ network¹³, a call that has been realised as the European Migrants Network (EuroMI).

The need for networking is evident because free movement of people in the EU tends to be very unevenly spread and is also temporary. Likewise, very varied forms of mobility (daily commuting, expatriation, posting, circular migration) call for a flexible approach and new instruments to accompany them.

One-stop “mobility shops” seem very well suited for this task. Ideally, such a “mobility shops” could be linked into “mobility partnerships” working in regions linked by labour migration trajectories (i.e. cross-border couples of regions like Wallonia and Nord-Pas-de-Calais, regions of Poland or Lithuania - the cities of Dublin and London). Such partnerships would facilitate return and circular migration, which is now considered as the best mobility option.

Mobility partners will need to find new financing instruments and also mechanisms in order to continue their networking effort. The new website for the follow-up of the Year could be as useful as the one which accompanied it.

5. NEW LEGAL INSTRUMENTS

»»Create a European citizens card or European Personal Number

In order to make it easier to move around Europe and reduce red tape and the need to produce and translate personal documents, a European citizen’s card or a European Personal Number should be considered. While the Directive 2004/38/EC proposed to banish the residence card, it may in fact simply replace it with the much more awkward to handle “residence attestation”. The European Health Card is a step in the right direction, replacing the E111 forms, but there are more in this “E” series, as well as birth, marriage and other personal documents. The Citizens’ Panel of 22 November advocated “the possibility of a personalised number to make it easier for citizens to switch social security and tax systems”. Such a card or number could facilitate cooperation between authorities responsible for the coordination of social security arrangements, whose work is complicated by more complex patterns of temporary migration, with people moving more quickly in and out of different national systems. A card or a number could also facilitate access to health care, vocational and language training.

»»Improve redress mechanisms

Improving the information service for migrant workers, informing them about their free movement rights should be done in parallel with strengthening the mechanisms for redress. In particular, the procedure should be faster, acknowledging that a citizen cannot wait years to have his diploma recognised, his residence rights or social entitlements confirmed.

Individuals should be able, provided they have exhausted remedies with the European Commission or a national tribunal, either to bring the case directly before the European Court of First Instance, or request the European Ombudsman to do so on their behalf. This seems a necessity in order to insure that information about citizens' rights can be followed by their application and, if necessary, quick and effective redress. In a similar vein, formal complaints to the Commission and other authorities, petitions and requests to members of the European Parliament and the European Ombudsman should be revised.

The law enforcement and redress mechanisms should be improved on the transactional level. Migration, especially illegal migration, can be vulnerable to cross-border abusive practice by bogus commercial work agencies or even gang masters. An EU alert system is needed to outlaw misleading and illegal practices by temporary employment agencies hiding behind national borders¹⁴.

Finally, the law enforcement and redress should be also improved on the Member States level. It has been seen that the pressure to maintain transitional arrangements has come not so much as a response to sudden influxes of job seekers from New Member States, as in response to particular instances of "social dumping", breaches of labour law, collective agreements or the minimum wage, and other forms of exploitation of migrant workers themselves. These problems could be better dealt by more effective redress mechanisms.

6. THE IMPACT OF MIGRATION AND CIRCULAR MIGRATION

It is now acknowledged that circular migration is the most desirable pattern. As the experience of Central European countries in 80s and 90s has already demonstrated, the wave of return migration became the driving force of their economies. If an adequate policy is developed, this experience could be repeated. In favourable conditions migrants can invest their savings from abroad as well as new skills in their own enterprises and thus also create new jobs. The circular migration requires, however, the policy instruments that accompany it and overall confidence of migrant workers that it is worth returning to their home country because they will be able to benefit at home from their experience abroad.

Confidence in improving conditions of life in the home country is beyond the scope of policy making. Nevertheless, many accompanying instruments could be deployed such as assistance in the recognition of qualifications, lifelong learning possibilities, and information and advice services. Finally, networks of mobility stakeholders should not only facilitate the preparation of departure and integration in the host country but also the return and reintegration in the home country. This should be a shared responsibility of mobility partners and it is a real pre-condition for a "mobility culture" and "optimising, not maximising, mobility".

7. TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Transitional arrangements for A8 were mentioned as a significant barrier in their own right throughout the Year. There has been a consensus that hindering fundamental freedom of free movement is not a good solution (just like hampering other three "economic" freedoms). The experience of countries which have opened up their labour markets has revealed not only a favourable impact of free movement from New Member States on growth rates and tax revenue, but also a very low demand for social assistance and evidence that the migrant workforce is complementary rather than competing with the local labour force. Despite this positive evidence, 15 out of 25 EU Member States imposed transitional periods on Romanian and Bulgarian workers at the end of 2006. Even some New Member States (Hungary and Malta) have done so. Although this action is fully authorised in the light of EU Accession Treaties, it is contradictory to the spirit of European citizenship. Unfortunately, these decisions are taken on the governmental level. Other actors of mobility should, nevertheless, continue to exert pressure on governments so that they consider lifting the restrictions earlier.

National transitional arrangements should be phased out in favour of monitoring the labour flows, better labour law enforcement and social inclusion programmes. Instead of restricting access to the labour market and taking the risk of irregular migration, a liberal approach should be taken in order to increase participation in the white economy and subsequently enable the host economies to “earn the rent”¹⁵. The social problems of migration should be, in their turn, addressed by the instruments of social cohesion, the respect of equal treatment principles and better law enforcement mentioned above. In this respect the EYWM can be very much complemented by the European Year of Equal Opportunities.

CONCLUSIONS

The European Year of Workers’ Mobility was essentially an awareness raising event, and it showed that whilst free movement of people has popular support, it is still under-developed. There is no doubt that Union citizens are adjusting slowly to more of a mobility culture, as economic studies in 2006 showed, but there are wide discrepancies between countries and cross-border regions. There is therefore scope for some regions where migration is at a low level for demand to catch up. The overall positive effects of free movement of people has been shown by the Year in both opinion surveys and economic analyses but the evidence has also demonstrated the need for a broader set of policy instruments, to meet a wider range of problems. So far the EU has concentrated less on legal and administrative barriers to mobility and should continue to do so, because there are still gaps and problems of poor enforcement and these are the areas most within its competence. However, more attention needs to be devoted through cohesion policy to the regional dimension, social problems, language training, housing and working conditions. The need for one-stop shops and creating European and local multi-disciplinary networks has become self-evident particularly in regions sending or receiving significant numbers of migrants. As mentioned in the introduction, the Year has helped bring together dispersed governmental, non-governmental and commercial actors, a tacit recognition of the added value of partnership.

A great amount of research was carried out throughout the Year - opinion polls and surveys seem abundant. Yet, there seems to be a discrepancy between the opinion surveys and decision making. Citizens should not just be observed, they should be given a more active role. Having experimented with citizens’ participation methods, ECAS does advocate the involvement of citizens “on the move” with direct experience of EU regulations in policy recommendations. Many fresh ideas and simple but clever solutions will come from such an exercise.

In the same vein, to encourage this development from the top down as well as from the bottom up, ECAS’ Chairman Mario Monti made the suggestion on 21 February 2006 at the launch conference of the year of workers’ mobility to create a new version of the Veil group, whose report and 85 recommendations were the origin of the current phase of legislative activity which is now coming to an end:

“The group created an overview taking evidence and ideas from different departments across the European Commission. At ECAS we constantly advocate the need for such a holistic approach. This is because people on the move naturally have a bundle of questions ranging over different areas of community law and policy. Free movement of workers is affected by legislation related not only to the workplace and social security but also to recognition of academic and professional qualifications, family law issues and the Union’s programmes for training and research. The mechanism provided by the Veil group was useful even though now there has been more progress so that there would probably not be a need for 85 recommendations.”

Indeed, the requirement now is to analyse how legislation and the case law of the Court can be better enforced to close the perceived gap between the theory and practice of being a European citizen. As a result of the Year, the need for an exercise creating an overview of different policy areas is also even more apparent, as the issue of free movement of people becomes linked to a broader range of programmes.

1. During the ECAS seminar in Prague, research conducted by RILSA (Research Institute for Labour and Social Affairs in the Czech Republic) was quoted, which shows that “total migration of Czech citizens to the states of “Old Europe”, for reasons of work, is not imminent, and its extent and nature does not threaten Western European labour markets at all.”
2. Eurobarometer 64.1 on geographical and labour market mobility
3. “Economic emigration of Poles to Ireland”, prepared as the background document for the ECAS seminar in Warsaw.
4. Chapter 5 of the European Commission’s 2006 report on employment in Europe
5. World Bank EU8: Quarterly Economic Report, September 2006
6. This is a widely reported view, also mentioned during the Citizens Panel and during all the seminars organized by ECAS, that the transitional arrangements undermine the concept of European citizenship.
7. Increase of number of workers by 10 % causes a fall of wages of local workers by 1-3% (according to Maciej Bukowski, Warsaw School of Economics).
8. Increase of number of workers by 10 % causes an increase of GDP by 0.1 -0.5% (according to Maciej Bukowski, Warsaw School of Economics). According to a study of Ernst&Young, in 2006 Polish people working in Great Britain generated 0.2% of GDP and contributed £300 mln to the British budget in income tax.
9. Julianna Traser, *Who’s afraid of EU enlargement?* recommendations - p. 45
10. The very first experiences of commercial services oriented towards migrant workers - such as bank accounts which can be opened, residence card or and health insurance dossiers pre-registration which can be filled before departure, show that such solutions
11. SOLVIT internal training system can be considered a good source of inspiration.
12. Equal Managing Authorities, *The Principle of Partnership in the new ESF programmes (2007-2013)*, June 2006
13. The same idea came from the seminar held in Dublin where the positive experience of collaboration between Irish Citizens Advice Bureaux and their Polish counterparts was
14. An important piece of legislative work is to come from the Commission - the Directive on temporary work agencies.
15. Julianna Traser, *Who’s afraid of EU enlargement?* p. 45 recommendations