
Project: Testing EU citizenship as “labour citizenship”: from cases of labour rights violations to a strengthened labour-rights regime

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Project coordinator: Multicultural Center Prague, Czech

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Description of the Project: "Testing EU citizenship as “labour citizenship”: from cases of labour rights violations to a strengthened labour-rights regime"

All workers from the EU are supposed to have same rights across the whole EU, but in praxis this often does not materialize. Equal terms and conditions concerning labour law are especially not fulfilled in low-qualified and low-paid jobs, often in form of seasonal work, internships, domestic work or facilitated by private work agencies. Employee status often lacks standards of fully-fledged employment contracts.

The project brings together 12 partner organizations who collect migrant workers' testimonies of serious labour rights violations in the EU. The testimonies become basis for discussions on role of EU and national labour related institutions (labour inspection, labour offices, etc.) and laws (ex. public procurement directives, seasonal workers directive). The project is based on normative position that decent wage and working conditions are necessary in order to promote democratic participation of EU citizens.

The objective of the project is to grasp EU citizens' mobility both from perspective of economically weak regions as a source of work migration and places of destination where migration influences labour and broader social milieu. We emphasize concrete experience of migrant workers and seek to translate it to broader discussion on labour related future of Europe.

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Applicable to the Strand 2 – Measure 2.1 "Town-Twinning"

Participation: The project involved 758 citizens, notably 225 participants from the cities of Prague, Brno (**Czech Republic**), 198 participants from the cities of Padova, Rimini (**Italy**), 56 participants from the city of Bucharest (**Romania**), 51 participants from the city of Vilnius (**Lithuania**), 100 participants from the cities of Berlin, Leipzig (**Germany**), 84 participants from the city of Brussels (**Belgium**), 22 from the city of Warsaw (**Poland**), 22 from the cities of Dublin, Cork (**Ireland**).

Location/ Dates: The events took place in Prague, Brno (Czech Republic), Padova, Rimini (Italy), Bucharest (Romania), Vilnius (Lithuania) Berlin, Leipzig (Germany), Brussels (Belgium), Warsaw (Poland), Dublin, Cork (Ireland) from 01/01/2015 to 31/08/2016.

Short description: The project brought together 12 partner organizations who collected EU and non-EU migrant workers' testimonies about serious labour rights violations in the EU. In this project, we used the testimonies as the basis for discussing the role of EU and national labour related institutions (labour inspection, labour offices, etc.) and laws (ex. Posting directive, public procurement directives) and for creating relevant policy recommendations. The project adopted the position that decent wage and working conditions are necessary for enabling EU citizens' full democratic participation thereby granting labour citizenship.

The project's objective was to study EU citizens' mobility both from the perspective of economically weak regions (as a source of work migration) and from the perspective of the places of destination where migration influences labour dynamics and the broader social dynamics.

The day of 20/03/2016 was dedicated to the Preparatory Event - First Meeting, Preparations

The days from 16/3/2015 to 30/9/2015 were dedicated to the Hearings I – **Events 1,2,3.**

The days from 1/5/2015 to 31/8/2016 were dedicated to Hearings II – **Events 4,5,6,7,8.**

The days from 4/4/2016 to 5/4/2016 were dedicated to the Final Conference – **Event 9.**

The days from 6/4/2016 to 31/8/2016 were dedicated to the Supplementary sub-events – **Event 10.**

Applicable to the Strand 2 – Measure 2.2 "Networks of Towns"
Measure 2.3 "Civil Society Projects"
Strand 1 – "European Remembrance"

10 events + Supplementary sub-events have been carried out within this project:

Preparatory Activity

Participation: The event involved 60 citizens, including 19 participants from the city Prague (Czech Republic) which was the project partners' meeting. Additional preparation for the hearings was

conducted with 26 participants in the city of Padua (Italy) and 15 participants in the city of Vilnius (Lithuania).

Location / Dates: The events took place in the United Nations Information Centre (Prague, Czech Republic) from 20/03/2015 to 20/03/2015, at the University of Padova (Padova, Italy) from 15/4/2015 to 5/7 2015 and in the Diversity Development Group (Vilnius, Lithuania) from 26/4/2015 to 26/4/2015.

Short description: The project began with a main preparatory meeting in Prague to which both project partners and various experts were invited. During the meeting, the partners agreed to form an international project advisory group to provide expert advice, they discussed the main types of “extreme” labour rights violations occurring across Europe, and they focused the project’s research questions in relation to specific EU policies (directives, see Event1). This meeting was an important step in developing the project methodology. Further preparatory meetings were held in Padua and in Vilnius (cities which only held one hearing) and their aim was to prepare for hearings é2. The activities consisted of interviews with EU migrant workers in the tourism and logistic sectors (Italy) and interviews on the access to labour and social rights throughout the process of immigration-emigration that were not sector-specific (Lithuania).

Events 1,2,3 – Hearings I

Participation: The event involved 83 citizens, including 25 participants from the city of Prague (Czech Republic) - Event 1, 25 participants from the city of Bucharest (Romania) - Event 2, and 33 participants from the city of Berlin (Germany) - Event 3.

Event 1 - 3 countries (Czech Republic, Romania, Spain)

Event 2 - 1 country (Romania)

Event 3 – 2 countries (Germany, Poland)

Location / Dates: The event took place in Multicultural Center Prague and Diakonie CCE offices (Prague, Czech Republic), from 16/3/2015 to 30/9/2015, in Claca Social Center and Conect Association (Bucharest, Romania) from 16/3/2015 to 30/9/2015 and in Polnischer Sozialrat (Berlin/Leipzig, Germany) from 16/3/2015 to 30/9/2015.

Short description: Hearings I were organized in Prague, Berlin, and Bucharest. These hearings aimed at collecting and understanding cases of labour rights violations as they affected EU migrant workers themselves, and with a focus on these workers’ perspectives. Groups of workers from several sectors (electronics, construction, meat processing, domestic work) participated in these hearings and shared their experiences of exploitation in the workplace, and the problems they face as mobile EU workers in the EU. These hearings were necessary in obtaining a broad idea of the types of serious labour rights violations present across sectors (wage non-payment, lack of or illegal contracts, etc), and which mechanisms enable them (subcontracting, bogus self-employment, weak labour enforcement, etc) in each EU country. In addition, the hearings focused on the ways in which the workers’ experiences affect their perception of their EU citizenship, as well as their access to help and support services as EU labour migrants. In Prague, Czech, Romanian and Spanish citizens participated in the event, In Berlin, the Polish workers were interviewed and in Bucharest, Romanian workers were interviewed.

Events 4,5,6,7,8– Hearings II

Participation: The event involved 210 citizens, including 47 participants from the city of Brno (**Czech Republic**) – Event 4, 40 from the city of Padua (**Italy**) – Event 5, 31 participants from the city of Bucharest (**Romania**) – Event 6, 34 participants from the city of Berlin (**Germany**) and 22 participants from the city of Cork (**Ireland**) – Event 7, 36 participants from the city of Vilnius (**Lithuania**) – Event 8.

Event 4 - 7 countries (Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland)

Event 5 - 7 countries (Austria, the Czech Republic, Finland, Greece, Italy, Romania, United Kingdom)

Event 6 - 4 countries (Austria, Germany, Italy, Romania)

Event 7 - 4 countries (Czech Republic, Germany, Poland, Romania)

Event 8 - 4 countries (Finland, Lithuania, Ireland, United Kingdom)

After identifying some of the key gaps between workers’ experiences of exploitation and their rights under local and EU law, especially with regards to mobility, the second hearings pushed for a deeper understanding of such abuses as systemic, and envisioned possible solutions and policy recommendations on migration and labour.

As part of Hearing II, each partner also held a roundtable discussion with labour experts and policy

makers on the specific issues, policies, and recommendations. Special focus was placed on the inter-relation of the main levels of regulation (sectorial, national, EU), which included information about recently-approved and older EU directives in the fields of labour and social rights (especially on temporary agency employment, posting of workers, working time regulation, seasonal work, social considerations in public bids). In addition, the Irish partner held a focus group and interviews with Lithuanian and Polish workers to provide the German and Lithuanian partners with an additional comparative angle of the labour migration process from the point of view of a receiving country. As a result of the two types of Hearings, the partners produced individual Country Reports in which they introduced the key labour rights violations that they examined in specific sectors, the mechanisms of exploitation, and policy recommendations on the local and EU level.

Event 9 – Final Conference

Participation: The event involved 84 citizens from 18 countries, and from different partner organizations and public sphere. The Event was held in the city of Brussels (Belgium).

Location / Dates: The event took place in the EESC in Brussels, Belgium from 4/4/2016 to 5/4/2016.

Short description: SOLIDAR (Belgium) organized the project's final conference in cooperation with MKC. The partners' six country reports on labour rights violations were launched there, and a vision for safeguarding social standards in Europe was presented. The event aimed to promote fair labour mobility in the EU and to make a case for strengthening "labour citizenship". The event consisted of two panels, one on mobility and labour citizenship in which the partners proposed several recommendations to overcome potential regulatory failures at the national and EU level, mainly in systems of subcontracting, temporary agency work, intermediaries, etc. The second panel tackled social dumping evasion and included perspectives for overcoming an Eastern versus Western European framework. A third roundtable included the presentation of a position paper on safeguarding social standards in Europe.

The conference successfully intervened in an ongoing policy debate on EU labour mobility. A Policy Brief was prepared which was discussed with the invited policy makers, as well as at bilateral meetings (organised by the each of the partners) to push forward the policy recommendations from the Hearings. The conference was considered a success, and an insightful advocacy tool in relation to the upcoming proposals for a Pillar of Social Rights and the Labour Mobility Package.

Number of countries involved: 18 countries (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, Serbia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom)

Event 10 – Supplementary sub-events

Participation: The event involved 221 citizens, including 144 participants from the city of Prague (Czech Republic), 22 participants from the city of Warsaw (Poland), 33 participants from the city of Berlin (Germany), 33 participants from the city of Padua (Italy).

Location / Dates: The events took place: in Trade Union Building (Prague, Czech Republic) from 23/5/2016 to 23/5/2016, in Ministry of Labour Building (Prague, Czech Republic) from 20/6/2016 to 20/6/2016, at the Charles University (Prague, Czech Republic) from 30/6/2016 to 1/7/2016, in Tranzitdisplay Gallery (Prague, Czech Republic) from 16/7/2016 to 16/7/2016, in Potrvá Café (Prague, Czech Republic) from 18/7/2016 to 18/7/2016, in Galician Foundation for Regional Development (Warsaw, Poland) from 1/7/2016 to 1/7/2016, in Polish Social Council (Berlin, Germany) from 2/7/2016 to 3/7/2016, at the University of Padua (Padua, Italy) from 21/6/2016 to 21/6/2016 and in Casa Madiba (Rimini, Italy) from 15/7/2016 to 15/7/2016.

Short description: With the approval of the project's extension, several supplementary sub-events were organized in Prague, Padua, Berlin, and Warsaw. The aim of these events was to share the results of the Final Conference and present the Country Reports and the recommended policies locally.

In Prague, MKC presented a specific policy paper co-authored with the Association for Integration and Migration to the Czech-Moravian Confederation of Trade Unions (CMKOS). MKC presented a second policy paper at the premises of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs which included a set of recommendations on how to tackle the systemic violations of EU citizens' employment rights in the

Czech Republic, based on the Country Report and the findings from the Hearings, as well as on the results of the Final Conference.

In addition, MKC also participated in a workshop on Mobility, EU Citizenship and Labour Rights during the international conference on International Migration, Integration and Social Cohesion held in Prague, and presented the project as well as the concepts of Labour Citizenship. MKC also organized a two-part workshop on nationalism and migration in CEE, and on migrant labour exploitation. During these workshops, MKC screened the project's videos and incited a debate on the causes of rising nationalism and how it affects EU labour mobility including the position of mobile workers themselves.

In Padua, the partner (University of Padova) met with representatives of two local trade unions. Both unions are active in defending the labour rights of workers employed in the hospitality industry (one of two sectors that the partner focused on). The meeting focused on campaigning against the exploitation of hospitality industry workers, the different legal statuses and material conditions of migrants who live in Italy, such as EU mobile workers, Non-EU migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. University of Padova also screened the project's videos during its events.

In Berlin, the partner (Polish Social Council) held a roundtable to present the results and recommendations of the final conference, with a special emphasis on social dumping by subcontracting. While the Council's previous events focused on intervening directly into the political sphere, this roundtable intended to find a joint approach among social counselling organisations who are working on the problems facing people of a Polish migration background in Germany.

In Warsaw, the partner (Galician Foundation) held an open debate on the experiences of Polish workers in the EU labour market, which joined perspectives from Germany, UK and Ireland. The event tackled the question whether law and institutions sufficiently protect the rights of Polish workers in the EU. A large part of the discussion was devoted to the recent proposal to reform the Posted Workers Directive.