



# EUROPEAN POLICY BRIEF



## **EUMAGINE project : the case of UKRAINE**

Franck Duvell (COMPAS)  
Yuriy Bilan (CSR)  
Iryna Lapshyna (LAC)  
Yulia Borshchevska (CSR)

January 2013

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Research objectives**

This project was aimed at investigating the impact of perceptions of human rights and democracy on migration aspirations and decisions particularly in Ukraine; and at studying how Europe is perceived from outside the EU and compared with other migration destinations.

Additionally, research aims were to explore how perceptions on human rights and democracy affect migration aspirations and decisions and how they interact with other determinants of migration aspirations.

### **Scientific approach and methodology**

Project methodology was a combination of three components: ethnographic fieldwork, a large-scale survey and qualitative interviews. Methodological approach allowed in-depth study of local migration processes and people's subjective perceptions as well as systematic comparisons and quantitative generalizations.

The research in Ukraine was conducted by Centre of Sociological Research (Ternopil) in four research areas: Zbaraz, (research area with high emigration/Western Ukraine), Novovodolazka (research area specifically analysed for the human rights situation/Eastern Ukraine/), Znamyanska (/area with low emigration/Central Ukraine) and Solomyansky rayon/Kyiv (research area with immigration history/capital).

In each research area 500 survey questionnaires (total 2,000) and 20 in-depth interviews (total 80) were conducted with people aged 18-39. For the quantitative survey, rigid sampling was applied, for the qualitative interviews informants were selected on grounds of age, gender and employment status.

### **New knowledge generated by the project**

From the scientific perspective, the EUMAGINE project provided ample empirical evidence which enables verification or falsification of

public and policy perceptions as well as theories related to migration. The broad scope of this project produced significant new and comprehensive findings which complement previous migration research in Ukraine. Thus this project

- fills knowledge gaps about migration from Ukraine, flows to different destination countries and linkages between migration aspirations and decisions;
- provides valuable insights into the status of human rights situation and democracy in Ukraine as perceived by its citizens and complements expert opinions and accounts of human rights organizations;
- challenges some general assumptions, notably through unexpected findings in the area of low emigration rate and the area selected to specifically study human rights issues.

### Key messages for policy makers, scientists and civil society organizations

Many recommendations for policy makers are not directly connected to the migration realm but rather deal with issues identified as push factors of migration. Factors which have implications on the migration situation in Ukraine are of socio-economic and political character: economic hardship and in particular underdeveloped social infrastructure, poor political performance and high corruption rate.

## KEY OBSERVATIONS

### Migrant's socio-demographic profile

Project results provided migrant's characteristics, some of which contrast general and widespread assumptions.

- Generally, migration aspirations are high in Ukraine. Almost half of the respondents, 49.3 are ready to go to Europe if somebody would give them the necessary papers but still 50.7 percent would nevertheless stay.
- Other than expected, the number of would-be emigrants in the low emigration area (Znamyanska, Central Ukraine) is still significant (39.1 percent). Economic difficulties, lack of opportunities and problems to sufficiently provide for child bearing were given as major impetus for going abroad.
- Unlike widely perceived, peoples' dependence in high emigration area on remittances is low, no more than 7 percent.
- Internal migration flows in Ukraine seem largely insignificant; except in the capital where one third of the respondents were from another region of the country or from abroad. Thus, internal mobility seems no alternative to international migration.
- The number of migrants willing to return to Ukraine seems generally small, with an exception of Western Ukraine where returnees make up 10 percent on average.
- Migration aspirations are comparably higher amongst pupils/students, unemployed, retail and unskilled manual workers and lower amongst housewives, manual skilled and office workers, teachers and the 'other' category.
- No or little gender difference has been observed and women are almost as likely to wanting to migrate as men.

### Perceptions of human rights and democracy in Europe and Ukraine

The findings demonstrate that the human rights and democracy situation of Ukraine are generally perceived very critically.

- The majority of Ukrainians (54 percent) considers chances to

achieve by working hard much lower than in Europe. This creates frustration and is a major migration driver.

- Whilst education and healthcare are well below the expectations of people in Ukraine education and medical services are perceived good in Europe. In combination this constitutes another powerful driver of migration.
- The suggestion that politicians in Ukraine do what is best for the people is rejected by a vast majority of the respondents (over 70 percent) whilst performance of European politicians is rated high. This further amplifies migration aspirations.
- Corruption is seen by over 70 percent as a tremendous problem to the country's development and prosperity. This is the single-largest complaint fuelling migration aspirations.
- Also gender equality and freedom of speech are believed to be better protected in the EU than in Ukraine.
- Nevertheless, people in Ukraine are not well informed about conditions and life in Europe and hold positive but not necessarily well-founded perceptions.

### Migration perceptions and discourse

Investigating migration related imaginations, perceptions, aspirations, values and discourses generates the following results:

- Ukrainians are very pessimistic about the social, political and economic future of their country. Thus the migration potential could remain high.
- Over 65 percent of Ukrainians believe that most people from Ukraine who go to live or work in Europe gain valuable skills, thus going abroad is considered an important element of expanding one's human capital.
- The level of those who encouraged others to go to Europe appeared to be low, around 10 percent (over 15 percent in Western Ukraine illustrating some culture of migration).
- Women are more positive about the idea that "going to live or work in Europe can be a good experience for women" than men reflecting traditional ideas of gender roles.
- A significant proportion of the respondents (46 percent) believe that migration harms family life. But still people who acknowledge the potentially harmful consequences of migration would nevertheless go abroad.

### Geographical imaginations of migration in Ukraine

- First Germany followed by Italy and UK appear to be the most popular destination countries in Europe for Ukrainians. As expected, Italy is the most attractive destination for Western Ukrainians and Russia for Eastern Ukrainians.

### Life satisfaction in Ukraine

The project findings point to some significant influence of non monetary factors on overall life satisfaction in Ukraine.

- Whilst 46 percent of the people in Ukraine are dissatisfied with their financial situation and with the political conditions most are nevertheless satisfied with their social life. As a result only 25 percent are overall dissatisfied with their lives. Thus good social lives partly compensate for economic dissatisfaction which potentially weakens migration aspirations.

## POLICY IMPLICATIONS

### High migration pressure calls for diverse measures to address the root causes

Almost half of the Ukrainian respondents, men and women alike, aspire to leave the Ukraine, for diverse frustrations with the economic, social and political conditions in the country. This calls for short- and long-term measures to address consequences and root causes.

---

### More legal labour migration channels should be introduced and visa requirements liberalised

Large numbers of Ukrainians migrate. Due to lack of legal migration channels and difficulties in accessing visa they often do so irregularly. Instead, legal (permanent and temporary) labour migration channels should be introduced and access to visa eased.

---

### Rights of Ukrainian labour migrants in the EU should be better protected

National governments of the EU member states should be encouraged to sign and ratify bilateral agreements with Ukraine in order to improve protection of fundamental rights of Ukrainian labour migrants in the EU.

Also Ukraine, with support from the EU, should improve the status of labour emigrants in the Ukrainian legal system, notably revise the law on employment and the employment code.

---

### Reintegration of returning migrants in Ukraine should be assisted

Advice and assistance should be provided to the Ukrainian state concerning reintegration of returnees, notably in developing the National Reintegration Programs.

This process has currently been slowed down due to economic difficulties.

---

### Economic conditions must be improved

Major causes for emigration are lack of opportunities, low salaries and related concerns for upbringing families. Thus, measures should be taken to improve economic conditions, investment climate and growth.

---

### Ukraine's political performance should be continuously monitored

Another major frustration causing migration is perceived failure of the political system and democratic deficits. Therefore, requests for political progress in Ukraine must be an essential constituent of the EU-Ukraine association agreement. The EU should also not loosen its monitoring of the Ukrainian situation.

---

### Social reform processes in Ukraine should be endorsed

Poor performance of the education and health systems undermines the well-being of Ukrainian citizens and thus represents strong incentives to migrate. The Ukrainian government should therefore be encouraged to progress in the social reform agenda.

---

### Combating corruption fighting in Ukraine should continually be a great priority of the EU-Ukraine agenda

Combating corruption must be strengthened as this is a major concern and cause of frustration of Ukrainians. Ongoing reform of legislation aimed at addressing corruption, assessment of the effectiveness of anticorruption practices and implementation of the bill "On Prevention and Counteraction to Corruption" are essential.

---



### Support for Ukrainian-based NGOs should be strengthened

In the EU's support to Ukraine's civil society special attention should be given to NGOs (in particular within Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum) which seek to provide migratory advice, but also to those aiming at increasing political participation, address corruption and improve social infrastructure in Ukraine. Future EU programs supporting the civil society sector in Ukraine should acknowledge the results of this project and existing programs should be accordingly adjusted.

### Encourage more balanced analysis, reporting and discussions of migration issues

Ukrainian politics, academics and media should be encouraged to take a more balanced approach to migration and highlight not only the negative facets but acknowledge (1) the need and the will of the people to migrate and (2) the partly positive impact (skills acquisition, poverty reduction, development). The Ukrainian media should also be encouraged to take a more balanced approach on EU issues and thus provide a more realistic view on life, social and working conditions in the EU including the negative facets. The media should generally increase coverage of migration related topics.

### Initiate further migration information campaigns

EU, Ukraine and other stakeholders should jointly conduct balanced migration information campaigns informing people about labour migration opportunities, risks and benefits and how to manage these.

## RESEARCH PARAMETERS

### EUMAGINE seeks to understand why people want to migrate to Europe or not

*Imagining Europe from the Outside (EUMAGINE)* set out to understand why people in Europe's neighbouring regions may or may not want to migrate to Europe. The project paid particular attention to people's perceptions of human rights and democracy—both in Europe and in their own country.

Data collection was carried out in Senegal, Morocco, Turkey and Ukraine. Within each country, the project team selected four research areas to represent diverse socio-economic and migration contexts.

### A detailed survey was conducted with 8000 people

Quantitative data collection consisted of a survey that was carried out with 500 respondents in each Research Area, yielding a project-wide total of 8000. Plans for random sampling were elaborated for each research area, depending on local conditions.

A detailed questionnaire was developed over a ten-month period, including extensive pilot testing in each research area. Questions covered household migration histories, individual migration aspirations, perceptions of human rights and democracy, and a range of other issues.

### Qualitative interviews provided deeper insights

Qualitative data collection entailed in-depth interviews and observation. In each research area the team conducted twenty interviews, which were recorded whenever feasible. The qualitative material provided an opportunity to contextualize the quantitative results and understand more of the social processes behind statistical patterns.

The qualitative interviews also allowed for addressing the effects of the financial crisis in Europe, which unfolded while data collection was under way.

The interview transcripts and observation reports were analysed with a specialised software (NVivo) for analysis of qualitative data.

---

## PROJECT IDENTITY

<b>Coordinator</b>	Prof. Christiane Timmerman (University of Antwerp, BE)
<b>Consortium</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University of Antwerp, BE</li> <li>• University of Oxford, UK</li> <li>• Peace Research Institute Oslo, NO</li> <li>• Koç University, TR</li> <li>• Université Mohamed V – Agdal, MA</li> <li>• Centre of Sociological Research, UA</li> <li>• Université Cheikh Anta Diop, SN</li> </ul>
<b>Duration</b>	February 2010–January 2013
<b>Funding scheme</b>	Collaborative Project. Small or medium-scale focused research project
<b>Budget</b>	€ 2,415.000 (of which EU contribution: € 1,852,000)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.eumagine.org">www.eumagine.org</a>
<b>Further reading on the topic of this policy brief</b>	Düvell, F., Bilan, Y., Borshchevska, Y., Lapshyna, I., Vollmer, B. Vdovtsova, S. (2012), <i>Perceptions, imaginations, life-satisfaction and sociodemography: The case of Ukraine</i> , Antwerp: Eumagine, <a href="http://www.eumagine.org/outputs/Project%20Paper%2011%20-%20Ukraine%20FINAL.pdf">http://www.eumagine.org/outputs/Project%20Paper%2011%20-%20Ukraine%20FINAL.pdf</a> .
<b>Contact person for the topic of this policy brief</b>	Franck Düvell, COMPAS, <a href="mailto:franck.duvell@compas.ox.ac.uk">franck.duvell@compas.ox.ac.uk</a> Yuriy Bilan, CSR, <a href="mailto:yuriy_bilan@yahoo.co.uk">yuriy_bilan@yahoo.co.uk</a>