

NORFACE Transnational Programme on Migration in Europe

The NORFACE Research Programme on Migration is a programme of 12 transnational research projects about the theme: *Migration in Europe: Social, Economic, Cultural and Policy Dynamics*. Having started in 2009, the projects finished in 2014. The programme received funding through the European Commission 7th Framework Programme. This overview presents a description of the programme, its main findings and implications, and suggestions for further research.

NORFACE: understanding migration in Europe

Migration is currently at the top of the European agenda due to the large-scale flows of asylum-seekers. At the same time, migration has been part of Europe's history, evidenced by Europe's substantial share of immigrant (first and second generation) populations. To engage fruitfully with these diverse realities, Europe is in dire need for high-quality research on migration to develop coherent migration policies. This is what the NORFACE Migration programme provided: **large-scale, comparative, multi-disciplinary and multi-level research**, offering valuable insights on migration in Europe - at the national, European and international level.

Bringing together migration researchers in Europe

While research on migration in Europe was quite fragmented, the NORFACE Migration programme successfully **brought together researchers on migration from various European countries and from different disciplines** to stimulate cross-fertilization. As a result, the NORFACE Migration programme has **fostered a global debate among migration researchers**, with a specific focus on European migration research. Various new collaborations among migration researchers around the world have been established, enabling knowledge creation on the topic of (European) migration.

Novel data

Primary data collection resulted in various unique, large-scale and publically available datasets that allow for comparative research (e.g. cross-national, multi-ethnic, longitudinal, multi-actor, matched samples). This, combined with the harmonisation of the data infrastructure in Europe, allows for further enhancing the evidence base for policy formulation. Additionally, the projects have used **unique, underexplored data** sets that are mainly administrative in nature and typically cover the entire population. The unique scope of this data make it possible not only to study the evolution of labour market outcomes of immigrants, but also focus on broader aspects such as the school performance of immigrant children, health, fertility, crime, marriage and residential choices.

Key findings

The innovative use of existing data sets has resulted in a more **complete and consistent picture of international migration** flows among 31 countries in Europe from 2002 to 2008. In addition to mapping migration flows, the various projects touched upon different aspects of migration processes. Several key findings are listed below:

Integration

- **Integration of migrants in the labour market** takes time, flexible labour markets help migrants to better access the labour market
- **Cultural integration** is a more complex process, highly group specific and dependent on the destination country context

Labour market outcomes

- Immigration **complements** rather than substitutes **trade flows** between origin and destination countries (more migration means more trade)
- There is a **positive** relation between **cultural diversity and the availability of facilities** (e.g. 'the restaurant effect') and between diversity and **wages**. There is a **negative** effect of cultural diversity on **housing prices**
- Labour migrants are **not attracted by generous welfare states**

Families and children

- **Transnational families** are a well-established phenomenon. From an origin country perspective, the absence of a parent due to migration does **not necessarily result in lower well being** for children given that certain conditions are met
- However, if children remain behind in a post-conflict setting, or when parents abroad are in a **precarious** (e.g. undocumented and low wage jobs) **situation**, both parents and children's **well-being is negatively impacted**.
- **In the UK, immigrant children start by lagging behind** their native peers, but they **catch up throughout primary and secondary school career**

Origin country outcomes

- International migration significantly improves the **quality of political institutions** in the sending country through diaspora engagement and social remittances (i.e. transfers of ideas, values, know-how, practices)
- **Origin countries are not static entities**: e.g. educational expansion at origin reduces the educational gains from migration
- **Migrant networks** can either facilitate or obstruct further migration flows. **Migration institutions** (e.g. recruitment agencies) may stimulate further migration. **Online social media** has become increasingly important in shaping migration flows
- **Temporary migrants** are more likely to send money transfers to their origin country and they send larger amounts

Implications

To stimulate connectedness between the policy world and researchers, the various NORFACE Migration programme have **engaged policy makers** at different stages throughout the research process. The **substantive research** that came out of the NORFACE Migration programme informs debates on **demographic patterns and determinants of (temporary) migration, return migration, integration, well being, welfare, and the role of migration policies:**

- A more complete picture of migration flows in Europe avoids over-counting migrants and underreporting emigrants in population data
- Cross-national studies allowed for examination of the role of European national contexts (integration, migration policies, migration history, labour market institutions)
- Unemployment leads to return migration: voluntary return schemes can be more successful if targeted towards recent immigrants
- Policy makers should realise that policies related to migrants' documented and job status at destination also impact the well-being of children at origin
- Temporary migrants remit more: remittances by temporary migrants can have a substantial macroeconomic impact on the home and host country
- Universal child care programs help narrowing the achievement gap between native and immigrant children

Further research¹

- The NORFACE Migration programme has been extremely successful in **creating new, large-scale comparative and longitudinal datasets**, as well as providing **new and innovative ways of using of existing (administrative) datasets**
- The data and research infrastructure established through the NORFACE Migration programme offers ample **opportunities for cross-national comparative research in Europe** to further understand the role of nation-state contexts
- More **cross-cutting research** is needed to better understand the impact of migration **beyond economic consequences**, such as the effects of migration on families and children and how migration interacts with (demographic) choices across the life course, thus promoting an inclusive, innovative and reflective European society
- An integrated, publically available database on migration flows within Europe has been created, with synthesised information on European migration flows, allowing future research to **investigate the causes and consequences of migration in Europe**
- The primary data that has been collected facilitates research on the **complex interplay between various dimensions of integration**, such as cognitive-cultural, structural, social and emotional-cultural integration
- The primary data additionally collected information on **migrants from different European and non-European origin countries**. This allows for **disentangling origin and destination effects** influencing migrants' (early) integration, (transnational) family lives, and return migration

¹ These recommendations for further research are in line with those presented at the 8th meeting of the Programme Committee for SC6 'Europe in a changing world – Inclusive, Innovative and Reflective Societies. Brussels, March 8 2016.

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Table 1. Overview of the 12 transnational projects

Acronym	Project title	Principal Investigator
CHOICES	Understanding Migrants' Choices	Dr. Jackline Wahba, University of Southampton
CILS4EU	Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Survey in Four European Countries	Prof. Frank Kalter, University of Mannheim
IMEM	Integrated Modeling of European Migration	Dr. James Raymer, University of Southampton
LineUp	500 Families: Migration Histories of Turks in Europe	Dr. Ayse Guveli, University of Essex
MIDI-REDIE	Migrant Diversity and Regional Disparity in Europe	Prof. Peter Nijkamp, VU University of Amsterdam
MI3	Migration: Integration, Impact and Interaction	Prof. Jonathan Wadsworth, CReAM, University College London
NODES	Nordic welfare states and the dynamics and effects of ethnic residential segregation	Prof. Mari Vaattovaara, University of Helsinki
SCIP	Causes and Consequences of Early Socio-Cultural Integration Processes among New Immigrants in Europe	Prof. Claudia Diehl, University of Konstanz
SIMCUR	Social Integration of Migrant Children: Uncovering Family and School Factors Promoting Resilience	Prof. Birgit Leyendecker, Ruhr University Bochum
TEMPO	Temporary Migration, Integration and the Role of Policies	Prof. Giovanni Facchini, University of Nottingham
THEMIS	Theorizing the Evolution of European Migration Systems	Prof. Oliver Bakewell, University of Oxford
TCRAF-EU	Transnational child-raising arrangements between Africa and Europe	Prof. Valentina Mazzucato, Maastricht University