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EUROOPAN MUUTTOLIIKEVERKOSTO - EUROPEAN MIGRATION NETWORK

Summary of the presentation “Policy Needs for Migration Research” held by Ann Singleton

Ann Singleton stated that migration needs to be looked at not only as an economic policy challenge, but also as a social policy challenge. She notes that the concept of a ‘Migration state’ is a consequence of the concept of a ‘Nation state’ that defines its national boundaries, who can cross the borders and what rights do people living inside those borders have. However, migration does not only involve border control issues and national legislation on who is legal and who is illegal. Ann Singleton stated that the dichotomy ‘illegal vs. legal migrant’ should not be used. No person is illegal, every person has a legal right to exist, and it is just that in the context of migration, some people do not comply with national legislation concerning entry into their territory. Migration policy development needs to take into account the motivation behind these kinds of migratory flows, and the social reality that rules change and circumstances change, making people move between different immigration statuses. This can be described as ‘liquid migration’. Oxford University-based migration research centre COMPAS talks about semi-compliance in this context.

Quantitative studies with new transnational methodologies, as well as better use of statistics in the form of more sophisticated data with holistic analysis are needed for this purpose. They can reveal a lot of relevant data on the social reality behind various kinds of migratory flows and assist in forming better long term policies and gives a deeper understanding of which factors cause people to leave and which factors cause others not to.

Ann Singleton concluded by presenting a recent EU-publication (link below) that includes reviews on migration research funded by the EU, the results of the different projects and their possible implications for the development of immigration policy within the European Union.

http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/policy-review-migration-publication_en.pdf