

Editorial

This 2010-2 issue of the *SEER Journal for Labour and Social Affairs in Eastern Europe* focuses on different aspects of labour migration in Europe. Two articles examine European migration policy in a critical and comparative manner from the point of view of intra-EU labour mobility and in respect to extra-EU migration to Europe. Two other articles within the focus topic highlight country-specific features of migration, one analysing the different outwards migration patterns of Czech and Slovak migrants, the other addressing the unique case of Russia as a migration target country.

These articles are based on a collection of papers from the 3rd Forum of Social Sciences PhD Students in Bratislava that was supported by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation's Bratislava office. One of the aims of the *SEER*, as a platform for information exchange on labour and social affairs between central, south-eastern and eastern Europe, is to take the opportunity to disseminate articles to the wider public.

One of the four articles of the open section of the issue addresses the perspective of the EU integration of the western Balkans region – a continuing area of interest of this journal – while the three other articles of this section draw back to our previous focus topic of the financial crisis.

The article by Chris Wright analyses the reasons behind the heterogeneity of the policy responses by EU-15 countries with respect to the free movement of labour from the new member states that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007. He examines both the economic and political factors behind the different policy outcomes by member states, giving a detailed description of the situation in the UK with a view also to changing policy attitudes over time.

Deniz Genç turns our attention to the restrictive nature of EU migration policies *vis-à-vis* third country migrants. The author points to a specific feature of EU migration policy; that is, an emphasis on the security dimension of migration. This 'securitisation' of migration appears in terms of the security of the internal market; the security of the cultural identities of European societies; and the security of welfare systems. The paradox of EU migration policy – as the author puts it – is that the result of this policy attitude is that migrants appear as a threat to European society but, on the other hand, the EU also wants to attract outside migrants due to its skills shortage.

The article by Lucia Kurekova takes a comparative approach in order to highlight the different outcomes of Czech and Slovak outwards migration patterns, despite the common history and similar socio-cultural traditions of the two countries. She explores the link between the reform processes which have led to different socio-economic regimes and a divergence in migration dynamics in these two central and east European economies.

Anna Rocheva examines the adaptation of migrant workers with a view to exploring the role of institutions concerning social assistance for migrants in Russia, analysing the role of formal and informal institutions. The challenge is sizable since Russia is not a traditional immigration country, although it does face an inwards migration that is the second highest after the US.

Gordana Đurović and Milivoje Radović give an overview of the current status and perspectives of the countries of the western Balkans region concerning the EU integration process. They examine the EU enlargement mechanism and assess the readiness of individual countries for EU accession, devoting attention also to the role of lobbying institutions.

Finally, three further articles deal with the financial and monetary aspects related to the financial and economic crisis, our long-standing focus topic in previous issues of the *SEER*.

Damjan Kozamernik and Tina Žumer look at the case of a success story and examine the role of monetary policy and disinflation on the way to the introduction of the Euro in Slovenia, the first country among the new member states from central and eastern Europe to adopt the common currency.

Ramona Rupeika-Apoga analyses the effects of financial globalisation on Latvia with particular regard to the Latvian banking sector which was at the centre of the crisis encompassing the whole Latvian economy.

Elvīra Zelgalve and Inna Romānova take a look at the other side of the coin and examine the capital structure of Latvian enterprises in the period preceding the crisis, pointing to a major vulnerability within the Latvian economy.

Béla Galgócz

October 2010

Calvin Allen