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INTRODUCING CEASEVAL

The "long summer of migration" in 2015 and the associated "crisis of European asylum policy" are decisive topics of public discourse, with far-reaching consequences for political decisions at national and EU-level. While the humanitarian obligation to receive refugees is out of question, there are unresolved issues regarding the fair and humane redistribution of asylum seekers to Member States, the harmonization of asylum procedures and concrete practices in dealing with asylum seekers before, during and after the asylum procedure.

The necessity to produce fresh research results on the topic and feed it into political decision making processes is reflected by several calls within the European research program HORIZON2020 since 2015. We decided to take part in those calls, starting off from a group of researchers who regularly collaborate within the IMISCOE* research cluster RELOCAL**, and reaching out to further partners all over Europe. Our interdisciplinary consortium consists of 14 partners from 13 countries, representing research institutions as

well as think tanks and NGO's. Having successfully competed in the call, we started our project in November 2017 and are currently preparing the empirical fieldwork, which will get started in June.

Our research pursues three major goals: First, we will carry out a critical evaluation of the Common European Asylum System and identify and analyze discrepancies between EU standards of refugee reception and national legislation and their implementation. Secondly, we will develop and empirically test a new theoretical framework for the process of "multilevel governance" of the Common European Asylum System. Thirdly, we will elaborate new policies by constructing different alternatives of implementing a common European asylum system and discuss those scenarios with political and civil society stakeholders. On this basis, CEASEVAL will determine which kind of harmonization (legislative, implementation, etc.) and solidarity is possible and necessary.

The conceptual approach of our

research is based on the notion of harmonization, which comprises various meanings and practices. While in legal terms, harmonization is interpreted as a process of approximation to a minimum consensus, political science interprets it as a governance approach aiming on the convergence of regulations and related practices. Human geography has yet another interpretation, focusing on the spatial reference levels of the asylum system and on the variances in framing features (such as socio-economic conditions), actor constellations and practices. Hence, our research will combine all those approaches and carry out a multi-level and multi-sited analysis of the Common European Asylum System, including juridical aspects, regulatory patterns, and practices of receiving asylum seekers and the treatment of their asylum applications. We will also take into account the societal discourses that triggered asylum migration towards and throughout the EU states and the thematic interfaces with other European policy areas, such as border security, Schengen and Dublin agreements, and a common European migration policy.

EVENTS

Ceaseval kick-off meeting; 16-17/11/17, TU Campus, Chemnitz

Ceaseval research workshop; 14-15/04/18, ICMPD, Vienna

Glorius, B. Youth Mobility & Migration in Europe – Keep on Moving? 7-9/3/18, University of Luxembourg

Upcoming

Webinar on current situation of asylum law across the EU and discussion of key variables for elaboration of the database, 14/5/18, Brussels

IMISCOE 15th Annual Conference: “Europe, migrations and the Mediterranean: human mobilities & intercultural challenges”, 2-4/7/18, Barcelona.

Panel 5 “CEASEVAL Insight & first results” & Panel 20 “CEASEVAL: The discursive component of European asylum” at Partner attendees: Caponio, T., Collyer, M., Consterdine, E., Doomernik, J., Garcés –Mascareñas, Glorius, B., Kraler, A., Nienaber, B., Oesch, L., Paraschivescu, C., Ponzo, I., Sanchez, E., Sik, E., Wagner, M., Wahlbeck, O.

Workshop: Borders & the experiences of refugees & asylum seekers in the EU. Dr C.

Paraschivescu, Prof. B. Nienaber, Dr L. Oesch (Uni Luxembourg)



Research Workshop on the empirical elements

What is “harmonization” and in how far is it essential for the development of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS)? How do EU MS interpret “solidarity” and what “responsibilities” are there to share in the context of the CEAS? Which reasons and considerations lead to the national governance of reception systems and in how far are the different levels of governance involved in this process? Which borders exist and how do they steer the trajectories of asylum seekers and migrants and in how far do they prevent or are the catalysts for secondary movements?

Researchers from the CEAS EVAL project partners held a retreat on 16/17 April 2018 in Vienna to intensify the exchange on those and other related questions. Since the start of the project the research tools have been developed by the partners. It was now time to discuss the tools, identify overlaps with existing literature or reports and to retrieve synergies between the different strands of the research. The workshop was thus the opportunity to test the research instruments, exchange on lessons learned from pilot surveys and to coordinate the empirical data collection between the different work packages of the CEAS EVAL project.

Evidently, asylum and refugee issues not least since the so-called “refugee crisis” in 2015/ 2016 became a highly researched area. The public as well as policy makers and academics at national, EU and global

level engaged in the debate and much has been and is being invested in research to better understand the phenomenon of the high influx during those years. Reports, briefs and policy papers increase. Ideas have been developed, pondered, shared and discussed. Some triggered interest and some got lost along the way.

Yet, as a consequence of decreasing flows thanks to – highly contested – agreements with third countries along the migratory routes, EU Member States started to size down their emergency measures by at the same time signaling that a situation as in 2015/2016 shall not repeat again. Despite the opportunities offered by decreasing migratory pressures to consolidate and assess the lessons learned for the CEAS, the discussions for the third reform of the CEAS came to a halt because of clearly detrimental views on the ways forward by the MS.

It is this wider framework that sets the challenging environment for empirical research and will be also a test for the research within the CEAS EVAL project. The retreat helped to develop a common understanding and identified strategies to gain insights on the above questions in light of national particularities of EU Member States. Stay with us to find out more about the results from our research!

Together, the Annotated Bibliography and the results of our online searches will provide a sound bibliographic foundation for much of the new research to be conducted in the course of the project. Wherever possible, full-text versions of these approx. 600 pieces of literature will be obtained and collected in a (digital) database, and the team is developing a coding system that will facilitate the use of this database by other project partners.

We found that the dominant concepts in the literature relate to many CEASEVAL work package themes, including solidarity, burden-sharing, harmonization, politicization of migration and multi-level governance. We also found that themes concerning externalization and human rights were dominant as well as return and deportation. Much of the literature sets out to identify transposition and implementation issues in the CEAS, whilst best practice examples were scarce

Over the coming months, we will conduct both qualitative and quantitative analyses of the collected literature and publish preliminary results in the form of two briefings (by the end of May) and a state of the art literature review as a working paper by the end of June. The overall aim of this exercise is to identify the most important themes, as well as potential gaps, in the vast amount of literature that already exists on the Common European Asylum System, and its potential shortcomings.

Upcoming Webinar

The University of Sussex team (Wp1) with the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) team (wp2) will hold a webinar at 12.30 on Monday 14 May 2018 at ECRE's offices in Brussels on "The current situation of asylum law across the EU and discussion of key variables for the elaboration of the database".

The webinar discussion will allow the UoS team to benefit from ECRE's knowledge and resources on the issue of asylum law, in order to develop an asylum policy database for the Ceaseval project. The new policy database will focus on variables relevant to asylum applications in both sending and receiving countries. The Asylum Information Database (AIDA) managed by ECRE currently represents the most comprehensive overview of the field of asylum legislation in the EU, and this project will expand it with further detailed analysis. Therefore the webinar will be a chance to explore the AIDA database and discuss how it could be utilized with the ECRE team.

The team will discuss the current situation of asylum law across the EU and the varying stages of transposition of the CEAS, and the broader framework of the CEAS and its transposition in each state. Discussion will then focus on the database, including key research questions, variables and sources.

- 12.15-12.30: Introduction to Ceaseval project
- 12.30-12.45: Annotated bibliography & key concepts
- 12.45-1.15: Current situation in asylum law
- 1.15-1.45: Building the Ceaseval database
- 1.45-2: Q & A/close

Details on how to join the webinar will be available online at ceaseval.eu and twitter [@ceaseval](https://twitter.com/ceaseval)

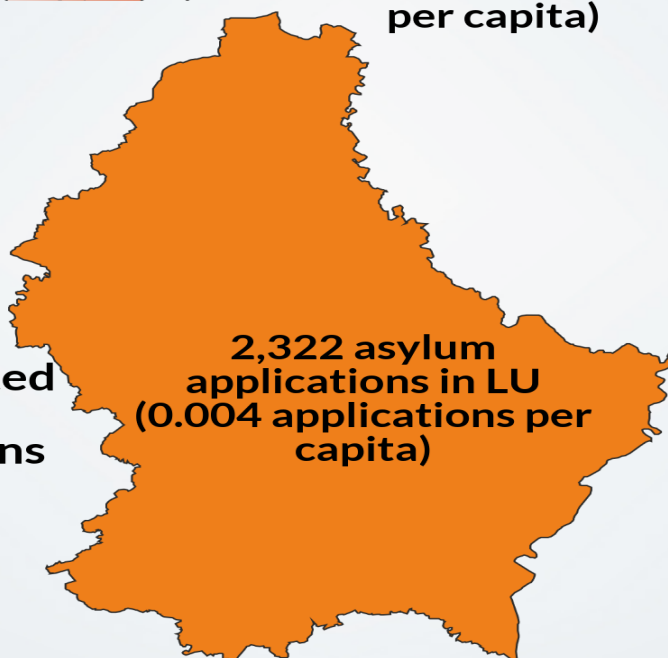
LUXEMBOURG ASYLUM SEEKERS IN 2017



650,000 asylum applications in the EU-28 (0.0013 applications per capita)

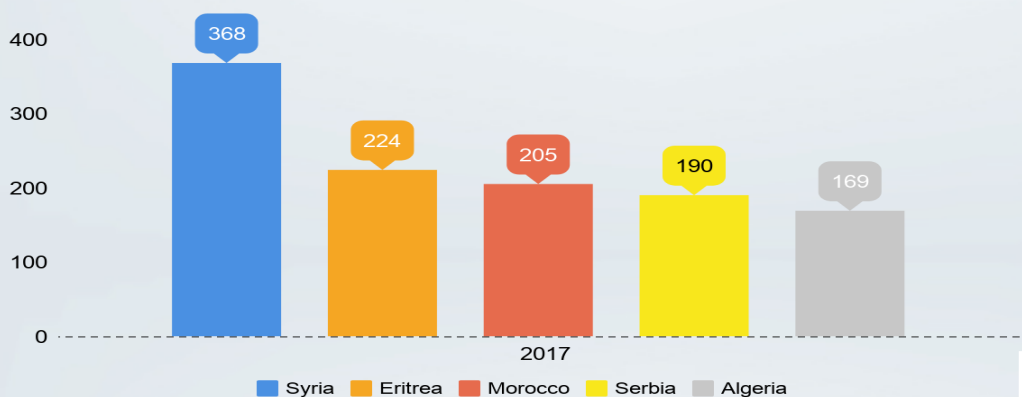


526 rejected asylum applications



1,152 approved asylum applications

Top 5 applicant producing countries to Luxembourg



Source: Bilan de l'année 2017 en matière d'asile et d'immigration. Le Gouvernement du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg. Ministère des Affaires étrangères et européennes.

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