

Constructing Europe Through Mobility*,¹

Construyendo Europa a través de la movilidad

Ander Audikana
University of Deusto, Spain
ander.audikana@deusto.es

Vincent Kaufmann
École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, Switzerland
vincent.kaufmann@epfl.ch

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Summary: Promoting mobility through the development of the principle of free movement of people, goods, services and capital has been a cornerstone of the European integration process. This article offers a synthesis of the different European policies that have contributed to the development of this principle. Three types of policies are identified and analyzed: mobility regulation policies, investment policies for the equipment of European territory, and incentive policies to promote mobility. This analysis contributes to contextualize the current crisis of the principle of free circulation and advocates for an analytical critique (neither isolationist nor ultraliberal) of mobility.

Keywords: Mobility, Europe, free movement.

Resumen: *La promoción de la movilidad a través del desarrollo del principio de libre circulación de personas, bienes, servicios y capitales ha constituido una piedra angular del proceso de integración europea. Este artículo ofrece una síntesis de las diferentes políticas europeas que han contribuido al desarrollo de este principio. Tres tipos de políticas serán identificadas y analizadas: las políticas de regulación de la movilidad, las políticas de inversión para equipar el territorio*

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¹ This article is extensively based on a recent publication: Vincent Kaufmann and Ander Audikana, *Mobilité et libre circulation en Europe - Un regard suisse* (Paris: Economica, 2017).

europeo, y las políticas de incitación a la movilidad. Este análisis contribuye a contextualizar la crisis actual del principio de libre circulación y aboga por una crítica analítica (ni aislacionista, ni ultraliberal) de la movilidad.

Palabras clave: *Movilidad, Europa, libre circulación.*

I. Introduction

That the construction of Europe has advanced through the promotion of different kinds of mobilities is not just an abstract idea. On the contrary, this conception has inspired many concrete policy interventions that have been implemented with varying degrees of success over the last few decades. These interventions have been designed and developed by the European authorities with different participation and acceptance depending on the member states concerned by these initiatives.

This paper seeks to summarize analytically a set of policy interventions seeking to promote the different mobility flows in Europe. What type of intervention has been adopted at the European level? In what policy areas and in which contexts? What are the difficulties and limitations that these interventions have encountered?

European interventions to promote mobility are very diverse in nature, but it is possible to establish three main families:

1. Regulatory policies to improve the mobility conditions within the European Union (EU). This first type of intervention develops a common regulatory framework to harmonize the technical and legal conditions relating to the different flows of mobilities. One of the founding constituents of Europe is to create a single space allowing four types of circulation, the “four freedoms”, namely the free movement of goods, capital, services and people within the EU.
2. Investment interventions to equip and organize the EU from the point of view of infrastructure and spatial planning. This second type of intervention seeks to transform the European geography to maximize the mobility conditions of the different territories and populations.
3. Incentive policies aimed at encouraging and stimulating mobility between the different member states. This third type of initiative seeks to encourage mobility by providing actors the necessary resources to meet the possible costs associated with mobility.

In practice, the three families of intervention for the promotion of mobility are often co-present and act together. For example, the development

of physical infrastructure is also an object of “regulation” or “incentives” in terms of use. Interventions aim not only to ensure conditions of access by acting on the right of mobility of European citizens and economic actors. They are often more ambitious in scope and aim to develop mobility knowledge and skills at the European level, but also to stimulate mobility projects for the inhabitants and collective actors of the different European countries. Therefore, it is not just about making mobility possible, it is also about encouraging it as much as possible.

II. Regulatory policies

1. *A market of mobilities*

The “four freedoms”, the movement of goods, capital, services and people, form the core of the European integration project. These freedoms, together with agriculture and transport sectors, constitute the very foundations of the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community (EEC) of 1957. The creation of an integrated common economic area is not only one of the strategic objectives of the European project but also the privileged way to advance in the integration process. The establishment of the common market by the EEC Treaty is the first step in this process.

To this end, the Treaty provided “the elimination, as between member states, of customs duties and of quantitative restrictions on the import and export of goods” (art. 3a), the “establishment of a common customs tariff and of a common commercial policy towards third countries” (art. 3b) and “the abolition, as between member states, of obstacles to freedom of movement for persons, services and capital” (art. 3c). It established that the Community sought to promote “freedom of movement for workers” (art. 48), defined as the right to “move freely” (art. 48 3b), to “stay” (art. 48 3c), and to “remain” (art. 48 3b) in a member state, along with the “right of establishment” allowing to “take up and pursue activities as self-employed persons and to set up and manage undertakings” (art. 52). It addressed the restrictions “on freedom to provide services” (art. 59) and “on the movement of capital” (art. 67.).

Since then, measures taken at the European level have influenced economic activity, trade, investment flows and mobility of people. In 1968, customs duties on merchandise trade were abolished between member countries. The adoption of the Single European Act in 1986 and the legislative reform for the creation of a single market in the following years marked a major change. The Single European Act aimed at the creation of an internal market comprising an “area without internal frontiers

in which the free movement of goods, persons, services and capital is ensured” (art. 26 2). The aim was to facilitate the mobility of factors of production². The link between European integration, economic integration, and regulation of mobility is directly observed by some analysts:

“European integration is built on the growing encouragement of cross-border mobility of all kinds - canonically the free movement of capital, goods, services and persons - and the giving up of state sovereignty over these processes in deference to the needs of an integrated market (...). Through the economic integration governed by the European integration process, the European nation-state’s supreme early-twentieth-century control over migration and population dynamics was being voluntarily dislodged.”³

Despite all these efforts, economic integration is not complete and many barriers remain between the different European member states. While mobility of capital seems to be able to move towards full integration, the mobility of goods and services appears to be more limited because of legal and technical barriers, or because of consumer and firm consumption patterns. The mobility of people, and more specifically that of workers, is considered to be much more limited due to cultural and linguistic differences between European countries.

In the same way, the positive correlation between the creation of the euro and the increase in the mobility of other factors of production is far from being fully established. Three economic arguments seem to justify the adoption of a single currency according to Krugman⁴: the benefits of monetary integration on trade in goods and services; the fact that monetary autonomy is no longer necessary when workers can move where the jobs are located; the establishment of common budgets to benefit from a single monetary policy. Krugman concludes from the economic crisis of the late 2000s that the first two arguments are insufficient to ensure the proper functioning of a single monetary area. He and other observers⁵ cautioned against the risk of economic adjustment through labor mobility, which

² Giandomenico Majone, *Europe as the would-be world power: the EU at fifty* (Cambridge, Cambridge Univ. Press, 2009).

³ Adrian Favell and Randall Hansen, « Markets against politics: Migration, EU enlargement and the idea of Europe », *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 28, 4 (2002): 585.

⁴ Paul Krugman, « Moneda común, destino común », *El País*, 18 June 2013, accessed 1 January 2017, <http://blogs.elpais.com/paul-krugman/2013/06/una-moneda-comun-un-destino-comun.html>

⁵ Thomas Farole, Andrés Rodríguez-Pose and Michael Storper, « Cohesion Policy in the European Union: Growth, Geography, Institutions », *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 49, 5 (2011): 1089-1111.

could lead to an economic and fiscal weakening of the labor-exporting countries. Some observers consider that in many regions the process of European integration has reinforced the phenomena of deindustrialization and brain drain, leading to intergenerational unemployment, poverty, social exclusion and demographic decline⁶.

2. *An area without borders*

Yet, as Recchi points out, people related mobility in the EU cannot be considered as a mere component of the single market:

“Making it a component of the single market, however, does not do justice to the legal and practical implications of the EU free movement regime. Its significance is decidedly broader, for people are not merely producers and consumers. Freedom of movement in the EU alters the traditional notion of national citizenship, which is intrinsically both a privilege and a spatial constraint.”⁷

By tracing the history of the right to free movement in Europe, Recchi shows how the meaning, the categories of persons concerned by and the spatial extent of the right to free movement have been developed considerably over time. The mobility of the European inhabitants has thus become the very heart of the notion of European citizenship. The right of free movement and residence across EU territory is indeed the “true keystone of the edifice of European citizenship”⁸. Because of this development, the “migrant workers” of the member states of the past have become European “mobile persons”. From this point of view, the EU is seen as a “human mobility system”⁹.

The idea of an area without borders culminated in 1990 with the Schengen agreements. The paralysis of European borders provoked in the spring of 1984 by truck drivers triggered the mobilization of certain national governments¹⁰. France and Germany were the precursors of a single mobility area project, which envisaged the gradual abolition of

⁶ Stefanie Dühr, Claire Colomb and Vincent Nadin, *European spatial planning and territorial cooperation* (London: Routledge, 2010).

⁷ Ettore Recchi, *Mobile Europe: the theory and practice of free movement in the EU*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 2-3.

⁸ Recchi, *Mobile...*, 27.

⁹ Recchi, *Mobile...*, 145.

¹⁰ Commission Européenne, *Biblio Flash 1995/02 Espace sans frontières « Schengen »* (CE, 1995).

controls at the borders of these two countries. Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg were soon interested in this initiative. Five years later, the five countries signed the Schengen Convention. This Convention distinguished between the “internal borders” which constitute “the common land borders of the Contracting Parties, their airports for internal flights and their sea ports for regular ferry connections exclusively from or to other ports within the territories of the Contracting Parties” (art. 1) and “external borders” which constitute the remainder “of the land and sea boundaries, as well as airports and sea ports of the Contracting Parties”. The Convention also defined how traffic at the external borders is subject to the control of the competent authorities. It aims to eliminate all controls on people at internal borders, while ensuring internal security and controlling migratory flows.

With the entry into force of the Amsterdam Treaty, the Schengen acquis was incorporated into the EU framework. During the years 2000 and 2010 various measures were adopted, such as the creation of a European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders (FRONTEX); an External Borders Fund to assist certain member states which bear a heavier burden in control of persons and border surveillance because of their geographical location; and the European Border Surveillance System (EUROSUR) for the purpose of detecting, preventing and combating illegal immigration and cross-border crime. Clearly, the European neighborhood policy implemented since the mid-1990s aims to strengthen the control of external borders. Some observers conclude that Schengen evolved from a project combining “freedom of movement” and “security” to a project focused mainly on security aspects¹¹.

However, this evolution is criticized. Walters considers, for example, that illegal immigration policy is fundamentally aimed at isolating the territory and at considering Europe as an autonomous region / entity, distinguished and confronted with other entities also delimited¹². For this type of observer, “Schengenland” transforms Europe into “a home that must be protected from those who don’t live in it, who may enter as guests, but should have no claim to stay there permanently”¹³. Indeed, in the aftermath of the attacks of 11 September, Europe’s borders remained blurred and permeable, and migration flows were defined and governed by economic

¹¹ Ruben Zaiotti, *Cultures of border control: Schengen and the evolution of European frontiers* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2011).

¹² William Walters, « Anti-illegal immigration policy: The case of the European Union », in *Governing international labour migration: current issues, challenges and dilemmas*, ed. Christina Gabriel and Pellerin Héléne (London: Routledge, 2008), 58.

¹³ William Walters and Jens Henrik Haahr, *Governing Europe: discourse, governmentality and European integration* (London: Routledge, 2005), 139.

factors¹⁴. But soon, the policy hardened, though selectively. Favell notes that there is a tension between the porosity towards the east through a policy of enlargement and the boundary towards the south¹⁵.

This brief overview of interventions in the field of mobility regulation within Europe highlights a “loss of boundary control” at the national level¹⁶ in favor of market integration and the creation of a space of mobility. The integration of the market requires for its designers to remove obstacles, restrictions, limitations or barriers to mobility. At the same time, new common rules are being adopted. These regulatory measures aim to create a space of perfect mobility to ensure the economic and political integration of the EU.

III. Investment policies

The simple right to free movement does not inevitably result in an increase in actual mobility. For there to be mobility, this right must be put into practice through the realization of physical infrastructures. This mechanistic concept of supply has guided the interventions at European level in terms of investment in large transport infrastructures. In this section, we outline the major interventions in this area.

1. *Trans-European networks*

The Trans-European Networks (TENs) program is the most ambitious intervention in terms of infrastructure supply at the European level. The TENs program has been part of the European Treaties since its inclusion in the Maastricht Treaty in 1992. Despite the many implementation difficulties, notably linked to financial constraints, the TENs program remains to date on the EU’s agenda. Title XII of the Treaty (art. 129b) is very explicit in the objectives, namely:

“enable citizens of the Union, economic operators and regional and local communities to derive full benefit from the setting up of an area without internal frontiers, the Community shall contribute to the establishment

¹⁴ Favell and Hansen, «Markets against politics...».

¹⁵ Adrian Favell, «Immigration, migration, and free movement in the making of Europe», in *European Identity*, ed. Jeffrey T. Checkel and Peter J. Katzenstein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 167-190.

¹⁶ Fritz W Scharpf, «Negative and Positive Integration in the Political Economy of European Welfare States», in *Governance in the European Union*, ed. Gary Marks et al. (London: SAGE, 1998), 16.

and development of trans-European networks in the areas of transport, telecommunications and energy Infrastructures.”

Three elements are closely linked in the TENs program: the creation or modernization of infrastructures, the technological standardization and the liberalization of exploitation. While large infrastructures have traditionally been developed in terms of national territories, the TENs program aims to tackle infrastructure planning at the European level.

The TEN-Transport (TEN-T) program occupies a very important symbolic place in the strategy of European networks. This is probably related to the spatial visualization of these infrastructures through images and maps, as well as its impact and physical presence on the territory. The TEN-T includes infrastructures for land transport (road, rail, inland waterways), air, sea and multimodal. As currently defined, the TEN-T includes a “global network” consisting of more than 130,000 km of railways and roads and a “core network” consisting of those parts of the global network of the highest strategic importance.

Some observers consider that the TEN-T program consolidates the discourse on market and political integration¹⁷. This program creates new mobility potentials within the EU and in relation to the surrounding territories. Other observers recall the possible contradiction between the objectives of cohesion and territorial balance of the EU and the dynamics of spatial concentration linked to this type of large infrastructure¹⁸. The development of large infrastructures can in fact reinforce the dynamics of differentiation between the central areas of Europe and the peripheral regions and between the urban centers and the rural areas.

The TEN-T is a fundamental part of the common transport policy to ensure the mobility potential of the European territory. The improvement of mobility conditions remains a strategic objective in this area, while other perspectives in terms of modal shift or environmental impact have been incorporated more recently. It was not until the early 2000s when the White Paper “European transport policy for 2010: time to decide” was drawn up that the possibility of moderating or slowing down the growth of mobility was put on the agenda. The White Paper proposed “the option of gradually breaking the link between economic growth and transport growth”, without restricting the mobility of people and goods. This strategy was eventually abandoned and the new White Paper “Roadmap to a Single European

¹⁷ Ole B Jensen and Tim Richardson, *Making European space mobility, power and territorial identity* (London: Routledge, 2004).

¹⁸ Dühr et al., *European spatial...*

Transport Area – Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system” (2011) explicitly stated that curbing mobility was not an option.

2. *The Single European Sky*

Even if it is not labeled TEN-T, the single European sky is a mobility equipment with a strong regulatory character, which has allowed a very important development of air traffic. Since the 1980s, the organization of air transport in Europe has undergone significant changes. By the late 1980s, domestic air markets, previously under the control of governments and public airlines, were opened up to competition. Any European airline with a technical certification can now offer national or international routes within Europe.

From the late 1990s onwards, the Single European Sky initiative was launched. It aims to increase transport capacity and ensure aviation safety through the development of an integrated air traffic control system. In 1999, the Commission (Communication from the Commission to the council and the European parliament - The creation of the single European sky) considered that:

“Europe cannot keep the frontiers in the sky that it has managed to eliminate on the ground; it must allow the freedom of movement of persons, goods and services beyond such frontiers.”

The single European sky will be implemented in stages. In 2004, three regulations relating to the provision of air navigation services, organization, use of airspace and interoperability of the European air transport management network were adopted. As from 2009, new legislative initiatives emerged to increase the economic performance of the regulatory framework established, because with the increase in demand, the capacity of the infrastructure can be insufficient.

While the territorial footprint of this initiative is limited in contrast to some TEN-T infrastructure projects, the reorganization of the aviation sector in Europe seems to be motivated by the same logic aimed at improving the mobility potential while neutralizing the perverse effects in terms of safety or environmental nuisance¹⁹.

¹⁹ Jensen and Richardson, *Making European...*

3. Regional Policy

Since the late 1980s, regional policy has constituted a key investment policy at European level, representing around 0.4% of the EU's GDP. While the Treaty of Rome established that harmonious development was part of the tasks of the Community, it was not until 1975, with the creation of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), that regional policy underpinned a first real development²⁰. Over the next decades, the ERDF financed many projects located in the most disadvantaged European regions to rebalance the European territory.

With the integration of Greece, Spain and Portugal in the 1980s, regional policy gained a momentum. The Delors Commission aimed to create a synergy between reducing disparities and reducing barriers to free movement²¹. To this end, a common framework was created for the different Structural Funds and their budget was doubled. In 1992, the Cohesion Fund was set up to offset the efforts of the most disadvantaged member states to meet the convergence criteria for the adoption of the single currency. This new fund makes it possible to finance projects in the field of environment and transport infrastructure, in particular those belonging to the TEN-T. In addition, specific programs have been developed within regional policy to ensure the development of specific territories such as the border regions (with the INTERREG program) and the outermost regions (with the REGIS program). Finally, during the 1990s and 2000s, pre-accession instruments were also created within the framework of regional policy, such as the Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-Accession (ISPA).

Regional policy aims at a balanced development of the European territory in terms of competitiveness, sustainable development and governance. Regional policy is explicitly a strategy allowing to limit internal migration to European territory:

“If growth does not provide sufficient jobs to reduce unemployment rates, recent developments have made it possible to create enough jobs in areas formerly condemned to emigration in order to reverse this trend. In a Europe where political and linguistic fragmentation greatly reduces the mobility of the workforce compared to other major areas, such as China or the United States, this is an essential result. Since this mobility cannot be greatly increased in the Union, it is imperative that the geography of

²⁰ Jean-François Drevet, *Histoire de la politique régionale de l'Union européenne* (Paris : Belin, 2008).

²¹ Drevet, *Histoire de la...*

jobs approximates that of the population, which is inconceivable without a policy pursuing this objective explicitly.”²²

In practice, regional policy has contributed to territorial rebalancing from the point of view of differences between member states, while interregional inequalities within states seem to have increased²³. Some analysts highlight the existing tensions between territorial cohesion objectives and intra-regional competitiveness strategies that have become widespread in recent decades in Europe and beyond²⁴. Others consider that spatial planning policies have the real effect of increasing the mobility potential of European citizens. While opposing the idea of promoting mobility as a priority option, the Barca report on regional policy reform stressed that mobility opportunities must be part of the policy of the EU:

“The second misconception is that place-based development policies restrict mobility by encouraging people not to move out of places. On the contrary, the virtue of the policy is that it broadens people’s opportunities and gives them more substantive freedom of choosing whether to move or not. If place-based development policies were about reducing mobility, they would be against efficiency and equity, since the option of moving is an important ingredient of both. On the contrary, place-based policies are, in fact, intended to enhance individuals’ substantive freedom of deciding whether to stay (and to make the most of staying) or to move (and to make the most of moving).”²⁵

It is in the perspective of the Barca report that initiatives developed within the framework of regional policy have focused particularly on the question of mobility. This is the case of the territorial cooperation program, INTERREG, which financed a very large number of projects. Some issues such as pollution or transport infrastructure have been priorities for territorial cooperation²⁶. Transport infrastructures and mobility programs (students, researchers, etc.) play a predominant role in territorial cooperation

²² Drevet, *Histoire de la...*, 263.

²³ Andreas Faludi, *Cohesion, coherence, cooperation: European spatial planning coming of age?* (London: Routledge, 2010).

²⁴ Mark Tewdwr-Jones, « Cohesion and competitiveness: the evolving context for European territorial development. », in *Territorial development, cohesion and spatial planning ; knowledge and policy development in an enlarged EU*, ed. Neil Adams, Giancarlo Cotella and Richard Nunes (London, Routledge, 2011), 69-83.

²⁵ Fabrizio Barca, *An Agenda for a Reformed Cohesion Policy – A Place-based Approach to Meeting European Union Challenges and Expectations*, Independent Report prepared at the request of Danuta Hübner, Commissioner for Regional Policy 2009, 37.

²⁶ Dühr et al, *European spatial...*

such as in the Øresund, the Alpine space or cooperation between the two sides of the Pyrenees.

4. *The strategy for the development of the European territory*

While it is within the framework of regional policy that a reflection on spatial planning has been carried out at European level, the first initiatives concerning this issue have nevertheless originated elsewhere within the Council of Europe with the Creation in 1970 of the Council of Europe Conference of Ministers Responsible for Spatial/Regional Planning (CEMAT). It was within the CEMAT, for example, that the Charter of Torremolinos, considered the first planning document at the European level, was drawn up and adopted in 1983. This Charter addresses a series of recommendations to the European institutions. It states that:

“Regional/spatial planning is an important instrument in the evolution of European society and that the intensification of international cooperation in this field represents a substantial contribution towards a stronger European identity.”²⁷

During the 1990s, European institutions carried out a more systematic effort in favor of a European perspective in the field of spatial planning under the technical guidance of the Spatial Development Committee (CDS) set up in 1991. This strategy will lead to the adoption of the “European Spatial Development Perspective” (ESDP) in 1999. The ESDP identified a single large geographical area of economic integration of global importance delineated by London, Paris, Milan, Munich and Hamburg, which accounted for 20% of the EU’s surface and 40% of the population. It contributed about 50% to the European GDP. Faced with this concentration, the ESDP advocated for a polycentric approach to territorial development to create several areas of global economic integration. In terms of mobility, the ESDP noted that the mobility of people, goods and information in the EU was characterised by concentration and polarisation tendencies. Consequently, the ESDP considered that all regions need to have adequate access to infrastructure, while avoiding that high-quality infrastructure do not lead to the removal of resources from structurally weaker and peripheral regions (pump effect) or that they are crossed without connecting them (tunnel effect).

²⁷ Council of Europe, *European regional/spatial planning Charter Torremolinos Charter*, 1983.

Some observers point out that the ESDP remains ambiguous insofar as the discourse in favor of territorial competitiveness takes precedence over the rebalancing strategy²⁸. The ESDP has not been directly implemented, but its development has been an important learning and pooling moment at the European level²⁹. On the basis of this document, for example, the European Observation Network, Territorial Development and Cohesion (ESPON) was created in 2002 to carry out studies on planning and territorial strategy at the European level.

This development in spatial planning has contributed to the fact that the Treaty of Lisbon adds the territorial dimension to the objectives of economic and social cohesion of the EU. It is in this context that the Commission presented in 2008 the “Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion Turning territorial diversity into strength”. This document stressed the need to work for a “harmonious development of all these territories” by focusing on concentration, linkages and cooperation. In 2011, the Ministers of Planning of the EU countries agreed on a document that included the objectives of territorial rebalancing and harmonious development. This document stressed the need to improve connectivity across Europe:

“The growing interdependence of regions generates demand for better connectivity at global, European and national level. Integration barriers at local and regional level can result in the underutilization of human, cultural, economic and ecological resources of the border regions and increase their peripheral position and social exclusion (...). We believe that fair and affordable accessibility to services of general interest, information, knowledge and mobility are essential for territorial cohesion. Providing services and minimizing infrastructure barriers can improve competitiveness, and the sustainable and harmonious territorial development of the European Union.”³⁰

5. Support for urban and rural policies

Since the 1990s, the urban dimension has also attracted interest from the European institutions with a view to increasing trade and improving interconnections. Between 1988 and 2006, it was notably through the URBAN programs that Europe carried out interventions at the urban level.

²⁸ Dühr et al, *Europeana spatial...*

²⁹ Faludi, *Cohesion...*

³⁰ Agreed at the Informal Ministerial Meeting of Ministers responsible for Spatial et Planning and Territorial Development, *Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020 Towards an Inclusive, Smart and Sustainable Europe of Diverse Regions*, 2011, 4-7.

These programs aimed to develop an integrated approach to addressing urban issues. This field of action was consolidated during the 2000s with the elaboration of the “Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities”. This charter aimed to promote integrated urban development in terms of sustainability. It called for measures to ensure the circulation and interconnection of urban areas. Similarly, the document “Cities of Tomorrow”, which identified the European model of sustainable urban development, emphasized inter-city connectivity as a central element of urban development:

“The connectivity of Europe’s cities is a key element in creating balanced territorial development. Many European cities benefit from good connectivity by air or rail with other major European cities, allowing for business day trips with full-day meeting possibilities. Such cities have good ‘contactability’.”³¹

Unlike urban spaces, rural areas seem to be largely outside of this strategy of mobility and territorial connectivity of European policies. The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is fundamentally characterized by a concern for the protection of indigenous agricultural production. The CAP could be considered to have acted as a stabilizing device at the territorial level. However, studies on the territorial impact of this policy have found that the CAP acted contrary to the balanced territorial development objective of the ESDP and did not support the objectives of economic and social cohesion as it favored the central areas of the EU and the areas most accessible from a local point of view³². Similarly, some observers consider that the CAP has not really prevented the loss of jobs in the agricultural sector, the depopulation of the countryside and the immigration to cities³³.

The different types of interventions that we have just described must be understood as part of a general strategy for improving the material conditions of mobility of the EU. Through the creation of infrastructures and the spatial planning, the goal has been to improve the mobility conditions of economic actors and inhabitants across the European territory.

³¹ European Commission, *Cities of tomorrow: challenges, visions, ways forward* (Luxembourg: Publ. Office of the European Union, 2011), 55.

³² ESPON, European Observation Network, Territorial Development and Cohesion, *L’impact territorial de la PAC et de la politique de développement rural*, 2006.

³³ Dühr et al, *European spatial...*

IV. Incentive policies

Regulatory and investment policies are not the only interventions by which Europe contributes to the promotion of mobility. To cope with the difficulties of becoming mobile, the EU has also developed measures to individually support the different actors in their mobility strategies. This third area of intervention concerns what some sociologists called motility. The term motility³⁴ refers to making possible mobility in terms of access (exercise the right of mobility), but also to develop the necessary knowledge and skills (be able to move) and incorporate mobility into individual projects (desire to move). The message is clear: mobility must not remain a dormant ability, but must be activated and integrated into individual patterns of action. Let us focus on the incentives that the European authorities have developed in this field.

1. *The European Social Fund*

The incentive interventions in favor of mobility concern in particular the spheres of employment and training. A flagship initiative in this area is the European Social Fund (ESF). This fund is the first structural fund to improve job mobility within the EU. The ESF was established by the Treaty of Rome in order to:

“improve opportunities of employment of workers in the Common Market and thus contribute to raising the standard of living, a European Social Fund shall hereby be established in accordance with the provisions set out below; it shall have the task of promoting within the Community employment facilities and the geographical and occupational mobility of workers.”

The ESF has been extensively used to finance youth exchange programs in apprenticeships. The aim of these exchange programs is to forge a European awareness. As a first step, the ESF was intended in particular for workers in southern Italy and used as a compensation fund for the costs imposed to the member states by the problems of geographical mobility of workers from regions with high unemployment³⁵. A central element of the ESF at that time was to encourage unemployed persons to move within

³⁴ Vincent Kaufmann, Manfred Max Bergman and Dominique Joye, «Motility: mobility as capital», *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 28, 4 (2004): 745-756.

³⁵ René Leboutte, *Histoire économique et sociale de la construction européenne* (Bruxelles : PIE Lang, 2008).

the Community to seek employment. They were the workers, as a factor of production, and not the citizens of member countries who had the right to move freely within the framework of the ESF.

In the following decades, the ESF has been reformed several times. Although it was originally conceived as an instrument of proactive employment policy, from the 1980s onwards, it was transformed into a system of social cohesion and territorial redistribution with its rapprochement with other Structural Funds³⁶. It also aims at objectives such as the integration of women and young people into the labor market through the promotion of vocational training and retraining.

Yet, mobility remains a strategic objective to influence the employability of workers. In this context, in the face of the economic crisis of 2010s, the geographical mobility component is part of the ESF initiative. A recent document of the Commission (EC, 2014a: 9) raises this question very clearly:

“The crisis has not added so much to in-country differences, but created significant cross-country labour market disparities. As a result, higher cross-border mobility becomes an important factor for improving resource allocation in order to outbalance local labour market situations across Europe. However, intra-EU mobility is still low in most EU countries despite recent improvements.”³⁷

In this context, the document states that “policies to encourage workers’ mobility across Europe are becoming more important if one considers the labour market outlook for the next ten years”³⁸. Through the “Strengthening employment and mobility “ axis, the ESF currently helps job-seekers to move across Europe to find work. These actions are inspired by the Europe 2020 (EC, 2010) strategy for growth and employment, which places mobility as one of the main areas of work. More specifically, the Commission will endeavor to:

“facilitate and promote intra-EU labour mobility and better match labour supply with demand with appropriate financial support from the structural funds, notably the ESF, and to promote a forward-looking and comprehensive labour migration policy which would respond in a flexible way to the priorities and needs of labour markets.”³⁹

³⁶ Jacqueline Brine, *The European Social Fund and the EU: Flexibility, Growth, Stability* (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group Ltd., 2002).

³⁷ European Commission, *Promoting inclusive growth: European Social Fund thematic paper* (Luxembourg: Publications Office on the European Union, 2014), 9.

³⁸ European Commission, *Promoting...9*.

³⁹ COM(2010) 2020 final COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION EUROPE 2020 A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

The strategy to encourage mobility is particularly aimed at young people. One of the objectives of the ESF is precisely to encourage mobility so that “thousands of young people gain work experience and language skills abroad”⁴⁰.

2. ERASMUS

The ERASMUS program is perhaps the most emblematic EU initiative in terms of mobility for learning purposes. As early as 1987, ERASMUS replaced an action program on university cooperation launched in 1976. The ERASMUS program was directly inspired by the Adonino reports⁴¹, which aimed to elaborate interventions which directly affected the European citizens, bringing tangible benefits in their daily lives. Since 1987, through the ERASMUS program, EU has contributed to the funding of student mobility by enabling almost three million students to complete their studies or to complete an internship abroad.

The spirit of the program has also evolved over time. Initially, it aimed mainly to create a European demos and to promote cultural exchange. Today, the ERASMUS program evolves towards the acquisition of knowledge to increase students' skills in the labor market⁴². In 1995, the ERASMUS program was integrated into the SOCRATES initiative, designed to contribute to the development of quality education and training and to create an open European area of cooperation in education. At the same time, the Leonardo da Vinci program was created with the aim of developing a professional training policy through, inter alia, the implementation of transnational investment and exchange programs. Beginning in 2014, all these programs have been grouped under the Erasmus + initiative, which defines the mobility of “individuals for education and training purposes” as the first key action by supporting the implementation of mobility projects in areas of education, training and youth.

⁴⁰ European Social Fund and European Commission, *The European Social Fund: investing in people : what it is and what it does* (Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union, 2012).

⁴¹ Benjamin Feyen, « The Making of a Success Story: The Creation of the ERASMUS Programme in the Historical Context », in Benjamin Feyen and Ewa Krzaklewska (ed.), *The ERASMUS phenomenon: symbol of a new European generation?* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 2013).

⁴² Ulrike Klose, « The Making of a Success Story: The Creation of the ERASMUS Programme in the Historical Context », in Benjamin Feyen and Ewa Krzaklewska (ed.), *The ERASMUS phenomenon: symbol of a new European generation?* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 2013).

3. Democratizing mobility

Mobility emerged at the beginning of the 2000s as the essential element of the European integration project, when the European Council of Nice approved a resolution on a “mobility action plan”. Member states committed themselves “to meet the great expectations of their fellow citizens, that with the support of the Commission” and “take the steps necessary to remove obstacles to mobility and to promote it”. An action plan defining and democratizing mobility in Europe was proposed to promote adequate forms of financing and improving the conditions for increased mobility. It defined 42 measures concerning training of persons, financing mobility, improving mobility and enhancing mobility periods. Consequently, in 2001, the Commission published a brochure for young Europeans entitled “Passport to mobility: learning differently: learning abroad”⁴³. This document, which stated that “moving with the times means embracing cross-frontier mobility” or that “mobility is everyone’s business” and advocates for “lifelong mobility” considered that “the next stage” was “to make mobility as widely accessible as possible”. This document announced, for example, the development of a CV model, known as Europass, which would facilitate mobility for professional purposes, both between countries and between sectors.

This strategy is continuing in the 2000s, with the creation in 2008 of a “High Level Expert Forum on Mobility”, whose mandate was to expand mobility not only within the university sector but also among young people more generally. In its report, the Expert Forum advocates for “learning mobility” at different levels and highlights the benefits of increasing mobility:

“There is an urgent need to break firmly with past patterns and to give a new impetus to mobility among European citizens – mobility essentially focused on learning, but ultimately for jobs, competitiveness, cultural exchange and citizenship.”⁴⁴

Similarly, in 2009 the Commission published the Green Paper “Promoting the learning mobility of young people”, which dealt with the preparation of a period of mobility abroad. In the Europe 2020 strategy, an initiative “Youth on the Move” was launched, in particular to encourage

⁴³ European Commission, *Passport to mobility: learning differently : learning abroad* (Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2001).

⁴⁴ The High Level Expert Forum on Mobility, *Making learning mobility an opportunity for all*, http://move-project.eu/fileadmin/move/downloads/links/mobilityreport_en.pdf.

young people to take advantage of European scholarships to study or train in another country. In this context, it is possible to assert that young Europeans are supposed to become “highly skilled worker, seeking professional added value or moving for study reasons and whose migration may only be temporary”⁴⁵.

These mobility efforts have been particularly important in academic research and university cooperation since the late 1990s. The Bologna Declaration of 1999, the cornerstone of the European higher education area, established a credit system as an appropriate means of promoting student mobility as widely as possible. At the same time, during the 2000s, various efforts were made to consolidate the European Research Area, through programs to support the mobility of researchers, such as the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions.

More recently, different initiatives have been proposed by the Juncker Commission to boost the mobility of European citizens and economic actors. In the political guidelines presented in July 2014, as a candidate for President of the European Commission, Juncker advocated for promoting “labour mobility”:

“Free movement of workers has always been one of the key pillars of the internal market, which I will defend, while accepting the right of national authorities to fight abuse or fraudulent claims. I believe that we should see free movement as an economic opportunity, and not as a threat. We should therefore promote labour mobility, especially in fields with persistent vacancies and skills mismatches.”⁴⁶

One of the initiatives defined by the Juncker Commission to improve the integration of internal market is the Labour Mobility Package. This includes a revision of the posting of workers directive and the social security coordination regulations, along with a new regulation on the European Network of Employment Services (EURES) set up in 1993. The Commission sought to “make the EURES network an effective instrument for any job seeker or employer interested in intra-EU labour mobility”⁴⁷.

⁴⁵ Elizabeth Murphy-Lejeune, *Student mobility and narrative in Europe: the new strangers* (London: Routledge, 2002), 2.

⁴⁶ Jean-Claude Juncker, *A New Start for Europe: My Agenda for Jobs, Growth, Fairness and Democratic Change, Political Guidelines for the next European Commission*, 2014.

⁴⁷ Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on a European network of Employment Services, workers’ access to mobility services and the further integration of labour markets (COM(2014) 6 final, 17/01/2014).

V. Conclusions

This set of interventions aims explicitly to encourage mobility. Far from being disconnected or isolated from one another, they converge on a common agenda in which mobility is a key strategic element. While the real effects of the measures adopted are probably not commensurate with the ambition of the interventions envisaged, this action program is becoming more and more systematic and mobility is gradually gaining a preponderant role. For some populations, such as young people, the unemployed or researchers, the observation goes even further: mobility would be the miracle solution to their respective problems.

The conception of the EU as a project to promote mobility is not independent of the dynamics of generalization and intensification of global mobility flows. The measures of deregulation, regionalization and economic globalization that have been developed since the 1980s have multiplied the different types of mobility. However, in no other model of economic integration or cooperation mobility seems to have played a so relevant political role as in the case of the EU. In short, while mobility is a concomitant phenomenon with the globalization process, Europe has extracted its maximum political functionality and significance.

In any case, it may be that the European integration model based on the promotion of mobility has reached its limits. On the one hand, mobility does not seem to guarantee a territorial integration of the European continent with the establishment of supranational solidarities and the emergence of a common citizenship and identity. The functionalist approach that has inspired the European project is currently questioned. On the other hand, mobility cannot be regarded as a factor of adjustment and regulation that maximizes the opportunities of economic actors and European citizens in relation to the development of the single market. In particular, the free movement of persons does not in itself seem to ensure the integration of European workers and unemployed people. It is difficult, in this context, to consider social integration based on the promotion of mobility as a systematically applied strategy. Finally, on the basis of this type of diagnosis, the forces opposed to the process of European integration have put the principle of free movement, particularly with regard to the mobility of people, in the spotlight. These perspectives advocate for a reestablishment of national borders.

Here, a comparison between the EU and the United States can be useful. For some Europeanists, the “flat world”⁴⁸ of the United States

⁴⁸ Adrian Favell, *Eurostars and Eurocities: free movement and mobility in an integrating Europe* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub, 2008).

has been the model of inspiration more or less conscious for the EU. The ideas of freedom, mobility and individuality are in fact closely linked to the American imagination which seems to inspire the principle of free movement in Europe specially in its origins. Some observers note that mobility between states in the United States is six times greater than migration between EU member states, although the latter has grown significantly over the past 25 years⁴⁹. These observers insist that the two realities are not comparable: the United States is a federal state, a nation, with a predominant language. Even so, if mobility is considered as a movement associated with a social change⁵⁰, it can be concluded that mobility is more intense in Europe than in the United States. Mobility between countries in Europe implies much more adaptability and flexibility than between the constituent states of the United States. But the questioning goes further because it does not concern only the fact that the two realities are different. The question is whether they should remain so. Is it somehow necessary to be more American to be completely European?

Between isolationist and ultraliberal perspectives, it is necessary to consolidate a space for analytical critique of mobility. Three key issues could be at the heart of a new research agenda. On the one hand, it would be necessary to analyze more in depth the relations between the different flows of mobility (people, services, capital, goods) as well as their effects. On the other hand, it would be necessary to identify the undesired effects and discomfort caused by the intensification of mobility flows. Finally, the social distribution of benefits and losses derived from mobility flows would require a more detailed study. This type of analysis in the European context would allow to better understand and relativize the role of mobility as a driver of the integration process.

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⁴⁹ Recchi, *Mobile...*

⁵⁰ Kaufmann et al., « Motility: mobility...

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