Objective

The Undocumented Worker Transitions (UWT) project will document the factors that underlie migration flows, illegal and legal, focusing on undocumented migrants and under-documented migrants, whose migration status limits or prevents their working.

The link between work and migration flows is at its heart: what knowledge such migrants have of their host labour markets, how they find work, what work they do, what transitions between different jobs and statuses take place and what impact their working arrangements and migration have more generally both in the host country and in their countries of origin.

Recognising that gender, age and ethnicity are key factors in understanding migrant and refugee flows, UWT will analyse migration and work trajectories in a differentiated way to better understand the process.

The ethical issues are considerable and the project will guarantee its interviewees complete anonymity while ensuring that researchers' personal safety is not compromised. Its purpose is to deepen understanding and awareness of contemporary migration flows and to present clear choices to policymakers, not to provide an assessment of the efficacy of policing.

Our objectives are as follows: to give more reliable estimates of migration and refugee flows into the EU; to deepen understanding of the impact of migration flows on EU labour markets; to theorise the relationship between the presence of 'informal' or 'shadow' industry labour markets and migration flows; to map and model migrant and refugee pathways in and within the EU; to deepen knowledge of how legal status interacts with migrant labour market positions; to deepen understanding of the impact of migration flows on countries of origin; to test key theories concerning human capital and social capital in relation to migration; and to explore the particular consequences of migration for women workers, including trafficked workers. At the core are in-depth interviews with 210 migrant and refugee workers.

Related information

Report Summaries

Final Report Summary - UWT (Undocumented Worker Transitions: Compiling evidence concerning the boundaries and processes of change in the status and work of undocumented workers in Europe)
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Last updated on 2010-01-18
Retrieved on 2019-09-26

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