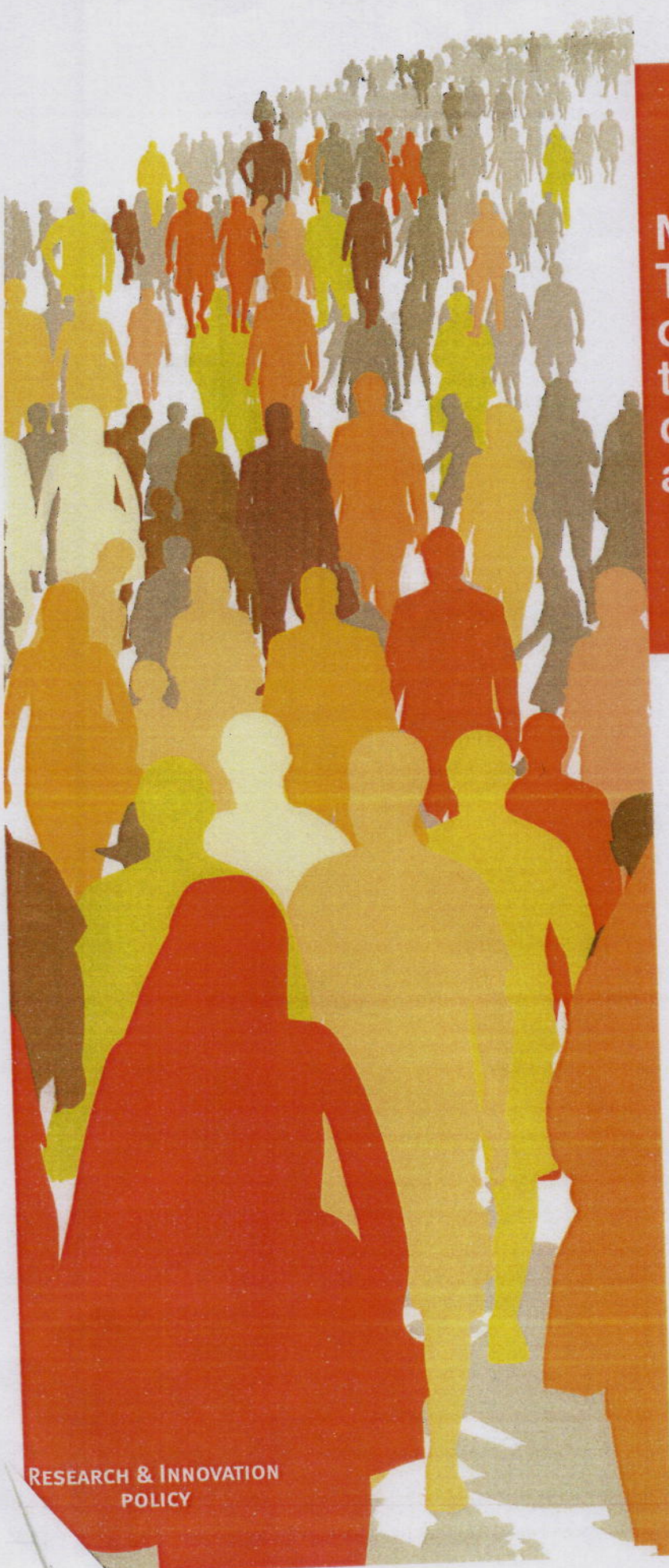




European  
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Horizon 2020  
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for Research & Innovation



Migration and asylum:  
The contribution  
of frontier research to  
the understanding  
of human mobility  
across frontiers

RESEARCH & INNOVATION  
POLICY



European Research Council  
Established by the European Commission



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

**Migration and asylum:  
The contribution of frontier research  
to the understanding of human mobility  
across frontiers**

ERC  
European Research Council



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<b>Foreword</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Examples of ERC projects by theme</b>	<b>13</b>
Migration and youth	13
Gender and migration	17
Diaspora and historical aspects of migration	21
Belonging and identity	25
Asylum, refugees and displaced persons	29
Borders and border control	33
Social inclusion	37
Health and migration	41
Migration and urban space	45
Citizenship, governance and mobility	49
Economic aspects of migration	53
Development and migration	57
<b>Annex: Country codes</b>	<b>61</b>



and provide an input to the Knowledge Centre on Migration and Demography recently launched by the Joint Research Centre.

When organising the description of projects based on the 'bottom up' choice of researchers rather than on topics prescribed in Calls for Proposals, the methodological challenge of how to cluster them for the purpose of reader-friendliness is quite interesting. The pragmatic choice implemented here – with the dual aim of remaining loyal to the researchers' own choices and of relating to current debates in the field – was to extract the headings of the various sections from the keywords used by the Principal Investigators and matching them with some of the initiatives at EU and global level in the field of migration and asylum. As a result, some sections take a more 'actor focused' angle (youth, women, diasporas, refugees), some a more 'context focused' one (borders, cities, different historical periods), others a more 'process oriented' perspective (governance, inclusion, identity formation, health protection, development). It goes without saying that some projects can fit equally well into different sections and the purpose here is simply to give examples of the variety of topics, methods and findings.

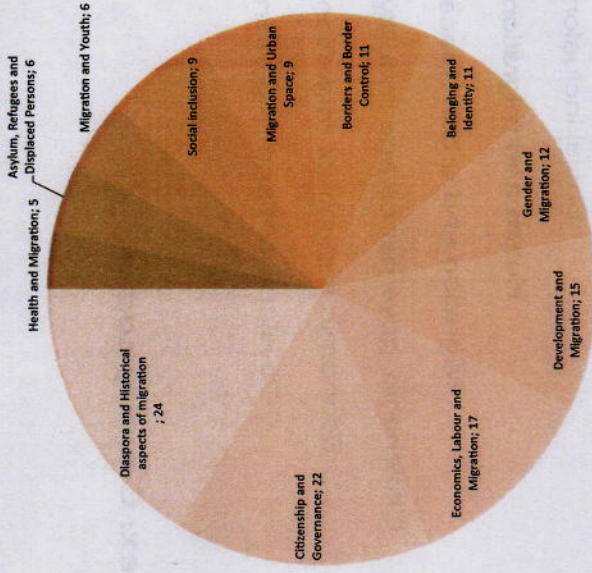
The sequence of sections is random except for the choice of starting with migration in connection with 'youth' and concluding with 'development'. After all youth migration is an especially marking experience that concerns an increasing number of young adults and children (including the worrying increase of unaccompanied minors in current migration flows towards Europe) and the link between migration and development is a key promise and at the same time a contested one in terms of both diagnostic and response.

The sections below also intend to engage with and complement the useful synthesis of migration research under the cooperation component of FP7 and Horizon 2020 (*Research on Migration: Facing realities and maximising opportunities*), contribute to the Task Force on Migration established by the Directorate General for Research and Innovation

A mapping of what ERC-supported researchers choose to focus on, in which stage of their career (Starting, Consolidator, Advanced grantees), from which countries, both in terms of researchers themselves and of Host Institutions (the two often being different given researchers' mobility), and of ERC budget allocated to the relevant projects is offered in the data below.

As shown in Figure 1, since the beginning of the ERC in 2007, most projects that have been selected by our panels of experts have focussed on the historical roots of migration, looking at refugees and migrants from a governance and legal framework, as well as from a socio-economic perspective. These topics reflect the fact that migration has been at the heart of human history, influencing the creation of communities throughout the ages. The experience of mobility, forced or voluntary, and the issues that it brings, raised questions that have been explored by our research community over the last decade. These projects have delivered new insights into the complexity of migration and refugee issues and have provided food for thought on matters that need serious attention in a knowledge based society.

Figure 1: Number of ERC projects funded since 2007 until Starting Grant 2016 by main research themes related to migration



Migration related issues have been a major focus of research explored by the research community supported by the ERC with strong increase between 2008 and 2011 and then again a 'pick' in 2015 with an increased interest in migration issues in relation to social inclusion, urban space, gender, youth, health,

economic and historical aspects of migration. Projects prominently focused on asylum and refugees have a lower curve, but projects under other categories as main focus (e.g. borders, citizenship) often tackle the situation of refugees and asylum seekers.

Figure 2: Trends over time in ERC projects related to migration and asylum (2007-2015)

