The background of the cover is a complex abstract composition of various colored rectangles and shapes. A prominent feature is a large dark blue circle with a gold outline, positioned in the upper right quadrant. Overlapping this circle and other elements are several other shapes: a white rectangle, a red triangle, and a dark blue rectangle. The overall color palette includes shades of gold, dark blue, red, and brown. The entire design is framed by a dark red border.

*Emerging European
migration policies
and MPG's first ten years*

Jan Niessen – Lori Lindburg – Beth Ginsburg – Yongmi Schibel

***Emerging European migration policies
and MPG's first ten years***

Introduction

This collective memoir chronicles the early development of the Migration Policy Group (MPG) and its ground-breaking work amidst the backdrop of emerging European policies on migration and related issues of integration and anti-discrimination from the mid-1990's and throughout the early 2000's. Formally established in 1995, MPG was the first European independent organisation that exclusively dealt with these issues. In response to rapid changes in Europe, it was launched as a 'think-and-do-tank' with the ambition to make significant contributions to the development of European policies in these areas. Many of the initiatives that MPG spearheaded or was involved in at the time matured over the years, and many of them still exist today in one form or another.

We feel that this is an important story to tell – that of a new organisation that emerged to play a pivotal role in Europe's migration, integration and anti-discrimination dialogue and policy formation. These issues provoked considerable debate and anxiety within European countries at the time, issues that are still pressing and challenging today, making this story all the more relevant. Those who are active in these areas currently may be interested to learn how a young organisation chose to respond to these challenges by cooperating with European institutions and engaging multiple and relevant stakeholders who could learn from each other.

This manuscript is not an attempt to provide the full story of MPG. It is, rather, the recollections of a few key staff members who were part of the organisation at various points during its first decade up until 2005, and who helped lay the foundation for MPG's role in the development of European policies. Throughout the text, MPG and 'we' are used interchangeably, the 'we' constitutes the staff members listed in the annex. The authors acknowledge that this rendering is not comprehensive. Not all of MPG's staff are named, nor was it possible to list the dozens of organisations with whom MPG partnered who were instrumental in our ability to influence European policies. We invite scholars or other interested parties to dig deeper and to pose questions that we have not sufficiently addressed.

The document is structured as follows. The first chapter discusses why and how MPG was created and the challenges it had to overcome. Next, we look at how the Council of Europe and the European Union were dealing with migration, integration and anti-discrimination, and how MPG began working with both institutions. In the following chapters, we look at the most ground-breaking projects MPG undertook. This work helped to position MPG as an influential organisation and preferred partner in projects of both smaller and larger scale and impact.

MPG 2005 and beyond

While this collective memoir seeks to capture MPG's impact during its founding years from the perspectives of a few of its early and passionate staff, the organisation continues today to play a constructive role in shaping European laws and policies on integration, migration and anti-discrimination.

MPG continues to inform, mobilise and innovate actions aimed at achieving lasting progress towards more open and inclusive societies, championing a large repertoire of efforts that include: high-profile publications; co-managing the European Equality Law Network; coordinating the European Website on Integration (EWSI); further developing the Migrant Integration Policy Index; and include local and regional dimensions (WHOLECOM and REGIN); engaging key stakeholders in policy debates; increasing voter participation of diverse voters (VoteBrussels and VoteEuropa, New Europeans Initiative); creating opportunities for multi-level stakeholders to adapt best practices (Cities, Grow, Spring); leading the MEGA and NES multi-stakeholder partnership to support migrant entrepreneurship, and more.

The authors wish to thank Jo-Ann Butler, Antonio Cruz, Simon Hix, Majid El Jarroudi, Mirjam de Jong, Paul Lappalainen, Gerben van Lent, Stephen Pittam, Mindy Sawhney and Patrick Yu for helping to refresh our memory of these important early years. In particular we would like to thank Isabelle Chopin, MPG's current Director, who was with MPG from its beginnings, and Marcel Zwamborn, with whom we worked on many projects. Our thanks also to Anna van Oosterom and Kees Reniers for design and production of the report.

Jan Niessen – Lori Lindburg – Beth Ginsburg – Yongmi Schibel
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1 Unchartered waters

In the 1990s, many European countries were struggling with migration and immigrant integration. The number of migrants was rising, accompanied by pronounced anti-immigrant rhetoric and racism, and inadequate policy responses. The need for successful integration posed serious challenges for the receiving

countries. A growing question was whether these issues also needed to be tackled at the European level. We answered this question with a resounding ‘yes’, arguing that a European organisation was needed that would engage both governmental and non-governmental actors in well-informed migration policy debates.

Migrants and refugees

Unless they are fleeing persecution, war, or other violent hardships, people usually migrate for economic (migration for self-/employment) and social reasons (often for family reunification). According to the 2000 IOM World Migration Report, the number of long-term international migrants – persons residing in a foreign country for more than one year – was growing steadily during the last 35 years of the twentieth century. There were an estimated 75 million migrants in 1965, 84 million in 1975 and 105 million in 1985. Five years later their numbers had grown to 120 million and to 150 million in 2000. Almost half of them were women.

Migration often occurred within the same continent, and more than half of the migrants were living in developing countries. The industrialized countries experienced significant growth in their immigrant populations during the 1990’s. In 1986-1987, about 36 million international migrants lived in the United States, France, Germany, Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom. A decade later, more than 46 million international migrants were reported to be living in these countries, a more than 25 percent increase.

The other significant migration involved those fleeing violent hardship. According to the UNHCR’s report State of the world refugees, in 1999, there were more than 20 million refugees and asylum-seekers and internally displaced persons in the world, of which six million were in Africa, seven million in Asia, six million in Europe, one million in North America and one million in Latin America, the Caribbean and Oceania.

Germany received the largest number of asylum-seekers during 1999 (93.000), followed by the United Kingdom (89.700) and Switzerland (46.100). The Netherlands, which had been the third largest asylum-seeker receiving country in 1998, fell to the fourth position in 1999, whereas Switzerland moved from the fourth to the third position.

Compared to its total population size, Switzerland received the largest number of asylum-seekers in Europe in 1999 (6.5 asylum-seekers per 1,000 inhabitants), followed by Belgium (3.5) and Austria and the Netherlands (both 2.0). France received the lowest number of asylum-seekers compared to its total population during 1999 (0.5), almost half the European average (0.9).

1.1. A new organisation

At this time, national migration NGOs were rarely working together at the European level, likely a consequence of the dominant view that migration was the domain of national policy. Only the Brussels-based Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME) operated at the European level. It organised exchanges between its members (namely, churches and church-based organisations), participated as an observer in the Council of Europe's Committee on Migration (CDMG), and worked in Brussels with members of the European Parliament and the European Commission. CCME drafted proposals for European immigration policies and legislative measures to secure migrants' residence rights and protection against discrimination. It also published a monthly news sheet and briefing papers.

Independent organisation

CCME's work served an audience that extended beyond its ecumenical membership. The organisation felt that the impact and sustainability of some of its initiatives could be enhanced when they were carried out by a neutral organisation. A report prepared by the Netherlands Institute of Human Rights (SIM), in cooperation with CCME, underscored multiple stakeholders' view of the need for a European migration and anti-discrimination organisation that was truly independent. Such an organisation should neither be part of nor holding close links to any other organisation, such as churches, trade unions, political parties or governmental agencies. It should use research and dialogue as a means to develop informed policy options around which to build broad support.

MPG was the response to this unmet need and was founded as an independent organisation in 1995. MPG assumed the responsibility for three CCME initiatives, namely the Migration NewsSheet, the Starting Line and the Round Tables on Societal Integration. Benefitting from CCME's standing and good reputation, MPG further developed and financed these initiatives and generated coalitions of support for them¹. In the run up to its formal creation and for some years thereafter, the two organisations worked closely together, which helped MPG to establish itself as an independent organisation.

Not-for-profit

MPG was set up as a not-for-profit organisation rather than a commercial group of independent associates. It was incorporated as a foundation under Dutch law and was governed by a small board. As a not-for profit, MPG was better positioned to cooperate with other organisations to fund its work through philanthropic, governmental and other funding streams.

We chose the name Migration Policy Group (MPG) intentionally as an organising principle for our work: staff were selected for their expertise and were expected to be entrepreneurial, advance their own portfolios and further develop their expertise and profiles. Bringing them together under one roof made MPG a strong, integrated and respected organisation.

1.2. A pioneering staff

As staff members of this organisation in the making, we were highly motivated and driven to work – initially on a project basis. We worked more days and hours than we

¹ https://ccme.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/2004-10-26_CCME_Bro-History_of_CCME_40_years.pdf

were paid for. MPG's early years were a time before the internet, email and mobile phones. We made photocopies and built an archive of all relevant decisions taken by European institutions; we relied on faxes and only later on email as it emerged as a common tool. International calls were expensive and phone lines were not always reliable. Flights were expensive, and we relied on the cheapest forms of transport. We worked in cramped offices. Yet many of us talk about this as one of the most rewarding periods in our professional lives. Europe was rapidly changing and we were on the frontlines.



To the left of the white building, the Ecumenical Centre in Brussels housed MPG's first office

1.3. Positioning a new organisation

As a new organisation, one of MPG's main challenges was to position and brand itself as an independent 'think-and-do-tank' and to demonstrate its *raison d'être*. We specifically chose not to become a membership organisation that was beholden to a constituency who would raise its specific concerns with the European institutions in Brussels and Strasbourg. Because of MPG's independent role, we continually had to make its position known to both civil servants and migration advocates, both of whom at times mistrusted our ties to the other. We viewed this as healthy affirmation that we were striking the right position, further building MPG's credibility among multiple stakeholders.

Substantive discussions

We consulted with many respected advocacy groups across Europe, but we did not want MPG to become one. We encouraged and assisted NGOs in joining forces at the European level, but only as a credible facilitator of well-informed policy debates. The consultations we organised were to bring together a variety of stakeholders for substantive discussions. In our contacts with officials and NGOs, we wanted to strike a constructive and non-confrontational stance.

Policy-oriented research

MPG often worked with academia, made use of existing and undertook its own international comparative policy research. Our research was inspired by consultations with stakeholders, often helping us to formulate precise research questions, such as what are the commonalities in approaches promoting societal integration and which practices are transferable? Which legal provisions are in place in which countries that secure residence, facilitate the acquisition of citizenship and protect against discrimination? What do countries need to do to adapt their national law to European regulations? MPG discussed the

outcomes of our research with stakeholders – be they governmental institutions or non-governmental actors – before making them public. In this way, we were able to formulate relevant and applicable policy proposals that were never general but always specific.

On a shoestring

Another formidable challenge MPG faced in its infancy was to generate sufficient financial support for its activities. Like many nascent organisations, MPG had to operate on a shoestring budget during its formative years. Funds had to be raised for every project at a time when funding for migration and integration was very limited. The Council of Europe (COE), for instance, did not pay consultancy fees, thus MPG’s work for it was completely *pro bono* (other than for travel and accommodation expenses). We engaged in this work willingly because an invitation and opportunity to work with the Council of Europe underscored our expertise and enhanced MPG’s visibility and reputation across Europe.

Diversified income

As a new organisation in the 1990s, MPG looked for ways to fund our mission and mandate. National agencies were not inclined to sponsor an independent European migration organisation, and only a few philanthropic foundations had a European brief. The European Union did not have a budget for migration, integration or anti-discrimination, nor were there subsidies for projects or calls for tender, as was the case after 2000. We pieced together project work for the EU Commission and received very small grants for the Migration NewsSheet, the Round Tables on Societal Integration, and the Starting Line. As with most new non-profit organisations, building an operational reserve was next to impossible, with most funds restricted to project work, making MPG’s financial situation very tenuous. The organisation nevertheless managed to survive those early years.

Core funding

The Joyce Mertz Gilmore Foundation was the first foundation to make a one-off grant available to MPG to cover its core costs. Grants from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, the Barrow Cadbury Trust and, from 2000 onwards, the Atlantic Philanthropies, eventually transitioned to funding MPG’s operational costs over a longer period.

Fundraising

Over time, MPG successfully began to raise project funding from US- and European-based foundations: the Open Society Foundations (OSF) and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation sponsored an anti-discrimination project; The German Marshall Fund of the United States sponsored several transatlantic exchanges; the Netherlands-based European Cultural Foundation contributed to a joint project with the Council of Europe on diversity. MPG further diversified its funding base, generating income from the private sector and through subscriptions for the Migration NewsSheet. The ‘mixed’ nature of MPG’s funding strengthened our independence. While core funding enabled us to invest time into new topics that we considered relevant, our project work allowed us to scale up activities and deepen our relationship with key stakeholders.

1.4. Comparative perspectives

At this time, few migration actors and academics worked together at the European level. Many used different languages and spoke from the varying perspectives of civil servants, advocates, bureaucrats or academics. Much work would need to be done to arrive at a common and workable understanding of the situation in Europe.

French was still the dominant working language of the European Union. French and English were the two official working languages of the Council of Europe. Those who were not able to speak either of these languages risked being left out of international cooperation discussions altogether. Translation and interpretation slowed down meetings' progress and often contributed to confusion.

English gradually became the *lingua franca* of international dialogue. Its dominance had a strong impact on how the issues at hand were defined and discussed. This, in itself, created additional misunderstandings, as the most frequently used concepts did not always align with the perspectives of individual countries. MPG learned to develop a comparative perspective that accounted for distinct national elements and concepts. We sought to familiarise and promote adoption of a common nomenclature across multiple forums in Europe.

Comparing countries

Most European countries did not consider themselves to be countries of immigration, although many of them counted sizable groups of foreign workers or 'overseas citizens' from former colonies among their resident populations. Many governmental and non-governmental actors insisted on the unique character of European countries and were adamant that they could not be compared with each other, let alone with North American countries. These actors were neither keen to acknowledge that they were comparatively inexperienced on migration and integration issues and had much to learn from countries with longer immigration histories.

In contrast, MPG believed that comparability could be created by clearly describing the framework and the salient factors influencing a policy, its implementation and impact. Rather than looking at overall 'models' of migration and integration, MPG highlighted specific

themes and framed its events as dialogues, thus making the exchanges more palatable to European actors. We focused on labour market assessments, admission rules, equal treatment, anti-discrimination and diversity.

What is a migrant?

Various terms were used for international migrants. 'Migrants' were seen as people on the move between countries and 'immigrants' as people who had established themselves in a new country. The latter term was used in some countries, while in others, such individuals were referred to as 'guest-workers', or 'foreign-born'. Sometimes a differentiation was made between 'first-', 'second-', or 'third-generation immigrants'. Among them was a particular group, namely inhabitants of former colonies who were considered citizens of their former colonial powers, such as Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and the UK. In a few countries, the term 'Black' and 'ethnic minorities' was used; in other countries, people with a migration background were referred to as 'ethnic minorities'.

Diversity

Europe's population was rapidly becoming very diverse from the 1990s onwards as a consequence of the growing number of migrants and refugees living within its borders. Whether people had arrived in the country as temporary or permanent workers, inhabitants of former colonies, or whether they wished to be reunited with their families, different rules regulated their admission and status within receiving countries. MPG argued that there was not a 'one-size-fits-all' policy for the different groups, and that both general and specific measures were needed to address their diverse and precise situations. We adopted the language of International Conventions, which distinguishes between various types of migrants and refugees and asylum-seekers, as well as their status and associated rights.

Population by citizenship (1 January 1991) Europe, Africa, America and Asia

	Europe (non-EU)	Africa	America	Asia
Belgium	107.227	181.284	19.348	22.205
Denmark	71.271	7.063	7.920	38.247
Germany	3.016.091	197.974	144.633	513.420
Greece	40.213	19.117	28.647	36.130
Spain	33.336	39.875	98.438	36.130
France	349.594	1.633.142	72.758	226.956
Ireland	1.800		76.000	
Italy	118.024	238.365	128.362	140.279
Luxembourg	5.132	1.724	1.836	1.612
Netherlands	234.210	186.225	42.153	52.956
Portugal	2.646	45.255	26.369	4.154
United Kingdom	149.000	148.000	221.000	453.000

Taken from an EU Commission Communication on immigration and Asylum (1994)

Division of labour

Some actors understood ‘migrants’ to be an umbrella term that included refugees and asylum-seekers, while others considered them to be mutually exclusive categories. This resulted in a division of labour between organisations working on migration and those working on refugees and asylum. While acknowledging that the line between the two categories was often blurry and that migrants and refugees have a lot in common, MPG decided for pragmatic reasons to work almost exclusively on migration. The policy issues for both groups were quite different, and several other organisations were already working to address refugee and asylum issues.

Societal integration

‘Integration’ was a controversial term that various stakeholders interpreted or described differently. Many

considered it to mean assimilating into the receiving country, a concept that became increasingly contentious over time for putting the onus on newcomers to blend into the receiving culture, often at the expense of their own cultural heritage and expression. In the UK, the term was rejected altogether. Groups of British citizens of different racial and ethnic backgrounds did not identify as immigrants and used the term ‘racial justice’ instead, believing that it was the responsibility of the receiving culture to create fair and equal access for their former colonial subjects and their families. In France, integration was thought to be a matter of ‘individual human rights’ and ‘equality before the law’. In Germany, integration was all about the ‘equal treatment of people’, irrespective of their national or ethnic origin. Debates often erupted over whether to follow a ‘minority rights’ or ‘individual rights’ approach.

At MPG, we opted to use the term ‘societal integration’ to refer to strategies for incorporating people with different migrant backgrounds into very different European societies. It referred not only to cultural, but also to socio-economic inclusion, with receiving countries bearing significant responsibility for removing barriers to social and economic participation in society.

Laying the foundation

MPG’s adoption of the term ‘socio-economic integration’ sought to specifically address the ways that receiving countries were building inclusive policies and practices, with additional focus given to economic inclusion via employment and enterprise. We chose not to engage in debates on ‘multiculturalism’ and instead to work with partners on economic and organisational inclusion and diversity. From our perspective, measures that secured residence rights, allowed for family reunion, facilitated political and economic participation, provided access to citizenship and offered protection against discrimination would lay a solid foundation for the societal integration of immigrants.

Racism

‘Racism’ was another term that provoked controversy throughout Europe. In Britain, racism referred to discrimination predominantly towards Black and Asian minorities. In Germany, racism was linked to the atrocities of the Nazi regime’s race legislation and the Holocaust. In some European countries, the concept of ‘race’ and, thus ‘racism’, were rejected altogether as social constructs, preferring terminology referring to ethnicity. The term ‘xenophobia’ (fear and hatred of foreigners) was used in some European countries and for some time at the European level. In line with the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), MPG preferred to use the term ‘racial and ethnic discrimination’.

Eurobarometer 1997

A European Union-wide survey carried out in Spring 1997 depicted a worrying level of racism and xenophobia in Member States, with nearly 33% of those interviewed openly describing themselves as ‘quite racist’ or ‘very racist’.

Dissatisfaction with life circumstances, fear of unemployment, insecurity about the future, and/or low confidence in the way public authorities and the political establishment were functioning in their countries were defining attributes of those who ranked themselves at the top of the racist scale and who were more likely to agree with negative stereotypes on immigrants and minorities. Many of the self-declared ‘racists’ were, in fact, ‘xenophobic’, as the ‘minorities’ who were the target of racist feeling in each country varied according to its colonial and migration history and the recent arrival of refugees.

The 1997 survey results demonstrate the complexity of the ‘racism’ phenomenon. Feelings of racism often co-exist with a strong belief in the democratic system and respect for fundamental and social rights and freedoms. A majority of Europeans who were surveyed at the time felt that society should be inclusive and offer equal rights to all citizens, including those from immigrant and minority groups. But as the questions became more detailed as to which rights should apply under all circumstances, the more fractures in opinion became evident. Many respondents thought it was necessary to limit the rights of those who were considered ‘problem’ groups – i.e., those immigrants who were in the European Union illegally, involved in crime and/or who were unemployed.

Taken from an EU press release

1.5. Influencing policies

MPG did not fully participate in the often-passionate debates on migration frameworks, integration models and anti-discrimination concepts, but sought instead to focus discussions on concrete European policy measures. The greatest obstacle we had to surmount here was to overcome widespread mistrust about European cooperation. This applied more to the European Union than to the Council of Europe.

Euroscepticism

European governments at this time were very reluctant to work together to develop EU policies. They preferred exchanges on national policies (a common Council of Europe practice) over EU policymaking that normally led to binding measures on their countries. The EU's legal measures were to a higher degree enforceable than Council of Europe Conventions, which was one of the reasons why MPG over time began to work more with the EU than with the Council.

Race to the bottom

NGOs, on the other hand, were inclined to see EU policies as an extension of national migration and refugee policies, thereby reinforcing these policies' restrictive tendencies. They were also worried about EU policymaking as a 'race to the bottom,' resulting in the lowest common denominator in terms of inclusiveness and human rights. In other words, neither governments nor NGOs wanted Brussels to tell them what to do. This mindset misconstrued how decisions at the European level were actually made.

EU decision-making

In most instances, the European Commission took the initiative to prepare policy proposals, for which it consulted the Brussels-based member states' ambassadors. The

outcome of these deliberations was sent to the Council of Ministers, comprised of ministers of member states' governments. After consultation with or approval of the European Parliament, the Council then took a final decision for which a unanimous vote was usually required. Once adopted, the measure had to be implemented nationally, which required public and national parliamentary debate. The Commission and the Court of Justice oversaw that implementation was done properly.

In other words, European policies were the outcome of a collaborative effort involving the member states' governments and the European Parliament. They could reinforce or change existing national policies. However, when an adopted measure turned out to be unpopular in a particular member state, national governments were quick to blame 'Brussels', just as they claimed credit when the measure met with public support.

National partners

MPG gave priority to developing and maintaining a good working relationship with the EU Commission given the Commission's prominent role in the formation of EU policies. We also worked with the European Parliament and with our national partners in order to influence their respective government's stance vis-à-vis EU policies. To that end, we began to develop a European-wide network of practitioners and academics as well as a method for monitoring policy implementation.

Consultations

Shedding light on the EU decision-making process was an integral part of MPG's work since many actors were not familiar with how European policies came about. Our strategy for influencing policies mirrored the way the EU operated. With the help of the Migration News-Sheet, we followed what was happening in the member states and consulted regularly with key stakeholders to



Across the street from MPG's office was the Berlaymont Building, the seat of the EU Commission. It took 13 years to renovate the building, including the removal of asbestos, for which it was hidden behind a white protective screen.

formulate policy proposals on key topics. We shared this information and our carefully formulated policy proposals with national NGOs in order to mobilise necessary support before sharing them with European Commission and European Parliament officials. We then encouraged national NGOs to put pressure on their governments.

Horizontal exchange

Whenever a topic on integration, migration or anti-discrimination became the subject of official discussions and negotiations in Brussels, MPG asked our partners in the member states to increase the pressure on their governments. In this way, we went back and forth between member state capitals and Brussels and between EU institutions and national NGOs. Wherever possible, we monitored together with our partners the implementation of adopted measures. The 'horizontal' exchange between our partners also provided them with factual,

positive and negative examples from other countries. Many partners used these examples to inform national debates, which were frequently dominated by myths and preconceptions.

Overall, MPG took a realistic stance on what we believed European institutions could do to improve the position of migrants and to promote their equal treatment. We believed that the EU could play a constructive role in the formation of sound migration policies. While certainly not blind to the imperfections of European policymaking, we preferred to engage and to improve upon what had already been achieved.

As the next Chapter illustrates, MPG took a unified view of Europe, rather than accepting the erroneous view of a divide between the 'progressive' and human rights-based Council of Europe and the 'restrictive' and interest-based European Union.

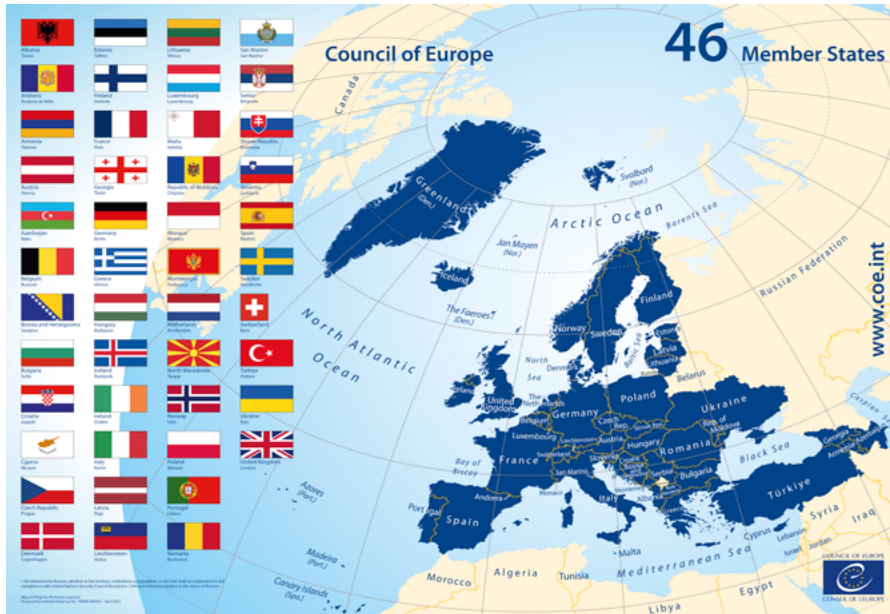


Palais de l'Europe, seat of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg

2 The European landscape

To put MPG's work in context, we describe in this section how the Council of Europe and the European Union were working on migration, integration and anti-discrimination, and how MPG began

to work with them. The Council and the Union are very different institutions and are governed by distinct rules. Their partially overlapping membership increased after the fall of the Iron Curtain.



The Council's membership in 2023

2.1. The Council of Europe

The Strasbourg-headquartered Council of Europe was founded in 1949, in the aftermath of WWII, with the aim to uphold human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Europe. At the time, this was the only forum in which member governments were working together on migration, integration and non-discrimination. In the early 1990's, its membership consisted of almost twenty member states.

Setting standards

The Council adopted a series of international human rights instruments, such as the 1953 European Convention on Human Rights (and its Protocol 12, adopted in 2000) and the 1961 European Social Charter, both of which include provisions on equality and anti-discrimination. Other conventions focused on protecting migrants' rights and the acquisition of citizenship, and were adopted in 1977 and 1997, respectively.

Holding governments accountable

MPG viewed international human rights conventions as good starting points for the formation and review of national migration policies. These conventions both defined the obligations of governments and the rights of migrants, and adhering states were required to base their national policies on these instruments. The conventions' supervisory mechanisms not only held governments accountable, but also provided a platform for debate with NGOs. Drafting international law was often a complex and time-consuming process, as was the monitoring of its implementation. In the drafting process, aspirational proposals were often watered down and supervision often became a cumbersome diplomatic exercise. For these reasons, many NGOs did not view this as a worthwhile investment of time for achieving so little.

Solid foundation

MPG valued the setting of international standards. International standards not only provide a good foundation for the development of national policies, but also prevent countries from reneging when political winds change and national policies threaten to become more restrictive. In addition, such standards facilitated countries' ability to compare themselves with and learn from one another. MPG thus maintained a strong focus on international human rights standards and used them to draft concrete policy proposals and to undertake policy assessments.

Policy exchanges

Besides its international standard-setting work, the Council of Europe organised policy exchanges, for which it created various working parties comprised of member state representatives and senior Council staff. The Council's European Committee on Migration (CDMG) focused on migration, and CCME was one of the few non-governmental organisations that was allowed to attend its meetings as an observer. MPG staff members were

among the independent experts who were occasionally invited to offer their expertise.

MPG provided background research and wrote and assisted with editing various Council of Europe publications and was also involved in a task force that drafted immigration policy proposals. In addition to enhancing MPG's reputation and visibility, our work with the Council helped to develop MPG's European-wide network of policymakers, NGO's and academics.

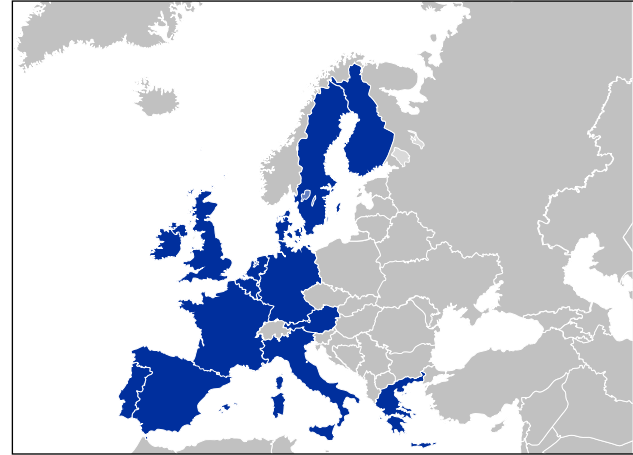
2.2. The European Union

The European Economic Community (EC), the forerunner of the European Union (EU), was the other high-level policy platform that operated at the European level. Created in 1958, its aim was to bring about economic integration between its founding six member states. By 1990, the EC had grown to twelve member countries. Its executive arm, the European Commission, was housed in Brussels. The legislative branch comprised the Council of Ministers (from national governments) together with the European Parliament, which met in both Brussels and Strasbourg. The EC also had a judicial branch: the European Court of Justice (ECJ).

A common market

The EC's focus was on the creation of a common market to be based on four freedoms: the free movement of goods, services, capital and people. To that end, national physical, fiscal and technical barriers to free movement had to be removed or replaced with European-level rules. The deadline for the creation of the internal market was set for 31 December 1992, by which date the control at the EC's internal borders also had to be removed, thus facilitating cross-border trade of goods and services and allowing people to travel freely.

Enlargements



The six EC founding member states in 1958 (left). In 1992, the EC was transformed into the EU, which counted fifteen members in 1995 (right). With each enlargement, MPG was able to expand its network and build solid working relationships with NGOs and academics in the new member states. We were also able to do so in Norway and Switzerland, both of which had voted against accession in 1995 and 1996, respectively, and who were thus designated as associated states, a status Turkey had held since 1964.

Free movement

Since 1958, nationals of the founding six and successive new EC member states had the right to move to and work in an EC member state other than their own. They were to be treated equally in the labour and housing markets and were entitled to family reunion. A series of binding legislative measures prepared by the European Commission facilitated and regulated this type of intra-EC migration, backed up by rulings of the ECJ. The free movement of people was seen as essential for the completion of the internal market.

In 1990, free movement rights were gradually extended to unemployed people and pensioners. In addition, new member states, as well as the associated states Norway and Switzerland, had to incorporate these provisions of

EC law into their national bodies of law. The implementation was monitored by the European Commission and the ECJ was called in when national laws deviated from EC law.

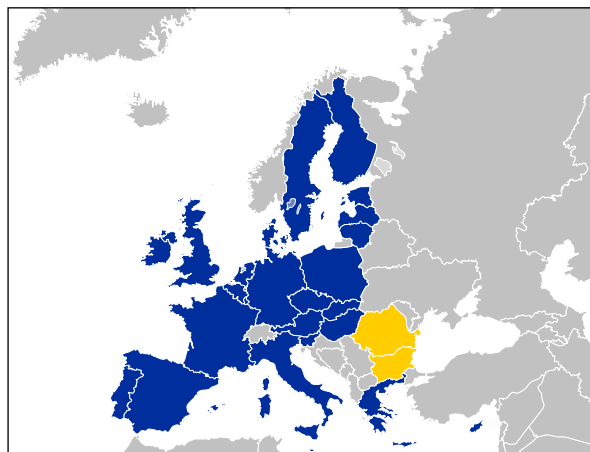
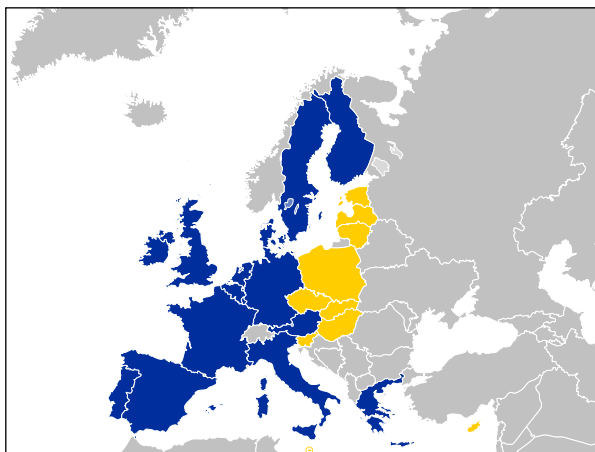
Extra-European migration

The situation was entirely different regarding extra-EC migration. While nationals of a member state had the right to move to any member state on the basis of EC law, non-EC nationals did not have the right to migrate to a member state, whether they came directly from a non-member state (a third country), or from another member state where they were legally residing. These so-called 'third-country nationals' could only be granted admission to another member state on the basis of the national migration rules of the member state concerned.

That the admission of non-EC nationals was considered to be strictly a matter of national sovereignty did not mean that the individual member states were not working together on migration. They discussed the harmonisation of their usually very different immigration rules and promoted technical cooperation on border control. This was done outside the EC's institutional framework, for which member states created various ad-hoc working groups, such as the Trevi and Schengen Groups and the Ad-hoc Group Immigration, which met behind closed doors and with little public scrutiny.

NGO networks

Traditionally, the EC institutions consulted with employers' organisations and trade unions, which were given a place within the EC's institutional framework. From the late eighties onwards, the European Commission facilitated the creation of NGO networks and covered most of their operational costs. Among them were development agencies, women's organisations, anti-poverty and, much later, anti-racism organisations. An attempt to bring migrant associations together ultimately failed due to mismanagement by the participating associations.



Ten new members entered the EU in 2004 (left) and two more in 2007 (right). In the running up of their membership, MPG worked with NGOs in these countries on migration, integration and anti-discrimination issues, bringing them up to speed with EU policies and practices and, at the same time, learned from them about related issues in their countries.

2.3. Game changers

The European landscape dramatically changed in the 1990s. The Council of Europe, and then the European Union, opened their membership to former communist countries. Two new Treaties – the 1992 Maastricht Treaty and the 1997 Amsterdam Treaty – broadened the EU's mandate. Consequently, cooperation on immigration,

integration and anti-discrimination increased – involving growing numbers of countries and NGOs – leading to adapted structures and ways of working within both European bodies. MPG benefited from these developments, which made it possible to influence policy and create platforms for European consultation and cooperation.

The European Union's expanding migration mandate

1957	Treaty of Rome EC member states	Freedom of movement of goods, services, capital and people
1976	Trevi Group	Intergovernmental cooperation on issues of terrorism, extremism and violence and, from 1985 onwards, included immigration
1985	Schengen Accords	Removal of internal border controls and strengthening of the common external border of the initial six EC states and, later, additional EU and associated states
1987	Single European Act EC Member States	The creation of the Common Market and cooperation on foreign affairs
1990	Dublin Convention	Harmonisation of refugee and asylum policies
1992	Maastricht Treaty	EU citizenship; the introduction of the Third Pillar, enhancing cooperation on justice and security, including immigration
1997	Amsterdam Treaty	Establishing an area of Freedom, Security and Justice covering asylum, immigration, and judicial co-operation in civil matters. Mandate to act on racial, ethnic and religious discrimination
2000	Human Rights Charter	Freedom of movement and residence may be granted to legally residing nationals of third countries

European citizenship

The Maastricht Treaty transformed the European Economic Community into the European Union and gave it a three-pillar structure. The first pillar dealt with socio-economic policies (the extension and regulation of the Single Market), the second, with foreign and security policies, and the third, with justice and home affairs, including migration. In this way, the international organisation evolved from a purely economic project into one with much broader goals.

The Treaty also introduced 'European Union citizenship', which was a special status reserved exclusively for nationals of the EU member states. In addition to free movement rights, these citizens acquired the right to vote in local and European Parliament elections regardless of where they lived in the EU. With more countries joining the EU, an increasing number of people benefited from these citizenship rights. This development garnered more public interest in the European project, and it was only a matter of time before an array of human and civil rights organisations began to advocate to protect citizens' rights at the European level.

Acquisition of citizenship

The introduction of EU citizenship reinforced the different status of EU nationals and resident third-country nationals. MPG argued that legally residing third-country nationals should be treated as equals to the nationals of the member state in which they resided and be given the right to move freely and vote within the EU. Their free movement was equally essential for the completion of the internal market as the right to vote was for their inclusion. Some migrant rights groups pleaded for giving legally residing third-country nationals a special European status similar to EU citizenship. MPG was in favour of making the acquisition of national citizenship easier for immigrants, which would make them also European citizens.

Immigration mandate

With a common external frontier and physical controls at internal borders nearly abolished (except for the UK and Ireland, which remained outside of Schengen), the need for common EU immigration rules was becoming much more evident. A European Commissioner was appointed in 1995 to address these issues, leading to enhanced intergovernmental cooperation, which focused almost exclusively on border controls, refugees, asylum and combatting irregular migration. MPG advocated for the adoption of EU immigration policies that were based on assessments of internal labour market needs and looked to North America for inspiration.

The Amsterdam Treaty went a step further and expanded the Union's mandate to establish an Area of Freedom, Security and Justice, which allowed for the adoption on EU immigration rules. However, the responsible Commissioner and Directorate-General (DG) largely kept the focus on issues of border control. Moreover, its legislative proposals dealing with the admission of immigrants were blocked or watered down by the EU's Coun-

cil of Ministers. The DG had more success in its efforts to promote cooperation on integration. MPG would develop a strong working relationship with this DG.

Institutional responses

The Council of Europe created the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) in 1994 and launched the 1994-1996 All Different – All Equal campaign. Soon thereafter, the EU created the high-level European Consultative Commission on Racism and Xenophobia, which laid the foundation for the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC, now the European Fundamental Rights Agency FRA). MPG established good working relationships with both agencies.

An anti-discrimination mandate

The Treaty of Amsterdam also signalled a pivotal moment in Europe's anti-racism efforts. It amended the Maastricht Treaty and included a new article mandating the EU to act on racial and ethnic discrimination. This brought the possibility of the adoption of EU anti-discrimination legislation much closer. MPG intensified its working relationship with the leading EU Commission's Directorate for Social Affairs and Employment (then known as DG V). The 1997 European Year Against Racism (EYAR) was also a game-changer. These and numerous other initiatives to fight racism took root across the EU. MPG and its partners were heavily involved in many of these efforts.

Balancing act

The EU struggled to balance the powers of the EU Council of Ministers, the European Commission and the European Parliament. The Council of Ministers represented the interests of individual member states, whereas

the Commission served the interests of the Union as a whole, with the increasing importance of the role of the European Parliament. These institutions often disagreed on what issues could be taken up by which institution and who had final decision-making power. Every policy initiative needed to be based on an article in the EU Treaties and to adhere to the strict procedures. The respective institutions zealously guarded their mandate and decision-making powers.

Truly European policies

The Ratification of the Maastricht and Amsterdam Treaties by all member states occurred after significant public and parliamentary debates and, in some countries, after additional referendums. While the EU Commission and Parliament continued to acquire more powers, these powers were still limited. This back-and-forth granting and restricting of powers was inherent in the EU decision-making process. Nevertheless, MPG

favoured a larger role for the EU Commission and Parliament. We preferred the adoption of binding EU legislative measures over policy exchanges resulting in non-binding agreements. Of the different types of EU legal measures, we preferred a Directive over a Regulation since the former allowed a more tailor-made incorporation of its provisions into member states' national bodies of law, requiring parliamentary debates and approval in the member states.

Over time, MPG's work with the Council of Europe began to diminish and we focussed more on the expanding European Union. By necessity, as a small organisation, we had to focus where we felt we could have maximum impact. While we stayed in contact with the CDMG and ECRI, from 2000 onwards we began to work more with the EU institutions, particularly the European Commission.

3 Ground-breaking initiatives

This chapter discusses some of MPG's initial ground-breaking projects. We first look at the Migration NewsSheet before turning to the Starting Line and the Societal Integration Round Tables. These projects were underway in the run-up to MPG's formal establishment in 1995. We then go on to discuss MPG's work with the private sector and our organisation of the Transatlantic Migration Dialogue. The chapter concludes by describing two projects we were asked to carry out by other organisations, namely the establishment of a network of anti-racist NGOs and the design of a Charter on anti-racism for political parties. These two projects came to an end before 2000, while work on the other projects continued.

3.1. The Migration NewsSheet

Before the onset of Europe-wide publications and the internet, there were very few means available at the international level for the collection and dissemination of information on migration, integration and anti-discrimination. The Migration NewsSheet (MNS) was, and for many years remained, the only printed European publication on these issues and on refugees and asylum.

Of primary focus were policy initiatives and decisions taken by the member states of the European Union, the Council of Europe and various other intergovernmental bodies. The monthly also chronicled important legal developments at the European Court of Justice and the European Court of Human Rights. It made references to these institutions' relevant documents which, though



not often confidential, were nevertheless quite difficult and time-consuming to obtain.

Readership

The rather unique character of the NewsSheet's information and sources, its recognition of the need to limit coverage to facts, and its commitment to objective reporting, generated interest from a wide and varied group of subscribers, including immigrants, lawyers, researchers, activists, welfare organisations, judges, ministers and civil servants who were dealing with migration and asylum in Europe, and their counterparts in Australia, Canada and the United States. Over the years, we carefully built up a list of between 850 and 900 subscribers who also received the CCME Briefing Papers, which provided analysis on the development of European migration policies². We often turned to MNS subscribers to participate in our projects such as the Starting Line and the Societal Integration Round Tables. Partners helped open doors for MPG to work with governmental organisations.

² <https://ccme.eu/index.php/downloads/archive/briefing-papers>

Migration NewsSheet (MNS) Partners

At various points in its production, Dutch, French, Italian and British organisations partnered to provide both content and modest financial support for the NewsSheet, which for a few years was published in English, French and Italian.

In 1992, CCME, the European Centre for Work and Society, the Dutch National Bureau against Racism (LBR) and the Dutch Centre for Foreigners (NCB) formed the European Information network (EIN) whose purpose was to ensure the publication's continuation. After 1995,

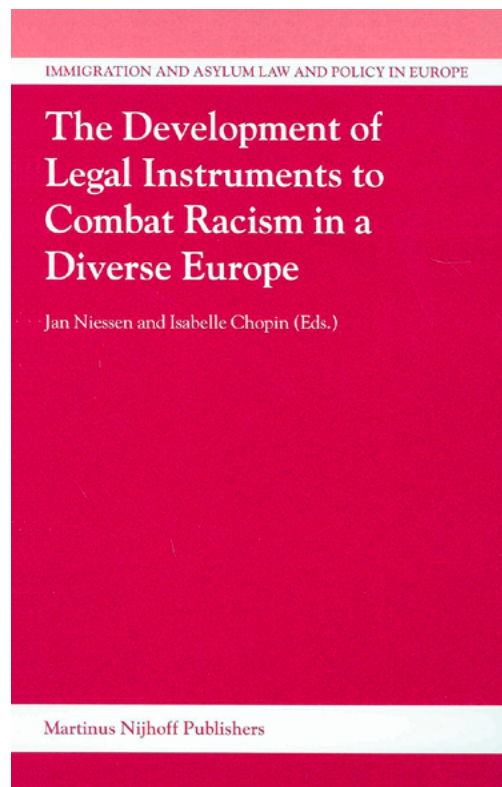
MPG would assume this role. Staff of the Viennese Integration Fund, the Swedish refugee rights organisation, Farr, the Nijmegen University and the Centre for the Study of International Migration (CIEMI) assisted with the collection of information.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) would eventually help fund and distribute the MNS among their constituencies. The Council of Europe, the US State Department and the Canadian Ministry for Citizenship and Immigration took out a block subscription.

MNS ceased to exist in 2017 after more than 30 years without missing a single month's publication. It always was, out of financial necessity, a subscription-based publication, however, it lost most of its NGO subscriber base when these organisations were faced with drastic budget cuts. In addition, other publications were launched that were free of charge, and the internet soon became the vehicle for information-sharing. Governmental and non-governmental organisations developed websites that provided their own publicity and shared news and reports with their respective constituencies and the wider public.

The European Journal on Migration and Law

Not long after MPG had assumed responsibility for the Migration NewsSheet, we approached Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, a highly regarded global publisher, about the possibility of partnership. When this idea did not take hold (the financial risk was considered to be too high), another did, namely that of developing a new scientific journal that would provide analysis of European migration policy developments. The European Journal of Migration and Law was thus launched, published by the





Centre for Migration Law at Nijmegen University in the Netherlands in cooperation with MPG. The Centre took the lead and put together an editorial team with MPG joining its advisory board. MPG also co-edited a book series on Immigration and Asylum Law and Policy in Europe that was launched by the same publisher. MPG staff contributed several articles for the Journal and edited two of its books. In addition to documenting and reflecting on our work, these publications helped to foster MPG's relationship with academia.

3.2. The Anti-discrimination Law Campaign

Racism and anti-immigrant sentiment in Europe escalated during the last decennia of the 20th century. Racial and ethnic minorities were discriminated against in the labour and housing markets, in health, education, professional development and other services. Skinheads were marching in the streets, immigrants and minorities suffered violent attacks, and racist murders were committed. Refugee reception centres and mosques were set on fire and Jewish graves desecrated.

Parliamentary inquiries

In the eighties, the European Parliament twice launched an Inquiry into the Rise of Fascism and Racism in Europe. The rapporteur of the second inquiry turned to the publisher of the Migration NewsSheet, asking him to conduct background research and provide input for his report, which was published in 1991³. Among its many recommendations, the report called for European legislative measures against racial discrimination.

Unequal protection

The level of protection against racial and ethnic discrimination at this time varied considerably between European countries, resulting in unequal protection against racism. Most EU member states had constitutional equality and anti-discrimination provisions included within their civil, administrative and penal systems, and some had more specific anti-discrimination and equality provisions. Only six of the fifteen member states had specific and more elaborated legislation prohibiting certain forms of discrimination (for example, antisemitism and the denial of the Holocaust). However, the scope and implementation of these diverse pieces of legislation and provisions varied from one country to another. EU legislation could remedy this.

³ <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/d8734ae4-921b-487c-9086-2941571e1cf1>

Drafting the Starting Line

In 1992, a small working party comprised of experts from six EU member states (Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and the UK) and a former staff member of the EU Commission began – under CCME’s chairmanship – to draft a proposal for EU legislation against racial and ethnic discrimination. Within a year, the working party reached an agreement on the text of the proposal, which it called ‘the Starting Line’⁴. The drafters recognised that EU institutions lacked the explicit power to act on racial discrimination. Following the logic of the internal market, they maintained that racial discrimination prevented some EU nationals from fully exercising their rights to free movement.

Using existing instruments

The drafters drew upon anti-discrimination and equality provisions in the UN International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. They also looked at the British Race Relations Act. Most importantly, they borrowed concepts such as ‘direct’ and ‘indirect discrimination’, ‘harassment’, ‘victimisation’ and the ‘sharing of the burden of proof’ from existing EU gender equality legislation. In other words, what the drafters proposed was not new or radical, something they would frequently remind its opponents.

Strategic choice

The drafters’ choice for a Directive was a strategic move, since it would formulate the goals and minimum standards to be achieved. This would leave considerable freedom to the member states to incorporate these standards into national law and, should they wish, to go beyond them. This would further stimulate debates at the national level.

The proposal was circulated among a few European and national organisations and officials. It signalled the first time that an NGO had prepared a detailed proposal for

Founding members and early supporters of the Starting Line

The Starting Line was an initiative of CCME, the British Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) and the Dutch National Bureau against Racism (LBR). After the completion of the first draft, they formed the Starting Line Group (SLG), which was joined by the Commissioner for Foreigners of the Berlin Senate, the Belgian Centre for Equal Opportunities and Opposition to Racism, the Dutch Centre for Foreigners (NCB), as well as European organisations, such as the European Jewish Information Centre (CEJI), the European Migrants Forum, the European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN), the Quaker Council for European Affairs, the Jesuit Refugee Service, and Caritas Europe.

EU legislation on anti-discrimination. Later other NGOs also began to adopt this method of formulating precise European policy proposals. MPG would repeat such an exercise eight years later, helping to draft and raise support for legislative proposals for immigration Directives (see, **Immigration law proposals**).

Initial reactions

It quickly became clear that member states’ governments were not in favour of EU action in this area. In fact, some rejected the need to legislate against discrimination altogether. The EU Commission welcomed the Parliamentary Inquiry and many of its recommendations. It also appreciated the content of the Starting Line pro-

⁴ <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/1369183X.1994.9976449?journalCode=cjms20>

posal but insisted that the Commission lacked the mandate to initiate anti-discrimination legislation and thus could not officially endorse the Starting Line. It could, however, help to stimulate debates on anti-discrimination issues. To that end, the Commission provided a small grant to CCME in 1993. It also unofficially asked its language service to translate the Starting Line proposal (and later the Starting Point) into the EU's official languages. We considered both actions as modest successes.

MPG's involvement

In 1995, MPG became the project carrier and Secretariat of the Starting Line. Photocopies of the proposal were sent to as many organisations as possible across the member states. At the same time, MPG prepared a proposal for a new provision in the EU Treaty that would provide the EU with the mandate to act on racial discrimination. It was ready just prior to the start of the Intergovernmental Conference that would negotiate the text of the Amsterdam Treaty. We called this proposal the Starting Point and circulated it among a wide audience.

Campaigning

With the help of the European organisations that had endorsed the Starting Line, we convened consultations in individual member states,⁵ which MPG continued to do until 1999. We succeeded in focussing the current anti-racism debates on the need for robust anti-discrimination legislation, while recognizing that non-legislative measures were also necessary. We were also able to convince multiple NGOs that a European approach would be most effective for getting such legislation on

the books in all member states. In this way, MPG began to build a strong coalition of anti-discrimination and migrants' rights organisations⁶.

Endorsements

Some 450 organisations endorsed the Starting Line by literally signing the document and mailing or faxing it to MPG. Among them were non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations and mainstream welfare organisations, trade union and church-related organisations, as well as quasi-governmental organisations from all, then fifteen, member states. To give a few examples: The Northern Irish Council for Ethnic Minorities (NICEM), the UK Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants and other migrant rights' groups; the British Runnymede Trust, the Viennese Integration Fund, the Swedish Refugee Rights Group (Farr) and many other refugee organisations; the Italian trade-union ACLI; the Irish, Spanish and German associations of Travellers, Gitanos, Roma and Sint and SOS Racism organisations.

Thorny issues

Some migration organisations were initially reluctant to endorse the proposal because they felt that its key tenets, which opposed discrimination on the basis of nationality, were not strong enough to protect the EU's approximately ten million resident third-country nationals to the same extent as nationals of member states. Some larger human rights organisations had lengthy

⁵ https://www.migpolgroup.com/_old/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/104.CampaigningAgainstRacismandXenophobia-fromaLegislativePerspectiveatEuropeanLevel_EN_11.99.pdf

* https://brill.com/view/journals/emil/1/1/article-p111_7.xml?language=en

⁶ https://www.migpolgroup.com/_old/anti-discrimination-equality/starting-line/

* <https://brill.com/edcollbook/title/8964>

procedures for endorsing an initiative they had not authored or did not see the necessity of endorsing the Starting Line.

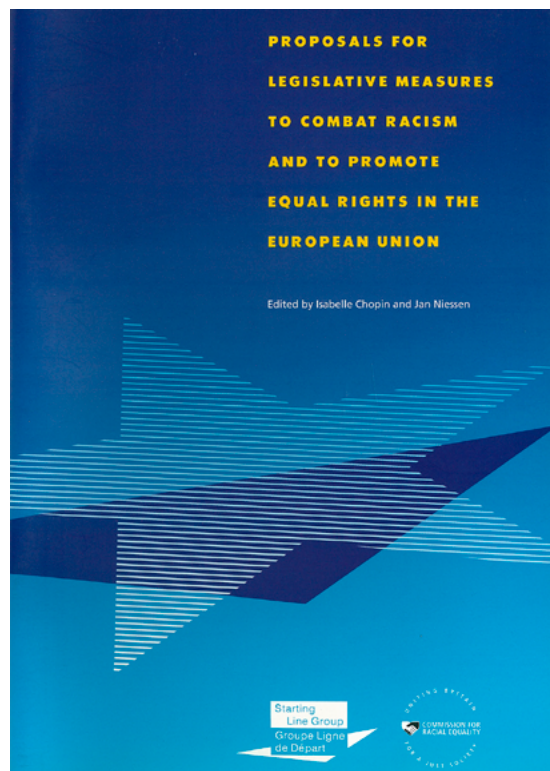
Another issue the campaign grappled with was the recurring question of whether to broaden the proposal's scope to push for a comprehensive anti-discrimination Directive. Such a Directive would expand the definition of discrimination beyond race and ethnicity to include age, disability, sexual orientation, religion and belief. Though MPG saw the merits of this, our overarching concern was that we needed to adopt an incremental approach and stay focused on these initial tenets to prevent the undermining of our still-fragile coalition.

The new Starting Line

As described in the previous chapter, the adoption of the Amsterdam Treaty in 1997 was a game-changer as it provided the EU with a mandate to act on racism. Ratification by all member states was needed before the Treaty could enter into force, which it ultimately would do in 2000. This was preceded by discussions – and often heated debates – on its provisions by national governments, parliaments and the public. MPG and its partners decided to draft a new version of the Starting Line, proposing stronger enforcement measures. In an annex, we also proposed separate legal measures for securing residence, family reunion and voting rights for third-country nationals, thus addressing the concern of some migration organisations⁷.

How to use the new mandate

The new proposal was met with great approval by the Starting Line supporters who began to put even more pressure on their national governments to speak out in



favour of EU anti-discrimination law. We wanted to know how member state governments wanted the EU to use this new mandate. To find that out, we initiated and carried out a short research project that took stock of the position of each member state on this issue with the support of the Dutch Ministry of the Interior⁸.

EP Resolutions

In the meantime, our work with the European Parliament began to pay off. From the beginning, MPG had worked with some of its influential members who sought to advance a Parliamentary Resolution calling for European

⁷ https://www.migpolgroup.com/_old/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/161.StartingLine_ProposalsforLegislativeMeasurestoCombatRacism_PromoteEqualRights_EU_1998.pdf

⁸ https://www.migpolgroup.com/_old/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/113.Article13-ANewChallengeforEuropeanInstitutions_EN_01.99.pdf

legislative measures against racial discrimination. A few Resolutions to that effect were indeed adopted, one of which referenced the Starting Line as a possible template. This augmented the Starting Line's status and gave the campaign additional momentum. MPG also worked with the representatives of the member states in the EU Consultative Commission on Racism and Xenophobia and succeeded in convincing them that European legislative measures against racial discrimination were needed.

Breakthrough

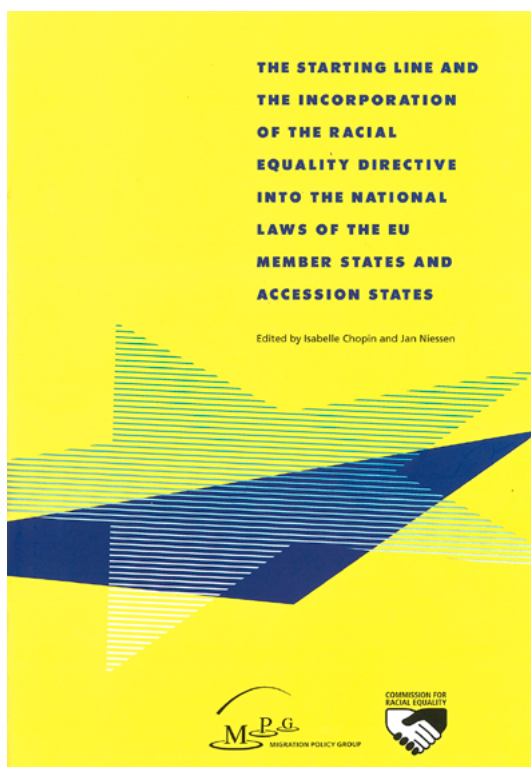
In 1998, the UK EU-Presidency organised a large conference on combatting racism in Europe at which the Starting Line figured prominently. The conference was co-organised by the UK Commission for Racial Equality, which translated the Starting Line in German and French and made printed copies available to the conference participants. This conference constituted a major breakthrough in the debates on EU anti-discrimination law: it was inevitable that European legislative action would have to be designed and adopted.

The Racial Equality and Employment Equality Directives

After the Council of Europe's All different – All equal campaign, the 1997 European Year Against Racism, and the entry into force of the Amsterdam Treaty, the EU Commission acted swiftly to draft the Racial Equality Directive and the Employment Equality Directive. The former outlawed racial and ethnic discrimination, and the latter outlawed discrimination on the basis of religion and belief, disability, age and sexual orientation in employment. These two Directives incorporated the most essential provisions of the Starting Line⁹.

An historic moment

MPG and its partners felt some victory when, in 2000, the Council of Ministers adopted the Directives after tough negotiations¹⁰. The Directives contained many similar provisions to those proposed by the Starting Line. They required all member states, including those with relatively advanced equality legislation, to raise and broaden the minimum level of protection against discrimination on all grounds in accordance with the EU provisions by 2003¹¹. The broader scope of the Racial Equality Directive (concerning education, social security,



⁹ <https://heinonline.org/HOL/LandingPage?handle=hein.journals/ejml2&div=30&id=&page=>

¹⁰ https://brill.com/view/journals/emil/3/2/article-p199_5.xml?language=en

¹¹ https://www.migpolgroup.com/_old/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/90.TheStartingLine_IncorporationoftheRacialEqualityDirective_NationalLaws_EUMemberStates_25.08.01.pdf

access to goods and services) also led a number of member states to expand the protection related to religion, disability, sexual orientation and age beyond the field of employment as required by the Employment Equality Directive. MPG and its partners would play an important role in that process (see, **Implementing anti-discrimination law**).

Our work of designing and campaigning for EU anti-discrimination legislation, which had begun back in 1992, had come to a very successful end. Working with governmental and non-governmental organisations and undertaking research¹² had proven its value and remained MPG's standard practice.

3.3. The Societal Integration Round Tables

In 1994, CCME started to work on what we would later refer to as the Comparative Approaches to Societal Integration project. The inspiration for this work was sparked during a conversation with a staff member of the EU Commission at a time when anti-immigrant sentiments in Europe were running high. This official thought that we were well-positioned to facilitate discussions on migration and integration amongst key stakeholders within individual member states to address these growing sentiments. Shortly thereafter, MPG drafted a proposal to organise round tables in four EU countries, which the Commission awarded. When the Council of Europe's Committee on Migration (CDMG) heard of these plans, we were asked to add an additional six countries, including two in Eastern Europe.

Round Tables

During 1995 and early 1996, MPG would convene and chair national Societal Integration Round Tables in ten countries, hosted by their respective national governments or semi-governmental agencies. The round table discussions focussed more on societal integration – or 'community relations' in the Council's parlance – than on migration¹³. We invited representatives from governmental departments, trade unions, welfare organisations and NGOs that dealt with migrant integration in some manner to participate in the discussions.

Comparative approaches

In some countries, this was the first time that these stakeholders had come together to discuss integration



The final report, which included and expanded upon the official report that was published by the Council of Europe

¹² <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12134-000-1027-z>

¹³ https://www.migpolgroup.com/_old/portfolio/council-of-europe-a-review-of-the-implementation-of-community-relations-policies/

challenges and possible solutions. Even within state governments, civil servants from different departments did not necessarily know what their colleagues in other departments were doing. In round table after round table, MPG found that there was little coordination on this increasingly important issue. After each session, we prepared a report summarising the findings. At the conclusion of the project, MPG invited key representatives from each of the round tables to participate in a European Round Table on Societal Integration to discuss how they were working to address the challenges of societal integration. These international ‘best practice’ discussions would become a cornerstone of MPG’s work during its first decade.

European Ministerial Conference

The Council of Europe’s primary interest in supporting this project had been to incorporate it into a review of the implementation of its 1991 Community and Ethnic Relations report, which had advocated for a continued process of international exchanges on its recommendations. With input from the CDMG, MPG’s final report on Comparative Approaches to Societal Integration was presented at the sixth European Ministerial Migration Conference in Warsaw in 1996.

Missions

Subsequently, the CDMG invited MPG to participate in a number of missions to new East European member states and in expert seminars organised by the CDMG. We also assisted with the preparation of some of these meetings and with editing part of the CDMG series on community relations. We also authored the CDMG’s report on diversity and cohesion¹⁴. Many years later, MPG would play a leading role in a similar exercise, this time initiated by the EU Commission, in which we organised

experts’ seminars, wrote issue papers and authored the EU Integration Handbook (see, **Civic citizenship and integration**).

Our work for the Council of Europe demonstrated MPG’s ability to engage governmental and non-governmental actors in meaningful dialogue on critical issues related to migration and integration. Our reports, which gained the reputation of being succinct and substantive, were viewed as ‘must-reads’ by many governmental and non-governmental actors.

Working with researchers

In all the described projects, MPG worked with researchers at research institutes and universities. Over time, MPG would develop strong contacts in academia. At the time, international comparative research on migration, integration and anti-discrimination was scant, but we made use of what little there was. We convened small meetings with academics to discuss and deepen our understanding of topical issues. This helped to ground MPG’s policy recommendations and contributions to public policy debates with research from credible academics.

Other research-based exchanges on migration

In this vein, MPG was pleased to welcome and participate in the International Metropolis Project, initiated and supported by the Canadian and US governments to examine the impact of international migration on North American and European cities. In 1995-1996, MPG hosted Metropolis’ two founding meetings in Brussels and participated in its annual meetings for the first five years.

The International Metropolis Project is now the largest cross-sectoral international network of researchers,

¹⁴ https://www.coe.int/t/dg3/migration/archives/documentation/Series_Community_Relations/Diversity_Cohesion_en.pdf

policy makers, and community groups engaged in identifying, understanding, and responding to developments in migration, integration, inclusion, and diversity¹⁵.

Similarly, the Journal of International Migration and Integration (JIMI), launched in 2000, reflected the mandate of the Metropolis Project, as it provided a forum for policymakers, representatives of non-governmental organisations (NGO's), and university-based researchers to discuss common issues and promote cooperation. MPG was asked to be join the Journal's Board of Directors.

3.4. Working with the private sector

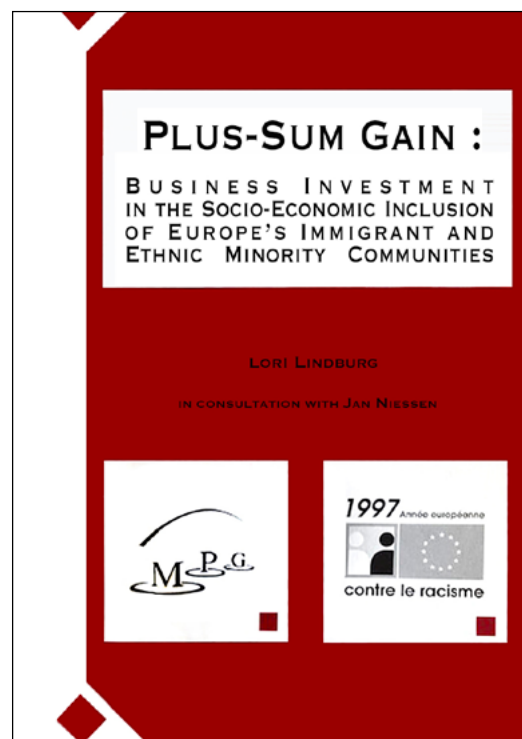
During the Societal Integration Round Tables, a strong case had been made for continued collaboration and dialogue among stakeholders. Participants frequently stressed the importance of (self-)employment for immigrants and minorities, which helped to shed light on the absence of a critical stakeholder in the integration debates, namely, the private sector. Therefore, MPG evolved its societal integration initiative and designed a European Commission-funded project that specifically targeted corporate practices aimed at the inclusion of immigrants and ethnic minorities in the labour market, the customer base, and in enterprise creation.

Gaining from Diversity

MPG recognised that economic empowerment was a critical factor in countering marginalisation and that, by improving these individuals' economic opportunities, they would be better able to address many of the integration challenges they faced in their own locales. In the US and the UK, an additional argument had begun to take root, predominantly among globally operating companies who

recognised that immigrants and ethnic minorities could make and were making valuable contributions to their economies and societies.

The Socio-Economic Inclusion project involved interviews with dozens of private sector organisations across Europe, which informed a final report examining business investment in inclusion strategies and the important role of government and non-governmental actors in these initiatives¹⁶. MPG convened a European Round Table in Stockholm in 1997, which was co-hosted by the Sweden 2000 Group, a network of forward-thinking business leaders of several large and medium-sized enterprises.



¹⁵ <https://metropolis-international.org/about-us/leadership-governance>

¹⁶ https://www.migpolgroup.com/_old/portfolio/plus-sum-gain-business-investment-in-the-socio-economic-inclusion-of-europes-immigrant-and-ethnic-minority-communities/

While businesses in Europe – depending on factors such as country headquarters, culture, size, and markets – differed significantly in their approaches to hiring or conducting business with or for immigrants and ethnic minorities, many admitted that their motivation to do so stemmed from fear for the adoption of US-, Canadian-, and UK-like legislative mandates. (i.e., ‘affirmative action’, ‘positive discrimination’). Even among these companies, however, many cited the business gains of these voluntary measures.

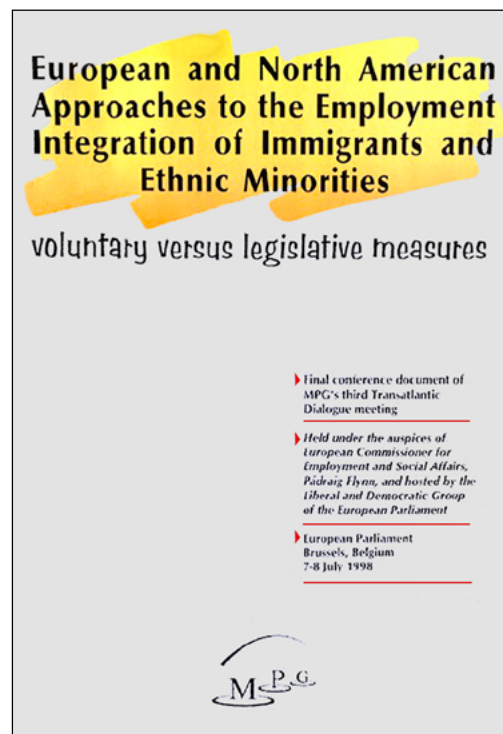
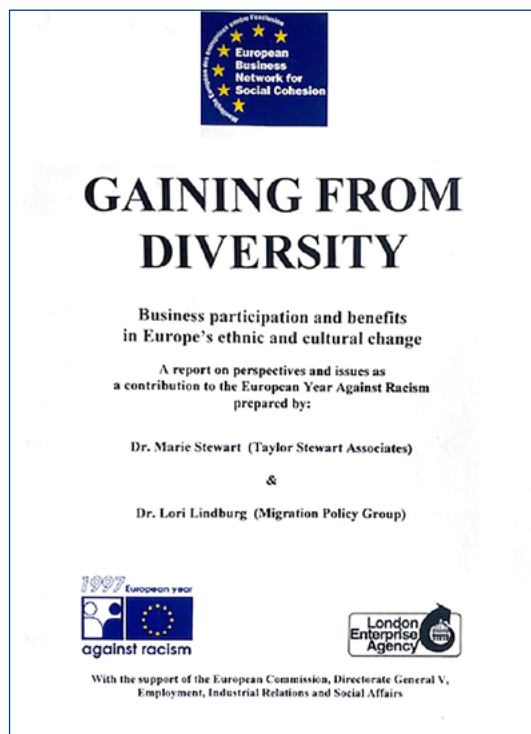
Business-led

In the course of this work, MPG noted that there was little appetite among businesses to engage in discussions with governmental and non-governmental actors, preferring instead to participate in business-led discus-

sions on effective practices. MPG was invited to join the European Business Network of Social Cohesion (EBNSC), a recently established taskforce of private companies. The task force and its 1997 conference focused on the business opportunities presented by Europe’s increasing ethnic and racial diversity, for which MPG presented and co-authored the Gaining from Diversity report. The EBNSC functions today as Corporate Social Responsibility Europe.

Private and public sector cooperation

As Europe-based companies worked to build inclusive practices in their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programmes, MPG travelled to the US to look at how several US companies were implementing these types of programmes. In addition to business organisations,



MPG met with a number of city officials on how they were working with the private sector to incentivise these practices. This formed the basis for the next iteration of MPG's integration analysis, which examined public-private practices aimed at preventing the socio-economic exclusion of immigrants and ethnic minorities. The study focused on eight cities across Europe, the US and Canada, and included site interviews with business leaders, city officials, and minority-led and immigrant organisations in each city.

MPG framed the analysis around both voluntary and legislative measures – often framed around public-private partnerships – for promoting socio-economic integration. Regardless of the impetus, all of the initiatives we examined underscored the value of diversity as a sound business practice.

Transatlantic learning

We presented our findings at a Transatlantic Migration Dialogue meeting, hosted by the European Parliament in Brussels in 1999, focussing on successful strategies for promoting economic inclusion. (See next section for a discussion of the first **Transatlantic Migration Dialogue**). The EU Commissioner for Social Affairs and Employment gave the keynote address to North American business representatives and officials from each of the eight cities. MPG produced a report examining the various European and North American approaches to employment integration. As with many of MPG's round tables and transatlantic dialogues, such exchanges among vastly different countries and stakeholders offered important – and often unexpected – opportunities for shared learning and partnerships. For our work with the private sector on anti-discrimination and diversity issues, MPG received a grant from the Levi Strauss Foundation and from Northern Foods.

Minority businesses

As another means of economic empowerment for immigrants and ethnic minorities, MPG further explored what could be done to support immigrant and ethnic minority businesses (henceforth, minority businesses). We initially linked up with IFS, a Stockholm-based enterprise agency that was already working to form a minority business supplier diversity programme in Sweden. Together we tried, with support from the EU Commission, to set up a European network of minority entrepreneurs. After numerous consultations with minority entrepreneurs and business support agencies, we began to see that a more effective approach to supporting minority entrepreneurs would be through changing the procurement policies and practices of multinational corporations (see, **Supplier Diversity Europe**).

3.5. The Transatlantic Migration Dialogue

Since the early nineties, CCME, and later MPG, participated in the work of the CDMG experts group on immigration, while in Brussels we tried to engage more stakeholders in debates on concrete immigration policy measures. A fundraising trip to the US in 1995 unexpectedly offered an opportunity to scale up this work. This was just after the first EU Commissioner responsible for migration had been appointed. MPG was asked to give a presentation at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, a Washington-based think-tank, after which we met with a senior official of the US State Department. He asked whether we thought the EU would be interested in establishing a high-level transatlantic dialogue on migration and, if so, whether MPG could facilitate this with funding from the US State Department. MPG took up the challenge and set up an office in Washington, DC, to prepare the high-level transatlantic meeting.

First high-level EU-US exchange on migration

This first high-level Transatlantic Migration Dialogue took place in Washington, DC, in 1996. In addition to the EU Commissioner responsible for migration and the US Assistant Under-Secretary of State, the meeting included senior officials from both sides of the Atlantic, as well as representatives from the European Parliament, the United Nations High Commissioner on Racism (UNHCR) and the International Organisation on Migration (IOM). The meeting prompted a subsequent high-level dialogue between the EU Commission and the US government, which MPG viewed as an affirmation of the Dialogue's success.

MPG would continue to hold additional transatlantic dialogues meetings with stakeholders on both sides of the Atlantic (including Canada) to facilitate best-practice sharing on socio-economic inclusion policies and practices. The Transatlantic Migration Dialogue fostered MPG's relationships with key US organisations, such as the National Immigration Forum, the National Immigration Law Center and the Institute for the Study of International Migration at Georgetown University. It also introduced MPG to the EU Commissioner and senior officials of the Commission's Directorate General responsible for migration, thus laying the foundation for future cooperation (see **The European Migration Dialogue**).

3.6. Connecting anti-racist NGOs

In 1997, when MPG was still heavily involved in the Starting Line campaign, the EU Commission asked us to explore the feasibility of setting up a European network of anti-racist organisations with NGOs and other stakeholders. MPG and its partners had been advocating for such a network for several years. While MPG could facilitate the creation of a European anti-racist advocacy

network organisation, it clearly could not become that organisation. Not only was MPG's mandate broader, but acting here as a consultant this would have created a conflict of interest. The Commissions' request gave the Starting Line campaign an additional push.

Consultations

Building on its contacts with migration and anti-discrimination organisations in all, then fifteen, member states, MPG invited many of these stakeholders to national round table discussions on anti-discrimination in their respective countries. We chaired these meetings and wrote a final report, concluding that there was enough support for the creation of a European anti-racist network among anti-racist organisations. Our greatest challenge was to fully understand how each country was addressing racial discrimination, and the different vocabulary, theories and anti-racist strategies employed.



Not all NGOs were initially receptive to the idea of a European network of anti-racist organisations. Some viewed this network as an EU Commission-led – and thus EU-controlled – initiative. For representatives of grassroots organisations, the movement from the national to the European policymaking levels was simply too ambitious. Others claimed that the initiative was premature and that anti-racism organisations were not yet fully developed.

The Launch of ENAR

MPG's reputation and continued work with many of these organisations helped them to overcome these reservations. We were able to reach a common understanding of the issues and to formulate a common European strategy. In the year following the 1997 European Year Against Racism, the EU Commission and MPG co-organised the founding conference in Brussels of what would later be called the European Network against Racism (ENAR). MPG subsequently assisted with putting together the board and selecting its staff and, for a few years, stayed on as an external advisor¹⁷.

3.7. A Charter for political parties

Around this same time, MPG became involved in another anti-racism project. A few members of the European Consultative Commission on Racism and Xenophobia wanted to explore how political parties could contribute to the fight against racism. MPG was asked to carry out the background research on this, for which we interviewed politicians and party functionaries at the European and national levels¹⁸.

Fighting racism in their own ranks

The research pointed to a number of possible actions political parties could undertake. In electoral campaigns, the Charter recommended that political parties deal with issues related to immigrants and refugees in a responsible way. For example, political parties could highlight diversity's positive contributions to societies and economies. They could fight against discrimination within their own ranks and could make awareness of racism part of the screening process for candidates running for public office. Furthermore, parties could publicly state that they would not cooperate with racist parties or form governments with them. They could actively recruit people from immigrant or refugee backgrounds as members, involve them in the life work of the party and select them as candidates for public office.

The ensuing report served as input for a conference organised in 1998 by the Dutch National Bureau against Racial Discrimination (LBR) under the auspices of the Consultative Commission. At this conference, the final draft of the Charter of European Parties for a Non-Racist Society was adopted¹⁹. Thereafter, MPG was involved in mobilising political parties to sign on to the Charter. In 2003, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe endorsed the Charter. A recent update of the Charter by the Parliamentary Assembly in 2022 demonstrates the Charter's continued relevance²⁰.

¹⁷ https://www.enar-eu.org/wp-content/uploads/history_booklet_final.pdf

¹⁸ https://www.migpolgroup.com/_old/portfolio/charter-of-european-political-parties-for-a-non-racist-society/

* <https://heinonline.org/HOL/LandingPage?handle=hein.journals/ejml3&div=10&id=&page>

¹⁹ <https://rm.coe.int/charter-european-political-parties-non-racist-society/16809022ba>

²⁰ <https://pace.coe.int/en/pages/no-hate-politicalchart>

Intermezzo

S ometime during the year 2000, MPG reached an inflection point. After an accelerated start and years of frenzied activity, we began to reflect on MPG's position in the larger scheme of European migration, integration and anti-discrimination policy-formation. We decided to bring in an external consultant to conduct an organisational review and to extract lessons from what we had achieved to date. We wanted to capitalise on our reputation and track record and to use our acquired skills to work on new projects. We also wanted to remain a flexible organisation with a light structure and a stronger board.

Learning by doing

MPG had learned how to work with multiple actors holding different responsibilities and perspectives. We had the patience to work with officials, the mindset to work with academics and the passion to work with NGOs. By working with the private sector, we also acquired new skills. We fostered our working relationships with European institutions. We knew how to write high-quality reports, and what to do (and not do) when setting up a European network. We had run a very successful European campaign for the adoption of EU anti-discrimination law. We learned to better plan and carry out projects and to keep track of the progress we were making, using benchmarks and indicators. We became familiar with

exchanging best practices, identifying critical success factors and creating an impact assessment. We also learned to prepare competitive proposals and to write succinct memorandums and presentations. We used these newly developed skills to keep MPG up to speed with changes in public policymaking and grant-making foundations and, as a consequence, had become successful in winning EU grants as well as service contracts with the EU Commission.

Tapping into new resources

MPG had also managed to diversify its sources of income. We increased the number of subscribers to the Migration NewsSheet and were exploring the development of additional fee-for-service contracts with the private sector. We were getting better at raising funds and generating income from service contracts, the latter of which was unheard of at the time for NGOs. We sought to balance this with other revenue sources so as not to turn MPG into a group of consultants. We continued to work with the EU Commission without

losing our independence, which better positioned MPG to influence policies. At one point, we briefly considered merging with a like-minded organisation, but decided against it so as to keep our focus, flexibility and independence. Instead, we deepened our working relationship with key stakeholders and partnered strategically with a few commercial organisations.



MPG's offices at the first floor of 205 Rue Belliard

4 Influential and preferred partner

In the years following the turn of the 21st century, migration, integration and anti-discrimination became recurring issues on the European agenda. As never before, governments were working together on these issues, as were non-governmental organisations. Both were looking to MPG for cooperation, and to MPG's reports, policy briefs, dialogue meetings and trainings to enhance their capacity to act. MPG developed its own projects alongside the work we carried out on behalf of the European Commission. In this final chapter, we describe our work on anti-discrimination first and then turn to migration and integration.

4.1. Implementing anti-discrimination law

To fully exploit the opportunity for policy change in the member states, MPG stressed the need to conduct well-researched assessments of what each state would need to do to comply with the adopted Racial Equality Directive. In our view, this would help national governments to correctly integrate the Directive's provisions into national law. NGOs could then use such assessments to monitor that process. We also emphasised the need to empower activists, lawyers and judges to make full use of the newly adopted anti-discrimination law. All this would make anti-discrimination law more effective in preventing discrimination and supporting its victims.

Laying the foundation

We learned that across Europe there was a great interest in ensuring that anti-discrimination provisions in European Conventions and EU Directives were being incorporated into existing national laws and regulations. This

would lead to considerable changes in policies and laws in almost all of the member countries. Together, with the European Roma Rights Center and Interights, MPG embarked upon the project 'Implementing EU Anti-discrimination law', which was supported by the Open Society Institute (OSI) and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation.

This project laid the foundation for MPG's ongoing monitoring of the implementation of anti-discrimination policy and law in the EU and beyond, and for empowering stakeholders to put the law into practice. The three-year project ran from 2001 to 2004 and covered fifteen EU member states and eleven candidate countries.

First extensive country reports

MPG began this project by putting a team of researchers together, who, in 2002, produced 26 country reports on the state of national anti-discrimination legislation of the then fifteen member states, ten candidate countries, and Turkey. Some of these reports were published by the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC), others by MPG. This was the first time that such extensive country reports on anti-discrimination law had been produced and published.

In addition, the partners published a background paper, which compared the Racial Equality Directive and Protocol No 12 of the European Convention on Human Rights with existing national law in 26 countries.

Training workshops

The project also sought to maximise the impact of the Directives and organised five training workshops for activists, judges, lawyers, NGO's, government officials,



members of parliament and staff from specialised anti-discrimination and equality bodies. The two-to-three-day workshops provided information on the Directives and how its provisions were and should be incorporated into the laws of the member states. The participants also discussed how anti-discrimination policies could be used creatively in court. The workshops were held in five different cities, each covering five to six countries, and involved over 250 participants in total. In 2004, the partners published a handbook on strategic litigation, which would be widely used by lawyers and anti-racist NGOs²¹.

²¹ <https://www.migpolgroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Strategic-litigation-of-race-discrimination-in-Europe.-From-principles-to-practice.pdf>



The EU Commission steps in

While MPG was carrying out this project, the EU Commission approached us asking how we had organised the research and what the involved costs were. Apparently, the Commission was considering undertaking a similar exercise because, not long thereafter, it published a call for tender for a service contract to prepare country reports comparing existing national anti-discrimination legislation with the requirements of the Racial Equality Directive. Such reports would assist the EU Commission in carrying out its statutory role to oversee the correct implementation of EU-law.

New and updated country reports

Based on its existing work in this area, MPG was in a very good position to present a competitive proposal and, indeed, a winning bid. This was MPG's first large commercial contract from the European Commission. Between 2002 and 2004, MPG and a team of selected legal scholars and practitioners produced annual reports on national legislative measures against discrimination on the grounds of race and ethnic origin. In 2003, we were also asked by the Commission to look at discrimination on the basis of religion and belief. While the full reports could be downloaded from the EU Commission's website, MPG published a compilation of summary reports²².



²² https://www.migpolgroup.com/_old/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/54.TheImplementationofEuropeanAnti-discriminationLegislation-workinprogress_12.04.pdf

²³ https://www.migpolgroup.com/_old/public/docs/33.DevelopingAnti-discriminationLawinEurope_comparativeanalysis_I_EN_09.05.pdf

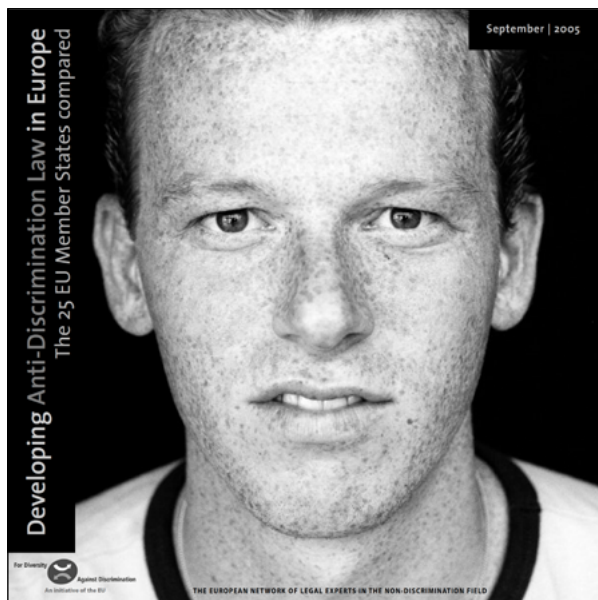
²⁴ https://www.migpolgroup.com/_old/public/docs/39.EuropeanAnti-discriminationLawReview-Issue1_EN_04.05.pdf

Covering five grounds of discrimination

Upon completion of the first contract, the Commission launched a new call for tender to produce country and thematic reports and a biannual Law Review. This time, all five grounds of discrimination in the Racial and Employment Equality Directives had to be covered. A network of national independent experts (one per member state) was to be set up and managed. MPG recognised that, in order to put together a winning bid, it needed to partner with another organisation to supplement our expertise in areas beyond racial, ethnic and religious discrimination. We therefore formed a consortium with the small Dutch consultancy firm, MEDE, (later called Human European Consultancy). The Commission awarded the consortium the contract.

Network of independent experts

The consortium partners established the European Network of legal experts in the non-discrimination field (henceforth, 'the Network'). Its members were recruited from MPG's network of legal scholars, activists and law practitioners. The work of the Network began in 2004, a year after the member states were required to have incorporated the provisions of the two Directives into their national law. Within a year, the Network produced 25 high-quality country reports and a comparative analysis covering all discrimination grounds²³. The EU Commission subsequently used this information to prepare its official report on the implementation of the two Directives. The network also produced thematic reports on the Directives' concepts and the bi-annual European Anti-discrimination Law Review²⁴, which were all published in English, French and German and illustrated with photos of (potential) victims of discrimination.



The first comparative analysis of the country reports on the implementation of the anti-discrimination and equality directives

Annual Seminars

In addition, the consortium partners organised an annual seminar at which officials and experts discussed how national anti-discrimination laws could best be adapted and further developed taking into account the respective national contexts. They discussed the Directives' concepts, such as 'direct' and 'indirect discrimination', 'victimisation', 'discrimination by association' and 'sharing the burden of proof', with which many participants were not familiar.

Expansion

MPG was responsible for coordinating the research and editing the publications. MEDE provided technical back-up and dealt with issues of contract management. A group of five senior experts ensured that all five discrim-



The first issue of the European Anti-discrimination Law Review

ination grounds were covered correctly. The country reports, which were updated annually, were published on both MPG's and MEDE's websites. Four years later, the Commission put this work out for tender again and, again, our consortium was successful in winning the contract.

Over the years, not only did the material scope of the contract expand – from covering a few to all five grounds of discrimination – but the geographical scope also grew with more countries joining the EU. MPG was able to expand its network and increase our areas of expertise. In 2014, the European Commission wanted us to merge the Network with the older network on gender equality, to form the European Equality Network. This Network is still producing country reports, comparative analyses and other publications²⁵.

²⁵ <https://www.equalitylaw.eu/>

Impact

Our work with the Network greatly influenced the formation of anti-discrimination legislation in the member states in accordance with the Directives. The annual reports documented this process of policy change and demonstrated how the anti-discrimination provisions were interpreted and case law developed.

The ‘flash reports’ provided the Commission with timely information on legislative developments and case law on an ongoing basis. These reports were made public. The Commission’s ‘Ad-hoc requests’, on the contrary, were not public and were prepared, for instance, when a member state did not correctly implement the Directives. In some cases, the Commission started legal action, so-called ‘infringement proceedings’, against the member state concerned. Often, merely the threat of the proceedings was enough for the member state to change course. The thematic reports empowered stakeholders to push for the correct interpretation of the law and the Law Review was occasionally referred to in court, most notably in Eastern Europe.

4.2. Capacity-building

After years of campaigning for EU anti-discrimination legislation and then becoming a key player in its implementation, MPG was becoming a focal point and unique source of information and analysis for all those who were working on anti-discrimination in Europe.

Expertise

Thanks to MPG’s expertise, we were regularly asked to advise policymakers, activists and law practitioners in many European countries and executed a number of separate service contracts with the EU Commission, such as a prospective impact assessment on extending the Equal Treatment Directive’s field of application²⁶. With OSI, ERIO and ERRC, we prepared a report on equality for Roma – a frequent target of discrimination across Europe – with a roadmap for action. With the British Immigration Law Practitioners’ Association (ILPA), we published a report on borders and discrimination²⁷ and, with the European University Institute, we worked on a research project on the acquisition and loss of nationality²⁸.

Mapping exercise and training

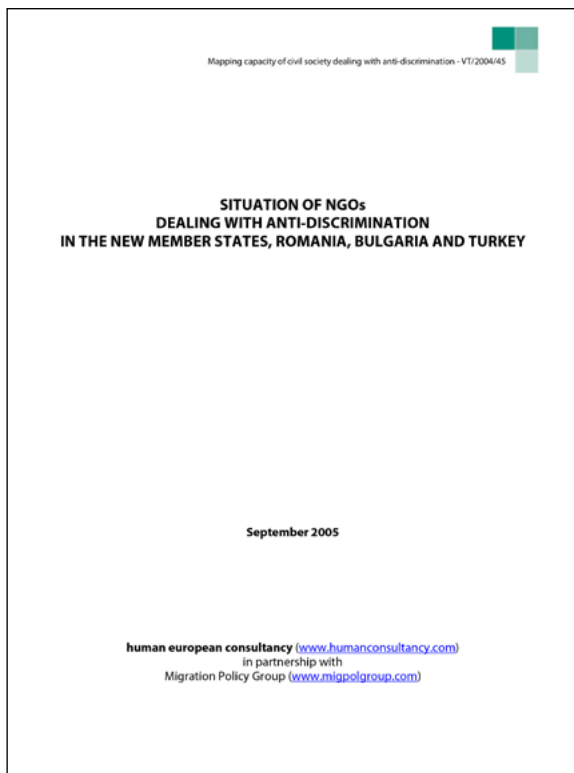
Another important focus of MPG’s other anti-discrimination work was to build the capacity of national NGOs and trade-unions to strategically address the anti-discrimination mandate. In a major EU-funded operation MPG and MEDE mapped these organisations’ needs and capacity, which helped us to develop and deliver training tailored to their specific contexts. We organised train-the-trainer workshops for lawyers, judges and trade union staff in the new EU member states and as associated state, Turkey. We produced several training manuals in multiple languages. Around 500 NGOs and some 80 trainers participated in trainings.

With these projects MPG raised awareness, increased knowledge of anti-discrimination law and empowered stakeholders to use the law effectively.

²⁶ https://www.migpolgroup.com/_old/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/9.Inventoryofnatmeasurescombatingdiscoutsidempl_mapstrand1_EN_12.06.pdf

²⁷ https://www.migpolgroup.com/_old/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/152.bordersandDiscrimination_exec_summary_01.02.pdf

²⁸ <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt46mw34> and <https://www.aup.nl/en/book/9789053569214/acquisition-and-loss-of-nationality-volume-2-country-analyses>



The 13 training manuals were translated in all of the official languages of the countries involved

4.3. Creating a network of equality bodies

The Racial Equality Directive required the creation of a specialised body to prevent racial and ethnic discrimination and to assist victims. MPG explored whether there was an interest among those that already existed, to work together at the European level. To that end, we convened a brainstorming meeting with a number of them at the Viennese Integration Fund.

Around the same time, the Dutch Equal Treatment Commission (CGB) asked MPG whether it would be willing to jointly develop a project and submit a funding proposal

to the EU Commission aimed at strengthening cooperation between such organisations. We began the successfully awarded project with a feasibility study, for which we interviewed senior staff of seven organisations (some of whom covered more grounds of discrimination than race and ethnicity, which we began to refer to as ‘equality bodies’).

Equinet’s founding members

The Dutch Equal Treatment Commission (CGB, Netherlands), lead organisation
The Migration Policy Group (MPG, Brussels, Belgium), co-chair and provisional Secretariat

The Centre for Equal Opportunities and Opposition to Racism (CEOOR, Belgium)

The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE, United Kingdom)

The Equality Commission for Northern-Ireland (ECNI, Northern Ireland)

The Equality Authority (EA, Ireland)

The Ombud for Equal Employment Opportunities (GAW, Austria)

The Ombudsman against Ethnic Discrimination (DO, Sweden)

On the basis of our well-received feasibility study, CGB submitted a follow-up proposal to the EU Commission to set up of a network of organisations that would promote equality. Seven of them and MPG joined and became founding members of the initiative.

Expert seminars

Between 2002 and 2004, CGB and MPG organised seven expert seminars hosted by each of the partner organisations. These seminars dealt with issues such as

proving discrimination, using statistics, situation testing; remedies and enforcement; combating discrimination in working life and the provision of goods and services. MPG edited and produced the seminar reports, which were put on the project's website and those of the participating organisations.

PROVING DISCRIMINATION THE DYNAMIC IMPLEMENTATION OF EU ANTI- DISCRIMINATION LAW: THE ROLE OF SPECIALISED BODIES

REPORT OF THE FIRST EXPERTS' MEETING, 14-15 JANUARY 2003
HOSTED BY THE BELGIAN CENTRE FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND OPPOSITION TO RACISM

One of the seven reports of the expert seminars for equality bodies

One-stop-shop

Between 2004 and 2006, the consortium partners reached out to 23 organisations in nearly all of the EU member states and Norway. We worked with these organisations towards a common understanding of European equality law and its national implementation and what the role of an equality body was. At the end of this process these organisations made a significant step forward by agreeing to develop an international

one-stop-shop that would enable equality bodies to exchange best practices. Partners could learn from each other how to operate as a specialised body. They would facilitate staff exchanges and trainings and engage in an ongoing dialogue with European institutions. In 2007, the partners took the next step and formally established Equinet as an international not-for-profit association with its own secretariat. MPG remained on the board for some time and continued to work with Equinet, which is still in operation today²⁹.

4.4. Supplier Diversity Europe

In 2002, MPG made a new push in our work with the private sector. Ultimately, we wanted to know how anti-discrimination and equality policies could benefit businesses, minorities and immigrants. We posited that just as companies were diversifying their workforce, they could diversify their pool of suppliers by inviting businesses owned and managed by minorities to bid for contracts. Mainstream and minority businesses would both benefit from the economic integration of minority businesses. Companies would increase their pool of suppliers, and immigrants and minorities would begin to carve an economic future for themselves and their families, making it easier to embrace their new societies.

Learnings from the US

Supplier diversity was already a well-known business practice in the US, where companies that had contracts with the federal government were required to set aside 10% of their supply work for ethnic minorities. This eventually became standard practice for business-to-business supplier requirements as well. In the US, the National Minority Supplier Diversity Council (NMSDC), a well-established business-led organisation, assisted its members

²⁹ <https://equineteurope.org/>

with implementing supplier diversity and organised best practice exchanges. Among its members were a number of multinational companies who were interested in developing a supplier diversity programme in Europe.

A network of companies

Many of these companies' headquarters for Europe, Middle East and Africa were based in London. MPG approached their heads of procurement and succeeded in recruiting them to work with us on supplier diversity. We called this project Supplier Diversity Europe (SDE). Participating multinational companies were coming from a variety of sectors including, but not limited to the financial, tech, food and pharmaceuticals.

Leading members of Supplier Diversity Europe

Most SDE participants were US companies, although a few European businesses joined the initiative. Members included Bristol-Myers Squibb, Pfizer, Citigroup, Credit Suisse, Lehman Brothers, Morgan Stanley, Goldman Sachs, Deutsche Bank, Hewlett Packard, IBM, Cisco, Weil, Gotshal & Manges and a number of other smaller, companies.

Making the business case

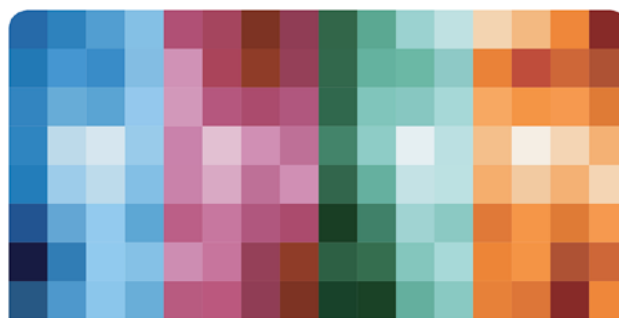
We first needed to make the business case for supplier diversity to the European head offices of these multinationals and their procurement staff. To address their hesitancy, we explained how EU anti-discrimination law could affect procurement practices³⁰. We provided training on how to make the business case to their procurement staff and on how to work with ethnic minority entrepreneurs. We organised events at which procurers

³⁰ https://www.migpolgroup.com/_old/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/81.CombatingRacialandEthnicDiscrimination-TakingtheEuropeanLegislativeAgendaFurther_03.02.pdf

³¹ https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/sites/default/files/2009-12/docl_11320_579055718.pdf

could connect with potential suppliers of needed goods and services.

Based on this work, we put together a handbook in close cooperation with the Centre for Research in Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurship (CREME) at De Montfort University³¹. From 2002-2008, we worked with more than 30 multinational companies to help build their European Supplier diversity programmes.



Handbook on Supplier Diversity in Europe

Supplier Diversity Europe | CREME | Migration Policy Group →

Connecting businesses

Our aim was to connect SDE member companies to minority-owned businesses (micro businesses of up to ten people) that were able to meet these companies' procurement needs. However, finding such potential suppliers posed challenges. These businesses were not registered as ethnic minority-owned. Such delineation did not exist in European countries. Businesses were not asked to register as minority-owned companies when they registered, nor did many of them wish to be categorised as such. There was no perceived advantage

in doing so, and in many cases, they feared it might disadvantage them.

Who is a minority entrepreneur?

Countries in Europe differed in the information they collected about immigrants and ethnic minorities. In the UK, the census encouraged people to self-identify as ethnic minorities, whereas in Germany, although it was legal to self-identify, our SDE members were not keen to push self-identification due to the country's history of racial and ethnic discrimination. In France, it was illegal to ask ethnic minorities to self-identify. MPG thus had to find other ways to locate these businesses. For example, in France we looked at postcodes around Paris, knowing that there was a large ethnic minority population, and therefore minority businesses, in the banlieue. We worked with a small group of 'social entrepreneurs' of the organisation Adiva who were able to raise interest in supplier diversity among an international accountancy firm and regional authorities.

Over time, MPG was able to build relationships and trust with minority business communities in a few countries. We demonstrated how they could find opportunities to work as suppliers of multinational corporations if they would self-identify and enter their details on the companies' supplier databases.

Benchmarking

Large companies were accustomed to exchanging best practices in non-competitive fields of operation, for which they used quantitative and qualitative indicators and benchmarks. Knowing this, MPG designed a framework of qualitative indicators and benchmarks for supplier diversity. This comprehensive tool contained four levels: basic, established, intermediate and advanced. To achieve each level, the benchmark explained what needed to be done by senior management, the supplier

diversity manager, the buyers, internal and external stakeholders and existing and potential suppliers.

LEVEL/AREA	SENIOR MANAGEMENT
<p>ADVANCED (includes all benchmarks listed below)</p> <p><i>At this level, the organisation is seen as model of best practice. Its supplier diversity programme is seen as a leader in its industry and is recognised by supplier relations organisations, diverse and under-represented businesses, and business organisations and associations. Organisation has in place a solid and widely supported Supplier Diversity Programme. It has received the full support from senior/executive management and from the procurement and supply chain management.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior Management provides the financial and staff support to measure the positive impact of supplier diversity programme on society and helps raise awareness of the LPO's programme and supplier diversity generally. Senior Management gives its full support to the supplier diversity programme to consolidate the programme and raise its profile internally and externally.
<p>INTERMEDIATE (includes all benchmarks listed below)</p> <p><i>At this level, the organisation has a Supplier Diversity Programme in place. It has mapped the diverse and under-represented businesses landscape. It has a strategy for the matching of its needs with the fit to supply diverse and under-represented suppliers. It establishes direct or indirect contacts with these businesses.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior Management commits ample resources to map the under-represented business landscape and to match the LPO's needs with the 'fit to supply' under-represented businesses. He or she also provides the resources to establish direct and indirect contacts with the under-represented businesses.

Becoming a Buyer of Choice: A Tool for Mainstreaming Supplier Diversity

We used this tool for assisting private (and public) sector purchasing organisations to recognise the benefits of developing a local and diverse supply chain. It provided a standard to be assessed against and a way to learn from best practice. The idea was to also use it for designing an international management standard similar to an ISO standard. This idea was discussed with the British member of the International Standard organisation (ISO). We

started to use the tool for accreditation purposes and accredited three companies³².

Following the 2008 financial crisis, however, many multinational corporations abandoned the idea of investing in supplier diversity in Europe and cut down or ended their US programmes. We felt that these corporations were still far from embedding supplier diversity in their operation and that it would take organisational change to see supplier diversity as a standard business practice in Europe. Nevertheless, we had laid the groundwork for others to pick up when the time was right.

Public procurement

MPG, probably the first migration NGO to work with the private sector and to introduce the concept of supplier diversity in Europe, shifted its focus from private to public sector procurement. As buyers of goods and services, governments could also include immigrant and ethnic minority businesses in their list of suppliers, what is commonly referred to as ‘social procurement’ in Europe. In various projects with city governments, MPG introduced supplier diversity as an instrument to promote the inclusion of immigrants, refugees and ethnic minorities and as an economic resource to grow the local economy³³. Subsequently, MPG led several EU- and private sector-funded projects on social public procurement signalling that this idea had gained some traction in various European countries, regions and cities.

4.5. Changing terms of migration debates

Well into the end of the 20th century, most European countries denied that they were countries of immigration, and indeed seemed to cast negative connotations on the notion of immigration. This began to change somewhat in the late 1990s and early 2000s. The Council of Europe and the European Union began to highlight some of the positive effects of migration at some of their large migration conferences. MPG welcomed this positive development, while still noting the dominant and unfortunate focus on how best to restrict migration, or to ‘stem the flows’, as it was commonly expressed.

The terrorist attacks in the US, in 2001, and Madrid, in 2004, had a tremendous negative impact on the migration and integration debates. Frequent and vocal concerns about the increasing number of migrants led many governments to adopt more restrictive migration measures. Consequently, migration was elevated on the agenda of many NGOs who had been predominantly involved in anti-racist activities.

Relaunch

Against this backdrop, MPG relaunched its migration work and sought to focus the terms of the debate on migration’s potential positive contributions to addressing demographic imbalances and labour market mismatches³⁴. MPG’s publication on the management and managers of migration was discussed at a meeting hosted by the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), an EU advisory institution comprised of trade unions and

³² [https://www.migpolgroup.com/_old/diversity-integration/supplier-diversity-europe/#:~:text=Supplier%20Diversity%20Europe%20\(SDE\)%20is,and%20effective%20procurement%20prog](https://www.migpolgroup.com/_old/diversity-integration/supplier-diversity-europe/#:~:text=Supplier%20Diversity%20Europe%20(SDE)%20is,and%20effective%20procurement%20prog)

³³ https://www.migpolgroup.com/_old/wp-content/uploads/2010/02/171.CitiesAccommodatingDiversity_DIVE_22.02.10.pdf

³⁴ https://www.migpolgroup.com/_old/wp-content/uploads/2005/07/142.FullReport_ImmigrationasLabourMarketStrategy_2005.pdf

* <https://heionline.org/HOL/LandingPage?handle=hein.journals/ejml3&div=34&id=&page=>

employers' organisations. In other fora, we linked migration to foreign policies and international trade³⁵.

Institutional mismatch

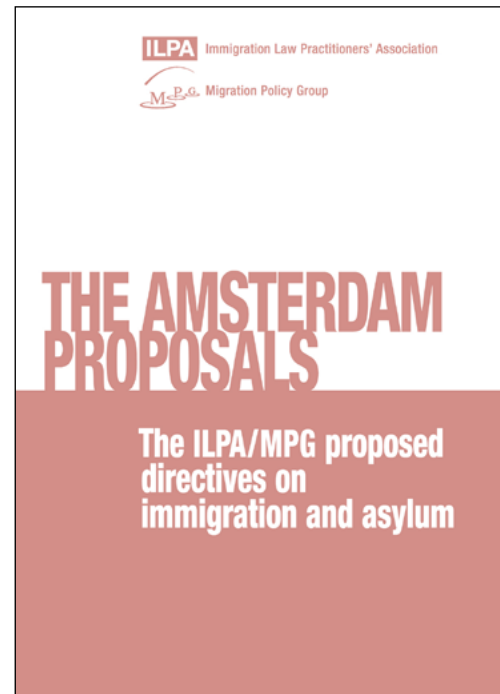
MPG soon had to deal with 'institutional mismatch' in its migration work. The Commission's Directorate-General responsible for migration (DG Justice and Home Affairs) was focussed primarily on border controls and was slow to develop constructive legislative proposals on immigration. In addition, this DG was not very interested in working with NGOs, while NGOs that opposed restrictive border control measures became very critical of cooperating with EU institutions. The Directorate-General responsible for Employment and Social Affairs (DG V) was not inclined to address issues related to migration for employment in its newly launched Lisbon Strategy on Employment. Finally, actors in international development (DG DEV) and DG Trade were not keen to work on migration as they feared jeopardizing their core agenda by including what they considered to be a contentious issue.

4.6. Immigration law proposals

In 2000, MPG began to promote proposals for EU legislative measures on migration. To that end, we joined forces with the Immigration Law Practitioners' Association (ILPA), which had prepared a series of proposals that we named the ILPA/MPG Amsterdam Proposals (after the Amsterdam Treaty)³⁶. The proposals dealt with asylum, family reunion, long-term residence, visa and border controls, admission of migrants and irregular migrants. The drafting of these proposals and MPG's work to dis-

tribute them among officials and NGOs was supported by the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust and the Barrow Cadbury Trust.

We invited Commission officials for an informal brainstorming session, during which we compared our proposals with their ideas for legislative measures in these areas. Impressed by our sound and detailed proposals, the Commission subsequently consulted with MPG and our project partner on occasion when drafting official proposals for Directives, which would contain some provisions similar to our proposals. The Commission's



³⁵ https://www.migpolgroup.com/_old/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/86.InternationalMobilityinaGlobalisingWorld_PaperpresentedatACP-EUJointParliamentaryAssembly_20.03.02.pdf

* https://www.migpolgroup.com/_old/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/151.NegotiatingtheLiberalizationofMigration_IsGATSaVehicleoraModelforGlobalMigrationGovernanceEPCLissuepaperNo7_28.10.03.pdf

³⁶ https://www.migpolgroup.com/_old/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/101.ILPA-MPG_ProposedDirectives_FullReport_2000.pdf

proposals nevertheless met with fierce resistance by member states, and some of them were adopted only after a protracted period of negotiation during which they were watered down considerably³⁷.

Generating support

To generate support for the Amsterdam Proposals, MPG partnered with the European Network against Racism (ENAR) and the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE), both of whom had endorsed the proposals. Together we prepared a less technical version of the Amsterdam Proposals in English, French and German. These printed publications were widely distributed among and discussed by the coalition's member organisations across the Union.

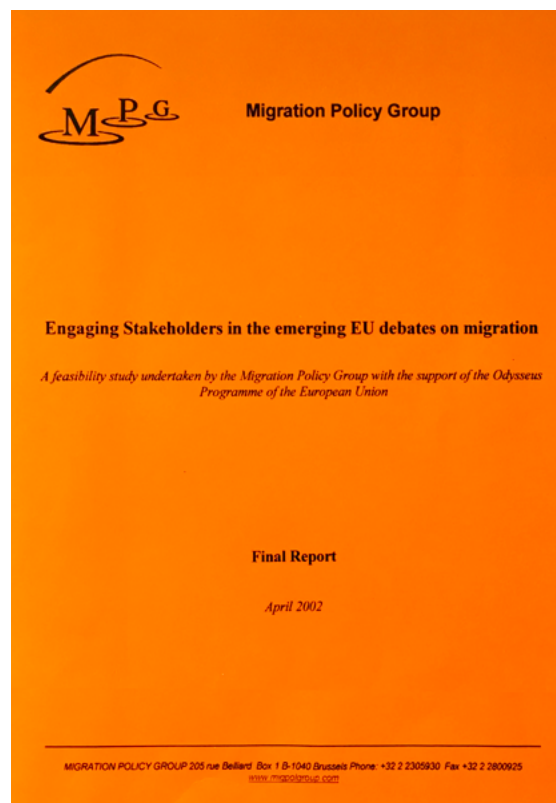
4.7. The European Migration Dialogue (EMD)

In 2001, MPG organised a series of Round Tables in member and candidate member states to stimulate debate on EU legislative migration measures and to put pressure on governments to adopt measures along the lines of what we had proposed. Unfortunately, many migration NGOs were reluctant to respond to our calls to work together on this, sceptical that it would ever bear fruit³⁸.

Engaging stakeholders

MPG thus decided to take a step back to identify which NGOs were amenable to working together at the European level and on what issues. After having convinced EU Commission officials that NGO cooperation was beneficial for the formation of EU migration policies, the

Commission awarded MPG a grant to explore how NGOs could be engaged in the EU migration debates. Non-governmental stakeholders in 18 countries and a number of European organisations dealing with migration participated in this feasibility study, which MPG carried out in 2001 and 2002. They included advocacy, migrant, human rights and welfare organisations, foundations, think tanks and university institutes. This exercise inspired some organisation to (further) develop a migration programme and to link up with European partners.



³⁷ <https://www.temaasyl.se/Documents/Organisationer/Ovriga/MPG%20Transposition.pdf>

* <https://heinonline.org/HOL/LandingPage?handle=hein.journals/ejml6&div=34&id=&page=>

³⁸ https://brill.com/view/journals/emil/2/2/article-p203_5.xml?language=en

<https://heinonline.org/HOL/LandingPage?handle=hein.journals/ejml4&div=39&id=&page=>

Informal networking

In 2003, MPG presented the findings at a European Round Table that was attended by the EU Commissioner for Justice and Home Affairs and by representatives of organisations from sixteen countries who had participated in the study. All were prepared to work together at the European level, but only occasionally and on specific topics. There was no real interest in creating a formal network, nor was the Commission inclined to structurally finance such a network. This momentary setback, however, led to the birth of the European Migration Dialogue (EMD).

Linking European and national agendas

The EMD partners agreed to meet once per year in Brussels to review the migration agenda, identify priorities and develop and maintain working relationships with the European institutions. In each country, the partners would coordinate a national network to disseminate information on EU policies, link the European and national agendas and strengthen the involvement of other non-governmental actors in the debates. MPG assisted the national partners by monitoring, assessing, and disseminating information about EU developments in the immigration field. MPG also facilitated interaction between the partners, as well as dialogues between the partners and the European institutions.

European Migration Dialogue partners

Austria Information and Advice Centre for Migrants

Belgium King Baudouin Foundation with Centre d'Etudes de l'Ethnicité et des Migrations (CEDEM-ULG) and Hoger Instituut voor de Arbeid (HIVA-KUL)

Denmark Danish Institute for Human Rights

Finland Finnish Refugee Advice Centre with CEREN, Centre for research on ethnic relations and nationalism, University of Helsinki

Germany DGB Bildungswerk with Interkultureller Rat (Intercultural Council)

Greece Hellenic League for Human Rights with KEMO, Minority Groups Research Centre

Hungary Research Group on International Migration and Refugees, Research Institute on Minority Issues, Hungarian Academy of Sciences

Ireland NCCRI (National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism)

Italy C.I.E. (Centro di Iniziativa per l'Europa)

Luxembourg ASTI (Association de Soutien aux Travailleurs Immigrés)

Netherlands FORUM (Institut voor Multiculturele Ontwikkeling)

Poland CSM (Center for International Relations) with ISP (Institute for Public Affairs)

Portugal Centre for Geographic Studies, University of Lisbon with Luso-American Foundation (Fundação LusoAmericana)

Spain CIDOB Foundation (Fundació CIDOB) Ortega y Gasset Foundation (Fundación José Ortega y Gasset)

Switzerland SFM (Swiss Forum for Migration and Population Studies)

UK UKREN (UK Race and Europe Network) with IAS (Immigration Advisory Service)

International partner MPG (Migration Policy Group)

Migration governance

One of the issues MPG sought to examine was how cooperation between various levels of governance (European, national and local) could lead to the adoption of just and effective policies. We thought that comparing the US and the EU could shed light on this issue and travelled to the US to interview migration actors in Washington D.C., and Iowa, (where a special migration programme was being conducted in cooperation with the federal government). We commissioned and edited national reports on eighteen selected European countries and wrote a comparative analysis of the various countries' approaches³⁹. This project was sponsored



by the German Marshall Fund of the United States and its findings were presented in 2003 at a Transatlantic Migration Dialogue meeting in Brussels.

Convergence

The central question the project sought to address was which groups (within government, employers, trade unions, NGOs, academics and other experts) were assessing national migration needs, which instruments and mechanisms they were using to make these assessments, and how they asserted influence in the political decision-making process to translate these assessments into policies. In particular, the reports analysed the areas covered by three Directives proposed by the European Commission, namely on admission for employment, family reunification and long-term residence. By comparing these proposals with national legal frameworks, the authors assessed the degree of convergence between the two.

Updating

Recognising the value of this exercise, the EU Commission awarded MPG a grant for another series of reports updating the 2003 reports but shifting the primary focus from legislative developments. This time, the authors were asked to capture both the climate in which migration policymaking was taking place and the translation of overall policy goals into concrete programmes. The reports referenced the public and policy debates and analysed the position of member state governments and other stakeholders. At the EU level, the reports discussed a new type of EU policymaking mechanism known as the Open Methods of Coordination on Employment and Social Inclusion and additional EU legislative instruments.

³⁹ https://www.migpolgroup.com/_old/wp-content/uploads/2003/05/143.ComparativePerspectives_EU-USapproachestotheManagementofImmigration_2003.pdf

In 2005, at another European Migration Dialogue meeting in Brussels, the new series of reports were presented under the heading Current Immigration Debates in Europe⁴⁰. In the year thereafter, the EMD partners continued their activities by organizing a national EMD meeting. EMD working groups were also formed to pursue members' particular interests. However, without longer-term financial support from the EU, participating organisations or private foundations, the EMD slowly discontinued its operation.

4.8. Migration and international relations

In 2002, the European Commission published a Communication on integrating migration into the European Union's relations with third countries. The Communication's focus was on the drivers, or root causes, of international migration. It examined how instruments of European external relations, such as development and political cooperation with third countries, could help to address certain push factors.

MPG found this focus to be too narrow. We decided to undertake a comparison with the US to highlight migrations' contributions to economic development. We looked at factors such as remittances – income raised by migrants and sent back to their countries of origin – and development strategies involving migrants.

Remittances

With funding from the German Marshall Fund of the United States, MPG edited a publication on International Migration and Relations with Third Countries: European and EU approaches⁴¹, which contained reports on five

selected member states, the European Union, and the United States. In our research on the US, we cited the steadily increasing size and significance of remittance flows. We also noted how multilateral financial institutions, such as the Interamerican Development Bank (IDB) and the World Bank, were increasingly paying attention to remittances. The Banks pushed for lower transfer costs and engaged in pilot programmes with foundations and governments in remittance-receiving countries such as Mexico and El Salvador, as well as with 'hometown associations' of migrants, who raised community funds for development objectives.

Migration controls still the primary focus

At the same time, we found that migration control objectives continued to shape many of the policies that linked migration and foreign relations. Examples are the conclusion of readmission agreements, financial and technical assistance to neighbouring and transit countries to better control their borders, and voluntary return programmes. In 2004, MPG organized a Transatlantic Migration Dialogue meeting and brought US-based experts to Brussels to discuss policy options for linking migration and economic development. However, interest among European actors was low (including that of DG DEV), with the notable exception of a federation of European savings banks.

MPG experienced how debates could be slowed down considerably by 'institutional mismatches'. While we did not have the capacity to sustain further activities on the issue, other organisations later picked up the charge and promoted a more positive debate on migration and external relations.

⁴⁰ https://www.migpolgroup.com/_old/wp-content/uploads/2005/09/141.EMD_Introduction_2005.pdf

⁴¹ https://www.migpolgroup.com/_old/portfolio/eu-report-on-international-migration-and-relations-with-third-countries

4.9. Civic citizenship and integration

Diversity Policies Network (DPN)

The Transatlantic Migration Dialogue meetings were not the only occasions in which MPG brought non-European perspectives and expertise to European discussions. In 2000, MPG created the Diversity Policies Network (DPN) with the aim of developing effective diversity and social cohesion strategies as well as methods for monitoring their implementation.

Between 2000 and 2005, the Diversity Policies Network (DPN) brought together representatives of the Australian, Canadian, Danish, Dutch, Norwegian, Swedish, Swiss, and British governmental departments who were responsible for the implementation of the reception of refugee and immigrants, and for integration and diversity policies⁴². MPG had previously worked with several of these countries through the Council of Europe's CDMG (of which Australia and Canada were observers). The network was supported financially by the participating countries.

State responsibility

MPG acted as the DPN's Secretariat. We prepared background papers (often based on visits to the participating countries) and facilitated seminars that allowed for frank exchanges on both successful and less successful practices. By linking discussions on the reception of immigrants to issues of citizenship and service provision for a diverse population that included second- and third-generation immigrants, the Network promoted a holistic approach to integration. The Network focused on the state's responsibility and capacity to accommodate

diversity during a time when public debates in Europe emphasized the individual's obligation to integrate.

Vast differences between the participating countries' political systems stood in the way of developing joint initiatives, however, limiting DPN's impact. Moreover, the EU was becoming a much more important platform for exchanges on integration issues.

Increasing cooperation on integration

In 2004, the EU adopted the Common Basic Integration Principles and made funds available to put them into practice. As calls for projects were published, MPG was often approached by national and European non-governmental organisations and research institutes to join or become a leading partner in the submission of project proposals. We also began to work with local authorities and with Eurocities, a coalition of municipalities⁴³.

Civic citizenship

MPG developed the concept of 'civic citizenship', a combination of measures that would facilitate the securing of long-term residence, family reunion, access to nationality and protection against discrimination, laying the legislative foundation for the societal integration of immigrants and their families. We took stock of the 'civic citizenship' policies in fifteen member states with the aim of elevating integration standards and enabling integration actors to monitor whether they were being met in the countries' developing integration policies. We also monitored how individual Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) had voted on the relevant Commission's proposals for Directives⁴⁴.

⁴² https://www.migpolgroup.com/_old/diversity-integration/diversity-policies-network/

⁴³ <https://heinonline.org/HOL/LandingPage?handle=hein.journals/ejml5&div=8&id=&page=>

⁴⁴ https://www.migpolgroup.com/_old/portfolio/civic-citizenship-and-immigrant-inclusion-a-guide-for-the-implementation-of-civic-citizenship-policies/



Ranking countries

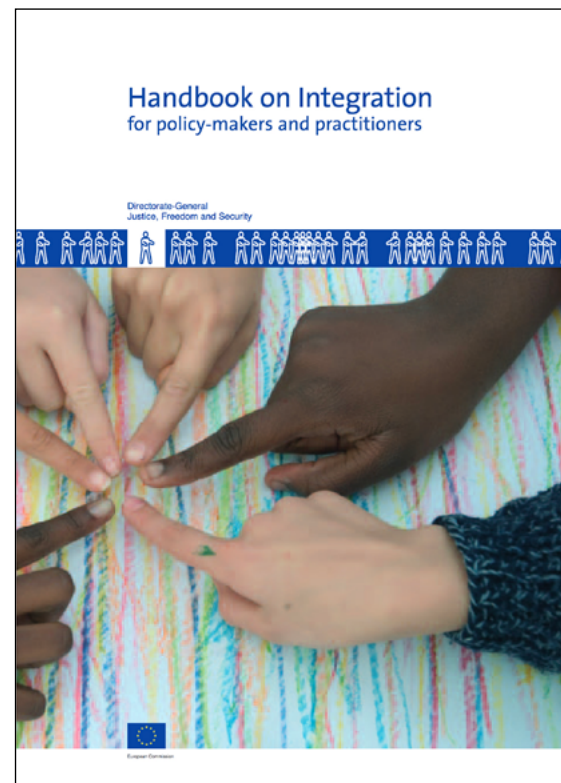
The 15-country study prepared the ground for the Civic Citizenship and inclusion policy Index, which we produced in 2004 together with the British Council, the Foreign Policy Center and the University of Sheffield⁴⁵. The project brought together MPG's work on migration, integration and anti-discrimination. It was supported by the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust and the Barrow Cadbury Trust. The Index ranked countries according to the measures they had adopted in each of the four areas.

Later editions were called the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) involving more than 100 academics and

covering additional fields and countries in Europe, North America and Asia. Many members of the European Migration Dialogue were also involved in this project.

EU Integration Handbook

In 2003, the European Commission awarded MPG a contract to prepare the first EU Handbook on Integration. Under this contract, we organised a series of seminars at which policy makers and practitioners exchanged best practices. Together with the Commission and the so-called National Contact Points on Integration



First edition EU Handbook

⁴⁵ https://www.migpolgroup.com/_old/public/docs/44.EuropeanCivicCitizenship-and-InclusionIndex_2005.pdf

(i.e., member state officials), MPG selected the seminar discussion topics and participants, prepared background papers on the selected themes to be discussed and produced the final reports.

The Handbook was translated into 21 languages and promoted widely. The exercise would be repeated twice, each time focussing on different integration topics and resulting in more seminars, background papers and two further editions of the Handbook. Identifying best practices and key stakeholders in various policy fields allowed MPG to further grow its network, particularly with local and regional governmental representatives in the member states.

Integration Website and Immigration Portal

Because of our expertise and reputation, MPG also won contracts for the setting up of the official EU Website on

Integration and the EU Immigration Portal. For the Integration Website, we were asked to set up an informal network of correspondents (one per member state) for which we recruited integration practitioners and scholars from our EMD partners. For the immigration Portal, we worked with immigration lawyers in our network. The Commission's Justice and Home Affairs DG would eventually create the European Migration Network (EMN) to manage the gathering of such information in each of the EU member states.

With just over ten years under its belt, MPG had come a long way in influencing policies at the European and national levels. With many of its networks, proposals, and reports now embedded in the European framework for migration, integration and anti-discrimination, we had laid the groundwork for continued ground-breaking work that would follow in the next nearly two decades.

Epilogue

Because of MPG's unique position as an organisation that worked with government, NGO's, and a wide range of other stakeholders across Europe, it was able to stay at the forefront of European-wide migration, integration and anti-discrimination policy developments and discussions. Central to this work was our belief in cooperation and dialogue and that diverse countries and stakeholders could learn from one another.

One could argue that MPG was the right organisation at the right time, emerging as the changing and expanding European Union began to deal with issues of migration, integration and anti-discrimination. MPG developed through trial and error. For every successful initiative, there were others which did not take hold. We learned just as much from our unsuccessful ventures as our successful ones and built on this experience to develop new initiatives and solutions framed around cooperation and partnership.

Neither activists nor academics were well-positioned in MPG's early years to bring together the stakeholders who could influence Europe's nascent policies on integration, anti-discrimination and migration, though both would become essential partners in MPG's trans-European and global networks. We valued our discussions with activists and benefited from their insights and shared passions. We enjoyed working with academics and they enjoyed working with us. Our well-researched proposals and reports made us more credible and effective, gaining relevance for our partners' work in policy debates, and stimulating further scientific research. For governmental officials, MPG was a reliable and forceful counterpart, and for the private sector, a resourceful adviser.

The high quality of MPG's legislative proposals and of its many country and thematic reports gave us the reputation of being an effective focal point for the production of reliable information and analysis. Our capacity to organise productive exchanges, trainings and best practice exchanges among diverse stakeholders in Europe and North America made us a preferred partner to European and national governments, NGOs, and academics, allowing us to have a lasting influence on Europe's policies in these areas.

Annex

MPG's primary early staff consisted of:

Jan Niessen, as of 1990, CCME's General-Secretary, founded MPG in 1995 and was responsible for the development of the organisation and its programmes. He brought to MPG his migration expertise and strong connections with European institutions, civil society and academia. He was Director until he retired in 2014.

Antonio Cruz started the Migration NewsSheet when he was at CCME and remained the editor while at MPG. The NewsSheet was a reliable and highly respected source of information on European developments in the areas of migration, integration and anti-racism. He retired in 2017.

Beth Ginsburg joined CCME/MPG in 1994 and launched the societal integration project and raised funds for MPG. She organised the first Transatlantic Migration Dialogue, after which she left MPG to work for the private sector. In 2002, she re-joined MPG to manage Supplier Diversity Europe, after which she became an associated staff member until 2023.

Isabelle Chopin joined CCME/MPG in 1995 to manage the Starting Line campaign and led MPG's other anti-discrimination projects, including the networks of anti-discrimination academics and practitioners for which she also raised funds. She became MPG's Deputy-Director in 2001 and Director in 2016.

Lori Lindburg joined MPG in 1995 and organised EU, Council of Europe and Transatlantic Migration Dialogue and national and European Round Table meetings with government officials, businesses, NGOs and scholars on societal integration and socioeconomic inclusion of immigrants and ethnic minorities. She (co-) wrote several reports on migration and integration. She left MPG in 2000.

Yongmi Schibel was with MPG from 2001 to 2006, further developing the migration and integration programme, and managed the Transatlantic and European Migration Dialogue. She authored many reports and the first edition of the EU Handbook on Integration.

During MPG's first ten years, other staff were hired, for a shorter or longer period, to work on specific projects.

As former staff members of the Migration Policy Group (MPG) we looked back at exciting times in our professional lives and chronicled MPG's first ten years, from 1995 when it was created, until 2005 when it had proven to be an influential organisation and a preferred partner. We wanted to understand what made this young organisation so successful.