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EU INSTITUTIONS ON THE MIGRATION OF HIGHLY EDUCATED CITIZENS IN A COMMON MARKET

A qualitative idea analysis of the ideas of the Committee of the Regions and the Commission in the issue of the migration of highly educated citizens

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Abstract

For the EU to work, all different member-states need to benefit in some way from the cooperation. The migration of highly educated citizens is an example of a complex economic and political science problem since some member-states benefit from the migration while other member-states do not. The aim of this thesis is to create a better understanding of how EU institutions presents the issue of the migration of highly educated citizens from some member states and regions as a consequence of the single market integration, and which solutions they present to mediate the negative effects. A comparative idea analysis was conducted on material discussing the migration of highly educated citizens from the Committee of the Regions (CoR) and the Commission, to show how the ideas and solutions differed between the institutions. The results show that the CoR viewed the migration as largely negative in the form of brain drain which can be solved through solutions on regional, national, and European levels, especially through the cohesion policy and cohesion funds. The Commission discussed the migration of highly educated citizens as both positive and negative, with solutions lying mostly on a national level through incentives to create a brain circulation. This difference in ideas can be explained through the theory of liberal intergovernmentalism, which views the Commission as being more influenced by the stronger member states than the CoR which is on a different bargaining level and, therefore, more influenced by smaller actors.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Free movement has been an integral part of the European Union from the very beginning. Initially, this free movement was closely linked to the economic integration and was only available for workers but would later expand to include economically inactive people such as students. With the Maastricht Treaty, a European citizenship was created with several fundamental rights, such as the freedom of movement. Promoting the mobility of EU citizens became an essential part of building a shared cultural and political identity in the European Union to further create a European integration (Maas, 2015).

The idea for the free movement was that it would economically strengthen all countries of the European project and help further its goal of economic convergence, the process when relatively poorer countries grow faster than richer ones, thereby leading to the poorer countries catching up to the richer ones (Alcidi et al, 2018). However, this economic convergence has not been successful in recent years, with many countries and regions, especially in Southern and Eastern Europe, seeing a large portion of their highly educated citizens emigration to Western and Northern Europe for a higher living standard and higher wages (Ienciu & Ienciu, 2015).

There is a discussion in which respect this migration of highly educated citizens is positive or negative for the EU, especially in the long term. The more negative view on this emigration of highly educated citizens is called “brain drain”, which is when a high amount highly educated citizens of a country emigrate, leading to a decreased social and technological progress and fewer means for the country or region to create capital (Földvári & Van Leeuwen, 2009). The more positive view is called “brain gain”, which is when a country positively benefits from the migration of highly educated citizens. Brain gain can be applied to both the countries that send highly educated migrants and those that receive them. Receiving countries get an immigration of highly educated citizens that help boost the economy while sending countries may see a surge in citizens choosing to study within the country, leading to some students not migrating and, therefore, increasing the number of educated citizens in the country (Beine, Docquier & Rapoport, 2001). “Brain circulation” is another view, which means that the highly educated migrants move back home after a while

and bring with them new knowledge and capital, boosting the origin country's economy (Horvat, 2004).

The migration of highly educated citizens is an interesting economic and political issue since the European Union works through joint solutions. The migration needs to be politically and economically legitimised for the different member-states and regions to accept this freedom of movement, especially when there are winners and losers in the trade-off, at least in the short-term. Hasslebalch (2019) points out that more research is needed into the power relations between EU members to better explain the different discourses in this issue.

The theory of intergovernmentalism can help in explaining how the negative aspects of free movement are negotiated and solved. According to the theory of liberal intergovernmentalism, the larger and economically stronger member states influence the European institutions in the larger decisions so it will benefit them (Moravcsik 2003). The smaller and poorer member states are in return offered different forms of side payments, such as economic benefits, to support and legitimize these decisions (Copeland, 2014). However, there is some criticism against the theory of liberal intergovernmentalism. Smith and Ray (1993) argue that there are more levels of bargaining that are important and should be analysed, and more actors than the states should be brought into the discussion.

Material from the Commission and the Committee of the Regions (CoR) have been analysed in this thesis since these are two different EU-institutions on two different levels, with the CoR consisting of local and regional actors taking decisions on a cross-national basis. The first material that have been analysed is the *"Opinion of the European Committee of the Regions — Brain Drain in the EU: addressing the challenge at all levels"* from the Committee of the Regions where they present policy recommendations for the issue of the migration of highly educated. The second material that have been analysed are the annual intra-EU migration reports from the Commission in the timespan of 2016-2020, where the reports discuss the migration of highly educated citizens.

The theory of liberal intergovernmentalism has been complemented by an idea analysis to explain what ideas that dominate in the EU institutions on the issue of migration of highly educated citizens. The thesis analysed in what respect the EU institutions view this

migration as a negative in the form of brain drain or as a positive, at least in the long-term, in the form of brain gain and/or brain circulation. The thesis also analysed what solutions and compensations the EU institutions present to solve or minimise the negative effects since the EU wants to achieve economic convergence for the member states. The thesis also looked at how these ideas differ on an individual, regional, national and EU level since the problems from brain drain may be seen as a problem on a regional, national, or European level. Similarly, the solutions have been categorized on a regional, national or European level, since the responsibility or the ability to solve the negative effects may be put on different levels.

1.2. Aim

The aim of this thesis is to create a better understanding of how EU institutions present the issue of a high emigration of highly educated citizens from some member states and regions as a consequence of the single market integration, and which solutions they present to mediate the negative effects. In all, this will build an understanding of how the EU builds the rhetoric around complex political-economic issues, that normally produce winners and losers, but still need everyone to politically opt into the solutions.

1.3. Research Questions

This thesis will approach the following research questions.

1. What ideas do the EU institutions present to describe the migration of highly educated citizens?

2. How does the view differ between different EU institutions on the issue of migration of highly educated citizens?

3. How do the ideas and solutions differ between different EU institutions on how to solve the negative aspects of the emigration of highly educated citizens?

4. How does the theory of liberal intergovernmentalism reflect the positions taken by the different actors?

1.4 Disposition

This research thesis begins with an introduction on the issue of the migration of highly educated citizens and a presentation of the aim and research questions. This is followed by an overview of previous research on the concept of brain drain, brain gain, and brain circulation and how the migration of highly educated citizens looks in Europe. The research thesis then presents the theory, power relations in the European Union, and the power relations in the issue of migration of highly educated citizens. The different ideas presented in the previous research are categorized in an analysis schedule. This is followed by a presentation and discussion of the actors and materials that have been analysed and a presentation of the chosen method and how the analysis has been conducted. The thesis then analyses the material from the CoR and then the Commission and then does a comparative analysis of the different materials. The research thesis then ends with a conclusion of the results.

2. Previous research

2. 1. Free movement in the European Union

Free movement has been an integral part of the European project from the very beginning in the aftermath of WW2. Initially, this free movement was for mostly economic reasons. The countries in the European project thought that labour shortages would hinder economic growth and the reconstruction of their countries in the post-war period. This free movement was closely linked to the project of economic integration through a single European market which also involved the free movement of capital, goods, and services. Additionally, labour mobility was also seen as a key to achieving the political objectives of European integration (Benton & Patuzzi, 2017).

In the 70s, the ideas of a European union citizenship began to emerge in European law. The framework of the free movement began to expand to also include non-workers. By the 90s, the rights and entitlements of economically inactive people such as students and retirees were officially codified in community legislation with a set of directives. In 1992 the Maastricht Treaty was created which outlined the founding principles of a political union and introduced the concept of a European citizenship which included free movement as a fundamental right. Promoting the mobility of EU citizens became an essential part of the project of building a shared political and cultural identity in the EU (Maas, 2015).

The introduction of the Eurozone further strengthened the economic case for free movement of labour. A single currency removes the ability of countries to control their own money supply so, therefore, in theory, these countries rely more on exporting their workforce to other countries in periods of unemployment instead of adjusting their currency to bring in investments and create jobs. Free movement of labour, therefore, became more central to the project of economic convergence in the European Union by exchanging the flow of capital for a flow of labour (Katzenstein & Checkel, 2009).

In the 21st century, the EU has been enlarged to include several more central- and eastern European countries. The argument for this enlargement was to promote stability across the European region and supporting the countries still dealing with the aftermath of the transition from state socialist countries to free-market democracies. But the admission of

countries with lower wages and lower living standards led to concerns of large-scale migration. The economic crisis created further problems for the free movement as it dampened the EU's power to support economic growth across all the member states, especially in Southern Europe and Central- and Eastern Europe (Benton & Petrovic, 2013). This lack of economic growth is relevant for the EU goal of economic convergence. The EU wants to achieve an economic convergence since it sees this as beneficial to the European Union as a whole since it creates social and economic cohesion (Strielkowski & Höschle, 2016). The goal of an economic convergence constitutes the legal ground for the creation of the European Structural Funds as well as the backbone of the EU Cohesion Policy. Both the Structural Funds and the cohesion policy were intended to act against regional disparities and to help achieve an economic convergence. First by devising redistributive measures and secondly by equipping poorer regions with the tools to improve their potential growth and productivity. The idea was that the creation of the internal market and its four freedoms (free movement of people, labour, goods, and services) would have negative effects such as cross-border relocation of resources and production and therefore the cohesion policy was needed to avoid these negative effects The European Union's cohesion policy aims to strengthen the economic and social cohesion by reducing disparities in the level of development between regions and member-states. The policy focuses on key areas which will help the European Union to remain globally competitive (Alcidi et al, 2018).

The economic convergence has not been so successful in the last years, especially considering the economic crisis in 2008 which had large long-lasting negative effects on most of the European Union (Strielkowski & Höschle, 2016). While the evidence of free movement is mostly positive, its effects have not led to only positive results with issues such as an emigration of highly educated citizens. The economic convergence has also not been successful in all regions, especially in southern Europe (Alcidi et al, 2018). Benton & Patuzzi (2017) argue that this tension between the economic view and the political view may create difficulties for the member states and the European institutions. The EU institutions are faced with the choice between promoting the political idea of free movement or the economic benefits.

Maas (2014) argues that the project of European integration has always been about more than economics, it is also about creating a community of people transcending

nations. He does however agree that non-economic arguments are difficult to find before the 1990s in European law. Benton & Patuzzi (2017) argue that there are two different views on free movement in the European Union. The original view on free movement was largely economic but over the years free movement has also become a symbol of the European Union as a political entity. The EU citizenship in the Maastricht Treaty largely epitomized this shift. The free movement can therefore not only be captured through an economic cost-benefit analysis. Whether the free movement in the European Union is a success depends on which view that is evaluated.

The idea of a free movement, in the form of an EU citizenship, has high support from the public (European Commission, 2016), but may meet pushback from member states who see this as an affront of sovereignty. Meanwhile, the economic rationale such as economic convergence has less resonance with public opinion (Benton & Patuzzi, 2017).

2.2 Migration of highly educated citizens

There are three main concepts discussed in the migration of highly educated citizens. The first concept is “brain drain”. Brain drain is the name of the phenomena when a high percentage of the highly educated citizens in a country emigrate, affecting the country negatively (Morano-Foadi, 2006). The most central negative aspect of brain drain is the flight of human capital. Human capital is important for the growth and development of a country because it affects the production factor labor (Földvári & Van Leeuwen, 2009). When a country has a high percentage of highly educated citizens, the potential for social and technological progress increases. When highly educated residents emigrate, less social and technological progress is made and the potential for the country decreases (Horvat, 2004). Brain drain can also have negative effects on other aspects of the country, such as the question if it is worth investing in the education of the country. If a country invests resources in educating citizens that end up emigrating, the country will not experience any faster economic development since the country cannot reap the benefits of the investments (Carrington, 1999). Docquier and Rapopo (2012) point out that highly educated migration is becoming dominant in international migration and a major aspect of globalization. The migration of highly educated workers from less-developed countries to higher-developed countries is becoming a serious source of concern since it hurts the economic and social development of these countries. Through the brain drain, the human capital is becoming

weaker where it is already weak and stronger where it already is strong which creates increasing inequality between countries.

The reasons for educated citizens emigrating are often for better opportunities such as higher, salaries, more stable economies, better working conditions, and better career opportunities. Countries that suffer from an emigration of highly educated citizens usually have an unstable labor market with high unemployment and low salaries (Ienciu & Ienciu, 2015). Morano-Foadi (2006) argues that some countries that have a high emigration of highly educated citizens also suffers from corruption and nepotism. Highly educated workers feel like there are little to no opportunities to be able to advance in their careers in their home countries.

Dumont, Martin, and Spielvogel (2007) point out that there is a gender dimension of brain drain. Female emigration has been increasing in the last decades, which includes the emigration of highly educated women. Considering that many women in developing countries still have unequal access to education this means they are overrepresented in the brain drain. Women leave these countries since they find greater working opportunities in other countries with better gender equality. A high emigration of highly educated women can also be seen in highly developed countries. Ono and Odaki (2011) argue that the gender wage gap, high degree of gender segregation, and lack of long-term career prospects for women in the Japanese labor market have led to a female brain drain in Japan. Many highly educated Japanese women seek employment in foreign firms for better career opportunities and higher salaries than they would find in the Japanese labor market.

The second term in the migration of highly educated citizens is “brain gain” which is used to describe when a country benefits from the migration of highly educated citizens, such as when a country has the immigration of an educated workforce (Carrington, 1999). Brain gain is seen as something positive for a country. The country that receives educated migrants has not spent resources on educating the migrants but gets the benefits. A highly educated workforce improves the potential for progress in engineering and other sectors which creates more capital for the country. There might also be a brain gain for the country that sees an emigration of highly educated citizens. While brain drain might lead to fewer investments in education it might also lead to the opposite. Countries experiencing brain drain may invest more in education and research to make it more attractive for highly

educated citizens to stay. These investments might also lead to the country attracting workers and students from other countries, creating a brain gain (Horvat, 2004). Beine, Docquier & Rapoport (2001) argue that the opportunity to emigrate might increase the number of citizens who choose to study within the country. Since some students will end up not migrating, the country may end up experiencing a positive effect on its human capital, eventually leading to a brain gain.

Another aspect of the brain gain is that many migrants will emigrate alone while their family stays in the home country. They, therefore, continue supporting their families by sending money home which gives an influx of capital to the home country. Faini (2007) does however argue that this is not always true, especially for highly educated migrants. Highly educated migrants are usually from more affluent families which leads to the families being able to support themselves or the migrant being able to move with the family to the new country.

The third term in the migration of highly educated citizens is brain circulation. This concept describes career and training paths in which students or highly educated workers move abroad to specialize and then return to their country of origin, drawing on the experience they have amassed to secure more advantageous employment conditions (Milio et al. 2012). Horvat (2004) argues that brain drain can become something positive if a country manages to attract back their emigrants after a while. When highly educated citizens move abroad, they will gather both capital and new knowledge that they might not have been able to attain in their home countries. If the migrants then move back to their country of origin, they will bring back both newfound knowledge and capital which will benefit the country. If a country can circulate this process in harmony with the nation's interests and in the context of globalization this process may be very favorable.

There is however some criticism against the concept of brain circulation. Docquier and Rapopo (2012) argue that the globalization of the world creates winners and losers among the countries experiencing a brain drain. Certain countries manage to capitalize on having a skilled, educated diaspora because they have the right policies to attract the migrants back while others do not and therefore lose their human capital. Lundborg (2010) argues that the use of a brain circulation policy to achieve economic development would require very detailed knowledge about the consequences for the countries suffering from a

high emigration of highly educated citizens. A successful brain circulation policy presumes that the country knows or at least has a good estimation of several issues such as the effects of emigration on the human capital, which duration of migration best suits the establishment of businesses, the effects and extent of remittances, etc. Such knowledge is currently lacking. Teferra (2005) argues that brain circulation can only attain full circle if the host and home countries both benefit from the mobility in a somewhat equal and comparable manner. Countries with a high emigration will need to create deliberative policies and effective strategies to attract back citizens to create a brain circulation. Despite this, even with successful brain circulation schemes, less developed countries can still experience a high emigration of highly educated citizens since they cannot compete with the higher resources and higher wages in more highly developed countries. Many countries experiencing a brain drain will need serious socioeconomic and sociopolitical improvements to be able to attract back skilled workers.

Beine, Docquier & Rapoport (2008) point out that the size of the country matters on whether an emigration of highly educated citizens will give positive or negative results. A large country such as China or India, will not be as affected by brain drain since they have a large labor market and therefore the negative effects are not as strong. The emigration of highly educated skilled people from smaller countries does not seem to generate the same positive effects on human capital and instead seems to be dominated by negative effects since the emigration of highly skilled will have larger effects on a small labor market.

In summary, there are several different viewpoints on the migration of highly educated citizens and its effects. It can be caused by several push and pull factors. Some of the possible push effects are low salaries, gender inequality, and bad work opportunities while some possible pull factors are better work opportunities and higher salaries. The emigration of highly educated citizens is often caused by the economic disparity between richer and poorer countries since the poorer countries do not have the same resources to offer the same opportunities. It is possible for countries suffering from brain drain to change the course into something more positive, such as brain circulation or brain gain. Some possible ways to achieve brain circulation are through good policy and investments in education. However, it is possible this is not always enough, especially since these poorer countries often do not have the resources and higher wages to compete with the richer countries.

2.3 Migration of highly educated citizens in the European Union

The issue of the migration of highly educated citizens is an issue for many different regions and countries in the European Union. Eastern Europe has an emigration of highly educated citizens to Western Europe because of better work opportunities such as higher salaries (Ienciu and Ienciu, 2015). This income disparity between Western Europe and Eastern Europe is attributed to the different political and economic systems during the cold war. Many countries in Eastern Europe belonged to the eastern bloc which had state-socialism as a political system. The economy was dominated by bureaucracy, high state ownership, low unemployment, and universal social benefits (Bohle & Greskovits, 2012). The citizens also had a restricted movement across national borders, especially to countries in Western Europe. When the eastern bloc collapsed, the Eastern European countries from the now-former eastern bloc underwent a drastic transformation to market capitalism and democracy. The fall of the eastern bloc also led to the opening of borders which meant that citizens in Eastern Europe could move to Western Europe which had a higher living standard (Ienciu & Ienciu, 2015). Despite the transformation to a market economy, the countries in Eastern Europe still have not caught up to Western Europe's higher living standards (Bohle & Greskovits, 2012).

When the European Union was to be enlarged in 2004 with several Eastern European countries, both the old and new Member States were worried about what this free movement would mean. Since Western Europe and Eastern Europe had been divided for decades, there were numerous economic, social, and political differences between them. The old Member States in Western Europe were worried that there would be large immigration of EU migrants from Eastern Europe in search of better job opportunities. They were afraid that these new migrants would take work away from their citizens and lower the national wages (Ienciu & Ienciu, 2015). The old member states were also concerned that migrants would use the countries welfare system which would cost money and resources. This led to the old Member States being able to apply for transitional provisions where they could restrict immigration from the new Member States for a couple of years, with the exception of Cyprus and Malta, which were excluded from these rules. The new Member States in Eastern Europe were generally more positive to the enlargement. However, they were worried that their younger and highly educated population would emigrate with negative effects such as brain drain and a negative demographic trend (Kahanec, 2015).

The enlargement of the European Union led to an increase in the number of migrant workers in the Union, from less than 2 million in 2004 to almost 5 million in 2009. With the financial crisis, development stalled but picked up again when the countries in the European Union began to recover economically. The migrants who emigrated from Eastern Europe to Western Europe were mostly of lower education or of higher education (Kahanec, 2015).

Ienciu and Ienciu (2015) argue that highly educated workers in Eastern Europe are more likely to emigrate in search of better opportunities because their home countries are lacking in public policies such as competitiveness and government efficiency. Lower wages, lack of research facilities and insufficient training and education opportunities is seen as central for the brain drain phenomenon. Some countries were better at keeping their skilled workers such as Latvia, the Czech Republic and Estonia. Ienciu and Ienciu argue that Estonia was especially good at offering opportunities for its highly skilled workers due to good policymaking, good quality of the education system, and availability of research and training services. Countries such as Croatia, Slovakia, Bulgaria, and Romania had a high emigration of highly educated citizens. Bulgaria was on the lower end which can be attributed to the low quality of the education system. This can also be explained by Bulgaria going through a difficult period in its political stability and thus public policies were affected, especially when it came to higher education and training. Raluca (2018) points out the Romania is one of the countries in the world with the highest emigration rates. Many of these migrants are highly educated which is a loss of human capital for Romania and leads to a negative impact for several key sectors. Reasons cited for this emigration are economic instability, low salaries, corruption, and limited professional opportunities.

The emigration of highly educated citizens is becoming a problem for several key sectors in Eastern Europe, such as healthcare. Adavor et al (2021) point out that Eastern Europe's migration rates have increased since EU accession, especially among healthcare workers. Romania had among the highest emigration rates of healthcare professionals in the world. Séchet and Vasilcu (2015) point out how the emigration of healthcare professionals in Romania is having significant effects on the healthcare provision in the country. Romania is facing a drastic reduction of healthcare workers, especially in rural areas. Kaczmarczyk (2010) argues that while Poland experiences an emigration of highly educated workers, the

country also has increased its share of highly educated citizens. Those who emigrate are often from areas in Poland where the labor markets cannot offer suitable professional opportunities. In this context, the emigration of highly educated citizens in Poland might be described as a "brain overflow" instead of a brain drain. However, Poland got an issue with a lot of the highly skilled emigrants being healthcare professionals. The emigration of healthcare professionals may result in serious problems for regional and local healthcare facilities, especially when some of these health-care workers are specialized and cannot easily be replaced.

Southern Europe experiences an emigration of highly educated citizens to Northern Europe, especially after the financial crisis in 2008. Ifanti et al (2014) point out that Greece experienced an emigration of highly educated citizens when they were hit by the financial crisis. The country got high unemployment and lower wages which leads highly educated Greeks to seek better conditions in Western Europe. González-Ferrer & Moreno-Fuentes (2017) discuss how when the financial crisis hit Spain in 2008, unemployment and emigration from Spain increased. This emigration still persists and many of those who leave are young and emigrate to either another EU country or South America. Morando-Foadi (2006) points out how Italy sees an emigration of highly educated citizens since there is a lack of investments in research and higher wages. Italy also got issues with corruption and nepotism which leads to many highly educated citizens finding better opportunities abroad.

Docquier & Rapoport (2011) point out how Northern Europe also has an emigration of highly educated to a smaller extent. Even if some of these citizens move within Europe, there is an emigration of highly educated citizens from Western Europe to the United States. This is explained by the better investments in research and higher salaries in the United States. Saint-Paul (2008) argues that this emigration could lead to Europe not being able to compete with the United States on a research level. While Western Europe does not have a major emigration of highly educated citizens, it is expected that some key professionals in business and research will emigrate to the United States. These key people can be pioneers in their fields, which can be a great loss. Docquier and Rapoport (2011) point out that Western Europe's problems with the emigration of highly educated citizens are often compensated for by having migration from Eastern Europe, which ultimately leads to a brain gain in Western Europe.

3. Theory and Analytical framework

3.1 Power relations in the European Union

Liberal intergovernmentalism is a political theory that seeks to explain the broader transformation of regional integration. Liberal intergovernmentalism sees the EU as an international institution that can be studied by viewing the member states as the main actors. The member states are in a situation of anarchy where each state achieves its goals through bargaining and negotiations (Cini & Perez, 2015).

Moravcsik (1993) argues that these negotiations take place on two levels. First, there is a debate on a domestic level where the state is influenced by domestic groups such as NGOs, businesses, etc. The government then aggregates the policy desires of the major groupings in the domestic society they represent and creates a set of national policy preferences at the international level. The second level is state-to-state bargaining. Moravcsik defines the state as unitary at the international level. This means that while there are different groups and interests at a domestic level, the state is a single actor on the international stage. The states are "rational" actors that make decisions on a cost-benefit analysis, which means that the state tries to maximise their gains and minimise their losses in line with their national policy preferences against other states with different policy interests. The final decision of bargaining between the EU member states is decided by the relative power of each state. Here the more a state has to lose from not securing what it needs from a negotiation, the more it will concede to reach an agreement. The less a member state has to lose from leaving the negotiations, the more powerful it is in the bargaining and more likely to achieve its overall objectives. The big and powerful member states are thought to be able to leave a negotiation more easily and thus more likely to achieve their overall objectives.

According to liberal intergovernmentalism, EU institutions are mainly a means to create credible commitments for member government to make sure everyone sticks to their end of the bargain. Therefore, the institutions are highly influenced by the member-states (Moravcsik & Vachudova, 2003). George and Bache (2001) argue that the main function of the supranational EU institutions, such as the Commission, is to implement the decisions taken by the negotiations. Since the negotiations are more influenced by the stronger member-

states, the institutions are implementing decisions that are largely in the stronger member states interests.

Moravcsik and Vachudova (2003) argue that the richer and larger countries of the European Union have historically proposed and favoured new initiatives such as the Single European Act which have cast the smaller and poorer EU members in the role of effective veto. While these smaller and poorer member states cannot make any major decisions, they can extract some concessions and side payments from the larger member states in exchange for support. Copeland (2014) points out that in negotiations where unanimity is not needed, the poorer and smaller member states are deprived of their veto-powers and are, therefore, less likely to influence these decisions.

Copeland (2014) argues that the economic weight and knowledge and workings of the EU institutions play a large role in the influence and status of EU member states during the negotiation process. This is especially true for Germany, which is the largest economy in the EU, the biggest contributor to the EU budget, and the largest trading partner for most EU countries. Because of Germany's economic power they have the most power in EU negotiations, especially in macro-economic and monetary policies. Other large economics such as France and Italy also got a lot of bargaining power. As a result of this, smaller or poorer member states have a history of being side-lined in the integration process. This is especially true for the newer member-states from Eastern Europe that has little political and economic power (with the exception of Poland that got both a larger political and economic power because of its size).

A large part of the bargaining process for the smaller and poorer member states is to gain side payments for supporting decisions. Some of these side payments come from the Cohesion fund (Copeland, 2014). Coman (2018) argues that the rules adopted in the midst of the Eurozone crisis in order to strengthen the governance of the euro-area had spill-over effects on the cohesion policy. In the years of the crisis (2010-2013), some actors pushed forward the idea of suspending structural funds for member states in case of non-compliance with the rules of the Stability and Growth pact, which made the funding conditional for member states on the compliance with the rules of the new economic governance. Coman argues that the Parliament was side-lined by a strong partnership between the Council and the Commission.

Weiner & Diez (2009) argue that there is a criticism against the theory of liberal intergovernmentalism since it focuses on grand bargaining and major decisions but does not explain the everyday decision-making procedures that represent most EU policies. Smith and Ray (1993) argue that liberal intergovernmentalism only takes into account two levels of bargaining, that of the domestic level and the inter-state level. In addition to the domestic and inter-state level, there are other forms of interaction such as sub-national exchange, EU and non-member state exchange, and institutionalised intergovernmental exchange. This focus calls for bringing in other non-member state and non-state actors into the analysis.

3.2 Power relations in the issue migration of highly educated citizens

Frank (1980) argues that the idea of brain drain has been used to exemplify the unequal power relationships of dependency between rich developed countries and poorer developing countries. Mahroum (2001) points out that highly educated immigration is becoming an essential part of national technology and economic development policies in the developed world. Boeri et al. (2012) argue that there is an increasing competition between developed countries to attract highly skilled migrants, even if this mostly applies to western countries outside Europe, such as the USA. The EU has however taken measures to attract more highly skilled migrants through actions such as the “Blue card” initiative.

Golovics (2019) discusses the migration of highly educated citizens and the idea of a tax solution to compensate the countries experiencing brain drain for their welfare losses. Golovics is critical of this idea and discusses how brain drain in the context of liberal intergovernmentalism where every state act in its own interest. Since the member states bargaining through joint decisions, it is highly unlikely that member states that are beneficiaries of brain gain would support a concept such as a brain drain tax since it is against their interests. Golovics is also critical of the idea that the member states are compensated for the losses of the emigration of highly educated citizens through the cohesion funds. The cohesion funds are not a direct compensation for this emigration but rather compensation for the acknowledged inconveniences and disadvantages of an EU-membership (as well as the cohesion funds themselves being one of the benefits of being an EU-member). The cohesion funds are also intended to enhance the economic convergence which is in the best interest of the European Union as a whole (including the net contributor countries). Coman (2018) researched how the rules adopted for the economic crisis years spilled over to the cohesion

fund. This was made possible because of a partnership between the Commission and the Council. Hasselbalch (2019) discusses this further and suggests that this may have been possible because of the interests of stronger actors, such as the northern EU-members.

Hasselbalch (2019) discusses the changing crisis perceptions in the EU when it comes to the migration of highly educated citizens and how this interrelates with the emergence and re-constitution of policy problems. The perception of the migration of highly educated citizens has changed between a "skills storyline" and a "macroeconomic" storyline. The macroeconomic storyline builds on the emigration being caused by macroeconomic differences between EU member states, leading to large differences in wages, rights, and conditions for workers. The skills storyline encourages free movement and builds on the emigration of highly educated citizens being caused by skills mismatches. Before the financial crisis, the focus was on macroeconomic differences, but this changed during the financial crisis and after to the issue being skills mismatch. The macroeconomic differences are still seen as being the issue for the emigration from Central- and Eastern Europe while the skills storyline is seen as the reason for the emigration in Southern Europe. Despite this, the EU institutions focus on skill mismatch being the main cause for the emigration of highly educated citizens and think this will be solved through investments in education and through incentives to create brain circulation. Hasslebalch suggests that the emphasis on skills may be explained by the interests of more powerful actors such as DG Ecfin (The Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs), employer organizations, and northern member states. The skills storyline has made it possible to build a coalition between powerful policy actors. Coalitions must rest on something more than only material considerations but with the skill storyline, they receive the social context that is needed to align the expectations about what the nature of a given policy problem is and what solutions that are needed and deemed appropriate. Hasslebalch does however point out that more research is needed into the power relations between EU-member states to better explain the discourses behind the view on the migration of highly educated citizens in the EU-institutions.

The skills storyline can be criticised since the implication that more or better education will help migrants find work in their home countries seems to be contradicted by the statistical conclusion that many Central- and Eastern European migrants are already overqualified for their work (Galgoczi et al., 2009). While increased schooling can help

migrants in finding better work, the belief that every labour problem can be solved on a societal level through increased schooling is strongly questioned (Grubb and Lazerson, 2004). While brain circulation may be helpful, policies to create it may risk displacing more difficult but necessary structural interventions or investments (Pellerin & Mullings, 2013).

According to the theory of liberal intergovernmentalism, the EU institutions should be influenced by the interests of the stronger member-states. The Commission's main function is to implement what the member-states have already negotiated (George & Bache, 2014). The ideas and solutions that the EU institutions present in the issue of migration of highly educated citizens should be in the interests of the stronger member-states as a result of inter-state bargaining (Moravcsik a& Vachudova, 2003). The stronger member states should benefit in some way from the migration of highly educated citizens and, therefore, want to legitimise it (Golovics (2019). However, the weaker member states must gain some sort of side payments or solutions to support migration that might negatively affect them (Copeland, 2014). There is some criticism against the theory of liberal intergovernmentalism. According to Smith and Ray (1993), other actors and levels should also be taken into account in an analysis of the bargaining process. Therefore, to give a fuller picture of the issue of the migration of highly educated citizens in the EU, another level of bargaining should be analysed.

3.3 Analytical framework

To be able to analyse the issue of migration of highly educated citizens, the different perspectives on the migration, and the solutions and side payments needs to be divided up in an analysis schedule. From an economic and social perspective, there are very many different ideas on the issue of the migration of highly educated citizens. The dominating idea will have a drastic effect on what concrete measures are put in place.

The ideas on the migration of highly educated citizens can be divided up into the three main terms. These three main terms are:

- Brain drain
- Brain gain
- Brain circulation

These main ideas can also be divided into three different levels since the issue can be seen differently on a regional, national, and supranational level. This division can explain if the negative effects of the migration of highly educated citizens can be seen as only a regional or national issue, or if it is a European one. The three levels are:

- Regional
- Member-state
- European Union

These main ideas on the migration of highly educated citizens answer the research question of

- What ideas do the EU institutions present to describe the migration of highly educated citizens?

By comparing these ideas on the migration of highly educated citizens between different EU institutions, the second research question can be answered.

- How does the view differ between different EU institutions on the issue of migration of highly educated citizens?

Table 1: Guideline of ideas on the migration of highly educated citizens

Ideas on the migration of highly educated citizens	Brain drain	Brain gain	Brain circulation
Regional level			
National level			
EU level			

The solutions and compensations in the analysis schedule are based on the previous research. The first one is cohesion policy (which includes the cohesion funds) that seeks to solve and compensate the negative economic and social effects on a member-state. While the cohesion policy and cohesion funds are not a direct compensation for the negative effects of the emigration of highly educated citizens (Golovics 2019), they can still be presented by an institution as a compensation or solution. The second solution is the skills mismatch storyline,

suggested by Hasselbach (2019). The third solution is investments in education and research, which can create positive effects that leads to brain gain and/or brain circulation. The fourth one is incentives to create brain circulation (Horvat, 2004). It can be argued that the investments in research and education should not be its own category since it closely relates to the skills storyline, with educational facilities reskilling workers, and the incentives to create brain circulation, since research is seen as a factor to create the circulation. However, investments in research and education can lead to several different solutions and goals, such as both brain gain and brain circulation, and should, therefore, be its own category. The fifth category of "other" is also included in the analysis schedule since there may be solutions and compensations mentioned that previous research literature has not mentioned. The five solutions in the analysis schedule are:

- Cohesion policy
- Skills mismatch
- Investments in education and research
- Incentives to create a brain circulation
- Other

Similarly, to the previous ideas on the migration of highly educated citizens, the ideas for compensatory mechanisms and solutions are also divided into regional, national, and supranational levels. This division is created since the solutions and compensatory mechanism and/or the responsibility to minimise the negative effects may lie on different levels. These solutions and compensatory mechanism are compared between the different EU institutions and answer the research question of

- How do the ideas and solutions differ between different EU institutions on how to solve the negative aspects of the emigration of highly educated citizens?

Table 2: Guideline of ideas for compensatory mechanisms/solutions

Ideas for compensatory mechanisms/solutions	Cohesion policy	Skills mismatch	Investments in education and research	Incentives to create a brain circulation	Other
Regional level					
National level					
EU level					

4. Material and method

4.1 The Commission and the Committee of the Regions

The first actor that has been researched is the Commission. The Commission is the executive branch of the EU, responsible for proposing legislation, implementing decisions, and upholding the EU treaties. The Commission consists of Commissioners from each member-state, that are proposed by the Council of the European Union on the basis of suggestions made by the member-state governments. The Commissioners first need to be approved by the European Parliament before they can be appointed by the European Council. The Commissioners swear an oath at the European Court of Justice, pledging to respect the EU treaties and to be completely independent in carrying their duties during their mandate (European Commission). The theory of liberal intergovernmentalism sees the EU institutions (including the Commission) as mainly being used for implementing decisions already taken by the negotiations (George & Bache, 2001). The Commission should, therefore, be somewhat influenced by the ideas from the stronger-member states.

The other actor that has been researched is the Committee of the Regions (CoR). The CoR is an example of a European institution that consists of non-state actors that take decisions on a cross-national basis. CoR is the EU's assembly of local and regional representatives that provides sub-national authorities (such as regions, cities, etc.) a direct voice within the institutional framework of the EU. The CoR is an advisory body, and the Commission, Parliament, and Council must consult the CoR when drawing up legislation on matters concerning local and regional government (such as employment, social policy, economic and social cohesion, etc.). When the CoR receives a legislative proposal, it prepares and adopts an opinion which it then circulates to the relevant EU institutions (Committee of Regions, 2021). Hönnige and Panke (2013) argue that CoR was rather unwanted by the European Commission and the European Parliament during its creation in 1993. The CoR was intended to be used as a tool by the regions of the EU to allow them stronger involvement in the decision-making processes to which they had previously not had access. This also allowed the regions to circumvent their national governments. While the CoR does have some limited influence on the decision-making in the EU since their recommendations are not legally binding, findings show that CoR does have an influence on both the addresses and the policy outcomes. This influence is however affected by several variables such as how early CoR

delivers their recommendations in the decision process and if the opinions of the CoR are already close to the decisionmakers' own positions.

Since the CoR consist of non-state actors, they should not be as influenced by the views of the larger member states. Therefore, the CoR should present arguments, views, and solutions on the issue of migration of highly educated citizens that differs from other EU institutions, such as the Commission, since they should not be as influenced by the opinions and interests of the member-states. It can be criticised that the CoR is not the best institution to choose for the theory of Liberal intergovernmentalism since the CoR does not have direct power in the decision making. However, the CoR does have some influence on the decision-making and the decision-makers as an advisory board (Hönnige and Panke, 2013).

4.2 Material

Two different materials were chosen for this research. The first material was a self-initiated opinion from the CoR. As explained in previous research, the CoR was a relevant institution to analyse since it is a European institution consisting of non-state actors and should, therefore, not be as influenced by the opinions of the stronger member states. The CoR was also relevant to analyse since it is a smaller regional and local actor in the EU that is often directly affected by the negative effects from the emigration of highly educated citizens.

The CoR can issue opinions on its own initiative, which is the material that has been analysed in this thesis. The material that has been analysed is the *"Opinion of the European Committee of the Regions — Brain Drain in the EU: addressing the challenge at all levels"* which suggests several policy recommendations on how the different actors in the EU can deal with the issue of migration of highly educated citizens. This material was relevant since it is the official position of an EU institution, in this case, the CoR, on the issue of migration of highly educated citizens. This material presents some of the ideas, solutions, and compensations surrounding migration from the viewpoint of not only an EU institution but also on a local and regional level. The self-initiated opinion from CoR is based on previous EU documents and research, including the annual EU reports on intra-EU labour mobility.

The annual EU reports on intra-EU labour mobility are published by the European Commission on the official website of the commission. These reports have been

published yearly from 2014 and aim to identify labour mobility trends in the free movement of workers and their families, based on the latest data. The reports also focus on a special topic which changes yearly. These reports give an idea of how the view on the migration of highly educated citizens looks in the institutional framework of the Commission. Therefore, they were suitable to be analysed and compared to the policy suggestion from the CoR, to see if the ideas, solutions, and compensations in the issue of migration of highly educated citizens differed between the Commission and the CoR. The European Commission was a suitable institution to analyse since it has a role in the decision-making in the EU and has close contact with the member states (Copeland 2014).

The chosen EU reports on intra-EU labour mobility were in the time period of 2016-2020. This limit was set partially because of limited time and resources but also because the EU reports from 2014 and 2015 presented just the data on the intra-EU labour mobility and did not discuss the topic thoroughly. Therefore, an analysis of these two reports would not have given a sufficient result for this thesis. The reports from 2016-2020 discussed the intra-EU labour mobility more thoroughly and gave an overview of the ideas and views on the EU labour migration in the Commission. Several different reports were needed since they focused on different labour migration topics, the ideas on migration may change year form year, and some reports were more descriptive than others. The labour migration report also focused on all labour related migration and, therefore, limitations had to be set. The parts of the reports that did not focus on the migration of highly educated citizens were not analysed in this thesis. The annual report on intra-EU labour mobility from 2019 did not discuss the migration of highly educated citizens. Because of this, the 2019 report were not analysed since it was not relevant for the research of the migration of highly educated citizens.

One criticism against analysing the labour reports could be found in the legal notice which reads:

"The information and views set out in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the European Union. Neither the European Union institutions and bodies nor any person acting on their behalf may be held responsible for the use which may be made of the information contained therein."

However, this was not necessarily relevant for this research since the annual intra-EU labour migration reports that were analysed were not taking a stance on different opinions on the issue of migration of highly educated citizens, but rather discussed and presented the different ideas and solutions in the debate. It is also worth pointing out that it is hard to summarize a general opinion of the European Union and its different institutions since there are a lot of different actors with different interests and opinions. In line with the research aim of this thesis, the goal was to create a better understanding of how the EU institutions presented the issue of the migration of highly educated citizens, not the official opinions. Lastly, it is worth pointing out that it is highly unlikely that the European Commission would annually publish reports that does not reflect any of the ideas if the institution.

The documents had a high reliability since they were published from the EU and the documents were gathered from official EU websites (Esaiasson et al. 2017). Enough material was gathered for this research to reach a good saturation since the *"Opinion of the European Committee of the Regions — Brain Drain in the EU: addressing the challenge at all levels"* presented the official position of the CoR and the annual intra-EU labour mobility reports before 2015 did not discuss the issue of migration of highly educated citizens.

4.3 Method

A comparative qualitative method was used for this research to be able to compare the different ideas between the Commission and the CoR to be able to differentiate if the ideas on the migration of highly educated citizens differed between the institutions. Since the focus of this research was on ideas, an idea analysis was chosen to be able to answer the research questions.

There are other qualitative methods than idea analysis that could have been relevant for the research such as content analysis or argument analysis. Content analysis was not chosen for this research since the method is more relevant for finding patterns in a larger amount of material. Content analysis tends to make more broad generalizations and does not take into account all parts of a text. For this research, content analysis could have led to the analysis missing solutions for the migration of highly educated citizens that have not been mentioned in the previous research. Argumentation analysis is useful to describe the argumentative element in a text, which could have been suitable for the material from the

CoR since they argued for policy suggestions. However, an argumentative analysis would have been less useful for the material from the Commission since the text in these reports were less argumentative (Bergström and Boréus, 2013).

Idea analysis was chosen for this research since this research focused on the ideas on the migration of highly educated citizens. There are different ideas on how the migration can be described (brain drain, brain gain, brain circulation) and different ideas on how to solve and compensate for the negative effects of this migration. These ideas are important since they are central in what policies that are created in the EU labour migration, which can give long-term economic and social effects on different countries and regions in Europe.

There are no clear definitions of how an idea analysis is conducted. However, the idea analysis in this research was inspired by Bergström and Boréus (2013) and Vedung (2018) and their descriptions of how an idea analysis can be conducted.

An idea can be seen as a thought construction. A thought construction can be a notion of reality, a notion of how one should act, or a valuation of phenomena. However, it is important to point out that the concept of an idea is difficult to define (Bergström and Boréus, 2013). There are several approaches in an idea analysis but for this research, a functional idea analysis was chosen since it focuses on the effects and origins of ideas and has both descriptive and explanatory purposes. The ideas in this research were explained by explanatory ambition. Explanatory method means that the origin of an idea is clarified and that the study focuses on examining the extent to which an idea can explain the existence of certain reforms and institutions (Vedung, 2018). A functional idea analysis was suitable for this research since the research focused on the origins of why EU institutions view the migration of highly educated citizens in a certain way. In the context of this analysis, the view and ideas of the EU institutions were explained from the theory of liberal intergovernmentalism. According to this theory, the EU institutions are influenced by negotiations where the stronger member states have the most influence (Moravcsik 2003) and, therefore, the ideas that were presented in the material should have had an origin in the interests of these member-states. These ideas on the migration of highly educated citizens have an effect on if the view of the migration is positive or negative. This view, thereafter,

have an effect on what solutions and compensatory mechanism for the negative effects from the migration that are presented by the EU institutions.

According to Bergström and Boréus (2013) there is no developed template for how idea analyzes are to be carried out. The researcher thus has a great deal of freedom to develop analytical instruments that suit the research question. It is thus the research question that decides which tool is best suited. The chosen analysis tool must be appropriate to answer the question posed in relation to the selected material (Beckman 2005).

The chosen analysis tool for this research was dimensions. Dimensions are used to distinguish different statements or different clarifications of the same statement. What is central for an understanding of dimensions as an analysis tool is that it is connected to what is going to be analyzed and the researcher needs to find what dimensions that exist in their research. When dimensions are used as analysis tool, the text analysis must be followed by a discussion that relates the analysis result to the research questions. Dimensions were a useful tool for this research since this research aimed to distinguish different ideas on the concept of the migration of highly educated citizens. (Bergström & Boréus 2013).

For this research, the categories that had to be put into dimensions were the ideas on the migration of highly educated citizens, and the ideas for solutions and compensatory mechanisms for the negative effects. The analysis schedule had already divided up the different ideas that fit into different dimensions. Therefore, the different dimensions followed the analysis schedule. The first dimensions divided up where the dimensions of how the migration of highly educated citizens could be viewed. These dimensions were brain drain, brain gain, and brain circulation. The second set of dimensions that had to be divided up were the ideas for solutions and compensatory mechanisms. These ideas were cohesion policy, skills mismatch, investments in education and research, incentives to create brain circulation, and other.

Dimensions are a useful analysis tool for categorizing different materials, however, it is worth noting that one criticism that exists against dimensions is that they are often not fully comprehensive, since there often exists more dimensions than can be analyzed (Bergström & Boréus 2013). This criticism was relevant for the dimensions of solutions and compensatory mechanisms, where the dimension of “other” was added to be able to present

all the mentioned solutions in the material that has not been mentioned in previous research. The dimensions that had not been mentioned in previous research could, therefore, be included in the dimension of "other."

One criticism that exists against idea analysis is that there may be uncertainty as to whether the analysis framework is designed in advance or whether it should be seen as a result of the study (Bergström & Boréus, 2013). In this text analysis, the aim was to avoid this criticism by building the analysis model on previous research and theories. However, a category of "other" was implemented in the dimensions for solutions and compensatory mechanisms since there were a wide array of ideas to solve the negative effects of the emigration of highly educated citizens and, therefore, it was difficult in the research to give each idea its own dimension, especially since some dimensions of solutions had not been mentioned in previous research.

The validity of this research method should have been sufficient since the research aim was to analyse the ideas, which is exactly what an idea method does. The ideas and dimension tools had a basis in the previous research on the migration of highly educated citizens. The reliability, however, is always an issue in qualitative research since the researcher in a qualitative research will have to interpret the results, which can lead to problems with the reliability since another researcher doing a similar qualitative research might interpret the results differently (Marshall and Rossman, 2006). To avoid problems with reliability, an analysis schedule was created from different ideas presented in previous research, so the ideas investigated had a basis in the research of the migration of highly educated citizens. This analysis schedule was then applied to the material where first, the ideas mentioned in the text were presented and then summarized. After every material had been analysed in the same way, the results were compared to each other. Through this, adequate results should have been achieved since the research had a large basis in previous research and theories, and all the steps of the analysis and chosen method have been fully presented.

By conducting the first part of the idea analysis, the first research question of what ideas the EU institutions present to describe the migration of highly educated citizens could be answered. The first document that was analysed was the policy suggestion from the CoR. The ideas that were analysed followed the analysis schedule, with the ideas on the

migration of highly educated citizens analysed first. The policy suggestions that described the different dimensions of brain drain, brain gain, and brain circulation were analysed and put into the analysis table 3 so a complete picture of the ideas on the migration of highly educated citizens in the CoR could be seen. After this, the analysis followed the second part of the analysis schedule and analysed the different dimensions of ideas for compensatory solutions and mechanisms. Here the parts of the text were analysed that suggested solutions or compensatory mechanisms to solve or minimise the negative effects from the migration of highly educated citizens. These ideas were then put into analysis table 4 to summarize the ideas for compensatory solutions and mechanisms.

After this, each of the annual reports on Intra-EU labour mobility were analysed, starting with the 2020 report and then in order, the 2018 report, 2017 report, and lastly the 2016 report. Here each report followed the same analysis schedule order as the CoR, with the text part describing the ideas on the migration of highly educated citizens being analysed first and then analysing the text parts that discussed the ideas for compensatory solutions and mechanisms. Each annual labour report had its own analysis tables. The 2020 report had analysis table 5 for the ideas on migration and table 6 for ideas for the solutions. The 2018 report only had one analysis table, table 7 for the ideas on migration, since the report did not discuss any compensatory solutions or mechanisms. The 2017 report had table 8 for ideas on migration and table 9 for ideas for solutions. The 2016 report had table 10 for ideas for migration and table 11 for ideas for solutions.

The second part of the analysis was the comparative analysis where the material was compared to each other to answer the second and third research questions of how the EU institutions differed in their ideas on the view on the migration of highly educated citizens and how their ideas and solutions to solve the negative effects of the migration of highly educated citizens differ. First, the different analysis tables from the different reports on Intra-EU labour mobility were compared to each other to gain an overview of which ideas the Commission discussed. The comparative analysis followed the research questions, with first comparing the different reports' ideas on the migration of highly educated citizens which was then summarized into analysis table 12. Then the different ideas for compensatory solutions and mechanisms were summarized in table 13.

When a summary of the ideas from the Commission had been created into analysis tables, the analysis tables were compared to the analysis tables from the CoR. Analysis table 3 from the CoR was compared to analysis table 12 from the Commission to analyse whether the ideas on the migration of highly educated citizens differed between the Commission and the CoR. Then the analysis table 4 from the CoR was analysed to analysis table 13 from the Commission to see if the ideas on solutions and compensatory mechanism differed between the two institutions. When the analysis of the two institutions had been compared to each other, the theory of liberal intergovernmentalism was applied to the results to answer whether the results could support the theory of the Commission and the CoR having different ideas and solutions for the migration of highly educated citizens as a result of more or less influence from the stronger member-states.

5. Analysis

5.1 Committee of the regions

The CoR has named their document *"Opinion of the European Committee of the Regions — Brain Drain in the EU: addressing the challenge at all levels"* and lists 42 policy recommendations.

5.1.1 Which idea dominates on the migration of highly educated citizens?

The CoR writes that the issue of brain drain is complex and requires a pragmatic policy response from both the Union and the Member states that address all aspects of brain drain, such as brain gain and brain circulation (policy recommendation 3).

The CoR explains that brain drain is triggered by existing social and economic imbalances between the EU regions. The CoR point out that studies identify a series of push and pull factors with receiving regions having more attractive labour markets, diverse job opportunities, and a better quality of life, with the opposite for the sending regions (policy recommendation 5). The CoR continues to describe that the emigration of highly educated citizens is caused by macroeconomic differences and that the EU needs to deal with push factors that make the sending regions insufficiently attractive to workers (policy recommendation 14). The CoR recommends the European Commission to step up in its efforts to reduce regional and national disparities, especially between Southern/Eastern Europe and Western Europe, these disparities are one of the major causes of brain drain (policy recommendation 31).

The CoR sees brain drain as a large problem on a local level and thinks that local communities are the ones directly affected by the consequences of brain drain, with a loss of young and educated workforce that is a huge challenge for local communities across the EU (policy recommendation 8). The CoR also sees the issue of brain drain as a problem on a larger level and writes that if the issue of brain drain is left unaddressed, the phenomenon will have long-term and permanent effects on an EU level and will hamper territorial cohesion (policy recommendation 4). The CoR draws attention to the risk brain drain poses to the long-term sustainability of the EU project. Countries that see an emigration of highly educated citizens are in a double bind since they need the economic convergence but are losing their

skilled workforce. The CoR thinks that for the long term, any change or transition to a competitive and sustainable economic model would be difficult to achieve since disparities between sending and receiving regions are widening. If these problems are left unaddressed, the disparities will increase, and a circle of disintegration will ensue. The CoR points out that the Eastern and Southern member-states are currently among the world's countries least able to retain their highly educated workforce (policy recommendation 13)

The CoR focuses less on the ideas of brain circulation and brain gain than on brain drain. The CoR thinks different types of responses are needed for each subcomponent of the brain drain phenomena, such as brain circulation and brain gain (policy recommendation 3). The CoR writes that they would like a better understanding of the reasons and barriers which prevent those who have emigrated from returning (policy recommendation 17). The CoR thinks a better understanding of this could lead to a transformative effect, turning brain drain into brain circulation or re-migration. The CoR point to the Europe 2020 objectives, such as innovation and increasing the number of tertiary educations, could potentially lead to brain gain and a regain through attracting and stimulating talented individuals (policy recommendation 6).

Table 3: Summary of the ideas on migration of highly educated citizens in "Opinion of the European Committee of the Regions — Brain Drain in the EU: addressing the challenge at all levels".

Ideas on migration of highly educated citizens	Brain drain	Brain gain	Brain circulation
Regional level	Loss of young and highly educated citizens	An aspect of brain drain. Increasing number of tertiary students in education might lead to a brain gain	An aspect of brain drain. A better understanding on all levels on how to create a brain circulation might negate the negative effects of brain drain

National level	Southern and Eastern Europe experience a loss of highly educated citizens to Western Europe, hampering economic and social convergence	An aspect of brain drain. Increasing number of tertiary students in education might lead to a brain gain	An aspect of brain drain. A better understanding on all levels on how to create a brain circulation might negate the negative effects of brain drain
EU level	Brain drain will hamper territorial cohesion. Increased economic disparities may lead to disintegration	An aspect of brain drain. Increasing number of tertiary students in education might lead to a brain gain	An aspect of brain drain. A better understanding on all levels on how to create a brain circulation might negate the negative effects of brain drain

The dimension of brain drain dominates in the issue of the emigration of the highly educated citizens in the policy suggestions, with negative effects on all levels, especially on the local and regional since they are directly affected by brain drain. The CoR sees brain drain as a hinder for the EU goal of economic and social convergence, with Southern and Eastern Europe lagging behind Western Europe. The CoR believes brain drain is caused by macroeconomic differences between both regions, and member states. The CoR also believes the issue of brain drain can grow to be a larger problem if economic and social convergence coherence is not achieved, with risks for the sustainability of the European project. While the CoR does recognize both brain gain and brain circulation as something positive, they focus on the idea that the migration of highly educated citizens is mostly a negative phenomenon in the EU in the form of a brain drain for Eastern and Southern Europe.

5.1.2 What are the ideas for compensatory mechanisms and solutions?

The CoR notes that brain drain is triggered by existing social and economic imbalances between EU regions. The CoR, therefore, suggests that future EU budgets should concentrate resources on rectifying the misbalance between sending and receiving regions within the framework of cohesion policy (policy recommendation 5). The CoR stresses that there should be a strong association between the cohesion policy and measures envisaged to deal with brain drain. The CoR points out that two of the key objectives of Europe 2020,

increasing the percentage of employed people and improving social inclusion, are directly relevant to creating favourable conditions that will diminish brain drain in Europe (policy recommendation 6). The CoR writes that while the European institutions have put forward mechanisms to reduce regional disparities, those approaches have only been partially effective. A different type of initiative is needed to address the push factors from sending regions (policy recommendation 14). The CoR recommends the European Commission to step up in its efforts to reduce regional disparities. The CoR thinks the cohesion funds play a crucial role in supporting regions and areas that suffer from these disparities between Eastern/Southern Europe and Western Europe (policy recommendation 31).

The CoR points out that while brain drain is often seeing as a national or supranational policy problem, brain drain can be addressed successfully at the subnational level. Since local and regional communities are directly affected by the consequences of brain drain, these public authorities play a crucial role (policy recommendation 8). The CoR observes that the local authorities represent the best level at which policies on brain drain can be drafted and implemented. Local communities are systems with clearer boundaries which allows for an easier analysis of the problem and the ability to create tailor-made solutions. Local authorities can also easily monitor and evaluate the success of policies at a local level (policy recommendation 9). The CoR writes that the direct experience of local authorities in addressing the issue of brain drain could be helpful in developing a coherent policy at EU level. Local and regional authorities can go beyond a general and abstract definition of policy issues and provide concrete and effective solutions (policy recommendation 11).

The CoR writes that an education-labour market gap is one of the problems associated with brain drain. Education is an area where improvement can help to reduce the negative effects of brain drain. Local and regional authorities should pay more attention to improvements in education, in cooperation with national and European authorities (policy recommendation 15). The CoR highlight the importance of programs such as Erasmus in creating professional and academic opportunities for international networking and partnerships throughout Europe, and not just certain regional hubs (policy recommendation 17). The CoR considers it crucial that the local and regional authorities understand the importance of education in the local development within a knowledge-based economy. Public authorities need to develop partnerships with universities and support them, including through

investment in local infrastructure. The CoR writes that there must be as much affinity as possible between the strategic objectives of universities and those of public authorities (policy recommendation 36). The CoR mentions that measures such as increasing the number of people in tertiary education can lead to brain circulation (policy recommendation 6). The CoR points out that certain regions and cities are already implementing creative solutions for attracting and retaining talent. These policies range from supporting the relocation of talented individuals to those regions or cities to more sophisticated measures involving the development of transnational networks of entrepreneurs (policy recommendation 21).

The CoR point out that education systems need to factor in the different dynamics of the labour market and its increasing diversity to gain a return for the investments in the countries or regions human capital, which is lost with brain drain (policy recommendation 15). The CoR suggests that local authorities can increase the resilience of the community by taking use of the upskilling and re-skilling programmes, such as those supported through the EU Skills Agenda (policy recommendation 40).

Table 4: Summary of the ideas for compensatory mechanisms/solutions in "Opinion of the European Committee of the Regions — Brain Drain in the EU: addressing the challenge at all levels".

Ideas for compensatory mechanisms/solutions	Cohesion policy	Skills mismatch	Investments in education and research	Incentives to create a brain circulation	Other
Regional level		Using upskilling and re-skilling programmes	Local authorities should pay attention to improvements in education and create partnerships with universities	Increasing number of people in tertiary education, relocation of talented individuals, networks of entrepreneurs	Local and regional authorities have specific knowledge on how to draft and implement good policy

National level	Cohesion funds crucial to support affected countries			Increasing number of people in tertiary education	
EU level	EU budget and cohesion funds should reduce economic disparities and help affected countries		Erasmus and other networks create career and academic opportunities all over Europe	Increasing number of people in tertiary education	

In summary, The CoR takes a large emphasis on the dimension of cohesion policy and the funding as a measure to solve or at least limit the problems of brain drain, since they see the macroeconomic differences between different regions and member-states as a cause for the brain drain. The CoR also puts an emphasis on how important the solutions on all levels are, especially the local and regional levels since they face these problems directly.

5.2 Annual Report on Intra-EU Labour Mobility 2020

The annual report on intra-EU labour mobility provides updated information on labour mobility trends in EU and EFTA countries based on data from 2018 and 2019. The 2020 report features two specific topics, mobility of highly educated EU citizens and the impact of demographic change on prospective mobility flows across the EU.

Chapter 3 focuses on the emigration of highly educated citizens. Chapter 4 discusses mobility and demographic change and mentions a few topics relevant to the issue of the migration of highly educated citizens.

5.2.1 Which idea dominates on the migration of highly educated citizens?

In chapter 3, the 2020 report discusses the migration of highly educated citizens as something positive. A great movement of highly educated citizens is framed as something that can help to develop the knowledge-based economy and be beneficial to the mover, the receiving country, and the country of origin through matching of supply and skills with demand. However, the report points out that a too great loss of a highly educated workforce can hamper the development of the countries of origin in the short-term. The report mentions brain circulation and that the skills gained by the movers whilst working abroad can strengthen the workforce of the home country when the mover returns.

The report points out that the mobility of highly educated workers includes a number of challenges that need to be managed. These challenges can be applied on several different levels. It may be a problem for the mover, who may have difficulty finding employment in a country where her or his skills are imperfectly transferable. These challenges can also be applied for the country of origin, which might, temporarily or not, lose a highly educated member of the workforce, who the country of origin has invested in through training or university which is not subsequently reinvested in the country.

The report mentions that while traditional theories on the emigration of highly educated citizens, called brain drain, have suggested that the departure of highly educated citizens has a negative effect on the sending country, more recent theories argue for a brain gain. According to these theories, the possibility of emigration and its potential personal benefits being accessible through education works as an incentive for more people to pursue higher education. Not all of these people will emigrate and so the country of origin will end up with more highly educated citizens than if it was closed for emigration.

The report describes highly educated migration as being more caused by pull and push factors. Pull factors describe the attractivity of the destination, such as a greater availability of work, jobs corresponding to the field and level of education of the mover, or other socioeconomic factors such as higher wages. However, in times of economic crisis, push factors have played a large role, such as high unemployment.

The report mentions that there is a recognition that brain circulation can have a positive effect on the sending country. Movers gain experience and skills whilst living and

working abroad and then bring those skills and additional knowledge back to their country of origin, which will be helpful for the development of the knowledge-based economy.

In chapter 4, the economic disparities are discussed. The report mentions that the economic disparities between member states are a major driver of intra-EU mobility. Reasons for this migration are better salaries for similar jobs, better job opportunities, and better living conditions. While projections include an assumption of gradual socioeconomic convergence where the socioeconomic differences are presumed to fade out in the long term, the high emigration from different Southern and Eastern European countries demonstrates that the differences remain in terms of labour market and earning potential. A greater convergence in living standards would lead to a decreased migration from Southern and Eastern Europe to Western Europe while if the socioeconomic gap remains, the migration will likely not decrease. The report mentions later in the chapter that the progress for economic convergence has been slow in the past decade for Eastern Europe while the socioeconomic gap between Southern Europe and Western Europe is increasing. The report points to economic coherence being one of the primary goals of the EU and that this is strongly promoted, for example, through the structural funds.

Table 5: Summary of the ideas on the migration of highly educated citizens in the Annual Report on Intra-EU Labour Mobility 2020.

Ideas on the migration of highly educated citizens	Brain drain	Brain gain	Brain circulation
Regional level			
National level	Countries may short-term or long-term lose their educated citizens and thus hampering the economic development	Sending countries may see an increase of citizens in higher education. Receiving countries can fill labour shortages	Returning migrants can bring new skills and experience
EU level			

The emigration of highly educated citizens is not described as something that is necessarily negative in the 2020 report. The report puts a large empathizes on the dimension of brain circulation, which can bring new knowledge and skills to the country. The report mentions that there are challenges with the emigration of highly educated citizens, such as the dimension of brain drain. The report does however suggest that recent studies talk about a brain gain instead, with better results than if the county was closed for emigration, to begin with. The report does recognize that emigration is caused by push and pull factors. The report mentions that economic differences cause migration and that economic convergence in the EU has not been so successful in recent years.

5.2.2 What are the ideas for compensatory mechanisms and solutions?

The 2020 report mentions in chapter 3 that brain circulation can turn the highly educated emigration into something positive. One way to achieve this is through business, scientific and political networks since it makes it easier for an emigrant to return and find a job.

The report mentions how several Eastern, and Southern European Countries have adopted policies aimed at incentivising return mobility. The policies are usually tax incentives or employment opportunities in the country of origin. There are also “diaspora strategies” designed for maintaining contact with the movers while they are abroad. These strategies encourage return mobility and inform the emigrants about ways they can contribute to their countries of origin, such as remittances, investment, or knowledge networks.

In chapter 4 the report discusses measures that would lead to a reduction in the emigration of workers. The report points to how a greater socioeconomic convergence would most likely reduce the emigration from member states in Southern and Eastern Europe to member states in Western Europe. The economic coherence in the EU is one of the primary goals in the EU, which is strongly promoted through the structural funds. In addition to these economic objectives, it has become more important in the past decade to promote social development across the EU, with one of the tools to achieve this being the allocation of funds.

Table 6: Summary of the ideas for compensatory mechanism/solutions in the Annual Report on Intra-EU Labour Mobility 2020.

Ideas for compensatory mechanisms/solutions	Cohesion policy	Skills mismatch	Investments in education and research	Incentives to create a brain circulation	Other
Regional level					
National level				Tax incentives, career opportunities, diaspora strategies, creation of networks.	
EU level	Economic coherence promoted by structural funds				

The report does present the dimension of incentives to create a brain circulation to solve the issue of brain drain. The report also presents measures that the affected countries can implement, such as employment opportunities, to make citizens move home. The report does discuss how cohesion funds and greater socioeconomic convergence will most likely lead to less citizens emigrating from Southern and Eastern Europe.

5.3 Annual Report on Intra-EU Labour Mobility 2018

The 2018 annual report on intra-EU labour mobility provides updated information on labour mobility trends in EU and EFTA countries. The report for 2018 has a

focus on two specific topics, the qualifications and the household composition of the EU-28 movers. In chapter three of the report, the qualifications of EU-movers are discussed.

5.3.1 Which idea dominates on the migration of highly educated citizens?

In chapter three, the 2018 report describes that migration can bring benefits to the receiving countries. Both high-skilled and low-skilled migrants can in the long-term increase labour productivity and GDP per capita for the receiving countries. The effects of the freedom of movement are mostly positive for receiving countries, such as filling labour gaps and bringing specific skills.

For countries of origin, mobility may have positive effects such as decreasing unemployment. However, when a large number of high-skilled workers leave their countries of origin, the impact may be less positive. The report describes an outflow of skilled labour, called brain drain, as having negative effects on labour productivity in the countries of origin. Outflows of highly educated citizens in Southern and Eastern Europe have had a negative effect on the economic development of these regions and slowed down their economic convergence with Western Europe. While remittances have some positive effects on the income level and spending in the affected regions, there is a risk for a long-term effect from the brain drain.

The brain drain can also cause labour shortages in some skills categories and/or in certain economic sectors for the sending countries. Countries such as Hungary, Lithuania, and Poland are characterised as being at high risk of sectoral shortages due to immigration. One example of this labour shortage is in the healthcare sectors in various Central and Eastern European countries which have seen a large number of health care professionals emigrating. The report mentions that it appears that the economic crisis pushed many health care professionals to move, leading to shortages, particularly in specific unserved regions and in several specialist positions. The report also mentions that many migrants are overqualified for their jobs, which is an indicator of potential human capital loss.

Table 7: Summary of the ideas on the migration of highly educated citizens in the Annual Report on Intra-EU Labour Mobility 2018.

Ideas on the migration of highly educated citizens	Brain drain	Brain gain	Brain circulation
Regional level	Decreased economic development.	Economic remittances from citizens abroad.	
National level	Decreased economic development. Skills shortages. Lack of healthcare professionals.	Increased labour productivity and GDP for receiving countries. Migrants fill labour gaps and bring specific skills.	
EU level			

While both the positive and negative effects of migration are discussed, the report focuses on the dimension of brain drain. The dimension of brain gain is indirectly mentioned by pointing out the positive effects for receiving countries while the concept of brain circulation is not mentioned at all.

5.3.2 What are the ideas for compensatory mechanisms and solutions?

The 2018 report does not mention any ideas for compensatory mechanisms, instead opting to simply present the problem of brain drain.

5.4 Annual Report on Intra-EU Labour Mobility 2017

The 2017 report specifically looks at the gender dimension of mobility, language, and other barriers to cross-border mobility in neighbouring regions, and at the mobility of health professionals.

5.4.1 Which idea dominates on the migration of highly educated citizens?

In chapter 2.2.2 the report mentions that migration can have a positive effect on the labour market in the receiving countries in the form of filling labour gaps and bringing certain skills.

In chapter 2.4 the report discusses the mobility of health professionals. Healthcare is one of the largest sectors in the EU, but the sector has been facing problems in the last few years. Budget constraints due to cuts in public spending and the opening of the labour market after the accession of the new member states have affected the mobility of health-care professionals.

The report describes this mobility as being both positive and negative. On the negative side, this mobility has led to brain drain and skills shortages in several countries. The positive effects are a supply of healthcare professionals to areas where there may be a lack of healthcare services, decreased unemployment, and financial benefits to the source countries in the form of remittances. The report also mentions that returning migrants in the healthcare sector may bring new applications of skills to the home country.

The report discusses the reasons for healthcare professionals leaving their home countries. The accessions in 2004 and 2007 affected the mobility of health professionals, with increased migration from the new member states to the old, although to a smaller extent than anticipated. Another influential factor was the 2008 economic crisis and related austerity measures, such as cuts in public spending on healthcare. As a result of worsening working conditions and lower pay, many healthcare professionals emigrated to other member-states, and there was a re-emergence of flows from poorer to wealthier countries. The migration flows were mostly from the south to the north. This has created shortages in healthcare sectors in several countries and regions, mostly specific underserved regions, and for specific specialist positions. Most of the new member-states had high shares of their personal care workers in other EU-member states. Income was the most cited factor in deciding whether or not to migrate and whether migrants would return to their home countries.

Table 8: Summary of the ideas on the migration of highly educated citizens in the Annual Report on Intra-EU Labour Mobility 2017.

Ideas on the migration of highly educated citizens	Brain drain	Brain gain	Brain circulation
Regional level	Skills shortages in healthcare sectors	Supply of healthcare workers to areas previously lacking in healthcare services	
National level	Skills shortages in healthcare sectors	Financial remittances from workers abroad	New application of skills from returning healthcare workers
EU level			

The 2017 report does indirectly mention the dimension of brain gain, describing how countries that receive an immigration of healthcare professionals do receive benefits such as filling labour shortages in areas lacking in healthcare services. The report also indirectly mentions the dimension of brain circulation, that returning migrants in the healthcare sectors might bring a new application of skills. The report discusses the dimension of brain drain in the migration of highly educated citizens, especially in the healthcare sector.

5.4.2 What are the ideas for compensatory mechanisms and solutions?

The report mentions in chapter 2.4 that some countries such as Poland, Lithuania, and Estonia have introduced "retention strategies" (such as salary increases and improvements in working conditions) which have been proved to attract returnees. Among the main factors promoting movers to return to their home countries were improvement in working conditions, salaries, and professional opportunities. The report also points out that the lack of recognition of qualification in the host country can be an issue for movers to returns. This was found to be the case for Poland where data shows that some nurses may lose their license to practice, as they cannot prove having continuously worked as a nurse abroad.

Table 9: Summary of the ideas for compensatory mechanism/solutions in the Annual Report on Intra-EU Labour Mobility 2017.

Ideas for compensatory mechanisms/solutions	Cohesion policy	Skills mismatch	Investments in education and research	Incentives to create a brain circulation	Other
Regional level					
National level				Improved salaries, working conditions and career opportunities, recognise qualifications in host country	
EU level					

The solutions that the report presents are what the dimension of what countries suffering from brain drain can do to solve the issue. The solutions presented are the dimension of incentives to create a brain circulation.

5.5 Annual Report on Intra-EU Labour Mobility 2016

The 2016 report presents an overview intra-EU mobility consisting namely of stocks in 2015 and mobility flows in 2014. The two specific thematic topics included this year were return mobility and mobility of retired persons.

5.5.1 Which idea dominates on the migration of highly educated citizens?

The report describes in chapter 2.1 how the 2004 accession triggered a large increase in mobility from Eastern Europe to Western and Northern European countries. However, after the financial crisis, southern Europe has not economically recovered which

has led to an emigration of highly educated movers to Northern Europe. The report also suggests that his emigration is caused by Southern European countries having a less knowledge-based economy which makes it harder for highly educated citizens to find work.

In chapter 2.3 the report discusses return mobility in the EU intra-labour migration. The report mentions that the educational level of returnees is an important characteristic of the return policy. The education level of the returnee can be seen as an indicator of whether or not return mobility alleviates to a brain drain.

The report writes that many highly educated persons return to their home countries, thus improving the skills and educational levels of the home countries. The report mentions that there is a high level of education among returnees, which indicates that return mobility may alleviate brain drain to a certain extent.

The report writes that it is widely acknowledged that the returnees bring with them positive effects. A new societal perspective, skills, and connections can be beneficial for the sending country as a means to address and reverse the negative effects of brain drain. Upon return, the returnees can enhance the productivity of the home country with new assets in a more advanced economy. For the highly educated individuals that do return, work experience abroad may lead to increased salaries.

Table 10: Summary of the ideas on the migration of highly educated citizens in the Annual Report on Intra-EU Labour Mobility 2016.

Ideas on the migration of highly educated citizens	Brain drain	Brain gain	Brain circulation
Regional level			
National level	The negative effects of brain drain on a country can be solved by brain circulation		Brain circulation can enhance productivity for the country and improve the skills and education of the citizens
EU level			

The 2016 report focuses mostly on return mobility and mentions, indirectly, the dimension of brain circulation as a means to solve brain drain. The dimension of brain circulation dominates the discussion on the migration of highly educated citizens, while the dimension of brain drain is mentioned as a negative phenomenon that can be solved by brain circulation. The dimension of brain gain is not mentioned.

5.5.2 What are the ideas for compensatory mechanisms and solutions?

In chapter 2.3 the report discusses that for migrants to return to their home countries, policies on free movement, labour market integration, and coordination of social security are needed. A crucial question is whether or not returnees can apply the skills they have learned while working abroad and whether return migration can make up for skills shortages created by the emigration of young and highly educated citizens.

The report lists several reasons for migrants returning. Reasons for returnees moving home are having gained a higher purchasing power at home, having higher chances of employment at home, and having achieved previously set goals, such as completing education. Overqualification also seems to play a role in return migration since returnees may more easily find jobs that match their skills level when returning home.

The report lists highly educated citizens returning as a way to solve the issue of brain drain. These highly educated citizens may return home with new skills, new societal perspectives, and new connections. These returnees may also boost the economy by bringing new economic assets. The reports list that it is easier for highly educated returnees to find a job back home than for other groups of returnees. The report points out that the technological development in the country may be crucial for returnees when it comes to being able to transfer their skills.

Table 11: Summary of the ideas for compensatory mechanism/solutions in the Annual Report on Intra-EU Labour Mobility 2016.

Ideas for compensatory mechanisms/solutions	Cohesion policy	Skills mismatch	Investments in education and research	Incentives to create a brain circulation	Other
Regional level					
National level				Labour market integration, policies on free movement, coordination of social security, application of skills, technological improvements	
EU level					

The report puts a strong responsibility on the affected countries to solve the negative effects of the emigration of highly educated citizens. The report focuses on the dimension of incentives to create a brain circulation.

6. Comparative analysis between documents

6.1 Comparative analysis between the Intra-EU labour migration reports

To be able to do a comparative analysis between the two institutions to answer the research questions 2 and 3, a summary of the reports from the Commission needs to be made.

First, the tables on the ideas on the migration of highly educated citizens are compared to each other. These tables are table 5 from the 2020 report, table 7 from the 2018 report, table 8 from the 2017 report, and table 10 from the 2016 report. To answer which ideas are most prevalent, the research looks at how often, and how the tables describe the three dimensions of the ideas on the migration of highly educated citizens. These dimensions are brain drain, brain gain, and brain circulation.

The dimension of brain drain is mentioned in all tables, but the descriptions of brain drain differ. Table 7 and 8 both describe the migration of highly educated citizens as something that has negative effects on both regional and national levels. Table 8 describes brain drain as something that has negative effects on the healthcare sector while table 7 describes brain drain leading to both skill shortages and a decreased economic development. Table 5 describes brain drain as possibly leading to a decreased economic development in the short-term for a country but can in the long term be turned into something positive in the form of brain gain or brain circulation. Table 10 does not describe brain drain thoroughly, only mentioning it having negative effects. In summary, the dimension of brain drain is prevalent in the material from the Commission, but the description of brain drain varies, and it is largely seen as a regional or national issue.

The dimension of brain gain is mentioned in table 5, 7, and 8. All three tables describe the idea of a brain gain for countries receiving an immigration of highly educated citizens in the form of filling labour and skill shortages. Table 8 points out that this immigration might also be positive for regions with a supply of healthcare workers. All three tables also describe some brain gain for countries with an emigration of highly educated citizens. Table 7 and 8 point toward emigrated citizens sending financial remittances back to their relatives which brings in new capital for the home country. Table 5 discusses how the

opportunity for highly educated citizens to find a better job in another country might lead to more citizens applying for higher education. Since some of these citizens will not emigrate the country might end up with an increase of highly educated citizens, resulting in a brain gain for the country which would not be possible if there never was an emigration, to begin with. In summary of the dimension of brain gain, three tables point toward a brain gain for countries and regions with an immigration of highly educated citizens and a possible brain gain for countries with an emigration of highly educated.

The dimension of brain circulation is discussed in table 5,8 and 10. Table 10 puts a strong focus on the dimension of brain circulation. Brain circulation is seen as a possible way for countries with a brain drain to stem the negative effects. Table 5 also discusses how the negative effects of brain drain in countries can in the long-term be turned into something positive with brain circulation. Table 8 discusses that while the emigration of highly educated citizens in the healthcare sector might be negative, the negative effects in a country can be stemmed through creating a brain circulation, with healthcare workers returning with a new set of skills. In summary, three tables focus on brain circulation on a national level as a means to stem the negative effects of brain drain.

Table 12: Summary of the ideas on the migration of highly educated citizens in the Annual Reports on Intra-EU Labour Mobility 2016-2020.

Ideas on the migration of highly educated citizens	Brain drain	Brain gain	Brain circulation
Regional level	Skills shortages in healthcare sectors	Supply of healthcare workers	
National level	Countries may in the short-term lose their educated citizens and thus hampering the economic	Sending countries may see an increase of citizens in higher education and financial remittances. Receiving countries can fill	Returning migrants can bring with them new skills and experience that

	development. Skills shortages in several sectors	labour shortages and receive skilled workers	enhance productivity in the country
EU level			

There are three different tables discussing compensatory mechanisms and solutions for the negative effects of the migration of highly educated citizens. These tables are table 6 from the 2020 report, table 9 from the 2017 report, and table 11 from the 2016 report. When it comes to the comparison between the tables on the ideas for solutions, there are five different dimensions that need to be looked at. These dimensions are cohesion policy, skills mismatch, incentives to create a brain circulation, investments in education and research and, "other".

Only table 6 mentions the cohesion policy as a solution. Table 6 points out that achieving an economic coherence through structural funds would lead to a decrease in migration in the EU. This support from the structural funds lies on an EU level.

No table mentions either the dimension of skills mismatch or the dimension of investments in research and education as possible solutions to the negative effects of the migration of highly educated citizens.

All three tables discuss how countries can implement incentives to be able to create a brain circulation as a possible solution to the negative effects. Table 6 points towards incentives such as the creation of networks to make it easier for the returning migrant to find a job, tax incentives, employment strategies, and diaspora strategies. Table 9 points towards improved salaries, improved working conditions, and creation of career opportunities as possible incentives to create brain circulation. Table 11 suggest that countries need to implement policies on free movement, labour market integration, and coordination of social security to create a brain circulation. Table 11 also points out the importance of being able to transfer the skills of the returnees and point out the importance of technological improvements for this.

The tables do not list any solutions that do not fit into either the dimensions of cohesion policy or incentives to create a brain circulation, therefore, the dimension of other is not used.

Table 13: Summary of the ideas for compensatory mechanism/solutions in the Annual Reports on Intra-EU Labour Mobility 2016-2020

Ideas for compensatory mechanisms/solutions	Cohesion policy	Skills mismatch	Investments in education and research	Incentives to create a brain circulation	Other
Regional level					
National level				Networks, improved salaries, improved working conditions, diaspora strategies etc.	
EU level	Economic coherence promoted by structural funds				

6.2 Comparative analysis between the Intra-EU migration labour reports and the CoR policy suggestions

To be able to answer the research questions of how the view differs between the EU institutions on the issue of migration of highly educated citizens, and how the ideas and solutions differ between the institutions on how to solve negative aspects, the tables from the CoR and the tables from the Commission are compared to each other. The tables used for the Commission are tables 12 and 13 that summarise the ideas from the reports.

First, the tables on the ideas on the migration of highly educated citizens are compared to each other. These tables are table 3 from the CoR and table 12 from the Commission. The three dimensions that are looked at are brain drain, brain gain, and brain circulation.

Table 3 describes the migration of highly educated citizens as having negative effects in the form of a brain drain. Brain drain is seen as an issue on all levels. Regions suffer directly from an emigration of young and highly educated citizens. On the national level, Southern and Eastern Europe experience an emigration of its highly educated citizens to Western Europe, which hampers the economic and social convergence. On a European level, brain drain hampers territorial cohesion, increases economic disparities, and might even lead to a European disintegration. Table 12 also points out that brain drain might have negative effects on a regional level, in the form of skill shortages. On a national level, brain drain might, at least in the short term, hamper economic development and lead to skill shortages.

The main difference between the different levels is the focus on a European level. While table 3 describes brain drain as a European issue that might lead to disintegration, table 12 only describes brain drain as a problem on national and regional levels.

In the dimension of brain gain, table 3 only describes brain gain as a positive aspect of brain drain when the number of tertiary students is increased. Table 12 discusses brain gain more thoroughly, pointing out that it might have positive effects for both countries and regions receiving an immigration of highly educated citizens and those countries experiencing an emigration.

In the dimension of brain circulation, table 3 only describes brain circulation as an aspect of brain drain that might negate the negative effects. Table 12 puts a larger emphasis on brain circulation, seeing it as a large solution to stemming the negative effects of the migration of highly educated citizens in countries.

In summary, there is a large difference between the two tables on the ideas on the migration of highly educated citizens. Table 3 mostly focuses on the dimension of brain drain and only views brain circulation and brain gain as aspects of brain drain. Table 12 discusses all dimensions more thoroughly and does not describe brain circulation and brain gain as aspects of brain drain.

When it comes to the comparison between the tables on the ideas for solutions, there are five different dimensions that are looked at. These dimensions are cohesion policy, skills mismatch, incentives to create a brain circulation, investments in education and research, and “other”. Table 4 from the CoR and table 13 from the Commission discuss the ideas on the compensatory solutions and mechanisms.

Table 4 points to the importance of how important the cohesion policy and the cohesion funds are for stemming the negative effects of the migration of highly educated citizens, especially in Southern and Eastern Europe. Table 4 points towards the emigration of highly educated citizens as being largely caused by macroeconomic differences between countries and regions. To decrease this emigration, a larger support and budget from the EU institutions is needed to help the countries and regions suffering from the negative effects. Table 13 also points towards the importance of the economic coherence, and that it is promoted by structural funds.

The dimension of skills mismatch is mentioned in table 4 which promotes regions using upskilling and reskilling programmes to help citizens in finding new job opportunities. The dimension of investments in education and research is also discussed in table 4. Table 4 points towards that local/regional authorities should improve education and create partnerships with universities. On a European level, table 4 points towards the importance of Erasmus and other education networks in creating career and academic opportunities all over Europe. Table 13 does not mention any of these two dimensions as solutions.

In the dimension of incentives to create brain circulation, table 4 discusses incentives to increase number of people in tertiary education as an incentive to create a brain circulation. Table 4 also points towards regional/local authorities relocate talented individuals and creating entrepreneur networks as possible incentives. Table 13 discusses a large number of possible incentives such as increasing salaries, improving working conditions, diaspora strategies, etc. Table 13 also suggests, just like table 4, that creating networks might be a viable incentive to create a brain circulation.

In the dimension of other, table 4 discusses how local and regional authorities have specific knowledge on how to draft and implement a good policy which might help negate the negative effects from the emigration of highly educated citizens. Table 13 suggests no solutions in the dimension of other solutions.

In summary, both table 4 and table 13 suggest incentives to create a brain circulation and the importance of cohesion policy. However, table 4 puts a much larger emphasis on the cohesion policy as a solution and compensatory mechanism on a European level while table 13 puts a large importance on the member-states creating incentives to create a brain circulation. Table 4 also suggests solutions from the other three dimensions which table 13 does not.

In summary of the comparisons of the tables 3 and 4 from the CoR, and the tables 12 and 13 from the Commission, both the ideas on the migration of highly educated citizens and the ideas on compensatory mechanism and solutions differs between the institutions.

Answering the research question of how the view differs between the different EU institutions on the issue of migration of highly educated citizens, the CoR describes the migration as having large long-term negative effects in the form of a brain drain while the Commission describes the migration in all different viewpoints, brain drain, brain circulation, and brain gain.

In the research question of how the ideas and solutions differ between different EU institutions on how to solve the negative aspects of the emigration of highly educated citizens, the CoR suggests all dimensions of solutions, with a large emphasis on the cohesion policy promoted through the cohesion funds. This differs from the Commission which only

discusses the cohesion policy and incentives to create a brain circulation, with a large emphasis on the incentives to create a brain circulation.

6.2.1. Liberal intergovernmentalism

These results support the theory of liberal intergovernmentalism and the criticism against it, in that the ideas should differ between the two EU institutions since they are on different levels of bargaining. The CoR's ideas can be explained by being influenced by the ideas of regional and local actors and not the ideas of the member-states. The CoR's viewpoint is more beneficial for regional and local actors since they view the migration of highly educated citizens as a brain drain that has long-term negative effects. Meanwhile, the Commission is influenced by the negotiations between the member-states and needs to represent many different actors. The Commission presents a wider array of ideas and viewpoints on the migration of highly educated and describes the migration as both positive and negative. The Commission also discusses these ideas on a national or regional level, but not on a European level. This could point towards an influence from the stronger member-states since this idea on the migration limits the negative effects to a national problem.

The Commission only discusses two solutions, cohesion policy and incentives for creating a brain circulation. While cohesion policy benefits the economically weaker member states, it is more unclear how beneficial the idea of incentives to create a brain circulation is for the economically weaker actors, especially since brain circulation has been criticised as being hard to achieve through national incentives. It is also worth noting that brain circulation still benefits the stronger member states since with this solution they will continue to see an immigration of highly educated citizens. The Commission puts a larger emphasis on creating a brain circulation than the cohesion policy, with the responsibility for creating incentives lying on a national level. This differs from the CoR which presents a large array of solutions, with responsibility for solving the issue lying on a regional, national, and European level. The CoR puts a large emphasis on what the EU can do to help the countries, especially in the form of promoting the cohesion policy through the cohesion funds, which benefits the weaker member-states.

In conclusion, the CoR mostly discusses ideas that are beneficial for the economically weaker member-states and regions. The Commission discusses ideas and solutions that can be beneficial for both stronger and weaker member states, which shows an

influence from many actors. This can be explained by that while the stronger member states may be more influential, the weaker member-states still need to gain some sort of payment, such as promoting the cohesion policy as a solution. The biggest difference between the two institutions lies in which level the ideas are presented, which could be explained by an influence on the Commission from the stronger-member states. The CoR sees the negative effects of brain drain as an issue on all levels and, therefore, it is in everyone's interest to present solutions. This puts a responsibility on both the EU institutions and on all member-states, including those member-states that do not experience an emigration of highly educated citizens. The Commission however discusses the ideas on a national basis, with the responsibility to solve the negative effects lying mostly on the affected member-states. This viewpoint could be explained by an influence from the stronger-member states since the responsibility for any of the negative effects is removed from the stronger-member state.

7.Conclusions

The EU is a complex cooperation with many different actors, ideas, and levels of institutions. For the EU to work, all different member-states need to benefit in some way from the cooperation. The migration of highly educated citizens is an example of a complex economic and political science problem since some member-states benefit from the migration while other member-states do not. This thesis builds a better understanding of how EU institutions present the issue of the migration of highly educated citizens, and which solutions they present to mediate the negative effects, so all member-states can politically opt into the free movement of highly educated workers.

The results from this research thesis show that the ideas and solutions on the issue of migration of highly educated citizens differ between two different EU institutions, the Commission, and the Committee of the Regions (CoR). This difference could be explained by the theory of Liberal intergovernmentalism, and the criticism against it. According to liberal intergovernmentalism, The EU institutions (in this thesis, the Commission), should be influenced by the ideas and views of the stronger member states. Criticism against Liberal intergovernmentalism argues that there are more levels of bargaining and other actors than states that should be included in an analysis. This criticism fits well with explaining why the CoR and the Commission's ideas and solutions for the migration of highly educated citizens differs since the CoR consists of interactions between non-state actors and should, therefore, not be as influenced by the stronger member states. While this research thesis has proven that there are differences between the ideas of the Commission and the CoR, future research could include material from more institutions, such as the European parliament, to further test the theory and criticism of Liberal intergovernmentalism.

The analysed results show that the CoR sees the migration of highly educated citizens as having negative effects in the form of brain drain on member-states and regions, especially in Southern and Eastern Europe. The CoR sees many different solutions for these negative effects on several different levels but puts an emphasis on the importance of the cohesion policy promoted through the cohesion fund. The Commission discusses all different dimensions of the migration of highly educated citizens, both negative and positive, and emphasises how incentives to create a brain circulation can solve the negative effects.

However, the Commission puts a large responsibility on the affected member-states to solve the problems themselves. This viewpoint could be explained by an influence from the stronger-member states since the responsibility for the negative effects is removed from the stronger-member states.

Several member states in the EU can face larger long-term problems because of the emigration of highly educated citizens. The economic convergence in Europe has not been so successful in the last years, with the economic divide between Southern and Western Europe growing. Several Eastern European countries, such as Bulgaria and Romania, have seen a large proportion of their highly educated population moving and are facing skills shortages in several areas, especially in the healthcare sector. Future research could focus on how the EU institutions discuss ideas and solutions for the emigration of healthcare-professionals since this emigration might have large negative social effects on the affected countries.

The Commission seems to discuss the negative effects as something that will be solved in the long-term. The question is how the EU institutions will argue for the migration of highly educated citizens if these negative effects remain, especially when the current ideas discussed by the Commission puts a large responsibility to solve these issues on a national level. While the stronger member states may have more influence in the bargaining process, the other actors will need to benefit from the migration of highly educated citizens, otherwise, there is little reason for them to support this freedom of movement.

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