European Inter-University Centre for Human Rights and Democratisation &
Leuven Institute for Human Rights and Critical Studies, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven

Advocating for migrants’ rights at EU level
An analysis of advocacy activities concerning the 2011 amendments
of the Frontex regulation

Master’s thesis – European Master’s Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation

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Abstract
The respect, protection and fulfilment of migrants’ rights count amongst the most pressing human rights challenges the European Union (EU) and its Member States are facing. At the same time, migration is increasingly framed and treated as a security or economic issue. In this context, migrants’ rights advocacy towards EU decision-makers becomes increasingly important. However, the advocacy practices of pro-migrant groups at EU level have so far received little attention in scientific research. This thesis explores these practices focusing on advocacy in the legislative process concerning the regulation amending the mandate of the EU border agency Frontex in 2011. Its main findings result from a qualitative content analysis of data gathered in semi-structured interviews with staff members of five pro-migrant groups by use of categories deduced from interest group research. The analysis sheds light on concrete advocacy activities, identifying influence strategies and channels of influence used, as well as information provided to decision-makers. Furthermore, based on findings and insights gained during the research process, characteristics of migrants’ rights advocacy at EU level are suggested, which can be seen as signs of a professionalisation of this advocacy. This study demonstrates the applicability of concepts from interest group research on migrants’ rights advocacy, while also identifying needs and opportunities for further theory development and research.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>AI</td>
<td>Amnesty International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCME</td>
<td>Churches’ Commission for Migrants in Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF</td>
<td>Consultative Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council</td>
<td>Council of the European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DROI Committee</td>
<td>Subcommittee on Human Rights of the Committee on Foreign Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC</td>
<td>European Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECRE</td>
<td>European Council on Refugees and Exiles</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECtHR</td>
<td>European Court of Human Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>EP</td>
<td>European Parliament</td>
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<tr>
<td>EPAM</td>
<td>European NGO Platform on EU Asylum and Migration Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>ETR</td>
<td>European Transparency Register</td>
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<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRA</td>
<td>European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>FRO</td>
<td>Fundamental Rights Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frontex</td>
<td>European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (from French: Frontières extérieures)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greens/EFA</td>
<td>Greens/ European Free Alliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JRS</td>
<td>Jesuit Refugee Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIBE Committee</td>
<td>Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEP(s)</td>
<td>Member(s) of the European Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO(s)</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisation(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PACE</td>
<td>Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PICUM</td>
<td>Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</td>
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