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Advocating for migrants' rights at EU level

An analysis of advocacy activities concerning the 2011 amendments
of the Frontex regulation

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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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List of abbreviations

AI	Amnesty International
CCME	Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe
CF	Consultative Forum
Council	Council of the European Union
DROI Committee	Subcommittee on Human Rights of the Committee on Foreign Affairs
EC	European Commission
ECRE	European Council on Refugees and Exiles
ECtHR	European Court of Human Rights
EP	European Parliament
EPAM	European NGO Platform on EU Asylum and Migration Policy
ETR	European Transparency Register
EU	European Union
FRA	European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
FRO	Fundamental Rights Officer
Frontex	European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (from French: Frontières extérieures)
Greens/EFA	Greens/ European Free Alliance
JRS	Jesuit Refugee Service
LIBE Committee	Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs
MEP(s)	Member(s) of the European Parliament
NGO(s)	Non-Governmental Organisation(s)
PACE	Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
PICUM	Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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