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**ADiM BLOG**  
**September 2021**  
**EDITORIAL**

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***Better late than never: towards a revised Blue Card Directive?  
The point of view of the IntoME Summer Training School's attendees***

*The Editorial Board – ADiM Blog*

*“There are many strongly held views on migration in Europe, but I believe the common ground is not so far away”.* Such an encouraging – and indeed optimistic – statement by the President of the Commission Von der Leyen was given in front of the European Parliament, on the occasion of the traditional [State of the Union address](#) on 15 September 2021.

Is the long-standing deadlock over migration issues really coming to an end? The “common ground” evoked by the President has been lacking for over five years now. Apart from very few exceptions (visas and border controls), no new legislation has been agreed in the EU since 2016.

The case of the Blue Card directive on highly-qualified non-EU workers is quite telling of the difficulty in resolving divergences within the EU. The existing text of the directive goes back to 2009, when the Treaty of Lisbon was not even in force yet. Despite being aimed to encourage admission of highly-qualified workers – a category of migrants whose desirability for EU Member States is not in question – the overall impact of the Blue Card had been modest.

The Juncker Commission, hence, tabled a proposal to replace the directive in 2016 (COM(2016) 378 final), with a view to restore and relaunch a tool considered as strategic for the EU in the global “race for talents”. Five years of negotiations, however, have proved to be insufficient. A potential turning point was reached in May 2021, when the European Parliament and the Council reached a [political agreement](#) on

revision of the Blue Card directive. The Commission [welcomed](#) this convergence and invited the co-legislators to move forward and unlock the impasse on highly-qualified non-EU workers.

Pending the negotiations, the Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence on Integration of Migrants in Europe ([IntoME](#)), established in September 2020 at the Tuscia University, has chosen to devote the first edition of its Summer Training School (STS) to the topic of [Legal and Political Challenges of Migrants' Integration in Europe](#).

The STS took place between 28 June and 9 July 2021, gathering over 40 participants originating from all around the world, with different backgrounds, skills and experiences. Together with a multidisciplinary teaching staff, composed of scholars with legal, political, social, economic, geographical and historical expertise, the participants explored the complexity of the phenomenon of migrants' integration from a variety of viewpoints.

In addition to classes, the STS provided participants with two training sessions, one of which was specifically devoted to the reform of the Blue Card directive. Building on the 2016 Commission's proposal, as agreed by the EU co-legislators in May 2021, the participants examined and discussed possible amendments and integrations of the text, reflecting on different, possible scenarios. The outcomes of the group discussions were collected and translated into policy papers, outlining the practicability and the coherence of the proposed amendments.

This month, the ADiM Blog hosts some of the contributions elaborated by the attendees of the IntoME STS and revised on the basis of both the discussion in the training session and our comments.

Despite the complexity of the problem of migrants' societal integration and its multiple implications, there is one common denominator participants have agreed on: the need to act towards a fair, inclusive strategy of labour market integration, accompanied by complementary measures aimed at reducing the socio-economic and human cost of exclusion and marginalisation of migrants. A successful integration policy, indeed, is beneficial for both the receiving society and the migrants.

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