

Travel Grant - Report

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I would like to express my deepest gratitude for the research/travel grant that I have been awarded by the Center for the European Studies at Carleton University. The grant supported my trip to Brussels to conduct interviews for my research project investigating the effect of the European Union (EU) on Ukrainian capacities to manage migration flows. The goal of my research is to study the influence of the EU on the Ukrainian regulatory and administrative reforms that promote convergence of Ukrainian policies with EU norms, standards and best practices. This project is contributing to the understanding of how the EU develops relationships with neighboring countries in the area of migration policy.

During my two-week trip to Brussels in June of 2012, I interviewed officials from the European Commission and the Mission of Ukraine to the European Union. Furthermore, I interviewed analysts from the International Organization for Migration, the leading intergovernmental organization in the field of migration, and from the European Policy Centre, which has developed considerable expertise in the area of migration and has focused on studying Ukraine. In addition to conducting interviews, I worked in the European Commission library with the most recent literature analyzing migration issues.

My research trip to Brussels has been useful for my research in several ways. Firstly, it has helped me to understand the European Commission's work in developing its global approach to migration in time when political and social stability in the EU's neighborhood has eroded. Secondly, I have learned the mechanism of the EU-Ukrainian dialogues on visa facilitation and visa liberalization issues. Thirdly, the interviews and discussions in Brussels have clarified to me the extent of EU/Ukraine partnership in controlling irregular migration and have sparked further questions about the capacities of Ukraine to manage migration flows. Lastly, the research trip to Brussels gave me the chance to observe the institutional culture of different EU organizations that have shed a new light on the culture of Ukrainian organizations during my subsequent research trip there. In summary, the research grant has played a crucial role in my understanding the EU-Ukraine relations on migration issues. I would like to thank Joan DeBardeleben for her critical advice during the development of my research project, and Natasha Joukovskaia and Brigid Bedard-Hinz for providing resources and support for my trip.