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Future Migration Flows to the EU:

Adapting Policy to the New Reality in a Managed and Sustainable Way

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Future Migration Flows to the EU:

Adapting Policy to the New Reality in a Managed and Sustainable Way

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Abstract

Even in a baseline scenario in terms of climate change and conflict in the EU's neighbouring regions, there is likely to be a substantial increase in the number of people trying to reach the EU in the coming decades. Moreover, an ever larger share of those seeking to reach Europe are likely to come from Africa and the Middle East. Migration and integration policy will have to recognise this fact. In this policy note, we do three things. First, we assess the push and pull factors for migration to the EU, provide an overview of the debates about migration in the EU currently, and how these create the structures within which politicians can act. Second, we give an overview of EU policy on migration as it stands, and in particular its evolution since the migration and refugee crisis of 2015-2016. Finally, we detail our proposals for how EU migration policy should evolve in order to meet the challenges that the coming decades will bring. We conclude that the EU must manage future migration flows via a partnership approach, particularly in relation to Africa. The EU should also encourage circular migration, be flexible, devote sufficient resources to support refugees in its neighbouring regions, tackle integration challenges, and communicate properly and honestly.

Keywords: Africa, Middle East, Eastern EU partnership countries, migration, migration policy, demographic developments, refugees, migration policies

JEL classification: F22, J11, J61, O15

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Future migration flows to the EU: Adapting policy to the new reality in a managed and sustainable way

1. INTRODUCTION

Migration is already a hot topic in the EU, but our study establishes that it is likely to be an even bigger theme in the coming decades. Between now and 2030, we will see an intensification of both the 'pull' factor of working-age population decline in the EU, and the 'push' factor of population growth in many of the EU's neighbouring regions. We find that even in a baseline scenario in terms of climate change and conflict in the EU's neighbouring regions, there is likely to be a substantial increase in the number of people trying to reach the EU, from Africa in particular. A more difficult scenario, with the negative impact of climate change and conflicts driving 'surges' of migrants towards the EU is quite possible. The current policy framework is unlikely to be able to meet these challenges.

Perhaps the most important finding of wiiw Working Paper 198 and 199 is that migration into the EU in the coming decades will come much more from the South (and East-West migration will become relatively less important). Migration policy, including domestic integration policies, will have to recognise this fact. Immigration into the EU from the Middle East and Africa will be different from past patterns of East-West migration, and this will create new challenges. Future migrants will also be coming from areas with higher degrees of economic, social and political instability. Moreover, much of the Middle East and Africa suffers, and will continue to suffer, from environmental disasters and conflicts, which will be further drivers of migration flows.

While recognising these challenges, the new patterns of migration in the coming decades will also have some positive aspects. Certainly, the demographic complementarity is much stronger for South-North migration than was the case for East-West. Moreover, Africa is a fast-growing economic area, with large shares of the population increasingly highly educated, and with increasing trade and investment linkages to Europe (and other powers such as China). EU migration policy can therefore seek to take advantage of and build on these potential and existing linkages, including in the areas of trade, foreign direct investment (FDI) and education.

Taking into account the findings of wiiw Working Paper 198 and 199, in this policy note we will do three things. First, we will assess the push and pull factors for migration to the EU, provide an overview of the debates about migration in the EU currently, and how these create the structures within which politicians can act. Second, we will give an overview of EU policy on migration as it stands, and in particular its evolution since the migration and refugee crisis of 2015-2016. Finally, we will detail our proposals for how EU migration policy should evolve in order to meet the challenges that the coming decades will certainly bring.

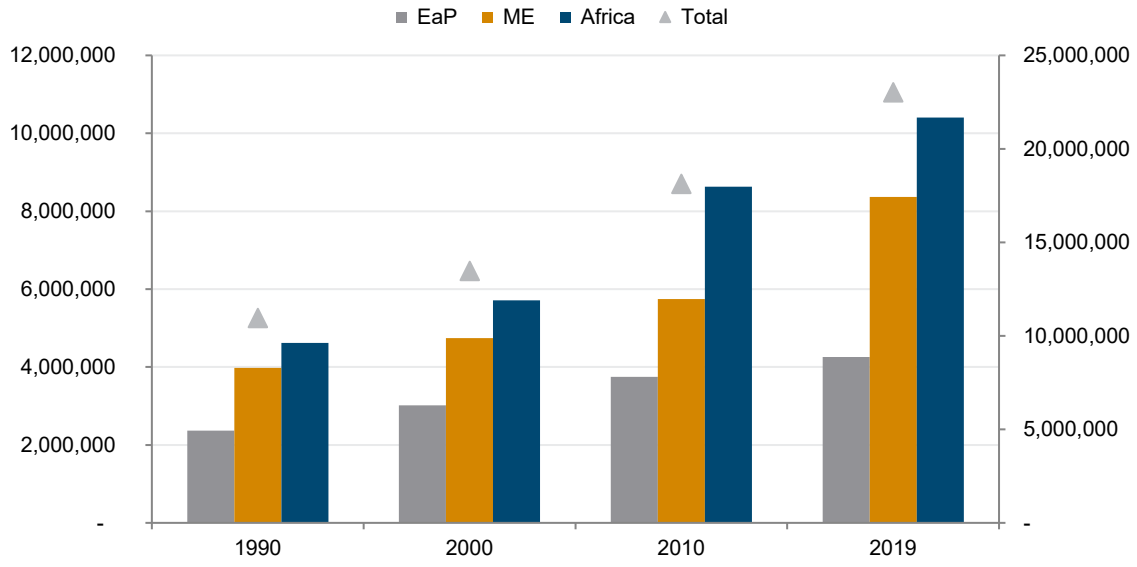
Although migration debates have been quietened somewhat by the dominating theme of the Covid-19 pandemic, this will not last. This is a crucial time to be thinking about migration. From an EU perspective, not only is the level of migration likely to change permanently, but so is its source. Whereas East-West migration flows seem to be slowing down, South-North flows are, if anything, speeding up. That will also increase the challenges of integration. Our analysis will contribute information for EU policy makers considering future options for migration policy.

2. THE DEBATE ABOUT MIGRATION IN THE EU

2.1. The push factors: Development levels, war and climate change

As wiiw Working Paper 199 established, migration from Africa and the Middle East to the EU has increased over the last two decades. Already in 1990, the total stock of migrants from both the Middle East and Africa in the EU28 and EFTA countries was higher than for Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries (Figure 1). However, this disparity has grown sharply since then, especially since 2000 for Africa and since 2010 for the Middle East. As of 2019, the total stock of migrants from the Middle East in EU28 and EFTA countries was over 8m, and for Africa over 10m. This largely reflects very different levels of economic development, which have persisted over this period and remain strong push factors for migration flows today.

Figure 1 / Stock of migrants to EU28 and EFTA by main region of origin

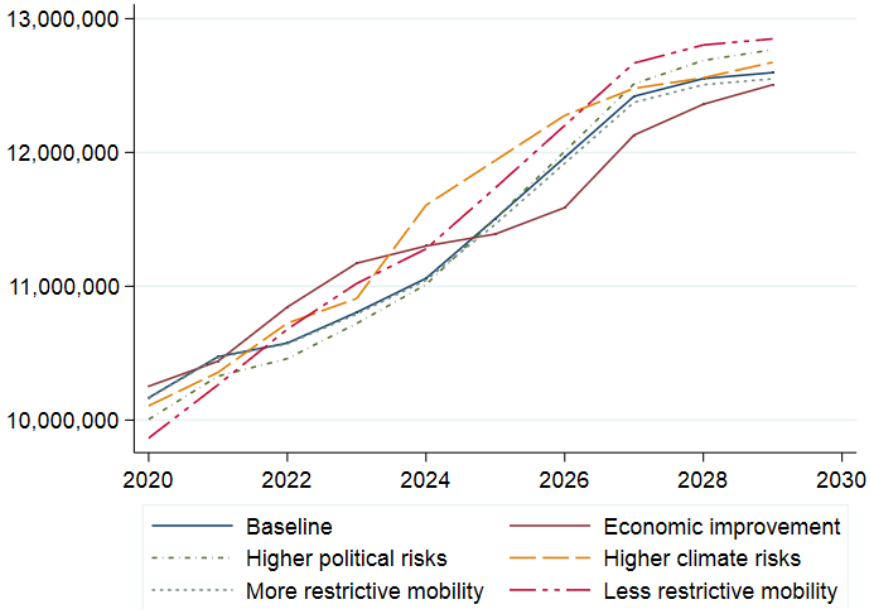


Sources: own calculations; UN statistics. Note: migrant defined by country of birth. Migrant stock by region of origin: left axis. Total migrant stock: right axis.

Although much of Africa in particular is growing quickly in economic terms, in the coming decades the wealth gap will remain huge, which will continue to 'push' migration towards the EU. Wars and climate change are also serious push factors for migration from Africa and the Middle East to the EU, and it is reasonable to expect that these will be at least as important in the future as in the past. Environmental factors may well be an even stronger push factor for migration in the future than is currently the case.

Even in the baseline scenario outlined in wiiw Working Paper 199, we expect a substantial increase in the stock of migrants from Africa to the EU15 in the next decade (Figure 2). Higher climate risks in particular would drive even more migrants from Africa towards the EU15.

Figure 2 / Projected stock of migrants from Africa to EU15, 2020-2030



Source: wiiw projections.

2.2. The pull factor: working-age population decline

As established earlier in this study, working-age populations are set to decline in the EU in the future. Over recent decades, parts of EU-CEE have already experienced a steeper decline in their working-age populations than any previously recorded outside of a war or famine.[1] However, sharp declines are also projected in parts of Western Europe in the coming decades, including Germany. A previous wiiw study found that many EU economies, including Germany, will essentially run out of workers during the 2020s (Leitner et al., 2019). Across the EU, birth rates are generally below the replacement rate. Moreover, in general the decline in the working-age population is occurring more rapidly than the fall in the overall population, and so the dependency ratio is rising. In parts of Western Europe, immigration is already the only real driver of population growth, and a key element of meeting labour demand.

This has important economic implications for policy makers. Labour shortages are already here and will intensify in the coming decades. The extensive social welfare systems in the EU will become very difficult to afford as populations age. Projections indicate that Europeans will have to retire much later. Overall GDP growth will be lower (Peschner and Fotakis, 2013), increasing the burden of public debt loads on workers. The idea that higher immigration can help to offset this by delivering a sizeable welfare boost to receiving countries is widely accepted in the literature (Clemens, 2011; Gonzalez-Garcia et al., 2016; Portes, 2019).

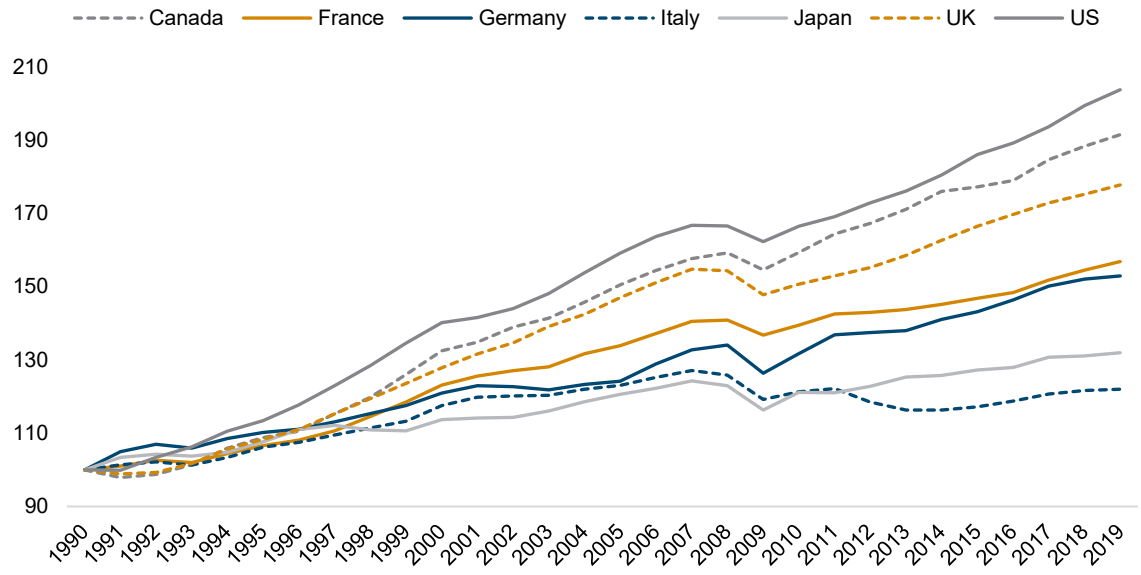
[1] https://www.ft.com/content/70813826-0c64-33d3-8a0c-72059ae1b5e3

The scale of population decline in many parts of the EU is widely acknowledged, and plays an important role in public debate. The Croatian prime minister, Andrej Plenkovic, for example, has described depopulation in EU-CEE as an 'existential problem'. Although this translates into demands for higher immigration from some sources (notably businesses, even in countries particularly opposed to immigration[2]), many in the EU do not react to population decline in this way. Ivan Krastev, for example, has argued that population decline actually reinforces anti-immigrant sentiment in parts of the EU, by creating a fear that ethnocultural majorities will be lost (Krastev, 2020).

One muted alternative to addressing labour shortages via higher immigration is the 'Japan' scenario, whereby immigration is kept at very low levels and labour demand is met by higher participation rates and automation. There is some scope for this in the EU, with automation rates generally lower than in Japan, especially outside Northwest Europe (IFR, 2020). It is also possible that the COVID-19 pandemic will deliver a positive shock to both digitalisation and automation, which may in turn alleviate labour shortages in some sectors in the future.

However, the idea that labour shortages can be solved without immigration seems quite fanciful. Many of the jobs that are likely to be most in demand in the future, for example in old-age care, will be difficult to automate. Meanwhile, in most of the EU, the scope for substantially increased participation rates from current levels appears to be quite limited (Leitner and Stehrer, 2019). Even for Japan itself, the 'model' does not seem to work completely. The Japanese scenario has negative aspects, including that the Japanese economy has been stuck on a very low growth path for over two decades (Figure 3) and public debt/GDP has reached very high levels. Moreover, in recent years Japan itself has had to relax tight migration controls, in order to alleviate labour shortages (Green, 2017).

Figure 3 / Real GDP, 1990 = 100, G7 countries



Source: IMF.

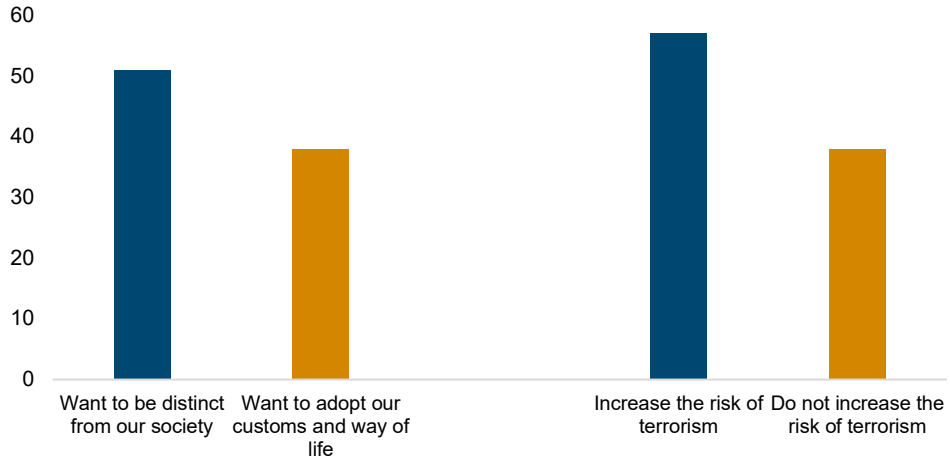
[2] https://www.ft.com/content/2dd225a8-a498-11e9-974c-ad1c6ab5efd1

2.3. Public attitudes towards immigration

The 'pull' factor of need for migrants is offset by apparent anti-immigrant sentiment in the EU. However, although debate in the media often takes this sentiment and general negative feeling towards migration as a given (Chouliaraki et al., 2017), available data suggest a somewhat more nuanced picture, with important implications for policy making.

It is true that many people in the EU express anti-immigrant sentiments. The 2020 Eurobarometer survey showed that 48% of EU residents had a negative feeling towards immigration from outside the EU, with 44% expressing a 'positive' view.[3] A survey conducted by the Pew Research Centre in 2019 found that a majority of respondents from EU countries saw immigrants as wanting to be distinct from their host society (i.e. not integrating) and increasing the risk of terrorism (Figure 4; Pew, 2019). Those sentiments in parts of the population have contributed to the rise of far-right parties in the EU. However, perhaps more importantly, it has also impacted mainstream political discourse. In Austria, the theoretically centre-right ÖVP has taken a hard line on migration,[4] with a high level of success in terms of vote share. In Germany, domestic pressure forced the chancellor, Angela Merkel, to harden her stance on migration significantly in 2018.[5] In France, the president, Emmanuel Macron, has taken a tougher line on migration, with the intention of 'winning back' votes from the far right.[6]

Figure 4 / Immigrants in our country today... (%)



Source: Pew Research Centre, 2019.

However, surveys conducted in recent years appear to show that, in a broad sense, a majority of EU residents support immigration. A Eurobarometer special from 2018, which focused on the integration of immigrants, found that 57% of respondents felt comfortable having social relations with immigrants. Similarly, the 2019 Pew survey showed that 53% of EU respondents thought that 'immigrants make our

[3] Although not relevant within the context of this study, it is interesting to note that sentiment towards immigration from other EU countries was very different: 68% positive and 25% negative. There is little evidence of blanket pro- or anti-immigrant sentiment; EU residents appear to have very different views on immigration depending on the source.

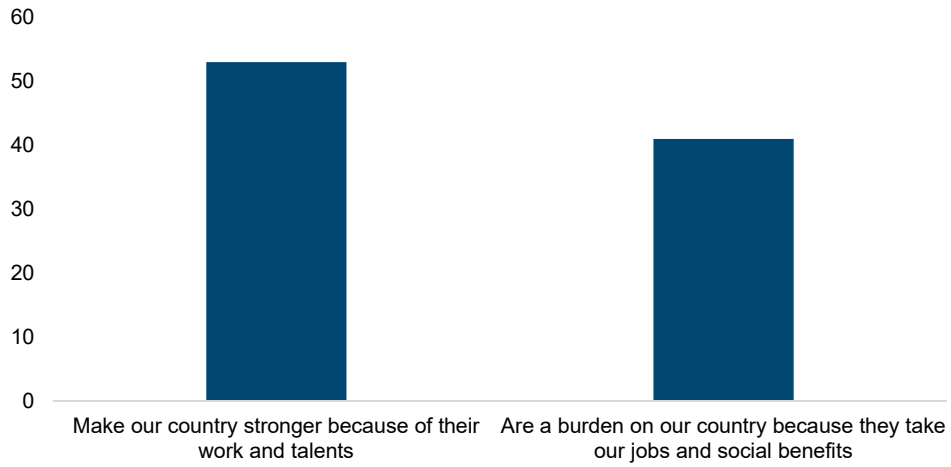
[4] https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/10/10/austria-chancellor-sebastian-kurz-ovp-green-fpo-coalition/

[5] https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/02/world/europe/angela-merkel-migration-coalition.html

[6] https://www.ft.com/content/ae546d22-ffe6-11e9-be59-e49b2a136b8d

country stronger because of their work and talents' (Figure 5; Pew, 2019). A 2018 report found that, contrary to popular belief, attitudes towards immigration in the EU were not becoming more negative (Dennison and Drazanova, 2018); the study found that attitudes were at least stable, and had shown signs of becoming more positive in recent years. A further important point is that even if a respondent to a survey says that they are against immigration, this does not inevitably mean that this will have a political impact (i.e. that they will vote for an anti-immigration party). Hatton (2017) showed that preferences about immigration are not correlated with its salience. A person may not like immigration, but may consider several policy areas (typically those related to the economy) to be more important. Finally, public attitudes in the Western world towards genuine refugees have become more sympathetic since 2000, apart from a temporary decline in support for refugees during and immediately after the 2015-2016 crisis (Hatton, 2020).

Figure 5 / Immigrants in our country today... (%)



Source: Pew Research Centre, 2019.

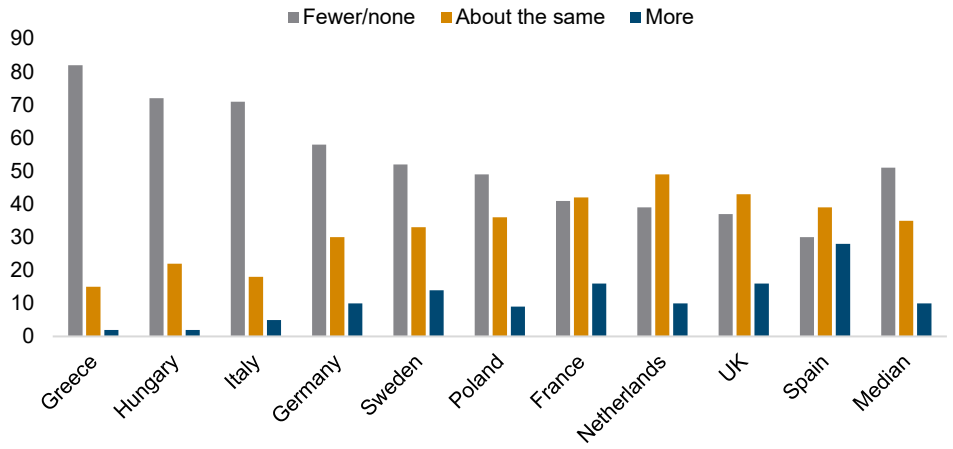
For policy makers, such data can provide something of a confusing picture. Some of the key elements from a policy-making perspective can be found in the details. There are several important fault lines within and between EU countries when it comes to attitudes towards migration.

› Those with higher education, who live in cities, and/or are young tend to be more positively disposed towards migrants. By contrast, people with less education, living in rural areas, and/or who are older, tend to have more negative attitudes.

› Some Southern and Eastern EU member states display much more negative attitudes towards immigrants than the EU as a whole. In the 2018 Eurobarometer special, only a small minority of residents in some EU-CEE countries felt 'totally comfortable' having social relations with immigrants.

› A separate survey by Pew in 2018 found that 82% of Greeks and 72% of Hungarians would like fewer or no immigrants to come to their country in the future (Figure 6). By contrast, only 30% of Spanish respondents felt the same. One of the interesting outcomes of this survey and others, incidentally, was how many people in Southern and Eastern Europe see outward migration as a problem (ECFR, 2019). This lends weight to the Krastev hypothesis that existing outward migration can help to explain fears of inward migration.

Figure 6 / In your opinion, should we allow more immigrants to move to our country, fewer immigrants, or about the same as we do now? (%)



Source: Pew Research Centre, 2018, https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/12/10/many-worldwide-oppose-more-migration-both-into-and-out-of-their-countries/#more-309372

An examination of the literature and survey data yields two other points in relation to public attitudes towards immigration in the EU. First, the issue of control and management of immigration is very important to EU citizens. In 2013 a survey of eight European countries found that 75% of people were 'worried' about illegal immigration, compared to 29% for legal immigration (Hatton, 2020). Second, EU citizens seem strongly to support a common EU migration policy. The most recent Eurobarometer survey, with fieldwork undertaken in mid-2020, showed 71% of respondents in favour of a common EU policy on migration. There was a clear majority in every member state except Czechia and Slovakia.

2.4. The challenges of integration

In the 2018 Eurobarometer special survey on the integration of immigrants in the EU, 69% of EU respondents felt that fostering integration was important, with over 90% saying that learning the country's language and contributing to its welfare system were a central part of this integration. These findings were corroborated by Dennison and Drazanova (2018), who found that 'Europeans everywhere want immigrants who are able to assimilate socially'.

Our findings in the earlier part of this study suggest that the issue of integration will become more difficult in the future. Migration patterns have changed, and current and future immigrants in the EU are likely to come from further away and from different cultural, linguistic and professional backgrounds, making the challenge of integration harder. Labour market integration (which is not the only important aspect of integration) of those arriving in Germany in 2015-2016 has been much more successful than many predicted,[7] albeit still with mixed results. It has taken considerable time and resources, testifying to the scale of the challenge in the future. In Austria, labour market integration of refugees has been quite successful (Jestl et al, 2019), although many end up working in jobs below their skill and education level (Landesmann and Leitner, 2020).

[7] https://reliefweb.int/report/germany/germany-integration-refugees-labour-market-deemed-success-limitations

A key debate in the literature concerns the extent to which attitudes to migration shift over time, as the overall stock of migrants increases and existing populations interact more with them. This is known as the 'contact effect' versus the 'group threat effect' (Wagner et al., 2006). At country level within the EU, the contact effect seems to be stronger: countries with higher levels of existing migration are generally more positive towards future migration.

3. CURRENT EU POLICY

In 2016, following the migration crisis, the EU set out a new plan to deal with migration and asylum. The stated aim was to better control external borders and migration flows. It included an important deal between the EU and Turkey, whereby all migrants crossing into Greece from Turkey would be sent back to the latter if they failed to apply for asylum or had their asylum claim rejected. This new approach reduced irregular migration to the EU by 90%, according to the European Council.[8] In 2016 the EU also launched a new partnership framework for migration with third countries, under the European Agenda on Migration. This aimed to collect all existing tools and instruments to better manage migration into the EU. In September 2020 the Commission proposed a new pact on migration and asylum (European Commission, 2020). This built on the legislative proposals from 2016. The aims of the Commission as of 2020 were based on the following pillars:

› Pillar 1. Improve and speed up asylum and migration procedures.

› Pillar 2. Fair sharing of responsibility and solidarity.[9]

The 2020 plan has been viewed as an attempt to find consensus between the EU member states, which often have very different opinions and priorities. In a sense, everybody gets something from the new plan. Southern EU member states that receive the most arrivals will get a hardening of external borders. Those receiving the highest numbers will find it (theoretically) easier to return failed asylum seekers. Finally, the mandatory sharing of refugees—vehemently opposed by parts of EU-CEE—has been dropped. Those member states that do not want to take their 'share' can contribute instead in other ways, by providing administrative and financial support.

This plan has been criticised from several different angles. First, as an unsatisfactory lowest common denominator approach. Second, as a way of outsourcing not only migration controls, but also of obligations to afford protection (Maas-Albert, 2020). Third, as indulging in the fantasy that migration can be stopped, at least to some extent – whereas evidence suggests that the real impact of such measures will simply be to reroute migration at increased cost and danger (Carayol, 2019). Fourth, that it is simply a quick fix and does not include any kind of long-term plan (Ruy and Yayboke, 2020). Fifth, that the plan so far only addresses irregular migration and does not provide a path to legal migration (Barigazzi, 2020); there is currently a public consultation on this issue.

A common view is that the 2020 plan simply externalises migration policy. In that sense, it fits in with the existing practice of the EU, especially towards Africa. Although EU migration policy is based rhetorically on the direction of management in relation to Africa, the practice is really restriction (Zanker, 2019). Moreover, the concept of an EU-wide approach does not fully exist. As Zanker (2019) shows, migration

[8] https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/migratory-pressures/

[9] https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_20_1706

governance is still largely a national matter. Governments each follow their own path, based on their domestic political context, which undermines any common policies or approaches that are developed at the EU level. A separate study found that the EU 'oscillates between bilateral and multilateral, lacks consistency and gives AU member states "too many masters" ' (Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 2016).

4. OUR PROPOSALS

In this section, we will attempt to draw together the findings of wiiw Working Paper 198 and 199, plus the existing debate and policies identified above, to formulate a series of proposals for the way forward. At the outset, it is useful to summarise what appear to be the key framing conditions for migration policy in the future.

1. In the coming years, even under a benign scenario, the number of people trying to get from Africa to the EU is likely to increase substantially. In the case of conflicts and environmental disasters, the numbers will be higher.
2. If the EU's response to this is 'fortress Europe', many people will still reach the EU. But many will also die, smugglers will make a lot of money and centrist parties in the EU will come under more pressure.
3. Working-age populations in the EU will decline in the coming years and immigration can help to offset this.
4. EU citizens support providing asylum for refugees and have become more sympathetic since 2000. However, attitudes towards irregular migration have hardened.
5. EU citizens are not against immigration, but they want migrants to integrate.
6. EU citizens want migration to be managed. Surges and perceptions that migration is 'out of control' can quickly erode popular support and drive centrist politicians towards hardline policies.
7. EU citizens care where migrants come from. There is much less popular support for migration from outside the EU.
8. A lowest common denominator approach will not produce satisfactory results.
9. Migrants' preferred locations are driven by financial considerations and existing networks, and are largely limited to a small number of Northwest EU member states.

Having set out these framing conditions, we also build on the framework of sustainable migration established by Betts and Collier (2018). Sustainable migration must meet the following conditions.

1. Democratic support of the receiving society.
2. Meets the long-term interests of the receiving state, the sending society and migrants themselves.
3. Fulfils basic ethical obligations.

Putting this together, we come up with the following recommendations.

1. Manage migration with a partnership approach between the EU and Africa

The current system, whereby migrants and refugees pay extortionate sums to smugglers to make perilous journeys to the EU, and which adds to unease within the EU about immigration, is clearly not fit for purpose (Hatton, 2016). The ideal scenario for future migration flows between Africa and the EU is a system of co-operatively managed migration. This would include formal agreements between receiving and sening countries, with the interests of both sides taken into account. Under this scenario, there would be welfare gains for both sending and receiving countries (Stark et al., 2011). EU economies would get the workers they need to fill labour and skills shortages, EU citizens would gain a sense of control, and the journey would be safer for migrants themselves. Only those with a realistic chance of being able to stay legally – because of work, study, family reunification or asylum reasons – would make the journey. African sending countries also see this partnership approach as in their interests (Parkes and McQuay, 2020). During talks at the UN Global Compact for Migration, African states voiced support for the EU positions on border controls, readmissions and returns (Zanker, 2019). Nevertheless, the challenges to achieving this are significant. One recent expert survey ranked international co-operation to manage migration flows as the least likely outcome for the EU by 2030 (Acostamadiedo et al., 2020).

Partly, this could be achieved by simply making the current system work better. However, it will also require much more work on the pathways for legal migration into the EU. On the assumption that many people will try to come anyway, it is surely better to provide legal avenues for this. EU countries can use embassies on the ground to facilitate such a process, using work and student visas. This approach must, however, take into account the potential tension between the free mobility of the Schengen area and the role for national policy in determining needs based on local economic conditions. The private sector should also be involved, to help to identify needs in the EU economies, with a constant dialogue between government and firms to understand skills needs and adjust migration quotas based on these. Private sponsorship of migration should be included (as outlined at the Vision Europe Summit in 2016).

2. Encourage circular migration and make it easier to send remittances

A long-term and sustainable refugee policy must take into account the needs of sending countries. The relationship between migration and development is complex, with positives and negatives from the perspective of sending countries (Clemens, 2011). While countries in Africa gain remittances, they suffer a ‘brain drain’ of professionals to the West. Historically, the literature has shown that this ‘brain drain’ causes African countries to lose out on productivity spill-overs from skilled workers and to suffer worse public services because doctors and other professionals leave, as well as weakening their fiscal resources (Grubel and Scott, 1966; Bhagwati and Hamada, 1974; Kremer, 1993). More recently, Schiff (2005) showed that the positive impacts for receiving countries (‘brain gain’) are small, while also highlighting the concept of ‘brain waste’, where migrants end up working in jobs for which they are overqualified. Landesmann and Leitner (2020) found evidence of this latter effect in Austria.

The best way to maximise the gains and limit the losses from the perspective of sending countries, and to manage the politics of migration in receiving countries, is to encourage circular migration. For skilled workers, this means the opportunity to study and train in the EU for a fixed period, before they go back to their home countries to apply what they have learned. For unskilled workers, Betts and Collier (2018)

propose a Gulf-style pool of jobs in the EU (but with much stricter worker protection), which can be taken on a temporary basis by workers from Africa. This would lead to a permanently higher level of remittance flows. Various studies have shown that remittances can help economic development in Africa (Lavenex and Kunz, 2008; Van Criekinge, 2016; Gonzalez-Garcia et al., 2016). EU policy should therefore also be geared towards reducing the transaction costs of remittances. A further important policy step would be to support training and education facilities in source countries, to further develop human capital for domestic needs.

3. **Be flexible and have resources (money, technical) ready to be deployed quickly in case of refugee crises**

Managed migration based on co-operation is the goal, but this would rely on a fairly benign scenario, with no major conflicts or environmental disasters in or near countries of origin in the coming decades. That seems highly unrealistic. Therefore, policy needs to be constructed in a way that will take into account the reality that a lot of things can go wrong, which could result in a renewed 'surge' of migration towards the EU at any time. Betts and Collier (2018) have identified 'tipping points', at which Western countries have shut down immigration opportunities in response to a perception that too many people were arriving (examples include the US in the 1920s, the UK in the 1960s and West Germany in the 1970s). Something similar can be argued to have occurred in the EU following the refugee wave in 2015-2016. Avoiding such scenarios will be very important in order to truly manage migration and maintain long-term co-operative partnerships with sending countries.

It is therefore very important that the EU provides the money for refugees to be housed humanely close to conflict areas. The EU should in any case take on a much larger burden to support refugees (the vast majority of refugees are currently in low- and middle-income countries). However, in addition it must set aside funds and technical expertise that can be deployed quickly to support poorer countries that experience a rapid increase in refugee arrivals owing to a new conflict, environmental disaster or change in strategy by smugglers. Failing to do so could well lead to a repeat of 2015-2016. Then, Syrians only came to Europe *en masse* several years after the war there started, and only when neighbouring countries such as Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon changed policies to make it more difficult for them. The EU must also be able to distinguish between refugees who have already found a safe haven in a neighbouring country and those who have to move to the EU to be safe.

4. **Accept relocation realities from the perspective of both receiving countries and refugees themselves**

A true reform of the Dublin III Regulation—whereby the processing of asylum applications must be done by the country in which a claimant first arrives—is needed. Yet the political obstacles to this are formidable. Meanwhile, EU efforts to reallocate refugees between member states in a fair way have failed. Several countries in EU-CEE refused to take any, even after – in the cases of Hungary and Poland – losing legal challenges.[10]

The first way to deal with this is that Dublin III must be acted upon in the most humane way possible. This would include, for example, prioritising family reunifications, or recognising that the reality of

[10] https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-04-02/hungary-poland-lose-eu-top-court-challenge-over-refugee-quotas

migration networks goes beyond just the nuclear family. Other considerations, such as language skills and areas of previous study, should also be taken into account. As Hatton (2020) notes, in most migration models, the most powerful predictor of movement from country A to country B is the stock of previous migrants from country A already in country B.

This feeds into a second important element: recognising the realities that some EU countries see migration much more positively than others; that integration of refugees in some countries – mostly the same ones – is much easier because of historical experience, established networks or other factors; and that refugees themselves have preferences about where they should go within the EU. The 2015-2016 migration crisis was an EU-wide issue. However, it is clear that, after reaching Europe, migrants wanted to go to only a handful of EU countries. Those that were not the intended destinations appeared willing to wave migrants through on their way to other places. This brings into question the scope for a truly EU-wide response.

The EU's 2020 pact in a way recognises this quite extreme asymmetry in how different member states are impacted by and think about refugees. Part of the plan will allow countries who do not take refugees to contribute in other ways (financial, administrative). This seems to be a reasonable step in the direction of reality. However, it may make sense to go further than this. If a clearly identifiable group of EU member states is going to end up taking all successful asylum applicants, those countries could decide to pursue their own course, pooling resources and making decisions without consulting countries that do not have any intention of taking any refugees. This could improve response time and decision-making flexibility, in the same way as has been proposed for other areas of EU policy, such as defence and security.

5. **Devote more resources to development co-operation, but for the right reasons**

The EU should support economic development in Africa. Yet it must be made clear to all sides that this is not being done to stop outward migration. In fact, as countries become wealthier, up to a certain level the propensity of their populations to leave increases (Zelinsky, 1971; de Haas, 2010; Skeldon, 2012), although this has been disputed more recently by Bencek and Schneiderheinze (2019). Flahaux and de Haas (2016) show that outward migration from Africa is not driven by poverty or underdevelopment, but by economic and social development, 'which have increased Africans' capabilities and aspirations to migrate'. This also makes sense intuitively: it is hard to think of what kind of EU-financed development in Africa in the coming years could realistically alter the calculations of someone who has decided to leave to seek a better life in the EU. Instead, providing resources and technical expertise to support economic development is a way for the EU to show its commitment to countries of origin, and to provide incentives for them to participate fully in the management of migration flows.

Some of this is included in the EU's 2020 pact, including development aid, economic co-operation, and support for science, education, digitalisation and energy issues. In order to ensure that this is effective, the EU should also take into account its efforts closer to home, for example in the Western Balkans. Here, development initiatives, including a strong focus on regional economic co-operation, have produced quite disappointing results (Grieveson et al., 2020). Understanding why this is, including the lack of attention paid to political, territorial and constitutional conflicts as barriers to economic development and integration, should be part of the EU's developments plans in Africa.

6. Tackle integration

Integration is mostly, and is likely to remain, an issue for national governments rather than the EU. Nevertheless, the EU can play a role with funding and legislation to ensure common standards and the spreading of best-practice ideas around the bloc. For migrants and refugees, it is crucial to get access to work, social insurance and housing. Recognition of qualifications is also very important. Strong integration efforts are also crucial in order to build and maintain political support for new arrivals in the EU. Opinion surveys tend to show that language skills are valued particularly highly by host societies; language learning provision must therefore be a priority for integration policy.

7. Communicate properly and honestly

Communication is a key aspect of achieving sustainable, managed migration. For prospective migrants, the EU must intensify efforts to communicate effectively in countries of origin the reality of the migration experience. The message should be that legal, managed, safe ways exist for those who meet labour demand within the EU to migrate. Equally importantly, the reality for those who try to make the journey without any hope of staying in the EU legally should also be communicated.

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