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**Working Paper**

## A sustainable immigration policy for the EU

IZA Policy Paper, No. 126

**Provided in Cooperation with:**

IZA – Institute of Labor Economics

*Suggested Citation:* Ritzen, Jo; Kahanec, Martin (2017) : A sustainable immigration policy for the EU, IZA Policy Paper, No. 126, Institute of Labor Economics (IZA), Bonn

This Version is available at:

<https://hdl.handle.net/10419/162537>

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POLICY PAPER SERIES

IZA Policy Paper No. 126

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MARCH 2017

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# A Sustainable Immigration Policy for the EU

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MARCH 2017

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## ABSTRACT

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### **A Sustainable Immigration Policy for the EU**

A sustainable EU Immigration Policy aims to contribute to a vibrant European society through more effectively and selectively managed immigration from outside the EU, more attention to integration of immigrants, more rooting out of discrimination, more asylum centres close to areas of conflict, and more attention to education and training in areas where refugees have settled. Immigration from outside the EU is often opposed, mainly because of sluggish integration combined with tensions in actual and perceived values between immigrants and native populations. These divisions affect not only the first generation of immigrants, but also those that follow. We propose a sustainable, win-win policy fostering the benefits of immigration and in line with the preferences of EU citizens holding not only positive but also more sceptical views on immigration while relying on adherence to human rights. The proposed policy is directed towards more effectively and selectively managed immigration based on the employability potential of the immigrant, combined with more attention to integration and stricter measures to fight discrimination. We also acknowledge the need for a robust policy framework to cope with asylum and abrupt large-scale waves of refugees wanting to enter the EU, resulting from conflicts, natural catastrophes, and other sudden or violent events. We propose screening schemes for refugee camps surrounding countries they have fled to determine migrants' refugee status, channelling them either as economic migrants, selected on their employability, or through a humanitarian scheme that respects the EU's multilateral and bilateral commitments. Such a humanitarian scheme would be embedded into education-cooperation policies, to provide better opportunities to qualify for admission and substantially greater support for refugees.

**JEL Classification:** F22, J15, J61, J68

**Keywords:** migration, EU, migration policy, humanitarian migration, refugees, economic migrants, immigrant integration, asylum policy

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## 1. Introduction: the need for an EU policy

In this paper we focus solely on immigration from outside the EU. While mobility within the EU is a cornerstone of the EU and a right of EU citizens, immigration from outside is different: it is an entitlement that may be granted, or not, by EU member state authorities to the person who would like to be an immigrant. Furthermore the characteristics of immigration from outside the EU and that within the EU differ in terms of scope and scale. EU migrants tend to exhibit more ‘circular migration’, linguistic and cultural differences are smaller and the ‘values’ in the country of origin and those in the EU country of destination differ – on average and depending on the region they come from – less substantially (Koopmans, 2014) than in the case of immigrants from outside the EU.

Many EU countries have become immigration countries. Immigration from outside the EU has been substantial in recent decades, changing the face of – in particular – Western European countries. As of 2016 most of these Western countries have a population with a non-western immigrant background<sup>1</sup> of between 15 per cent and 25 per cent of the total population, having at least doubled this percentage over the past 10 years (United Nations, 2015a).

These changes have given rise to anti-immigration sentiments among some sections of both citizens and political parties. Regrettably, such views often go hand-in-hand with negative beliefs about those who have already settled and become EU citizens, have an asylum or refugee status, or their descendants of these immigrants. The refugee waves of 2015 and 2016 have contributed to the divisions and polarisation of debates among Europeans on the policies to deal with immigration in all of its different facets.

In this paper we make an attempt to bridge the pro-immigration and anti-immigration positions in the EU with a proposal for a new EU policy. People who are pro-immigration tend to believe at least one (but not necessarily all) of the following: they value the benefits of immigration for the economy or society, they are sceptical about national borders as constraining immigration (as Kant did in 1795), or belong to those who see immigration as a humanitarian issue and are mobilised by the suffering of refugees.<sup>2</sup> Clearly, these notions relate in different ways to different types of immigration.

The anti-immigration point of view is mostly driven by a preference to preserve the national culture and values of the country of citizenship, often seen through the lenses of local contexts (e.g. neighbourhood, city, workplace), which are viewed as actually or potentially jeopardised by immigration.

The proposed bridge between these points of view is – as we argue – an EU migration framework based on more pro-active, transparent, selective, predictably and consistently applied immigration policy for economic migrants, combined with far more humanitarian assistance to be provided outside the EU in areas of conflict or where asylum is needed, focused in particular on education and human capital development, but on food and housing also.

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<sup>1</sup> We distinguish between immigrants (persons born outside the country) and persons with a migration background (defined as having at least one parent born outside the country).

<sup>2</sup> For example: Choi and Veugelers (2015).

Immigration is now a hot topic for political debate across the EU. Brexit was in part a response to EU mobility, and not – as far the government seemed to stress – on immigration into the UK from outside the EU<sup>3</sup>. The French and Dutch debates, in contrast, hinge mostly on immigration from outside the EU, and – even worse – are often antagonistic towards existing immigrants, their children and grandchildren. The German and broader EU debate was in 2014-2016 mostly focused on the large numbers of refugees from Syria, but also from Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Iraq and some North African states, who generally entered the EU via the shores of Italy and Greece.

We consider the origins, numbers, and patterns of immigration, which have differed throughout recent history, in section 2. In 2010, 31.4 million EU inhabitants were born outside the EU (United Nations, 2015a).<sup>4</sup> Immigrants and their children form a considerable part of the EU population, in particular in the West, North and South, -coming predominantly from the global South or Asia- while Eastern Europe has a much lower immigrant population (with immigrants mostly from the East).

In recent debates in Europe, immigration is often identified with refugees and asylum seekers. Yet, refugees and asylum seekers form only a small percentage of those who receive a residence permit, and humanitarian migration is governed by different frameworks than other types of migration. The vast majority of migration is due to family reunification, work, or study.

In section 3 we focus on the reasons for migration and how existing legislation allows immigrants to enter, distinguishing between immigration for work, study, or family reunification on the one hand and asylum and refugees on the other. In section 4 we consider the attitudes towards and beliefs about, or outright resistance, to immigration. The overall integration record of immigrants and persons with an immigration background<sup>5</sup> is often below their own and natives' expectations in terms of employment and education. More generally the integration of a sizeable group of people with an immigrant background into mainstream society has been disappointing to many (persons with an immigrant background) and the native population alike). Many persons with an immigrant background and many natives express frustration gaps in beliefs and values between some persons with an immigrant background and those held by the majority and ingrained in the Constitution. Sometimes the values of persons with an immigrant background are still strongly rooted in the country of origin, even if those values are at odds with those of Western societies in terms of tolerance towards other religions, acceptance of freedom of speech, equal treatment of men and women, and acceptance of different sexual orientations. At the same time some of these values are contested within Western societies themselves, and xenophobic or outright racist views abound.

Section 5 then looks into the possible future of immigration from now to 2050. Population growth patterns are likely to continue to differ substantially for the medium and long run between the EU on the one hand and Africa and the Western part of Asia on the other. In particular Africa as a continent is likely to generate a substantial pressure on immigration into the EU as a result of high population growth, which is not sufficiently matched by economic growth (and per capita income differences are likely to persist between the EU and its southern and south-eastern neighbours). The continuation of

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<sup>3</sup> All this despite the fact that flows of immigrants to the UK from *outside* the EU are much larger than those from other EU countries (UN, 2016).

<sup>4</sup> Some 16 million (3.2 per cent of the population) were born in another EU member state: intra-EU migration is about half that of immigration from outside the EU, or one third of total immigration.

<sup>5</sup> People with migration background are those with at least one parent born outside the EU.

violent conflicts in Africa may be a further drive for emigration of Africans. In the foreseeable future, the Middle East and other parts of Western Asia are likely to remain areas with a strong push towards emigration, both through regular channels and through the emergence of conflicts or environmental catastrophes. In other words: the immigration pressures on the EU are likely to grow in the decades to come (see also: Collier, 2013).

It is therefore high time to take stock of these developments, define migration policy objectives, explore future options, and arrive at a sustainable migration policy for the EU. It does not have to be an EU-level policy, but it would be imperative to ensure that EU countries learn from each other. EU countries must also ensure that their immigration policies do not “beggar” their neighbouring countries, as per the refugee crisis of 2014/2015. Lastly, any immigration to an EU country which leads to citizenship implies that the new citizens will have the right to settle anywhere in the EU. As a result, such policies in practice affect the entire EU, and therefore require attention at that level.

Despite seeing conflicts on its borders and sluggish growth, the EU remains a beacon of progress, social cohesion, welfare, and human rights. We argue that a sustainable immigration policy would be helpful for the EU to retain that position. This is presented in section 6. It is based on limited admission of economic migrants to the EU using a points system, while the humanitarian perspective is followed by screening asylum seekers in the countries surrounding conflict areas, and stepping up efforts to engage with countries of origin (specifically in education cooperation by providing more help to refugees in those countries surrounding conflict areas). Likewise, the European Agenda on Migration (European Commission, 2016), which focused on asylum seeking -in view of the refugee crisis of 2015- has already set steps needed to screen refugees outside the EU.

## 2. The past decades of immigration

Immigration to Europe has been an integral part of all of European history. The roots of Europeans (as of all mankind) lie in Africa, with major migrations north occurring around 100,000 years ago. There were also massive migrations during the Roman Empire, some 2000 years ago, followed by significant migration waves and invasions from Central Asia in the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 5<sup>th</sup> centuries AD.

On a limited scale, emigration started with the colonisation of parts of Latin America, Africa and Asia. The 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries were marked by emigration of Europeans to the New Worlds: to North America, Australia and New Zealand. The destruction wrought by World War II represented another push for people to move out of Europe and seek a better future elsewhere.

During the 1950s, Europe started slowly to become a region of net immigration from outside of the EU. Decolonisation in the 1960s brought an inflow of migrants from former colonies to the UK (from the “Commonwealth” countries), to France (from North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa), to Portugal (from Latin America and Africa), to Spain (from Latin America and North Africa), to Belgium (from the Democratic Republic of the Congo) and to the Netherlands (from Indonesia and Suriname). The resulting immigrant diasporas, in turn, became poles of attraction for new migrants from the same countries of origin: sometimes through family relations, sometimes by relations established in



villages in the country of origin – even though immigration to the EU has become increasingly difficult in the past decade (Collier, 2013).

A second immigration wave came about as the result of a pull of the EU: the recruitment of “guest workers” to those Western European countries that faced serious manpower shortages in the period of rapid growth from the 1950s to the 1970s. Besides guest workers from southern Europe, this led to a sizeable immigrant population of non-European origin (mostly from North Africa and Turkey) within the EU, boosted by policies of family reunification and ‘naturalisation’ in the receiving countries.

A third, more recent, group of immigrants are asylum seekers and refugees. This group arrived in greater numbers than ever in the mid-1990s.<sup>6</sup> Many sought refuge in the EU because of the wars in the former Yugoslavia, but they were also joined by migrants from Africa and Asia. Since the regime change in Iran, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the collapse of Somalia as a state, and the suppression in Eritrea, migrants and refugees have settled in large numbers in the EU, mostly in Western-EU countries, with some regional patterns, for example: Iranians and Iraqis heading to Sweden, with Somalis and Pakistanis moving to Norway. Since the mid-1990s, asylum seeking has become highly visible, especially with the refugees arriving in 2015. However, in terms of the size of humanitarian migration, in the past decades only some 2-3 per cent of all new asylum seekers received a residence permit as a refugee, while another 7-8 per cent of the asylum applicants received a permit because they could not be returned<sup>7</sup> (Eurostat, 2015).

In sum, overall immigration from outside the EU has been substantial in the past decades, changing the make-up of – in particular – Western, Northern and Southern European countries which now have populations with a non-western immigrant background of between 15 and 25 per cent (United Nations, 2015a). Whereas the inflow of refugees and asylum seekers from outside of Europe was substantial in the 1990s and 2000s, the EU was unprepared for the European migration crisis of the 2010s spurred by the wars in Iraq and Syria.

Table 1 depicts the numbers of immigrants (stock) in Europe in 2015 with a breakdown for selected countries of origin. Only the largest groups (in terms of countries of origin) are included. It shows for example that 2.779 million Turks settled in Europe, of which 2.467 million in Western Europe. The total stock of immigrants in Europe is 76.146 million, of which more than half resides in the EU, according to United Nations (2015a) figures.

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<sup>6</sup> After the Second World War larger refugee flows were also experienced in the 1950s and 1960s after freedom movements in Central Eastern Europe were crushed by Soviet tanks.

<sup>7</sup> The percentage of recognized refugees among the asylum seekers of 2015 and 2016 is likely to be substantially higher.

Table 1: Immigrant stocks in Europe, selected countries of origin (x 1000), 2015.

European region/ Country of origin	Afghanistan	Algeria	Iraq	Morocco	Turkey	Total incl. internal European migrants
Europe total	313	1597	471	2508	2779	76146
Eastern	10	3	5	4	28	19684
Northern	128	34	271	47	202	13331
Southern	13	79	10	1131	81	15748
Western	162	1481	185	1326	2467	27382

Source: United Nations (2015a).

<http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/estimates15.shtml>

NB: **Europe** is defined as the geographic region (substantially larger than the EU). **Eastern Europe** is Belarus, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Ukraine; **Northern Europe** is the Channel Islands, Denmark, Estonia, Faroe Islands, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Isle of Man, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Sweden, the UK and Northern Ireland; **Southern Europe** is Albania, Andorra, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Gibraltar, Greece, the Holy See, Italy, Malta, Montenegro, Portugal, San Marino, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; **Western Europe** is Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Liechtenstein, Luxemburg, Monaco, the Netherlands and Switzerland

Because of the wars in their home countries; most are either refugees, status holders for asylum, or rejected asylum seekers who could not be returned. Afghanis and Iraqis form the largest group of immigrants in Europe related to civil unrest or war. By contrast, in 2015, immigrants to Europe who were born in Algeria, Morocco, and Turkey mostly came through family reunification or other regular channels. Only a minority has received refugee or asylum status.

While Afghanis and Iraqis have settled mostly in Northern or Western Europe and migrants from Algeria or Turkey also found their future in Northern and Western Europe, for Moroccans Southern Europe was the primary destination.

United Nations (2015a), Eurostat (2016), and OECD (2016) data show that between 1990 and 2015 the annual flows of migrants worldwide steadily increased: from 150 million to 250 million persons. Table 2 depicts the stocks of immigrants in selected countries in Europe. For the whole of Europe (as a geographical region), the immigrant population as a percentage of the total population grew from 6.8 per cent to 10.3 per cent, but some parts of Europe (in particular the North) saw a much faster increase (from 7.2 per cent to 13.0 per cent). Spain and Italy experienced large emigration in the period 1950-1990. Since then they have the fastest rise in the percentage of immigrants.

Table 2: Immigrant stocks as percentage of the total population (excluding persons with a migrant background).

Region or country/Year	1990	2015
Europe	6.8	10.3
East	6.7	7.1
North	7.2	13.0
South	3.0	10.3
West	9.2	14.4
Denmark	4.6	10.1
Germany	7.5	14.9
Norway	4.5	14.2
Italy	2.5	9.7
Spain	2.1	12.7
UK	6.4	13.2

Source: United Nations (2015a). An immigrant is defined as someone who is foreign-born. Note: Europe is defined as a geographical area (see note to Table 1). Immigrants include within-EU migrants.

In 2010, some 31.4 million people living in the EU (or 6.3 per cent of the EU population) were born outside the EU (United Nations, 2015a). The largest absolute number of people living in but born outside the EU, were found in Germany (6.4 million), France (5.1 million), the United Kingdom (4.7 million), Spain (4.1 million), Italy (4.0 million), and the Netherlands (1.4 million). This does not include those born inside the EU from migrating parents whether or not retaining the citizenship of the country of origin. In France, about one quarter of the population (some 14 million people) has a migration background (including those whose parents were born in another EU country) (INSEE, 2015).

Between 2000 and 2010 the immigrant populations of the Scandinavian countries more than doubled, when including intra-EU migrants (Sweden from 15 to 22 per cent of the population; Norway from 6 to 16 per cent; Denmark from 7 to 12 per cent; and Finland from 2 to 6 per cent).<sup>8</sup> This was in part the result of the perceived attractiveness of these countries for potential migrants (including the presence of family or friends) as well as their immigration policies. Norway and Sweden have rather generous immigration policies, while Denmark and Finland have more restrictive policies.

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<sup>8</sup> This includes children born to two immigrant parents.

Between 2010 and 2013, around 1.4 million non-EU nationals, excluding asylum seekers and refugees, immigrated into the EU each year by regular means, with the “old” (pre-enlargement) EU countries accounting for the overwhelming majority of this immigration, although a slight decrease has been seen since 2010 (UN, 2015), partly a result of the economic crisis, making it less attractive to move to the EU, and partly due to additional restrictions, such as those applied by the UK.

The data demonstrate how EU countries have very much become *countries of immigration*. The EU now surpasses the US in terms of immigration and would exceed it by even more if illegal immigrants were included (IOM, 2015).

However, the EU still does not have an immigration policy. There is also no correspondence, let alone a harmonisation, between the immigration policies of the EU countries. Most EU countries in fact have no comprehensive immigration policy at all. The European Migration Agenda (European Commission, 2015) instead of laying out such a scheme, rather only deals with the recent challenges of humanitarian crises, of boat refugees, than with the longer-term perspective and measures designed to tackle it.

The formulation of such a policy should start with the basic question: why do people migrate? Migration is regarded as a decision based on costs and perceived benefits (Borjas, 2014). The benefits are in terms of both the perceived differences in income between the home country and the country of destination, and more the generally quality of life for the family and their children. Given the continuing gap in living standards between the developed and the developing countries in the 20th century, the incentives to move have resulted in large migration flows. Another driver of migration was the flight from civil conflicts or wars. Worldwide in 2015 there were some 60 million refugees who had fled because of civil conflicts or war (UNHCR, 2016). Most refugees live in the countries surrounding the conflict areas. These are outside the EU. Only a small percentage of this group of 60 million has been accepted in North America, Oceania or the EU as refugees.

On the cost side of the migration decision are the psychological losses of the familiar home environment and the costs of long-distance moves from poor to rich countries. The ability of potential migrants to finance their migration has soared over the past two centuries, not least through “human traffickers” (McAuliffe and Laczko, 2016). Improved education levels and living standards in poor parts of the world—and falling transport costs globally, thanks to new technologies—have made it increasingly possible for potential emigrants to finance the move. In section 5 we discuss that this is likely to continue over the decades to come.

There are several ways for an immigrant to acquire a permit of residency or citizenship and thus become a legal migrant: (i) family reunification and work, (ii) humanitarian (including asylum), and (iii) study.

### **3.1 Family reunification and work**

Family reunification is the broader title covering the movement of family members from the country of origin to reunite with those relatives who have already received a legal right to stay in the country of destination. It also covers the marriage between an immigrant and a spouse or husband from another country.

Carol *et al.* (2014) analyse the backgrounds of transnational marriages of migrants in Western Europe, which are sometimes seen as associated with limited integration. Transnational marriages are partly linked to contextual factors such as a rural origin and the family reunification policies of the countries of destination, yet the choice of a partner from the parents' country of origin is mostly associated with religion. Policies of EU member states have made transnational marriage slightly more difficult by requiring minimal education and language competencies of the would-be wife or husband. Yet, Carol *et al.* (2014) find higher rates of transnational marriages under open family reunification policies, providing tentative evidence of policy effects.

There is also an EU external policy – the Blue Card – introduced in 2009 aimed at attracting well-qualified workers. This has not been a success: only a tiny percentage of immigrants entering the EU took this avenue: a total of 16,000 Blue Cards were issued against an estimated gross inflow of 2 million between 2009 and 2014 (United Nations, 2015a).

### 3.2 Asylum and refugees.

The humanitarian (including asylum) channel is a special category of migration. It was the focus of much political debate and unrest in EU countries during the refugee crisis of the 1990s and even more profoundly in the years 2015 and 2016. Under the [1951 Refugee Convention on the Status of Refugees](#), asylum seekers are those who seek refuge after fleeing persecution or conflict in their country of birth. They become refugees in the legal sense once their status is verified. The difference between refugees and asylum seekers is that refugees arrive in the host country with a pre-approved protection refugee status either from the new host country or from humanitarian organisations that also resettle them in the new host country.<sup>9</sup> Asylum seekers arrive in the new country and apply for asylum. The EU's Dublin Agreements require that asylum seekers to apply for asylum in the first EU country in which he or she enters.<sup>10</sup> The 1951 Refugee Convention (RC) and the 1967 Protocol outline the legal obligations for host countries, such as to give shelter and treat the application under the legal protection of the country. As everybody has the right to seek asylum (Art. 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948) and every claim has to be treated as genuine and falling under the legal appeal process of the country where the claim is filed, the EU faces a complex systemic challenge with the present system. These became obvious during the Migration Crisis (see also Constant and Zimmermann, 2016). Sorting out claims of persons without papers, who only speak their national or local language from a great diversity of countries, has been a cumbersome process.

Asylum seeking in the EU-15 grew rapidly in the period 1985 -1995, from 160,000 applications to a high of 674,000 in 1992, before falling to 305,000 in 1994 (Eurostat, 1996). Throughout the period 1985-1994 Germany received more asylum claims than all the other EU member states combined. In 1992, Germany received 65 per cent of all the asylum claims in the EU; in 1994 it was 42 per cent (Eurostat 1996). The sudden surge in the number of persons seeking asylum in this period was caused by the collapse of the former Yugoslavia and the subsequent wars between its different entities. The number of persons from the former Yugoslavia requesting asylum surged to a high of 226,000 in 1992 and decreased to 73,000 in 1994. But in their wake 116,000 Romanians and 33,000

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<sup>9</sup> In 2015 only 8.155 persons were accepted in the EU under this program;

<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tps00195&plugin=1>

<sup>10</sup> See: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/examination-of-applicants\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/examination-of-applicants_en)

Bulgarians also applied for asylum in 1992. The number of applications from Asia and Africa remained fairly constant at around 90-100,000 persons applying each year.

Eurostat (1996) explains that the rise in asylum seeking in the period 1985-1995 was not all due to the wars: "Most other legal forms of immigration apart from family reunification and formation had been stopped or significantly reduced. The asylum procedure for some applicants came to be seen as a *de facto* immigration mechanism in that it allowed asylum applicants to remain in the country and often to work while the claim was being processed".

In the receiving countries, awareness grew of a significant number of *"abusive claimants who despite unfounded claims nevertheless managed to remain for the time it took to process the application. In view of the time it took to take a decision, the result was often that rejected asylum-seekers were allowed to remain not because they were in need of protection but because they had been in the country for such a long period that it was no longer possible to return them. Finally, other factors such as the growing role of trafficking organisations, the role of networks that have been built up and the fact that the world is getting 'smaller' (more communication, easier and cheaper transport, etc.) have also contributed to the increase in the asylum applications"* (Eurostat, 1996). The decrease in applications after 1992 is explained by Eurostat (1996) as the result of improved legislation, reducing the potential abuse of the system. In most EU countries the number of persons accepted for asylum decreased after the Yugoslav crises of the 1990s. In Germany, the share of successful asylum applications was less than 10 per cent and often as low as 1 per cent in the period 1991-2014 (DeStat, 2016, p.223). Nevertheless, between 7 and 30 per cent of the asylum seekers who were not accepted for asylum in Germany could not be returned to their country of origin for a range of reasons, mostly because the country of origin was not considered "safe", leading to some 50,000 residence permits in 2014. This is in contrast to the 200,000 permits for those immigrants from outside the EU who received their permit for other reasons. For France similar numbers apply: of the total number of immigrants in France with a permit only 18,000 out of 200,000 were recognised for humanitarian reasons (INSEE, 2016).

The second European refugee crisis of 2015 was caused by a wave of asylum seekers totalling about 1.4 million people. They mostly came from Syria (0.4 million), Afghanistan (0.2) and Iraq (0.2) (IOM, 2015). EU Member States hardest hit by the economic crisis, like Greece and Italy, served as the main points of entry for migrants and refugees due to their proximity to the Mediterranean Basin. Despite their difficult economic circumstances, according to the Dublin Agreements, they were legally bound to process the asylum claims.

The political upheavals across the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia have generally been at the heart of the recent push for immigration into the EU. The number of illegal border-crossing detections in the EU began to surge in 2011, as thousands of Tunisians started to arrive on the Italian island of Lampedusa following the onset of the Arab Spring. Sub-Saharan Africans who had previously migrated to Libya followed in 2011–2012, fleeing the war and unrest in the post-Gaddafi era. Despite earlier attempts to streamline asylum applications the system remains overloaded and prone to abuse by economic migrants, almost without exception with the help of human smugglers. This is borne out by the large percentages of rejections, even in the third quarter of 2016, when it was clear

that many of the applicants came from war-torn Syria.<sup>11</sup> The percentages of rejections range from a low of 27 per cent for Germany to a high of 72 per cent for the UK, while the percentage of those recognised as a refugee ranged from a low of 6 per cent for Italy to a high of 55 per cent in Austria (DeStat, 2016, p.225).

There are the two sides to this most recent refugee crisis well described by Koser (2016). On the one hand there is the strain on the receiving countries, with a clear statement from many mainly Central and Eastern European countries that they do not wish to receive refugees. On the other hand, there is the humanitarian side of the migration story which includes the risks involved in order to arrive at a relatively safe haven, human trafficking, migrant smuggling, and the difficulties in the asylum process.

Asylum seeking has put a significant strain on EU countries and has come with substantial protests against immigration policies and protests against residencies used to house asylum seekers when they came by the hundreds of thousands in 2015. At the same time, the human costs of finding refuge in an EU country have been very high for the asylum seeker. In 2016 the EU decided that only applications from Turkey would be accepted for those seeking to cross the sea to Greece. The German interior ministry suggested the adoption of an Australian-style system under which migrants intercepted at sea are sent for processing at camps in third countries (Independent, 2016). This was in line with proposals made by European Council President Tusk to set up registration points in North Africa (Tusk, 2015).

### **3.3. Study in the EU**

Migration into the EU is in part migration for study. Kahanec and Kralikova (2011) show that the quality of higher education and availability of programs taught in English attract international students. EU universities have not yet been very successful in attracting students from other areas of the world, despite substantial efforts in individual countries (e.g. the German Academic Exchange Service). Two reasons are given by non-EU students who prefer to study in the US, the UK or Australia: language (where most courses in EU universities are not in the English language) and the quality of education as judged by the rankings of universities (also in individual disciplines). Still, in France 60,000 out of the 200,000 residence-permit holders were students with a visa.

## **4. Mixed success with integration of extra-EU immigration**

Anti-immigration feelings and politics are linked in part to a perceived lack of integration of some (groups of) immigrants in receiving countries. On the hand, there have been impressive success stories of many persons with an immigrant background<sup>12</sup> in all sectors of life, such as business,

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<sup>11</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum\\_quarterly\\_report](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_quarterly_report); this concerns the countries: Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden and the UK.

<sup>12</sup> "People with migration background" refers to those who are not born in the country, but who descend from immigrant parents, sometimes even into the second degree or beyond. "People with an immigration

politics and administration, the arts, literature, culture, the sciences, education and sports. Immigration has truly been to the enrichment of societies. But on the other hand, according to many indicators, integration of substantial groups of persons with an immigrant background has been sluggish (Kahanec and Zimmermann, 2011).

Despite immigrants' relatively salient formal educational attainment and eagerness to be active in host labour markets, they often face difficulties finding a job. Moreover, even if they find a job, it is very often below their level of formal qualification (Kahanec and Zimmermann, 2011). This is partly due to sluggish adjustment, including language and informational gaps, in the country of destination, but also discrimination. But the problem goes even deeper for some immigrant groups, in particular the less educated, which exhibit non-trivial gaps in measures of integration such as participation on the labour market and employment, educational attainment of their children, political participation, as well as expressed opinions on adherence to the country's constitution (taken to reflect possible gaps in values), as we shall explore further.

In terms of intra-EU mobility, EU member states can be on each side of the migration flow at the same time. Yet, with a few exceptions, EU member states are primarily destinations when it comes to immigration from non-EU countries. Therefore, in this context we consider the consequences of migration from the perspective of the interests of the population of the country of destination. These interests are to be understood broadly, to include humanitarian interests, in so far as these cannot be serviced through other means than immigration. For example, granting asylum can be viewed as serving the humanitarian interests of the population if no other means are available to safeguard the asylum seeker's life and security. *In other words we start from the point of view of the nation state or the set of nation states of the EU in which those who do not possess the citizenship of the country do not have any rights pertaining thereto.*

Some people gain, but some lose, both in the country of origin as in the country of destination, giving rise to distributional consequences (Borjas, 2014). The immigrant is likely to find himself or herself on the positive side of the equation, at least if their expectations indeed can be achieved<sup>13</sup>, even though they will – in the first generation – end up with wages below the level of co-workers with the same level of education (Borjas, 2016).

Immigrants are often met with suspicion by workers with lower levels of education. These workers fear, generally incorrectly that, as a result of the increased supply of labour, immigration has some depressing effect on their wages (Constant et al., 2009). Some people might also fear for an increase in inequality, even though Kahanec and Zimmermann (2014) document how immigration may improve economic equality in receiving countries.

But parts of the host population may welcome immigrants because they recognise that immigration of young, well-qualified people will benefit economic growth in the short and medium run (by having more workers to fill bottlenecks in the labour market) and the long run (in that immigrants and their children may alleviate ageing of the population). However this only applies if immigrants gain access

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background" may carry national passports, have dual citizenship or may have continued the citizenship of their (grand) parents. They are generally defined as people with at least one parent who is foreign born.

<sup>13</sup> The German Government in 2016 widely campaigned in Arab countries to ensure realistic expectations of moving to Germany based on the awareness that many previous migrants had "idealized" their fate in Germany.



to the labour market and their children integrate well into society. A first criterion for successful integration is therefore participation in the labour force. Clearly, it is in the interest of countries of immigration to ensure the full participation of immigrants in the labour market and the maximisation of their net contribution to public budgets.

The second criterion we apply is the long-run integration of children of migrants. The interests of the country of destination are that children of migrants participate in school and quickly achieve the same degree of success as native children, so that they grow up to become fully-fledged citizens of the country of destination, fully participating economically, socially, and politically. Their integration has to take into account any possible initial gaps in language skills, or social or human capital.

Non-EU immigrants are mostly concentrated in urban areas. This gives rise to serious integration challenges for the second and third generation in areas of concentrated ethnic populations, as larger diasporas may on the one hand help immigrants by e.g. channelling valuable information, resources, or economic opportunities; but precisely these positive effects of ethnic networks may, on the other hand, may hamper integration. From another perspective, roughly one quarter of the 802,000 new-borns in metropolitan France in 2010 had at least one parent born outside Europe (INSEE, 2015). This poses specific challenges to schools, which have to cater to classes with often close to half of the children who do not speak the national language at home.

The third criterion is derived from the stated values of immigrants. It is clearly in the interests of the population in the country of destination that those values correspond to, or at least gradually converge to, those of the national constitution. Koopmans (2014) has attempted to proxy the convergence in values and concludes for Western European countries that a sizeable gap in values exists between a substantial part of the population with an immigrant background and the values held within the constitution of Western European countries. Such gaps also exist among natives, in particular between the mainstream and religious sects (like in the Dutch “Bible Belt”) (Koopmans, 2013). But these sects form a much smaller group in the population and the gaps are considerably smaller.

#### **4.1. Integration on the labour market**

In most Western countries, integration of immigrants into the labour market is far from complete. Immigrants face multiple barriers to their inclusion into the labour market as well as welfare (Zimmermann et al., 2012). The process of integration of permit holders (those who have been granted asylum) is slow. For example, just one in three permit holders between the ages of 15 and 64 living in the Netherlands has a paid job and many are permanently dependent on social assistance benefits (WRR, 2016, p.15)<sup>14</sup>.

Many EU countries do not allow the registration of “immigration background” in order to promote integration and to avoid discrimination based on background. As a result, it is not easy to find statistics on the percentage of migrants or people with a migrant background who are on welfare. The overwhelming belief is that in Western EU countries these percentages are (much) higher than those of the native population, even when accounting for age or education level. However, Zimmermann *et al.* (2012, p. 32 and 45-45) show that when all benefits are taken together,

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<sup>14</sup> With the good news that the second generation of those who have found asylum prospers in the same way in Dutch society as the mainstream.

immigrants are less likely to be in welfare receipt than natives in the majority of EU member states, in fact. Even for unemployment benefits, for which welfare take-up is in most EU member states higher for immigrants than the natives, immigrants are less likely to access this type of welfare than *comparable* natives (i.e. with the same socio-economic characteristics) (ibid). .

Many barriers to labour and welfare inclusion of immigrants have been identified (ibid). For example, insufficient language proficiency is a major reason why work is not easily found. Some EU countries have therefore instituted obligations for migrants on welfare to deepen their knowledge of the local language and the national culture of the host country. The results have been, however, disappointing as civil servants appear unwilling or unable to apply sanctions where this obligation is not fulfilled (as appears to be the case in the Netherlands).

#### **4.2 School careers of youth with a migrant background.**

The OECD (2003, Table 4.2f) has documented the school achievement of youth with a migrant background of the first, second and third generations according to the results from the Programme for International Student Assessment (at age 15). In the EU, the average school achievement of youth with a migrant background is just below that of native children. This goes along with substantially higher rates of school dropout of children with a migration background:

- In 2011, the share of early school leavers (aged 18-24) was 32 per cent among third-country nationals, compared to 14 per cent among the total population;
- In the majority of EU member states, the percentages of young foreign-born people with the lowest level of performance in reading, mathematics, and science are considerably higher than the percentages for the total population;
- Young people with a migrant background are 70 per cent more likely to become NEETS (not in employment, education or training) compared to nationals;
- Young migrants and young people of immigrant origin continue to face disadvantages in education, on the labour market, and in the transition from education to the labour market, despite the fact that a large portion of this group of people has been socialised or born in their country of residence (European Integration Forum, 2013).

The school careers of youth with a migration background seem to suffer from a lack of support from the home environment in terms of language but also in attitudes. The home environment is often authoritarian, while the school environment presents itself as “permissive”, even though for native children (and their parents) it is well-bounded within social norms (Vinton, 1978, OECD, 2010).

This mismatch may also be a reason for the decidedly higher crime rate of youth with a migration background. Figures are not easily acquired due to the reluctance of governments to register migrant backgrounds. Incidental studies are available, however. It is also clear that the country of origin matters (see for the Netherlands: SCP, 2016). In Berlin between 2009 and 2013 approximately 80 per cent of the youth known to the police as frequent offenders had a migration background (Philippsen, 2013). The debate is still on as to whether there are systematic differences in crime rates between groups of youth with a migrant background (according to the country of origin) and native youth. On the one hand, based on an extensive literature review, Bell (2014) concludes with data from the UK,

Italy and the US that the total of EU mobility and immigration from outside the EU does not increase violent crime and that the effect on property crime is due to, on average, substandard labour market outcomes, a factor that affects natives' crime rates in a similar way. On the other hand, the evidence cited above shows that in individual North Western countries crime rates of certain groups of migrant youth tend to be (substantially) higher than those of other, even when taking education levels and parental income into account. For example: Van der Laan and Goudriaan, 2015 conclude for the Netherlands: "there is a significant overrepresentation from certain ethnic minority groups. Particularly young people of Dutch Antilles/Aruban and Moroccan origins are overrepresented as registered suspect of an offence (their proportion is almost five times higher than that of native Dutch young people)". Similar findings are available in other EU countries (see for example for Denmark: Teori-og Metodecentret (2006), where seven of out of 10 youth prisoners are immigrants). However as Blom and Jeurissen (2014) find: "Only a small part of the differences relate to ethnic origin; demographic and socio-economic background characteristics play a more important role".

### 4.3 Mismatch in values

It should not come as a surprise that the values of immigrants into the EU and those of the native population differ substantially. Values are related to basic elements in the constitutions of EU countries, in particular in respect and tolerance for religion or political choice of others, as well as equal rights of persons of different sexes or sexual persuasion (Koopmans, 2014). The values of immigrants are rooted in those of the country of origin in the same way as those of the native population are defined by their country. Some countries of origin have vastly different value systems, in particular on equal treatment of people of different sexes, of different sexual orientation, and other religions. In EU countries, immigrants are often (like in France since 2007, or in the Netherlands since 2015 or Luxemburg) asked to sign a "Reception and Integration Contract"<sup>15</sup>. In such a contract newly arriving immigrants promise to adhere to the constitution of the country of destination and "must prepare for their integration into French society" (as in France, [http://www.ofii.fr/s\\_integrer\\_en\\_france\\_47/all\\_you\\_need\\_to\\_know\\_about\\_the\\_cai\\_458.html](http://www.ofii.fr/s_integrer_en_france_47/all_you_need_to_know_about_the_cai_458.html)).

These contracts are a response to a lack that was widely felt by politicians, in convergence in values between new immigrants and the population in the country of destination. Koopmans (2014) provided the evidence on this gap in values finding that many non-western immigrants in surveys answer that they adhere more to the values of the countries of origin than to the values of the countries of destination. To illustrate: religious intolerance (in particular with a strong anti-Semitic charge), the rejection of equal rights for women or for persons with another sexual orientation is predominant under a large part of Germans from Turkish origin (Koopmans, 2014). This is strongly accompanied by the impression that the EU as part of the Western world is still engaged in a crusade against their religion. Half of the Germans from Turkish origin feel that their religion is more important than the law (Koopmans, 2014). Human rights, freedom of the press, independence of the judiciary: these all have different connotations in many countries of origin than in the EU (Koopmans, 2014).

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<sup>15</sup> See for example: <http://www.forum-cai.lu/Welcome-and-integration-contract.14-1.html>

#### 4.4 Language Integration

Language is the most important element in acquiring access to the community of the country of integration. It is therefore surprising to see how little this has been part of integration policies of the governments of EU member states with large groups of immigrants from outside the EU. Language integration differs substantially within the EU, as is shown by Hohne (2013) for six major West European immigration countries (Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden) for the period between 1965 and the mid-1990s. Hohne writes: “whereas in Sweden, France and Germany, migrants' linguistic integration was addressed by state authorities well ahead of establishing integration policy as a governmental task, the other countries under study ignored immigrants' possible language problems until the early or even late 1980s. Compared to the intense and sophisticated contemporary integration courses, the didactic quality of language courses taught between the 1960s-1990s was overall low”. EU languages are not easily acquired by non-Western immigrants. First, script and language can be markedly different (Turkish being a prominent exception). Secondly the majority of the immigrants of the past had little education and thus little experience with even their own native written language.

“The biggest challenge for urban governance is the need to ensure adequate infrastructure and service delivery to diverse and growing populations” (World Migration Report, 2015). This is particularly true in Western EU cities that want to ensure communication and understanding between the different groups of the population with different languages.

### 5. The expected demand for immigration into the EU to 2050

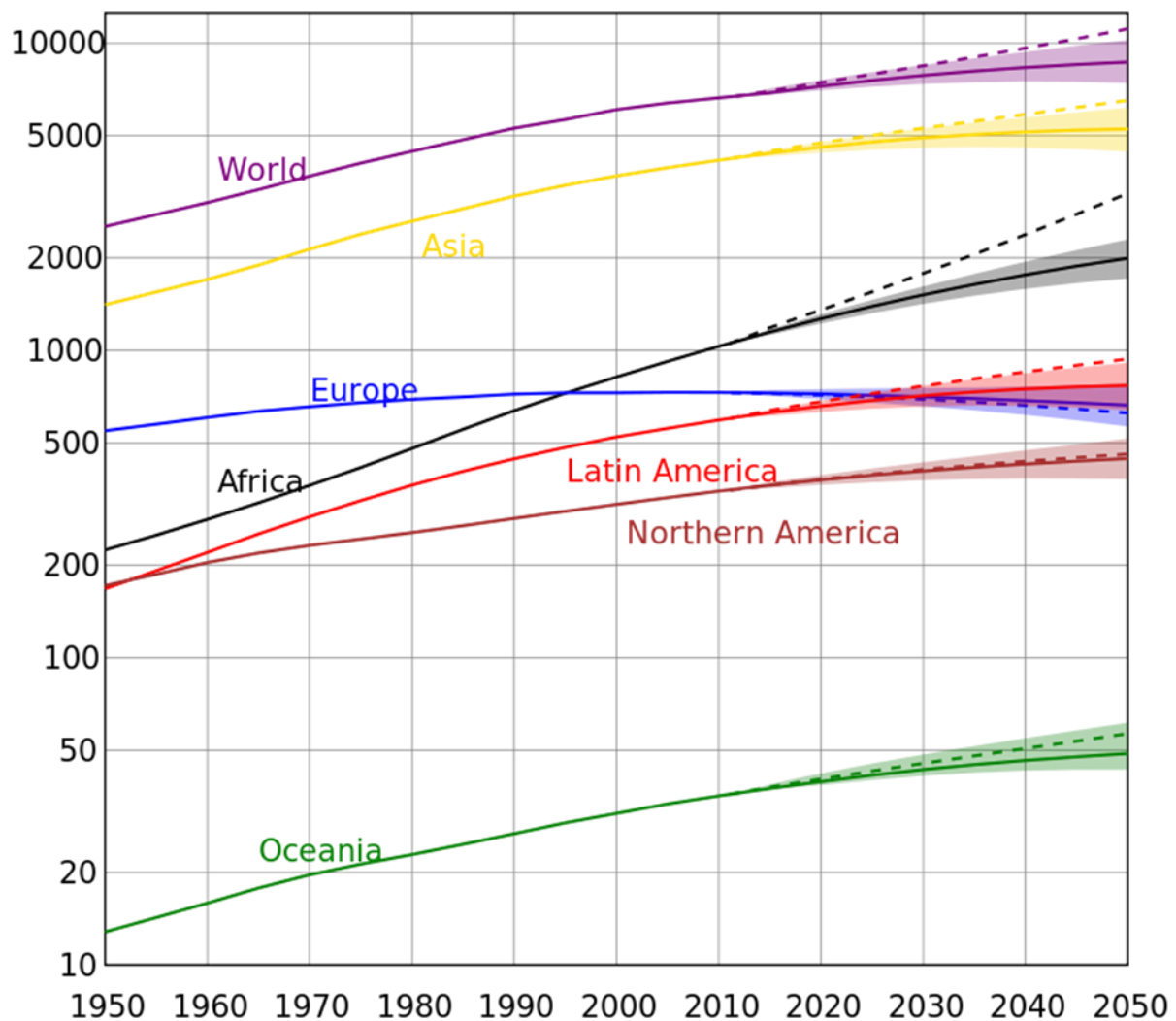
Migration is well explained by models of push and pull. A potential migrant decides to move with his or her family or individually if he or she believes it will improve the life chances for themselves and his or her children. Improvement means that one will see expected benefits against the costs of leaving the current environment, perhaps never to return or only to return occasionally.

A push is a threat to one's life or an insecure environment. War and civil unrest drive people to seek protection elsewhere, while pull is the perception of increased incomes and, for example, better schooling for children. But also unhappiness with the current country, dissatisfaction with the job and difficulties finding a new job are factors for seeking one's future abroad (Blanchflower and Lawton, 2009). If related to push and pull factors, immigration policies play a substantial part in the way migration occurs.

Population projections together with GDP growth projections give an impression of future migration (especially when noting the difference in GDP per capita as a potential pull for migration). Figure 1 presents the population projections of the United Nations (2015b). It shows that Africa is the fastest growing continent – population wise – followed by Asia and Latin America. North America is still growing in population, but at a lesser rate than other continents, while the population of Europe is stabilising and even may decline slightly.

These population projections can be juxtaposed to projections of income per capita (for example of Goldman Sachs, Kurtz, 2012).

Figure 1 Population Projection by Continent until 2050



Source: United Nations (2015b)

Kurz (2012) suggests that per capita income differences between Africa and the Indian Subcontinent (including Pakistan and Bangladesh) on the one hand and Europe on the other are going to persist in the period from now up to 2050. According to the models of migration (e.g. Borjas, 2016) this would imply hundreds of millions of potential immigrants to the EU. This is at odds with the projection of UNDP. They forecast the net number of international migrants during the period 2005–2050 to more developed regions to be 98 million (UNPP, 2016). This would imply a substantial slow-down in migration out of developing countries. For the so-called Eastern Partnerships of the EU, Kahanec and Fertig (2015) also forecast just moderate migration flows to the EU.

Williamson and Hatton (2014) believe that “migrant demand for entrance into high-wage economies will not grow as fast over the next quarter century as it did in the previous quarter century ..... as the underlying *transitional* forces that have driven the surge in third-world emigration—their demographic and industrial revolutions—die out, so will the pressure to emigrate”. At the same time they acknowledge: “Africa has yet to release a mass emigration on world markets and remains a wild card. Population aging in the post-industrial part of the world may increase the demand for

immigrant labour, but a growth slowdown in host countries is likely to offset it.” And “the next major shift in global migration will be a pronounced relative rise in migration *within* the third world (south-south migration) and a pronounced relative fall in migration *between* the third world and the west (south-north migration)”. The latter is corroborated by Berriane *et al.* (2016) for the Gulf Countries, Turkey and North Africa. Possible migration futures show that Turkey and other North African states may well evolve into immigration countries coinciding with increasing immigration from Sub-Saharan Africa to the entire Mediterranean (Berriane *et al.* 2016).

Many EU countries have the notion that they need high skilled young immigrants from outside the EU to offset the ageing of their population. Also labour market experts tend to agree on this (Krause, Rinne and Zimmermann, 2014).

## 6. A sustainable EU immigration policy

Any sustainable EU policy should fit within goals defined by the EU member states, namely to contribute to a space of inclusive prosperity and welfare. This implies safety, security, and social cohesion. It means good governance, good chances for education and health for all. This covers all citizens of the country in question.

Popular sentiments must be weighed when devising any policy, but false claims by populists must be countered, especially when they circulate freely in the digital world. The worst enemy of any immigration policy is the stereotyping of those with a migrant background. The start of any immigration policy is to take a firm stand against discrimination and racism, while actively campaigning for the facts and stepping up integration measures.

It is widely recognised that the right to migrate finds its limits in the basic right to self-government (Kant, 1795, Benhabib, 2004). These moral and legal rights seem more than ever at odds in our “globalised” societies. A bridge could be constructed with three complementary components:

- Limiting extra-EU migration to well-trained youth according to a point system (see: Tani, 2014). The focus on well-trained youth as immigrants from outside the EU builds further on the ideas behind the Blue Card introduced in 2009 by the EC to allow skilled third-country workers to work in any participating country EU country. It would also be supported by generous admission of youth for study in the EU. This has turned out to be a win-win for both receiving countries and countries of origin (Chevalier, 2014).
- Stepping up efforts for defeating stereotyping and discrimination in EU countries, in line with extra integration support.
- An active engagement of the EU with education and training in countries of origin of large group of migrants, to help potential migrants qualify for migration into the EU.

We take the position here – derived from the facts and figures of preceding sections – that the EU should support member states in managing migration from *outside* the EU to the level that is defensible on economic and humanitarian grounds, while also being sustainable in the long run. On economic grounds the emphasis should be on immigration of qualified workers. These may come from highly-educated echelons, but also well-qualified workers with lower levels of education. The labour market in the EU post-robotisation era will demand high-skilled, entrepreneurial, and “world-

wise” people. The majority of the unskilled or lower skilled immigrants are likely to end up in strong competition with local lower-trained workers, putting them among the most disadvantaged groups, even though their incomes may be much higher than in the country of origin. Many migrants to the EU feel cheated in their expectations, as they clearly express in terms of unhappiness (Kóczán, 2016).

### **6.1. “Regular” immigration.**

Most migration from outside the EU in the past decade stems from family reunification or from marriage with a citizen in the country of origin. This has led to gradual movement of large numbers of immigrant from North Africa, Eastern Turkey, Senegal and other African countries to EU countries, creating large diasporas (Taylor, 2015). Such immigrant communities in EU countries continue to converse in the language of the country of origin throughout the generations, as the third generation still marries with someone from the country of origin of some previous generation, who was the first migrant. Like intra-EU migrants, they watch the local TV of the country of origin and find their children in schools in a deprived situation (see, for example: Algan, 2012 or Taylor, 2015).

There is a stark trade-off between interests of immigrants in EU countries and the original population. The substantial majority of those with a migrant background have an interest in continued immigration of people from their country or region of origin. In contrast, the native population has overwhelmingly indicated that they see their interests in limiting the flow of new immigrants, mostly because of the perceived lack of integration of the newcomers. There is a narrow bridge between these interests in the form of immigration of youth with a good qualification, who are likely to integrate quickly in terms of language and values and norms.

EU countries have earlier engaged in limiting immigration through marriage by requiring minimum levels of knowledge of the language and a minimum ability to sustain oneself on the labour market of the EU country of destination. Denmark and the Netherlands are examples. In practice these requirements were set too low for effective integration<sup>16</sup>. In this policy proposal they are raised to higher education or equivalent qualification, subject to a point system.

Each EU country has separate regulations for acquiring citizenship. There are differences in terms of the exposure to the values of the EU-countries (laid down in the constitution), to the knowledge of the language etc. This doesn’t square with the free mobility of EU citizens within the EU. Some harmonisation is therefore essential. Also the implementation of these regulations differs between countries. In most EU countries migrants can still be “naturalised” without the knowledge of the language of that country (or another EU country for that matter), though which they would have a decent chance of finding a job, reading a newspaper, or taking part in the democratic process. There is a need for harmonising within the EU the demands for citizenship at a level where the new citizen can indeed exert a voice.

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<sup>16</sup> According to Kulu-Glasgow and Leerkes (2013): “Marriage migration has become the most common form of immigration from Turkey to the Netherlands. The Dutch government increasingly pursues restrictive admission policies for the immigration of partners from non-EU countries. This article shows that the tightened income and age restrictions were to some extent successful in limiting Turkish marriage migration. It is also demonstrated, however, that the power of the state to control this migration flow is constrained by two main factors: coping strategies of Turkish couples and international obligations, including the Association Agreement”.

Raising the requirements for immigration also puts responsibility on EU countries to contribute to education in the countries of origin, especially for those who seek to join someone in an EU country. University-to-university collaboration between EU universities and those in countries of origin should be enhanced. This would serve a multitude of purposes, but also the education of youth to be welcomed in EU countries as a benefit to these countries. The triple win scenario should be supported by provisions for circular migration.

## **6.2 Asylum and refugees.**

The right to asylum is laid down in the UN declaration on Human Rights of 1951<sup>17</sup>. This was translated in various forms by individual EU member states. It has been truly one of the best humanitarian achievements in the post-war areas, when it was aimed at cross-border refugees. But in its present form it supports migration over large distances, of those who are at risk in their countries of origin as well as those who seek a betterment of life even though they are safe in their countries of origin. Heated recent discourses in the EU indicate that the system of asylum is broken, especially in view of the potential dynamism of global mobility, with declined migration costs and growing inequalities. A sustainable model is urgently needed. Hathaway (2016) argues that „the time is right to change the way that refugee law is implemented. Specifically, advocates a shift towards a managed and collectivized approach to the implementation of refugee protection obligations. He contends that while the obligations under the Convention remain sound, the mechanisms for implementing those obligations are flawed in ways that too often lead States to act against their own values and interests, and which produce needless suffering amongst refugees“.

The current system has given rise to unacceptable circumstances, with incentives for migrants to ditch their documents, lie about their history, and burden the justice system. This relates to difficulties in evicting migrants whose asylum claims were refused, in a system that benefits human smugglers at the expense of migrants. Then in 2015 and 2016 there was the new wave of migrants, who sought refuge by sea – knowingly risking their lives. The death toll was (and remains) horrendous and a shame to the system that encourages these risks.

Moreover asylum seeking in its present form is a very inefficient way to serve a humanitarian purpose. The costs of dealing with the application are substantial. The opportunity costs for the asylum seeker, having to wait sometimes more than a year, likewise. Then it turns out that only a small fraction of asylum seekers can be truly considered to qualify. The costs per asylum seeker divided by the chance to qualify are substantial and could help a much larger group in refugee camps. In addition, it appears that tensions are likely to increase in local communities when they are confronted with a relatively large group of newcomers, but this has not yet been confirmed by evidence.

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<sup>17</sup> Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that "Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution." The United Nations 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees guides national legislation concerning political asylum. Under these agreements, a refugee is a person who is outside their own country's territory (or place of habitual residence if stateless) owing to fear of persecution on protected grounds. Common policies appeared in the 1990s in connection with the Schengen Agreement (which suppressed internal borders) so that asylum seekers unsuccessful in one Member State would not reapply in another. The common policy began with the Dublin Convention in 1990.



The asylum system needs the kind of changes that are in the process of development: asylum is sought from the refugee camps in the countries where the border between the country of origin and that of the refugee camp is crossed. Asylum applications are handled in those countries. Those who still enter the EU are returned to the country they came from. This has now been agreed with Turkey. It also means that boat refugees from Libya or other coastal areas in North Africa are returned to where they came from. This is in line with proposals from the EU foreign policy chief, Federica Mogherini (2015) when she sought UN Security Council authorisation for the use of military force against human smugglers and their vessels off the shores of Libya (this was denied at that time, but in the process of revival). A single EU policy is needed to avoid a “beggar-thy-neighbour” policy on asylum seekers and engage in burden sharing (Hatton, 2015).

EU countries would still comply with the spirit of the 1951 Refugee Convention by setting up application centres near refugee camps (i.e. in Turkey, Jordan and perhaps Ethiopia, Pakistan and Somalia), as called for by European Council President Donald Tusk (2016). At the same time, the EU needs to step up support for refugee camps – perhaps under EU coordination – to help them provide equal chances for a future as an immigrant to the EU. In particular the education component is important: refugee camps must – with the support of the EU – enable youth to use their talents and make the move to the EU.

Selecting refugees and asylum seekers from outside the EU, combined with substantial extra support to countries receiving large flows of refugees across their borders, are essential aspects of a sustainable immigration policy in the humanitarian domain. They would also contribute to more stable societies, bridging the gap between elites and well-to-do on the one hand and the lesser-educated and migrants on the other (as Collier, 2012 also observes).

Recruitment of refugees and asylum seekers from outside the EU would not, however, resolve the prickly question of where the person should go to. It is important that EU countries find agreement on this question. In particular Central and Eastern European countries (in particular, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic) are hesitant – to say the least – to accept refugees and asylum seekers with a different religious background than that of the main population, citing the discomfort of their own constituencies with the growing communities of immigrants with such different backgrounds, as shown for example in Hungary where 46 per cent of polled Hungarians believed that no asylum seeker should be allowed to enter Hungary at all. Also Poland and the Slovak Republic have rejected a quota system for refugees.

For now, the future of the Dublin Regulation must be clarified. Under this regulation, asylum seekers must remain in the first EU country they enter and that country is solely responsible for examining migrants' asylum applications. Migrants who travel to other EU states face deportation back to the EU country they originally entered. At the same time, however, the border countries of the EU need the support of the entire EU to deal with asylum applications.

This regulation put a tremendous strain on Greece and Italy in particular, when the flow of more than one and a half million refugees, asylum seekers, and illegal migrants arrived in 2015. The EU has helped to a certain extent – both financially and logistically – but not compensated the countries in full. This is illogical and counterproductive. It produced a flow of migrants away from – in particular Greece – to seek asylum in Northern European countries, where Germany generously decided to temporarily forget about “Dublin” and admit some 600,000 asylum seekers for registration in

Germany. Many other countries, however, refused to commit to the registration of asylum seekers who had not entered their country as the first country of entry in the EU and closed their borders, in violation of the Schengen agreement of visa free movement within the EU<sup>18</sup>. Fortunately, as of 2016, asylum seeking at EU border countries was considered an EU affair (although the cross-EU distribution of acknowledged refugees is yet to be settled). This question is not going away, so EU member states must at some point reach an agreement – an agreement that will of course be easier to reach if it fits into “positive” integration stories and does not wither away when confronted with populist anti-migrant sentiments.

Asylum has been used as an entry ticket into the EU for many from the African continent. It is therefore important to discuss with North African and Sub-Saharan leaders how migration from these countries can be embedded in the EU-policy aimed at well-trained workers. The annual EU-Africa Summits are an excellent opportunity (EU-Africa Summit, 2014). These summits grew out of the 2000 Cotonou Agreement and the 1975 Lomé Convention. They are broad-ranging, covering issues as diverse as economic growth, security and governance.

The pressure to emigrate from Africa is likely to increase over the next few years (see section 5). Natural catastrophes, local and national, may trigger additional flows. It is therefore in the interests of the key sending countries, African in particular, and the EU that migration is well-organised, proactively focusing on upgrading immigrants’ and refugees and asylum seekers’ human capital and strengthen their chances of integration. These are also the best prospects for circular migration, contributing in the longer run to the countries of origin. Closer cooperation between EU and the sending countries, African countries in particular, and specifically on higher education), will be a key step towards realising these prospects.

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<sup>18</sup> This was not the first time that the EU ideal of free movement came under attack. In April 2011 France briefly reintroduced border controls in response to the influx of thousands of Tunisian and Libyan refugees from neighboring Italy, with Denmark following suit.

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