

# Interlinks between migration and development

## SUMMARY

The EU and its Member States have reshaped their external policies, including development cooperation, to place more focus on migration-related issues. Widely used in this context, political rhetoric on 'addressing root causes of migration' has been questioned by academics as creating unrealistic expectations. Indeed, a positive correlation between migration and narrowly understood economic development persists until countries reach middle-income country level. However, several key drivers of migration are related to discrepancies in levels of human development. Demographic pressures, youth unemployment, job opportunities in the country of destination, the growth of migrant networks and the desire to reunite families, all play roles in migration. A complex interaction between aid and migration also exists, which is far from a simple one-way causality. In general, poverty alleviation, the primary objective of development aid, tends to enhance rather than deter the realisation of the aspiration to migrate, in the short- and medium-term, by increasing household incomes.

A more global approach to cooperation with third countries, such as the EU's already well-established assistance focusing on good governance, infrastructure, rural development and strengthening resilience, as well as going beyond development assistance to include trade and investment, appears promising in terms of deterring migration. On the other hand, studies confirm that international migration is an important path for development: remittances constitute a tool for poverty reduction, while diaspora skills and networks provide resources for economic and social progress. Nevertheless, EU policy integrating development aid as an instrument for curbing irregular migration is criticised by development stakeholders as undermining aid effectiveness, principles, and risks diverting aid from the most needy and indirectly prompting human rights violations. To avoid such outcomes, a contextual analysis must be the basis for identifying genuine synergies to be reinforced between development and migration management.



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## Migration and development nexus: rising issue at European and international levels

Migration has always been closely related to economic and social development, but has only recently become part of mainstream development thinking and international policy. The political stakes are high in the quest to adapt to new levels of migratory pressure, not only in the EU, but also on the global agenda, which recently saw a rise in migration related issues.

Contrary to the previous Millennium Development Goals, the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable development Goals \(SDGs\)](#) contains three explicit mentions of migration, acknowledged as an important element of a series of interconnected issues. This comprehensive and universal framework, that applies to all countries, calls for labour protection for all, including migrants (Target 8.8); reduction of inequities within and among countries including by the facilitation of orderly, safe migration (Target 10.7), and reductions in the transaction costs of migrant remittances.<sup>1</sup>

In parallel, the EU has revamped its external policies in recent years, to comprehensively face new challenges, including the unprecedented [migratory pressures](#) at its borders. The main components structuring EU external migration policy – the [Global Approach to Migration and Mobility \(GAMM\)](#), [European Agenda on Migration \(2015\)](#), and the [New Partnership Framework with Third countries \(2016\)](#) (including 'migration compacts' and the [European External Investment Plan \(EIP\)\(2017\)](#)) – increasingly underline the link between development and migration. In [EU development policy](#), the 2017 revision of the [European consensus on development](#) confirms the new political importance of the migration and development nexus. Indeed, in parallel to purely development objectives, articulated around the Sustainable Development Goals, the European interest in migration control is present throughout the document. 'Addressing root causes of migration' has become a mantra of an increasingly comprehensive EU external policy, including its financial diplomacy, based on the assumption that greater investment in development assistance will provide an incentive for people to stay at home.

### [Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration](#)

Finalised in July 2018 and officially adopted in [Marrakesh](#) (Morocco) in December 2018 (with some EU Member States [abstaining](#)), the United Nations Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration [provides](#) a first-ever global (non-binding) agreement setting out a common approach to international migration in all its dimensions. Concerning the links with development, the agreement attempts to find leverage to increase the potential of migration for the achievement of all SDGs. Among 23 objectives for safe, orderly and regular migration, Objective 2 'Minimise the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin', is the most relevant, as it perceives development, defined as the implementation of SDGs as a road to halt the need for people to leave their country of origin.

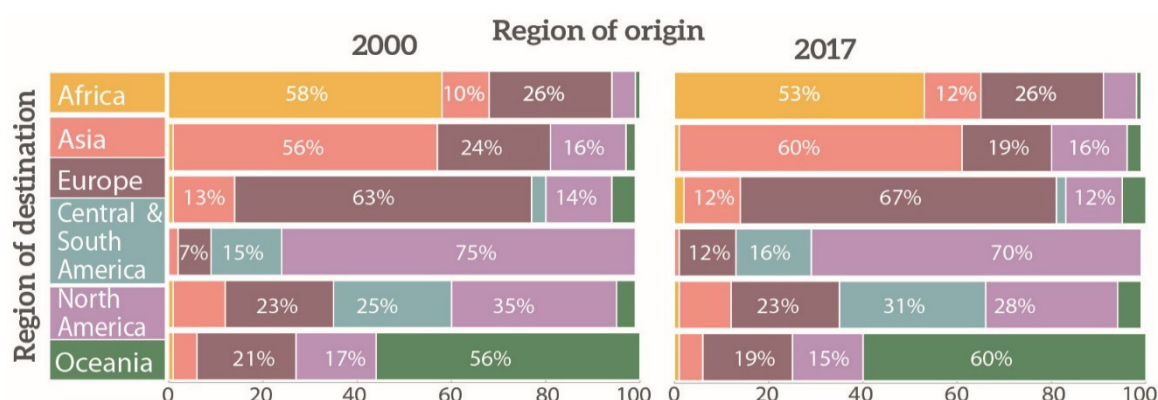
## Untying the migration and development knot

There is clear agreement among academics that the relationship between development conditions and migration flows is much more nuanced than the common political discourse on root causes of migration presents, and requires further investigation.<sup>2</sup> This is equally the case for the parallel question on the effects of emigration on the development of countries of origin. These two research questions articulate most of the academic debate on the migration and development nexus.<sup>3</sup> Deepening the understanding of the interlinks between development and migration must start with **defining concepts** and **presenting available data**. Some of the controversies in the debate about migration and development interlinkages are themselves based on different definitions and indicators of development.

While migration is observable and measurable, data collection at global level poses severe challenges. Migration is measured most often in terms of the **stock of migrants** – people residing in a country different from their birth country – and **migration flows** – that will count, over a period of time, immigrants arriving in a country, and those returning; emigrants leaving a country and returning, and transit migrants. The [global stock of migrants](#) – 258 million in 2017 – is growing, today representing 3.3 % of world population (against 2.8 % in 1990). Although African migrants represent only 14 % of international migration, the trend for the continent is rising sharply. Between 2010 and 2017, the number of migrants from [sub-Saharan Africa](#) has grown at a higher rate (31 %) than the world average (17 %).

Almost 70 % of sub-Saharan migrants live in other sub-Saharan countries, while only 17 % live in Europe and 6% in the United States.

Figure 1 – Percentage distribution of international migrants by region of destination, for regions of origin



Source: [UN International migration report 2017](#).

The global level of [forced displacement](#) across international borders, a politically sensitive type of migration due to illegal border crossing, also continues to rise: by the end of 2016, there were almost 26 million refugees and asylum-seekers in the world, representing 10 % of all international migrants, with developing countries hosting 82 % of them.

Due to a lack of comparable data in many regions, as data collection methodologies are not harmonised, it is impossible to present global migration flows accurately. According to the Migration Data portal that provides access to global migration statistics, in 2016, permanent migration flows to OECD countries were approaching 5 million. At the EU level, [Eurostat](#) provides a comprehensive set of data on both migration stock and flows for EU countries, desegregated by age, sex, countries of origin, and other. Concerning the [data on irregular migration](#), stocks and flows are generally unavailable. However some fragmented data depicts parts of the phenomena of irregular migration, with reference not to individuals, but to their migratory status, at a given point in time (while entering, staying or working) outside the legal rules of the country). [Frontex](#), the EU border surveillance agency, collects data on national border-control authority detections of illegal crossings of the EU external border. In 2017, 204 734 illegal entries were detected compared to 511 047 in 2016.<sup>4</sup> However, as reported by [Eurostat](#), in 2016, 650 000 first time asylum-seekers registered in the EU, compared to 1 206 500 in 2015, clearly illustrating the limits of illegal entry statistics as a point of reference to measure the phenomena.

As to **development** policy, although narrow economic definitions of development (especially GDP growth per capita) are still used in empirical studies, the picture is today completed with wider concepts of **human development**, and more recently, **sustainable development**. Since 1990, the United Nations (UN) development programme measures the [human development index \(HDI\)](#), an annual compilation of indicators such as life expectancy, education, level and income. This contrasts with the narrow view of development that focuses on growth of GDP, rise in personal income, or industrialisation. Sustainable development, anchored in Agenda 2030, further enlarges the concept to include the environmental dimension, as well as the idea of fighting inequalities, embodied in the expression 'leaving no-one behind'. The progress towards the 17 SDGs (defined in a list of 169 SDG targets) are measured with the help of 232 detailed indicators that can be monitored through an [SGD tracker](#). The World Bank [world development indicators](#) are another valuable source of development-related country level indicators.

## Drivers of migration

Although it is difficult to establish causality and isolate the factors that would facilitate or deter international migration, a number of studies try to address the issue of drivers of migration. The individual migration decision and the ability to put it in practice are the fruits of an interaction between a variety of factors that are shaped by a broader economic, political and social context. The distinction

between **push** (the reason people leave their country) and **pull factors** (the reason why people move to a particular country) is also often encountered. Push factors, such as violence, persecution, or famine, will be dominant in cases of 'forced' migration, while pull factors, such as better wages or solid safety nets attracting individuals to a foreign country, are key to defining voluntary migration, although the variety and interconnection of drivers makes this an **often uneasy distinction** in practice.<sup>5</sup> Studies often distinguish between **macroeconomic drivers of migration** where the effects can be evaluated in the short- and long-term, and **micro drivers**, referring to individuals' skills and aspirations, often based on interviews and surveys.

## Macro drivers

Among the most widely distinguished macro drivers are:

- **Demographic trends:** Africa is the only continent whose population continues to grow very fast, due to high fertility rates coupled with a decrease in infant mortality. In the short-term, this demographic trend may not increase emigration. In the poorest countries, a high birth rate may hinder migration, especially to more distant destinations. Nevertheless, in the long-term, once African markets are not able to create jobs for all young adults, this demographic expansion is likely to highly increase the absolute number of people on the move. The United Nations estimated that Africa's total population in 1960 was about 300 million, while it has reached 1.2 billion in 2017, and is predicted to increase further, reaching 2.5 billion by 2050. At the same time, the most mobile age group, 20-35 year olds, will grow in number in the next 20-30 years.
- **Existing migrant networks:** diaspora in receiving countries play a crucial long-term factor in shaping migratory flows.<sup>6</sup> The [connections](#) between members of a diaspora and family and friends in the country of origin are a key enabler of the realisation of a migration project. Indeed, formulating a migration project is strongly facilitated by information provided by those who already lived through the process. Living in an area with strong emigration rates and/or having family members abroad may encourage both a desire to migrate and the execution of the project. Remittances from family members abroad may also help to provide financial means.
- **Geographical and historical factors:** this set of explanatory variables relates to the geographic distance between sending and receiving countries, common language, or colonial past. These immutable factors are important in understanding some migratory patterns (e.g. the high proportion of North African migrants in the EU).
- **Conflict/insecurity:** the [rise in armed conflict](#) has triggered a sharp increase in forced displacement. As of [mid-2018](#), 68.5 million people were forcibly displaced, 400 million (including 40 million internally) were displaced, and 28 million were refugees and asylum-seekers. More than half of the world refugee population come from three war torn countries: South Sudan, Syria and Afghanistan. More than 85 % of forcibly displaced people remain in developing countries. According to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), sub-Saharan Africa is now home to 31 % of the global refugee population. In some cases, such as Lebanon, one in six people has received humanitarian protection. Large inflows of migrants can further exacerbate existing economic and political security stresses, risking destabilising the host country and ultimately thereby producing more forced displacement. The influence of conflict and security on migration flows is not, however, immediate: asylum-seekers and refugees have reported trying to cope locally with the consequences of conflict, and moving only once their means to do so were destroyed. Interviews with migrants have shown that 'a combination of several negative factors is often responsible for the decision to leave: [Afghan migrants](#) report that violent conflict coupled with lack of employment possibilities pushed them to leave.
- **Climate change:** according to [UN estimates](#), from 2008 to 2015, 26 million people were displaced annually by climate and weather-related disasters. Due to the growing frequency of tropical storms, hurricanes, drought and floods, and their impact on often vulnerable communities, the climate change impact on migration is expected to grow even further. The World Bank [estimates](#) that by 2050, 143 million people living in three particularly exposed regions – Sub Saharan Africa, South Asia and Latin America – will be pushed by climate change stresses to migrate within their countries in the first instance, with possible further consequences for onward movement. It is estimated that 8 % of the African population in 2100 will be affected by prolonged periods of heat,



and over 13 % by prolonged periods of drought.<sup>7</sup> However, the effect of these changes on international migration is difficult to predict. Some see millions of 'climate refugees' moving south to north, while others underline that affected communities may become 'trapped populations', much too poor to move farther.<sup>8</sup>

## Micro drivers

The factors that play a central role in individual migration decisions and their implementation are:

- **Income related:** increasing income in poor countries does not curb migration, but on the contrary produces additional migration up to a certain level. Numerous empirical studies have confirmed Zielinski's 1971 theory that the 'inverted U' mobility transition curve shapes the relationship between migration and economic development. Emigration rates to OECD countries from developing countries grow with increasing income per capita, up to US\$6 000, and tend to decrease thereafter.<sup>9</sup> The most common explanation for this phenomenon is that increasing financial means make migration more affordable. Successful migrants need to cover travel costs and also invest in travel documents, internet connection, and sometimes language skills. The costs of migration are very high: for example a prospective migrant needs €1 500 to €2 500 (more than two years' income), to get from a Sub-Saharan country to Europe. It is therefore unsurprising that, contrary to public perception, more than half of the Africans who take steps to migrate are in employment.<sup>10</sup> Studies nevertheless point to a deterrent effect where youth employment exceeds 70 %. Surprisingly, richer countries with higher youth employment rates (90 % in Paraguay) have similar migration rates to poor countries with much lower youth employment levels (60 % in Mozambique), showing the predominance of income-related factors.<sup>11</sup> Studies at national level show that people in poverty, if they manage to migrate, tend to do so for shorter distances, with intercontinental migration being the most common for those who are richer.<sup>12</sup>
- **Skills related:** 'the rise in education level is identified as one of the key factors contributing to the rise of migration at short term.'<sup>13</sup> It is [proven](#) that more educated and wealthier individuals have better means to carry out their migration projects. However, over the longer-term, a rising educational level, especially of women, is confirmed to slow population growth, thereby incrementally reducing the demographic pressure.<sup>14</sup> Studies [confirm](#) that educated women generally have fewer children than those with a lower level of education.
- **Aspirations:** individual decisions to migrate are influenced by the perception of international inequalities, comparisons between domestic life opportunities in terms of employment, education or access to health care, and the perception of the same opportunities abroad. Dissatisfaction with living conditions and a pessimistic view about the future are associated with a higher desire to move to another country. Increasing generalised access to internet and social media, make the 'comparison' of life perspectives easier. [Based](#) on a [Gallup World Poll survey](#) for the 2013-2016 period, around 30 % of people in low income countries express a desire to migrate abroad, while 1 % take practical steps to implement this aspiration. In Africa, the desire for migration is the most frequent (31 %), followed by Europe (outside EU) (27 %) and Latin America and the Caribbean (23 %).
- **Risk management:** by allowing for diversification of the household source of income through migration, families try to mitigate the risks linked to conflict, environmental hazards, job losses or sudden sickness. More stable and predictable economies with a functioning social safety net could help reduce the need for insurance against negative shocks, reducing migration.

## Impact of development aid on migration and its drivers

A review of the literature points to a high level of uncertainty regarding the circumstances that help to deter migration. There is large consensus, however, on **bi-directional, indirect and complex links between aid and migration**. Aid can, to some extent, affect the determinants of migration and migration flows, determining the level of allocation of development aid given to a country of origin, and this can lead to the geographical gaps in aid distribution, commonly known as 'aid orphans'.

Studies confirm that countries with strong immigrant communities [allocate](#) more bilateral aid to their specific countries of origin. One reason for this could be that donor countries wish to decrease the

immigration and diaspora influence on the aid policies of the host government. The impact of migration on aid allocation may increase as donor policy toward migrant entry becomes more restrictive. Also, countries of origin of asylum-seekers may receive more aid than countries with large internal displacement, confirming that a 'self-interest' motivation prevails over more altruistic motives.<sup>15</sup> However there is no clear evidence to date that aid is targeted more specifically at areas considered as relevant to root causes of migration in countries sending migrants compared to others.<sup>16</sup>

Concerning the impact of aid, while it is difficult to empirically establish the positive impact of foreign aid on development in a narrow economic sense, when this is the case, a positive correlation between migration and economic development persists until countries reach a middle-income country level. Many studies detect no effect from official development assistance (ODA) on growth, while others estimate that to obtain a 1 % a year increase in growth, an average poor country would need aid of the order of about 10 % of its GDP. To deter migration, this trend should be sustained for at least three generations. A quantitative assessment of global average effect of aid on migration by Berthélemy et al finds that increasing aid reinforces migration from average poor countries to high-income OECD countries.<sup>17</sup> The share of bilateral aid would have a double effect on emigration as aggregate aid. Indeed, several analyses suggest that good bilateral donor-recipient relations especially favour skilled migration. A 2017 [Lanati and Thiele study](#), using slightly different variables to measure both aid and migration, challenges this result, however. It found neither a perceivable effect of bilateral aid on migration, nor a negative effect of aggregate aid on migration. [Gregl and Logožar](#), analysing data from ACP countries for 1982-2012, came to the same conclusion: receiving higher amounts of development aid does not reduce international migration.

Several studies have evaluated the **effects of aid** in different sectors, considered as **relevant to the root causes of migration** that increasingly shape development policies. [Gamso and Yuldashev](#) compared, based on data from 103 recipient countries (1995-2010), the effects of rural and urban development aid on international migration. They found that **rural aid** is negatively associated with emigration rates, while there is no significant relationship between urban aid and emigration. This effect seems to be caused by the positive impact of aid on rural employment and other positive effects on the public sector. The same authors came to the conclusion that aid targeted towards governance is accompanied by reductions in emigration rates. Conversely, support for **vocational training** and **business development programmes**, in the form of microfinance, can raise aspirations and the capacity to migrate, especially if there is no sustainable possibility to put the newly acquired assets to use locally, and where there is an already-established history of migration from the region.<sup>18</sup> Investing in creating appropriate **environments for economic activities**, and **reducing risks at the systemic level** may therefore be a better way to address the root causes of migration than a narrow focus on growth-related trends. Concerning **conflict mitigation**, a review of existing studies indicates that there is no strong evidence that violence reduces the effect of aid and that aid in conflict zones may even exacerbate conflict. There are however indications that aid may protect relatively stable regions from slipping into conflict.<sup>19</sup>

Table 1 – Overview of drivers of migration and related policy options

Drivers of migration	Short-term effect on migration	Long-term effect on migration	Promising areas for support
Demographic growth	Deterrent (More children in poor countries aggravate financial constraints and capacity to leave)	Reinforcement	Education and empowerment of girls and women Family planning
Diaspora	Strong reinforcement	Strong reinforcement	Integration of immigrants Takes account of the migration history of given community while planning support
Geographical proximity and historical ties	Reinforcement	Less reinforcement	Promote regional integration of the countries of origin and transit
Conflict/insecurity	Weak	Strong reinforcement	Conflict prevention Good governance Assistance for forcibly displaced
Climate change	Weak	Reinforcement	Builds resilience and solutions to mitigate climate change
Rise of income	Reinforcement (up to US\$6 000)	Deterrent (once middle income country level reached)	Support for rural employment Investment in infrastructure and good business environment
Better education	Reinforcement (migration is more affordable)	Deterrent (link to fall in demographic growth)	Targeted, context related education support, respecting both host and countries of origin needs
Perception of (comparative) livelihood opportunities	Reinforcement	Reinforcement	Promotion of realistic information about countries of destination
Risk management	Reinforcement	Reinforcement	Support for social safety nets and income diversification

Source: EPRS.

## Impact of migration on development of countries of origin

Although migrants themselves benefit the most from moving from poor to rich countries, international migration also has **overall positive effects for countries of origin**. The positive impact of migration is most prominent in small countries with high migration rates, and the most difficult to detect for large countries where migration is relatively lower. The main migration related vectors influencing countries of origin development patterns are:

- **Remittances:** in 2017, migrants from developing countries sent home an estimated [US\\$466 billion](#) in remittances, three times the volume of global ODA. Top remittance recipients include: India (US\$69 billion), China (US\$64 billion), the Philippines (US\$33 billion), Mexico (US\$31 billion), Nigeria (US\$22 billion) and Egypt (US\$21 billion). For several developing countries, remittances represent a considerable [percentage of GDP](#): for example, around 30 % for Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan

and Haiti, around 10 % for Egypt, the Philippines or Guatemala. Although those payments, which rarely serve for productive investments, do not seem to have a direct impact on countries' economic growth, they are [considered](#) to be a very effective development intervention in terms of micro level [poverty alleviation](#). The remittances are mostly spent on [daily consumption](#) and access to health services and education. Multiple studies have [confirmed](#) gains for households left behind, in terms of growth in family assets (in particular housing and land), higher consumption and lower poverty rates. [Marglois et al](#) find that remittances have reduced poverty by 40 % in migrants sending remittances to an Algerian region that received a significant level of transfers. [Gubert et al](#) estimate that an extra 300 000 to 600 000 Malians would slip into poverty without family remittances. However not all migrants are willing and able to send remittances, so for some households the negative impact in terms of lost labour of one of its members will not be compensated by the positive effects of money transfers.

- **Social and political transmission:** in addition to financial remittances, some [non-financial assets](#) – human capital, innovative social behaviour or political aspiration – acquired as results of migration are also transferred to home regions of migrants. Cultural transfer often concerns spheres of personal and family life, in particular the roles played by women and the education of children, which in turns affect fertility rates. Studies confirm that migration to OECD countries contributes to lower fertility rates, while the opposite occurs with migration to rich countries with high fertility rates, such as Gulf countries.<sup>20</sup> Migration favours women's empowerment and gender role redefinition in patriarchal societies, firstly for women migrants, but also for those remaining [at home](#), and having to assume much more responsibility. The scale of change in the country of origin depends on the proportion of migrants versus the local population; the duration of migration and the degree of openness/integration of the diaspora in the host country.
- **Diaspora involvement:** migrants and their descendants play an important role in stimulating the development of their countries of origin, by investing in businesses, participating in heritage tourism, and engaging politically or philanthropically. Diaspora expertise can enhance aid efficiency and facilitate skills and knowledge transfer. For example, UK-based Sierra Leonean health workers provided [cultural awareness training](#) to aid workers travelling to the country during the Ebola epidemic. The presence of a diaspora [stimulates trade](#) between countries of origin and host countries, by creating connections between producers and consumers and simply buying home country products and introducing them to others. The existence of a migrant network also increases direct investments: both due to the diaspora's own investments, especially valuable in countries considered as risky by foreign investors, and by reducing transition and information costs for other investors. A diaspora's positive contribution depends to a large extent on homeland governments creating an enabling environment for emigrants' involvement and the degree of their integration in the host country.
- **Impact of returns:** return migration can lead to skills and technology transfers and increase investment in local economies, benefiting not only from savings, but also as social capital (networks) acquired abroad. Several countries, in particular China, India, Argentina and Ireland, have benefited from the return of their migrants, bringing new technology and skills from their emigration experience. [Returns](#), both permanent and temporary, could counteract the negative effects of brain drain. Indeed, emigration concerns much more the highly educated part of the population of low income countries, resulting in severe loss of human capital, shortages of skilled workers in critical sectors, and loss of investment in education. The poorest developing countries, in particular in Sub-Saharan Africa, tend to be most [affected](#). [Circular migration schemes](#) are often presented as a means to shift from brain drain to brain gain. From 2005 to 2015, the Migration for Development in Africa ([MIDA](#)) project in Ghana enabled 21 000 health workers to follow training programmes provided by over 1 000 Ghanaian diaspora health professionals. Several [destination countries](#) are offering support for returning migrants to start up their own businesses: from 2010 to 2015, the [Programme for the creation of Innovative Companies in the Mediterranean](#) offered up to €35 000 for returning North Africans with French graduate degrees in science or technology to open their own business. Returnee's positive impact on the development of their communities of origin will depend on several factors. The reason for [return](#), social, or economic success in host countries, and maintenance of links to countries of origin in particular through visits, are among key factors for sustainable return on an individual level. In the countries of origin, political and legal



arrangements, such as allowing dual nationality, establishing programmes to attract highly skilled returnees, or relaxation of restrictions on diaspora investments can amplify and facilitate returns and reintegration.<sup>21</sup>

## Effects of EU policies addressing root causes of migration

The sharp increase in migration flows in 2015 [impacted](#) EU development policy and propelled it in the core of a more integrated [EU global strategy](#)-based approach. Increase in ODA, especially for origin and transiting regions for migrants, was the first noticeable sign of a much more comprehensive process, combining various political, development, economic, and trade policy instruments, so far used separately, in different political frameworks.

Indeed, [collective EU ODA](#) reached its **highest level in 2016**, presenting a net increase, even when in-donor refugee costs are excluded. In 2017, the €75.7 billion level of ODA constitutes a slight decrease of 2.4 % of EU collective ODA, mainly due to the decrease of 80 % in the amount of debt relief operation by EU Member States and the decrease of 8 % in in-donor refugee costs (accounted during the first year as ODA accordingly to OECD rules), due to the [drop in asylum applications](#). The geographical priority and criteria of aid allocation has changed mostly via establishment of ad hoc financial instruments.<sup>22</sup> The [EU trust funds](#), more flexible, but less transparent than regular EU financial instruments from which they pool the money, were created mostly for disbursement of aid in countries and regions hosting and generating refugees, or strategically important from a migration management perspective.

The political framework has also become increasingly **focused on deterring migration** in the longer-term, addressing its underlining drivers, and at shorter-term, supporting returns and reintegration, and cooperation on border management. The new rhetoric, with 'root causes of migration' at its core, was fully deployed in 2015 in the [joint Valletta action plan](#), which however also emphasises the development benefits of migration. The plan was accompanied by the launch of the [EU Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing the root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa](#), based on resources coming mainly from EU development instruments, the European Development Fund in particular providing €3.7 billion from a total €4.1 billion. The fund focuses on four policy areas: 1) economic development through employment creation, especially for women and youth; 2) basic local level service provision, 3) migration management including border management and 4) governance, in particular promoting conflict prevention and addressing human rights abuses.<sup>23</sup>

In parallel, in June 2016 the Council endorsed the [new partnership framework with third countries under the European Agenda on migration](#), with at its core the aim of using both positive and negative incentives from different EU policies to achieve tailor-made agreements (migration compacts) with key countries of origin and transit, to better manage migration and address its root causes. As well as two fully-fledged compacts with [Jordan](#) and [Lebanon](#) concluded in 2016, cooperation, including with five priority countries (Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Mali and Ethiopia), has already developed in a more ad hoc manner. Specific to each national context, [cooperation](#) progress has already been [reported](#), including deployment of dedicated European migration officers in priority countries, strengthening EU agency involvement (Europol, European Border and Coast Guard), and deployment of innovative technical solutions to manage migration. [Diverging interests](#) between countries of origin/transit and the EU on issues such as returns and readmission of migrants are hindering progress, however, and some incentives are often perceived as insufficient. **Scaling up investments in the partner countries** in the framework of the [European external investment plan](#) (EIP), which upgraded to the new [Africa-Europe Alliance for sustainable investment and jobs](#) announced in December 2018, is one way in which the EU increased its leverage. The EIP, with its flagship instrument, the [European Fund for Sustainable Development](#), which was swiftly established in 2017, aims to reinforce mobilisation of EU grants to catalyse investment from public and private sources in order to tackle the root causes of migration in the European neighbourhood and Africa, while helping to achieve the 2030 Agenda Sustainable Development Goals.<sup>24</sup>

Development NGOs are generally critical of EU development policy that focuses on an integration in the core EU external policy. Some [note](#) that migration partnerships, using ODA as leverage, that emerged through ad hoc cooperation and introduce positive and negative conditionality by using in particular ODA, tend to be **asymmetrical** and aid provided in this framework **undermines the core objectives and principles of development policy**, imposing the EU's own political priorities on partner countries.

A CONCORD interview-based [report](#) assessing the European Union Emergency Trust Fund (EUTF) funded projects in Libya, Niger and Ethiopia reveals that the funding is mostly used to support **quick fix projects** that are likely to fail to address the drivers of forced migration. While in Ethiopia, the EUTF funded project is mostly in line with aid effectiveness and continues earlier development activities with a positive impact in one of the most neglected regions dealing with development aspects of migration and reinforces protections policies, in Niger and Libya the outcome is less constructive. Conversely, EU migration policy that widely uses EUTF induces adverse effects in terms of development, human rights and migration. Focused on migration management, and in particular enforcement measures, the EU support risks fuelling poor governance, encouraging riskier smuggling and human rights violations, and in particular, mushrooming detention facilities – preventing refugees from obtaining the protection they need. CONCORD calls for a redefinition of the EU current approach to the migration-development nexus, in line with policy coherence for development and **aid effectiveness principles**, in particular in alignment with national priorities and country ownership of programmes. Increasing criminalisation of migration in Northern and West African countries, resulting partly from European partners' pressure to control migration flows, disturbs the traditionally liberal migration tradition in those countries, affects the human rights protection of migrants, and negatively impacts trans-border economic activities. Intra-African returns, which the EU increasingly supports, have encountered several grave slippages: refoulement to war-torn regions or expulsion under dangerous conditions.<sup>25</sup> Cutting the smuggling revenues, as a result of EU conditionality, as [reported](#) in Niger migration-dependent regions, without providing long-lasting economic alternatives, may further increase the vulnerability.

From a broader perspective however, some of the EU development aid areas of intervention correspond to several areas of support identified as influencing the drivers of migration over the long-term. Support for [good governance and civil society](#), for instance, has progressively risen, accounting for about 13 % (US\$22 835 million) of EU institutional aid in 2005-2014. Women's equality, another important element that may impact on migration in the longer-term, accounted for 17 % of total EU governance aid. Some 25 % of EU bilateral ODA has [gender equality](#) as a significant goal. The EU has also developed a comprehensive framework to [build resilience](#) and prevent conflict, especially in fragile states where such support is much more efficient in preventing forced migration than conflict resolution. Supporting agriculture in developing countries, in particular via targeted aid for small-scale farming is another key area of convergence: in 2016 the EU [disbursed](#) €988 million in ODA for agriculture.

## Outlook: how to square the circle?

Migration has accompanied human development across history, and consensus exists among academics that it would be illusory, if not counterproductive (especially taking the complementary demographic dynamic in Europe and Africa into account), to attempt to simply halt migration. However, the dramatic character and unprecedented scale of irregular migration has prompted intense political discussion around the root causes of migration at the core of development-migration nexus.

Although largely criticised, the 'instrumentalisation' of EU development cooperation to manage migration has the merit of presenting development cooperation and migration as mutually dependent issues and placing them at the top of political agenda. Political momentum is currently at its highest in search of enhanced synergies and practical connections to the objectives of development and migration policies that achieve greater policy coherence. Research on the drivers of migration and its impact on

### European Parliament position

In its [resolution](#) of 18 April 2018, the European Parliament considered the adoption of global compacts on migration to be a unique opportunity to put the development-migration nexus at the centre of global agenda. For Parliament, growing international mobility, despite some challenges linked in particular with forced and irregular migration, is beneficial for both host and migrant societies. Members acknowledged that the management of migration requires supplementary funding that should be channelled through flexible and transparent instruments. They stressed however that the development budget need to retain a focus on poverty eradication, and should not be over-focused on short-term migration management through support for the security sector. The Parliament has also advocated, in particular in its resolutions of [5 April 2017](#) and [25 October 2016](#), a human rights centred EU policy to address migrant and refugee movements. Parliament calls for scrutiny with regard to the compacts concluded within the new European Partnership framework and calls for the use of ODA only for development and not for returns.

development suggest that some compromise will be required both from development and migration policy actors to work out synergies and balance the divergent interests, approaches and time perspectives that distinguish migration and development policies. The tension between equal as opposed to asymmetrical partnerships, poverty alleviation rather than cutting number of migrants; long- vs short-term result expectations; can build clearly conflicting, and politically unbearable, agendas. Greater coordination and finding common ground for action is therefore required to ease the tension and to allow for a 'new kind of triple win', as [Hooper and Newland](#) put it – for migration management, development cooperation and people on the move.

Transforming brain drain into brain gain through **circular migration schemes** is generally presented as the way forward, since skilled [migration opportunities](#) increase educational aspirations and reduce population growth over the longer-term, simultaneously slowing migratory pressure and enabling partner countries to benefit from remittances and transferable skills. Europe could consider investing in skills training programmes for potential migrants in Africa that would fit specific EU needs, while also enhancing human capital for the developing countries. Promoting skilled [regular migration](#) and integration of immigrant workers, including helping them to make full use of their education while working abroad, would avoid de-skilling, failure of migration projects and provide a potentially positive impact in terms of poverty reduction.

Maximising the benefit of migration for development can include measures to **lower the cost of transferring remittances** and better stream them with [diaspora involvement](#) into high development impact investments. Addressing structural barriers to economic growth and improving investment conditions represents a promising common ground for migration-development interlinkages to bring about an added value from increased resources and complementary expertise. The increased support for **enforcing good governance and rule of law, improving business environment and infrastructure**, and **building resilience** to form crisis-proof societies appear to be key areas where synergies can be found.

In each case, to impact deep-seated drivers of migration, a careful contextual analysis of each national and regional configuration is needed to establish long-term adjustable programmes. These could complement short-term 'quick fix' projects in the form of which the EU 'emergency' response to migration crisis in the migration framework with their countries is primary implemented. **Additional funding, human rights' mainstreaming** and the **geographical balance of EU support**, taking account not only of EU priorities in terms of migration management but broader development goals of partner countries, are the safeguards to prevent future clashes between development and migration proponents, while preserving EU 'soft power' international leadership. Smith's description of EU development aid used to deter migration as a 'money wall',<sup>26</sup> is unlikely to be able to stop migration whatever its size. EU assistance, if carefully reassessed, can however shape future migration, reducing its irregular aspects, and enhancing its benefits for both individuals, developing countries and the EU.

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