

# European Governance of Migration

## The Political Management of Mobility, Economy & Security

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### Summary Keynote speech

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for Migration, Refugees and Integration**

Migration is an ancient phenomenon, but the size and scope of migration have dramatically transformed during the last decades with a sharp increase in the amount of migrants. Major migration flows are from the economically depressed South towards industrially developed regions. Migration is responsible for important demographic changes in both origin and destination countries. Today 64 million migrants live in Europe of whom 15 million live in Germany alone. This accounts for one fifth of the total country population, while countries of origin are facing significant loss of population.

There is a predominant thought that migration policy has become a European matter. Indeed, there is a single market without border control in Europe. This means immigration policy of one EU Member State affects the immigration policy of another Member State. When National and European policies come together, a natural question arises: What is the room left for Member States to deal separately with their own migration issues? Is policy-making mainly driven by national regulations or regulations at the European level or by both simultaneously?

#### **There are three main objectives for successful migration policies:**

1. Carry on the humanitarian tradition of Europe
2. Pay closer attention to illegal migration and steer effectively legal migration
3. Combination of integration and migration

#### **1. Carrying on the humanitarian tradition of Europe**

It is common knowledge that vulnerable populations such as migrants and asylum seekers can rely on help from both European and Member State institutions. However, there is a pressing need for a higher degree of harmonization between the two. National asylum centers must improve their cooperation, especially when the national legislation differs on refugee rights from one country to another one.

The existence of the European Support Office raises two questions: 'Is the Center going to be helpful in dealing with refugees or will it only increase bureaucracy?' States need to be more pragmatic in their own refugee policies, and recognize that national asylum centers need to intensify multi-lateral cooperation. EU Member States must show a greater degree of solidarity and burden-sharing in regard to hosting refugees. It is necessary to define how many refugees a country can host at a time; what are the integration prospects in the respective countries. The European Refugee Fund should be enhanced; in addition other sources of financial support should be identified.

European Commission is to start soon discussion on the issue of refugees. The situation of refugees is dramatic not only concerning Syria and Jordan, but for many other countries. If there is no common European solution in regard to refugees, a hierarchy of refugees system should be adopted.

## 2. Fight illegal migration and steer legal migration

In order to design efficient policies to fight illegal migration, we have to differentiate between different groups of migrants. People leave their homes for economic, political, social and other reasons. On the one side there are temporary migrants. On the other side there are high skilled and low skilled labor migrants. Root causes of migration have therefore to be addressed if one wants to prevent traffickers from exploiting migrants. Military boats and border control alone are not solution to the problem.

In the future EU member states must concentrate on the task to intertwine migration solutions with development issues. Combating poverty and understanding people's reasons for leaving their home countries should be a top priority on the EU agenda with commensurate actions at European level and national level. European states need to pay closer attention to the countries of origin and better understand their situation. For instance, information from origin countries such as the counting of involuntary migration should be compared with European states databases.

Professor Böhmer is cautious about the positive effects of circular migration: *"Circular migration is a term enthusiastically received by some, and skeptically by others. We talk of recruiting guest workers, for temporary time, and returning them back. Some people discuss circular migration in terms of development: people migrate, benefit from host country, and return with additional knowledge and skills to home country. However, in practice situation often is different. Guest workers choose to settle in host countries as their social networks develop there, while job perspectives may not exist in home countries. Therefore, circular migration should be discussed according to experience. It is also necessary to address returnee programs."*

Member States migration policies need to be aware of the potential negative effects of the brain drain on development prospects. Countries of origin lose development opportunities when indigenous high skilled workers migrate to Europe. In addition, the same countries may have to bear important social cost of families being left behind by migrant workers.

The governance of migration issues remains highly complex. It is still not yet clear to which extent it is the task of the European Union or the national states to deal with issues related to migration. Professor Böhmer argues that controlling labor migration should stay within the responsibility of national states. *"Demand for labor is not similar across countries. In Spain high demand for labor is in agriculture sector. Situation is similar in Italy. In France there is high juvenile unemployment. In Germany seasonal labor is in demand. Common discussion about recruitment of high skilled labor is therefore impossible. As demand for labor differs from country to country, it should be the task of national states to regulate labor migration."*

Migration policies must also take into account number of factors that can steer legal migration. There is a need for legal framework offering migrant workers equal treatment and providing them with educational and professional opportunities. Finally, EU Member States need to learn from experiences of other countries that have successful migration policies in respect to steering legal migration.

## 3. Combination of migration and integration policies: the case of Germany

The German government recognizes that integration is a matter of national policy-making. The integration of 15 million migrants including third and fourth generations has required a comprehensive integration action plan specific to the German case. The adopted action plan aims at addressing migrants' needs and strengthening their integration prospect to the German society. The German government also intensively discusses the issue with other Member States, even if the situation and approaches to integration are country specific.

Language programs, education, and professional trainings are some of major aspects of integration. Language programs, promotion of education and vocational training are key factors. The aim is not

only to benefit migrants, but also to benefit the whole population. The state will benefit from having youngsters educated and skilled. Migrant communities should actively participate in social and political life in Germany. There have been projects related to civil society. The state needs to implement a comprehensive action to encourage peaceful and equal participation of migrants in Germany.

Germany currently experiences unsatisfactory situation regarding migrants' proficiency in German language, education, and professional training. Large number of migrants does not speak German. As a result many cannot graduate from schools successfully. 72 percent of Turkish migrants, 61 percent of migrants of Greek origin and 56 percent of Italian origin are without vocational training. Furthermore, it is worrisome that second and third generations of migrants face insufficient education. In the city of Ludwigshafen, there are students from 30 different countries in one school. Only one teacher is of German origin in the whole school. This case suggests that teachers need to be prepared to work with children of various cultural and religious backgrounds.

Germany learns from experience of other countries, not only in Europe, but also in Canada and USA. One result of exchange with France has produced successful results. Business initiative has been developed specifically to focus on potential of immigrants. 250 businesses have been subscribed to promote the "Charta der Vielfalt".

### **The Agenda ahead**

In November European ministers who are in charge of migration issues will be meeting. A policy paper is being discussed in the framework of the meeting. Guidelines based on experience will be developed. European states should share values and strive for cohesion. Common objectives should include strengthening policies on national languages, empowering female migrants, and improving inter-cultural dialogue. Member states should constantly exchange ideas and experiences. Common benchmark should be defined.

In conclusion, there is a need for more solidarity and cooperation among European member states. Europe must carry on its long-standing humanitarian tradition. While migration policies should be dealt with at national level, exchange of experiences and sharing of common values is important at European level. Exchange of information should be maintained between countries of origin and destination. Language programs, educational opportunities and vocational training for immigrants must be strengthened. Legal migration should be steered so that both migrants and hosting societies benefit migration.

Summary by Dariha Erketeva