

# Europe Beyond Aid: Assessing European Commitment to Migration

Gonzalo Fanjul

## Abstract

---

There is a twofold paradox at the heart of the international migration regime: first, no other global challenge that better responds to the risks and opportunities of the 21st century is so tied to the institutional and ideological model that prevailed a hundred years ago. Second, the international mobility of workers is arguably the most powerful engine for global prosperity and income redistribution, and yet the development community (large NGOs, in particular) has given its back to it.

Center for Global Development's Commitment to Development Index assesses migration among the 7 policy areas of rich countries which have an impact on poor people. The migration component looks at rich countries' policies with regards to opening their borders to developing-country migrants and students, and countries' contribution to aiding refugees and asylum seekers.

This paper uses the CDI Migration component to assess performance of Europe and other countries with regard to migration policy. Furthermore, it discusses the composition of the indicators, and suggests relevant changes. Based on identified strengths and weaknesses the paper proposes policy recommendations to be undertaken by Europe collectively, or individually by member states.

*\*The author would like to thank Petra Krylová, Isabel de las Casas, Sonia Garrido and Michael Clemens for their very useful contributions. None of this paper's possible mistakes is theirs.*

---

## Europe Beyond Aid Consultation Report Series

Europe Beyond Aid uses the Commitment to Development Index (CDI) to examine European countries' collective commitment to development on seven cross-border issues: aid, trade, finance, migration, environment, security, and technology.

We calculate a consolidated score for the 21 European countries included in the CDI to track their pursuit of development-friendly policies. In 2014 the Center for Global Development is launching a series of discussion papers for public consultation. Our goal is to press for a broader and more informed

discussion about how European policies can improve. By the end of the year, we will synthesize the expert consensus on the seven themes of the CDI into a comprehensive and specific policy agenda for European countries setting out practical, evidence-based conclusions on how they can improve their policies which affect development and global poverty.

Please, share your comments, suggestions and ideas by email to [pkrylova@cgdev.org](mailto:pkrylova@cgdev.org). We will be looking forward to hearing from you.

## 1. Introduction

There is a twofold paradox at the heart of the international migration regime: first, no other global challenge that better responds to the risks and opportunities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is so tied to the institutional and ideological model that prevailed a hundred years ago. In the words of Lant Pritchett (2009), we live in a world of *POSEBLL* (Proliferation of Sovereigns combined with Everything But Labor Liberalization) that results in intolerable direct and opportunity costs for all players involved

Second, the international mobility of workers is arguably the most powerful engine for global prosperity and income redistribution, and yet the development community (large NGOs, in particular) has given its back to it. The multiple ways migration flows have a positive impact on the prosperity of sending and destination countries have been extensively documented in the last decades. From their own income gains to the remittances, know-how and technology that they transfer, and the entrepreneurship and democratic values they underpin, migrants and their families are protagonists in the economic and social development of the countries they are linked to. As was lucidly documented a few years ago by Clemens et al. (2008), the scale of this process resists no comparison with other development strategies that capture far more attention from donors, academics and practitioners.

Confronting these paradoxes is a fundamental challenge for the governance of globalization in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the reduction of obscene global inequalities. We should therefore welcome the decision of the Center for Global Development to include *migration* as one of the 7 indicators that conform the Commitment to Development Index (CDI), along with aid, trade, finance, environment, security and technology. The very fact that the progress of migrants is considered to have an equally relevant ‘development impact’ is a political statement. In emphasizing the role of mobility within the migration indicator, the CDI takes an improbable stand against a conventional wisdom that sees migration as the result of a development failure, rather than a means to progress in itself.

Europe constitutes one of the top priorities in this regard. According to the latest figures from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the European region (Russia excluded) hosts the biggest number of foreign residents in the world.<sup>1</sup> It cannot be said, however, that development plays any substantive role in the way migration policies are designed and implemented (which is no exception among the rest of developed countries, by the way). Europe’s approach to migration is a political conundrum where an atomization of norms and institutions coexist with a homogeneous policy approach that can be characterized as *unilateral* and *closed*: policies are largely designed at one side of the migration process, lack any meaningful capacity to adapt and do not respond to the true drivers of mobility (Pritchett and Fanjul 2010).

The high number of undocumented workers and regularization processes pays testimony to the poor results of this approach. As a matter of fact, the existing gap between migration policies and realities raises important questions about how the development performance of OECD countries should be measured. Are outcomes the result of policies? Governments are politically rewarded and punished for mobility trends that, to a considerable extent, escape their own control. Should a hypothetical ‘self-deportation’ policy, for instance, be admitted and supported just because markets are successfully attracting undocumented foreign workers?

The bottom line is that – **as opposed to almost any other variable in the CDI – development concerns are rarely the basis for policy making in the migration area**; still, they are critically affected by it, so its performance must be tracked. We will also argue that an ethically questionable approach to migration can actually be self-defeating, since the rigidity imposed on migration flows might also be reducing the social and economic gains of destination countries (albeit not the political interests of their leaders). Therefore, a reform of the system that is based primarily on the enlightened concerns of rich countries could also be turned into a benefit for development, and vice versa: converting vicious circles of rigidity, vulnerability and constrained opportunities into virtuous circles of flexibility, dignified migration and unfolded common gains.

---

<sup>1</sup> The total number of foreign-born population surpasses the 52 million, 12 more than the USA. However, if undocumented residents were counted, the figures would be very similar. Norway, Iceland and Switzerland have been counted together with EU Member States. Source: OECD Migration Outlook (2013)

Such a debate comes at a challenging moment of Europe's contemporary history, as the recent Euro-parliamentary Elections have shown. The consequences of EU's political and economic meltdown are mutually imbricated and not necessarily evident. The resurgence of radical-populist political movements (explicit or embedded in traditional parties that are increasingly using migrants as the escaping goat) is an extreme manifestation of a wider phenomenon: European societies are increasingly comfortable with the idea of a second (or even third) class of citizenship. Political parties at both sides of the ideological spectrum are trying to capture this electoral mood through a reconsideration of the very rules that inspired free movement within the EU and basic levels of legal and social protection for all those residing in it, regardless of their legal status. This is true for economic immigrants as well as for asylum-seekers.

Challenging this trend in a convincing way is part of the aim of this paper. To do so, we will use the CDI methodology as a framework and propose an analysis based on a series of binding constraints that block the path to reform. These have a multiple nature and can only be resolved through a combination of political leadership, public pedagogy and institutional creativity.

This paper has the following structure: after this introduction, section 2 makes a description of the CDI migration component, including a critique on what is missing in it. Section 3 describes the evolution of the indicator in the last ten years, with a focus on European countries. Section 4 then dives into a qualitative analysis of this evolution, describing four different binding constraints in the links between migration policies and development: institutional, political, ethical and strategic. Finally, section 5 provides some conclusions and recommendations.

## **2. The migration component methodology**

The CDI migration component is built on the belief that migration advances development in source countries because it “provides immigrants with access to labor markets and higher wages which, in turn, increase the potential for individual immigrants to remit money or goods to the sending country...and enables migrants to establish migrant networks, which encourage continuous and expanding economic relations between sending and receiving countries” (Hamilton and Grieco 2002).

For that purpose, it compares rich countries on how easy they make it for people from poor countries to immigrate, a process that involves finding work or getting education, sending money home and returning home with new skills and capital. In concrete, the performance of each country is captured by measuring a combination of variables within which mobility stands out over the rest<sup>2</sup>:

a. **Level of immigrant flows** (65% of the overall indicator):

- Inflow of developing-country migrants (65%): the immigration flow indicator is the gross non-DAC immigrant inflow/receiving country population, taken the most recent year available. This is a reflection of flows, rather than stocks, and takes into consideration the relative importance of migration in the size of the destination country.

The *immigrant flows* indicator is weighted according to the origin country of the immigrants, in order to reflect poverty impact (the poorer the country, the higher it is weighted).

b. **Level and conditions of foreign student population that is non-CDI** (15% of the overall indicator):

- Students from developing countries as a share of total foreign students (15%): while it might be argued that this indicator does not reward *higher* total numbers of students, its purpose is rather to capture policy trends that are not determined by side-factors (such as the difficulties of studying in Japanese, for instance). The CDI considers non-CDI countries as “developing” (i.e. many new member states that play a significant role in some cases – e.g. students from Cyprus studying in Greece).

c. **Refugees and asylum applications accepted** (20% of the overall indicator):

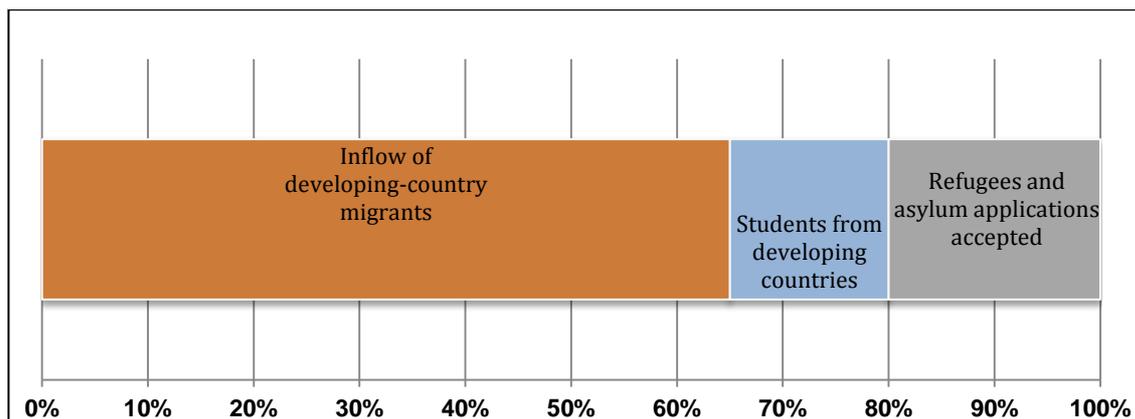
---

<sup>2</sup> The basis for this description has been obtained from Roodman (2013).

The CDI uses a simplified version of an index created by the UNHCR that measures countries' contribution to aiding refugees and asylum seekers. In concrete, it considers the total of three quantities (all taken over receiving-country GDP):

- The number of refugees hosted domestically.
- The number of other people “of concern” to UNHCR, such as internally displaced or stateless persons.
- The number of asylum applications taken.

**Graph 1 CDI Migration Component**



Source: Roodman (2013)

### What is not in the CDI

Since the CDI was first conceived a decade ago, it has been under constant scrutiny to guarantee its accuracy (Roodman 2013). In its original design of the migration indicator, Grieco and Hamilton (2004) proposed a slightly different combination of factors. Access to the workforce, for instance, was reflected in an indicator that measured the difference of unemployment rates between natives and immigrants. This was finally discarded due to the difficulties to extract policy trends from it (higher unemployment among foreigners might actually reflect the greater attractiveness of the host market, rather than the contrary).

In a posterior attempt to refine the index, Lowell and Carro (2006) suggested a set of new indicators for the migration index, intended to better reflect host governments' efforts to consolidate a migration governance system (through contributions to multilateral organizations and membership in ILO conventions), reward the amount of aid flows directed to origin countries or punish policies that would encourage *brain drain* through skilled immigration. While these are relevant considerations about the accuracy of the index, most of them had to be discarded: some on the basis of redundancy (aid to multilateral institutions is already considered in the CDI's aid index), some on the uncertainty of its policy relevance (aid to origin countries might actually be an instrument intended to deter migration flows) and some on the lack of scientific evidence regarding its real effects (the *brain drain* phenomenon).<sup>3</sup>

For anyone interested in the links between migration and development, it is striking not to see remittances as part of the index. There's a reason for it, as explained by Michael Clemens<sup>4</sup>, CGD's senior researcher on migration: “Remittances are almost all private, intra-household transfers, and they do not reflect ‘generosity’ any more than any parent buying food for his or her own child reflects ‘generosity’. Moreover, remittances are only a relatively small part of the income earned by people from developing countries who are able to work in rich countries. It's more complete to simply count the number of people given permission to live and work in rich countries, because that relates to the full economic benefit of the

<sup>3</sup> See, for instance, CGD's review of recent research on 'brain drain' in Clemens (2013).

<sup>4</sup> Private communication with the autor.

permission—including but not limited to the portion of the benefit that is given to other people, wherever they live”.

Leaving these debates aside, the fact is that some flaws that are not easy to resolve burden the migration component of the CDI. Some are related to the lack of proper data, some to the technical and methodological difficulties and some, finally, to the very nature of the migration debate, which leaves a number of factors open for debate. There are at least three areas to be considered:

- a. Irregularity: It is not possible to consider the policy-management of migration without considering the relevance of informal economies. Undocumented migration (through illegal entries, overstayed visas or any other means) plays a critical role in this debate that is not properly reflected in the CDI. As explained in the next section of the paper, the very fact that individuals have the chance to act outside the system and stay in host countries undocumented (for a lifetime, in some cases) changes the political, economic and social framework of the discussion and affects every consideration about it. It certainly affects the development impact of migration flows in the terms of quantity (the number of actual migrants) and quality (the extent to which the social and legal conditions of the migration experience has an effect on remittances, circularity, etc.).

None of this is news for the experts behind CDI, but there’s an obvious problem with the availability of data. Official calculations of immigrant flows are limited to legal entries and residence. When it comes to undocumented workers, estimations are calculated on the basis of official census and municipal registrations. Since the regulations of the latter change according to the country and do not necessarily reflect the level of qualifications of individuals, for instance, we are left with the census data, which take very long to be updated.<sup>5</sup>

This had been the option of the CDI until 2012, focusing on the difference between the 1990 and the 2000 census data, but due to the fact that census data have become increasingly out-dated, the 2013 CDI does not take this indicator into account.

The problem is that this timeframe ignores what has been happening in Southern Europe in the last decade. Countries like Spain, Italy, Portugal or Greece have been host for enormous flows of immigrants, and many of them arrived or stayed irregularly. Spain alone kept in the second half of the decade an undocumented foreign population of around half a million people... after an amnesty that covered more than 700,000 immigrants. As a result, the intensity of immigration flows in the last decade is very partially reflected in Southern Europe’s CDI (as opposed to Austria or Switzerland, for instance). Moreover, this could have a double punishing effect in the indicator, since there are reasons to think that the low number of asylum seekers in some of these countries is partly related with the easiness to enter the country as an undocumented migrant.

This is certainly a blind area of the CDI that will have to be dealt with in the future; looking into the details of municipal registration or taking into consideration respectable estimations such as those provided by the *Clandestino Project*<sup>6</sup>.

- b. Active pro-development policies: beyond the size and nature of immigration flows and refugees, a country might be making an effort in other areas that link migration with development. The UK, for instance, has tried to reduce the cost of remittances through better information and enhanced competition, although the system is still profoundly unfair and expensive, as Watkins and Quattri (2014) have recently exposed. Some other countries have been engaged in the so-called ‘co-development’ experiences, intended to increase the circularity of flows and the development impact of migration processes before, during and after the movement of workers. Mutual recognition of social security arrangements or mechanisms to reduce the visa waiting periods could also be part of these. In the case of the US, Michael Clemens and the CGD have pursued a more ‘surgical’ approach to the management of visas, one that links employment opportunities in the US with particularly vulnerable regions, such as the post-earthquake Haiti.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> The Integrated European Census Microdata (IECM) database offers a useful overview of the available data. Available at <http://www.iecm-project.org>.

<sup>6</sup> Details can be found in <http://irregular-migration.net>.

<sup>7</sup> Details at <http://www.cgdev.org/content/publications/detail/1425540/>

All in all, these experiences are limited in number and its development impact cannot be compared with the gross immigration flows. But they reflect policy options that should be rewarded at some point. The CDI might want to explore ways to reflect them in the indicator somehow.

- c. **Scale:** A final concern regarding the migration CDI is related to its scale and comparability. As opposed to other components of the index (such as ODA's 0.7% of GNP), migration lacks a proper reference beyond the mere comparison among countries. The problem is that the whole scale of this indicator might be distorted: It could be argued that, even in the best cases (such as Austria), the number of immigrants that are admitted in host countries is astonishingly low, i.e. rich economies are actively impeding what might be the most powerful tool for global income redistribution.

In other words, what is the 'desirable' level of migration? Shouldn't labor markets and demographic trends determine the level under a much more flexible arrangement? Shouldn't then flexibility be the measure of the 'commitment to development'? Isn't this the criteria when we measure tariffs as an indicator of development performance in trade?

This, of course, is an ideological presupposition, but it is a relevant one. As in our initial argument about Governments' lack of control of immigration flows, it is pertinent to ask ourselves how this indicator should be politically weighted in the context of the CDI. Is it fair to state that Switzerland's commitment to development was the 5<sup>th</sup> from the top in 2006, precisely when the Parliament passed the polemical Act on Foreign Nationals and the amendment to the asylum act?<sup>8</sup>

In summary, the migration component of the CDI is a solid, albeit imperfect, indication of a country's performance in this area. Its importance has to be considered in the context of the other six components of the index, which are reflected in the table and graph below (Table 1, Graph 1):

**Table 1 Europe as One 2013 Commitment to Development Index**

Standings/Europe as one									
	Country	Aid	Trade	Finance	Migration	Environment	Security	Technology	Overall (Average)
1	New Zealand	3.4	8.1	4.2	6.7	6.0	7.1	4.4	5.7
2	Australia	3.8	7.1	5.7	6.9	3.8	5.0	4.7	5.3
3	Canada	3.7	6.0	5.3	7.6	2.6	5.6	5.3	5.2
3	Europe	4.8	5.1	5.3	5.1	7.0	3.9	4.9	5.2
5	United States	3.0	7.1	5.1	3.6	4.3	4.6	4.7	4.6
6	Japan	1.0	1.6	3.9	2.3	3.8	4.5	6.2	3.3
6	South Korea	1.1	-1.2	4.9	5.7	4.3	1.3	6.8	3.3

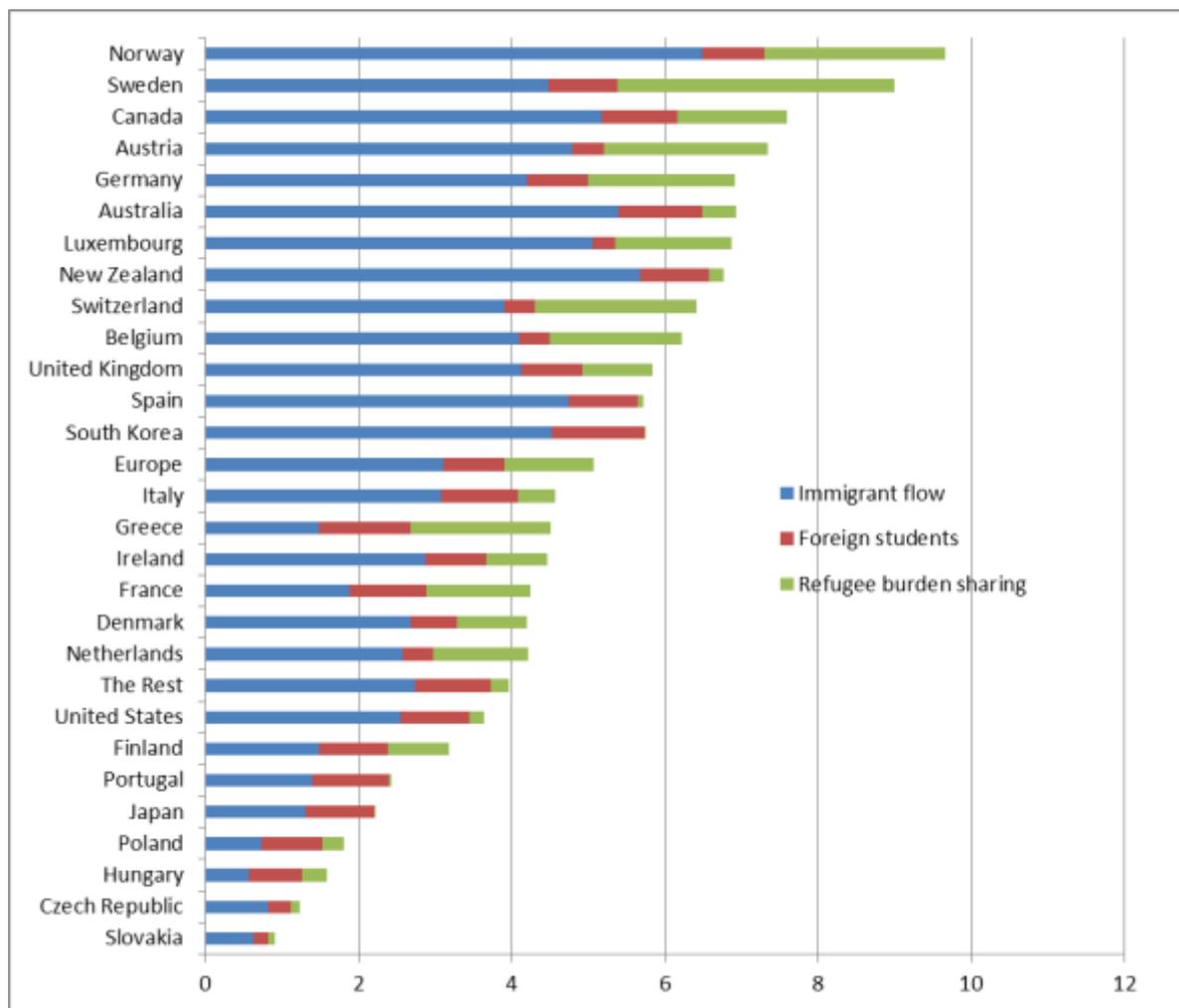
Source: Commitment to Development Index (2013)

### **3. Analysis of the evolution of the data**

The latest numbers for the CDI show that when it comes to migration and development, Europe scores are not particularly impressive (see Graph 2). Its composite index shows a level of 5.1 for the whole of the region. European score is higher (5.5) when we exclude the Central European countries, but is again negatively affected when not counting Switzerland and Norway, both of which have particularly committed refugee policies.

<sup>8</sup> More information at <http://www.migrationinformation.org/Feature/display.cfm?ID=731>

Graph 2 Commitment to Development Index 2013 Migration score



Source: Commitment to Development Index (2013)

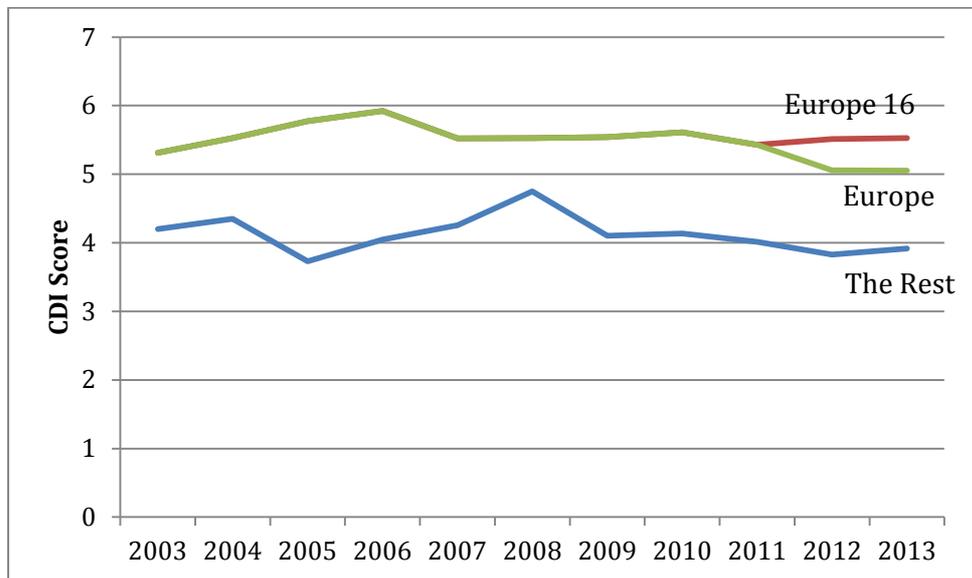
A closer look at the detailed data per country shows considerable differences among European countries. The average performance in the immigrant flow indicator (65% of the composite index) for Europe is 3.09, but Norway has two times as much, Austria, Sweden and Luxembourg also outperform European consolidated score, however Finland and Portugal for example do not reach even half of European score.. This is a reflection, in the first place, of the dynamism of migration flows in the periods observed (which have to be taken with caution, as we explain above); and, secondly, of a pretty good performance in the Refugee component. The Foreign students component does not seem to play a determinant role either way.

In comparison with other developed countries in the Index, Europe is in the middle. Very close to South Korea, and clearly above Japan and United States. But the performance of Australia, Canada and New Zealand (all of which score relatively high in the immigrant flows component) establishes an improvement path for Europe.

It must be noted, however, that the 2012 and 2013 European CDI on migration is below the average of previous years (see Graph 3). The reason is that in 2012 a number of Central European countries (Hungary, Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia) were added to the CDI and they score very low in most of the migration components, particularly in the Immigrants flow one. Poland even scores negatively, reflecting a dual nature (destination and origin of migration) that is increasingly important in other European countries affected by the crisis, such as Ireland, Portugal or Spain.

Graph 3 below reviews the trends for Europe ('Europe'), Europe without countries added in 2012 ('Europe 16') and the Rest<sup>9</sup>. As we can see the migration score has not changed much over the past decade. Europe 16 is on the same level as in 2003, the Rest has decreased slightly.

**Graph 3: Commitment to Development Index Migration score 2003-2013**



Source: Author's calculations based on Commitment to Development Index (2013)

Evolution of the index in the period 2003-2013

Leaving aside the particular situation of the new countries in 2012, the evolution of the migration component in the last years is relatively consistent in the upper part of the table and more variable at the bottom:

- The leading group of countries includes Austria, Norway and Sweden, all of them combining high scores in the immigrant flow and the refugee burden sharing indicators. Some other countries show a very good performance in the first years of the series, but then quickly lose positions as a result of a sudden drop in the refugee burden indicator. This is the case of Germany and Denmark (2006).

Finally, it is interesting to highlight the mediocre behaviour of traditional immigration destinations like France, Belgium or the United Kingdom, all of which maintain a close relationship with their former colonies and score at an average (or even high) level in other components of the CDI. The explanation can only be found in the different historical moments of their immigration boom. Most of the foreign unskilled workers arrived in the 60s, 70s and 80s, and the immigration policy in the last couple of decades has been focused on qualified migration and, in the case of the UK, foreign students.

Table 2 includes a summary per country, including some other significant variations in the evolution of the migration indicators.

<sup>9</sup> Consolidated score of Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, and the United States.

**Table 2CDI Migration score average 2003-2013**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Immigrant flow</b>	<b>Foreign students</b>	<b>Refugee burden sharing</b>	<b>Composite</b>
Sweden	5.99	4.50	19.18	8.41
Spain	11.52	5.19	0.36	8.34
New Zealand	10.64	6.61	2.04	8.32
Canada	8.76	6.07	7.27	8.06
Norway	6.70	4.99	11.08	7.32
Austria	6.89	3.80	10.58	7.17
Germany	5.40	6.08	12.26	6.87
Luxembourg	7.38	1.52	6.48	6.32
Australia	6.97	6.82	3.24	6.20
South Korea	7.03	7.51	0.05	5.71
Europe 16	5.19	5.29	6.79	5.52
Greece	4.90	7.76	5.78	5.50
Europe	5.14	5.28	6.75	5.48
United Kingdom	4.86	4.62	6.35	5.12
Denmark	3.46	5.13	10.44	5.11
Belgium	4.32	3.28	6.50	4.60
Ireland	4.66	3.18	4.97	4.50
Netherlands	3.12	3.51	9.51	4.46
Italy	4.73	5.77	1.15	4.17
The Rest	4.31	6.36	1.83	4.12
Portugal	4.64	6.56	0.10	4.02
United States	4.10	6.04	1.87	3.94
Switzerland	1.63	2.94	12.09	3.91
France	2.82	6.58	5.21	3.86
Finland	1.73	5.94	3.67	2.75
Japan	2.59	6.98	0.06	2.74
Poland	1.13	5.36	1.44	1.83
Hungary	0.93	4.66	1.68	1.64
Czech Republic	1.50	2.12	0.68	1.43
Slovakia	1.26	1.64	0.60	1.18

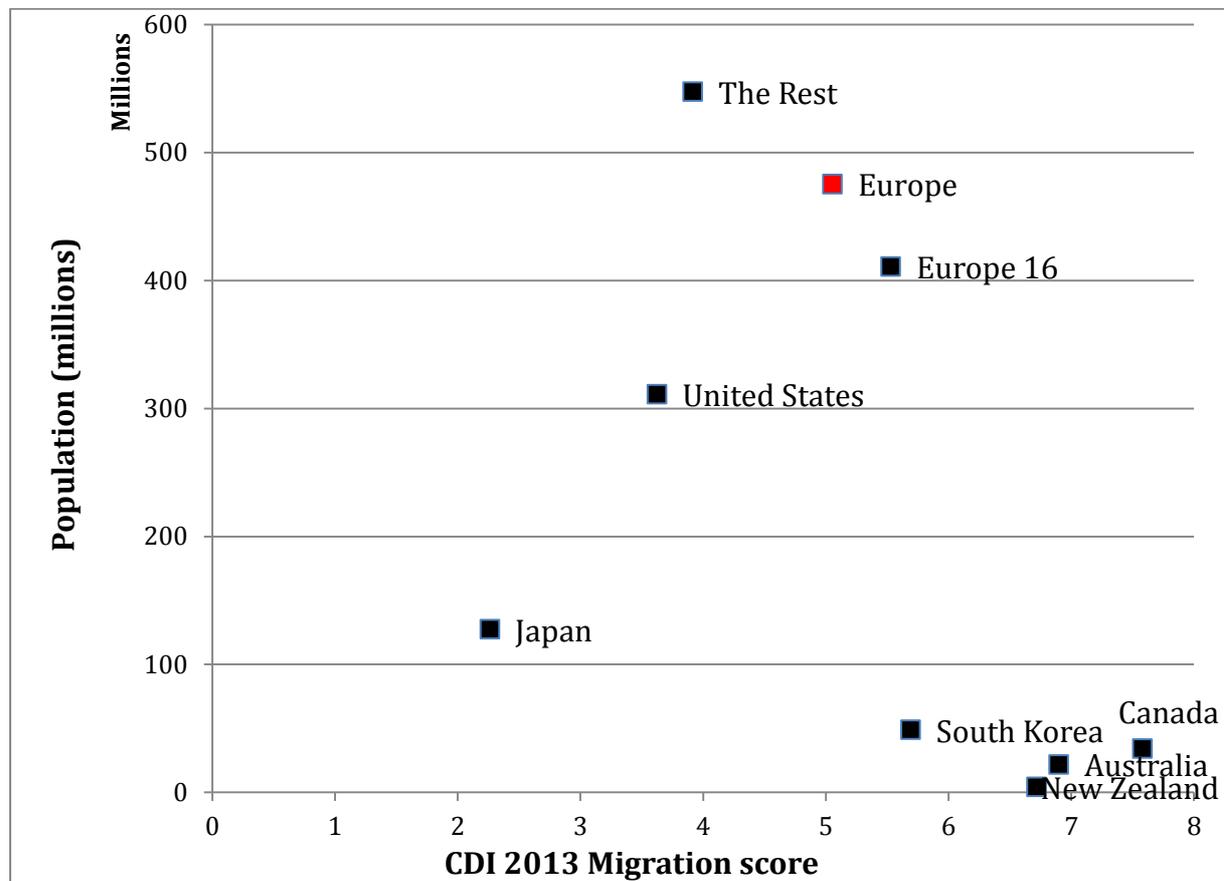
Source: Commitment to Development Index (2013)

Finally, when it comes to the CDI migration indicator, the comparison between Europe and other developed regions of the world does not show major differences. It is true that countries like Canada and New Zealand perform better in this component of the index, but in both cases the numbers are not much higher, while the total population makes them less relevant than Europe (see graph 4).

Europe and the Rest consolidated, perform quite similarly, Europe having a slightly higher score. The one country that would be comparable in terms of population, the USA, performs below European 2013 migration score. The difference is not even political: when it comes to development rhetoric and policies, America is far less ambitious than Europe and the EU. This is a fact in other components of the CDI, such as aid or environment. Migration, however, is an exception in this regard. Neither the USA nor Europe refers to migration policies as a component of their commitment to development, but rather a

core internal policy with tangible implications in their economic and security interests. This divorce has important consequences for development, as we will see in the next section.

**Graph 4 National population and CDI Migration score**



Source: Author's calculations based on CDI (2013)

**4. Qualitative analysis and trends**

In the analysis of what has been the evolution of European migration policies in the last couple of decades, this paper is based on a simple hypothesis: the migration regime that prevails in every single European country and, to a lesser extent, in the European common institutions, is as morally-questionable as self-defeating. It violates fundamental rights, restricts individual opportunities, limits national growth and progress, and stirs the worst instincts of our societies. In what arguably constitutes one of the fundamental challenges of our generations, it is a force against the common interest of sending and destination countries, as well as that of the migrants themselves. A more development-friendly regime is at the same time a more prosperous and safer regime for destination countries, and vice versa.

The key question we should respond is whether this force is unmovable. The political radioactivity and polarization that accompanies any debate on migration suggests that there are no alternatives to the prevailing model but to move within the narrow policy margins that we have witnessed in Europe, the USA and any other OECD country for the last twenty years. A context marked by a vulnerable economy (or an open recession, in the case of Southern European countries) does not help in this regard.

This paper will propose a more practical stance, one that avoids a debate of ‘absolutes’ (immigration *yes* or *no*) and tries to attempt the transformation of European migration policies from a more surgical, yet incremental, approach: identifying the binding constraints that impede reform (this section) and suggesting measures that would ease them (final section of the paper).

In a nutshell, we propose to address four different obstacles to an intelligent reform of European migration policies: institutional, political, ethical and, finally, strategic. The latter not only is critical in

order to build alternatives to navigate the complex power politics of the migration debate, but it is also our conviction that incrementally constructing a mutual trust among partners will pave the path for more ambitious changes.

1. *Institutional constraints: a rigid and atomized system*

The lack of a meaningful Common Migration Policy is an anomaly that contrasts with other areas of the European construction, such as trade, agriculture, finances or the free movement of communitarian citizens. Even compared to those areas where integration is still very partial –such as foreign and fiscal policies and defense- migration stands out as the last symbol of true sovereignty in 27 member States (plus Switzerland and Norway).

All in all, the EU has made tangible advancements in the communitarization of border control (through FRONTEX and EUROSUR, which provide common schemes for the detainment and deportation of irregular migrants), asylum and international protection, the mobility of highly qualified workers (through the so-called Blue Card and the directives for Intra-Corporate executives and researchers) and the admission of students (although national conditions apply once they have acceded). Efforts are being made in other areas, such as the management of seasonal labor flows (a Directive was approved in February 2014), long-term residence, return policies and the mobility of non-EU residents within the common borders. The ‘Single Permit’ Directive establishes a limited number of common rights for non-EU nationals residing in any member State, such as working conditions, pensions, social security and access to some public services. A number of ‘re-admission’ have been signed with 17 third countries and specific related clauses in another 30 arrangements. Finally, an interesting experimental path has been opened with the establishment of geographical platforms intended to increase the cooperation with certain regions in the management and policy construction of migration. The Rabat Process (with Northern and Western African countries) or the EU-LAC Dialogue or the Mobility Partnerships (with some Eastern European countries) are examples of these primitive mobility arrangements, which have shown mixed results.

But this is all. Today, Europe’s migration regime is still an atomized system where each of the nations decides the rules for the entry, staying and return of foreign workers and their families; unilaterally carries out regularization processes; defines bilateral migration agreements with origin countries; and regulates the access of irregular migrants to public services. Even humanitarian migration policies follow this rule. While almost all European countries are signatories of the basic regulations regarding asylum and refuge, its practical implementation varies wildly, as the CDI indicator shows.

Interestingly, this atomization does not reflect a fundamental heterogeneity in the policy approaches. On the contrary, every single country follows a model that could be characterized as ‘unilateral, closed’. One that is defined according strictly to the perceived interests and priorities of the host country, and also one that hampers adaptation and innovation. As we explained in a previous paper co-authored with Lant Pritchett (2010):

“[First] the discussion is entirely unilateral: what should the USA [or any European country, in this case] and the USA alone do? Second, the assumption is that the solution will be a “closed” solution, with a once off legislative reform followed by implementation of that fixed solution (with only the details left to be worked out) rather than an “open-ended” set of processes that work towards feasible solutions. While it might create some confusion between “open” and “closed” borders, in this instance we use “open” versus “closed” as a characterization of the nature of the process of policy formulation itself, a description of how innovation happens. The term ‘closed’ reflects a rigid, non-adaptive, system which cannot respond easily to the evolution of circumstances versus a more open system of policy making ...”.

The lack of adaptation is a key flaw in the governance of what in essence constitutes an ever-changing social and economic context. The rigidity of migration policies makes it very difficult for labor flows to follow income gaps and labor demographics as the fundamental push and pull drivers of mobility. Put simply, the combination of below-replacement birth rates and increasingly aging populations is a tangible threat for the future of Europe’s welfare states. A recent paper produced for the “Improving US and EU Immigration Systems” project indicates that 2010 has marked the turning point in the EU-27

demographics (see table 3).<sup>10</sup> Even if the migration trends of the pre-crisis period should continue (which is openly challenged by many), the current members of the EU would face a virtual stagnation of its total population (+3%), with a massive increase of aging people (+71%) and a tangible decrease of working age populations (-12%). The numbers are slightly different in a scenario that considers the entry of Turkey and other smaller candidates, but the fundamental trends remain.

**Table 3: Expected population gains and losses between 2010 and 2050 by age group at EU 27 level according to enlargement and migration scenarios**

Age group	2010	2050	Change 2050-2010	
			Absolute	Relative
<b>Scenario 1. No further enlargement of the EU</b>				
<i>1.A: No migration</i>				
0-20	81	59	-22	-27%
20-65	338	246	-93	-27%
65+	87	143	57	65%
<b>Total</b>	506	448	-58	-11%
<i>1.B: Continuation of current migration trends</i>				
0-20	81	73	-8	-10%
20-65	338	299	-39	-12%
65+	87	148	62	71%
<b>Total</b>	506	521	15	3%
<b>Scenario 2: Entry of Croatia, Iceland, Macedonia and Turkey into the EU</b>				
<i>2.A: No migration</i>				
0-20	81	83	2	3%
20-65	338	305	-33	-10%
65+	87	163	76	88%
<b>Total</b>	506	551	45	9%
<i>2.B: Continuation of current migration trends</i>				
0-20	81	97	16	20%
20-65	338	359	21	6%
65+	87	168	81	94%
<b>Total</b>	506	624	118	23%

Source: Fargues (2011)

Whether these new societies will demand the same number of non-skilled workers is open for discussion. Technology and outsourcing can play an important role in reducing the foreign labor demand in many destination economies, and the structural impact of the crisis in the longer-term trends of labor markets is uncertain. But the general consensus among authors is that these structural and conjunctural factors will not alter the fundamental trends of European labor markets. A recent prospective report from CEDEFOP (2012) - a reputed analytical center in this area - states that “The forecast is that [in 2020] there will be some eight million newly created jobs, but nearly 10 times more job opportunities, around 75 million, will arise due to the need to fill the jobs of people leaving the workforce”. According to the

<sup>10</sup> Details can be found in [http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/17839/EU-US%20Immigration%20Systems%202011\\_09.pdf?sequence=1](http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/17839/EU-US%20Immigration%20Systems%202011_09.pdf?sequence=1).

report, most of this employment will still be concentrated in medium-level qualifications, but there is a progressive polarization towards higher and lower qualification schemes. In other words, unless native families are willing to return to 19<sup>th</sup> century fertility rates, Europe is condemned to increase the inflow of qualified and non-qualified workers in order to sustain its growth and its welfare state.

The progressive consolidation of an inverted-pyramid demographic model in Europe has a natural complementarity in the inequalities between origin and destination countries. Put simply, income-gain expectations constitute the fundamental push factor in labor mobility. The 14 km that separate Morocco from the Euro area through the Strait of Gibraltar defines an income per capita (PPP) difference of 7 to 1. The wealth gap with big migration partners in other regions of the world follows the same pattern: 4 to 1 in Ecuador and Albania; 9 to 1 in Philippines; or 20 to 1 in Kenya (World Bank 2013).<sup>11</sup> Ortega y Peri (2009), estimated that each P\$1,000 increase in the income gap of origin and destination countries increases migratory pressures by 6% to 10% with regard to previous levels.

Clemens, Montenegro and Pritchett (2008) offered a refined version of this argument, focusing on the US as a destination case. Comparing the wages of workers inside the United States to the wages of observably *identical* workers in 42 countries outside the United States,<sup>12</sup> the authors estimate that “The median wage gap for a male, unskilled (9 years of schooling), 35 year old, urban formal sector worker born and educated in a developing country is US\$15,000 per year at purchasing power parity”. For a Bolivian worker, they can expect to multiply their wage by 2.7; Indians by 3.2; and Nigerians by 8.4.

These precise calculations have not been made for the European case, but it is difficult to expect wild geographical variations, as the very future migrants indicate. Gallup’s Potential Net Migration Index found in 2010 (Gallup 2010) that “If all adults worldwide who desire to migrate permanently to other countries actually moved where they wanted today, each [destination] country would see their adult populations double or even triple”. Around half of the adult population in countries such as Haiti, Nigeria, El Salvador or Comoros would be willing to emigrate temporarily or permanently should they have the opportunity.<sup>13</sup>

It goes without saying that the relevance of income disparity and labor demographics as the major structural forces for mobility is nuanced by a number of other variables such as increased technology and information, reduced transport costs, social benefits or diasporas as welcoming safety nets. Most of them tend to intensify in the years to come. For the same reason, specific migration policies can influence the short-term orientation and volume of flows: the introduction of visas by the Spanish Government for a number of Latin American countries at the end of the last decade had an obvious immediate effect on the affluence of legal immigrants, although not necessarily in the total outflows.

The important point is that those secondary factors influence and characterize the migration process but do not determine it, as the conventional wisdom goes. This was recently reminded by the 2012 OECD Migration Outlook in its analysis of the crisis-affected labor markets:

*“The first lesson, and it is a key one, is that it is job opportunities and demand by employers which drive labour migration. Migration policy can of course set limits which employers have to respect, such as minimum wages and working conditions or education levels or even occupations for which recruitment of immigrant workers is allowed, but the bottom line is ... no work, no labour migrants.”*

If this is true, the contrast of these forces with the rigidity of the migration regime is shocking. In any circumstance, the most intensive period of immigration into Europe after the Second World War (the last couple of decades) has been trapped into a fundamentally restrictive framework. According to Boeri and Bruker (2009), 70 out of the 92 legislative reforms carried out by European countries since 1990 were intended to unilaterally tighten the already restrictive existing rules: increasing difficulties to get a visa, reducing the timeframe of residence and working permits or establishing more obstacles for family reunification. For unskilled workers –and, to a lesser extent, for the more qualified ones–, obtaining a permit to work temporarily in a European country can imply between one and two years of endless, expensive, arbitrary and uncertain administrative procedures.

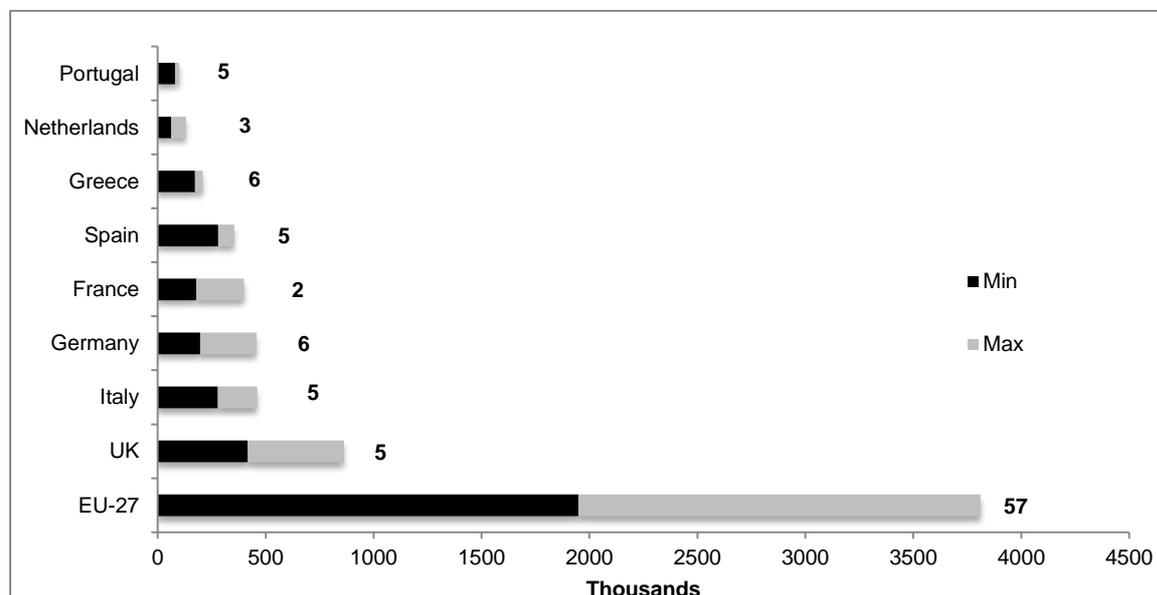
---

<sup>12</sup> Controlling for country of birth, country of education, years of education, work experience, sex, and rural- urban residence.

The problem of the European approach is that unilateralism is a game that others can play as well. Very often, origin countries and migrants themselves will find that it is worth to play out of the system. Undocumented residence –either through illegal entries or, more often, through the practice of overstaying visas- is a permanent factor of the European migration debate. Statistics in this regard are variable, but trustworthy estimations like the *Clandestino Project* (Morehouse and Blomfield 2011) has established the current figure (2008 numbers) in a range between 1.9 and 3.8 million irregular residents in the EU-27 alone, 13% of its total foreign population.<sup>14</sup>

According to the same source, the presence of undocumented migrants in 2012 was particularly notorious in a few countries like the UK, where up to 1 out of every 4 immigrants (a total of 863,000) is undocumented. Other large countries like Spain, Germany, Italy and France have numbers between 350,000 and 450,000, but in these cases its relative weight in the overall immigrant community is more reduced and it could have been reduced dramatically during the period of the Great Recession. Since 2008, the number of FRONTEX’s detected illegal border crossings has gone from 160,000 in 2008 to around 100,000 in 2010, due mainly to the decrease in labor demand.

**Graph 5 Range of estimated irregular migrants (2008) in selected EU countries and number of regularizations since 1988**



Source: Morehouse and Blomfield (2011)

To grasp the actual relevance of undocumented immigration, two other factors must be considered: the total EU numbers were considerably reduced after the accession of countries like Romania and Bulgaria, whose nationals were living irregularly. As a matter of fact, the range of estimations was 40% higher (2.4-5.4 millions) in 2005, before these countries acceded the EU. Secondly, and most important, over the past 25 years European countries have carried out 69 regularization processes, the great majority of them during the past two decades. These processes ended up in the regularization of over 4.3 million undocumented migrants (Kraler 2012). Just in the Spanish case, 3 collective regularizations since 1998 affected almost 1 million people.

It is the ‘bulimic’ logic of the model. When the right incentives are in place, the door is too small to enter (and too small to exit, as the current crisis is showing). The ever-increasing problem of undocumented migration is eventually dealt with through regularization processes, the same way a pressure cooker releases steam. All of which creates a massive opportunity cost, a policy failure and a general sense of frustration.

<sup>14</sup> These figures are similar to those estimated by the OECD.

It does grant, however, profitable electoral gains. To the extent that the rigidity of the migration regime responds greatly to political considerations and electoral toxicity, nobody is happy with the system... but nobody is willing to operate outside of it. While citizens naturally coexist with illegal immigration (sometimes as close as their very households), they are ready to punish any political attempt to make it more flexible. It is a society of in-house conscience objectors.

The current economic crisis will only intensify the pressures for control, taking native employment as a top priority and fueling nationalist movements. The populist and even violent reactions against immigrants (and the separatist movements in countries like Spain, Belgium, UK or Italy) are likely to intensify identity policies and weaken the chances for an internationalist approach. Greece's Golden Dawn or France's National Front are rough versions of a much more extended ideology that in the last years has captured governments in Hungary, Finland, Italy or France. An enlightened debate should balance these with a long-term view on the future identity and interests of European societies.

## *2. Political constrains: the multiple inefficiencies of a bipolar model*

The conflict between socioeconomic realities and political perceptions has generated some sort of a 'bipolar' migration regime where a formal system (*de iure*) is developed in parallel of a real one (*de facto*) (Pritchett and Fanjul 2010). The first is based on the conviction that destination governments can actually determine in full detail who enters, under which conditions and for how long. At the same time, a different *de facto* migration regime is taking place. One where millions of workers enter OECD economies through legal or illegal mechanisms (with the explicit or implicit support of their origin states), navigate the administrative and social storm imposed on them and make a decision on whether to stay or return depending most basically on the labor opportunities and the extent to which they have established roots. When these opportunities disappear, many are trapped without an income and without a chance to return.

Contrary to what common sense would dictate, the experience of European countries in the last decades shows that these two realities have not often overlapped, nurturing a system based on mutual distrust. And distrust has the effect of a vicious circle: first, migrants and origin countries are ready to operate outside the system; second, destination governments fall into an obsessive *micromanagement* that affects the natural behavior of markets in the wrong way, increasing risks and reducing opportunities.

What does this mean in practice? Leaving asylum regulations aside, migration regimes are designed to address current and future skills and labor shortages, as well as the rights and obligations derived from the mobility of foreign workers (such as working conditions and family reunification). The way European countries respond to these challenges differs wildly depending on the different states. All of them, however, comply with some common characteristics:

- There is a **high degree of interventionism**, derived from the political cautiousness that surrounds migration debates. Either through lists of 'occupational-shortage sectors' (Spain), point-based mechanisms (UK) or even demand-driven models (Sweden)<sup>15</sup>, immigration rules determine in considerable detail the skills, sectorial and geographical limitations of foreign employees, as well as their residence timeframe. It is true that the extent to which these conditions are enforced depends on the willingness and capacity of the authorities, but control formalities are established in the first place. The Single Permit Directive (European Parliament 2011)-which took four years of negotiations and excludes the UK, Ireland and Denmark- is a modest step forward in the homogenization of non-EU workers' rights, but it is full of national caveats and it does not incorporate the automatic right to work freely in other EU countries, therefore perpetuating the inefficient compartmentalization of the labor market.<sup>16</sup> This rusty mobility system affects return policies as well, introducing different mechanisms to incentivize return, except for the key one: an open opportunity to come back in the future without going back to the end of the row.
- There is a notable **differentiation between qualified and non-qualified workers**, in the benefit of the former. Migrants with higher qualifications (such as health professionals or computer engineers, for instance), tend to benefit from much more open migration regimes: quicker and cheaper

---

<sup>15</sup> It must be noted, though, that the 2008 Swedish reform of temporary migration models was a step forward in terms of matching real migration demand and supply.

<sup>16</sup> A interesting critic of the norm can be found in this EPC Policy Brief: [http://www.epc.eu/documents/uploads/pub\\_1398\\_eu\\_single\\_permit\\_directive.pdf](http://www.epc.eu/documents/uploads/pub_1398_eu_single_permit_directive.pdf)

admission processes, far less restrictive sectorial and geographical conditions, and easier and quicker family reunification and integration mechanisms are some of these advantages. This ambivalence reflects the different social perceptions with regard to unqualified migration, which are translated in a smoother political context. The fact that the European Blue Card was agreed is illustrative. Meanwhile, almost all non-qualified flows are admitted on temporary or seasonal basis, exception made of family reunifications.

- **Policies and norms take a mercantilist approach to migrant workers:** not only decisions are made on the basis of the (short-term) interests of destination economies and societies, but they are paved with all kinds of precautions and conditions that disregard the human nature of labor mobility and ignore the social contract embedded in it. The current crisis has opened some crude debates in this regard in important destination countries such as Spain, Italy, UK or Greece, where mainstream media and political parties have reduced the lives of immigrants to a disposable resource that is now a problem as much as it was an opportunity in the past.

The bipolarity of the migration regime results in all kinds of inefficiencies that damage the public interest at both sides of the process. From the **ethical** perspective, there's a fundamental problem with the logic of the system: to the extent that rules respond to purely political impulses and are designed to *control*, rather than *govern* migration flows, the system leads to the labor and social discrimination of foreign workers and their families. Temporary working schemes are subject to a number of conditions and limitations that can be distorted in the benefit of abusive employers, particularly in sectors such as agriculture and caring services.<sup>17</sup> Many workers are also affected when their academic qualifications are arbitrarily rejected, leading to the so-called 'brain waste' phenomenon. In general terms, there's a comparative disadvantage and an opportunity cost in the difficulties to accept other employment opportunities due to the conditions attached to the visas.

But it is the reality of undocumented migration and residence that concentrates most of the problems. Irregular migrants are subject to the violation of human and labor rights, the social discrimination of individuals and communities, and the denial of asylum rights (see Lampedusa, Ceuta and Melilla, for instance). In their obsession to control migration flows against the logic of its true drivers, many States cross the boundaries of what is acceptable in a liberal and modern democracy: arbitrary detention of undocumented workers, insufficient guarantees for unaccompanied minors, separation of families or denial of basic rights such as the access to health are just examples of this. Despite of its formal guarantees, the Return Directive, which was approved by the European Parliament and the Council in 2008, establishes in practice a punitive legal framework for migrants that allows for a up to a year and a half of reclusion and does not guarantee a return in safe and dignity. It is the same 'self-deportation' logic that has been debated in the USA during the last Presidential campaign: creating a living hell for irregular immigrants, so that return is eventually an acceptable option.

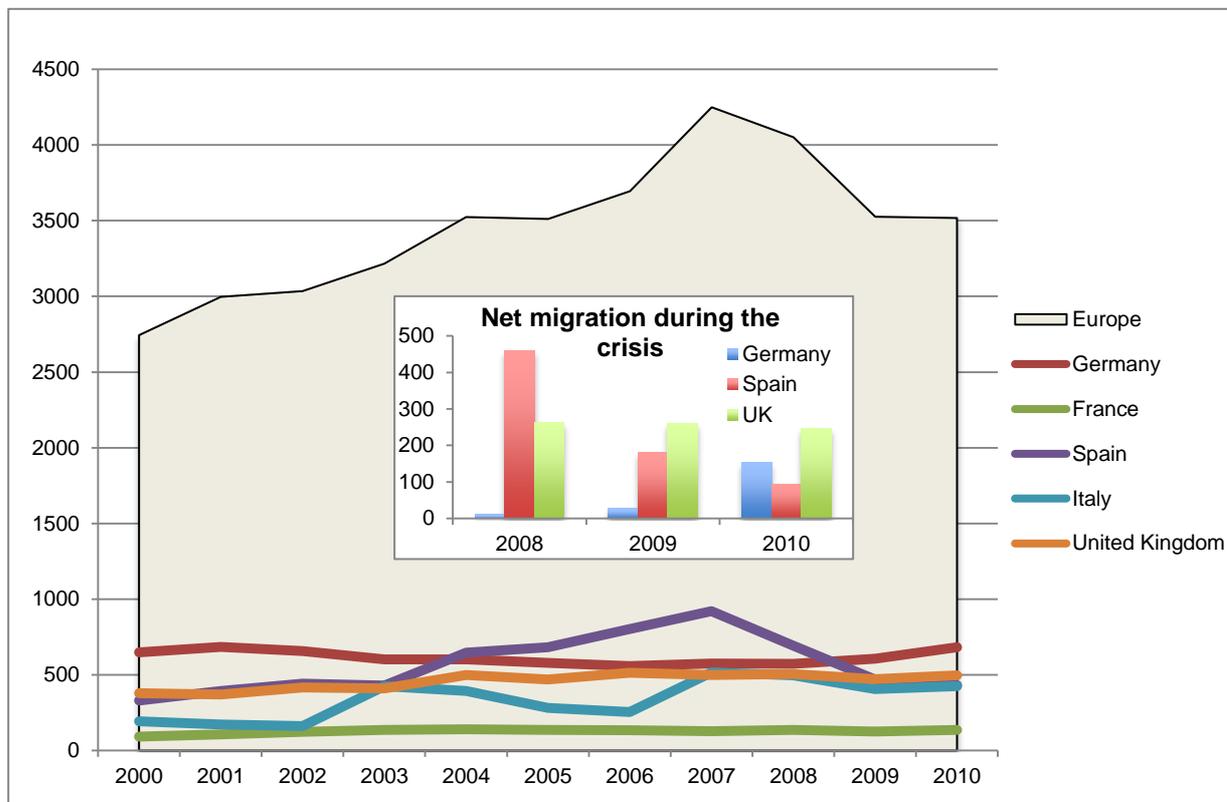
From the **economic and public governance** perspective, the current migration regime is a multi-dysfunctional one. In the first place, interventionism hampers the capacity of labor markets to adapt to economic cycles. According to the OECD (2009), a high share of the workers that acceded Southern Europe in the past decade did so on irregular basis. Portugal, Spain and Italy are paradigms of this 'narrow door' phenomenon. In the latter case, the Government granted 249,000 visas in the period 1998-2002, while more than twice as much immigrants entered the country and found jobs in that same period. When the economic crisis arrived, the incapacity of destination Governments to facilitate return processes through future migration opportunities has seriously reduced the 'circular' mobility of workers. Despite of the economic incentives (such as the possibility to capitalize unemployment benefits into one single payment linked to the return) and the fact that 4 out of 10 immigrants are now unemployed in Spain, the rate of return of non-nationalized foreign workers has been very slow since the crisis exploded in 2008 and only accelerated in the last months. In part, this is due to related factors such as housing investments, but the past experience, the need to consolidate a legal status through naturalization and the uncertainty about future opportunities to emigrate seem to have played a major role in these decisions. In short,

---

<sup>17</sup> A similar complaint has been repeatedly made in the USA. See, for instance Southern Poverty Center's work on *Immigrant Justice* (<http://www.splcenter.org/what-we-do/immigrant-justice>).

Europe's crisis has been translated into a sudden reduction of immigrants' inflows, but not on an equivalent intensity of returns (see graph 6).

**Graph 6 Inflows of foreign population (thousands)**



Source: OECD Migration Outlook (2012)

Net fiscal costs are another concern related with the current migration regime, particularly in relation with irregular migration. A report by the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR 2009) suggested that the legal condition of many immigrants in the UK has an annual cost for the State of at least 1bn pounds.<sup>18</sup> Similar arguments could be made in other European countries where there's a substantial number of undocumented migrants that are contributing to the national economy through their employment and indirect taxes, but do not do so through income and other direct taxes. Instead of limiting their access to social services, Governments should consider the way to make them contribute for their financing, while offering a more transparent fiscal report of migrants' contributions (hoping to be heard: the latest edition of the OECD's International Migration Outlook (OECD 2013) is a sound reminder of the widely positive fiscal impact of migration in host economies, and yet it does not seem to have made a difference in the highly ideological debate that is taking place in Europe).

Finally, the rigidity of migration policies limits their impact on the competitiveness of destination countries. Administrative labyrinths, lack of information, fees and transactional costs have a crowding out effect on small and medium enterprises, which cannot benefit from the existing recruiting schemes in many countries.<sup>19</sup> Migrants themselves are forced to wait long and pay high fees to formal or informal intermediaries that facilitate the entrance in the country. Background research for the 2009 Human

<sup>19</sup> The recent debate in the UK around the new limitations on qualified immigrants is an illustrative one in this regard. It's been happening for a while and it found its paroxysm during the recent European Elections. See The Economist October 20<sup>th</sup> 2012 piece *A Harder Road* for the general arguments (<http://www.economist.com/news/britain/21564895-government%E2%80%99s-policy-students-and-skilled-migrants-threatens-do-long-term-damage>).

Development Report (Martin 2009). showed that the total cost of the trip for an irregular migrant could range between \$1,000 and \$20,000.<sup>20</sup> This debt is a major obstacle for return.

All in all, the inefficiencies described above imply social and economic costs for destination countries, as well as a serious risk for the governance and cohesion of their societies. But, important as these are, the costs for Europe are dwarfed by the costs imposed by the system on the development opportunities derived from migration. If OECD countries had to assess the impact of their migration policy decisions on the welfare of migrants and their origin countries (which is not the case) they should at least consider the following:

- a) How many immigrants are admitted every year into the country and for how long: we have already referred to the importance of the total volume factor in the description of the CDI, but it is worth reminding here the critical role played by migration in global progress and the reduction of international income gaps. A famous estimation by the World Bank (2006) suggested that, all things considered, a modest increase in the number of unskilled migrants in OECD countries (equivalent to a 3% of the total labor force) could generate over \$300bn in development benefits. Roughly half of this amount would go to their communities of origin and half would remain in the hands of the migrants themselves. It is difficult not to have these numbers very present when donors engage in endless discussions on the levels of aid, for instance, when its best year's total amounted for around a half of the \$300bn mentioned above.
- b) Where they come from: development does not play any practical role whatsoever in the definition of migration quotas and policies. Workers and their families access Europe on the basis of their own requests, their qualification or the reunification rights they can benefit from. But, as the CDI clearly states, the original income level of the migrants (determined geographically or otherwise) establishes the expected gain and therefore the potential development impact. One of the downsides of the simplicity and toxicity that affects the public debate on migration is the difficulty to suggest a more surgical approach to some challenges. Michael Clemens' proposal on an specific visa program for Haitian workers has a negligible effect in the overall number of migrants that enter the US, but could still change the lives of thousands of people that have been hit by one of the worst natural disasters of the last years. Europe could consider a similar 'exceptionality' approach for populations affected by disaster-induced displacement.<sup>21</sup> But the lack of clear norms and the incapacity to show any 'weakness' in the control enforcement agenda is impeding these kinds of solutions.
- c) What is their legal status: the undocumented status of millions of migrants that live in Europe is the source of a number of ethical, economic and social inefficiencies, as we have seen above. But it does have an impact as well on the development outcomes of their migration experience. Their disadvantages and vulnerabilities partially determine their wages, working conditions, occupational mobility, access to social services and political representation, reducing their own benefits and those that receive their communities of origin. Sabates-Wheeler (2009) used a series of surveys of Malawians and Ghanaians in the UK to illustrate this argument: prospective legal status is not a reason that will determine the decision to emigrate and in fact there's a clear benefit in terms of their original situation; however, irregularity diminishes the gains and increases the suffering of the process.

Needless to say, the formal legal status is less of a determinant than the actual consequences of it. Undocumented migrants have until very recently been able to live a pretty decent existence in countries like Spain (where they used to have full access to education and health benefits) but not necessarily in others.

- d) What are the development incentives in migration policies: complementary policies can help to boost the benefits of migration for development. Efforts to increase the circularity of migrants (thus stimulating the transfer of know-how, technology or entrepreneurship), increase and optimize remittances or compensate origin countries for potential brain-drain effects have been part of explicit development policies in some cases. While not necessarily successful, these are all important efforts

---

<sup>21</sup> A recent paper by Cooper (2012) for the CGD shows the weaknesses of the European regulation in this area. *Migration and Disaster-Induced Displacement: European Policy, Practice, and Perspective*.

that capitalize a good share of the debate, but they must not be used to shadow the more relevant argument on the volume and the composition of migration flows.

- e) To what extent migration policy is ‘contaminating’ aid agreements: Contrary to the progressives’ conventional wisdom, an increase in aid flows to, say, Africa would not diminish the migration pressure from this continent. Leaving aside the fact that aid alone has a limited capacity to reduce potential migrants’ income gaps, the argument ignores the fact that a good share of Africa has not actually begun to migrate to Europe because they lack the economic and educational resources to do so. Aid would only take the continent closer to a massive emigration ‘launch point’, rather than the contrary. Realizing this fact should help to reconsider the importance of some migration origin countries as the destination of European aid flows, which should be oriented according to impact and real added values.

Beyond that, migration policies can also play a distortive role in aid policies, contaminating cooperation agreements with an informal link to migration control. This has been the recent case of the Spanish government in West African countries such as Senegal and Cape Verde, where aid programs were signed hand to hand with ‘re-admission’ (i.e. deportation) agreements. (Fanjul 2008).

### 3. The ethical strabismus: A ‘right to protection’ vs. a ‘right to survive’

One out of four Malian children die before they reach the age of 5. Why is it morally unacceptable to deny protection to a Malian mother that suffers political, sexual or racial prosecution, while it is practically mandatory to do it when she is trying to avoid the early death of her son? The economic apartheid against which we abhor in our European societies becomes admissible when it is exerted against somebody that holds a different passport.

The definition of migration policies is partially determined by the national understanding of *responsibility* towards third country nationals. The laws reflect a moral hierarchy in our societies. This is easy to understand when it comes to far-away genocides –which triggered an international *responsibility to protect*– and political persecution. With mixed results (as the CDI very clearly indicates), OECD governments have obliged themselves to approve and implement regulations that protect the internationally recognized right to asylum.

But, so far, these same governments have been extremely reluctant to extend this protection to the social and economic rights that are at the basis of the migration processes, or to other forms of ‘destitution’ such as disaster-related displacements. The fact that the UN Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families has been ratified or signed by 65 countries, none of which is a Northern destination one, is illustrative. This agreement establishes a reasonable floor for the rights of migrants and contains all kinds of guarantees that limit the obligations of destination countries in terms of their social and legal commitments.

Some countries (like Austria, which scores at the top of immigration flow indicator) have been generous in the so-called ‘humanitarian immigration’ (i.e. admitting a high number of immigrants that escape from a conflict). But there is also a reverse relationship between asylum rights and migration policies. The very low scores of Southern Europe in the CDI asylum and refuge indicators are in part related with the ‘securitization’ of economic migration filters and the related ‘externalization’ (sublease) of frontier controls to non-democratic neighbours like Morocco, Libya and Mauritania. Humanitarian organizations like MSF, Amnesty International or Migreurop have repeatedly denounced violence, non-secure deportations, illegal detentions and raping against transit migrants.<sup>22</sup> A 2006 report (Collyer) calculated that Morocco alone could host around 10,000 sub-Saharan citizens in this situation, mostly from Nigeria and Congo.

At the end of the day, the debate on the regulation of migration flows and its links with development poses some fundamental ethical and political questions: first, is there a *right* to move freely and progress outside of the country of origin (i.e. is there a right to be *admitted*)? If that is the case, what happens when the right of the newcomers clashes with the rights of those that were already residing in the destination countries? Can we admit that fundamental political, economic and social rights prevail over identity

---

<sup>22</sup> See, for instance, Amnesty International’s recent report “SOS Europa: Derechos Humanos y control migratorio”. [https://doc.es.amnesty.org/cgi-bin/ai/BRSCGI/EUR0101312-7463.ext%20\(SOS%20Europa\\_Derechos%20humanos%20y%20control%20migratorio\)?CMD=VEROBJ&MLKOB=31710714747](https://doc.es.amnesty.org/cgi-bin/ai/BRSCGI/EUR0101312-7463.ext%20(SOS%20Europa_Derechos%20humanos%20y%20control%20migratorio)?CMD=VEROBJ&MLKOB=31710714747)

considerations? It is in the definition and balance of this clash of rights that the future of migration policies resides, and handling them is extremely difficult, as we show below.

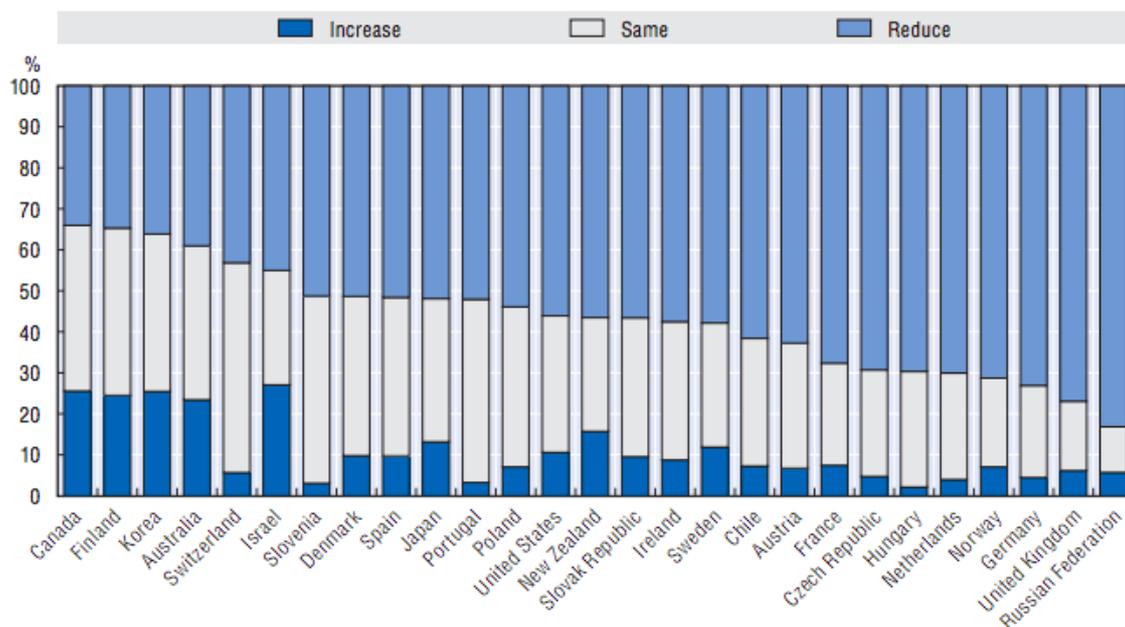
4. Strategic constraints: The emotional factor of migration politics, the incapacity to build reformist alliances and the institutional orphanhood

Migration reformists in Europe (as in any other place, for that matter) have so far been incapable of building an ‘offensive’ strategy that combines an alternative ideological and institutional construction, with a solid alliance that could push it forward. This is the result of a threefold failure:

- Telling apart legitimate beliefs and distorted ‘conventional wisdoms’, and working on them separately. Migration is an illustrative example of a political axiom in public affairs: the optimum solution is not the best one, but the best one that your constituency is willing to accept. Perceptions matter as much as realities, and any social or political organization that is willing to see a fundamental progressive reform of the migration regime must be clear about the starting point: no OECD destination society wants more immigrants, and most of them would actually prefer to have less.

The latest compiled opinion surveys (see graph 7) show that in no OCDE country the percentage of those that would like to see immigration flows increase goes beyond 30% (and most stay around 10%). On the contrary, an overwhelming majority would like to see migration flows maintained or reduced. The latter captures the lion’s share of the public opinion in every single European country, with the exception of Finland and Switzerland.

**Graph 7: Proportions of respondents in favor of increasing, maintaining or reducing the current migration flows to their countries, 2003**



**Note: Percentages do not take account of non-responses. Weighted data.**

Source: International Social Survey Programme (2003)

The higher or lower opposition to immigration is determined by a complex combination of factors that include ideology, education, income level and previous experiences with migration (like the supposed failure of the ‘guest workers’ program in Germany, for instance). In order to identify the possible angles for reform, it is imperative to distinguish how much of this is rooted on a particular understanding of their own societies and communities (identity) and how much is the result of a simple distortion of facts. Reformists should work on both.

Righting the lack of objective information regarding the economic and fiscal impact of migration is a low-hanging fruit. The analysis on the impact of migration flows on destination countries overwhelmingly shows that there’s a benefit for the host economy and a negligible, if at all negative, impact on local wages and employment levels. A literature review carried out by the Migration Policy Institute for the Equality

and Human Rights Commission (Somerville and Sumption 2009) showed that, in general terms, migration increases the demand for labor as it increases its supply, therefore contributing to economic growth without affecting wages in any fundamental way. There are, of course, distributional effects to be considered: some workers, particularly the less-skilled ones (including previous migrants), are more affected than others. But the relative importance of immigration in the qualitative conformation of labor markets is very low when compared to other variables such as education, technology or demographic change. These conclusions have been confirmed by a number of other studies, which also dismantle the argument about the fiscal burden of immigrants and their impact on social services.<sup>23</sup>

But, even if the battle of a rational economic debate were won, identity would still be a determinant obstacle. Culture, religion and nationalism play an equally important role in the definition of public opinions towards migration, and have created frictions with immigrant foreign communities, for instance. At the end of the day, the Swiss' decision to forbid the construction of more minarets in the country is based on a deep sense of communitarism that can only be confronted with a change in societies' values. It must not be forgotten that, as opposed to other large OECD destination regions, Europe was not built as a nation of immigrants. (Lakoff and Ferguson 2007).

In a sense, this is a social argument over which rights are 'fundamental' and which are 'accessory'. Communitarism and identity policies clash with the right of individuals to progress, even if that happens away from their places of origin. So the question is not 'why' they should be allowed to come, but rather 'why not'. An internationalist approach to this discussion would state that immigration should be paced on the basis of an informed strategy to sustain and expand welfare states, but not on the basis of cultural, racial or religious homogeneity.<sup>24</sup>

The final outcome of this tension will rely on the reformists' capacity to strengthen certain values of the society through education and transparent information. But they must also count on the leadership of enlightened individuals and institutions. In that regard, the public positions of mainstream European politicians go from the respectful agnostic to the aggressive populist. But none will make the argument about the need to radically change the model in the sake of the common interest, let alone in the sake of development. Reformist leaders are left with the technocratic-political dilemma OECD (2012): govern on the basis of what is better for your voters, or govern on the basis of what your voters are actually asking for. One might think that the balance has clearly inclined towards the latter, but looking at the overwhelming opposition for a freer migration system, we might be playing a game of lesser evils. This is precisely why, on a happier note, it could be argued that pro-migration lobbies have actually been pretty successful in maintaining this fragile status quo.

In any case, a quick look at the poll numbers in the best performing countries of the migration CDI (see Table 4) shows that leadership must have played some kind of role in the definition of migration policies. According to the numbers, 9 out of 10 respondents in each of these countries said that would like to see migration flows freed or reduced.

---

<sup>23</sup> The MPI is not the first to suggest that there are no tangible economic reasons to oppose migration, but rather the contrary. The World Bank's 2006 edition of its Global Economic Prospects looked into the various impacts of migration to conclude that the inflow of foreign workers actually increases the incomes of natives, as well as improving the flexibility of labor markets and unfold local employment opportunities through child care, for instance. A more recent study by Ortega and Peri (2009) uses a scope of 14 OECD and 74 origin countries in order to estimate that foreign workers increase employment, number of working hours, capital stock and income: "These results imply that immigration increases the total GDP of the receiving country in the short-run one-for-one, without affecting average wages or labor productivity. We also find that the effects of immigration are less beneficial when the receiving economy is in bad economic times".

<sup>24</sup> To win this argument, reformists must rely on information and education for this discussion, as much as on the conformation of a pro-migrants language code. As George Lakoff and Sam Ferguson noted, "[Immigration] linguistic expressions are anything but neutral. Each framing defines the problem in its own way, and hence constrains the solutions needed to address that problem".

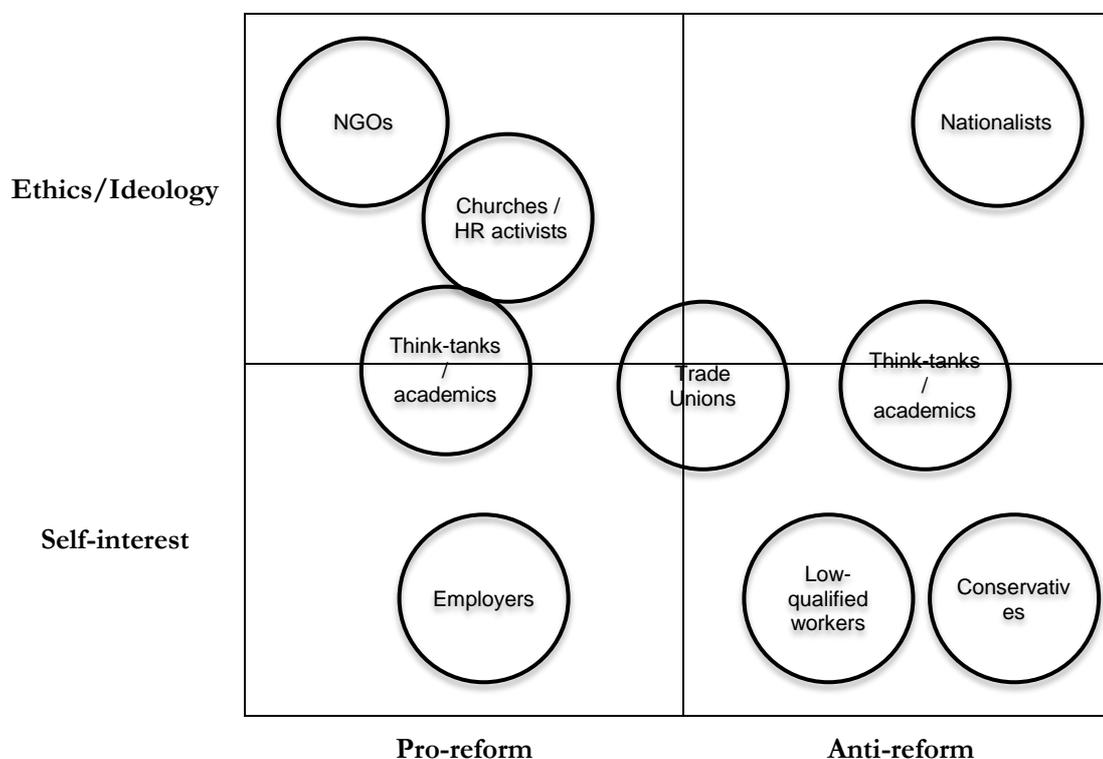
**Table 4 Migration perceptions**

Country	Position in the Migration CDI	% of population wishing to see migration freeze or reduce
Norway	1	92.9%
Sweden	2	88.1%
Canada	3	74.4%
Austria	4	93.2%
Germany	5	95.5%
Australia	6	76.6%
Luxembourg	7	N/A
New Zealand	8	84.3%
Switzerland	9	94.3%
Belgium	10	N/A

Source: Commitment to Development Index (2013), OECD (2010)

- Building strategic and wide-ranging alliances for reform: when it comes to the reform of the current migration regime, European civil society is either weak or absent, and always defensive and atomized. Employers, churches, NGOs, think tanks, academics, media and even trade unions: all have reasons for reform, but at best they take a defensive stance to avoid the crudest consequences of the system on human rights and labor conditions. There’s no coordinated and proactive discourse that uses a combination of ethical and self-interest arguments to set a different narrative of the migration experience and position reformers as practical ‘deal-breakers’. Graph 8 below is an attempt to reflect this variety.

**Graph 8: Civil society and migration policy**



Source: Author’s elaboration. A previous version of this table was conceived with Lant Pritchett as part of the discussions for the Pritchett and Fanjul (2010) paper.

European social democrats and trade unions are now part of the problem, incapable to move beyond the narrow margins of the existing policy framework.<sup>25</sup> But no absence is more noticeable than the development community's. It is true that migration already constitutes an established space of the development debate, with NGOs, academics, think tanks, governments and international organizations engaging in a myriad of research, program and policy initiatives.<sup>26</sup> And yet, this paper argues that migration does not constitute a core concern of the mainstream development community. Certainly, the international mobility of workers does not. A quick review of the most relevant international campaigns launched by NGOs in the last decade constitutes an illustrative exercise: aid, debt, trade, medicines, food, climate or arms are preeminent in the advocacy and research of Oxfam, Action Aid, Amnesty and others, but not a freer and safer migration regime.

Part of it is related with the ignorance (certainly not disdain) of poverty issues in developed countries. Part with the dangers and complex power politics attached to this debate. In almost every Northern NGO constituency, immigration can only be presented from a 'defensive' perspective: the violation of human rights. Any attempt to introduce a more proactive agenda that suggests the flexibility of the mobility mechanisms is a non-starter and therefore a waste of scarce resources.

But there is also an implicit understanding that an author denominated the *sedentary bias*: migration is perceived as a result of the failure of development, rather than as a means towards it (Haas 2009). As the caricature runs, peasants should be able to live their full lives in the idyllic context of prosperous villages, so even being forced to move to the cities is a failure. This is an exaggeration, but the hard truth is that the moment individuals cross the borders of their poor country they are lost for the development radar. It is about Bolivia, not about Bolivians (Clemens and Pritchett 2008).. This is not to disregard the importance of in situ operations by any means, but to highlight the fact that migration is largely ignored as leverage for development. As Michael Clemens put it once (2010), "It is time to ask whether the traditional development agenda is sufficient to cause convergence in productivity and earnings. If it is not, we need fundamental changes in the traditional development agenda if we desire convergence. The answer is, generally: no".

The key argument here is that the reform of the migration regime will demand a broad coalition of actors that goes beyond the defensive stance of human rights. This has been true in other apparently impossible achievements, such as the access to medicines or the public recognition of global warming. The development community is a necessary part of this coalition.

- Creating an alternative institutional framework: It is fair to say that European reformists lack an enabling institutional framework that would simultaneously help to govern this challenge and dilute the political risks that burden it. Trade constitutes an interesting precedent: despite of a general opposition (that remains to this day), the EU has been involved in some of the most ambitious trade liberalization agreements (beginning with the Common Market itself). The 'communitarization' of political decisions has been instrumental in this regard: to the extent that many others are involved in the decision-making process, it is a third player (the European Commission or the WTO, for instance) that is biting the stick, the political risks of making the right decisions can be diluted in a very convenient way. In other words, the lack of a meaningful Common Migration Policy or an equivalent international reference that can act as a 'bar-raiser' is an obstacle for reform.

While the internal institutional objective is to build a truly multilateral framework, the approach towards third countries is necessarily a different one. Since there is no direct precedent of a national or multinational experience of this kind (the liberalization of labor mobility within the EU was the result of much more ambitious economic and political union), Europe (including Norway and Switzerland) should consider the possibility of creating them from scratch. The very Mobility Partnerships and dialogues that have been opened with a series of developing regions might provide a good basis to start from. But the challenge is to go beyond the narrow limits of the current approach

---

<sup>25</sup> The latest (and very ambitious) report on irregular migration published by the British Labor think tank IPPR is a very illustrative example. Despite of its recommendations to make the detention and return processes much more human than they are right now, there's no fundamental challenge to the reasons why the UK has almost one million irregular migrants.

<sup>26</sup> The World Social Forum on Migration is gathering this year for the fifth occasion after it was launched as a spin-off of the Porto Alegre movement in 2005. The World Bank and the UNDP have already devoted their flagships reports to this issue, highlighting the scale of this massive opportunity for development.

and consider a system in which all three parties (origin and destination countries, as well as migrants) have more to gain than to lose. Only this way they will be willing to comply with its rules, controlling and self-restricting irregular migration in exchange for expanded and safer opportunities for temporary mobility. We come back to this point in the next section.<sup>27</sup>

## **5. Conclusions and recommendations**

This paper has made the case for a fundamental reform of the migration model that prevails across the European continent (and everywhere else, for that matter). In doing so, we have argued that the discrepancy between a more rigid and a more flexible regime is in part the conflict between the sovereignty of States and the rights of individuals. The former legitimately defends the identity and cultural roots of a previously established community, as well as the sustainability of their welfare and social protection models. But the latter is consistent with the drift of a global justice that recognizes the right of everyone to protection and dignity, even if that has to be granted outside their place of origin. Most importantly, it does not have to be imposed at the cost of destination societies', but rather the contrary.

We have also argued that, to a certain extent, this is a perfectly irrelevant debate. Whether people should have the right to migrate or not, the fact is that they do it. Europe can make it more dangerous, more expensive and more humiliating, but a share of the overwhelming number of individuals that would like to migrate will eventually end up doing it.

So there are practical considerations that help to understand the unprecedented possibilities of reform. We operate within a system that multiplies risks and minimizes opportunities. The bipolar model that we have described is one out of control that generates direct and opportunity costs that go far beyond what is reasonable. We believe that this should make it easier for the parties to reach an agreement, should the proper circumstances be in place.

This is the approach of our recommendations. While only a few years ago the notion of a more open migration system would have been received with open disdain by mainstream politicians, there are reasons to think that a combination of social pedagogy, enlightened leadership and institutional creativity might allow us to overcome the different binding constraints explained above. The crisis, paradoxically, offers a triple incentive in this direction. First, a political opportunity in terms of reduced pressures to immigrate and therefore a less sensible negotiating environment. Second, the need of some countries like Portugal, Spain, Greece or Ireland to increase the return of foreigners and reduce the barriers imposed to their own migrants in third regions such as Brazil. Finally, the fundamental contradiction exposed by the increasing nationalism and the institutional failures derived from the economic crisis: many in our European societies, institutions and political parties fear these trends and are willing to oppose them, but few are ready to recognize the implications of the same logic for the rights of non-EU nationals.

Our proposals have been divided into five areas and cover a shorter and a longer-term agenda. Leaving aside those that refer exclusively to EU institutions, these recommendations are valid for all European countries in the CDI:

### **1. Increasing mobility through adjusted national frameworks and a meaningful Common Migration Policy**

- Member States need to guarantee a solid 'floor' for the human and labor rights of non-EU residents and workers. National legislations should clearly reflect (or institutions enforce, when the norms already exist) a non-discrimination and equal-treatment approach in terms of social protection, labor rights and access to social services; sectorial and geographical mobility; and portability of social rights such as pensions and unemployment benefits.
- National legislations should promote the self-regulation of foreign labor markets, easing the accession administrative procedures, reducing the restrictions on labor mobility and allowing workers and employers to engage in free arrangements under the guarantees of the law. As some observers have already suggested,<sup>28</sup> this could be initially focused on temporary migration and done through a *temporary work permit* (also called *job-search visas*) that would allow the worker the space to find and change jobs, and that could be renewed if the immigrant maintains its job. The experience of Sweden's 2008 reform constitutes a precedent in the right direction.

---

<sup>27</sup> Important international references have already made similar points. See, for instance, OECD's Dayton-Johnson et al. (2007).

<sup>28</sup> See, for instance, Dalla-Zuanna (2011).

- This enhanced flexibility should also be reflected in return policies. Beyond the economic instruments to incentivize the return of immigrants without a job (such as the possibility to capitalize all unemployment benefits into one single payment), governments should consider ways to guarantee a second immigration opportunity after some time has passed. This could be done through the ‘freezing’ of unused residence and work permits, as some countries like Spain are already considering.
- With some exceptions, the overall numbers of required immigrants should be calculated on the basis of a combination of growth forecasts, unemployment levels and general qualification requirements, rather than the micromanaged existing quotas. Migration permits should be predictable and multiannual.
- All of the latter should be done in a way that reinforces the current primitive foundations of a Common Migration Policy and facilitates its future development. The correction of this historical political gap would make the system more efficient from the economic point of view and more manageable from the political one (as it has been suggested in the EC’s proposal for a Global Approach to Migration and Mobility). In particular, Member States and European institutions should collaborate to:
  - Extend the concept of common labor market and intra-EU mobility to non-EU residents and workers. This flexibility would critically help to balance labor supply and demand and reduce the inefficiencies associated to market fragmentation.
  - Address the future volume and skill needs of European labor markets through a more sophisticated and adaptive common forecast system with multiple entry doors and common admission criteria. Adopt a European-wide *temporary work permit* (or *job-search visa*).
  - Reinforce the establishment of common rights through the full implementation and the future extension of the Single Permit, Seasonal Workers and Intra-corporate Directives.
  - Simplify visa classifications and procedures.
  - Improve the monitoring system of migration inflows and outflows, including a harmonized methodology to estimate the number of irregular migrants.
  - Strengthen the implementation of protective asylum and refugee norms and extend national best practices (such as those of Scandinavian countries). Effectively incorporate disaster-related displacement as a reason for protection.
  - Deepen into the Migration and Mobility Dialogues, aiming for a common model to be extended to all developing regions and incorporating mutually binding commitments.
  - Consider the creation of a new coordination and policy-development European migration agency that plays a similar role to the one played by EuropeAid on aid policies.

## 2. A human and intelligent approach to deal with the challenge of irregular migration

- Europe needs a coherent, coordinated and long lasting vision to reduce the number of irregular migrants in its territory. This paper does not deepen into the possible details of this plan, but any meaningful solution should consider a combination of targeted regularizations and re-compliance options, incentivized returns and forced expulsions (albeit with enhanced legal guarantees). The Solidarity and Management Migration Flows (SOLID)<sup>29</sup> can be instrumental for these purposes, provided it fully incorporates the ‘reintegration’ aspects of its policy and not just the effective return of irregular immigrants (which is a major problem today).
- National and common European legislations should guarantee a ‘firewall’ between the system that provides basic social services such as health and education, and the system that regulates the accession

---

<sup>29</sup> This General Programme consisted of four instruments: [External Borders Fund](#) (EBF), [European Return Fund](#) (RF), [European Refugee Fund](#)(ERF) and [European Fund for the Integration of third-country nationals](#) (EIF).

and expulsion of foreigners. All residents –on a legal or an illegal status- should be granted access to basic social rights, including health, education and protection.<sup>30</sup>

- European institutions should reconsider the most polemic contents of return policies in order to guarantee expulsion and return processes in safe and dignity. In particular, they should reconsider extended and arbitrary reclusion periods and the loopholes in the protection of unaccompanied minors.
- Border control agreements with neighbor countries (such as Northern Africans’) must guarantee the full respect for transit migrants and potential asylum and refuge seekers. European countries should be accountable for the violation of the human rights of third nationals when this is a result of the implementation of immigration control agreements. UNHCR’s *10-Point Plan of Action on Refugee Protection and Mixed Migration* can be a useful guidance in that regard.

3. Overcoming the reluctance of the public opinion: Integration policies and a more transparent and pedagogic fiscal system

- Increasing the integration of migrant communities in destination societies (through social services, targeted policies and political participation) will improve the social conditions of immigrants and the stability of their host communities. This is good for development and good for the policy-making context.
- European countries and EU institutions should provide systematic migration fiscal balances on the basis of official and estimated gains and costs of migration (including irregular flows).
- Governments should consider adaptations of their fiscal instruments so that the public opinion can clearly identify the contribution of immigrants to the sustainability of social services and pensions (for instance, through entry levies and finalist health or education-related taxes that do not increase the overall fiscal burden of immigrants but clearly identify its volume and destiny).

4. Underpinning the links between migration and development, beyond enhanced mobility mechanisms

- European member states and common institutions must incorporate migration as part of their development policies. The EC’s communication on the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility is a step towards a formalization of these links, but specific policies must go far beyond the ‘traditional’ package (remittances, mainly) and consider a definition of migration flows that is bigger in volume and targeted in terms of development impact.
- The origin of migrants (both in terms of geography and income-level) needs to be considered in the selection process for development purposes, either through a points-based system or other mechanisms. European countries should consider a more ‘surgical’ approach in its visa policies, considering specific programs for particularly vulnerable communities that do not fall under the asylum criteria (post-disaster economies, for instance).
- European development agencies must design and integrate a comprehensive package to optimize the impact of migration on development. This includes incorporating a more development-friendly selection process as the one proposed above, but also other instruments intended to reduce the costs of remittances through better regulation, compensate any possible brain-drain effect or stimulate productive circularity models.
- National governments and the EC should established mixed policy teams for the design and management of migration policies. Development officials should be present in these teams together with labor and security experts, assessing the impact of different policies and offering bridges with origin countries and communities.
- The Governments of origin countries should force the inclusion of migration clauses as part of their overall package of bilateral or plurilateral relations with destination countries. Better investment and fiscal conditions should be reciprocated with increased and safer migration opportunities for their nationals.

---

<sup>30</sup> I have taken the concept of ‘firewall’ from the Canadian philosopher Joseph Carens. His works very lucidly argue the ethical case for migration.

- Development NGOs (both at the national and the EU levels) must actively engage in the labor mobility debate. They could reinforce the pro-reformist stance through increased research and active campaigning towards public opinion and policy-makers. Migration reform ought to be considered part of the post-2015 Millennium Development Goals.<sup>31</sup>

#### 5. Europe as a leader towards a new global migration regime

- Despite of the open opposition that they will encounter, most of the proposals listed above are mere adjustments to the existing model. In the longer term, origin and destination countries are deemed to find a radically different global mobility regime, one that gradually reduces the multiple risks attached to the process and optimizes its opportunities. It is the same kind of cooperative institutional innovation process that has been applied to other major global challenges such as trade, environment or crimes against humanity.

The details of our proposal were outlined in a previous paper co-authored with Lant Pritchett in 2010.<sup>32</sup> The following is an updated version of its key elements:

- An **adaptive** and **plurilateral** approach based on a small group of countries that define their tools and rules as they work through ‘interim institutions’. We cannot expect to achieve a 1994 WTO, but rather a 1947 GATT where a small group of interested parties decide the scope and the conditions of their liberalization agreements. The intensive process of institutional innovation of the last decades (see the role of public-private partnerships in the global health sector, for instance) offers an interesting path to follow. The pool of experiences could be replicated and expanded according to the results.
- The basis for a **social contract** between parties that establishes what is not accepted, rather than a narrow definition of the agreements/arrangements that are acceptable. Put simply, there is a ‘solid floors/fixed ceilings’ approach where fundamental labor and human rights are not negotiable but everything else is. In our view, the UN Convention on the Rights of Migrant Workers provides a very solid starting point in this regard: one could not impose labor or social discrimination for admitted migrants, but the parties could agree, for instance, on much more gradual family reunification process, which is the origin of a good share of current migration flows.
- A **predictable system** that incorporates **compliance mechanism** via a forum for disputes and compensations. The agreements will only be taken seriously if breaches have consequences. This is true for irregular migration (much more efficient control mechanisms could be implemented with the collaboration of origin countries and migrant communities) as it is for the unilateral changes in the original agreement (any reduction in the quotas, for instance, should be justified and compensated).
- A platform for the **participation of civil society**: non governmental actors (employers, unions, labor brokers, migrant associations) would have the same membership status as nation- states, but at the same time they would be integral members, able make proposals and bring cases to the dispute settlement understanding. The ILO precedent is a very useful in this regard.

The whole purpose of this package is to build trust among partners in a consolidate-and-advance process. The following table illustrates the balance of risks and opportunities faced by each of the three parties in the current model, as opposed to an alternative one based on increased opportunities for temporary migration under a more flexible and adaptive regulatory system where irregular mobility is notably reduced through enhanced cooperation and appropriation of the system.

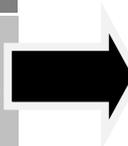
---

<sup>31</sup> Anna Koll (ECDPM) made an interesting contribution about this in <http://www.ecdpm-talkingpoints.org/can-we-afford-to-ignore-migration-post-2015/>.

<sup>32</sup> Pritchett and Fanjul (2010).

**Table 5 Who wins what with migration reform?**

Migration: Who wins what with status quo vs. reform?				
	Current system		Alternative system	
	Incentives	Costs	Incentives	Costs
<b>Destination countries</b>	<p>Political benefits (aligning with average voter)</p> <p>Cheaper labor based on irregular flows</p>	<p>Lack of flows' control, which results in social tensions and difficulties to plan social services.</p> <p>Lost fiscal income.</p> <p>Increased black economy.</p>	<p>Potential political gains (reduction or irregular flows)</p> <p>Labor markets better adapted to economic environment.</p> <p>Increased public revenues and better planning of social services</p>	<p>Political vulnerability (soft on immigration)</p> <p>Third countries and persons (spoilers) might not collaborate and still pursue undocumented migration forms</p>
<b>Migrants</b>	<p>Decision to migrate is individual and unilateral</p> <p>There are available jobs that do not depend on an intermediary</p>	<p>Restricted social rights and discriminating labor conditions</p> <p>Multiple difficulties to bring their families along</p> <p>Emotional rupture (no chances to return sporadically to their origin countries).</p>	<p>Opportunities to migrate are safer, more abundant and more profitable</p> <p>Social benefits and chances to have new migration opportunities in the future</p> <p>Chances to go back home for holidays or sporadic visits</p>	<p>Migration is not a unilateral decision</p> <p>Procedures might take longer</p> <p>Family reunification rights might be restricted</p>
<b>Origin country</b>	<p>Remittances, know-how and technology transfer</p> <p>Relative alleviation of non-qualified unemployment constraints</p>	<p>Potential brain drain (including younger population)</p> <p>Government's legitimacy and policies affected by the violation of their expatriated nationals' rights</p> <p>Limited transfer of know how and technology due to restricted circularity</p>	<p>More remittances as a result of increased, more predictable and more secure migration flows</p> <p>Compensation for potential brain-drain</p> <p>Increased opportunities for know-how and technology due to circularity and return</p> <p>Political gains derived from the protection of their nationals abroad</p>	<p>Political cost derived from a tougher stance on illegal emigration</p>



Source: Author's elaboration. A previous version of this table was conceived with Lant Pritchett as part of the discussions for the Pritchett and Fanjul (2010) paper.

**References**

- Boeri, T., and Brücker, H. (2009). *Why are Europeans Getting so Tough on Migrants?* Available at <http://ist-socrates.berkeley.edu/~pog/academic/EP/EP-160605.pdf>
- CEDEFOP (2012). *BRIEFING NOTE: Europe's skill challenge*. Available at [http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/9068\\_en.pdf](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/9068_en.pdf)
- Clemens, M. (2010). *A Labor Mobility Agenda for Development*. Available at [http://www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/1423717\\_file\\_Clemens\\_labor\\_mobility\\_FINAL\\_1.pdf](http://www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/1423717_file_Clemens_labor_mobility_FINAL_1.pdf)
- Clemens, M. (2013). *What do we Know About Skilled Migration and Development?* Available at <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/SkilledMigration-Development.pdf>
- Clemens, M. and Pritchett, L. (2008). *Income per natural: Measuring development as if people mattered more than places*. Available at <http://www.hks.harvard.edu/fs/lpritch/Labor%20Mobility%20-%20docs/CP%20income%20per%20natural%20feb%205%202008.pdf>
- Clemens, M.; Montenegro, C.; and Pritchett, L. (2008). *The Place Premium*. Available at [http://www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/16352\\_file\\_CMP\\_place\\_premium\\_148.pdf](http://www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/16352_file_CMP_place_premium_148.pdf)
- Collyer, M. (2006). *Undocumented Sub-Saharan African Migrants in Morocco*. Available at [http://subweb.diiis.dk/graphics/Publications/Books2006/mediterranean\\_transit\\_migration/mediterranean\\_transit\\_migration\\_web.pdf](http://subweb.diiis.dk/graphics/Publications/Books2006/mediterranean_transit_migration/mediterranean_transit_migration_web.pdf)
- Commitment to Development Index (2013). *Global CDI Spreadsheet*. Available at <http://www.cgdev.org/initiative/commitment-development-index/inside>
- Cooper, M. D. (2012). *Migration and Disaster-Induced Displacement: European Policy, Practice, and Perspective*. Available at [http://www.cgdev.org/files/1426605\\_file\\_Cooper\\_disaster\\_displacement\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.cgdev.org/files/1426605_file_Cooper_disaster_displacement_FINAL.pdf)
- Dalla-Zuanna, G. (2011). *Migration in the European Union: The narrow street of convergence*. Available at [http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/17848/EU-US%20Immigration%20Systems%202011\\_18.pdf?sequence=1](http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/17848/EU-US%20Immigration%20Systems%202011_18.pdf?sequence=1)
- Dayton-Johnson, J., Katseli, L.T., Maniatis, G., Münz, R. and Papademetriou, D. (2007). *Gaining from Migration: Towards a New Mobility System* and the report of the *Global Commission on International Migration*. Available at [http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/gaining\\_from\\_migration.pdf](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/gaining_from_migration.pdf)
- European Parliament (2011). *Press release: Common rights and single work and residence permit for non-EU workers*. Available at <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20111213IPR33946/html/Common-rights-and-single-work-and-residence-permit-for-non-EU-workers>
- Fanjul, G. (2008). *Puertas al mar: Por qué todos deberíamos estar interesados en una política migratoria más justa e inteligente*. Available at [http://www.oxfamintermon.org/sites/default/files/documentos/files/071022\\_Puertas\\_al\\_mar\\_def.pdf](http://www.oxfamintermon.org/sites/default/files/documentos/files/071022_Puertas_al_mar_def.pdf)
- Fargues, P. (2011) *International Migration and Europe's Demographic Challenge*. EU-US Immigration Systems, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, San Somenico di Fiesole (FI): European University Institute. Available at [http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/17839/EU-US%20Immigration%20Systems%202011\\_09.pdf?sequence=1](http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/17839/EU-US%20Immigration%20Systems%202011_09.pdf?sequence=1)
- GALLUP (2010). *Migration Could Triple Populations in Some Wealthy Nations*. Available at <http://www.gallup.com/poll/142364/Migration-Triple-Populations-Wealthy-Nations.aspx>
- Haas, H. de (2009). *Mobility and Human Development*. Available at [http://www.heindehaas.com/Publications/HDRP\\_2009\\_de\\_haas.pdf](http://www.heindehaas.com/Publications/HDRP_2009_de_haas.pdf)
- Hamilton, K.A. and Grieco, E. (2002). *Realizing the Potential of Migrant "Earn, Learn, and Return" Strategies: Does Policy Matter?* Available at [http://www.cgdev.org/doc/CDI/Migration\\_2004.pdf](http://www.cgdev.org/doc/CDI/Migration_2004.pdf)
- IPPR (2009). *Irregular Migration in the UK. An IPPR update*. Available at <http://es.scribd.com/doc/19421880/Irregular-Migration-In-the-UK>

- Kraler, A. (2012). *Regularisations – an instrument to reduce vulnerability, social exclusion and exploitation of migrants in an irregular situation in employment?* Available at [http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra\\_uploads/2325-Regularisation\\_paper-110912.pdf](http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/2325-Regularisation_paper-110912.pdf)
- Lakoff, G. and Ferguson, S. (2007). *The Framing of Immigration*. Available at <http://afrolatinoproject.org/2007/09/24/the-framing-of-immigration-5/>
- Martin, P. (2009). *Demographic and Economic Trends: Implications for International Mobility*. Available at [http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2009/papers/HDRP\\_2009\\_17.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2009/papers/HDRP_2009_17.pdf)
- Morehouse, C. and Blomfield, M. (2011). *Irregular Migration in Europe*. Migration Policy Institute. Available at file:///C:/Users/CGD/Downloads/TCMirregularmigration.pdf
- Somerville, W. and Sumption, M. (2009). *Immigration and the Labour Market: Theory, Evidence and Policy*. Available at <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/immigration-and-the-labour-market.pdf>
- OECD (2010). *OECD International Migration Outlook 2010*. Available at <http://www.oecd.org/migration/mig/internationalmigrationoutlook2010.htm>
- OECD (2012). *OECD International Migration Outlook 2012*. Available at <http://www.npdata.be/BuG/165-NV-A-migratie/OECD-Migration-Outlook-2012.pdf>
- OECD (2013). *OECD International Migration Outlook 2013*. Available at <http://www.oecd.org/els/mig/imo2013.htm>.
- Ortega, F. and Peri, G. (2009). *The Causes and Effects of International Labor Mobility: Evidence from OECD Countries 1980-2005*. Available at [http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2009/papers/HDRP\\_2009\\_06.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2009/papers/HDRP_2009_06.pdf)
- Pritchett, L. (2009). *The Cliff at the Border*. Available at [http://www.hks.harvard.edu/fs/lpritch/Labor%20Mobility%20-%20docs/cliff%20at%20the%20borders\\_submitted.pdf](http://www.hks.harvard.edu/fs/lpritch/Labor%20Mobility%20-%20docs/cliff%20at%20the%20borders_submitted.pdf).
- Pritchett, L. and Fanjul, G. (2010). *Goldilocks Globalization: Finding “Just Right” Regulation of Cross-Border labor Flows*. Available at <http://www.hks.harvard.edu/fs/lpritch/Labor%20Mobility%20-%20docs/goldilocks.pdf>
- Roodman, D. (2013). *The Commitment to Development Index: 2013 Edition*. Available at [http://cgdev.org.488elwb02.blackmesh.com/sites/default/files/archive/doc/CDI\\_2013/Index-technical-description-2013-final.pdf](http://cgdev.org.488elwb02.blackmesh.com/sites/default/files/archive/doc/CDI_2013/Index-technical-description-2013-final.pdf)
- Sabates-Wheeler, R. (2009). *The Impact of Irregular Status on Human Development Outcomes for Migrants*. Available at [http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2009/papers/HDRP\\_2009\\_26.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2009/papers/HDRP_2009_26.pdf)
- Watkins, K. and Quattri, M. (2014). *Lost in intermediation: How excessive charges undermine the benefits of remittances for Africa*. ODI Report. Available at <http://odi.org>
- World Bank (2006). *Global Economic Prospects 2006: Economic Implications of Remittances and Migration*. Available at <http://econ.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTDEC/EXTDECPROSPECTS/GEPEXT/EXTGEP2006/0,,contentMDK:20709766~menuPK:1026823~pagePK:64167689~piPK:64167673~theSitePK:1026804,00.html>
- World Bank (2013). *World Development Indicators: GNI per capita, PPP*. Available at <sup>1</sup> <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GNP.PCAP.PP.CD>