

VENTOTENE AND THE EVOLVING PATTERN OF MIGRATION

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ABSTRACT

Migration is one of the most divisive themes in Europe and in the European Union. However, human mobility, which has always existed and will always take place, was undeniably one of the cornerstones in the Union's beginnings. With the Schengen agreement and the Erasmus mobility program an intra-European space has been provided where European citizens can move freely in search of jobs and educational qualifications. The asylum pressure has revealed different approaches among the European countries, but the European Commission has acted to support each country in coping with the pressure and is supporting a revision of the Dublin convention. Many more initiatives are needed but the European countries in the 'migration' field are moving along the spirit of the *Ventotene Manifesto*, toward a more coherent but differentiated approach to human mobility. The European Commission is also supporting migrant integration which is a priority not only for migrants themselves but mainly for natives because *together* they will be the future European citizen.

Keywords: European Union, Migration, Asylum Seekers, Integration Policy, Third National Countries.

JEL Codes: J31, J61.

Migration is one of the most divisive themes in Europe and in the European Union. However, human mobility always existed, migration will always take place and undeniably it was one of the cornerstones in the Union's beginnings.

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The *Ventotene Manifesto* proposed the vision of an open but protected Europe. We will try to see how it has evolved and how many steps should be taken to consolidate the European spirit which permeated the founders. We subdivide the evolution of the dimensions of the migration phenomenon in Europe in two main phases: the 1960s until the end of the 1970s and for some country the beginning of the 1980s, and the period that follows. We will name them *before* and *after* taking into account that the European migration evolution slightly differs in each country and that what we want to point out is the main trend in this development.¹

1. *BEFORE THE INTRA-EU MIGRATION WAS PREDOMINANT IN THE TOTAL INFLOWS. AFTER, MIGRATION FROM THIRD COUNTRIES BECAME PREDOMINANT*

The European Union came into existence and was largely forged out of intra-EU mobility. In the 1970s the share of foreign population of European origin, amounting to respectively 74% of total migrants in Germany, 72% in France, 83% in Belgium, 60% in the Netherland (Bonifazi and Strozza 2002: 76, Venturini 2004), substantially consisted of Italian, Spanish, Portuguese and Greek citizens.

The EU migration phenomenon and policy are thus based upon the intra-EU mobility which was formally recognized through the Single Market Program in 1992. The enlargement to the Eastern area, after the initial transitory period, reinforced the intra-EU mobility which replaced the South-North flows with the East-West flows. The abolition of passport control among France, Germany and the Benelux states in 1995 – a product of the Schengen agreement,² signed in 1986 – was extended to Italy and Austria in 1997, to Greece in 2000, to Denmark, Sweden and Finland in 2001 and later to the new member states after their accession. With this European framework citizens could move to find jobs or to study inside the EU and created the perception of a European reality in line with the Ventotene vision of Europe. The Erasmus program for student mobility also reinforced this perception of a unified European region among the youth.

In the past, migrants from the Third countries were a minority featuring such vast differences in languages and cultures that their multifarious lot was not included into the European common migration policy and left in the hands of nation states. Countries created different inflows designed

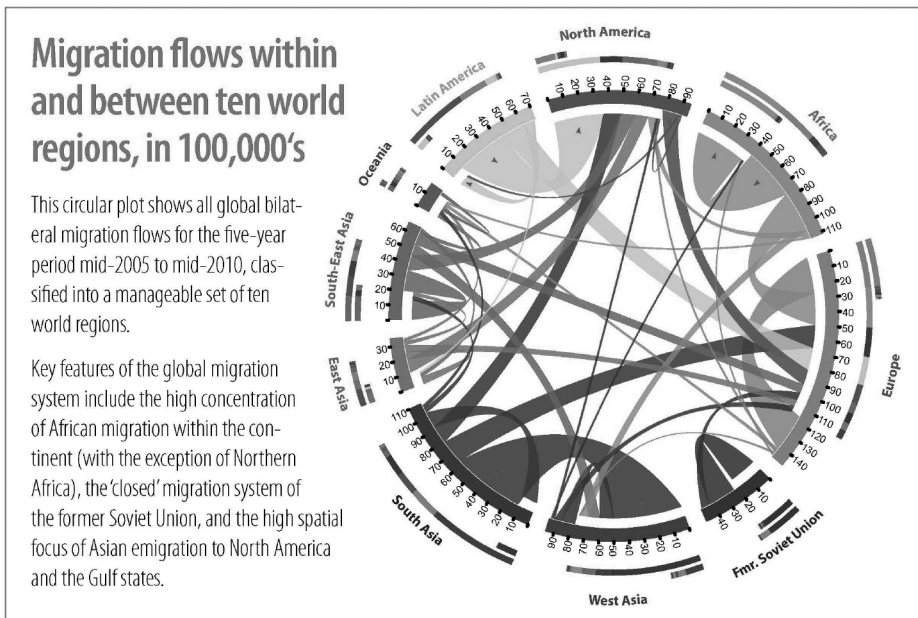
¹ For reasons of space we do not discuss the migration before the World War Two which was intercontinental, but we concentrate upon migration in Europe. See also on this issue PASTORE 2005.

² EUROPEAN COMMISSION 2008.

by bilateral agreements with the countries of origin. Such inflows would follow the demand of the domestic labour market as well as political agreements with former colonies. Thus, for instance, we find Algerians, Tunisians and Moroccans in France or Latin Americans in Spain.

Today, the majority of the foreign population originates from extra-European countries: 10 millions from North and Sub-Saharan Africa, 5 millions from Latin America and 12 millions from Asia and the Middle East, amounting to 58% of the total foreign population in 2019 (Eurostat Demographic Statistics 2019-2020). Thus, the variety of foreigners who took advantage of the different rules of entrance decided by each member state increased the complexity of a European Migration scenario which was and is difficult to keep under the same umbrella. Figure 1 shows how these flows between the main world regions and the European Union have come to generate a more interconnected world.

Fig. 1.



Source: Demographic Statistics. Available at: www.global-migration.info (accessed December 3, 2021).

2. *BEFORE LABOUR MIGRATION BECAME PREDOMINANT, THE DURATION OF THE LABOURERS' STAY WAS UNCERTAIN. AFTER FAMILY REUNIFICATION PROCEDURES INCREASED, TOTAL INFLOWS GENERATED LARGER COMMUNITIES AND INTEGRATION POLICIES BECAME A PRIORITY*

The first inflows of migrants are in general labour migrants and this was also the case in Europe. Little by little, family members would arrive. Now, 40% of the stock of foreign population entered as family members, against 17% arriving as labour migrants, 9% as asylum seekers, 4% as students and 32% as free movers (Eurostat Demographic Statistics 2019). About 40% of the inflows are using this channel, which does not vary with the economic cycle and is very stable.

Family members' arrivals involve a transformation of the labour migration pattern which was initially conceived as temporary in the head of migrants and in the perception of the destination country. Immigrants turn into a population of migrants with the perspective of settling in the destination country – thus, the transition turns into the acquisition of citizenship process.

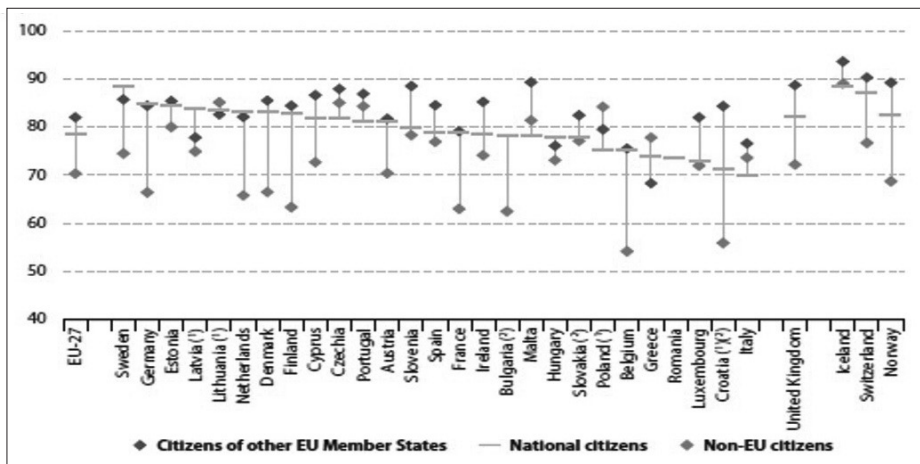
2.1. *Integration as priority*

Given the different economic trends, and different mainstream cultures prevailing in the destination countries, *integration* was more successful in some countries than in others, but it was also implemented with a different philosophy – namely, in France for instance it was called assimilation, the intention was to transform migrants into French citizens, while in Germany integration rather relied on separation and gave the migrants space for their own culture. In other words, different models came to produce different results in each country. Not infrequently, poor language skills and poor qualifications, or lack of familiarity with contexts which were entirely novel to the newcomers, produced discrimination on the workplace. Severe miscommunication (verbal and nonverbal behavior revealing a lack of mutual understanding) fed the native population's intolerance and even genuine prejudice – in brief, non-acceptance of the 'Other', even in the higher ranks of the professions (Cortese 2020).

Parallel to the Intra-European migration model there was a very diversified Extra-European migration model which provided autonomy to the different countries to keep their social vision and model. The lack of a uniform European welfare system and the different social models prevailing in each country produced patchy results which were difficult to unify, but in all countries a clear form of *under assimilation* prevailed in the labour market – namely, higher migrant unemployment rates and lower migrant

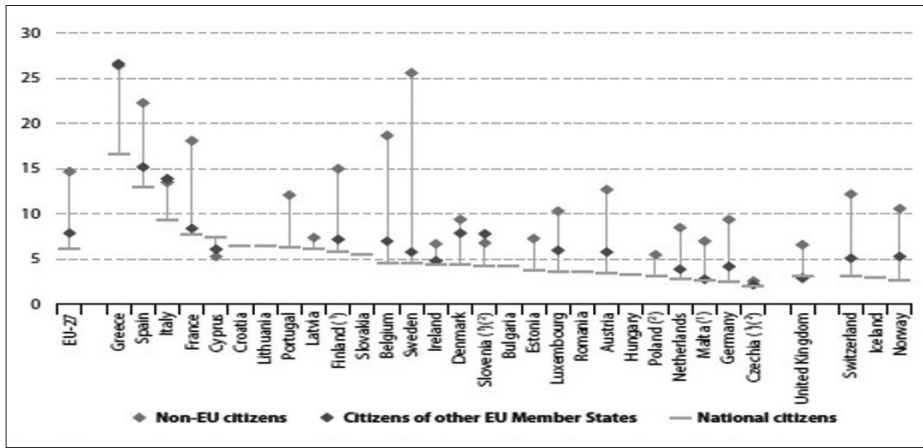
wages than for natives with similar characteristics. In the figure 2 below, the line indicates the native labour force participation rate, while the darker diamond shows the intra-European migrants' labour force participation rate, clearly less integrated in general, and the lighter diamond represents the third national country migrants, even less included in the labour force. In the next figure, figure 3, the scenario is reversed but with the same interpretation, that is a higher unemployment rate for the extra-EU migrants. The male/female comparison is even more dramatic, with fewer foreign women in employment and very concentrated in low-wage jobs. While only 5% of natives are in the bottom decile of the income distribution, the share of the Third country national migrants can reach 10% and even more, the worst configuration being that of females – 10% of native women are in the bottom decile of income distribution and 20-30% of women are Third country nationals (source Eurostat Demographic Statistics 2019-2020).

Fig. 2. Activity rates for the population aged 20-64 years, by citizenship, 2019.



Note: ranked on activity rates for nationals. Bulgaria and Romania: citizens of other EU member states, not available. Romania: citizens of other EU member states, not available. ⁽¹⁾ Citizens of other EU member states: data with limited reliability. ⁽²⁾ Non EU citizens: data with limited reliability. Source: Eurostat (online data code: lfsa_urgan).

Fig. 3. Unemployment rates for the population aged 20-64 years, by citizenship, 2019.



Note: ranked on unemployment rate for national citizens. Bulgaria, Croatia, Lithuania, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Icesland: citizens of other EU member states and non-EU citizens, not available. Estonia, Latvia, Poland and Portugal: citizens of other EU member states, not available.

⁽¹⁾ Citizens of other EU member states: data with limited reliability.

⁽²⁾ Non EU citizens: data with limited reliability.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: lfsa_urgan).

2.2. Integration of the second generation

The explanation of the low inclusion of the first generation of migrants is based on the human capital theory which suggests that their lower human and social capital reduces their 'employability' because their poor linguistic and communication competences make them less 'employable', especially women who in general hold jobs in the service sectors where communication is crucial (Strom *et al.* 2018). However, such a low degree of inclusion is less understandable among the second extra-European generation, whose low education or lower ability of getting highly skilled jobs seems related to the community background which determines their school performance and their job access. The Eurostat ad hoc 2014 module of the labour force survey shows that the over education of the extra European migrants of first generation is 32% for male and 40.1% for female, it declines for the second generation to 20% for male and 25% for female, but remains larger than the one of natives or European migrants respectively 19% and 22%. Maurice Crul in his numerous studies (i.e. Crul and Vermeulen 2003; Lelie, Crul and Schneider 2012) stresses

that the obstacles that the second-generation migrants encounter in their education careers are many. His first research on Moroccan and Turkish second generation in the Netherlands identified the root causes of under assimilation in the community background and also in the institutional structure which is supposed to take care of them. The results are language deficiency and poor primary school achievement which push them into dead-end lower vocational training. However, the change of attitude of the countries of origin, which created a “ministry of the migrants abroad” for instance in Morocco and Turkey with the intention to support their migrant citizens into education and professional success abroad and also changed the narrative of their role for the country of origin, starting to consider them their “ambassadors abroad” seem very promising especially if supported with tailored policies by the destination country (Venturini 2017).

While steps ahead toward a unified European model were achieved for the intra-EU migration, a lot is still to be done for extra-EU migrants. Entrance policies should likely remain flexible so as to respond to needs of the country and its international relations, but common initiatives are severely missing on the integration side because labour market trends are different across Europe, and so are social policies.

2.3. *Highly skill migration*

The European Union has made a step forward in the race to attract the best and the brightest migrants which could contribute to the world competition for skills, creating the *BLUE Card*, a permit and a preferential channel of entrance to favor the inflow of highly skilled³ migrants to push European productivity and innovation. The mechanism was not universally accepted however. For instance, the Netherlands and the UK preferred their national procedures which were simpler and backed by the experience of the local employers, while in Germany the lack of a previous system made the card very useful. The card represents, nevertheless, an attempt to create a European instrument to manage Third country national migration in a unified way and for that reasons it should be considered a success because it could include also intra-EU mobility.⁴

On family reunification the practices remain national, but even if they respect a common principle stressing the importance of the unity of the

³ Blue Card Directive 2009, https://ec.europa.eu/immigration/blue-card/essential-information_en (accessed November 17, 2021).

⁴ See for a comment KALANTARYAN and MARTIN 2015.

family, the issue has not received specific attention. This is surprising because since at least 20 years the most important channel of entrance for inflows of migrants has been the family reunification channel, which is less volatile and larger than the inflow of labour migrants (which is more important only in the new immigration Eastern countries), students and asylum seekers.

Integration policies are part of the Third pillar and are thus very far from the core of EU competences, but the European Commission is involved in funding integration programs through the Asylum and Migrants Integration Fund⁵ and many other forms of support. The reduction of overeducation – namely a level of education higher than necessary for job in which the worker is employed – between the first and the second generation is a good point of departure but the question of under-education remains among the members of the labour force, negatively affecting both economic and cultural inclusion.

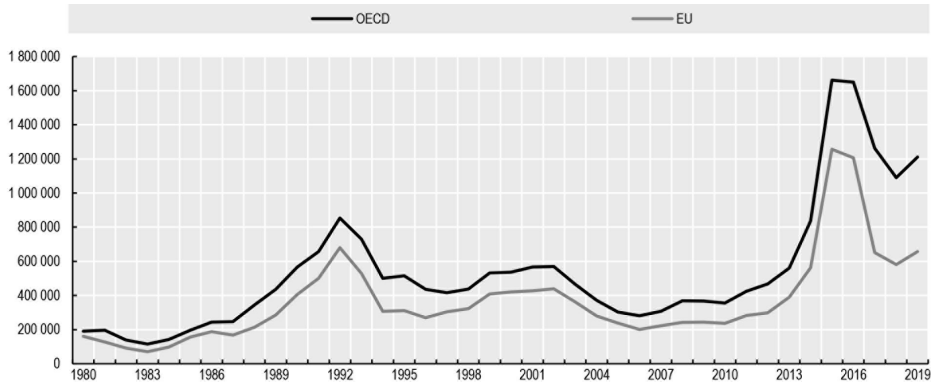
3. *BEFORE* MIGRANTS IN SEARCH OF AN INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION REPRESENTED AN OCCASIONAL AND LIMITED AMOUNT OF THE INFLOWS. *NOW*, IN 2015, ASYLUM SEEKERS HAVE INCREASED ABRUPTLY, THEIR ARRIVALS AND THEIR ‘PROCESS OF RECOGNITION’ HAVING GAINED ATTENTION, THEY POINT OUT THE WEAKNESSES OF THE EUROPEAN SPIRIT INSIDE THE UNION

The annual asylum applications in Europe were in general limited. In 1985 they were below 200,000, after the fall of the Berlin wall they rose to 697,000 in 1992, but declined already to 250,000 in 1995, then picked up again in 1998 with the start of the Kosovo conflict and reached a total of 463,000 in 2002, then very rapidly declined and stabilized to less than 200,000 until the beginning of the Syrian conflict. The Syrian conflict and the Arab Spring abruptly brought the inflows to 1,325,000. In the years following, the inflows declined but remained higher than in the past, focusing the attention of all the European countries on the asylum seekers’ demands and the function of the European asylum procedure. Most of the applicants came from the Neighbor European countries and Europe was the area most under pressure as the figure 4 (OECD) below points out.

The ‘top of the list’ nationalities of asylum seekers in 2015 were Syrians with 372,560 asylum applicants, Afghani with 251,000 and Iraqueni

⁵ Just to provide a reference the annual Plan for Italy provided € 339,075,470 of Com-munitarian contribution, www.interno.gov.it/it/temi/immigrazione-e-asilo/fondi-europei/fondo-asilo-migrazione-e-integrazione-fami (accessed November 17, 2021).

Fig. 4. New asylum applications since 1980 in the OECD and the European Union.



Note: Preliminary data 2019.

Source: UNHCR, Eurostat.

179,000, little by little the flows declined and in 2019 none of the inflows reached 100,000 and the Syrian demand was lower than the Venezuela and Honduras ones.

The Dublin agreement,⁶ which was the legal provision for the recognition of the 'asylum seekers', placed too much responsibility on the border countries where the asylum seekers arrived irregularly. The failure of the United Nation High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR) in organizing a 'resettlement' from the area of conflict which the asylum seekers were fleeing to safe destination countries, created the pressure for illegal flows. The increase in irregular arrivals, not all in search of international protection, many only in search of a better future, created an excessive load for the border countries. Relocation inside Europe was expected but not supported by all the EU countries. Germany, which accepted 1,000,000 persons in search of international protection, was an exception. The application for international protection is a long one and is managed in a different way in each one of the EU countries.

What the border countries demanded was *relocation* before recognition of international protection, the latter being a long (one or two years) and costly process because a 'temporary' integration process needs to be implemented, which creates expectations and brings in people whose presence is perceived as irregular, causing a lot of discontent among the native popu-

⁶ COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION 2003.

lation. The rise of attention for migration issues made this issue into the top priority for European citizens according to the Eurobarometer survey of 2017 and eventually complicated the solution. This was not accepted by some of the new member states of the European Union, somehow still attached to their own cultural roots, who did not yet fully share the European values of international solidarity. The 2020-2021 pandemic and the subsequent international recession led to restrictions of international contacts that intensified nationalistic sentiments, amplifying differences and making agreement even more problematic.

Changes in values take time. In the future, the new generations of European citizens from these countries will reinterpret the national values in their own cultural roots in the light of the newly accepted European ones, but for the moment they are unable to step rapidly in this direction.

The control of the frontiers was in the hand of nation states, both the land and the sea borders, and the possibility of the EU to create an agency able to support border countries was very limited. At the beginning the countries close to the sending areas behaved as transit countries, organizing emergency support activities and letting the foreigners who wanted to reach relatives in other countries to leave. Later this became impossible, the internal frontiers were closed, and Schengen agreement suspended. Migrants remained in the area of arrival and recognition procedures in the hands of the arrival countries.

However, those who failed to obtain international protection, ranging between 60-50% of the total applicants, due to the cost of repatriation – which was not implemented efficiently by the country of destination – remained in the destination country and created discontent among the local population. Frequently, the migrants who remained were unable to access the labour market and to obtain a legal stay (Venturini 2018).

Effective protection of human rights was not granted even with the strenuous role played by the volunteer associations. Social justice was not respected because the local, regional, national and international institutions were not able to approach the problem in a conclusive way. The Commission, given that the (Council of) national countries was unable to find an agreement, intervened to reduce the intensity of this tragedy.

An example is the Turkish agreement of March 16, 2016 which was drafted inside the EU Commission but signed by the Prime Minister of each European country and by the Turkish President to create hosting camps for Syrians in Turkey, near the Syrian border, with financial support from the European countries. This agreement tried to mediate between the rights of the Greek population, invaded by flows of asylum seekers in search of protection, and the rights of the asylum seekers and was in line with the Turkish initial position of open door policy to Syrians. It has

been criticized, but in the short run it offered the most successful possible solution for the number of persons in search of an international protection in Greece because the situation was unmanageable. Of course, more should have been done to improve the quality of support offered to migrants in Turkey but at that time the end of the Syrian war seemed to be impending.

The asylum problem is difficult to manage because the flows are rarely predictable, their management is complex because Europe keeps receiving individuals who seek international protection and are faced with the recognition procedure. When their rights are recognized international cooperation schemes between first arrival countries and final destination ones should be put in place.

The expectation of receiving spontaneous asylum seekers discourage the EU countries, which are close to the inflows areas, to offer thought the UNHCR position for asylum seekers and reduces the efficacy of this legal channel of entrance which would be safer and cheaper. In addition, the inflows of potential asylum seekers also discourage the reopening of the labour channel which could satisfy the 50% of the seekers of international protection who do not obtain it. The European Commission has intervened to support countries of first arrival and to revise the Dublin agreement with very little success so far, but the New Pact of Migration and Asylum seems promising. The European Commission is trying to build consensus upon the redistribution of the costs of asylum seekers and migrants inside the European countries. Equally commendable is the Commission's attempt to achieve a more equitable recognition of their rights to international protection by transforming the EASO (European Asylum Support Office) into an agency operating in different states and providing not only support to states but direct and effective intervention to recognize the rights of international protection.⁷

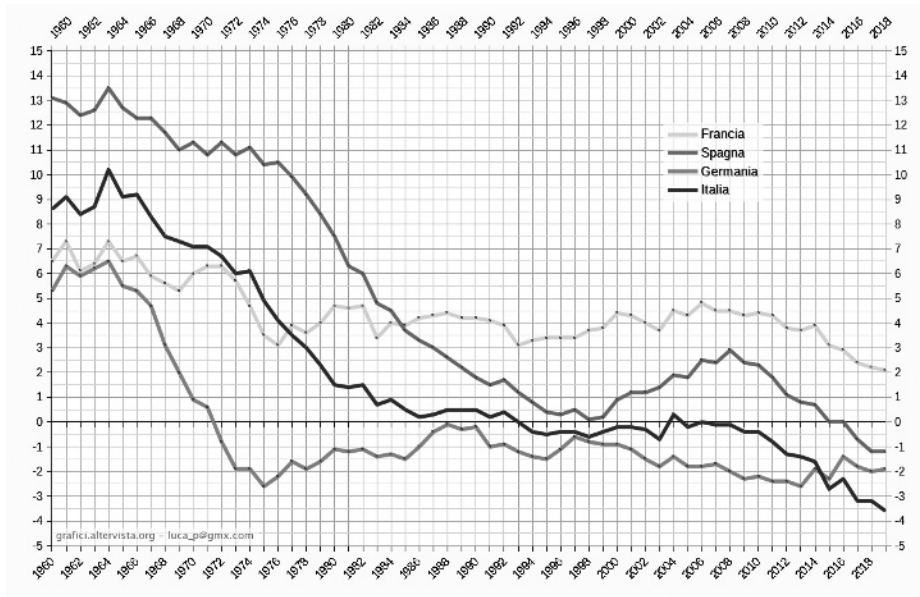
A lot is however to be done because while labour migration is an economic issue, asylum migration is a strongly political issue where human, cultural, and economic issues are intertwined and need a strong political synergy which does not seem a priority in all the member states at the moment.⁸

⁷ See EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT 2021.

⁸ The example of United Kingdom where the inflows of European immigrants played a role in the 'sentiment' which favours the vote to exit from the European Union, and which is now facing the lack of workers which blocks the distribution of products, proves the complexity of migration dynamics and the necessity to have a pragmatic long run approach instead of an emotional one.

4. BEFORE, THE GROWTH OF EUROPEAN DEMOGRAPHY WAS POSITIVE UNTIL 1970. IT THEN STARTED DECLINING. NOW THE NATURAL POPULATION GROWTH IS NEGATIVE, EVEN VERY NEGATIVE IN SOME COUNTRIES (GERMANY, ITALY AND ALSO POLAND) AND FOREIGN INFLOWS ARE TO THE ADVANTAGE BOTH OF MIGRANTS ACCESSING THE LABOUR MARKET OF DESTINATION COUNTRIES AND OF THE DEMOGRAPHIC COMPOSITION OF EUROPE

Fig. 5. Population growth rate in France, Spain, Germany, and Italy.



If we consider the replacement rate, namely the amount of population needed to replace the dead, in all the EU countries with the exception of UK and France the outflow is larger than the migrant inflows, thus the total population is declining. It is well-known that immigration inflows are necessary to contrast the decline of the total population. In the short term they represent a rebalancing of the labour force and a form of financial support in a 'pay as you go' pension system. In the long run, they will not be enough to rebalance the population structure, now weighted too much on the ageing members and too little on young members in the labour force. But the advantages of having a balanced population are much broader. Young people are more proactive, risk prone and ready to adjust to and implement the changes needed to keep up with international competition and the evolution of the environment. They also support the 'green

turn' in the environment, and their role as consumers ultimately keeps the economy growing.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The European countries in the 'migration' field are moving (with a stop-and-go kind of pace) along the spirit of the *Ventotene Manifesto*, toward a more coherent but differentiated approach to human mobility.

Seen from the outside, the intra-EU mobility has reached with the Schengen agreement the creation of a European space where European citizens can move freely in search of jobs and educational qualifications which have both economic and culturally relevant implications. In fact the agreement can be said to complement the Erasmus student mobility program, providing job opportunities for the European citizens; furthermore, it is a cornerstone in the construction of a European space based on contacts which create mutual understanding and common trust upon which Europe can grow in all dimensions. Due to the pandemic this integration has slowed down in the last two years but it is caching up again.

The creation also of a European instrument to favour highly skilled immigration of third national countries such as the 'Blue Card' is a move in the same direction, equipping the European countries with an instrument to participate in the race for talent. We also hope that very soon a solution to manage the asylum seekers at European level will be found with the New Pact on Migration and Asylum. In the meantime the European Commission has already taken initiatives to support the member states in many ways such as for instance in controlling the borders, in providing funds for the first assistance actions and for integration policies.

Seen from the inside, a less homogeneous picture emerges. Different roles are played by the Council of national ministers which provides a direct contact with the national electorate and its mood namely the values, preferences and feelings prevailing in the different European regions, and the European Commission which is more detached from, let us say, the local emotions and economic constraints and is pursuing more universal objectives providing support where it is more needed. What was the *Ventotene Manifesto* idea? The *Ventotene Manifesto* writers had in mind a European Union – 'Europe' with differences: differences in food, languages, expressions of lifestyles, climate, sports, and clothing, but with the clear feeling of belonging to a special area of freedom and rights. Very similar to the one we have now. Cultures and preferences are different around Europe but lie within a common framework of understanding and tolerance of diversities.

For these reasons, given the complexity of the migration scenario we have to keep in mind that migrants introduce diversity in each region which has to be managed at national level but even more at European level. This process needs a comparison of values, a mix of cultural tolerance and identity, and very shortly we will have not only a national identity but a European identity – more nuanced but based on solidarity values to compare and contrast with the ones of the migrants. The education of the second generation and their inclusion should be a priority to grant them economic and cultural inclusion. The European integration of migrants is a priority not only for migrants themselves but mainly for natives because *together* they will be the future European citizen.

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