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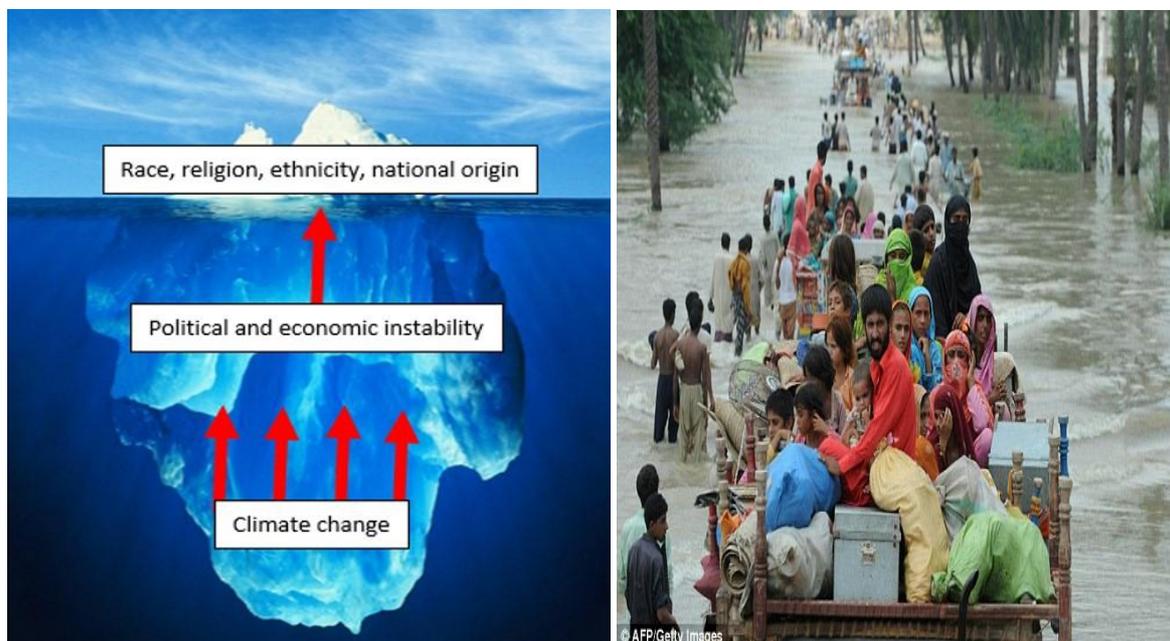
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Looking at the tip of the Iceberg: “*Europe facing climate change immigration*”

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Speed read

- Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF) report says 10% of the global population is at risk of forced displacement due to climate change
- Scientific evidence for warming of the climate system is unequivocal.
- The number of migrants attempting to settle in Europe each year will triple by the end of the century

Key words: Immigration, Integration, Climate Change, Europe, Aging Population

Europe's big hug

The countries and cultures of Europe have always been diverse and heterogeneous in their ethnic, religious and social composition. The opening of borders, globalization of markets and production, worldwide migration and new communication technologies mean this trend will continue, even if populist and extremist forces on the right persist in their attempts to stir up antipathy and mobilize citizens against any acceptance of cultural heterogeneity.

Former massive migration influx

The ongoing violence in a large number of the countries of the Middle East and North Africa, the access to the neighboring countries which has been restricted a radically, following the deterioration of the conditions in these countries, caused by the vast numbers of migrants and the recent geopolitical changes that have closed off most alternative destinations, led to a massive migration influx in the former years to Europe's continent.

This leads to the conclusion that the migrant flows will continue with the same or even higher rates in the foreseeable future.

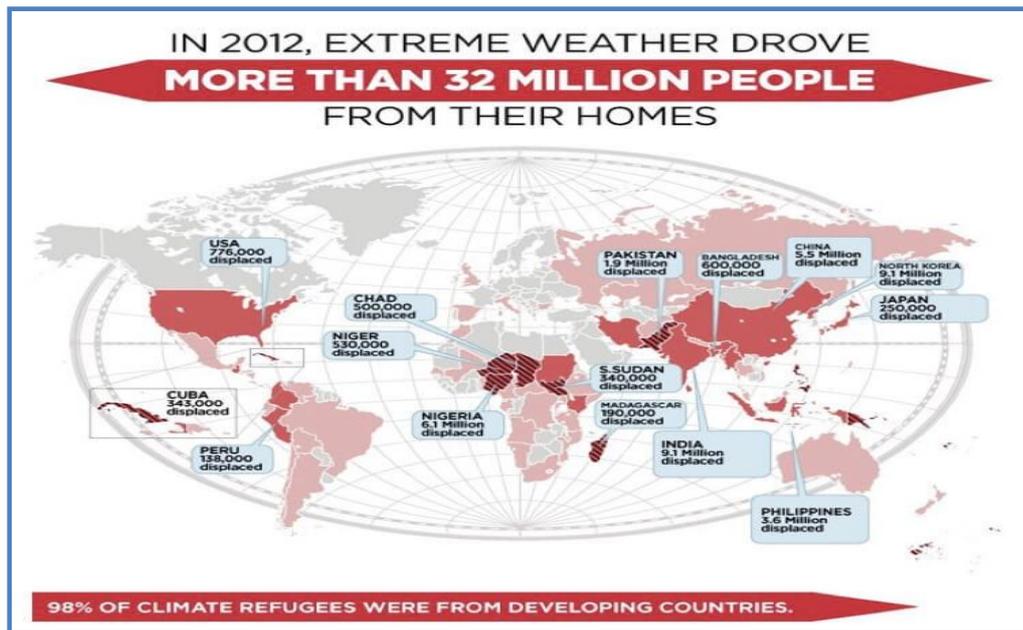
Climate Change is the key word

According to the Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF), Global warming will force up to 150 million "climate refugees" to move to other countries in the next 40 years. In 2008 alone, more than 20 million people were displaced by climate-related natural disasters. The EJF claimed 500 million to 600 million people – nearly 10% of the world's population – are at risk from displacement by climate change. Around 26 million have already had to move.

Oli Brown to his article, 'Climate Change and Forced Migration', analyses three scenarios, the good, the bad and the ugly. Under the ugly scenario, predictions of 200 million people displaced by climate change might easily be exceeded. Large areas of Southern China, South Asia and the Sahelian region of sub-Saharan Africa could become uninhabitable on a permanent basis. Climate forced migration would be unmistakable with tens of millions of people at a time displaced by extreme weather events, such as floods, storms and glacial lake outburst floods, and many millions more displaced by climate processes like desertification, salinisation of agricultural land and sea-level rise.

In the longer term, the report said, changes to weather patterns will lead to various problems, including desertification and sea-level rises that threaten to inundate low-lying areas and small island developing states. An expert at the Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations in Paris recently said global

warming could create "ghost states" with citizens living in "virtual states" due to land lost to rising seas.



IPCC's evidences stress policy makers and foreseers

The globally-recognised scientific body for climate research is the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which has been producing climate change reports on behalf of the United Nations since 1988.

“Scientific evidence for warming of the climate system is unequivocal”

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

Researches based on the comparison of atmospheric samples contained in ice cores and more recent direct measurements, provides evidence that atmospheric CO₂ has increased since the Industrial Revolution. Earth-orbiting satellites and other technological advances have enabled scientists to see the big picture, collecting many different types of information about our planet and its climate on a global scale. This body of data, collected over many years, reveals the signals of a rapid changing climate.

Last year, the hottest on record for the third year in a row, was about 1.1 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial level, according to Nasa, boosted slightly by the natural El Nino effect. Satellite observations reveal that the amount of spring snow cover in the Northern Hemisphere has decreased over the past five decades and that the snow is melting earlier.

Most of the leading scientific organizations worldwide have issued public statements endorsing this position. The evidence for rapid climate change is compelling. Global temperature rise, warming oceans, shrinking ice sheets, glacial retreat, decreased snow covers, sea level rise, high temperature extreme events and ocean acidification are only few facts of what we witness almost every day around our world...

Numbers are relentless

Climate change will drive a huge increase in the number of migrants seeking asylum in Europe if current trends continue, according to a new study. The number of migrants attempting to settle in Europe each year will triple by the end of the century based on current climate trends alone, independent of other political and economic factors, according to the research. Even if efforts to curb global warming are successful, the number of applications for asylum could rise by a quarter, the authors predict.



Image: Nearly 700,000 persons have been internally displaced in Somalia as a result of the drought and food crisis. Photograph: Peter Caton/Mercy Corps

Wolfram Schlenker, professor at the school of international and public affairs at Columbia University in New York, and lead author of the study, said: “Europe will see increasing numbers of desperate people fleeing their home countries.” Many countries, including Bangladesh, Kenya, Papua New Guinea, Somalia, Yemen, Ethiopia, Chad and Rwanda, could see large movements of people. Bangladesh has had 70 climate-related natural disasters in the past 10 years.

Bob Ward, policy and communications director at the Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment, at the London School of Economics and Political Science, said “This study shows how Europe will be impacted by one of the most serious impacts of climate change. Hundreds of millions, perhaps billions, of people will be exposed to coastal sea level rise and shifts in extreme weather that will cause mass migrations away from the most vulnerable locations. We know from human history that such migrations often lead to conflict and war, with devastating consequences. The huge potential costs of migration-related conflict are usually omitted from economic models of climate change impacts in the future.”

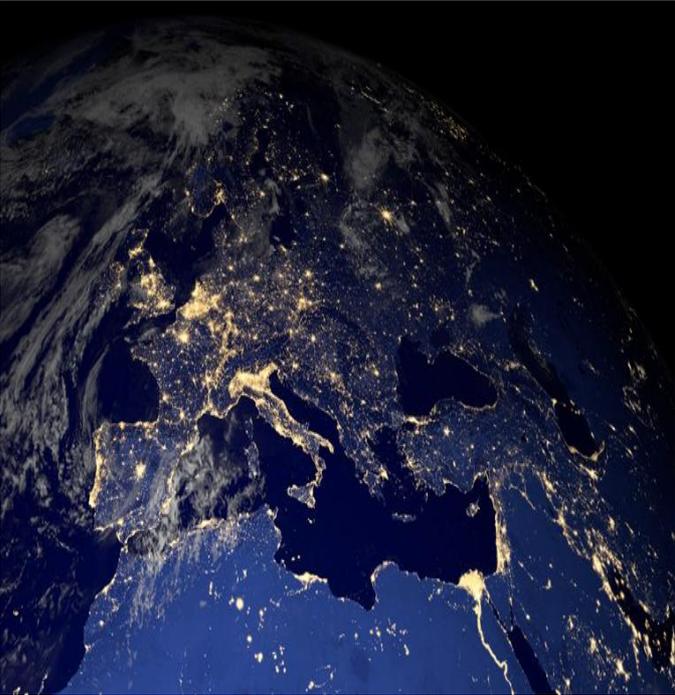
The new study, published on Thursday in the journal *Science*, was initiated and largely funded by the EU’s Joint Research Centre, with contribution from the US Department of Energy, and led by scientists at Columbia University in New York.

The authors of the study examined asylum applications in the EU from 103 countries between 2000 and 2014, during which time applications averaged more than 350,000 a year. They compared the applications with information on environmental factors, such as temperature and weather, and adjusted the data for factors such as conflict and political turmoil. In doing so, they spotted a trend correlating weather and changes in the number of asylum applications. For instance, countries with average temperatures around 20°C – the optimum for growing many crops – show a higher number of applications, while there are fewer asylum seekers from areas with cooler temperatures.

They recorded increases in the number of migrants from hot places such as Iraq and Pakistan when temperatures rose. The scientists posit that as the globe warms, the number of people seeking asylum in Europe will correspondingly rise. Warming of 2.6°C to 4.8°C, which climate experts say is likely unless stronger action is taken to bring down greenhouse gas emissions, would result in as many as 660,000 additional asylum seekers coming to Europe each year by 2100, according to the model.

EU remains unprepared for the next migration crisis

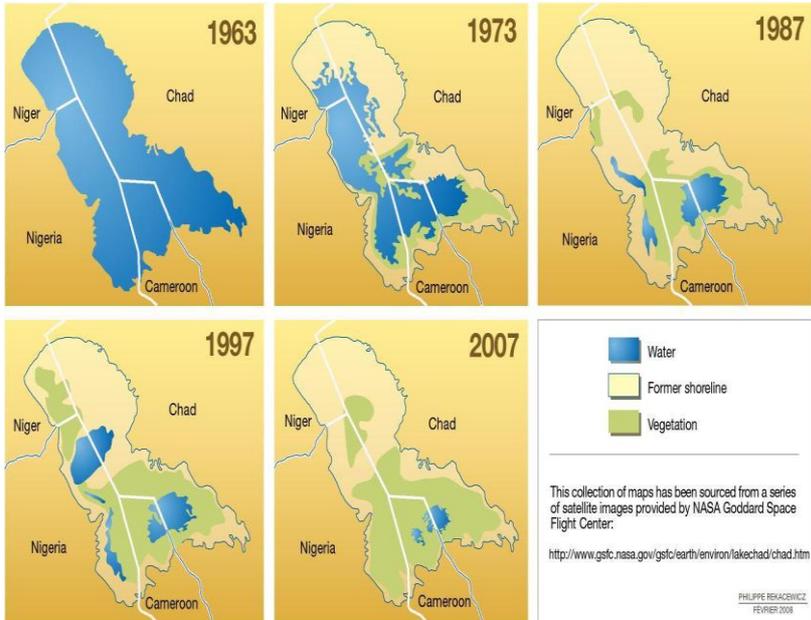
Europe is underestimating the primary cause of migration from sub-saharan Africa: climate change. Environmental changes have a particularly pronounced impact on migration from Africa for at least four reasons: the continent is highly dependent on natural resources and agriculture, which are the first assets to be undermined by climate change; it has poor infrastructure, such as flood defences; its states are often characterized by weak institutions, which are less able to adapt to climate change; and its high poverty rate undermines the resilience of local populations to climate shocks.



The Sahel belt, which is at the center of EU efforts to combat illegal migration in Africa, is a useful case study in this regard. Here, environmental and demographic changes combine with devastating effects. Greenhouses emissions are on the rise, temperatures are increasing and, as a result, the intensity and frequency of catastrophic events is rising dramatically.

Northern Nigeria, Chad, Niger and Mali are among the most affected countries. In 2012 alone, more than 6 million people in North-Eastern Nigeria were forcibly displaced due to floods and more than 500,000 people were displaced in Chad.

The total absence of European policies to address climate-driven migration from Africa is deeply concerning



Lake Chad (which borders Chad, Niger, Nigeria and Cameroon) has shrunk by 90% since the 1960s. Around 25 million people in the region who depend on the lake for their livelihoods in agriculture, fisheries and livestock are in an immediate danger. The dramatic reduction in water levels means that almost 7 million people are currently food insecure. Thousands of

fishermen and farmers became unemployed in recent years. This has clearly contributed to forced movement, with 2.5 million people already displaced from the region. More will surely follow.

Presently, the proportion of people living below the poverty line (\$3.10/day) is estimated at more than 80% in Niger and Burkina Faso, 77% in Mali, 64% in Chad and 60% in Nigeria. These countries are also the most dependent on agriculture in the world. Agriculture is in turn heavily dependent on climate conditions. If we consider that about 60% of the population along the Sahel area is employed by rain-fed agriculture, it is easy to understand the potential devastating effects of environmental changes on the region.

Current data shows that a large majority of those forced to move (more than 90%) choose to remain in the region, rather than travel to Europe. This is largely due to a lack of material resources needed to leave the continent. However, given the demographic trends, neighboring countries will not be able to absorb the flows forever. As such, it is likely that people will look increasingly toward Europe as their lifeline.

This, of course, is a concern for European policymakers. But what should concern them even more is the complete absence of any long-term policies to address these trends. The EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa is typical in focusing on enhancing

border control and fighting smuggling, rather than tackling the long term causes of migration.

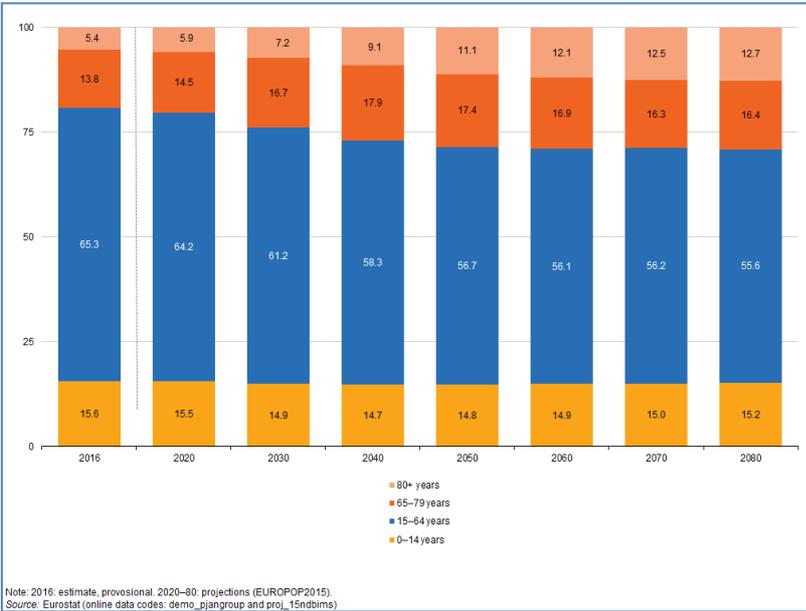
The combination of poverty, dependence on agriculture, environmental degradation, and population growth are creating a vicious circle, which can be expected to translate into increasing forced migration.

These environmental factors are exacerbated by demographic trends, creating a potentially explosive situation. The total population of Africa will grow from the current 1.2 billion to 2.5 billion by 2050. Niger, with the highest fertility rate in the world - 7.3 children per woman – will see its population multiply from 20 million to almost 70 million people in this timeframe. By contrast, Germany and Italy will see their populations decline from 81 to 79 million and from 60 to 55 million people respectively over the same period.

Europe’s Opportunity

Is there any real emerging opportunity for our continent through all this? Successful crisis management requires making the best out of any positive aspects.

The EU demographics which have been in decline for a long period will eventually jeopardize the future prosperity of EU citizens. According to EUROSTAT, the proportion of people of working age in the EU-28 is shrinking while the relative number of those retired is expanding.



The share of older persons in the total population will increase significantly in the coming decades, as a greater proportion of the post-war baby-boom generation reaches retirement. This will, in turn, lead to an increased burden on those of working age to provide for the social expenditure required by the ageing population for a range of related services.

Image: Population structure by major age groups, EU-28, 2016-80 (% of total population)

“Population ageing, the not so new trend in Europe...”, Eurostat assures

Population ageing is a long-term trend which began several decades ago in Europe. This trend is visible in the transformations of the age structure of the population and is reflected in an increasing share of older persons coupled with a declining share of working-age persons in the total population.

The growth in the relative share of older people may be explained by increased longevity, a pattern that has been apparent for several decades as life expectancy has risen. On the other hand, consistently low levels of fertility over many years have contributed to population ageing, with fewer births leading to a decline in the proportion of young people in the total population.

According to Münz Rainer, senior Research Fellow at the Hamburg Institute of International Economics (HWWI), the size of the labor force in the countries of western and central EU is 227 million. In the absence of immigration and at the current labor force reduction rates this force would shrink to 201 million in 2025 and to 160 million in 2050.

In order to maintain its' constant over the analyzed period, a net inflow of 66 million labor migrants would be necessary. This would mean that on average a net inflow of slightly less than 1.5 million labor migrants per year would be required to keep the EU's economically active population at constant levels. However, since not all newcomers will join the work force (e.g. children and elder) the total net migration would have to be higher.



BRIC's domination

Furthermore, the recent economic crisis has revealed that in the new globalized market, there are other more dynamic and resilient players to share the pie of global wealth. China, India and Brazil, having young and dynamic populations, challenge directly the advantages that the US, Japan and the EU have enjoyed so far almost exclusively.

So, it is totally understandable that aging workforce could prove to be a critical vulnerability for the whole Europe. The EU member states public must become aware that the declining demographic trend will inevitably have a negative impact in

the domain of the economy. Being impossible to convince the EU indigenous population to trade their wealth and comfort for more children, the only possible way to renew the workforce of the EU is through migration. It is of no wonder that Germany, being the power engine of the EU's economy, is willing to welcome refugees.

This is the time for Europe to seize the opportunity...

Europe policy makers must perceive the current and the following migration flows, less as a problem and more as a solution to some of their long term economic problems, that we mentioned before.

Still in search for a successful integration strategic plan?

There are innumerable proposals, core strategies for advancing integration and cohesion for a successful integration process, expressed by many actors, stakeholders, NGOs, International Institutions, etc.



The European Commission has already adopted an Action Plan on the integration of third-country nationals from 7 June 2016.

The Action Plan provides a comprehensive framework to support Member States' efforts in developing and strengthening their integration policies, and describes the concrete measures the Commission will implement in this regard.

While it targets all third-country nationals in the EU, it contains actions to address the specific challenges faced by refugees.

The Plan includes actions across all the policy areas that are crucial for integration:

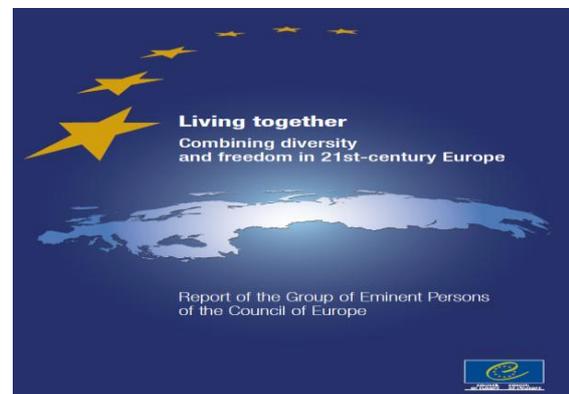
- Pre-departure and pre-arrival measures, including actions to prepare migrants and the local communities for the integration process
- Education, including actions to promote language training, participation of migrant children to Early Childhood Education and Care, teacher training and civic education
- Employment and vocational training, including actions to promote early integration into the labor market and migrants entrepreneurship
- Access to basic services such as housing and healthcare
- Active participation and social inclusion, including actions to support exchanges with the receiving society, migrants' participation to cultural life and fighting discrimination

It remains only to be proved to what extent EU countries are willing to adopt 100% these measures and proposals.

In addition, in the summer of 2010, the Council of Europe requested from an independent “Group of Eminent Persons” (the Group) to prepare a report on the challenges arising from the resurgence of intolerance and discrimination in Europe. Among this report, which assessed the seriousness of the risks and identified their sources, the group - headed by the former German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer - made a series of proposals for living together in open European societies.

According to the Report of the Group of Eminent Persons, particular sectors of society and institutions, which have the capacity to change the way people in Europe, think about each other, and so enable them to live together better must play more active role. The main actors for a potential realistic change in our Europe are:

- Educators
- Mass Media
- Employers and Trade Unions
- Civil Society
- Churches and Religious groups
- Celebrities and “Role Models”
- Towns & Cities
- Member States
- European Institutions



It is important to remember that the envisioned benefits of migration come only when this migration is done under specific rules and conditions which maximize the positive issues and minimize the negative ones. The EU must come up with policies tailored to the specific EU needs.

EU member states should launch targeted public communication campaigns. It is through these communication campaigns that will help the public realize that, the potential risk that they take now will in turn help in limiting the serious economic risk that next generations will have to face. This awareness could positively influence peoples' minds and turn the tide in the right direction.

“Acknowledge that integration can take a long time, particularly for the least educated”,

one of the worth mentioned proposals of OECD’s report for successful integration procedures.

Even OECD organization through its report “Making Integration Work”, which published in 2016, drew on key lessons from the OECD’s work on integration. The objective was to summarize in a non-technical way the main challenges and good

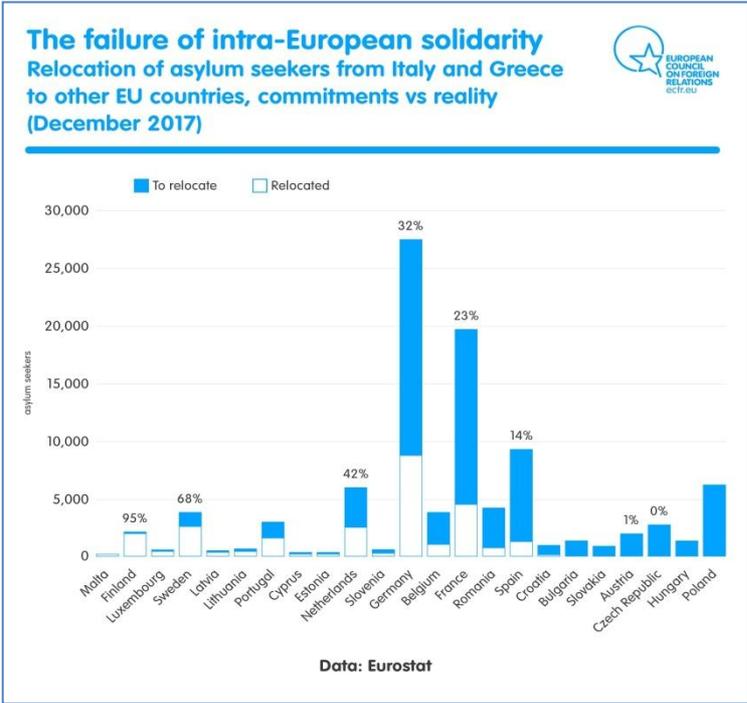
policy practices to support the lasting integration of refugees and their children for selected key groups and domains of integration.

Economically, the goal is to allow the legal entry of migrants in the workforce, thus allow them to become active members of the economy of the host country. A system must be set in place and the sooner migrants become economically active and fiscally accountable, the sooner they will start contributing to the economy and will gain the acceptance of the local population.

Only by this way, Europe will be able to absorb the forthcoming waves of climate refugees of Africa and Asia.

EU behaves like Janus

On the contrary, what we still face today... is a “Janus” behavior concerning Europe’s states and institutions, with only few assertive exceptions...



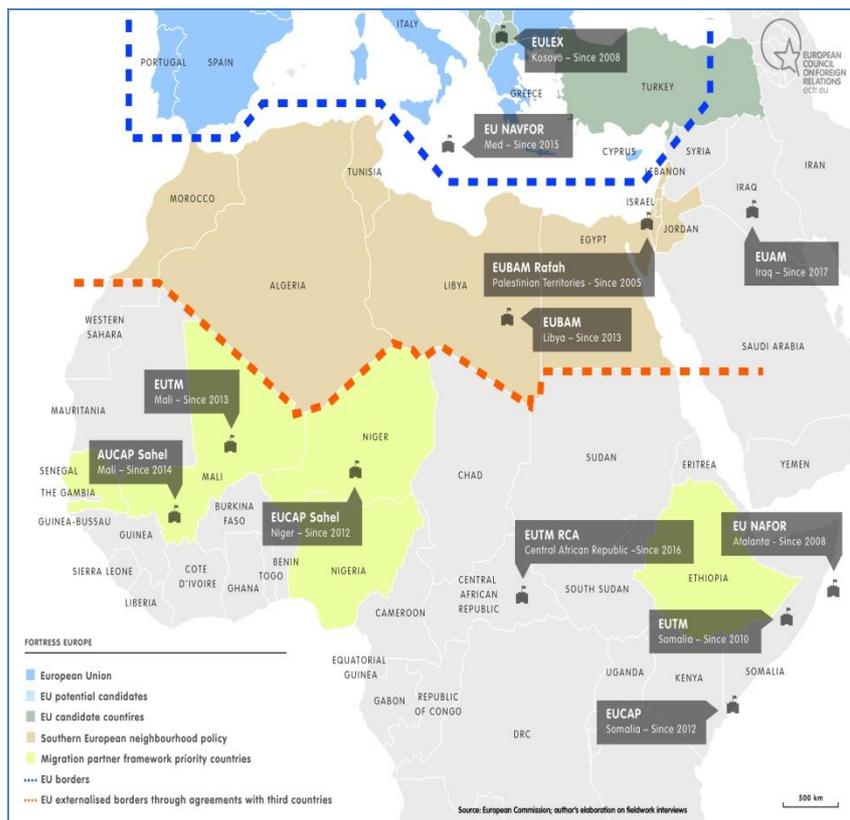
Unfortunately, concerning the relocation program for refugees, in the last two years, less than a fifth of the original target have been relocated or resettled. Initially Brussels wanted 160,000 refugees to be shared out among EU countries. Then it was reduced to 98,000 before falling to 33,000 places in April 2017, with the EC citing a lack of people eligible to be transferred. The EU received 43 percent fewer asylum applications in 2017 than it did in 2016.

“Still in Shock”

It is obvious that EU is definitely still in shock, but not only. It seems that is also divided in at least two opposed camps. Most central European states impose and implement restrictive policies, when on the contrary some northern and western European countries -such as Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, Sweden and Germany- allowed hundreds of thousands of refugees to cross their borders.

"FORTRESS EUROPE"

Another indication to the above mentioned, that EU reveals its ugly face, is the money spend to border control, security, and measures to restrict migratory flows, especially from Africa. Moreover, Europe's security-driven approach to migration risks exacerbates the problems that drive migration in countries of origin, generating greater instability in the long term. Through the policies it has adopted so far, the EU, which has an impressive presence within civilian and military missions in Africa, effectively moved its borders south towards the Sahel.



It is this externalization of borders control which helped to forge the image of a "fortress Europe" worldwide.

But who tries to avoid the unavoidable?

Summing up, climate change is predicted to result in more droughts, floods, heatwaves, as well as more intense storms and rising sea levels. These effects are likely to render agriculture more difficult, if not impossible, across swathes of the globe, including sub-Saharan Africa and parts of Asia.

These effects will also be felt in Europe, but its lower base temperatures, relative prosperity and advanced infrastructure mean the damage could be contained, and make it an attractive destination for migrants.

A rise in migration owing to climate change could exacerbate political tensions further. Europe is already conflicted about how many refugees to admit. The world must prepare. We will need to build new institutions and systems to manage this steady flow of new kind asylum-seekers. As we have seen from recent experience in Europe, there are tremendous costs, both for refugees and their hosts, when we are caught flat-footed.



"Climate change impacts on homes and infrastructure, food and water and human health. It will bring about a forced migration on an unprecedented scale," said the EJF director, Steve Trent. "We must take immediate steps to reduce our impact on global climate, and we must also recognize the need to protect those already suffering along with those most at risk."

Symptomatic of the general lack of interest in climate-enforced migration is the absence of any legal recognition for 'climate migrants'. While the term "refugee" offers protections based on a precise meaning under the Geneva Refugee Convention of 1951, there is no consensus over the definition – and the legal treatment – of people forcibly displaced by climate change. At present, they are treated as economic migrants, resulting in barriers to entering Europe legally. Addressing this deficiency is just one way in which European policymakers must now, belatedly, get to grips with the growing phenomenon of climate-enforced migration.

Parallel paths

Parallel to these conditions, Europe's demographic situation is characterized by longevity and low fertility. This leads to population aging and eventually shrinking domestic populations and work forces. Given the high levels of employment already reached by skilled EU-nationals, recruitment of migrants from third countries is increasingly appearing as the main way of responding to the growing demand for medium and high skilled labor.

At the same time, Europe experiences a continuing demand for low skilled labor. For these demographic and economic reasons, during the 21st century, all present EU member states and EU candidate countries will either remain or become immigration countries.

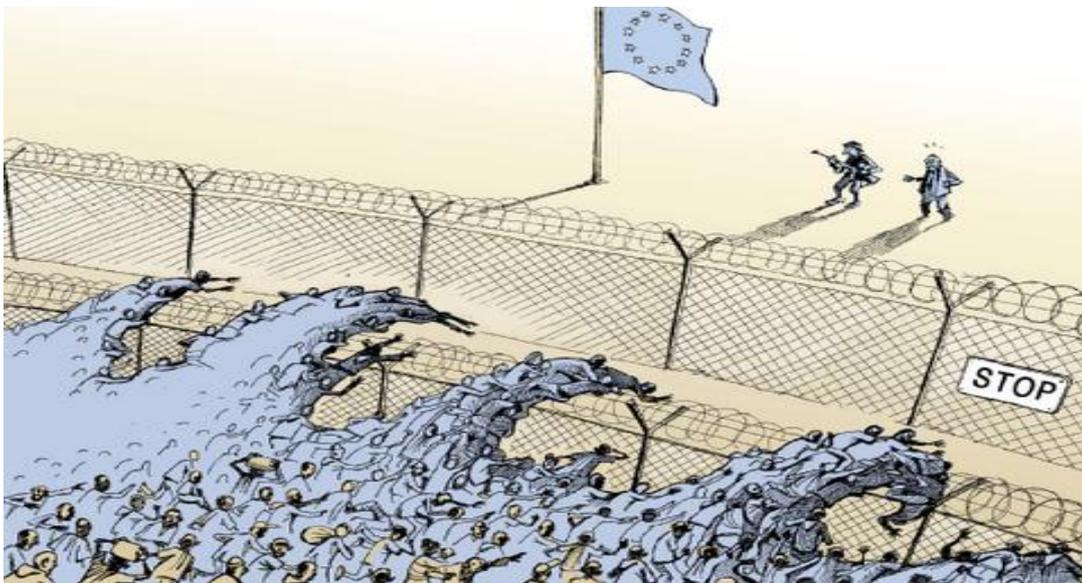
In this context, a pro-active approach to immigration could play a crucial role in tackling shortages of labor and skills, provided the qualifications of immigrants are appropriate. The migrants most likely to help match shortages of labor and skills and with the best chances to integrate are probably those who are able to adapt to

changing conditions, by virtue of their qualifications, experience and personal abilities.

Finding guts

There is probably no head of state or government in Europe who does not privately believe that Europe's demography, with a steady decline of the number of working-age people in proportion to those who need support, makes it inevitable that more immigrants will be needed over the coming decades; or who has not been told firmly by business leaders in his or her country that denying visas to skilled workers from abroad means hampering industry and slowing the economic recovery.

Europe's Leaders now more than ever, should be able and willing to explain this clearly to the public, and to insist on carrying out policies they know to be necessary and right, while also giving convincing responses to the public's real and legitimate concerns.



Last call for immediate action

Many analysts believe that this is our last opportunity as a continent.

Resolving internal disputes, bringing together diverging trends and taking decisive action is a prerequisite for success. From this perspective, the migration crisis that EU faced is an opportunity that EU leaders must seize, for there probably will not be a second one.

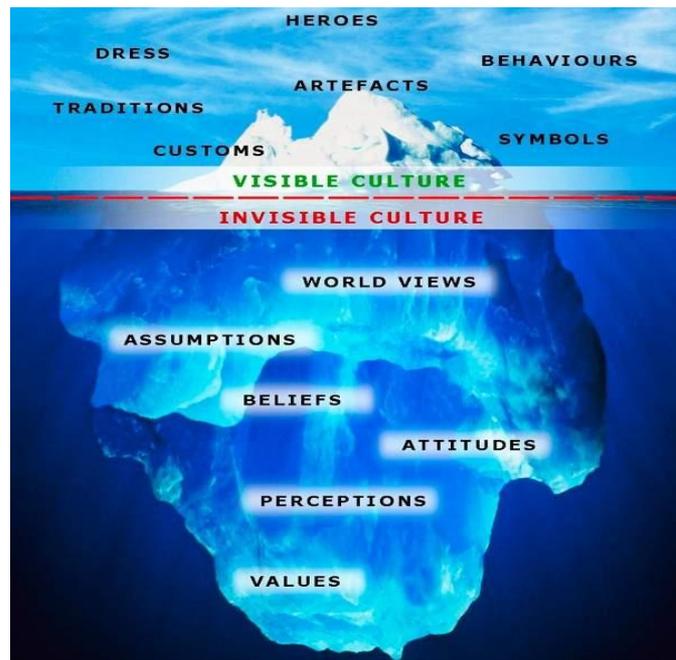
This time however, is absolutely vital for the Union to overcome its internal problems, avoid disintegration and prepare EU societies for the inevitable changes that come slap bang.

We only have to look under the sea, to understand the invisible part of the oncoming Iceberg

Once again, time is running out and the EU cannot afford to lose again.

Trying always to be optimistic, as a continent of very many different countries, languages and cultures, Europe is by its very nature diverse.

It is a place where people from different cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds, men and women with different sexual orientations, individuals with and without physical and mental disabilities pursuing widely differing lifestyles and inhabiting different economic milieus all live together.



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