



The EU-Africa migration agenda

realising a new partnership

ETTG Policy Brief 2/2024

Authors:

**Claire Kumar (ODI),
Jessica Hagen-Zanker
(ODI), Amanda Gray
Meral (ODI), Jesper
Bjarnesen (The Nordic
Africa Institute), Anna
Knoll (ECDPM)**

KEY MESSAGES

1. Differences in opinion around what the relationship between migration and development entails are central to diverging perspectives on migration governance between Africa and Europe. While African governments emphasise the developmental benefits of migration, European policymakers prefer to tackle the so-called 'root causes of migration' to address what they deem unwanted migration. These opposing views lead to significant divergence in policy agendas between the two regions.
2. The deterrence of irregular migration and achieving returns of African migrants to their countries of origin remains at the heart of the EU's policy priorities. By contrast, African policymakers are prioritising maximising remittances, effective diaspora programmes and the promotion of freedom of movement within Africa, as well as action to address climate-induced displacement. African priorities remain neglected within the partnership.
3. The two blocs are unlikely to make progress on their migration partnership without reorienting policy approaches. For the EU this means building its approach more strongly on the robust evidence that development leads to migration, and that migration leads to development.

KEY MESSAGES (CONTINUED)

4. EU member states will need to expand and/or create new legal pathways for migration from Africa to address labour shortages in a context of heightened global competition for workers. However, all signs point to a new European Commission that will prioritise defence and security, with labour mobility sidelined. This will likely disappoint both the European private sector and African governments.
5. The EU's focus on deterrence and securitised borders has resulted in severe, and well-documented, human rights violations at the EU's borders, at sea and along the land routes from the East and Horn of Africa and West Africa to the Mediterranean Sea. There is also mounting evidence of the EU's direct complicity in these given its financing of migration measures.
6. The introduction of the New Pact on Migration and Asylum, and in particular its accelerated procedures, could lead to wrongful denials of Africans' asylum claims and an even stronger focus on returns. This will likely further accentuate key areas of divergence between the two regional blocs including the reluctance of African governments to enter into readmission agreements.
7. There are no signs of any changes in political direction from the EU side. Rather it is expected the new European Commission will double down on its focus on irregular migration and returns, and accelerate its externalisation efforts. Moreover, pushing for new outsourcing of Europe's asylum responsibilities may well lead to further shifting of the responsibility for refugee hosting onto Africa.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	4
AFRICA-EUROPE MIGRATION CONTEXT	4
THE 'MIGRATION-DEVELOPMENT NEXUS' – A CRITICAL POINT OF DIVERGENCE	6
THE SHORTCOMINGS OF THE EU'S DOMINANT POLICY RESPONSE	6
THE LACK OF LEGAL PATHWAYS FOR AFRICAN MIGRATION TO EUROPE	7
HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS OF AFRICAN MIGRANTS IN TRANSIT AND AT EUROPE'S BORDERS	9
RECENT POLICY APPROACHES ENTRENCH THE DIVERGENCE OF INTERESTS	10
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	13
REFERENCES	14

INTRODUCTION

Migration has become a central concern in EU-Africa relations. This policy brief forms part of a research series being developed under ETG's partnership with Open Society Foundations (OSF), which looks at Europe-Africa relations across a range of themes including migration. It explores the current migration context, recent policy trends and particularly key areas of disagreement, where perspectives between Europe and Africa diverge. It seeks to place these within the current evidence base on migration and to reflect on some of the fundamental changes needed to secure the mutual benefits of more safe, legal and orderly migration between the two continents. This brief builds on, and is informed by, a high-level event that took place in Brussels in April 2024 (see ETG, 2024).

AFRICA-EUROPE MIGRATION CONTEXT

Africa-Europe migration has been a relatively minor phenomenon in the context of global migration flows and with regard to African migration flows, with recent trends reinforcing this. The latest World Migration Report finds that most African migration is intra-Africa, a trend which has grown significantly since 2015 largely as a result of free movement protocols on the continent (IOM, 2024). While the EU is a favoured destination for many Africans, emigration from North and East Africa to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states is also increasingly significant thanks to employment opportunities in sectors such as construction, hospitality, security and retail (ibid.). Despite remaining challenges in strengthening the rights of African labour migrants, migration to the GCC is seen as a viable alternative given restrictive visa options elsewhere.

The African continent also remains highly affected by conflict and Africa is a major host of refugees globally. Recent years have seen millions of people displaced within and/or from the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan and Ethiopia (IOM, 2024). The recent conflict in Sudan has led to 1.8 million Sudanese being hosted in neighbouring countries such as Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia and South Sudan, though only very small numbers of Sudanese are reflected in sea arrivals to southern Europe (UNHCR, n.d.; UNHCR, 2024).

The number of African citizens travelling to the EU has increased over the past decade (see Figure 1). However, while in general there was a rapid increase in residence permits issued after the Covid-19 pandemic, the trend in permits issued to African citizens shows they are not benefiting to the same extent as other nationalities from Europe's migration opportunities.

Analysis of Schengen visa applications finds Africans particularly disadvantaged, with rejection rates especially high for Africans applying for short stay visas for business or tourism purposes compared to citizens from other regions (Foresti & Mantegazza, 2023). And while there has been a decrease in the number of



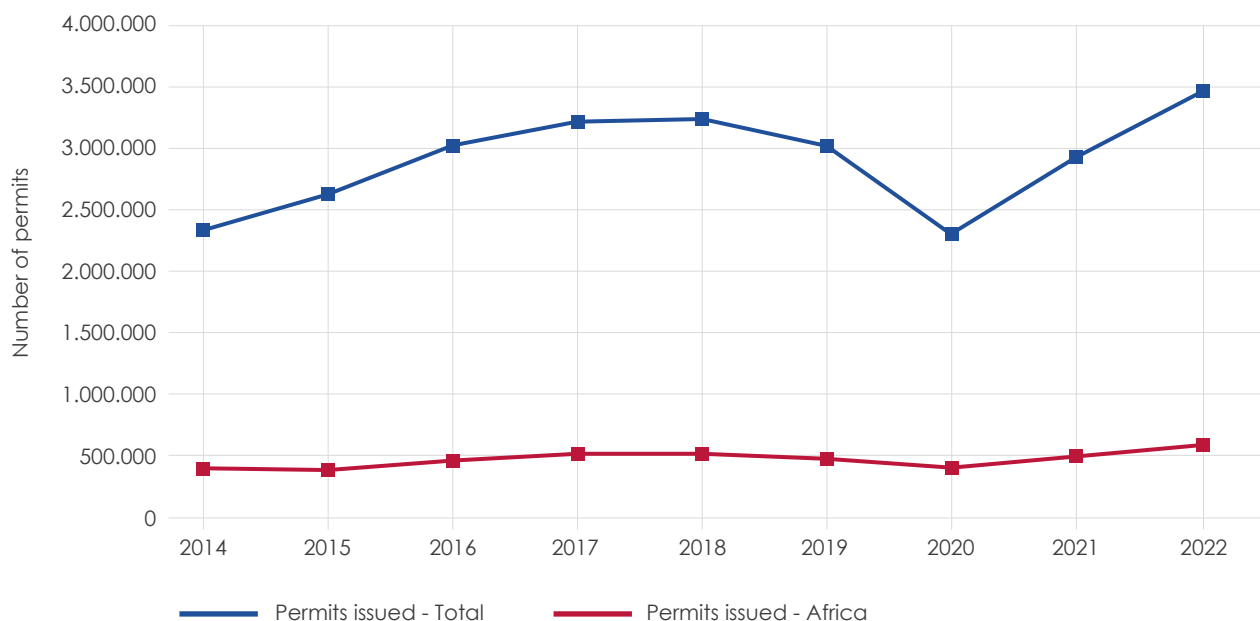
Schengen visa applications in Africa between 2014 and 2022, the rejection rate has surged in the same period (from 18% to 30%) (Taddele Maru, 2024).

Irregular migration from Africa to Europe also remains a feature of the migration flow between the two continents, with people departing from both North African and West African locations and often making dangerous journeys by boat to reach Europe. The central Mediterranean crossing is now the world's most deadly migration route. In 2023 African nationalities figured prominently amongst the irregular arrivals documented, with Morocco, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Tunisia and Egypt amongst the top 10 nationalities recorded (IOM, n.d.). However, irregular arrivals from Africa and elsewhere make up only a fraction of migration into the EU (Barber, 2024).

The number of African citizens travelling to the EU has increased over the past decade. However, while in general there was a rapid increase in residence permits issued after the Covid-19 pandemic, the trend in permits issued to African citizens shows they are not benefiting to the same extent as other nationalities from Europe's migration opportunities.



Figure 1: First residence permits issued by EU member states, 2014–2022



Note: This shows the numbers of first residence permits issued by EU member states for employment, education, family reunification or any other purpose, including international protection. Source: Eurostat, n.d.a



THE 'MIGRATION DEVELOPMENT NEXUS' – A CRITICAL POINT OF DIVERGENCE

Differences in opinion around what the relationship between migration and development entails is central to many of the divergences between African and European approaches to migration governance (Bakewell, 2008; Akinola & Bjarnesen, 2022). While African governments emphasise the developmental benefits of migration, European policymakers have long embraced the popular policy idea of tackling the so-called 'root causes of migration' as a way to address what they deem unwanted migration. These diverging policy agendas result in opposing views around the relationship between development and migration, which has led to significant obstacles to EU-Africa collaboration. Setting aside policy preferences however, the evidence is clear: it is as true that development leads to migration as it is that migration leads to development (Bastia & Skeldon, 2020: 15).

Those aspiring to become migrants generally set out with the intention to work (Carling, 2017; Aslany et al., 2021; Bjarnesen, 2023), even when the journey takes place in irregular ways (UNDP, 2019). Due to the vast differences in salary levels and labour market demand, South-North migration in particular is, more often than not, worth the risks and high costs (UNDP, 2019; World Bank, 2023). Migration also tends to benefit sending communities through financial and social remittances (Clemens & McKenzie, 2018) to an extent that is difficult to replace through development aid, which is why the African Union (AU) is reluctant to act on restrictive migration policies and more inclined to emphasise the importance and potential of its diaspora (Abebe & Mudungwe, 2024; Makina & Magwedere, 2024).

At the same time it is well-established that development itself also leads to migration. This is one central reason why recent European efforts to stem migration through development are untenable. Even if development interventions were to reach their targets in terms of increasing the standard of living in a sending country such as Mali or Eritrea, emigration is more likely to increase rather than decrease in the short term (Carling, 2017; de Haas, 2020). As Clemens and Postel (2018: 2) argue, even if current investments in macro-economic growth and youth unemployment were tripled overnight, the rates of growth needed to reduce income inequality enough to discourage future migration would take more than a generation.



While African governments emphasise the developmental benefits of migration, European policymakers have long embraced the popular policy idea of tackling the so-called 'root causes of migration' as a way to address what they deem unwanted migration. These diverging policy agendas result in opposing views around the relationship between development and migration, which has led to significant obstacles to EU-Africa collaboration.



THE SHORTCOMINGS OF THE EU'S DOMINANT POLICY RESPONSE

The EU's policy response largely ignores the wealth of evidence on the migration-development nexus. Rather it has focused on tackling the so-called 'root causes of migration', an idea that has been around in policy circles for decades. A case in point is the 2015 European Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF) which aims to '*contribute to better migration management as well as addressing the root causes of destabilisation, forced displacement and irregular migration, in particular by promoting resilience, economic and equal opportunities, security and development, and addressing human rights abuses*' (EU, 2015). Yet it is not clear what 'root causes' are, how they can be measured or the extent to which they actually drive migration.

Defining the root causes of migration as 'widely experienced hardships, to which migration is a possible response, that are perceived to be persistent, immediately threatening, or both', Carling et al. (2023) assessed the extent to which 'root causes' actually drive migration aspirations, drawing on the MIGNEX survey dataset covering more than 13,000 respondents in 25 communities across 10 countries. The analysis shows that some 'root causes' do drive migration aspirations. For instance, people are more likely to want to leave communities if they see limited opportunities to earn a living and feed a family, and where corruption is widespread. People are also more likely to want to leave if they distrust government institutions and are discontent with public services. Levels of poverty play the opposite role. People who are poorer, or live in poorer communities, are both less able to leave and less likely to want to. Overall, safety, security and environmental issues are much less relevant hardships, in explaining migration aspirations, in contrast to the attention they receive in media and political discourses.

As Hagen-Zanker and Carling (2023) conclude, 'root causes' are a meaningful label for some of the drivers of some forms of migration. They typically represent hardships that are important to address in order to improve people's lives, regardless of the effects on migration. Some 'root causes' can be addressed, but in practice, there is a scarcity of policy tools proven to deliver the kind of transformation necessary to fully address 'root causes' and as such reshape migration aspirations (Vargas-Silva et al., 2023).

Critically, 'root causes' are never the only causes. Many other factors that influence migration are often outside of the policymaker's control, such as the flow of information between migrants and their communities of origin. This means managing migration by 'tackling the root causes' is also unlikely to work because 'root causes' make up only part of the drivers.

THE LACK OF LEGAL PATHWAYS FOR AFRICAN MIGRATION TO EUROPE

Europe's working-age population is shrinking while Africa is experiencing a youth bulge. Employers across EU member states are experiencing significant and ongoing skill and labour shortages in various professions, encompassing different skill levels. Sectors such as construction, healthcare and information technology regularly top the EU's shortage occupation lists (ELA & EURES, 2024). Due to increasing economic demands, hiring third-country nationals has become an important strategy to address these labour shortages. However, migration remains a contentious political issue, and the acceptance of increased labour immigration varies among EU member states.

The European Commission has committed to expanding legal pathways; however member states retain competence in this area leaving the EU with limited options. EU funding, via the Migration Partnership Facility, has encouraged member states to undertake skills mobility partnerships, including with African countries. However, these have had relatively disappointing results, with high operational costs, a lack of private sector buy-in in some pilots and very limited scale, with many projects planning to offer migration opportunities to fewer than 100 people (Hooper, 2019; Hooper, 2021).

The EU has now established the Talent Partnerships Framework and the EU Talent Pool. These initiatives are intended as policy tools to help member states take advantage of international mobility and align foreign skills with labour market demands and to scale up action in this area. However, effectively integrating and advancing the Talent Partnerships within national migration systems can be challenging. This process requires not only efficient and effective legal migration systems but also coordination between labour market assessments, the identification of current and future migration needs, and information on the skill profiles and economic needs of partner countries.

Progress in advancing Talent Partnerships has been slow. Launched in 2022 via a process of roundtable negotiations between the EU and member states and the selected Talent Partnership countries (which include



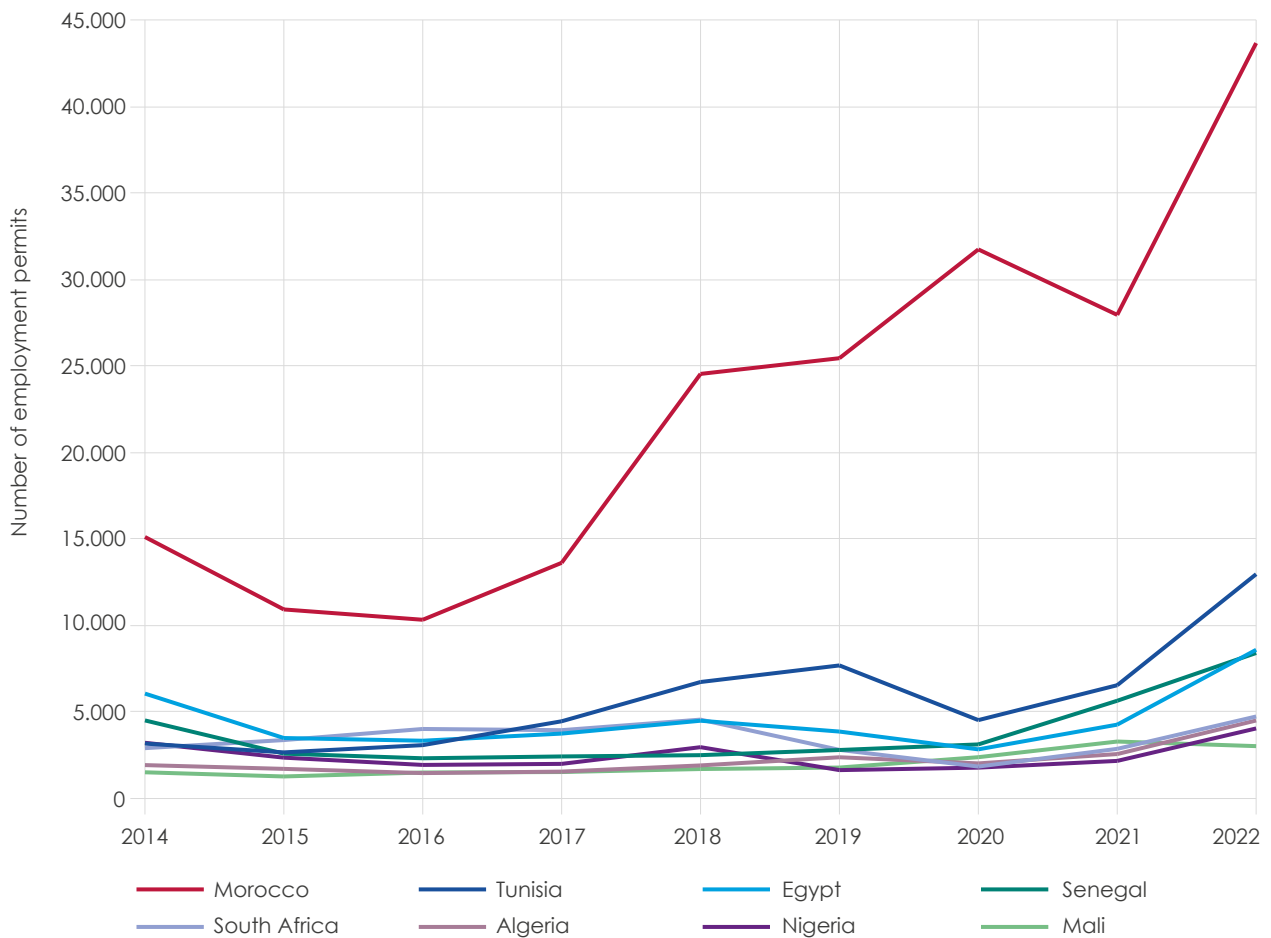
Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia), their roadmaps for action are still under development. By the end of July 2024, only one African country (Tunisia) had completed its second roundtable. With notable exceptions, EU member states have taken a rather cautious approach to joining these negotiations. It also remains unclear to what extent legal pathways will actually be expanded or created for African workers under these processes.

Across many EU member states there has been a trend towards pragmatic solutions to recruit third-country nationals driven by economic and business needs. More employment permits are being issued, though this is not taking place in sufficient numbers to cope with demand in Europe (Knoll, 2024 forthcoming). This is benefiting

some African citizens, and particularly Moroccans so far, but the increase is relatively slow and from a low base (see Figure 2).

The immigration systems of EU member states differ quite significantly in their types of labour migration pathways. They are often selective towards highly skilled migrants and opportunities for lower-skilled or lower-paid migrants from outside the EU are more restricted (often to temporary or seasonal work). As the global competition for talent becomes more acute, European member states will increasingly have to ensure their attractiveness for workers at all skill levels (Knoll, 2024 forthcoming). This should include introducing new (and adjusting existing) pathways for labour migration from Africa.

Figure 2: First permits for employment reasons issued by EU member states to African citizens, 2014–2022



Source: Eurostat, n.d.a

However, the political guidelines for the next EU Commission put a stronger focus on reducing irregular migration and facilitating return (von der Leyen, 2024). They present the creation of pathways for legal migration – based on the skills needed by the EU's economies and its regions – as an ancillary aspect, possible if there is progress in securing borders and achieving a firm and fair approach to managing migration. Placing labour mobility under the framework of defence and security however will miss opportunities to view it as an economic issue that is at the heart of how European economies will function in the longer term. It is also likely to disappoint many African governments interested in negotiating expanded labour migration opportunities.



The political guidelines for the next EU Commission put a stronger focus on reducing irregular migration and facilitating return. They present the creation of pathways for legal migration – based on the skills needed by the EU's economies and its regions – as an ancillary aspect, possible if there is progress in securing borders and achieving a firm and fair approach to managing migration.



HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS OF AFRICAN MIGRANTS IN TRANSIT AND AT EUROPE'S BORDERS

Increasingly, EU migration and asylum policies have prioritised the deterrence of irregular migration from outside Europe and the securitisation of its borders. The often brutal measures deployed to this end have caused severe human rights violations against migrants, which in turn has undermined the EU's overall credibility in relation to African actors. This was a central point of discussion in ETTG's event; in particular Europe's violation of the principle of *non-refoulement*¹ was strongly highlighted (ETT, 2024).

Pushbacks of migrants at the EU's borders are now widespread and endemic. The practice has resulted in several applications to the European Court of Human Rights concerning asylum seekers pushed back from the Greek islands towards Turkey (ECRE, 2024). A recent documentary by the BBC evidenced EU-funded boats being used by Greek authorities to round up migrants, abandoning them in the Mediterranean Sea, where many subsequently lost their lives (BBC, 2024). Pushbacks are not confined to Greece and have been well documented at the Polish-Belarus border and Croatian-Serbian border as well as other locations (ECtHR, 2021; HRW, 2022). The Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) has raised concerns following its monitoring of widespread and coordinated pushback efforts by EU states to deter migrants (CPT, 2022).

Enabled by increased externalisation policies at the EU level, these pushbacks have extended southwards (AP News, 2023; AI, 2024; The New Humanitarian, 2024). The International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Mixed Migration Centre and UNHCR (2024) document a litany of human rights violations – from torture and physical violence to arbitrary detention and collective expulsions – experienced by refugees and other migrants along the land-based routes from the East and Horn of Africa and West Africa towards the Mediterranean Sea. In 2024, two mass graves of migrants were discovered along the Tunisia-Libya border (Sanderson, 2024).

1. Under international human rights law, the principle of non-refoulement guarantees that no one should be returned to a country where they would face torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and other irreparable harm. This principle applies to all migrants at all times, irrespective of migration status.



Externalisation policies have resulted in the EU's direct complicity in human rights violations. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and numerous NGOs have documented the detention and torture of migrants in Libya; this was after the EU signed a cooperation agreement in 2017, designed to fund and train the Libyan coast guard as well as with other authorities within Libya to stop migrants crossing the Mediterranean Sea (AI, 2020; MSF, 2022; OHCHR, 2022). There is also evidence that African migrants have been dumped in the desert by Libyan, Tunisian and Moroccan officials, driving EU-funded vehicles acquired under EU external migration agreements (Bulman et al., 2024).

The OHCHR has called on the international community 'to review and, if necessary, suspend cooperation on asylum and migration with those authorities involved in human rights violations' (OHCHR, 2024). While the EU is aware of the allegations – and in spite of the wealth of evidence in the public domain – it has insisted that its financial aid does not support such activities (Bautista et al., 2024). Regardless of these denials, the EU's credibility has been seriously undermined by these systematic abuses, gravely affecting its relations with the AU and other African actors, who point out that the European discourse on a 'partnership of equals' rings false as long as African citizens are exposed to such overt violence.



Increasingly, EU migration and asylum policies have prioritised the deterrence of irregular migration from outside Europe and the securitisation of its borders. The often brutal measures deployed to this end have caused severe human rights violations against migrants, which in turn has undermined the EU's overall credibility in relation to African actors.



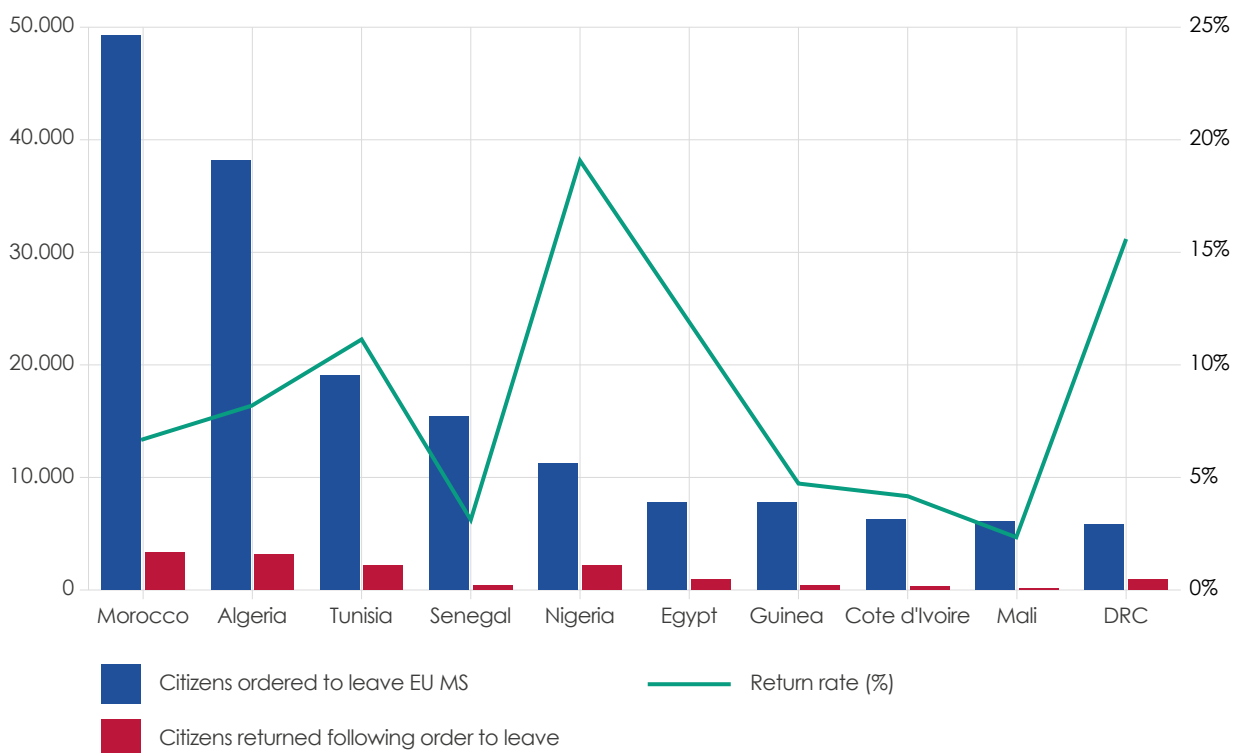
RECENT POLICY APPROACHES ENTRENCH THE DIVERGENCE OF INTERESTS

The New Pact on Migration and Asylum is the EU's attempt at meaningful reform of a poorly functioning asylum system. A new Reception Conditions Directive is expected to strengthen reception standards, while the new mandatory solidarity mechanism should ensure better responsibility sharing between member states at times of high migration pressure (Strik, 2024). However, migration experts and human rights organisations have expressed concerns around the Pact, particularly given the increasing use of digital surveillance technology, fast-tracking of asylum procedures and blanket detention of those seeking international protection (including children) at the EU's external borders (Dimitriadi, 2024; MacGregor, 2024; Strik, 2024). The potential for the new accelerated procedures to impact Africans' asylum claims '*potentially leading to wrongful denials or expedited returns*' has been noted (Monyani, 2024: 27).

Making returns more effective is a key priority for the EU and the structure of the Pact itself is built around a successful returns policy (Milazzo, 2024). The Pact's accelerated border procedures and the expanded definition of a 'safe third country' may well lead to more returns to third countries, including to transit countries (*ibid.*). What this means for African countries is highly uncertain since returns depend heavily on effective bilateral cooperation. This is an area where EU member states have struggled to advance, despite a long history of making development aid conditional upon cooperation on return and migration control (Godin et al., 2024). The EU and its member states have few readmission agreements covering African countries (EMN, 2022) and, with the exception of Nigeria, returns to many African countries are far below the EU average returns rate (19% in 2023) (see Figure 3).

This is an area of clear divergence of interests between the two continents. Readmission agreements are perceived as controversial in Africa. Heavy stigmatisation and exclusion of returnees – interlinked with difficulties accessing employment and housing – and aspects such as the lack of reintegration assistance from the EU, all make reintegration extremely difficult (Digidiki &

Figure 3: Return rates for a selection of African nationalities, 2023



Note: This figure shows the top 10 nationalities, in terms of numbers ordered to leave by EU member states in 2023, alongside the number of returns and the % return rate achieved. Source: Eurostat, n.d.b.

Bhabha, 2020; Bisong, 2022; Ike et al., 2023) as strongly noted in a recent ETTG event (ETT, 2024). African governments are aware that returns could have serious implications for their remittance-receiving potential (Ike et al., 2023). Also important is whether returns are forced or voluntary. While voluntary returns can have positive impacts on communities, depending on the specific socio-economic conditions, forced returns have been assessed as representing a risk to development (Siegel et al., 2024). Unsurprisingly these aspects have led to significant hesitancy from African governments when it comes to signing readmission agreements.

A failure to cooperate with the EU on returns has consequences. Ethiopia has been on the receiving end of tightening visa application conditions as a result of its lack of responsiveness to the EU's readmission efforts (InfoMigrants, 2024). The EU has also delayed launching its Talent Partnerships with Nigeria and Senegal, given the lack of progress on readmission agreements (Migration Control, 2024). This despite Nigeria's relatively good performance on returns in practice (see Figure 3).



Readmission agreements are perceived as controversial in Africa. Heavy stigmatisation and exclusion of returnees – interlinked with difficulties accessing employment and housing – and aspects such as the lack of reintegration assistance from the EU, all make reintegration extremely difficult.





The EU also continues to sign new, controversial migration management agreements, most recently with Tunisia, Mauritania and Egypt. Tunisia and Egypt have received several hundred million euros each for migration measures (Dubois, 2024; Liboreiro & Genovese, 2024). Tunisia has doubled interceptions of people at sea, and forcibly removed thousands of people to Algeria and Libya (Dubois & Samson, 2024). Moreover, reports continue to emerge of the detention and deportation of Sudanese refugees from Egypt (Fox, 2024).

Generally, the EU has faced heavy criticism for this approach that risks legitimising authoritarian regimes and exposing the EU to complicity in abuses, as well as leading to more repressive migration control measures and more human rights violations (Barber, 2024; Francavilla, 2024; Liboreiro & Genovese, 2024). Research has also demonstrated that the increasing militarisation of migration within African countries has disrupted traditional migration routes and negatively impacted on livelihood strategies (Poggi et al., 2021), as well as undermining regional measures to promote migration and mobility (Bisong & Knoll, 2022).

New policy dialogues and efforts led by the African Union reflect very different priorities. Migration is seen as an important asset, not least because of remittances but also due to the importance of the growing African

diaspora. African countries increasingly have a diaspora ministry and the African Union supports multiple diaspora initiatives and programmes (Bjarnesen, 2023). Governments remain resistant to the EU's demands to sign readmission agreements and engage with the EU's narrow focus on irregular migration, and are concerned that the approach of the EU is undermining African governments' efforts to promote the free movement of persons on the continent (Bisong & Knoll, 2022; Bjarnesen, 2023).

New priorities are also emerging for African governments. With record levels of drought and devastating cyclones across the continent, climate-related displacement is now a hugely significant topic (IOM, 2024). African policymakers in the East and Horn of Africa have made specific commitments in this area under the Kampala Ministerial Declaration on Migration, Environment and Climate Change. This declaration makes requests to the parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in several areas, including action to address climate-induced displacement both within and across borders and strengthened cooperation on the free movement of people and labour mobility (UNFCCC, n.d.). However, this has not led to any strategic partnership discussions on this theme with the EU (Bisong & Knoll, 2022).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is clear that African and European governments often have very different priorities in relation to migration. It is also well-established that the EU's vision regarding its migration cooperation with Africa is 'skewed towards what Europe wants, with little space for African views and priorities' (Bisong & Knoll, 2022). Constructive progress depends first and foremost on a fundamental (and evidence-based) acknowledgement from the EU that migration can be a developmental resource. In addition, a shift in approach, to creating an equal partnership that takes the perspectives of African policymakers and the aspirations of African migrants more seriously, is required (Bjarnesen, 2023).

Further – and as noted strongly by panellists in the above-mentioned ETTG event – there are significant concerns in both Europe and Africa, that migration, and particularly returns, is dominating the EU's foreign policy agenda

in ways which are unhelpful and which undermine the credibility of much of the EU's external action (ETT, 2024). A new approach is long overdue, one that shifts the focus from irregular migration and returns to the creation of legal pathways and maximising the potential benefits of migration.

Unfortunately, with the passing of the recent Pact, it is more likely that we will see the EU continue its heavy focus on deterrence and returns. Many EU member states also want to go further, with 15 governments pushing for more outsourcing of Europe's asylum responsibilities, including the establishment of 'returns hubs' and processing of asylum claims in third countries (Hunter, 2024). All indications are that the EU will continue with its externalisation efforts and will prioritise securing the EU's borders over expanding opportunities for labour mobility and upholding international protection.

While expectations for a change in approach may be low, a number of actions would help reorient the partnership between Europe and Africa.

Recommendations are as follows:

1. Provide explicit space in negotiations and within migration partnerships for African governments' priorities, including in relation to maximising remittances, diaspora engagement, circular migration and action to address climate-induced displacement.

2. Prioritise legal channels for migration over all other measures – including the negotiation of readmission agreements – within migration partnerships. The EU should abandon the use of negative conditionalities and offer legal pathways as positive incentives instead.

3. Accelerate and expand Talent Partnerships negotiations between the EU and member states and African countries, including in the absence of signed readmission agreements. These should be designed to meet labour and skills shortages in ways which are mutually beneficial to both origin and destination countries.

4. Ensure that the protection of migrants' rights is a central point of discussion in the next AU-EU summit and within all migration agreements and partnerships. This should include a review of all cooperation with authorities accused of human rights violations and full consideration of Frontex's roles and responsibilities with regard to migrant protection, as well as how Frontex is working with security forces in Africa.

5. Ensure that deportations from Europe to Africa are not presented as of benefit to African countries and that development funding is never used to forcibly send people back.

6. Ensure negotiations between the EU and AU include discussion of how the EU can support African regional integration and the AU's efforts to promote free movement of persons on the continent.

REFERENCES

- Abebe, T. T., & Mudungwe, P. (2024). Migration policy frameworks in Africa. In D. Makina & D. Pasura (eds.), *Routledge handbook of contemporary African migration*. London & New York: Routledge, pp. 153–69. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003005551>
- Akinola, A., & Bjarnesen, J. (eds.). (2022). *Worlds apart. Perspectives on Africa-EU migration governance*. Johannesburg: Jacana. <https://jacana.co.za/product/worlds-apart-perspectives-on-african-eu-migration/>
- AI – Amnesty International. (2020). 'Between life and death': Refugees and migrants trapped in Libya's cycle of abuse. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde19/3084/2020/en/>
- AI – Amnesty International. (2024). Egypt authorities must end campaign of mass arrests and forced returns of Sudanese refugees. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/06/egypt-authorities-must-end-campaign-of-mass-arrests-and-forced-returns-of-sudanese-refugees/>
- AP News. (2023). Tunisian minister concedes 'small groups' of migrants were pushed back into desert no man's land. <https://apnews.com/article/tunisia-migrants-desert-interior-minister-pushback-81455ce286edc87d3da4ebd9438a2609>
- Aslany, M., Carling, J., Bålsrud Mjelva, M., & Sommerfelt, T. (2021). Systematic review of determinants of migration aspirations. *QuantMig deliverable 2.2*. Southampton: University of Southampton. <https://www.quantmig.eu/res/files/QuantMig%20D22%202021-01-29.pdf>
- Bakewell, O. (2008). Keeping them in their place: The ambivalent relationship between development and migration in Africa. *Third World Quarterly*, 29(7): 1341–58. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436590802386492>
- Barber, T. (2024, March 16) Migrants and strongmen. The EU's North Africa headache. *Financial Times*. <https://www.ft.com/content/53deb98e-f180-4c53-90a9-c8c0f617e622>
- Bastia, T., & Skeldon, R. (2020). Introduction. In T. Bastia & R. Skeldon (eds.), *Routledge handbook of migration and development*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315276908>
- Bautista, J., Bulman, M., van Dijken, K., Jullien, M., Ludke, S., Popoviciu, A., Ramalho da Silva, B., El-Sherbiny, E., & Stadius, T. (2024, June 4). *Migrants abandoned on the edge of the Sahara*. Spiegel International. https://www.spiegel.de/international/world/fortress-europe-migrants-abandoned-on-the-edge-of-the-sahara-a-cbec5337-6a3e-49e0-888a-557f81de308f?sara_ref=re-so-tw-sh
- BBC. (2024). Dead calm, killing in the Mediterranean. BBC Documentary. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m0020ct1/dead-calm-killing-in-the-med>
- Bisong, A. (2022). Return, precarity and vulnerability in West Africa: Evidence from Nigeria. In J. Kofi Teye (ed.), *Migration in West Africa: IMISCOE regional reader*. Springer: IMISCOE Research Series, pp. 211–36. https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007/978-3-030-97322-3_11.pdf
- Bisong, A., & Knoll, A. (2022, February 7). Why migration and mobility should – but probably won't – be at the heart of the EU-AU summit. EDCPM. <https://ecdpm.org/work/why-migration-and-mobility-should-but-probably-wont-be-at-the-heart-of-the-eu-au-summit>
- Bjarnesen, J. (2023). Aligning European migration policies with African priorities: Policy advice on African migration for Nordic decision makers. NAI Policy Note 2023:1. <https://nai.uu.se/stories-and-events/news/2023-04-28-aligning-european-migration-policies-with-african-priorities.html>
- Bulman et al. (2024). Lighthouse Reports. Borders: Desert dumps. <https://www.lighthousereports.com/investigation/desert-dumps/>
- Carling, J. (2017). How does migration arise?. In M. McAuliffe & M. Klein Solomon (eds.), *Ideas to inform international cooperation on safe, orderly and regular migration*. Geneva: IOM. <https://publications.iom.int/books/how-does-migration-arise>
- Carling, J., Caso, N., Hagen-Zanker, J., & Rubio, M. (2023). The multi-level determination of migration processes. MIGNEX Background Paper. Oslo: Peace Research Institute Oslo. www.mignex.org/d061
- Clemens, M., & McKenzie D. (2018). Why don't remittances appear to affect growth? *The Economic Journal*, 128(612): F179–F209. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ecoj.12463>
- Clemens, M., & Postel, H. M. (2018). Can development assistance deter emigration? CGI Brief. Washington, DC: Center for Global Development. <https://www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/can-development-assistance-deter-emigration.pdf>
- CPT – European Committee on the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. (2022). 32nd General Report of the CPT European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. <https://rm.coe.int/1680aabe2b>
- De Haas, H. (2020). Paradoxes of migration and development. In T. Bastia & R. Skeldon (eds.), *Routledge handbook of migration and development*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 17–31. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315276908>

Digidiki, V., & Bhabha, J. (2020). Returning home? The reintegration challenges facing child and youth returnees from Libya to Nigeria. Harvard FXB Centre for Health and Human Rights. <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/2464/2019/11/Harvard-FXB-Center-Returning-Home-FINAL.pdf>

Dimitriadi, A. (2024). The internal dimension in the new pact: A glass half-full. In *Migration and asylum – Towards a joint European response. Next steps in implementing the New Pact*. Istituto Luigi Sturzo and Hanns Seidel Stiftung. <https://sturzo.it/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/HSS-ILS-Publication-Migration-Pact-FINAL.pdf>

Dubois, L. (2024, March 24). EU to provide €165m to Tunisian security forces to curb migration. Financial Times. <https://www.ft.com/content/17c4cb4f-410d-49ed-80ce-278ed597dd0a?shareType=nongift>

Dubois, L., & Samson, A. (2024, April 11). How Europe is paying other countries to police its borders. Financial Times. <https://www.ft.com/content/e58c3331-434d-453d-8c98-8f450b2f1424>

ECRE – European Council on Refugees and Exile. (2024). Greece: Pushbacks by sea to go before European Court of Human Rights, access to procedures restricted on land, rule of law concerns in asylum system persist. Commission challenges legality of the safe third country concept. <https://ecre.org/greece-pushbacks-by-sea-to-go-before-ecthr-access-to-procedures-restricted-on-land-rule-of-law-concerns-in-asylum-system-persist-commission-challenges-legality-of-the-safe-third-country-concept/>

ECTHR. (2021). *M. H. and Others v. Croatia (Applications nos. 15670/18 and 43115/18)*. <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng>

ELA & EURES. (2024). *EURES Report on labour shortages and surpluses 2023*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. www.ela.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2024-05/EURES-Shortages_Report-V8.pdf

EMN – European Migration Network (2022). Bilateral readmission agreements. *EMN Inform*. https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-10/EMN_INFORM_bilateral_readmission.pdf

ETTG – European Think Tanks Group. (2024, May 21). The EU-Africa migration agenda: Driving a new migration partnership forward. <https://ettg.eu/index.php/2024/05/21/the-eu-africa-migration-agenda-new-partnership/>

EU – European Union (2015). The European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa. Strategic orientation document. European Union, Brussels.

Eurostat. (n.d.a). First permits by reason, length of validity and citizenship. *Eurostat Data Browser*. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/migr_resfirst/default/table?lang=en

Eurostat. (n.d.b). Migration and asylum database. Managed migration dataset [Enforcement of immigration legislation]. <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/migration-asylum/managed-migration/database>

Foresti, M., & Mantegazza, O. (2023, June 22). Europe must make it easier for Africans to get visas. London School of Economics. <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/africaatlse/2023/06/22/europe-must-make-it-easier-for-africans-to-get-visas/>

Fox, B. (2024, May 10). Egypt must respect refugee obligations, says EU, amid Sudan influx. *EU Observer*. <https://euobserver.com/migration/ar325ced88>

Francavilla, C. (2024, March 15). EU deal with Egypt rewards authoritarianism, betrays "EU values". Human Rights Watch Dispatches. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/03/15/eu-deal-egypt-rewards-authoritarianism-betrays-eu-values>

Godin, M., Gabrielsen Jumbert, M., Schweers, J., Lebon-McGregor, E., & Ike, N. (2024). Is policy coherence a smokescreen for a more restrictive migration agenda? *MIGNEX Policy Brief*. Oslo: Peace Research Institute Oslo. <https://www.mignex.org/d095b>

Hagen-Zanker, J., & Carling, J. (2023). What are the 'root causes' of migration? *MIGNEX Policy Brief*. Oslo: Peace Research Institute Oslo. <https://www.mignex.org/d066a>


Hooper, K. (2019). Exploring new legal migration pathways: Lessons from pilot projects. Migration Policy Institute. www.migrationpolicy.org/research/exploring-new-legal-migration-pathways-lessons-pilot-projects

Hooper, K. (2021). How can Europe deliver on the potential of Talent Partnerships? MPI Europe. www.migrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/publications/mpie-talent-partnerships_final.pdf

HRW – Human Rights Watch. (2022). Belarus/Poland: Abuse, pushbacks at border ensure humanitarian access, protect people from violence. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/11/24/belarus/poland-abuse-pushbacks-border>

Hunter, L. (2024, May 21). Denmark leads 15 member states in calls to outsource EU migration policy. *CPH Post*. <https://cphpost.dk/2024-05-21/news/politics/denmark-leads-15-member-states-in-call-to-outsource-eu-migrant-policy/>

Ike, N., Bala Akal, A., Lebon-McGregor, E., & Gabrielsen Jumbert, M. (2023). Exploring EU migration partnerships: The cases of Turkey and Nigeria. *MIGNEX Background Paper*. Oslo: Peace Research Institute Oslo. <https://www.mignex.org/d094>



InfoMigrants. (2024, April, 30). EU tightens visa requirements for Ethiopians in readmission quid pro quo. <https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/56773/eu-tightens-visa-requirements-for-ethiopians-in-readmission-quid-pro-quo>

IOM. (n.d.). Migration flows to Europe: Arrivals. *IOM Global Data Institute Displacement Tracking Matrix*. <https://dtm.iom.int/europe/arrivals>

IOM. (2024). *World migration report 2024*. <https://publications.iom.int/books/world-migration-report-2024>

IOM, Mixed Migration Centre, & UNHCR. (2024). *On this journey, no one cares if you live or die: Abuse, protection and justice along routes between East and West Africa and Africa's Mediterranean coast*. Volume 2. Geneva. <https://mixedmigration.org/resource/on-this-journey-no-one-cares-if-you-live-or-die-2/>

Knoll (2024 forthcoming). Re-thinking approaches to labour migration? Potentials and gaps in EU member states' migration infrastructures. MPF Policy Brief. ICMPD, Brussels

Liboreiro, A., & Genovese, V. (2024, March 18). Analysis: The EU's big bet on Egypt comes with a high price and high risks. Euronews. <https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2024/03/18/analysis-the-eus-big-bet-on-egypt-comes-with-a-high-price-and-high-risks>

MacGregor, M. (2024). Concerns over 'jail-like conditions' and invalid technology under EU Pact. InfoMigrants. <https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/57407/concerns-over-jaillike-conditions-and-invalid-technology-under-eu-pact>

Makina, D., & Magwedere, M. R. (2024). The remittances-development debate in Africa. In D. Makina & D. Pasura (eds.), *Routledge handbook of contemporary African migration*. London & New York: Routledge, pp. 231-45. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003005551>

Migration Control. (2024, March 8). Update on the state of play of external cooperation in the field of migration policy. Blog. <https://migration-control.info/en/blog/update-on-the-state-of-play-of-external-cooperation-in-the-field-of-migration-policy/>

Milazzo, E. (2024). How the EU could deliver on the Pact's predicaments through balanced external cooperation. In *Migration and asylum – Towards a joint European response. Next steps in implementing the New Pact*. Istituto Luigi Sturzo and Hanns Seidel Stiftung. https://sturzo.it/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/HSS-ILS_Publication-Migration-Pact-FINAL.pdf

Monyani, M. (2024). Shifting horizons: European Union's asylum and migration pact on Africa. In *Migration and asylum – Towards a joint European response. Next steps in implementing the New Pact*. Istituto Luigi Sturzo and Hanns Seidel Stiftung. https://sturzo.it/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/HSS-ILS_Publication-Migration-Pact-FINAL.pdf

MSF. (2022). Out of Libya: Opening safe pathways for vulnerable migrants stuck in Libya. <https://www.msf.fr/sites/default/files/2022-06/Rapport%20Out%20Of%20Libya.pdf>

OHCHR. (2022). Nowhere but back: Assisted return, reintegration and the human rights protection of migrants in Libya. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/reports/nowhere-back-assisted-return-reintegration-and-human-rights-protection-migrants>

OHCHR. (2024). "Peace and stability in Libya go hand in hand with human rights" says High Commissioner. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements-and-speeches/2024/07/peace-and-stability-libya-go-hand-hand-human-rights-says-high>

Poggi, C., Shepherd, A., Harouna, A., Diwakar, V., Diarra, A., & Da Corta, L. (2021). Youth of Niger. Migration as a double-edged sword for labour inclusion. AFD and ODI. <https://www.afd.fr/en/youth-of-niger-migration-double-edged-sword-inclusion-poggi>

Sanderson, S. (2024, July 10). UN discovers mass grave of migrants along Libya-Tunisia border. InfoMigrants. <https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/58339/un-discovers-mass-grave-of-migrants-along-libyatunisia-border>

Siegel, M., Marchand, K., Hagen-Zanker, J., & Weisner, Z. (2024). New insights of development impacts on migration. MIGNEX Flagship Report. Oslo: Peace Research Institute Oslo. <https://www.mignex.org/d077>

Strik, T. (2024, May 31). The New Pact on Migration and Asylum: Towards a realistic asylum and migration system. European Policy Centre, Migration Commentary. <https://www.epc.eu/en/publications/The-New-Pact-on-Migration-and-Asylum-Towards-a-realistic-asylum-and-m-5b0aa4>

Taddele Maru, M. (2024). Rejected: The impact of visa bias on Africa-Europe relations. Henley Global Mobility Report 2024. <https://www.henleyglobal.com/publications/global-mobility-report/2024-july/rejected-impact-visa-bias-africaeurope-relations>

The New Humanitarian. (2024). Tunisia accused of 'mass desert' dumping of migrants. The New Humanitarian <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news/2024/05/07/tunisia-accused-mass-desert-dumping-migrants>

UNDP. (2019). *Scaling fences: Voices of irregular African migrants to Europe*. New York: UNDP. <https://www.undp.org/africa/publications/scaling-fences-voices-irregular-african-migrant-europe>

UNFCCC. (n.d.). Kampala ministerial declaration in migration, environment and climate change. <https://unfccc.int/kampala-ministerial-declaration-on-migration-environment-and-climate-change>

UNHCR. (n.d.). UNHCR operational data portal. Mediterranean situation. <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean#>

UNHCR. (2024). Global trends. Forced displacement in 2024. <https://www.unhcr.org/global-trends>

Vargas-Silva, C., Hagen-Zanker, J., Carling, J., Carrasco, I., Czaika, M., Godin, M., & Erdal, M. B. (2023). Tackling the root causes of migration. MIGNEX Background Paper. Oslo: Peace Research Institute Oslo. <https://www.mignex.org/d065>

von der Leyen, U. (2024, July 18). Europe's choice: Political guidelines for the next European Commission 2024-2029. https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/e6cd4328-673c-4e7a-8683-f63ffb2cf648_en?filename=Political%20Guidelines%202024-2029_EN.pdf

World Bank. (2023). *World development report 2023: Migrants, refugees, and societies*. Washington: World Bank. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/wdr2023>



ETTG | European Think Tanks Group

© European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM), the Elcano Royal Institute, the International Affairs Institute / Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI), the Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations / Institut du Développement Durable et des Relations Internationales (IDDRI), the German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS) and ODI, 2024.

The views presented in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the organisations that make up the European Think Tanks Group.

Readers are encouraged to quote or reproduce material from this report for their own publications. ECDPM, Elcano, IAI, IDDRI, IDOS and ODI request due acknowledgement and a copy of the publication.

ISSN 2984-0457