The politics of migration

• The political repercussion of refugee, asylum and ‘irregular’ migration flows to the EU
  • Europe’s ‘migration crisis’
  • Internal response
  • External repercussions: EU relationships with African countries
Europe’s migration crisis: Irregular migration across the Mediterranean to Greece, Italy

- In proportion to overall number of international migrants, boat migrants have a seemingly outsized political effect
  - EU had around 55 million international migrants in 2015
  - Jan 2015 until today: ca 1.5 million arrivals across the Mediterranean, most in a six month period in late 2015 and early 2016

- But
  - Irregular migrants form a larger proportion of new arrivals
  - They explain a lot of the growth in net migration into the EU, as opposed to EU citizens moving between EU countries
  - Boat migrants are a particularly visible, chaotic, form of migration
Building up to the 2015 migration crisis

• Rising number of international ‘irregular’ migrants from 2010
  • ‘Mixed flows’, but depicted primarily as economic migrants
• After a lull, a sharp rise in conflict & displacement
  • Record displacement (still rising) combined with record South-North migration (peaked in 2005-10 period)
• Pressure on refugee host states in EU’s neighbourhood
  • 3.7 mill Syrian refugees in the region by end-2014

Scene set for Europe’s refugee and migration crisis
Syria: Concentric circles of flight (2015)

- 900,000 asylum seekers in Europe
- 4.8 mill regional refugees
- 6.6 mill IDPs
- 13.5 million rely on humanitarian assistance
Arrivals to Greece in 2015

Increasing numbers of refugees and migrants take their chances aboard unseaworthy boats and dinghies in a desperate bid to reach Europe. The vast majority of those attempting this dangerous crossing are in need of international protection, fleeing war, violence and persecution in their country of origin. Every year these movements continue to exact a devastating toll on human life.

Top-10 nationalities of Mediterranean sea arrivals

Top-10 nationalities represent 100% of the sea arrivals

- Syrian Arab Republic: 57%
- Afghanistan: 24%
- Iraq: 9%
- Pakistan: 3%
- Somalia: 1%
- Others: 6%
The charts below are based on figures from the Hellenic Coast Guard and Police. All figures are provisional and subject to change. Data includes sea arrivals to Greece from January 2015 to February 2016.

Figure 4. Percentages of nationalities arriving to Greece

- Syrian Arab Republic: 55.0%
- Afghanistan: 24.7%
- Iraq: 11.1%
- Eritrea: 0.1%
- Pakistan: 2.8%
- Somalia: 0.4%
- Iran: 2.7%
- Other: 3.3%
Figure 1 | Trend of global displacement & proportion displaced | 1997-2016

From UNHCR
The situation in the EU at the start of 2016

• 1.3 million asylum seekers in EU
  • Majority to Germany, after lifting Dublin requirement in August
• No progress on relocation, hotspots or other common EU measures
• Unilateral border closures starting with Hungary, Oct. 2015
• Mood shifts: Terror attack in Paris, Nov. 2015; New Years Eve in Cologne
Border closures and EU-Turkey deal

• Put an effective stop to the migrant trail, almost from the moment Macedonia closed its border in late February
  • Norway, 2016: The lowest level of asylum seekers since 1997
• 20 March 2016: EU-Turkey deal
  • Around 50-60,000 stuck in Greece
  • Not clear how long the deal will stick, but not clear it needs to...
Effect of border closures and EU-Turkey deal
EU internal repercussions

• Anti-migrant sentiments, nationalism, on the rise (not just in EU)
  • Brexit, Trump, Austria, Poland, Hungary...
  • Rise of far-right, response of main-stream parties

• Stricter asylum rules across Europe
  • Denmark’s Jewellery law; curbs on family reunion; protection short of asylum
  • Suggestions of scrapping asylum system for quotas
  • More forced returns, particularly to Afghanistan

• EU burden sharing not working
  • East-West differences
  • Pressure on ‘free movement’ pillar – UK Brexit
  • External EU border control, but little internal cooperation
  • Sealing off Greece and, increasingly, Italy from onward movement
  • EU in security mode: Deterrence, interception, detention, border control
EU-Africa relationships

• Migration dominating the EU’s agenda vis-à-vis Africa
  • All EU-AU summitry since Malta 2015

• Replicating the spirit of the EU-Turkey deal in Africa, esp. Libya
  • Stopping the boats
  • Pushing de facto EU border control to Libya’s southern border
  • Deterrence by allowing stranded migrants to suffer in limbo

• Migration ‘compacts’ with priority countries :
  • Long term ambition: reduce irregular migration incentives through economic growth, job creation, formal migration opportunities, etc.
  • Current focus: border control, crack-down on smugglers (and the migrants they smuggle), return agreements.
A skewed relationship

- EU diplomatic & aid focus shifting north from sub-Saharan Africa
- More humanitarian assistance to fragile & conflict affected states
  - Partly driven by containment agenda
- Migration priorities increasingly influencing aid agenda
  - Positive long-term development initiatives to reduce migration is not easy to achieve/measure – likely a wasteful/inefficient development strategy
  - Fall-back on support for border control, policing, repressive measures
- Some African countries have better bargaining chips, but the EU’s migration control agenda facilitates a highly transactional relationship open to abuse
Kenya’s announcement to close Dadaab

Official statement, 11 May 2016:

Kenya appreciates the national security interests that are informing how other countries are dealing with the challenge of refugee inflows. We are also seeking to anchor our humanitarian character, which is recognized all over the world, in considerations that put the security of our country first.

We will not be the first to do so; this is the standard practice worldwide. For example in Europe, rich, prosperous and democratic countries are turning away refugees from Syria, one of the worst war zones since World War Two.
Some concluding thoughts

• Deterrence sort of works, for now and at a cost
• Longer-term migration pressures from Africa to Europe will not go away
• Sustainable Development Goals: link between international migration and sustainable development
  • More positive, mutually beneficial policies need to be put in place
  • But that depends on EU countries’ internal migration debates (and a recognition that economic sustainability and political sustainability of immigration levels are not necessarily the same)
    • From immigration panic to migration control
Sea arrivals in 2017

145,870
Last updated 20 Oct 2017

Dead and missing in 2017 (estimate)

2,784
Last updated 20 Oct 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Previous years</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sea arrivals</td>
<td>362,753</td>
<td>1,015,078</td>
<td>216,054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dead and missing</td>
<td>5,096</td>
<td>3,771</td>
<td>3,538</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Demography of Mediterranean sea arrivals from January 2017

- Men: 80%
- Women: 15%
- Children: 5%
Most common nationalities of Mediterranean sea arrivals from January 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country of origin</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Data date</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td></td>
<td>31 Aug 2017</td>
<td>13.8% 16,624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syrian Arab Rep.</td>
<td></td>
<td>30 Sep 2017</td>
<td>9.7% 11,654</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guinea</td>
<td></td>
<td>31 Aug 2017</td>
<td>8.5% 10,291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Côte d'Ivoire</td>
<td></td>
<td>31 Aug 2017</td>
<td>7.9% 9,544</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td></td>
<td>31 Aug 2017</td>
<td>7.3% 8,747</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gambia</td>
<td></td>
<td>31 Aug 2017</td>
<td>5.2% 6,294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mali</td>
<td></td>
<td>31 Aug 2017</td>
<td>5.0% 5,989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eritrea</td>
<td></td>
<td>31 Aug 2017</td>
<td>4.6% 5,601</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 3. Population by region: estimates, 1950-2015, and medium-variant projection, 2015-2100

Many Europeans concerned with security, economic repercussions of refugee crisis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Refugees will increase the likelihood of terrorism in our country</th>
<th>Refugees are a burden on our country because they take our jobs and social benefits</th>
<th>Refugees in our country are more to blame for crime than other groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Netherlands excluded on question about crime (Q51b) due to administrative error.

Interwar period: hostility to refugees after record number of migrants in the preceding century

January 20, 1939

It has been proposed to bring to this country 10,000 refugee children from Germany—most of them Jewish—to be taken care of in American homes. Should the government permit these children to come in?

U.S.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: American Institute of Public Opinion

April, 1939

If you were a member of Congress, would you vote yes or no on a bill to open the doors of the United States to a larger number of European refugees than now are admitted under our immigration quotas?

U.S.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes, open doors</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>69.8%</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>85.3%</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.8%</td>
<td>84.0%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(by religion of respondent)

Source: Fortune