

SEP 9, 2015 14

Should Germany Leave the Euro?

[Michael Heise](#)

Michael Heise is Chief Economist of Allianz SE and the author of [Emerging From the Euro Debt Crisis: Making the Single Currency Work](#).

MUNICH – The debate about whether Greece should leave the eurozone has revived the idea that Germany, and other similarly strong economies, would best serve the rest of the continent if *they* were the ones to [exit the monetary union](#). But, though that notion may win some applause, implementing it would be shortsighted, impractical, and economically dubious.

For starters, it would not be easy to extricate Europe's largest economy from the single currency. Any serious discussion of such an objective would cause chaos in financial markets, given the many uncertainties attached to the process.

Even more important are the argument's economic flaws, three of which are immediately apparent. First, the proponents of a German exit put far too much faith in the [power of weak currencies](#) to fuel an economy. They argue that if Germany left, the rest of the eurozone would devalue and that this devaluation would restore growth. This is unlikely.

Before the introduction of the euro, countries such as Italy, [Greece](#), Spain, and Portugal – and until the 1980s, France as well – regularly devalued their currencies. The result was inflation with little growth. It was precisely the painful consequences of their sliding currencies that enticed these countries to join a monetary union with Germany.

Currency devaluation can boost exports in the short term, but it also makes imports more expensive, eroding households' purchasing power. Workers then demand higher wages to compensate. Unless the central bank is very strong and prepared to engender an economic slowdown, higher wages tend to push up inflation. The result is often a wage-price spiral that quickly offsets the competitiveness gains of a weaker currency.

Second, advocates of a German exit argue that its economy is too competitive [to share a currency](#) with weaker players like Italy, France, and Spain. This is flattering but wrong. Since 2000, France's cumulative GDP growth has been the same as Germany's. Ireland and Spain have done even better, despite the deep slumps they had to endure during the crisis.

Competitiveness does not depend only, or even primarily, on the exchange rate. Fundamentals such as productivity, education, research and development, and the tax system are more important. In these areas, Germany is far from being in a league of its own. On the contrary, the country will have to stop resting on its laurels and restart domestic reforms if it is to keep its strong position in the eurozone and globally. In any case, it would be absurd to rearrange the currency union every time individual members' relative competitiveness changes.

Finally, proponents of a German exit claim that the eurozone in its current form is [deeply flawed](#) (although they usually are reluctant to provide details regarding exactly how). To be sure, the eurozone does not fully meet all of the conditions of an optimal currency area (which include an open and diversified economy, free movement of capital and labor, and flexible prices and wages). But, although the eurozone certainly has plenty of room to improve, the crisis has brought much progress in terms of integration and flexibility. The eurozone may not be perfect, but it is good enough to last.

One of the most important – but often ignored – conditions for a successful currency union is its members' ability to agree on certain fundamentals of economic policy. Regardless of the historical and cultural differences that persist among the economic systems of, say, Italy, France, Spain, and Germany, all of these

countries agree on the fundamental principles of a market-based economy. Most notably, they agree that it is the private sector, rather than the state, that is responsible for creating jobs, and that sustainable economic growth requires open product and labor markets.

In the case of Greece, these fundamental ideas do not appear to have been universally accepted. For decades, the state acted as the employer of first and last resort. Product markets were strangled by regulatory red tape, owing to the influence of vested interests. This system could persist only through sustained public borrowing. Over the last 20 years – including the period before Greece joined the euro – the country’s average annual budget deficit was [more than 7% of GDP](#).

Greek wages and prices have already fallen sufficiently to restore competitiveness; the country now needs a framework in which private economic activity can thrive. If the conditions attached to its third bailout package help Greece move to a more sustainable economic model, then it, too, will have a future in the eurozone.

The eurozone’s survival requires, first and foremost, that all of its member countries have strong and flexible economies, which means that all of them must undertake continuous efforts to remain competitive. Wondering whether more (or less) competitive economies should leave the monetary union might be an interesting intellectual exercise. But it contributes little to the task at hand.

Read more at <https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/should-germany-leave-the-eurozone-by-michael-heise-2015-09#wK8HJycjSDsBtB1H.99>

128,3

Governments Give Migrants a Disastrous Mix of Social Welfare and Bureaucracy

SEPTEMBER 14, 2015 — [Justin Murray](#)

On August 27, 2015, seventy-one refugees [were discovered](#) suffocated in an abandoned, locked transport truck in Austria just across the border with Hungary. These individuals, reported as refugees fleeing from the civil war in Syria, made a trek of over 1,000 miles. This is just a long string in the growing refugee and migration crisis hitting Europe over the past few years, with [2,500 estimated deaths](#) from capsizing ships in the Mediterranean alone, of the nearly half million people crossing into Europe over the course of 2014–2015.

The problem is not unique to Europe. Many of these same migrants find their way to Brazil then die through the various jungle crossings attempting to reach the United States. This was true for [five migrants from Ghana](#), an African nation, found dead in the jungles along the Panama-Colombia border. This is a terrible loss of life and while most agree that “something” must be done, we have to question first what the underlying cause of this migration is and what that “something” should be.

Underlying Cause of the Migration

Much has already been written by the degree of instability caused by foreign war policy and the distorting effects of foreign aid that usually props up corrupt military dictatorships. The more interesting observation of the latest migration crisis is not that it is happening, but where the migrants are headed.

In the past, refugees usually trekked the minimal distance necessary to escape fighting with a few politically popular groups receiving airfare to further distant nations, like the Somali refugees relocated to Minneapolis, Minnesota. The rest find their way to the closest safety zone away from the fighting. However, this latest wave of refugees and migrants are passing through numerous safe nations, purchasing airfare across oceans and braving a travel path that is far more dangerous than remaining at home. For example, the aforementioned seventy-one Syrians found dead in Austria chose to bypass and ignore nearly a dozen other safe countries and make their way into Austria and, presumably, further on. It is odd that a Nepalese refugee will purchase airfare to Sao Paulo, Brazil then travel by roads through the Amazon jungle and cross the US-Mexico border if it was just war or natural disaster that they were fleeing.


Public Benefits Create the Incentives

A major driver creating the incentives to make this dangerous, life threatening journey can be summed up with a single photo:

Frontex Non-Classified Sensitive-Basic Protection Level, Releasable to SCIFA

Facilitators inform migrants on conditions of stay

Country/ question	Germany	Holland	Sweden	Norway	Denmark
Reunion	3-5 months after getting permit to stay	6-12 months max.	10-15 months	6-9 months	5 months max.
Salary/ benefits	300-330 Euro and after getting permit 370-390 Euro	220 Euro pr. Person. After permit 1400-1600 Euro for every family depending on need.	200 Dollars pr. Person. After permit 900-1100 Dollars pr. Person.	450 Dollars pr. Person. After permit 1300-1600 Dollars pr. Person.	10500 Kroner pr. Adult. Rent and tax will be deducted. You will remain with 5500 Kroner (900 Dollars)
Type of permit to stay	Temporary for 1-3 years. If war stops you will go back to your country if not you apply for permanent permit.	Temporarily for 5 years... if war stops you will go back to your country if not you apply for permanent permit.	Temporarily for 5 years then apply for permanent permit and then citizenship subject to conditions.	3-5 temporarily. If war stops you go back to your country if not you apply for permanent subject to conditions.	Temporarily 5 years and then apply for permanent after 8 years apply for citizenship subject to language and job.
Time to obtain residency	3-5 months	1-3 months	3-5 months	6-9 months	1-2 months
Accommodation	You stay in a camp. After getting permit you can rent a house.	You stay in a house. Dutch government pays the rent. After two months of getting permit (for family) and for singles stay in camp.	Singles stay in camp. Families stay in a room until they get permit to stay.	Singles stay in camp. Families stay in a room until they get permit to stay.	You stay in furnished house one month after getting the permit.

16 Latest phenomena at the EU's external borders, SCIFA 19 Sep 2014 

Above is a photo of a reference card [created by human smugglers](#) obtained by Frontex, the European Union’s border control agency. Smugglers throughout the Middle East, Turkey, and North Africa produce such cards and hand them to potential clients. In effect, refugees have ceased seeking the nearest safest refuge and are now shopping the best nations to flee to. This has created the issue that people are no longer fleeing from conflict or poverty, but fleeing toward the most lucrative benefit package. The above

cards do warp the legal systems by implying that showing up is sufficient cause for asylum and the benefits are permanent and for life. However, the presence of such benefit packages does exist and is a major incentive for migrants. This explains why people fleeing Libya are crossing the Mediterranean in rickety, overcrowded boats and people are passing through four or five perfectly secure nations to reach the EU. Part of this large humanitarian crisis is generated by dangling the incentives that anyone who arrives will be given a host of benefits that are, relatively speaking to the recipient, opulent.

The United States provides similar resettlement benefits and even includes the possibility of full family unification. With the United States, further issues exasperate with the treatment of Unaccompanied Minors, who are advertised as given an almost full ride by showing up. This accounts for the surge of fifteen-to-eighteen-year-old males crossing the US border under dangerous conditions.

Lots of Government Paperwork

Another driver of this behavior is how states handle migration and border control. Legitimately crossing into the nations of the EU and North America is a bureaucratic nightmare. Migrants following the rules have to obtain identity documents that are not readily available in their home nations. For example, with the United States, the petition time tends to be lengthy, requires travel to inconvenient USCIS locations in the home nation and is limited to people who have existing families or job offers because of qualified skills. If one looks at the [Green Card FAQ](#) there is little recourse for a low-skilled worker seeking a better life apart from a narrow and difficult asylum process. The entry process into the EU is similarly difficult.

I can speak from personal experience traveling to Switzerland for my MBA that even as a US Citizen seeking a one year visa in the Schengen area is a complex, difficult task. It is hard to even comprehend what someone from Syria or Ghana has to go through to obtain legitimate entry. Even the \$1,010 application fee, which provides no guarantee of acceptance, while not unreasonable by Western wealth standards, represents multiple years of earnings for some migrants. Even with legitimate refugees, the process is difficult and, with existing quotas, it would take nearly a decade to process just those displaced by the Syrian conflict.

By making legitimate entry points all but inaccessible to most desirable migrants, the migrants are funneled through non-standard routes such as the dangerous Panama-Colombia crossing or under razor-wire fences at the Hungarian border or associate with criminal cartels that will just as readily enslave, rob, or murder the migrants as assist them across borders. These routes are selected over safe alternatives because the safe alternatives have been made unavailable by government policy.

The Perfect Storm

Either of the above policies creates problems, but together, we get the perfect storm. By dangling a rich benefits package in front of potential refugees and migrants, governments are creating incentives for individuals to make the journey. But by making those said benefits impossible without running a dangerous gauntlet, we end up driving more people through quite literal meat grinders. This combination is almost cruel in a sense — great benefits, but near impossible to get to them.

The Solution

The key solution to this problem is two-pronged. First, guaranteed public welfare subsidies for refugees needs to be curtailed or outright eliminated. By removing the incentives, people enticed to migrate for public benefits will disappear, greatly reducing the apparent reward for undertaking the trip. The cost of the dangerous trip remains, but the reward has just vanished. Those who are truly desperate will no longer have the incentives to travel beyond the nearest safe location.

Second, the Byzantine, lengthy and costly system of legal migration needs to be scrapped. This is not entering the debate on open borders, but whether one supports open borders or not, it is difficult to argue that the current system of migration is costly and difficult for all but the best educated and most well connected. Those who seek to migrate and contribute to the host society are by and large cut off from legal avenues, leaving only the very dangerous routes available.

While influential voices like the Pope are correct that this is a travesty, the [policies promoted by him](#) and other government officials will only make this worse. Offering assistance to migrants by rescuing them when they become troubled or allowing migrants to remain without changing the underlying bureaucratic issue will only create greater incentives for more and more people to take the same dangerous routes. Risk compensation has to be considered — the greater the safety mechanisms in place, the more risky the behavior will become. Unfortunately, the current solutions presented by officials will likely result in boats even more overloaded with people and even greater numbers traversing dangerous jungle passes.

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Migrants : le putsch moral des éditorialistes

Égoïsme ou générosité, saurez-vous choisir votre camp?

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Mots-clés : [Immigration](#), [Le Monde](#), [Libération](#), [migrants](#), [Syrie](#)

Qu'un certain journalisme adore sermonner au moins autant qu'informer, ce n'est pas très nouveau. **L'appel publié jeudi en « une » de Libération** – et de onze autres journaux européens – ne m'a d'abord arraché qu'un haussement d'épaule. « *Nous journaux d'Europe, nous unissons pour exhorter nos dirigeants à agir résolument pour gérer cette tragédie humanitaire et empêcher que d'autres vies ne soient perdues...* »

D'abord, on ne voit pas qui pourrait être contre ça. Qui voudrait que des vies humaines soient perdues ? Qui pourrait dire qu'il ne faut rien faire ? Rassurez-vous, pas moi. Mais on devrait avoir le droit de se demander quelle part de la misère du monde on veut accueillir et dans quelles conditions.

Et puis, ce journalisme de grandes causes et de grandes consciences est une spécialité française, on s'habitue à son ronronnement satisfait qui nous dicte en toute occasion ce qu'il faut penser – sans grand effet du reste. Un peu de Zola, un peu de Malraux, une pincée de Kessel ou de Frantz Fanon, des accents héroïques ou pathétiques, des appels à la fraternité humaine – assortis de sentences d'exclusion de ladite fraternité à l'encontre de quiconque ne pense pas ce qu'il faut. Si on veut comprendre quelque chose à ce nouveau clergé, Régis Debray a dit l'essentiel depuis longtemps.

C'était prévisible, la tragédie à laquelle nous assistons sans la voir et sans la comprendre a stimulé comme jamais les ardeurs prêcheuses de nos grands médias et de quelques autres. Des entreprises font leur com sans vergogne en organisant des appels aux dons, des mairies se déclarent candidates à l'accueil de migrants. Enfin, se réjouit *Le Monde*, « **les artistes français sortent de leur réserve** ». « *Finie la colère rentrée* », écrit la consœur sans rire. Ouf, je n'avais pas remarqué qu'elle était rentrée mais il fallait qu'elle sorte. Marrant, dans un tel brouhaha, tous ces gens qui prétendent briser le silence.

D'éminents éditorialistes se réjouissent qu'une photo ait fait bouger les choses. Moi, ça me fiche plutôt la trouille que la politique de mon gouvernement soit dictée par une photo. Et puis, à mon avis, on devrait s'abstenir de faire parler les enfants morts. Parce qu'on finit par leur faire dire n'importe quoi. En l'occurrence, ce petit garçon serait, nous a-t-on serinés sans jamais prendre la peine de le démontrer, l'image de la culpabilité européenne. Des gentils, des méchants, on ne veut rien d'autre.

À une situation complexe, les médias ont donc opposé une grille de lecture simple. Chercher à réfléchir, dire autre chose que les mots magiques « accueil », « ouverture », « générosité », c'est déjà être un salaud. Là où on aurait besoin de comprendre l'ensemble des causes qui ont amené ce petit garçon sur cette plage turque, on répétant que ce sont les nouveaux juifs fuyant le nouveau nazisme. Ce qui revient à interdire de penser. Depuis une dizaine de jours, ce chantage émotionnel (dont **Slobodan Despot a fort bien décrit les ressorts**) a atteint une intensité inédite. Égoïsme ou générosité, choisissez votre camp ! Chacun exhibe son émotion comme une médaille, alors que ce qui serait méritoire, ce serait d'y résister un peu, à cette émotion.

Cela dit, des « J'accuse », la presse en publie tous les quatre matins et j'aurais oublié celui des douze journaux européens si Alain Finkielkraut n'avait pas attiré mon attention sur son caractère scandaleux. « *C'est une prise de pouvoir !* », m'a-dit mon cher professeur. De fait, cette alliance de douze journaux pour dicter leur politique à des gouvernements élus dont ils n'ont ni la légitimité, ni les responsabilités, traduit une curieuse conception de la répartition des rôles. « *On attend d'eux qu'ils nous donnent le savoir nécessaire pour penser, mais ils ne veulent pas décrire, ils veulent prescrire* », s'agace Finkielkraut.

Il est vrai que ce texte ne semble pas avoir soulevé les masses ni ému plus que de raison les gouvernements tchèque, hongrois et autres réfractaires à l'accueil de masse. Quant à nos gouvernants à nous, ceux de la vieille Europe, ils tentent de louvoyer entre les attentes de leurs électeurs et les diktats des médias – et comme ils sacrifient souvent les premiers pour complaire aux seconds, ils finissent par perdre. En attendant, les ministres de l'Intérieur vont bien devoir traduire toute cette émotion en action – ce qui commencera ce lundi à Bruxelles par un vaste marchandage sur le mode « j'en prends tant et toi tant » qui nous emmènera assez loin des grands mots et des grands principes. Reste que ce brouhaha humanitaire ne peut qu'encourager ceux qui hésitent, dans les camps réfugiés de Turquie ou de Jordanie, à tenter l'aventure européenne pendant que les opinions sont dans de relativement bonnes dispositions. De tout cela, mes estimables confrères se lavent les mains : leur rayon c'est la conviction, pas la responsabilité. C'est pourquoi on peut au moins parler d'une tentative de putsch moral.

Il y a tout de même un aspect presque comique, dans cette crise dramatique, c'est que la France s'empaille sur des questions qui ne se posent pas. On peut se demander s'il faut accueillir des réfugiés, et combien ou comment. L'ennui, c'est qu'il va falloir les obliger parce que, décidément, ils ne veulent pas venir chez nous. On invoquera les routes migratoires traditionnelles, les emplois allemands, le chômage français. D'accord, mais ils préfèrent même l'Angleterre et le coût de la vie à Londres. Alors, une pensée affreuse me vient : et si la France était vraiment trop sortie de l'Histoire, même pour des gens qui essaient de lui échapper ?

Europa ist gar keine Wertegemeinschaft

Deutschland will ein Einwandererland sein? Dann muss es sich auch so verhalten. Den Unterschied zwischen Asyl und Migration sollte es wenigstens kennen. Ein Gastbeitrag.

14.09.2015, von JÖRG BABEROWSKI

Jörg Baberowski (* 24. März 1961 in Radolfzell am Bodensee) ist ein deutscher Historiker. Er ist Professor für Geschichte Osteuropas an der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin.

Neulich erklärte Wirtschaftsminister **Sigmar Gabriel**, Deutschland müsse sich darauf einstellen, in jedem Jahr eine halbe Million Flüchtlinge aufzunehmen. **Weiß der Mann eigentlich, was er sagt und wie das, was er sagt, in jenen Ländern verstanden wird, aus denen Menschen zu uns kommen?** Der Bundeskanzlerin fällt zu dieser Frage nur eine Wahlkampfloskel ein: „Wir schaffen es“. Und sie fügt hinzu, dass Deutschland sich in den nächsten Jahren bis zur Unkenntlichkeit verändern werde. Als ob es die Aufgabe der Politik wäre, die Krise nur zu verwalten. Und als ob es einerlei wäre, was die Bürger dieses Landes darüber denken.

Natürlich kann die jährliche Einwanderung von 500.000 Menschen technisch bewältigt werden. **Aber wollen wir sie auch bewältigen? Diese Frage hat niemand gestellt.** Hat überhaupt ein Politiker je darüber nachgedacht, **was das Gerede von der Willkommenskultur bewirkt?** Es hat sich in den Krisenregionen dieser Welt inzwischen herumgesprochen, dass man für die Einreise nach Deutschland keinen Pass benötigt, dass der Wohlfahrtsstaat eine Versorgung gewährt, die in Pakistan oder Albanien nicht einmal für Menschen erreichbar ist, die in Lohn und Brot stehen. Solange der deutsche Sozialstaat der ganzen Welt Angebote macht, dürfen seine Repräsentanten sich nicht darüber beklagen, dass Menschen, die nichts haben, sie annehmen.

Auf das Machbare hinwirken

Deutschland ist ein Land der Hilfsbereitschaft und Gastfreundschaft. **Es ist auch ein Land, in dem Menschen unterschiedlicher Sprachen und Kulturen gut miteinander auskommen. Aber dieser Frieden wird aufs Spiel gesetzt, wenn Moral und Tugend die einzigen Ressourcen sind, aus denen die Begründungen für das politische Handeln kommen.** In der veröffentlichten Meinung ist nur noch von Flüchtlingen die Rede, nicht von illegalen Einwanderern. **Der Flüchtling ist verfolgt. Über ihn darf man nur Gutes sagen.** Darüber wissen jene, die über den Wortgebrauch entscheiden, sehr gut Bescheid.

Der Einwanderer aber kann auch andere Motive als die Flucht haben. Über ihn spricht man nicht, denn sein Einwanderungswunsch wirft die Frage auf, ob man ihm entsprechen will. Einwände aber sind im Reich der Tugendwächter, in das viele Medien und Politiker Deutschland inzwischen verwandelt haben, **verboten.** Wer darauf verweist, dass es **die Aufgabe der Politik ist, sich am Machbaren, nicht am Wünschbaren zu orientieren,** muss sich im schlimmsten Fall **den Vorwurf gefallen lassen, er sei „rechts“** und könne deshalb am öffentlichen Diskurs nicht beteiligt werden.

Der Zeitgeist, der das helle Deutschland bewohnt, beschwört demgegenüber Religion, Geschlecht und Kultur, will, dass alle nur noch seine Sprache sprechen. Von der Aufklärung, die der Bürger gegen die Obrigkeit zu verteidigen hätte, von der sozialen Frage, die sein Anliegen sein müsste, aber hat er sich längst abgewandt. Es kommt nicht mehr darauf an, was jemand sagt, sondern, wer es sagt und in welcher Sprache es vorgetragen wird.

Offene Fragen

Der Besonnene hätte demgegenüber an die Politik viele Fragen zu stellen. Wo sollen all die Menschen leben, die Jahr für Jahr zu uns kommen und die mit den schon jetzt in unseren Städten lebenden Armen **um knappen Wohnraum konkurrieren werden?** **Wie sollen Lehrer die Aufnahme von mehreren hunderttausend Schülern bewältigen, die unsere Sprache erst erlernen und sich an unsere Kultur gewöhnen müssen? Warum soll eigentlich ein Einwanderer gratis erhalten, wofür diejenigen, die schon hier sind, jahrzehntlang hart gearbeitet haben?** In den Vereinigten Staaten wissen die Bürger, dass der dazugehört, der sich den Respekt der anderen erarbeitet hat. Wer etwas leistet, kann von jedermann erwarten, geachtet zu werden. Das wissen auch jene Millionen Einwanderer, die einst als Gastarbeiter nach Deutschland gekommen sind und sich hier heimisch fühlen.

Warum, so fragen sich die Nachfahren der türkischen Gastarbeiter, die als Handwerker und Kaufleute in Deutschland leben, soll Einwanderern, die keinen Asylgrund haben, etwas geschenkt werden? Sekretärinnen, Bauarbeiter, Mütter, die im Alter nur noch wenig Geld zur Verfügung haben, Frisörinnen, die keine Wohnung finden, weil ihr Gehalt dafür nicht ausreicht, verstehen nicht, warum das soziale Netz auch für jene da sein soll, die für seine Finanzierung keinen Beitrag geleistet haben.

Die Politiker sagen uns, es kämen Ärzte und Ingenieure. Aber woher wissen sie das so genau? Kommen wirklich keine Analphabeten, und wird jeder, der kommt, eine Arbeitsstelle bekommen, die seinen Fähigkeiten entspricht? Die Arbeitslosenstatistik spricht jedenfalls keine eindeutige Sprache. **Was geschieht mit Analphabeten und Menschen ohne jegliche Qualifikation? Ist jeder Einwanderer eine Bereicherung?** Wer einen Blick nach Duisburg-Marxloh oder in den Görliitzer Park in Berlin-Kreuzberg wirft, wird eines Besseren belehrt. **Aber auf die dunklen Seiten der ungesteuerten Einwanderung wird der Mantel des Schweigens geworfen** und das Gegenteil von dem beschworen, was Tag für Tag in unserem Alltag besichtigt werden kann.

Verzicht auf Steuerung

Es liegt in der Natur illegaler Einwanderung, dass man gar nicht weiß, wer kommt, und es liegt in der Natur des Asylverfahrens, dass man es auch gar nicht wissen muss. Der Asylbescheid fragt nicht nach der Qualifikation des Bewerbers, sondern nach dem Grund der Verfolgung. **Wir verwischen soeben den Unterschied zwischen Asyl und Einwanderung.** Deshalb gelingt in Deutschland nicht, was in den klassischen Einwanderungsländern Normalität ist. **Sie laden nämlich ein, wen sie brauchen, und wehren ab, wer nur eine Belastung wäre.** Wenn Deutschland ein Einwanderungsland sein will, dann soll es sich auch so aufführen!

Stattdessen gibt es seine nationale Souveränität auf und überlässt es illegalen Einwanderern, darüber zu entscheiden, wer kommen und wer bleiben darf. Solch ein Verzicht auf Steuerung wird den sozialen Frieden gefährden. Hat überhaupt jemals ein Politiker darüber nachgedacht, warum sich die europäischen Staaten vom Tugendmodell Deutschlands abwenden und von ungesteuerter Einwanderung nichts wissen wollen? **Über die Solidarität der Europäischen Union sollte man sich keine Illusionen machen. Polen und Ungarn sind ihr überhaupt nur beigetreten, weil sie ihre Souveränität bewahren, nicht, weil sie sie opfern wollten. Europa ist keine Wertegemeinschaft. Es ist inzwischen nicht einmal mehr eine Interessengemeinschaft.**

Die Politik hat entschieden, dass Deutschland ein Vielvölkerstaat werden soll. Nun gut. Dann soll sie aber auch Vorkehrungen dafür treffen, diesen Staat so zu organisieren, dass alle Menschen in Frieden und Einvernehmen mit ihm leben können. **Die Integration von mehreren Millionen Menschen in nur kurzer Zeit unterbricht den Überlieferungszusammenhang, in dem wir stehen und der einer Gesellschaft Halt gibt und Konsistenz verleiht.** Wenn uns mit vielen Menschen nichts mehr verbindet, wenn wir einander nichts mehr zu sagen haben, weil wir gar nicht verstehen, aus welcher Welt der andere kommt und worin dessen Sicht auf die Welt wurzelt, dann gibt es auch kein Fundament mehr, das uns zum Einverständnis über das Selbstverständliche ermächtigt. **Gemeinsam Erlebtes, Gelesenes und Gesehenes – das war der soziale Kitt, der unsere Gesellschaft einmal zusammengehalten hat.**

Davon ist wenig übrig geblieben. Wenn Gesellschaft nur noch eine Veranstaltung von Menschen ist, die einander mit höflicher Nichtbeachtung begegnen und einander sonst nichts mehr mitzuteilen haben, können wir das Projekt der Einwanderung begraben. Solange der Sozialstaat die Wünsche aller Interessengruppen bedient, mag gutgehen, was sich die Sozialromantiker für uns ausgedacht haben. **Aber was geschieht in Zeiten der Krise? Was hielte uns dann noch zusammen?**

Ich möchte in einer Gesellschaft leben, die von den Errungenschaften der Aufklärung nicht abrückt, die religiösen Fanatikern Einhalt gebietet, die Einwanderern klarmacht, dass wir diese Grundsätze nicht aufgeben und sie auch verteidigen. Das wird nur gelingen, wenn wir uns unsere Einwanderer aussuchen dürfen. Und ich wünsche mir, in meinem Land offen sagen zu dürfen, was ich denke, ohne von ahnungslosen Fernsehpredigern und überforderten Politikern darüber belehrt zu werden, was moralisch geboten ist und was nicht.

<http://www.lefigaro.fr/actualites/2015/09/14/01001-20150914QCMWW00075-la-france-duit-elle-comme-l-allemande-retablir-les-contrles-a-ses-frontieres.php>

128,8

La France doit-elle comme l'Allemagne rétablir les contrôles à ses frontières ?

Mis à jour le 14/09/2015 à 10:55

16706 Votants

94% oui | 6% non

128,9

REVIEW & OUTLOOK (Editorial)

British Labour's Radical Turn

14 septembre 2015

[The Wall Street Journal](#)

Jeremy Corbyn's election Saturday as leader of Britain's Labour Party marks an extraordinary retrogression. In the eight years since [Tony Blair](#) left office, his party has completed its rejection of the politics of the only leader since 1974 to guide it to electoral victories. **Labour instead is returning to the old-time religion of socialism and anti-Americanism, handing Mr. Corbyn nearly 60% of its votes.**

Mr. Blair understood that after the governance disasters of the 1970s, Labour needed to make its peace with markets and prove it could govern from the center. Mr. Corbyn never read the memo. **He favors higher taxes as well as renationalizing the railways, post office and energy production. He opposes [NATO](#) membership and military action against [Islamic State](#), and he supports [Hamas](#) and [Hezbollah](#).**

Mr. Corbyn makes Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders look moderate in comparison, but **America's Democrats have made their own notable left turn.** **They've moved sharply away from [Bill Clinton's](#) New Democratic policies, a cousin of Blairism, on everything from taxes to trade to energy. In the presidential primaries, Mr. Sanders and Hillary Clinton are running to the left even of President Obama on economic issues.**

Mr. Corbyn's election has some Tories crowing that Labour is making itself unelectable for another decade, if not a generation. But there are no certainties in politics. Democracy requires a decent opposition capable of taking charge when the incumbent party loses support, as eventually it always does.

And unlike the early 1980s, when Labour last elected a similarly radical leader, the economic and ideological trends are far less friendly to the West. Mediocre economic growth brought about by bad economic ideas has a way of making bad ideas more popular, not less. This is the lesson of 20th-century Argentina and 21st-century Greece.

That means that even if Mr. Corbyn never takes power, Corbynism could become the dominant ideology of a party that someday will. An unopposed Conservative Party could become prone to infighting and scandal. Mr. Corbyn could also bring back into the fold left-wing Scottish voters who abandoned Labour for the Scottish National Party in the last election. Throw in an ill-timed recession, and a Labour comeback is far from impossible.

All of this should be a warning to Tories not to be complacent. **Prime Minister [David Cameron](#) has persuaded the public to accept a measure of fiscal responsibility, but he hasn't explained to the public, as Margaret Thatcher once did, the profound connection between a smaller state and greater individual opportunity.** **If free-market ideas are to be durable, those ideas have to be tested and taught. Conservatives on both sides of the Atlantic should take note.**

128,10

Declarations: The Migrants and the Elites

By Peggy Noonan

12 septembre 2015

What a crisis Europe is in, with waves of migrants reaching its shores as the Arab world implodes. It is the biggest migration into Europe since the end of World War II and is shaping up to be its first great and sustained challenge of the 21st century. It may in fact shape that continent's nature and history as surely as did World War I.

It is a humanitarian crisis. As **Richard Haass** of the Council on Foreign Relations notes, **it will not soon go away, for two reasons. First, the Mideast will not be peaceful anytime soon and may well become more turbulent. Second, "The more that Europe responds the more it will reinforce the supply of migrants. Europe is caught." If it doesn't respond with compassion and generosity it is wrong in humanitarian terms; if it does, more will come and the problem grows.** "This is now part of the architecture," says Mr. Haass.

Three hundred eighty-one thousand detected migrants have arrived so far this year, up from 216,000 in all of 2014. Almost 3,000 died on the journey or are missing. The symbol of their plight is the photo of the 3-year-old Syrian boy, Aylan Kurdi, who drowned along with his mother and 5-year-old brother when their boat capsized near a Turkish beach. Just as horrifying is what was found inside a Volvo refrigerated truck stranded on the shoulder of the A4 highway 30 miles from Vienna in late August. Inside were 71 bodies, including a 12-year-old girl, all dead of suffocation. They'd been left there by human smugglers.

It is a catastrophe unfolding before our eyes, and efforts to deal with it have at least one echo in America, which we'll examine further down.

According to the U.N. refugee agency, 53% of the migrants are from Syria, 14% from Afghanistan, 7% from Eritrea, and 3% each from Pakistan, Nigeria, Iraq and Somalia. Seventy-two percent are men, only 13% women and 15% children. Not all are fleeing war. Some are fleeing poverty. Not all but the majority are Muslim.

The leaders of Europe have shown themselves unsure about what to do. It is a continent-wide crisis that began in 2011, as Tunisians fled to the Italian island of Lampedusa. The following year, sub-Saharan Africans who'd migrated to Libya made for Europe after Muammar Gadhafi's fall. Since then the European response has largely been ad hoc and stop gap. European Union President Jean-Claude Juncker has proposed a "permanent relocation mechanism" with EU members taking greater shares of the refugees, but it is unclear how exactly it would work.

In many EU nations there will be powerful pushback. Like the crisis itself the pushback will build. Europe is in economic drift. As this newspaper has noted, even Germany is growing at only 1.6% a year. Welfare systems will be strained. Youth unemployment is already high. In Britain the crisis could contribute to a vote to leave the EU outright. There are fears, which the elites take lightly, that floods of displaced people will "alter the cultural balance of the country for ever," as the columnist Melanie Phillips put it in the Times of London. The Gulf states have not offered a home to their Arab and Muslim cousins. Dutch right-wing leader **Geert Wilders** this week called the wave of migrants an "Islamic invasion" in parliamentary debate, "an invasion that threatens our prosperity, our security, our culture and identity." A recent poll showed 54% of Dutch voters opposed to welcoming more than the roughly 2,000 refugees previously agreed to. Hungary is building a fence.

Reading the popular press of Europe you see the questions. Do we not have a right to control our borders? Isn't the refugee wave a security threat? ISIS is nothing if not committed to its intentions. Why would they not be funneling jihadists onto those boats?

Many things could be done to ease the crisis. States such as **Jordan and Lebanon** work hard to help refugees in neighboring countries and **need help.** Humanitarian relief is needed for the internally displaced. Go after the human smugglers, patrol the waters, take in those who are truly fleeing war and truly desire to become a peaceful part of their new, adoptive homes.

But here is a problem with Europe's decision-makers, and it connects to decision-makers in America.

Damning "the elites" is often a mindless, phony and manipulative game. Malice and delusion combine to produce the refrains: "Those fancy people in their Georgetown cocktail parties," "Those left-wing poseurs in their apartments in Brussels." This is social resentment parading as insight, envy posing as authenticity.

But in this crisis talk of "the elites" is pertinent. The gap between those who run governments and those who are governed has now grown huge and portends nothing good.

Rules on immigration and refugees are made by safe people. These are the people who help run countries, who have nice homes in nice neighborhoods and are protected by their status. Those who live with the effects of immigration and asylum law are those who are less safe, who see a less beautiful face in it because they are daily confronted with a less beautiful reality -- normal human roughness, human tensions. **Decision-makers fear things like harsh words from the writers of editorials; normal human beings fear things like street crime.** Decision-makers have the luxury of seeing life in the abstract. Normal people feel the implications of their decisions in the particular.

The decision-makers feel disdain for the anxieties of normal people, and ascribe them to small-minded bigotries, often religious and racial, and ignorant antagonisms. But normal people prize order because they can't buy their way out of disorder.

People in gated communities of the mind, who glide by in Ubers, have bought their way out and are safe. Not to mention those in government-maintained mansions who glide by in SUVs followed by security details. Rulers can afford to see national-security threats as an abstraction -- yes, yes, we must better integrate our new populations. **But the unprotected, the vulnerable, have a right and a reason to worry.**

Here is the challenge for people in politics: The better you do, the higher you go, the more detached you become from real life. You use words like "perception" a lot. But perception is not as important as reality.

The great thing in politics, the needed thing, is for those who are raised high in terms of responsibility and authority to be yet still, in their heads and hearts, of the people, experiencing life as a common person on an average street. The challenge is to carry the average street inside you. **Only then, when the street is wrong, can you persuade it to see what is right.**

The biggest thing leaders don't do now is listen. They no longer hear the voices of common people. Or they imitate what they think it is and it sounds backward and embarrassing. In this age we will see political leaders, and institutions, rock, shatter and fall due to that deafness.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/15/world/europe/europe-migrants-germany.html?hp&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&module=a-lede-package-region®ion=top-news&WT.nav=top-news&r=0>

128,12

Austria and Slovakia Follow Germany in Introducing Stricter Border Controls

By MELISSA EDDY and DAN BILEFSKY SEPT. 14, 2015

BERLIN — [Austria](#) and Slovakia introduced strict border controls on Monday, as [Germany](#)'s decision to institute border checks over the weekend began to ripple across a bloc struggling to deal with the [influx of migrants](#) coming to the Continent.

In Hungary, the authorities said that a near-record 5,353 migrants had crossed into the country from Serbia before noon on Monday — even as Budapest continued to try to seal off that border, which has been reinforced with the [construction of a razor-wire fence](#).

Citing Hungary's decision to make unauthorized entry into the country a criminal offense starting on Tuesday, Serbia said it would set up reception centers in the north of the country and pleaded for the [European Union](#), of which it is not a member, to take action. About 3,500 migrants were expected to pass through Serbia on Monday, most of them hoping to continue to Germany or Austria.

Deputy Chancellor Sigmar Gabriel told members of his center-left Social Democratic Party, which governs with Ms. Merkel's Christian Democratic Union, that Germany could face the arrival of [even more migrants](#) this year than the government had projected. "There are many indications that in this year we will not see 800,000 refugees, as predicted, but a million," he said in a letter to his party.

"Germany is strong and can handle a lot," Mr. Gabriel wrote. "Nevertheless, in the past few days we have experienced how, despite our best efforts, our abilities have reached their limits."

Horst Seehofer, the premier of Bavaria, a deeply conservative state in the south, has criticized Ms. Merkel for her open-door policy. More than 25,000 migrants arrived in Bavaria over the weekend.

"There is no order, there is no system, and in a country governed by the rule of law, that is a cause for concern," Mr. Seehofer told reporters on Sunday. He said that officials were straining to process and house thousands of newcomers, and that some of them were economic migrants, not people fleeing persecution.

"We need better controls in general, because we have determined that in recent days, many of those on the move are really not refugees," Joachim Herrmann, the Bavarian interior minister, told a local television station. Officials in Eastern and Central Europe, including Hungary, have made similar arguments.

It was not immediately clear how long the German measures would remain in effect, but Mr. Herrmann estimated that they would last "at least a week."

The restrictions to the European Union's border-free Schengen zone by Germany, one of the most ardent proponents of greater integration, signified a departure for Ms. Merkel, who had said just last week that there was "no upper limit" on the number of refugees her country could take in.

Steffen Seibert, a spokesman for Ms. Merkel, said the new measures were "not a closing of the border, or a suspension of the right to asylum," but were an attempt to instill greater order on the chaos of the arrival and application process.

“It also serves as a clear signal to our European partners that Germany, while prepared to take on a large share of responsibilities, cannot be solely responsible for taking in all refugees,” he said.

Nonetheless, Germany’s decision appeared to edge its neighbor, Austria, toward taking its own measures.

“If Germany carries out border controls, Austria must put strengthened border controls in place,” said Chancellor Werner Faymann of Austria, who is scheduled to meet with Ms. Merkel on Tuesday.

Mr. Faymann said that no asylum seekers had been turned back to Austria from the German border.

Vienna said on Monday that it was sending 2,200 soldiers to help reinforce its eastern border. Last week, Hungary sent 4,300 troops to its border with Serbia, where they have been conducting drills and assisting in the construction of the border fence.

Starting Tuesday, Hungary will treat illegal entry as a crime punishable by up to three years in prison rather than as a minor offense.

In Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia, officials announced temporary controls on its borders with Hungary and Austria, and the addition of 220 officers to police the borders.

The Schengen Agreement, which guarantees passport-free movement within much of continental Europe, has served as a cornerstone of European unity, along with the euro and a single market. Countries in the Schengen Zone are allowed, however, to temporarily reinstate controls at their borders for security reasons.

Such controls have been set up seven times since 2013, when the rules were clarified, and 37 times since the Schengen rules were developed. But this is the first time such controls have been imposed because of migratory pressures.

In Germany, the police on Monday carried out checks on trucks and cars entering the country from Austria, although train service between the two countries was restored.

Thousands of migrants striving to reach Germany remain stranded in Austria, Greece and Hungary, trying to move west as the news of the latest border controls filtered among them.

There were severe backups in traffic on main highways leading to Germany from Austria overnight Sunday and into Monday morning, as the police rigorously carried out checks. Officers eased up as the day wore on, however, and carried out spot checks only on vehicles entering Germany.

Thomas Schweikl, a spokesman for the federal police in the Bavarian town of Freyung, said that 31 people had been arrested on suspicion of people smuggling since controls began late Sunday.

Several hundred officers, wearing reflective vests and flagging down trucks and cars as they entered Germany, were carrying out the checks near the border. Officers from across the country arrived overnight to help the Bavarian police, Mr. Schweikl said.

“There is no way we could manage it on our own,” he said.

128,14

Europe's refugee crisis

All latest updates

Germany imposes border controls

The move, taken to reduce the flow of migrants, undermines Europe's free-movement policies

Sep 14th 2015 | BERLIN | Europe

GERMANY, only days ago the symbol of European openness in the face of large-scale refugee flows, has reintroduced border controls to “decelerate” the influx of people and restore some semblance of order to their registration. On September 13th Thomas de Maizière, the interior minister, explained Germany’s stunning policy, after giving the order to interrupt train connections between Germany and Austria and to begin spot checks on car traffic across the German-Austrian border.

In effect, Germany is imposing sharp limits on asylum seekers only a week after it had appeared to throw its borders wide open. In the first weekend of September, Angela Merkel, the chancellor, unexpectedly allowed trains to carry refugees from Hungary, where they were stranded, through Austria to Bavaria. **More than 20,000 arrived in Munich in that weekend alone.** Many were greeted enthusiastically by ordinary Germans eager to help those in need. **But Mrs Merkel quickly explained that this was only an “exception” to the existing rules, whereby refugees must in theory apply for EU asylum in the first member state they enter.**

As the asylum seekers keep coming day after day—**on Saturday more than 10,000 again arrived in Munich alone—Germany says it has hit its logistical limits. The country expects 1m refugees to apply for asylum this year, over four times as many as last year and more than the entire EU took in during 2014.** Germany's welcoming stance caused a small rebellion in Mrs Merkel’s own centre-right camp. Various leaders of the Christian Social Union (CSU), the Bavarian sister party to Mrs Merkel’s Christian Democrats, **called her open-door policy a “grave mistake”.** Speaking on September 13th, Horst Seehofer, the premier of Bavaria and boss of the CSU, suggested the new border controls came at his behest.

What may appear as a capitulation by Mrs Merkel, however, is at least in part also a tactical manoeuvre to press the rest of the EU to accept a quota system for asylum seekers—which they might do later today at a gathering of the EU’s interior ministers. **Germany, Sweden and Austria, the countries that have been most welcoming toward refugees so far, have long demanded that all member states share the burden in the refugee crisis.** Jean-Claude Juncker, president of the European Commission, last week put forth just such a plan. **France has indicated support.** But **other countries, especially in eastern Europe, are balking.**

In a press conference with Mrs Merkel on September 7th, **Sigmar Gabriel**, the vice chancellor and boss of the centre-left Social Democrats who are the junior partners in the governing coalition, had already—albeit subtly—nodded at the leverage Germany holds in the policy debate. **Germany borders on more countries than any other state in the EU: nine in total, all in the Schengen area of document-free travel.** **“We Germans have a great interest in keeping these borders open,”** Mr Gabriel said. **But if Germany’s neighbours don’t help by accepting more refugees, he added, “the debate can very quickly change completely. That would be a politically dramatic reverse for Europe, and I think a mental one too.** But it would also be heavy economic blow...especially for those states that are now saying: ‘We won’t participate.’”

The implication is that, barring an EU compromise, **Germany may in future reimpose controls on other borders in addition to the Austrian one.** Along with more border checks by other countries—the Czechs have also suggested they would begin policing their border with Austria—**this could spell the end of the Schengen area and thus reverse one of the most visible achievements of European integration.** The immediate consequence of Germany’s border controls will probably be new bottlenecks downstream in the refugee trails—in Austria, above all—and thus even more border closings. **The second and intended consequence, however, might be that the EU finally gets its act together and adopts a new asylum regime.**

The end of Schengen

How a human tsunami has shattered a European dream.

By [MICHAEL BINYON](#)

Michael Binyon is a foreign affairs analyst and former diplomatic editor of the Times of London.

Updated 9/14/15, 11:37 AM CET

LONDON — No country is more committed to European integration than Germany. All the grand schemes to bring Europeans together — the single currency, the push for common policies, the abolition of frontier controls within the European Union — have Germany at their heart.

But Berlin's [announcement Sunday](#) that it is to reimpose frontier controls with Austria strikes a deadly blow at one of the few agreements that has turned these visions into reality — the Schengen treaty, which removed passport controls along thousands of miles of Europe's frontiers.

Is Schengen now dead? And is this the beginning of the end for an “ever closer union” in Europe?

Germany insists that its new border check points are temporary, an emergency response to the thousands of migrants pouring in from the south. When the human tsunami dies down, the interior minister suggested, these controls will be lifted, the trains from Austria will start running again and Germany will continue to champion a Europe without borders.

It sounds like wishful thinking.

For more than a year, Europe has been struggling with an ever-increasing flow of desperate migrants — refugees from wars and persecution in Syria, Iraq, Libya and Afghanistan, young men fleeing dictatorship in Eritrea, poor people from across Africa and the Middle East seeking a better life. They have been smuggled across the Mediterranean in leaky boats, transported like cattle in airless lorries, forced by gangs to clamber across frontiers in Turkey, Greece and the Balkans. And almost all have had one destination: Germany.

Altogether, estimates say, some 800,000 may arrive in Germany in one year. And Germany, like Sweden, [the only other European nation](#) to have offered shelter to so many, now finds that its voters have had enough. Unless the flow is cut back or stopped, there will be riots, violence and racial attacks. Angela Merkel's government is reeling and populists are denouncing cherished European principles.

This is not the first time a country has temporarily reimposed border controls, permitted under the 1985 Schengen treaty (now incorporated in EU law) in cases of emergency or national security. But the move comes as the clamor for a permanent crack-down becomes ever louder, not only in Germany but also in France, Italy, Hungary and the European heartlands.

It is not only the refugee crisis that has exposed the failings of a frontier-free Europe: the exploitation by organized crime of the open borders to escape into other countries, safe in the knowledge that there will be no hot pursuit and little police intelligence to catch them, has caused rising anger and frustration.

Free movement around 26 countries for 400 million Europeans is now seriously threatened.

And then there is terrorism. The recent attempted murders by a gunman on a train from Amsterdam to Paris highlighted the ease with which terrorists can travel across borders to plot massacres. Interior and transport ministers warned after an emergency meeting in Paris there would have to be more spot checks, proper cross-frontier intelligence and amendments to Schengen to impose controls when necessary.

This triple assault means that free movement around 26 countries for 400 million Europeans is now seriously threatened. Many Europeans look enviously at Britain and Ireland, which were granted opt-outs when the treaty was signed, and still retain full border inspections — with some notable success in stopping terrorists and catching illegal immigrants. No such option is open to anyone else. The 1997 Amsterdam treaty insisted that any new EU applicant had to remove internal frontiers. Three non-EU members, Switzerland, Iceland and Norway, have already joined in. Three new members, Romania, Bulgaria and Cyprus, will be forced to do so soon.

European idealists and those desperate to keep frontiers passport-free argue that new border checks would not solve any problems. The challenges are mostly from outside Europe. The refugees will keep coming, they say, and human traffickers will still evade border police. Terrorism knows no frontiers. And organized crime often has its roots far beyond Europe. They argue that

political crises in the Middle East — war, extremism and religious persecution — must still be resolved, and border controls treat the symptoms rather than the causes.

These are poor arguments. Schengen, the treaty bearing the name of the little Luxembourg town where it was signed, has two massive weaknesses that have never been properly tackled. First, it will only work if Europe's common external frontier is massively strengthened. But where is this frontier? Often in countries least able to cope, running between Greece and Turkey, Malta and Libya, Hungary and Serbia, Sicily (Italy) and Tunisia. Only a paltry sum has been given to Frontex, the EU border force, to boost patrols, stop drug smugglers and check migrants. Secondly, the intelligence formerly gathered at frontier posts is never now properly passed on. Countries have no way of tracking who is entering or leaving unless police data is routinely made available.

The real weakness of Schengen, however, is that it runs counter to the growing mood in Europe.

This is more nationalist, more insular, suspicious of Brussels, skeptical of pan-European solutions, resentful of paying out for poorer neighbors, determined to reassert more local control and angry at the remoteness of decision-making. It is not a pretty or an idealistic mood. It has been fanned by the repeated crises over the euro, a growing north-south divide, austerity, slow economic growth and Europe's utter failure to find common solutions to the tragedies of migration and asylum.

While Brussels dithers, populist parties demand quick national solutions.

Little wonder that Marine Le Pen is said to be on course to win power in France or that smaller countries accuse Germany of imposing austerity on all of them. Schengen is in danger of being the first victim of this mood, as governments scramble to show voters that they are in command.

A blanket re-imposition of border posts would be hugely expensive, cause massive delays and anger tourists and businessmen alike. **But not everyone needs to be stopped. Passport controls could be selective, based on intelligence or random inspections. The mere possibility of interrogation would strengthen security across Europe. It works in Britain and Ireland.** Germany may find that having imposed checks with Austria, it will now have to do the same on every frontier if human trafficking is to be halted.

And despite the wailings of European idealists, the general public would not object. Schengen's days are numbered.

128,17

Le retour des contrôles aux frontières en Europe signe-t-il la mort de l'espace Schengen ?

Le Monde.fr | 14.09.2015 à 14h48 • Mis à jour le 14.09.2015 à 15h40 | Par [Maxime Vaudano](#) et [Alexandre Pouchard](#)

L'Allemagne est-elle en train de virer de bord dans la crise des migrants ? Dimanche 13 septembre, Berlin a annoncé le rétablissement des contrôles d'identité à sa frontière avec l'Autriche, pour endiguer le flux de réfugiés qui pénètrent depuis plusieurs semaines sur son territoire.

Une décision interprétée par la droite et l'extrême droite françaises comme une validation de leurs thèses. La présidente du Front national, Marine Le Pen, a réclamé que la France suive l'exemple de l'Allemagne en suspendant « à son tour en urgence les accords de Schengen ». « Comme quoi c'est possible », a renchéri sa nièce Marion Maréchal-Le Pen sur Twitter :

Guillaume Larrivé, secrétaire national à l'immigration des Républicains (LR), s'est réjoui de son côté d'une décision qui validerait l'analyse de Nicolas Sarkozy. Le président de LR a encore réclamé la semaine dernière la suspension temporaire de la libre-circulation dans l'espace Schengen, le temps de renégocier cet accord européen.

1. Que sont les accords de Schengen ?

Conclus en 1985 par la France, l'Allemagne de l'Ouest et le Benelux, les accords de Schengen visaient à supprimer progressivement les contrôles aux frontières communes et à instaurer un régime de libre circulation des personnes. Entré en vigueur en 1995, l'espace Schengen regroupe aujourd'hui 22 des 28 Etats de l'Union européenne, ainsi que quatre pays extérieurs : l'Islande, la Norvège, la Suisse et le Liechtenstein. Concrètement, il supprime tout contrôle des frontières terrestres, maritimes ou aériennes entre deux pays appartenant à cet espace.

2. Comment les frontières européennes sont-elles contrôlées ?

Chaque Etat ayant une frontière avec un pays non-membre de l'espace Schengen (comme la Hongrie avec la Serbie, par exemple) se doit de contrôler les entrées. L'Union européenne s'est dotée d'une base de données commune, baptisée « SIS » (pour système d'information Schengen), permettant d'identifier les individus pénétrant sur le territoire européen et de distinguer les arrivants interdits de séjour ou bien ceux recherchés. La coopération opérationnelle pour la surveillance des frontières est théoriquement assurée par l'agence européenne Frontex.

Concernant les demandes d'asile, très majoritairement déposées par des personnes entrées illégalement sur le sol européen, le règlement dit « Dublin II », adopté en 2003, prévoit qu'elles soient déposées uniquement dans le pays d'entrée dans l'UE. L'objectif est d'éviter qu'un migrant puisse faire une demande d'asile dans un Etat puis dans un autre en cas de réponse négative, et ainsi de suite (pratique baptisée « asylum shopping » en anglais). Mais ce système a l'inconvénient, largement rencontré par l'Italie, la Grèce et désormais la Hongrie, de faire peser l'effort sur les Etats ayant des frontières extérieures à l'UE et moins sur les pays « intérieurs ». Dépassés, ces Etats frontaliers ont récemment eu tendance à laisser passer massivement les migrants pour les laisser aller déposer une demande d'asile ailleurs.

3. Les pays européens avaient-ils le droit de rétablir des contrôles à leurs frontières ?

Oui. Une clause de sauvegarde intégrée à l'article 2.2 de la convention de Schengen autorise les Etats à rétablir provisoirement des contrôles aux frontières dans des circonstances exceptionnelles.

C'est le code frontières Schengen de 2006 qui en précise les contours : **il autorise le rétablissement des contrôles en cas d'atteinte de « menace grave pour l'ordre public et la sécurité intérieure » (pour six mois maximum) ou pour faire face à des événements imprévus (cinq jours maximum)**, et après consultation des autres Etats du groupe Schengen. Une réforme des règles réclamée par le président français, Nicolas Sarkozy, et le président du conseil italien, Silvio Berlusconi, a étendu en 2013 la possibilité de rétablir les frontières jusqu'à vingt-quatre mois, dans des « circonstances exceptionnelles », et notamment une défaillance grave du contrôle des frontières extérieures.

Ce type de mesure, appliqué en général deux à trois fois par an, s'est pour l'instant limité à des menaces imminentes de terrorisme ou à l'accueil d'événements internationaux : des réunions de la Banque centrale européenne à Barcelone, le G20 de Cannes, l'Euro 2012 de football ou la visite du président américain Barack Obama en Estonie ont ainsi donné lieu ces dernières années à un rétablissement des contrôles pour quelques jours.

L'Allemagne est le premier pays à invoquer cette clause pour des questions d'immigration. Cette justification n'étant pas clairement présente dans les textes européens, Berlin va devoir justifier d'une « *menace réelle, actuelle et suffisamment grave pour l'un des intérêts fondamentaux de la société* » auprès de la Commission européenne. De même que la République tchèque, la Slovaquie et l'Autriche, qui ont annoncé dans la foulée un contrôle renforcé de leurs frontières avec la Hongrie.

4. Cela annonce-t-il la mort de Schengen ?

Malgré sa décision, le gouvernement allemand n'a aucune intention de remettre en cause les accords de Schengen. Il a expliqué son choix par un dépassement de ses capacités d'accueil – une manière de faire pression auprès de ses homologues européens pour une meilleure répartition des demandeurs d'asile au sein de l'UE.

Le porte-parole de la chancelière Angela Merkel a d'ailleurs précisé lundi que l'Allemagne ne fermait pas sa frontière aux demandeurs d'asile : « *Les contrôles provisoires aux frontières ne sont pas la même chose qu'une fermeture des frontières, c'est complètement différent. Des réfugiés vont continuer à venir en Allemagne, nous espérons que cela se déroule dans le cadre d'un processus mieux ordonné.* »

Toutefois, sans accord des Européens pour trouver une solution durable à la crise migratoire, les appels à réformer, voire démembrer l'espace Schengen, devraient porter de plus en plus dans le débat public.

5. La France devra-t-elle accueillir les migrants refusés ailleurs ?

Certains responsables politiques français, à l'image de l'ancien ministre de l'intérieur (LR) Claude Guéant, craignent que la fermeture des frontières allemandes ne crée un « appel d'air » vers la France.

Selon les quotas proposés le 7 septembre par la Commission européenne, l'Allemagne devait accueillir 31 400 demandeurs d'asile arrivés en Italie, en Grèce ou en Hongrie. Mais l'afflux est tel que ce quota est largement dépassé : 100 000 personnes sont arrivées pendant le seul mois d'août et le pays s'attend à accueillir 800 000 demandeurs d'asile en 2015.

La France, elle, a accepté d'accueillir au cours des deux prochaines années au moins 24 000 demandeurs d'asile, en plus des 6 275 pour lesquels elle s'était déjà engagée. Auxquels s'ajoutent environ un millier de Syriens et d'Irakiens acheminés en urgence depuis l'Allemagne, a ensuite annoncé le président François Hollande. La décision des différents pays européens de rétablir les contrôles ne change aucunement cet engagement.

Les employés de l'Office français de protection des réfugiés et apatrides (Ofpra), qui s'occupe des demandes d'asile en France, faisaient jusqu'alors face à une difficulté inattendue : ils peinaient à convaincre des migrants de renoncer à « l'eldorado allemand » et de venir dans l'Hexagone. La décision allemande pourrait faire changer d'avis certains.

Merkel was never so wrong

The closure of Germany's border with Austria reveals the failure not only of Angela Merkel's refugee policy but also of the entire EU, the centre-left daily Süddeutsche Zeitung comments: "For the chancellor this is the admission of a political misjudgement that is unprecedented in her ten years as chancellor. And for Europe it sends the message: Germany has understood that it can't revolutionise Europe's refugee policy on its own. ... The German policy has run aground on the glaring contradiction between the moral (and legal) duty to grant asylum to every war refugee and the sheer size of the problem. Germany overestimated its own capacities while underestimating Europe's inertia. ... One can condemn the immobility on the part of the states of Europe, but solidarity is a two-edged sword: it also holds for those who feel unable to cope or politically pressured. And this time they were clearly in the majority." (14/09/2015)

Exodus to Europe: Refugees don't want to be distributed

The interior ministers of the EU states will meet for special talks in Brussels to discuss the distribution of refugees today, Monday. The Romanian leadership rejects fixed quotas. The Romanian service of German public broadcaster Deutsche Welle sees such quotas as unrealistic: "The refugees don't believe that Romania can offer them a relatively good future. ... Would they have left Turkey in droves (the country from which most of the refugees are setting off for Europe) if their only perspective had been Eastern Europe? ... If their lives were in danger Romania would be as good as any other country. But the Syrians' exodus is above all a problem of the rich countries. Not because they alone should take care of the refugees but because their prosperity has made them the destination countries. ... Will they accept being sent from Dortmund to Galati? It's interesting that the shapers of so-called European policy are putting together plans for refugees without asking such questions." (14/09/2015)

128,21

Die Presse - Austria

Europe becoming a "failed union"

In the economic crisis, as in the refugee crisis, the member states simply disregard the EU treaties whenever it suits them, the centre-right daily Die Presse complains: "The past days have made it drastically clear that this attitude of 'What do I care about treaties I signed in the past?' is by no means limited to the economic sphere. The protection of the external borders stipulated in the Schengen Agreement? The registration of asylum seekers in the first EU country they reach set down in the Dublin Regulation? What to do when countries don't play along? Sorry, but nothing will come of that. A community that fails to take its own treaties seriously is on its way to becoming a 'failed union'. Even die-hard Europeans couldn't have imagined in their worst nightmares that politicians could botch up such a good idea as a united Europe." (08/09/2015)

<http://diepresse.com/home/meinung/kommentare/wirtschaftskommentare/4815529/Europa-ist-unterwegs-zur-Failed-Union>

Europa ist unterwegs zur „Failed Union“

Die Devise lautet: „Was interessiert mich mein Vertrag von gestern?“

Josef Urschitz (Die Presse)

Alexis Tsipras, situationselastischer Ex-Premier des Pleitestaats Griechenland, hat am Wochenende angedeutet, dass er im Fall eines neuerlichen Sieges bei den bevorstehenden Wahlen den mühsam mit den Geldgebern und der Euro-Gruppe ausgehandelten Vertrag gleich wieder schmeißen beziehungsweise „neu verhandeln“ will.

Gut: Tsipras steckt im Wahlkampf, und er hat seinen Wählern schon viel versprochen. Aber in dem Fall hätte er gute Chancen, damit durchzukommen. Denn Verträge sind in der EU und den umgebenden Institutionen ganz offenbar wertloses Papier, das man einfach so unterschreibt – und vergisst.

Oder erinnert sich noch irgendjemand an die Konvergenzkriterien des Maastricht-Vertrags, die die Stabilität des Euro sichern sollten? Ganze zwei der 18 Euroländer (Luxemburg und Estland) haben das Defizit- und Staatsschuldenkriterium bisher auf Punkt und Beistrich erfüllt. Den anderen ist Maastricht mehr oder weniger egal. Konsequenzenlos.

Oder hat noch jemand die „No-Bail-out-Klausel“, eine der tragenden Säulen der Wirtschafts- und Währungsunion, im Sinn? Sie ist während der Griechenland-Rettung einfach in Vergessenheit geraten. Oder das Verbot der direkten Staatsfinanzierung durch die EZB, bei dessen Durchsetzung die Staatsanleihenkäufe der Euro-Notenbank zumindest eine haarige Sache wären?

Die vergangenen Tage haben uns drastisch vor Augen geführt, dass diese „Was interessiert mich mein Vertrag von gestern?“-Attitüde keinesfalls auf den Wirtschaftsbereich beschränkt ist. Der im Schengen-Vertrag festgeschriebene Schutz der Außengrenzen? Die im Dublin-Abkommen vorgeschriebene Registrierung von Schutzsuchenden im ersten EU-Land, das erreicht wird? Tja, was soll man machen, wenn die das nicht wollen?

Sorry, aber so wird das nichts. Eine Gemeinschaft, die ihre eigenen Verträge so krass nicht ernst nimmt, ist auf dem Weg zur „failed union“. Selbst eingefleischte Europäer haben es sich in ihren schlimmsten Alpträumen nicht vorstellen können, dass die Politik eine so gute Idee wie ein gemeinsames Europa so grausam vermurksen kann.

Die Ursachen liegen in Syrien

Russland stützt Assad im Kampf gegen Rebellen. Wie soll der Westen darauf reagieren? Wir sind betroffen, ob wir den Kopf in den Sand stecken oder nicht.

14.09.2015, von **KLAUS-DIETER FRANKENBERGER**

Immer wieder heißt es, die Fluchtursachen müssten endlich bekämpft werden, um den Strom der Flüchtlinge und Armutsmigranten eindämmen zu können. Der Ratschlag ist von zwingender Logik, und er wird auch auf den zweiten Blick nicht falsch. Doch würde eine solche Wurzelbehandlung allenfalls mittel- bis langfristig wirken. Den aktuellen Exodus aus den Krisen- und Konfliktzonen des Mittleren Ostens brächte sie, im Unterschied etwa zu robuster Abschottung, nicht (rasch) zum Erliegen. **Und welche Strategie soll verfolgt, welche Instrumente sollen eingesetzt werden: politische, wirtschaftliche, militärische?** Immerhin wird mit dem Verweis auf die Ursachen von Flucht indirekt anerkannt, dass Europa nicht immun ist gegen das Geschehen in der Nachbarschaft. Wir sind betroffen, ob wir den Kopf in den Sand stecken oder nicht.



Autor: Klaus-Dieter Frankenberger, verantwortlicher Redakteur für Außenpolitik. Folgen:

In Syrien, von wo die meisten Flüchtenden stammen, herrscht seit rund vier Jahren Bürgerkrieg. Staaten und „nichtstaatliche“ Akteure sind daran beteiligt. Unterstützt von Russland, setzt das Regime Assad im Kampf gegen „gemäßigte“ und radikale, von regionalen Mächten finanzierte Aufständische seine Waffen rücksichtslos ein – Leidtragender ist die Zivilbevölkerung.

Die Diplomatie darf nicht resignieren

Die Terrormilizen des „Islamischen Staats“ wiederum haben mittlerweile ein großes Territorium in Syrien und im Irak unter ihre Kontrolle gebracht. Die Methoden ihrer Herrschaft sind barbarisch. In Syrien – und in anderen arabischen Ländern – herrschen Mord, Bomben, Chaos und Willkür; eine mörderische Diktatur sucht die Kontrolle zurückzugewinnen, Dschihadisten profitieren vom Staatszerfall.

Der Vorschlag, hier Fluchtursachen zu bekämpfen und damit Ordnung zu stiften, hat somit etwas Irreales. Und dennoch darf die westliche Diplomatie nicht resignieren. Sie muss versuchen, Verbündete zu gewinnen – selbst jene, die ihr eigenes gefährliches Interessensüppchen kochen –, um vom Kriegs- zum Nichtkriegszustand zu gelangen. Bis dahin kann von Neuanfang und Wiederaufbau nicht die Rede sein. Russland bietet sich selbst als Partner an, aber nur im Kampf gegen den islamistischen Terrorismus, und nicht, um die Fluchtursachen zu bekämpfen.

Was dem Kreml gefällt

Denn Moskau steht fest an der Seite des Assad-Regimes, das, siehe oben, Fassbomben über Wohnquartieren abwirft. Es baut seine Militärpräsenz zügig aus; der Einsatz russischer Soldaten wird offenbar nicht mehr ausgeschlossen. **Putin** erhofft sich davon politische und geostrategische Vorteile sowie Positionsgewinne in der Rivalität mit dem Westen. Wie soll der Westen darauf reagieren? Soll er sagen, wir haben zwar den Ukraine-Konflikt, aber jetzt wollen wir erst mal gemeinsam die islamistischen Terrororganisationen bekämpfen, dann sehen wir weiter?

Vielleicht. Aber das bedeutete die Relegitimierung Assads. Es war, zur Erinnerung, dessen blutige Niederschlagung zaghafter Reformverlangen, die zur Radikalisierung der Opposition und zum Krieg führte. Irgendwie erinnert Moskaus Syrien-Politik an den Anfang des sowjetischen Vorgehens in Afghanistan. Wohin das führte, wissen wir. Und Moskau spottet noch, Europa werde von Migranten überflutet – und geschwächt; was dem Kreml gefällt.

Europa ist von einem Feuerring umgeben, der große Hitze abgibt. Um dieses Feuer zu löschen, bedarf es großer Anstrengungen, Handlungswillens und eines stärkeren Engagements, auch gegenüber den Ländern, die vom Syrien-Krieg direkt betroffen sind und Hilfe brauchen. Doch Wunder darf man nicht erwarten. Den Fehler hat der Westen zuletzt mehrfach gemacht – er und andere haben dafür bezahlt.

128,23

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Peter Sloterdijk : "Merkel, une femme sans qualités"

Propos recueillis par Thomas Mahler

La chancelière allemande Angela Merkel, en digne héritière de Helmut Kohl, **n'est qu'une "léthargocrate"**, assène le philosophe allemand. Explications.

Le Point : Après dix ans de pouvoir, Angela Merkel bénéficie de près de 80 % d'opinions favorables dans son pays. Comment expliquez-vous ce phénomène inédit dans une démocratie moderne ?

Peter Sloterdijk : C'est vraiment phénoménal. Je crois que cela s'explique par la cohérence d'un style non spectaculaire dans sa façon de gérer la chancellerie allemande. On n'a jamais l'impression qu'elle possède ce que Nietzsche aurait appelé la "volonté du pouvoir". Elle a un instinct politique, mais on ne voit pas la volonté. C'est quelque chose qui semble sympathique et même confortable pour la grande majorité des Allemands. En plus, elle a su profiter du génie du moment, c'est-à-dire que l'économie allemande était en train de s'envoler au moment de son élection. **Elle a récolté les fruits des réformes du gouvernement Schröder.**

Le Point : Le magazine Forbes l'a désignée cinq années de suite "femme la plus puissante du monde". Mais vous ne cessez de répéter qu'elle gouverne au contraire par la faiblesse...

P.S. **Il est difficile de dire si elle règne ou gouverne. On ne sait jamais ce qu'elle va faire, car elle puise dans un fonds inépuisable d'opportunisme.** Elle est ainsi l'authentique héritière de son père politique, Helmut Kohl. Il ne faut pas oublier que Kohl a été au pouvoir pendant seize ans et a gagné les élections quatre fois. Il a été l'inventeur de ce que j'appelle la "léthargocratie", **c'est-à-dire un gouvernement marqué par la sagesse de ne rien faire.** Merkel aussi est une parfaite "léthargocrate", même si sa journée de travail est longue. **Aujourd'hui, tout le monde comprend que les politiciens sont les personnages les plus impuissants du monde. On est entrés dans une période postpolitique et postidéologique.** Il y a ainsi une primauté de l'accident et de la crise. Reste pour nos gouvernants les premiers secours. Je pense que la caractéristique profonde de l'ère Merkel est cette transformation de la politique en une activité palliative, une sorte de dépannage.

Le Point : Mais ne lui reconnaissez-vous pas une formidable intelligence tactique ?

P.S. Si, bien sûr. **Mais c'est une tactique sans stratégie.** Il n'y a pas de projet à long terme, il n'y a que le maintien du statu quo. Le secret de son succès est exactement là : **la grande majorité des Allemands ne souhaite pas que la situation change.** On en revient à la fameuse formule, "**Keine Experimente**" *, qui a été le slogan du parti chrétien dans une Allemagne des années 50-60 traumatisée par les expérimentations idéologiques.

Le Point : Aux yeux de l'opinion européenne, Merkel, cet été, est passée du statut de guide monétaire vis-à-vis de la Grèce à celui de guide humanitaire dans la crise des migrants. La voilà nobélisable...

P.S. Elle comprend très bien les sentiments de ses compatriotes. **Sa dureté apparente dans la crise grecque n'était que l'expression de l'ambiance collective en Allemagne.** De l'autre côté, dans la crise des réfugiés, **elle a su prendre en compte le sentimentalisme allemand sur cette question.**

Le Point : Est-ce un pur opportunisme, ou son éducation protestante a-t-elle pu jouer dans cette décision d'ouvrir le pays aux réfugiés ?

P.S. Certainement, il y a un arrière-fond de christianisme chez elle, même si elle ne le montre pratiquement jamais. D'ailleurs, **l'un des faits marquants de l'ère Merkel est que le protestantisme a pris le dessus sur le catholicisme politique, qui était pourtant historiquement lié au parti chrétien, la CDU. Aujourd'hui, nous avons un président, Joachim Gauck, qui est un ancien pasteur luthérien, et une chancelière fille de pasteur.**

Le Point : Finalement, Angela Merkel, fille de pasteur et amatrice de Wagner, a tout pour n'être pas sympathique au nietzschéen que vous êtes...

P.S. **C'est un personnage qui va au-delà des notions de sympathie ou d'antipathie. Elle est trop lisse, trop opaque et se dérobe à l'affect. C'est la femme sans qualités par excellence.**

Salaires, chômage, comptes publics : comment l'immigration impacte l'économie française

Par [Marine Rabreau](#)

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LE SCAN ÉCO - Les immigrés plombent-ils les finances publiques françaises? Font-ils baisser les salaires et augmenter le chômage? *Le Figaro* fait le point sur les réponses économiques aux questions de l'immigration. Et constate l'échec chronique des politiques à intégrer les immigrés et à valoriser leur potentiel.

En 2014, les principales préoccupations des Français étaient [le chômage, les impôts... et l'immigration](#). Il semble que l'ordre des priorités [soit rebattu en cette rentrée 2015](#), depuis que la conscience collective s'est éveillée avec [le cliché glaçant du petit Aylan](#). L'Europe traverse [une crise migratoire d'une ampleur historique](#), qui [va s'inscrire dans la durée](#). Les Français, victimes d'une croissance économique clouée au plancher, d'un chômage de masse et de déficits publics chroniques, doivent-ils s'inquiéter d'éventuelles retombées négatives? Pour Jean-Christophe Dumont, chef de la division chargée des migrations internationales à l'[OCDE](#), «pour la France, qui compte parmi les pays européens où l'immigration est la plus faible, cette vague migratoire, aussi exceptionnelle soit-elle, ne change pas la donne globale et n'est pas de nature à mettre en danger l'économie française. Ni à la sauver d'ailleurs», précise-t-il.

«Les immigrés veulent se loger, travailler, consommer, et élever le statut social de leurs enfants. Toutes les études économiques sérieuses montrent que l'immigration a eu des effets positifs, sinon nuls, sur les comptes publics, le chômage et les salaires en France», assure-t-il. Mais la France est un «très mauvais élève en matière d'intégration de ses immigrés, faute de politiques cohérentes et efficaces depuis trente ans», déplore Jean-Christophe Dumont. Ce qui remet de plus en plus en cause la contribution positive des immigrés à l'économie française.

• L'immigration contribue à la performance économique de la France

En juin dernier, trois économistes français ont publié une [étude novatrice sur la contribution des migrants à la croissance française](#). Hors de toute considération politique, Hyppolyte d'Albis, Ekrame Boubtane et Dramane Coulibaly, ont croisé et analysé des bases de données sur la période 1994-2008. Il en résulte que les flux migratoires ont un impact «significativement positif» sur le PIB par habitant. Les flux migratoires étant faibles en France, l'effet est mécaniquement faible. Mais «l'immigration ne réduit pas le revenu moyen des Français», tranche Dramane Coulibaly, chercheur à La Sorbonne. Autre enseignement a priori contre-intuitif: «L'immigration féminine et l'immigration familiale expliquent cet effet positif sur la croissance», car ces immigrés sont complémentaires aux Français nés en France (les natifs). Contrairement aux immigrés du travail (avec des qualifications similaires aux Français nés en France), qui «se substituent aux natifs».

• L'immigration, une réponse à des besoins en main d'œuvre non pourvus?

Depuis plusieurs années, la France a des besoins en main d'œuvre qui ne sont pas comblés. En avril dernier, Pôle emploi a chiffré à 1,7 million le nombre d'emplois pour lesquels les entreprises «ont des difficultés à recruter» et dont les Français ne veulent plus. En particulier dans les métiers du bâtiment, de l'hôtellerie-restauration, de l'hôpital ou des services à la personne. Des emplois essentiellement peu ou moyennement qualifiés (ouvriers, agents de maîtrise, infirmiers, cuisiniers, techniciens, bouchers, etc.). Mais aussi pour des emplois très qualifiés (informaticiens, cadres commerciaux, techniciens, enseignants, personnel de recherche...). Les tensions enregistrées dans ces secteurs ne se résorberont pas à court terme.

Même l'immigration, actuelle ou accrue, ne résoudra pas ce problème structurel français. «En France, les immigrés sont certes surreprésentés dans ces deux catégories extrêmes», explique Jean-Christophe Dumont, de l'OCDE. Mais «dans les non-qualifiés, 43% ont un niveau très faible, c'est-à-dire qu'ils n'ont pas les compétences linguistiques et/ou cognitives

pour intégrer le marché du travail français; et chez les très qualifiés (un tiers sont diplômés du supérieur), il y a une tendance au déclassement, c'est-à-dire à accepter un salaire plus faible que les natifs», précise-t-il.

• L'effet pervers des restrictions à l'accès au marché du travail pour les immigrés

Une analyse corroborée par [une autre étude, menée par le Cepii](#), le centre d'études prospectives et d'informations internationales, qui conclut qu'«une hausse de 10% de la part des immigrés dans une classe de compétence dégrade d'environ 3% le taux d'emploi des natifs ayant des caractéristiques individuelles similaires». Les entreprises ont tendance à substituer aux natifs des immigrés «lorsque ces derniers sont amenés à accepter de moins bonnes conditions d'emploi», expliquent Anthony Edo et Farid Toubal, les auteurs du document de recherche. Ce qui est favorisé dans le cas français: dans l'Hexagone en effet, certaines mesures politiques, pour protéger le bien-être des natifs, limitent aux immigrés l'accès à l'emploi - les emplois de la fonction publique sont fermés aux étrangers non-européens, les professions libérales sont interdites ou restreintes... - et aux minima sociaux - il faut depuis [la «loi Sarkozy» de 2003](#) justifier d'un titre de séjour autorisant le travail depuis au moins cinq ans. Ainsi pour les immigrés en France, «la probabilité de trouver un emploi est plus faible que pour un natif, et le coût de ne pas en avoir est plus élevé». Paradoxalement, «en limitant les alternatives ouvertes aux immigrés, ces politiques restrictives risquent de renforcer l'effet négatif de l'immigration sur l'emploi des natifs», prévient le Cepii.

• Pas d'impact sur les salaires globaux

[L'étude du Cepii](#) montre en outre qu'avec le caractère rigide du marché travail français -un salaire minimum national et des indemnités chômage relativement élevées-, «entre 1990 et 2010, l'immigration n'a eu aucun effet global sur les salaires des natifs: les salaires sont, en moyenne, indépendants de la proportion d'immigrés dans la population active». Sur cette période, la part des immigrés dans la population active [est passée en France de 7% à 10% \(chiffres de l'Insee\)](#). Dans le détail, «l'impact de l'immigration sur les salaires horaires des travailleurs natifs très qualifiés est négatif (-1%) alors qu'il est positif sur ceux des travailleurs natifs faiblement qualifiés (+0,4%)». Sachant qu'en vingt ans, [la part des très qualifiés parmi les actifs immigrés a pratiquement triplé](#), de 10% en 1990 à 28% en 2010, tandis que celle des faiblement qualifiés a fortement reculé, de 67% à 39%.

• Un impact quasi-nul sur les finances publiques

En 2011, les économistes [Xavier Chojnicki](#) et [Lionel Ragot](#) ont publié [un livre qui fait encore référence](#) parmi les économistes spécialistes des questions migratoires. Leur constat: «Les immigrés ne prennent pas le travail des autochtones, ne tirent pas les salaires vers le bas, et ne pèsent pas sur les comptes publics», résume au *Figaro* Xavier Chojnicki, maître de conférences à l'Université Lille 2 et chargé de recherche au Cepii. «Quelque soit l'âge considéré, si l'on regarde la différence entre ce qui est versé (impôts et charges) et ce qui est reçu (RMI devenu RSA, allocations chômage, familiales ou logements...), le résultat est défavorable aux autochtones par rapport aux immigrés. Mais au global, comme les immigrés sont surreprésentés dans la tranche active (25 à 35 ans), cela contre-balance les versements des retraites et des dépenses de santé - qui représentent 80% des dépenses totales de l'État -, bien plus importantes proportionnellement pour les natifs que les immigrés.»

Au final, le solde des finances publiques ressort très légèrement positif, de presque 4 milliards d'euros pour l'année 2005. L'étude date, et ne tient pas compte de la violente crise économique que la France subit depuis 2008. Mais, compte-tenu du fait que les flux migratoires en France sont parmi les plus faibles d'Europe (200.000 migrants par an, deux fois moins que dans les années 1960) et que les immigrés qui entrent en France sont majoritairement jeunes et actifs, «le résultat devrait rester globalement neutre», estime le chercheur qui publiera une actualisation de ses chiffres «dans les prochaines semaines.»

• Des inégalités préoccupantes entre immigrés et natifs

En juillet 2015, l'OCDE et la Commission européenne ont publié [un rapport conjoint intitulé «Les indicateurs de l'intégration des immigrés 2015: trouver ses marques»](#) dans lequel les résultats sont très préoccupants pour la France. Quelques chiffres permettent de le constater. **En France, 57% des immigrés d'âge actif sont en emploi, contre 65% des personnes nées dans le pays (l'écart entre ces deux groupes n'est que d'un point en moyenne dans les pays développés de l'OCDE). Ce qui s'explique par le fait que 43% des immigrés d'âge actif (contre 29% dans l'OCDE) sont peu ou pas diplômés, une part seulement dépassée dans les pays d'Europe du sud.** Ainsi, 30% des ménages

immigrés vivent en situation de pauvreté relative contre 13% des autres ménages, soit un des écarts de revenu les plus élevés de la zone OCDE. Les immigrés étant surreprésentés dans les milieux défavorisés, «cela se traduit par de piètres résultats chez les enfants des immigrés et issus de l'immigration», sanctionne l'OCDE **dans une toute récente étude sur l'école et l'immigration**: 41% des élèves immigrés éprouvent des difficultés de compréhension de l'écrit contre seulement 26% en moyenne dans les pays de l'OCDE et les enfants immigrés originaires de familles défavorisées ont près de 10 fois moins de chance que ceux nés en France de parents autochtones de figurer parmi les meilleurs élèves - comparé à 2 fois moins de chance en moyenne en Europe. **Sur d'autres aspects, la situation semble toutefois plus favorable en France dans la mesure où les questions de logement, de déclassement, d'accès au système de santé ou à l'emploi public se posent avec nettement moins d'acuité que dans le reste de l'Europe.**

• L'Allemagne fait mieux que la France

Tout ceci conduit à un constat alarmant: les jeunes nés en France, de parents immigrés, se sentent davantage discriminés que les immigrés eux-mêmes (27% contre 17%). «Cela traduit l'inefficacité des politiques d'immigration françaises depuis plus de trente ans et cela révèle l'urgence de mieux cibler l'arsenal des mesures visant à faciliter et accélérer l'intégration des immigrés et de leurs enfants afin de s'assurer qu'ils contribuent au maximum de leur potentiel au développement économique et social de la France», analyse Jean-Christophe Dumont, de l'OCDE. «La politique d'intégration doit être perçue comme un investissement, pas un coût», estime-t-il.

Sur ce front-là aussi, l'Allemagne fait mieux que la France. «En Allemagne, depuis quinze ans, des centaines de mesures ont été prises pour favoriser l'intégration des étrangers, à commencer par la réforme du code de la nationalité, en passant du droit du sang au droit du sol pour faciliter l'acquisition de la nationalité allemande. Il y a en Allemagne des 'cours d'intégration' qui passent par l'apprentissage de la langue, et aussi une politique intransigeante et permanente de lutte contre la xénophobie et le racisme», **explique François Gemenne**, chercheur en sciences politiques à l'université de Liège, en Belgique.

128,27

Les migrants font voler en éclats l'espace Schengen

Par [Jean-Jacques Mevel](#)

Mis à jour le 14/09/2015 à 22:47

La fusée de détresse tirée par l'Allemagne est loin d'avoir ressoudé l'équipage européen, mais elle force déjà le navire à changer de cap. L'UE s'est décidée hier à traiter le problème des réfugiés en amont: **faire un tri systématique entre migrants et demandeurs d'asile dès qu'ils mettent le pied sur le Vieux Continent - en Grèce surtout -, plutôt que se déchirer sur la répartition future d'un contingent de réfugiés à chaque heure plus déconnecté de la réalité.**

Six jours après que Jean-Claude Juncker a demandé à 25 des 28 pays de l'UE de se répartir 160.000 réfugiés, les ministres de l'Intérieur ont inversé la priorité. Avant de s'intéresser aux destinations finales, il s'agit de filtrer ceux qui arrivent aujourd'hui et de régler le sort de ceux qui errent déjà à l'intérieur de l'«espace» Schengen. **«Un contrôle effectif de la frontière (extérieure de l'UE) est l'impératif de la gestion migratoire», insiste le texte discuté lundi Bruxelles.**

Après la monnaie commune, l'UE voit menacé son autre grand chantier d'intégration. **L'Allemagne, débordée peut-être mais sûrement résolue, fait monter les enchères. Elle a rétabli des contrôles aux frontières - principalement avec l'Autriche - mais sans bloquer le flot de ceux qui cherchent l'asile en terre germanique. Puissance centrale, elle fait comprendre que sans elle, il n'y a pas de libre circulation en Europe.** Pour preuve, l'Autriche et la Slovaquie ont dû embrayer lundi. La Pologne, les Pays-Bas, la Belgique et même la France y songent, avec plus ou moins de rigueur. La Hongrie a basculé depuis longtemps. **Ces mesures «exceptionnelles» et «temporaires» sont permises par le code de Schengen. L'effet domino crève pourtant les yeux.**

Une vraie garde frontalière

Pour Berlin et Paris, **la clef du dilemme se trouve désormais dans la mise en place effective de guichets d'entrée obligatoires (hotspots) en Grèce, au sud de l'Italie, ainsi qu'en Hongrie pour ceux qui sont passés à travers.** Bernard Cazeneuve et l'Allemand Thomas de Maizière ont enfoncé ce clou lors d'un aparté avec leurs trois homologues grec, italien et hongrois. L'idée n'est pas nouvelle, mais peine à se concrétiser. En Italie, les deux tiers des nouveaux arrivants seraient désormais enregistrés et identifiés, avec prise d'empreintes, d'après des statistiques officieuses. Budapest refuse tout hotspot, parce qu'elle craint plus que d'autres d'avoir sur les bras des «camps» dans lesquels viendraient s'entasser les laissés-pour-compte.

Le vrai point noir reste la Grèce. Ses îles, proches de la côte turque, ont vu débarquer plus de 200.000 personnes cette année, le double de ce que recueille désormais l'Italie. La plupart sont des vrais demandeurs d'asile, venus directement de Syrie ou après avoir transité par les camps surpeuplés du Liban, de Turquie et de Jordanie. **C'est un trou béant. Athènes, toujours sous perfusion financière et encore privée de gouvernement, a baissé les bras. C'est le point de départ de la «route des Balkans» et l'origine des soucis désormais communs d'Angela Merkel et de Viktor Orban.** La commission Juncker promet d'y installer un guichet d'entrée «dès que possible», mais sans avancer ni de chiffre, ni de date.

«Les défis posés à la Grèce sont ceux de toute l'Europe» et sur ce front, les ministres de l'Intérieur ont sonné lundi la mobilisation. Il est question d'y «déployer sans délai des équipes d'intervention de Frontex». L'UE veut aider le pays à étoffer ses capacités d'accueil, à renforcer son système d'asile et à muscler la surveillance de l'archipel. **«Les ressources financières adéquates devront être apportées»,** avertit le texte soumis à l'approbation des ministres. **En droit, le dernier mot restera à Athènes. La question d'une vraie garde frontalière européenne n'est pas officiellement soulevée. Mais l'Europe en approche.**

La nouvelle urgence des Vingt-Huit a relégué au second plan les «quotas» contraignants et le contingent de 160.000 réfugiés poussé par la Commission Juncker et le Parlement européen, avec un soutien appuyé d'Angela Merkel et de François Hollande, au début du mois en tout cas. **La Hongrie, la Slovaquie, la République tchèque et la Pologne ne veulent toujours pas en entendre parler. Elles y voient une atteinte à leur souveraineté. Le chiffre, mais pas l'obligation, a été retenu hier soir dans le texte approuvé par une majorité des Vingt-Huit.** Mais comme un engagement «politique», autrement dit un chantier suspendu. La seule promesse ferme porte sur la relocalisation de 40.000 réfugiés en deux ans, déjà faite en juin, lors d'un sommet européen mouvementé.

128,28

France et Allemagne échouent à imposer un accord européen sur les réfugiés

Le Monde.fr | 14.09.2015 à 17h38 • Mis à jour le 15.09.2015 à 06h36 | Par [Cécile Ducourtieux](#) (Bruxelles, bureau européen) et [Jean-Pierre Stroobants](#) (Bruxelles, bureau européen)
Les ministres de l'intérieur et de l'immigration de l'Union européenne ne sont pas parvenus à se mettre d'accord, dans la soirée du lundi 14 septembre, sur la proposition phare avancée il y a une dizaine de jours par la Commission européenne, à savoir l'accueil et la répartition « solidaire » de 120 000 réfugiés présents en Grèce, en Hongrie et en Italie.

Après des tractations assorties d'échanges peu aimables, les ministres ont dû se [contenter](#) de quelques accords :

La mise en route rapide de « hot spots » en Italie et en Grèce, des structures chargées d'enregistrer les demandes d'asile et de [distinguer](#) rapidement les réfugiés des migrants irréguliers.

Une augmentation des moyens de Frontex pour [assurer](#) des retours accélérés des déboutés du droit d'asile.

La répartition de quelque 40 000 réfugiés présents en Italie et en Grèce, une décision prise avant l'été.

On évoque aussi des contacts avec la [Turquie](#), le [Liban](#) et la [Jordanie](#) pour les [aider](#) davantage et l'établissement prochain d'une liste de « pays sûrs », permettant de [limiter](#) le nombre de demandeurs.

Il n'y a pas eu de consensus, en revanche, sur le partage, sur une base obligatoire, des 120 000 réfugiés. La République tchèque, la Slovaquie et la Roumanie ont campé jusqu'au bout sur leur position intransigeante. La Pologne et la Lettonie n'ont pas caché leur scepticisme. La Hongrie a tu le sien lors du dernier round de négociations.

Malgré des menaces de l'Allemagne, le conseil a voulu [éviter](#) un vote qui aurait creusé davantage l'écart entre les deux camps. « Nous allons aider les pays qui hésitent à se [diriger](#) dans la bonne direction », a affirmé le président luxembourgeois de la réunion, Jean Asselborn. Un nouveau conseil aura lieu le 8 octobre, ou avant. Et, à ce stade, l'issue est plus qu'incertaine. « Je ne sais pas ce qui doit se [passer](#) pour qu'on puisse [faire un pas en avant](#) », confiait après la réunion la présidente et ministre de la [justice suisse](#), Simonetta Sommaruga.

Jusqu'à la dernière minute

Le couple franco-allemand avait pourtant tenté, en travaillant jusqu'à la dernière minute sur le texte d'un éventuel accord, d'emporter la décision des plus rétifs. Avec un texte « renforcé » mettant notamment la priorité sur la mise en place la plus rapide possible des « hot spots ».

Le texte, approuvé par les ambassadeurs des 22 pays membres de Schengen, a suscité les critiques dès qu'il a été mis sur la table des ministres, en début de soirée. « Certains ont d'emblée demandé à ce que soit biffée la mention de « tous » les États membres confirmant leur volonté de s'engager dans l'accueil », déplorait une source diplomatique.

Pour [tenter](#) d'emporter leur décision, le ministre français Bernard Cazeneuve a menacé : « Pendant que nous tergiversons, les opinions publiques nous jugent, et les migrants meurent », lançait-il. Son collègue allemand Thomas de Maizière évoquait, lui, l'hypothèse d'un vote, une option tout à fait possible depuis l'instauration du Traité de Lisbonne mais difficile à [envisager](#) d'un point de vue [politique](#) : comment [imposer](#) à des pays comme la Slovaquie ou surtout la Hongrie l'accueil des réfugiés ou la mise en place de « hot spots », s'ils s'y opposent ?

Contrôles renforcés

La décision, prise par l'Allemagne dimanche, (rapidement imitée par la République tchèque, la Slovaquie et l'Autriche, sans doute bientôt par les Pays-Bas et la Belgique) de [rétablir](#) des contrôles à [ses](#) frontières rendait d'autant plus tendue l'ambiance de cette réunion extraordinaire. Officiellement, l'avenir de l'espace Schengen ne figurait toutefois pas au menu, déjà suffisamment dense, des [discussions](#). « Si nous échouons, ce sera l'éclatement de Schengen », affirmait toutefois une source diplomatique française.

Dans une déclaration commune, MM. Cazeneuve et Maizière avaient voulu, au début de la réunion, [fixer](#) leurs priorités et faire pression sur les pays d'Europe centrale et orientale. Ils ont insisté sur le fait qu'il ne pouvait y [avoir](#) de solution humanitaire « sans responsabilité ». Paris et Berlin insistaient sur la mise en place de contrôles renforcés aux frontières extérieures et prônaient une [aide](#) urgente aux pays voisins de la Syrie. Ils avaient encore l'espoir qu'un accord puisse, quand même, [être](#) conclu, qui aurait mêlé « la responsabilité et l'humanité ». En vain.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/15/world/europe/europe-migrant-crisis.html?hp&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&module=photo-spot-region®ion=top-news&WT.nav=top-news&r=0>

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More Border Controls as Europe Stalls on Migrant Quotas

By ANDREW HIGGINS and JAMES KANTERSEPT. 14, 2015

BRUSSELS — **Even as three more countries followed Germany in introducing border checks to control a flood of migrants, the European Union on Monday failed to agree on a modest plan that would force individual countries to take in a share of some of the hundreds of thousands now seeking asylum in Europe.**

Gathering in Brussels for an emergency meeting, interior ministers from across Europe agreed to share 40,000 migrants sheltering in Greece and Italy, but only on a voluntary basis, a watered-down version of a plan announced in May.

But as the fractious meeting stretched into the evening, there seemed little prospect that ministers would endorse a new plan put forward last week by Jean-Claude Juncker, president of the [European Commission](#), for a program of resettlement for a further 120,000 asylum seekers that would be compulsory for member countries.

Jean Asselborn, the minister of foreign affairs of Luxembourg, which holds the union's rotating presidency, told a news conference late Monday that a majority of countries accepted "in principle" Mr. Juncker's plan, but added that the discussions had been "very difficult."

Discussions will not resume until next month, a blow to Mr. Juncker, who last week pleaded for "immediate action."

In a sign of the disharmony caused by Europe's worst humanitarian crisis since World War II, ministers did not issue a joint final statement as is customary and left Luxembourg to issue a summary of the discussions in its own name.

The rancorous haggling in Brussels over the distribution of 160,000 migrants — a small part of the total — played out as Austria, Slovakia and the Netherlands introduced border controls on Monday, after a decision by Germany on Sunday to set up checks on its own southwestern frontier and halt train traffic with Austria.

The reintroduction of border controls, described as a temporary measure to restore order to an often chaotic flow of migrants, was the most serious challenge in years to Europe's cherished system of passport-free travel across much of the Continent.

The 26 European countries that are party to the so-called **Schengen Agreement**, a cornerstone of European integration that enshrines open borders but also allows for temporary controls for security reasons, have in the past periodically reinstated checks but never because of pressures from migration.

The reintroduction of controls also threatened to create an unpredictable patchwork of complications and potentially risky **obstacles for migrants seeking to make their way through Europe to preferred destinations in places like Germany or Sweden, where benefits are greater and the processing of asylum applications moves faster.**

The desperation to reach such countries, even as border controls have been tightened, has increasingly driven migrants and refugees into the hands of smugglers, leading recently to the [deaths of 71 migrants](#) who suffocated in the back of a truck along a highway in Austria.

In Hungary, the authorities said that a near-record 5,353 migrants had crossed into the country from Serbia before noon on Monday — even as Budapest continued to try to seal off that border, which is being reinforced with the [construction of a 109-mile fence](#) topped with razor wire.

About 50 police officers, wearing riot gear and equipped with gas canisters, converged Monday on the train tracks linking the villages of Roszke, Hungary, and Horgos, Serbia, which thousands of migrants had used to cross the border in recent days. An official in a bright yellow jacket turned away migrants seeking to enter Hungary.

The border measures raised pressure on participants at the emergency meeting in Brussels to close the deep fissures that have opened up among European nations over how to handle the migrant crisis. A further note of urgency came with an appeal in Brussels made by the aunt of [Aylan Kurdi](#), the 3-year-old Syrian boy whose body washed up on a beach in Turkey this month. Photographs of the dead child shocked European public opinion and helped set off an outpouring of sympathy for migrants.

"Europe has not done enough," the aunt, Tima Kurdi, a resident of Canada, said during a visit on Monday to Brussels for talks with officials. "Germany took the biggest number, and now it has too many. Every country has to take responsibility. Aylan's death was, I believe, a message from God to the world to wake up and do something about these refugees. Everybody is closing the door in their face."

All the same, ministers from several East and Central European countries remained steadfast in their opposition to the compulsory distribution of migrants proposed last week by Mr. Juncker.

“This proposal is not solving the problem,” said Robert Kalinak, the Slovak interior minister. **The Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and the Baltic States have all voiced deep reservations about taking in refugees, arguing that they have no tradition of offering refuge to people of different cultures; that their economies cannot sustain the influx; and that most of the migrants want to live in richer and more welcoming places like Germany and Scandinavia.**

In a dig at former Communist countries in the East that have said they will take only Christian refugees, Mr. Asselborn, the Luxembourg minister who ran Monday’s meeting, said that even his own country, the [European Union](#)’s smallest, “could take in a few hundred people who are not necessarily Christians, who have a different skin color, and that should be able to work in big countries like Poland or the Czech Republic or in Slovakia.”

In an effort to win over opponents of the plan, Germany, France and other nations embraced some of the Eastern Europeans’ tough language, calling for tighter controls of Europe’s external borders and firmer measures against migrants who fail to qualify as refugees, including their swift return to countries deemed safe.

The French interior minister, Bernard Cazeneuve, stressed that economic migrants needed to be separated from genuine refugees fleeing war or oppression. “There cannot be humanity without firmness and responsibility,” he told reporters.

Ministers endorsed plans to increase cooperation against smuggling and border violations with Turkey, which has become one of the major transit countries for migrants making their way to Europe.

In a speech on Wednesday to the European Parliament, Mr. Juncker presented the migrant crisis as a test of Europe’s ability to take common action and asked that interior ministers move swiftly to endorse his relocation plan at their Monday meeting. Voicing doubts that a voluntary program would work, he said, **“This has to be done in a compulsory way.”**

The [European Commission](#) did not include the remark in an official transcript of the speech, in what could be a sign of the strength of opposition to this initiative.

Luis Morago, campaign director for Avaaz, a refugee advocacy group, said that Europe’s reluctance to adopt mandatory quotas did not necessarily emasculate the relocation effort, but that **“in practice the only way of getting many European governments to do anything is if it is compulsory.”** Europe’s halting response to the migrant crisis, he said, had so far been “disappointing and contradictory.”

Elizabeth Collett, director of the Migration Policy Institute Europe, a research group in Brussels, said Europe’s difficulties in finding a common approach reflected the flaws in a shaky European system whose rules and institutions were “only half built” and whose ultimate goal — a fully integrated European state or simply a collaborative jumble of distinct nation states — “has never been decided.”

On migration, she added, “there is simply no consensus.”

“Some countries accept the idea that Europe is a place for asylum seekers,” she added, “but others don’t think this is their responsibility.”

The European Union’s mixed signals have exasperated nations that share a border with the bloc and that have become transit routes for ever growing numbers of Syrians, Afghans and others seeking entry into Europe.

Citing Hungary’s decision to make unauthorized entry into the country a criminal offense starting Tuesday, Serbia said it would set up reception centers in the north of the country and pleaded for the [European Union](#), of which it is not a member, to take action.

While Berlin said the controls along the German-Austrian border were only a temporary emergency measure, the restrictions, a response to the strain on local communities, signaled that Chancellor Angela Merkel’s welcoming stance toward the migrants was encountering domestic resistance.

“There is no order, there is no system, and in a country governed by the rule of law, that is a cause for concern,” Horst Seehofer, the governor of Bavaria, a deeply conservative state in the south, said Sunday.

Joachim Herrmann, the Bavarian interior minister, told a local television station, **“We need better controls in general because we have determined that in recent days many of those on the move are really not refugees.”**

Officials in Eastern and Central Europe, including Hungary, have made similar arguments as they battled to scuttle Mr. Juncker’s plans for the swift distribution of 160,000 migrants.

“A mandatory quota for the E.U.-wide relocation of migrants is unlikely to be achieved quickly, if at all,” said Carsten Nickel, a senior vice president at Teneo Intelligence, a political risk consultancy.

Dimitris Avramopoulos, the European Union commissioner for migration, insisted that action to relocate migrants was still possible.

“The majority of member states are ready to move forward — but not all,” Mr. Avramopoulos told a news conference. **“The world is watching us. It is time for each and every one to take their responsibilities,”** he added.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/immigration/11865242/EU-fails-to-reach-deal-on-migrant-quotas.html>

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EU fails to reach deal on migrant quotas

Core of ex-Communist eastern states block efforts by Germany and France to secure agreement on sharing out responsibility for sheltering refugees

By Reuters

11:38PM BST 14 Sep 2015

EU ministers failed on Monday to break a deadlock over sharing out responsibility for sheltering some of the hundreds of thousands of people who have sought asylum in Europe this year, leaving the shape of a final deal in doubt.

Determined opposition from a core of ex-Communist eastern states blocked efforts by Germany and France to secure agreement for a proposal by the EU executive to relocate 120,000 people from frontier countries according to mandatory national quotas.

After six hours of argument, ministers put off a decision, saying they hoped to agree on a deal to find places for the asylum-seekers at another meeting on Oct 8.

Officials said that following a final legal endorsement of an earlier plan to relocate 40,000 people to countries that volunteer to take them, Hungary and Slovakia led resistance to pleas to accept a quota system for the larger new number. They argue such schemes will draw more migrants and lead to further mass movements that threaten Europe's open borders system.

"We did not find the agreement we wanted," EU Migration Commissioner Dimitris Avramopoulos told reporters. **"The majority of member states are ready to move forward. But not all."**

Officials put a brave face on the divisions after a day in which a German decision to reimpose frontier controls with Austria to check a flow of refugees triggered a domino effect that threatens Europe's cherished Schengen area of open borders.

The ministers did agree to increase manpower and resources protecting the external frontiers as well as aid to the United Nations refugee agency, Turkey and other states sheltering millions of Syrians fleeing civil war.

More refugees should be transferred directly from the Middle East, officials said, sparing them life-threatening journeys and denying business to the people-smugglers who prey on them.

Ministers also agreed to finalise soon a list of "safe countries" whose citizens would not normally be entitled to asylum. But in a snub to Ankara, the EU presidency said Turkey would not be classified as "safe" for now due to its current military action against Kurdish militants.

The EU's critics have seized on bitter divisions, notably between the wealthy west and poorer east, led by Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orban, whose government has fenced off its EU border with Serbia.

"The world is watching us," Avramopoulos said. "It is time for everyone to take their responsibilities."

Orban has refused to take part in the larger relocation programme even though the EU executive's proposal would have made Budapest a major beneficiary by taking 54,000 asylum-seekers off its hands, along with people from Italy and Greece.

"The quota system isn't the solution," Slovak Interior Minister Robert Kalinak said as he arrived for the meeting.

European Council President Donald Tusk said on Friday he would summon EU leaders for an emergency summit if their ministers could not agree a solution. However, many governments question the value of such a meeting before interior ministers meet again for a regular council in Luxembourg on Oct 8.

Merkels Kehrtwenden

Erst öffnet die Regierung die Grenzen, jetzt führt sie wieder Grenzkontrollen ein. Es ist nicht der erste Sinneswandel der Kanzlerin - und mit rein innenpolitischen Motiven ist er nicht zu erklären.

15.09.2015, von **HOLGER STELTZNER**

Warum hat die Bundeskanzlerin alle Flüchtlinge eingeladen, nach Deutschland zu kommen? Vielleicht will [Angela Merkel](#) das so nicht gesagt oder gemeint haben, doch genau so ist die Kanzlerin [in Arabien, Afrika und Asien verstanden worden](#). Wenige Tage nachdem Merkels Worte den Flüchtlingsstrom beschleunigten und vergrößerten, führt Deutschland wieder Grenzkontrollen ein. Sieht so eine Politik aus, bei der alles vom Ende her bedacht wird?



Autor: Holger Steltzner, Herausgeber. Folgen:

Möglicherweise stimmt das von den Medien so gern gezeichnete Bild einer stets rational kalkulierenden Physikerin gar nicht (immer). Schon einmal [vollzog Merkel eine überraschende Kehrtwende](#). Auch vor der Energiewende sorgten Fernsehbilder vom explodierenden Reaktor in Japan für überschießende Emotionen in der deutschen Bevölkerung. Damals wie heute spielte natürlich auch die Innenpolitik eine Rolle, schnappte die Union den Sozialdemokraten ein Thema weg und öffnete sich die CDU für eine mögliche Koalition mit den Grünen auf Bundesebene.

Im Überschwang der Gefühle?

Doch sind innenpolitische Überlegungen für Merkel allein kein Grund, um ihren tastenden Regierungsstil aufzugeben. Wie mit der Energiewende stößt Merkel auch [mit der Einladung an alle Flüchtlinge ihre Partner in Europa vor den Kopf](#). In Europas Hauptstädten wird ihr Alleingang verwundert bis verärgert verfolgt. In London sehen manche Deutschland schon als einen von Gefühlen gelenkten „Hippie-Staat“. Während Berlin in der Euro-Krise vorgeblich auf die Einhaltung von Regeln pocht, schert es sich in der Flüchtlingskrise nicht um das gemeinsame Recht.

Sollte Merkel im Überschwang der Gefühle wirklich geglaubt haben, Deutschland könne die noch lange währenden und aus demografischen Gründen noch größer werdenden Wanderungen im Alleingang bewältigen („wir schaffen das“)? Von der Macht des Faktischen am Münchner Bahnhof (und der CSU) ist sie jedenfalls eines Besseren belehrt worden.

[Jetzt ist die Union sogar bereit für ein Einwanderungsgesetz](#). Darin die bestehenden Regeln widerspruchsfrei zu verknüpfen, damit im Ausland verstanden wird, was Deutschland will, ist ein frommer Wunsch, solange die Deutschen selbst nicht wissen, welche Art von Einwanderung sie jenseits des Asyls wollen. Von klassischen Einwanderungsländern wie Kanada, den Vereinigten Staaten, Australien oder England könnte Deutschland lernen, dass es neben dem Herz einen kühlen Kopf und auch eine gewisse Härte braucht, um zu bestimmen, wer wann wohin kommen darf – und wer nicht.

Madame Merkel – eine von uns

In Frankreich solidarisiert man sich mit den Flüchtlingen und wünscht, Merkel wäre Französin. Es gibt natürlich auch kritische Stimmen. Trotzdem könnte das der Anfang einer neuen Freundschaft sein.

15.09.2015, von JÜRIG ALTWEGG, GENÈVE



© DPA Angela Merkel vor dem Elysee-Palast

„Die Deutschen haben uns unsere Juden genommen, jetzt geben sie uns Araber zurück“: Mit diesem Bonmot hat der konservative französische Politiker Patrick Devedjian, dessen Vorfahren vor dem Genozid an den Armeniern nach Frankreich flüchteten, auf [Twitter](#) die deutsche Politik kommentiert. Er hat sich später für den „deplazierten Witz“ entschuldigt. Das sei ihm angesichts der herrschenden politischen Korrektheit unbenommen. Wir zitieren sein Bonmot, weil man die Stimmung im Lande mit 140 Zeichen schlicht nicht besser wiedergeben kann. Eine kleine historische Ergänzung sei gleichwohl angebracht: Bei der Verfolgung und Auslieferung der Juden ging Vichy sehr viel weiter, als die Besatzer je verlangt hatten.



Autor: Jürg Altwegg, Kulturkorrespondent mit Sitz in Genf.Folgen:

Der Kampf gegen die Araber als Einwanderer und Fremdarbeiter ist seit drei Jahrzehnten das politische Programm des [Front National](#). Der Aspekt eines „Kriegs der Zivilisationen“ kam nach den Attentaten vom 11. September hinzu. Der islamistische Terror in Frankreich zielte zunächst auf die Juden, mit denen sich die Republik erfreulich standfest identifizierte. Seit den Anschlägen auf „Charlie Hebdo“ und den jüdischen Supermarkt im Januar fühlt sich die ganze Bevölkerung von ihm bedroht.

Idealisten atmen auf

In weiten, vor allem linken Kreisen hat die Öffnung der deutschen Grenzen wie ein Signal zum Aufbruch gewirkt: Künstler, Intellektuelle, die Kirche solidarisieren sich mit den Flüchtlingen, es gibt Demonstrationen, kulturelle Veranstaltungen, Petitionen. „Titeuf“-Autor Zep hat die Flüchtlinge gezeichnet. „Wenn Angela doch Französin wäre“, stöhnte der Herausgeber von „Le Point“. „Die Flüchtlinge erneuern die europäische Utopie“, schwärmt der Marxist Slavoj Žižek in „Le Monde“. Der frühere Justizminister Robert Badinter, der die Todesstrafe abgeschafft hatte, plädierte etwas pragmatischer. [Jürgen Habermas](#) fordert, ebenfalls in „Le Monde“: „Deutschland und Frankreich müssen die Vorhut bleiben.“

Ein Aufatmen war zu verspüren – diese spontane Solidarität hat man seit Jahren nicht mehr zu offenbaren gewagt und sich deswegen als Verräter an der großen humanistischen Tradition des Einwanderungslandes empfunden. Für diese Selbstverleugnung gibt es kaum andere Gründe als die Rücksicht auf Le Pen und das politische Klima, in dem der Front National eine Hegemonie ausübt wie einst die Kommunisten. Den wiedererwachten Idealisten wird von den Pragmatikern und Realisten, die man auch nicht von vornherein der Fremdenfeindlichkeit bezichtigen sollte, nicht ihr Engagement vorgeworfen – eine Überschrift im „Figaro“ ist so deutlich wie Devedjians Tweet: „Diese Franzosen, die so sehr Deutschland lieben“. Es ist eine Anspielung auf die Kollaboration.

Dass Merkel Frankreich überrumpelte wie einst Hitlers Armeen, ist das latente Leitmotiv der Wahrnehmung. Auch ungeschminkt wird es formuliert: „Wer stoppt diesen Wahnsinn?“, entsetzt sich Yvan Roufiol im „Figaro“ unter dem Titel „Das reuige Deutschland wird zur Gefahr für Europa“. Es hat seine Juden vergast und holt sich Araber zurück, könnte man Devedjian paraphrasieren. Das Aussetzen von Schengen hat man in Paris mit Beruhigung und auch einer unterschwelligem Schadenfreude kommentiert.

Frankreich wurde viel zu oft im Stich gelassen

Die [Flüchtlingsdebatte](#) illustriert die deutsch-französische Phasenverschiebung im Bezug zur Vergangenheit. Noch ist sie weniger heftig als die Auseinandersetzungen um den Pazifismus, als die französischen Kommunisten, die es mit der DDR hielten, plötzlich von den Grünen und der Friedensbewegung zu schwärmen begannen. Die vom Marxismus zum Antitotalitarismus bekehrten „Neuen Philosophen“, die in ihrem Eifer der Vergangenheitsbewältigung „für Danzig (und Solidarność) sterben“ wollten, bekämpften die Pazifisten als Kollaborateure mit dem neuen Faschismus: „Lieber rot als tot.“ Dreißig Jahre lang prägte die neuphilosophische Ethik das französische Klima. In ihrem Namen wurden prophylaktische Kriege gegen „Hitlers Wiedergänger“ Milošević, Saddam Hussein, Gaddafi geführt.

Diese Ethik des Eingreifens macht Michel Onfray nicht ohne Grund für die Lage im Nahen Osten mitverantwortlich – insbesondere Bernard-Henri Lévy, der Sarkozy und die Amerikaner zum Eingreifen in Libyen anzustiften vermochte. Auch der Westen, sagt Onfray, ist für die Flüchtlingsströme verantwortlich. Jetzt, da die Situation für Europa eine wirkliche Bedrohung darstellt, ist der Imperativ verbraucht und Frankreich mit seiner Kriegsbereitschaft von den europäischen Partnern viel zu oft im Stich gelassen worden. Für den Kampf in Syrien fehlen ihm die Mittel und der Mut, Bodentruppen zu schicken. Deutschland, das partout keine Kriege mehr führen will, bekommt die Flüchtlinge. Dass es mit ihnen seine wirtschaftliche Macht abstützen kann, könnte sich als Illusion erweisen – vergleichbar mit den französischen Lebenslügen und Großmachtattitüden nach 1945.

128,34

European Press Review of 15/09/2015

MAIN FOCUS

Still no refugee quotas

The EU interior ministers failed again on Monday to reach an agreement on the Commission's proposal for refugee quotas and postponed the decision on how a total of 160,000 refugees should be redistributed throughout the EU. Some commentators complain that the photo of little Aylan has done nothing to change the stance of individual states. Others hope that the heads of state and government will set aside their differences.

La Stampa - Italy

Powerless EU collapses

The EU is hopelessly at odds over refugee policy, the liberal daily La Stampa writes in dismay: "What we call Europe - in the belief that it is a political reality and not just a puzzle made up of interests, tricks and hypocrisy - has collapsed under the weight of its own powerlessness. Without quotas for refugees, and with borders that close one after another instead. ... While mothers and their children were drowning in the Mediterranean, our representatives in Brussels were quarrelling over ridiculously low refugee quotas: 5,000 here, 1,000 there. The disconnected nature of technocracy can now be seen more clearly than ever before: it believes it can control reality with absurd rules that weren't passed according to real needs but which reflect the balance of power among the 28 countries of the so-called Union. **This is the Brussels version of the banality of evil:** the belief that it is sufficient to react to the epochal tsunami of migration with sober-minded joint decisions." (15/09/2015)

El Periódico de Catalunya - Spain

Europe's solidarity has evaporated

The shock impact of the photo of the [dead Syrian refugee boy](#) Aylan has quickly evaporated, the centre-left daily El Periódico de Catalunya complains: "Not two weeks have passed since the photos of the Syrian boy rudely awakened the consciences of the Europeans and [softened](#) the stringent position of a few governments on the refugees' plight, and already things have gone back to the way they were before. Part of society (above all in so-called Western Europe) is organising networks to receive the masses who are fleeing the conflicts in Asia and Africa. Meanwhile the governments of the EU are still caught up in bureaucratic disputes and electoral strategies. In many cases, including that of Spain, they are completely forgetting their own recent past in which the generations before them suffered the same fate." (15/09/2015)

<http://www.spiegel.de/politik/ausland/fluechtlinge-eu-unfaehig-zur-krisenbewaeltigung-kommentar-a-1052925.html#ref=rss>

EU-Innenminister ohne Konzept: Europa in der Sinnkrise

Spiegel Online - Germany

The EU an Egoistic Union?

The EU threatens to break apart over the refugee crisis, the news magazine Spiegel Online fears, and regrets that the EU governments' attitudes "don't show any signs whatsoever of a common approach that could provide at least a glimmer of hope for a long-term solution to the refugee crisis. That would require the EU states to coordinate their foreign, economic, security and development policies to give them the clout needed to address crises at their sources - and prevent floods of refugees before they even begin. That, however, would require a level of consensus of which there is no sign at present. ... All of this faces the EU with existential questions: does it want to be a community of states that tackles problems as one even if they concern some states more than others? Or does it want to be a sort of easy going free-trade zone whose members decide all issues on their own - and in their own interests?" (15/09/2015) [» full article \(external link, German\)](#)

128,35

Poland and the refugees

Resistant to migrants, Poland debates the meaning of “solidarity”

Politics are shifting right and willingness to help Muslims or Europe is in short supply

Sep 15th 2015 | [Europe](#)

WHEN European Union interior ministers met on Monday to discuss a plan to redistribute 120,000 asylum seekers between them, Poland, the largest and most powerful of the EU's central and eastern members, quietly helped to shelve it. Unlike other central and eastern European leaders, Poland's prime minister, Ewa Kopacz, has not indulged in populist anti-migrant rhetoric. But Poland wants full control over which asylum seekers it lets in. The prospect of accepting large numbers of Muslim refugees in the name of European solidarity seems to be a step too far for a country whose politics were already shifting to the right.

The forces driving that shift were on display in Warsaw on September 12th, when demonstrators staged two rallies (pictured), one friendly to immigrants and one hostile. The “welcome” rally gathered at a statue of Copernicus on the city's university campus. It drew perhaps a thousand people, many of them dating from the generation of the other “Solidarity”—the 1980s trade-union movement that overthrew Poland's communist government. The posters were friendly; the speakers (barely audible) called for the country to show hospitality and apologised for the xenophobia and racism that have reared their heads in Poland's migrant debate. The atmosphere resembled that of a genteel chamber-music performance.

If the pro-migrant rally was a chamber music performance, the anti-migrant rally was a heavy metal concert. It was about five times as large, and overwhelmingly young. The slogans were considerably less sophisticated: “God honour the motherland,” “Fuck the EU” and “Hands off Polish land”. Demonstrators tossed red smoke flares in the centre of avenues as they marched from the city's Stalin-era Palace of Culture to the old town. A young man next to a poster claiming that Muslim immigrants constitute a “Trojan pig” unleashed a profanity-laced screed about the educational opportunities offered to Ukrainian youth, then noted that these “Arabs have mobile phones, so they're not poor”. His marching companions agreed.

The rhetoric was harsher still at a rally in Gdansk, where demonstrators chanted “We will do to you what Hitler did to the Jews.” The harsher corners of Polish social media include calls to “reopen Auschwitz” for the migrants. Internet comment sites everywhere in the world are filled with hateful garbage, but such references are more disturbing in a country where the gas chambers operated, and where anti-semitism and islamophobia seem capable of persisting even in the absence of significant numbers of Jews or Muslims. The country is 98% Catholic. Poland's interior minister has linked the migrant question to fears of terrorism, worrying that some of the refugees may have “bad intentions towards the countries that offer them help”.

The question is whether anti-migrant opinion will drive a stronger swing to the right in the parliamentary elections, due October 25th. The ruling centrist Civic Platform party's voters are in the “welcome” camp, but Ms Kopacz's government has been pussyfooting to avoid provoking public opinion. The party is almost certain to lose to the right-wing Law and Justice (PiS) party; the latest polls put PiS in the lead, 36% to 25%. Ms Kopacz was reluctant to accept even the initial quota of some 2000 migrants under the EU's first redistribution plan, which envisioned resettling 32,000 migrants. Her predecessor Donald Tusk, now president of the European Council, is said to have pushed her to accept the initial quota, although she long insisted all arriving refugees be Christian.

With the addition of 120,000 more migrants to the redistribution plan, Poland's share is now set at 11,946. Jean-Claude Juncker, president of the European Commission, has appealed for Polish support, alluding to the “20 million people of Polish ancestry [who] live outside Poland” due to the country's history of “border shifts, forced expulsions and resettlements”. But Andrzej Duda, Poland's recently-elected president, has rejected any mandatory quotas. Mr Duda, who hails from PiS, claims Poland is hamstrung by its absorption of Ukrainian refugees—a dubious claim given that in the first half of 2015 just 1284 Ukrainians asked for refugee status in Poland, and none received it.

Should an exodus of Ukrainian refugees ever take place, Poland would need EU solidarity. Under Mr Tusk, Polish diplomacy played in the big leagues, intervening with France and Germany during the Maidan crisis. Now, with its resistance to sharing Europe's migrant burden, Poland has placed itself back in what the German press calls “the merciless four”: the Visegrad group, along with Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. All seem to have repressed the memories of Western countries offering their citizens asylum in 1956, 1968 and 1981. On September 12th Ms Kopacz vowed to Poland's parliament that “nobody will teach us [Poles] the meaning of the word ‘solidarity’”. As Europe's migrant crisis evolves, this claim seems debatable.

Solving Syria in the Security Council

Jeffrey D. Sachs

Sachs, Professor of Sustainable Development, Professor of Health Policy and Management, and Director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University, is also Special Adviser to the United Nations Secretary-General on the Millennium Development Goals. His books include *The End of Poverty*, [Co...](#) [read more](#)

NEW YORK – The ongoing bloodletting in Syria is not only the world’s greatest humanitarian disaster by far, but also one of its gravest geopolitical risks. And the United States’ current approach – a two-front war against the Islamic State and President Bashar al-Assad’s regime – has failed miserably. The solution to the Syrian crisis, including the growing refugee crisis in Europe, must run through the United Nations Security Council.

The roots of US strategy in Syria lie in a strange– and unsuccessful – union of two sources of American foreign policy. One comprises the US security establishment, including the military, the intelligence agencies, and their staunch supporters in Congress. The other source emerges from the human-rights community. Their peculiar merger has been evident in many recent US wars in the Middle East and Africa. Unfortunately, the results have been consistently devastating.

The security establishment is driven by US policymakers’ long-standing reliance on military force and covert operations to topple regimes deemed to be harmful to American interests. From the 1953 [toppling of Mohammad Mossadegh’s democratically elected government](#) in Iran and the “other 9/11” (the US-backed military coup in 1973 against Chile’s democratically elected Salvador Allende) to Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and now Syria, regime change has long been the coin of the US security realm.

At the same time, parts of the human-rights community have backed recent US military interventions on the grounds of the “[Responsibility to Protect](#),” or R2P. This doctrine, adopted unanimously by the UN General Assembly in 2005, holds that the international community is obliged to intervene to protect a civilian population under massive attack by its own government. In the face of the brutality of Saddam Hussein, Muammar el-Qaddafi, and Assad, some human-rights advocates made common cause with the US security establishment, while China, Russia, and others have argued that R2P has become a pretext for US-led regime change.

The problem, as human-rights advocates should have learned long ago, is that the US security establishment’s regime-change model does not work. What appears to be a “quick fix” to protect local populations and US interests often devolves into chaos, anarchy, civil war, and burgeoning humanitarian crises, as has happened in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and now Syria. The risks of failure multiply whenever the UN Security Council as a whole does not back the military part of the intervention.

The US intervention in Syria can also be traced to decisions taken by the security establishment a quarter-century ago to overthrow Soviet-backed regimes in the Middle East. As then-Under Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz [explained](#) to General Wesley Clark in 1991: “We learned that we can intervene militarily in the region with impunity, and the Soviets won’t do a thing to stop us... [We’ve] got about five to ten years to take out these old Soviet ‘surrogate’ regimes – Iraq, Syria, and the rest – before the next superpower [China] comes along to challenge us in the region.”

When al-Qaeda struck the US on September 11, 2001, the attack was used as a pretext by the security establishment to launch its long-desired war to topple Saddam. **When the Arab Spring protests erupted a decade later, the US security establishment viewed the sudden vulnerability of the Qaddafi and Assad regimes as a similar opportunity to install new regimes in Libya and Syria. Such was the theory, at any rate.**

In the case of Syria, America's regional allies also told President Barack Obama's administration to move on Assad. **Saudi Arabia wanted Assad gone to weaken a client state of Iran, the kingdom's main rival for regional primacy. Israel wanted Assad gone to weaken Iran's supply lines to Hezbollah in southern Lebanon. And Turkey wanted Assad gone to extend its strategic reach and stabilize its southern border.**

The humanitarian community joined the regime-change chorus when Assad responded to Arab Spring protesters' demand for political liberalization by unleashing the army and paramilitaries. **From March to August 2011, [Assad's forces killed around 2,000 people](#). At that point, Obama declared that Assad must "step aside."**

We don't know the full extent of US actions in Syria after that. On the diplomatic level, the US organized the "Friends of Syria," mainly Western countries and Middle East allies committed to Assad's overthrow. The CIA began to work covertly with Turkey to channel arms, financing, and non-lethal support to the so-called "Free Syrian Army" and other insurgent groups operating to topple Assad.

The results have been an unmitigated disaster. While roughly 500 people per month were killed from March to August 2011, [some 100,000 civilians](#) – around 3,200 per month – died between September 2011 and April 2015, with the total number of dead, including combatants, reaching perhaps 310,000, or 10,000 per month. And, with the Islamic State and other brutal extremist groups capitalizing on the anarchy created by the civil war, the prospect of peace is more distant than ever.

Military intervention led or backed by the US in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya has produced similar debacles. Toppling a regime is one thing; replacing it with a stable and legitimate government is quite another.

If the US wants better results, it should stop going it alone. The US cannot impose its will unilaterally, and trying to do so has merely arrayed other powerful countries, including China and Russia, against it. **Like the US, Russia has a strong interest in stability in Syria and in defeating the Islamic State; but it has no interest in allowing the US to install its choice of regimes in Syria or elsewhere in the region.** That is why all efforts by the UN Security Council to forge a common position on Syria have so far foundered.

But the UN route can and must be tried again. The nuclear pact between Iran and the Security Council's five permanent members (the US, China, France, Russia, and the UK) plus Germany, has just provided a powerful demonstration of the Council's capacity to lead. **It can lead in Syria as well, if the US will set aside its unilateral demand for regime change and work with the rest of the Council, including China and Russia, on a common approach.**

In Syria, only multilateralism can succeed. The UN remains the world's best – indeed its only – hope to stop the Syrian bloodbath and halt the flood of refugees to Europe.

Britain's Populist Fantasies

[Chris Patten](#)

Chris Patten, the last British Governor of Hong Kong and a former EU commissioner for external affairs, is Chancellor of the University of Oxford.

LONDON – The election of Jeremy Corbyn as the new leader of the British Labour Party is a reminder that life is rich with paradox.

Globalization – the web of travel, technology, trade, and information that binds the world ever more closely together – is hardly a new phenomenon. **But politics in many developed democracies has lately been disrupted by populist insurgencies seeking to exit this shared reality. What these groups do not seem to recognize is that the alternative they wish for is a fantasy.**

From Syriza in Greece to the National Front in France, voters across Europe are being encouraged to believe in a virtual reality shaped by prejudice and uninformed nostalgia. In the United States, this mood first emerged several years ago, **fueling the rise of the Tea Party** and now enabling the [splenetic presidential campaigns](#) of **Donald Trump** and other Republican candidates who promise to seal America off from the twenty-first century. (The promise is to some extent literal: By building walls along the country's northern and southern borders, the candidates would defend the American dream from outside contamination.)

The United Kingdom is the latest victim of this fantasy-driven populism. On the right, we have already suffered the rise of the anti-European, anti-immigrant UK Independence Party, led by **the cigarette-smoking, beer-swilling joker Nigel Farage**, in whom **Britain has found its own version of Silvio Berlusconi**, if you can imagine such a thing.

Now the British left has embraced a similar folly. The Labour Party's defeat in May's general election brought about the resignation of its leader, **Ed Miliband**, a courteous and intelligent figure who, having abandoned the middle ground once controlled by former Prime Minister Tony Blair, **had failed to convince even his own party that he could run the country.** The campaign to choose his successor proceeded throughout the summer.

On the whole, the search was a pretty dismal business. Three respectable, if uninspiring, former ministers vied for the position, but struggled to find a compelling message that connected the party of the left with modern Britain. Unsure of the right approach, they wavered somewhere between moderation and left-wing nonsense.

Such indecisiveness was not a problem for Corbyn, whose principal distinction in more than three decades in parliament has been voting against his own party more than 500 times on the grounds that its proposals were not socialist enough. In fact, Corbyn made it onto the ballot only because a few MPs wanted to show that the Labour Party welcomed debate. **But his passionate advocacy of old-fashioned socialism quickly caught on, breathing new life – and drawing tens of thousands of new members – into a party that had been losing adherents in droves.**

So what exactly are Corbyn's proposals? At home, he would nationalize industries, especially in energy, and raise taxes, especially on business and the wealthy. Any semblance of fiscal prudence would go out

the window, with cuts in health, welfare, and education spending being reversed. Trade unions would regain the power they enjoyed before Margaret Thatcher's reforms in the 1980s. And public-sector workers would become the principal beneficiaries of the country's spending programs.

In foreign policy, Corbyn would slash defense spending and abandon the UK's nuclear deterrent. He would blame virtually anything that went wrong in the world on America, which is, in his view, morally equivalent to Russia. If a leader like the late **Hugo Chávez**, the architect of Venezuela's "socialist revolution," emerges, Corbyn would probably be on the next plane to meet him.

Despite his radical views, **Corbyn won the battle to lead Labour – and hence Britain's parliamentary opposition, with nearly 60% of the vote.** But Labour will not win a general election under Corbyn – a reality that has caused some Conservatives to respond to his victory as though they had won the lottery. In my view, however, no good will come from this insurrection for anyone.

First, Corbyn will not be swept out of his job by an early display of public distaste and hostility. On the contrary, at the outset, **he may be able to galvanize many alienated young voters against a government that has earned wary respect but is not much liked.**

Second, without effective and responsible opposition, governments can become arrogant, careless, and too focused on their own supporters. In this case, leaders of the Conservative Party's far-right component are likely to think that they can dispense with offering disciplined support to Prime Minister David Cameron and his policies, because Labour can never win under Corbyn, anyway.

Third, **at some time over the next year, the UK will face a referendum over its membership in the European Union.** While no one knows the position Corbyn will take on this issue, one can speculate that he, like some of the trade-union bosses who support him, might decide that the EU is a rich man's club, thereby **precluding the much-needed cross-party consensus in favor of continued membership.**

Fourth, Corbyn, who shares many of the political views of the Scottish nationalists, will make it more difficult to manage the question of Scotland's place in the UK. Making common cause with the nationalists in policy matters will complicate the question of how best to deal with their constitutional aspirations.

Fifth, there is a danger that the Conservative government, faced with irrational populist forces on both the left and the right, will shrink from its duty to stand up for good values and good sense. But it is vital that, amid all the make-believe, there are still those who hammer home the simple truth that, no matter how much people wish for it, a country cannot decide simply to stop the world and get off.

Corbyn's election underscores how many Britons are refusing to accept reality. It is up to Cameron to end their dangerous reverie.

128,40

Europe's refugee crisis

Migration creates a deepening gulf between East and West

Political tensions across central Europe are rising as solutions prove elusive

Sep 15th 2015 | Europe

EUROPEAN summits are not known for their displays of fraternity and generosity. Yet the world surely expected more from a meeting of European interior ministers, on September 14th, called to try to agree a response to the continent's growing refugee crisis. Last week the European Commission, the executive arm of the European Union, proposed a scheme to relocate 120,000 asylum-seekers from Greece, Hungary and Italy to most other EU countries under a quota system. No one expected the ministers to approve the plan in all its details. But few thought it would flop so decisively. The worst traditions of Brussels, from pernicky squabbles over wording to idle can-kicking, were on full display. Almost six months after the crisis erupted, the commission was reduced to issuing a statement that began by marking “a first step forward as a Union on the refugee crisis”. The UN declared itself “deeply disappointed” by the outcome.

It came as a surprise. With the support of the mighty German-French tandem for the commission's plan, many thought that the countries sceptical of the proposal—notably the “Visegrad” four of Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary—would at least allow discussions on the 120,000 to proceed, while parking the question of precisely how they would be redistributed. But the naysayers, led by the Czechs, refused to put their name to a document that did not contain the word “voluntary”. Hungary, although it would benefit from the plan, remains one of its fiercest foes. The moral appeals, threats and pleas came to nothing. “This is a real clash, a zero-sum game,” said one official from a sceptical country.

Another meeting may be convened to tackle the question. But with little prospect of a shift from the V4, the rest of the EU is preparing to use the nuclear option: a vote by qualified majority, which would mean overruling the sceptics. That would be “politically dangerous”, warns a diplomat from another of the eastern countries. It would certainly poison the well. But commission officials have started to say privately that no country would be forced to accept asylum-seekers it did not want. Instead, the 120,000 target might be reached, as with a previous scheme for 40,000 that the ministers approved last night, via voluntary pledges. The ministers barely discussed a more ambitious commission proposal for a permanent relocation scheme that would kick in whenever migrants surged to Europe.

The relocation proposal is at the heart of the commission's plan to deal with the EU's migrant difficulties. But Europe faces a much more pressing problem. Germany's unexpected decision, on Sunday night, to impose controls along its border with Austria has triggered a series of similar moves, undermining the passport-free Schengen zone to which most EU countries belong. Austria has stepped up checks along its border with Hungary, and Slovakia has done the same for its frontiers with both those countries. The Hungarians, meanwhile, have come close to militarising their border with Serbia, erecting a razor-wire fence, dispatching troops and passing draconian new laws against illicit migrants. Arrests, and worse, will follow.

Each of these decisions is individually rational, but collectively they do nothing to solve the problem. Hundreds of thousands of refugees, mainly Syrians, are somewhere on the route between Greece and Germany that has emerged as the main pipeline for refugee flows this year. Every additional border control merely displaces the problem further down the line. Tensions between Hungary and Serbia will surely grow. Later this week there may be trouble along the Serbia-Macedonia border, and then on Macedonia's border with Greece. And with 5,000 people still reaching the Greek islands from Turkey every day, the dangers of bottlenecks are clear. Meanwhile people-smugglers are already scouting out new routes into central Europe, perhaps via Croatia and Slovenia, or by sailing from Albania to southern Italy.

Political tensions are growing as markedly as migratory ones. Today Thomas de Maizière, the tough-talking German interior minister, proposed cutting EU structural funds for countries that refused to take quotas of refugees. There is little chance of that happening. But a worrying picture is emerging. **Just when the need for Europe's governments to co-operate could not be clearer, the prospect of them doing so is becoming ever-more distant.**

128,41

15. September 2015, 17:46 Uhr

EU-Flüchtlingspolitik

"Wir sind doch nicht in der Afrikanischen Union"

Luxemburgs Außenminister Asselborn kritisiert Merkels Forderung, einen Sondergipfel zur Flüchtlingskrise abzuhalten.

*Von **Daniel Brössler**, Brüssel*

Der von Bundeskanzlerin Angela Merkel und ihrem österreichischen Amtskollegen Werner Faymann geforderte Sondergipfel zur Flüchtlingskrise stößt auf Widerstand. "Wir sind doch nicht in der Afrikanischen Union", sagte der luxemburgische Außen- und Migrationsminister **Jean Asselborn** der *Süddeutschen Zeitung*.

Sein Land hat derzeit die EU-Präsidentschaft inne. Anders als die Afrikanische Union lebe die EU nicht nur von Absprachen zwischen den Staaten, sondern von der so genannten Gemeinschaftsmethode. In dieser agieren Rat und Europäisches Parlament als gemeinsamer Gesetzgeber.

Asselborn sprach sich dafür aus, die regulären Verfahren der EU anzuwenden. "Man sollte die Minister ihre Arbeit machen lassen", warb er. Anders als beim Ministerrat kann bei einem Gipfel nur einstimmig entschieden werden. Die EU-Innenminister hatten sich am Dienstag nicht auf eine Quote zur EU-weiten Verteilung von Flüchtlingen verständigen können.

128,42

Federal Reserve Faces Fork In The Road Over Interest Rates

SEPTEMBER 15, 2015 4:21 PM ET

CHRIS ARNOLD

Listen to the Story

All Things Considered
3:51

ROBERT SIEGEL, HOST:

The Federal Reserve takes up an important question for the U.S. economy tomorrow when it begins meetings. Should it raise interest rates? The Fed is getting a lot of advice. The World Bank warns against it, and some prominent economists say a rate increase now would be catastrophic. Another camp of experts and central bankers is telling the Fed exactly the opposite. Here's NPR's Chris Arnold.

CHRIS ARNOLD, BYLINE: The last time the Fed started raising interest rates, it was 11 years ago. Back then, Lehman Brothers was doing great. Lance Armstrong was a hero, and Donald Trump, well, he was just starting to fire people on his new reality TV show.

(SOUNDBITE OF TV SHOW, "THE APPRENTICE")

DONALD TRUMP: Guys, they killed you. They really gave you a good beating. You're going to be seeing the boardroom where somebody has to get fired.

ARNOLD: Then, of course, the real financial crisis hit, and in response, the Fed dropped interest rates lower than it ever has in history. And they've stayed there for years. So what exactly did that do for us? It did a lot, says former U.S. treasury secretary Larry Summers.

LARRY SUMMERS: Without low rates, more companies would have failed 'cause they couldn't service their debts. More households would've gone bankrupt, and large financial institutions would have been at greater risk of failure.

ARNOLD: In other words...

SUMMERS: Likely, we would've had a depression.

ARNOLD: But the question now is, has the time come to start raising rates again? If you wait too long to raise rates, you risk inflation, asset bubbles and other problems. The U.S. economy has been recovering. We've gained back 13 million jobs. But Summers says no, not yet. Wages are still stagnant. The global economy appears to be in more trouble than we thought just a few months ago.

SUMMERS: Raising rates is hitting the brakes on the American economy. It's not the moment to raise rates.

ARNOLD: So Summers says the Fed faces a fork in the road, but he says one path is a lot more perilous than the other. He says there's more room to maneuver if the Fed chooses the path of not raising rates yet.

SUMMERS: If the economy were to overheat, we have plenty of room to raise interest rates and slow it down.

ARNOLD: But we don't have room in the other direction - that is, to drop rates lower 'cause they're already at rock-bottom. So the other path - if we start raising rates a bit and hit the brakes on the economy - Summers says that could be inviting big trouble.

SUMMERS: Because there's very little in the fuel tank to use as stimulus. And so if we slow the economy down, we could have tipped off a dynamic that takes us towards recession and lower incomes.

ARNOLD: OK, all that sounds really bad. So why would the Fed even consider raising rates now? William Dunkelberg is the chief economist for the National Federation of Independent Business. He says, sure, there's a camp of economists, including Summers, who want to keep rates low just in case. But...

WILLIAM DUNKELBERG: Then you've got another set of people who say this is insane; none of this is real.

ARNOLD: Dunkelberg is in that camp. He says this years-long intervention to keep rates low is unnatural and it's already causing problems. He says millions of retirees can't make any money on super-safe investments like treasuries and bank CDs, and he thinks that the Fed moving to raise rates now would be a show of confidence for the U.S. economy. He thinks that would encourage the business owners that he represents.

DUNKELBERG: If we actually saw them move ahead, we would say, OK, finally, we have the green light from the Fed; they know everything, and we can go ahead and risk more and spend more. And that would help the economy, not hurt it.

ARNOLD: We'll find out what the Fed will do after its meeting wraps up on Thursday. Chris Arnold, NPR News.

128,43

Merkel convoque l'Europe sur les migrants

Publié le 15/09/2015 à 20:31

L'heure de l'explication au sommet va bientôt sonner entre l'Allemagne, ses voisins, l'Europe centrale et les pays de première ligne: Angela Merkel a demandé hier un Conseil européen d'urgence sur la crise des réfugiés et des migrants, appel aussitôt relayé par d'autres capitales comme Vienne et Bratislava.

Ce sommet, le troisième en quatre mois sur le défi migratoire, doit être confirmé ce jeudi et se tiendrait au début de la semaine prochaine. L'Élysée en soutient l'idée, bien qu'il ne s'agisse pas d'une initiative franco-allemande. **L'humeur est autrement plus sombre qu'en mai et en juin: les arrivées sont sur une pente exponentielle, la libre circulation craque à toutes les coutures du système Schengen, les divisions européennes s'évalent et aucun consensus européen n'est en vue pour reprendre, enfin, l'initiative. Entre chefs d'État et de gouvernement, le scénario d'un échec retentissant est tout sauf exclu.**

En attendant, les mauvaises nouvelles s'accumulent. **La Hongrie de Viktor Orban s'est ceinturée de barbelés et commence à arrêter les réfugiés qui franchissent sa frontière.** Mais c'est tout sauf un frein à l'exode. La «route des Balkans» sera juste déviée vers la Croatie ou la Roumanie, avant de nouveau l'Italie, l'Autriche ou le reste de l'Europe centrale. **Frontex, l'agence européenne de coordination aux frontières, chiffre désormais à plus de 500.000 les arrivées dans l'UE depuis le début de l'année.**

Le mois dernier, la Grèce a accueilli 88.000 personnes, 11 fois plus qu'en août 2014. Aux trois quarts, ce sont des Syriens, autrement dit des demandeurs d'asile légitimes. À l'autre extrémité du couloir balkanique, la Hongrie en a reçu 52.000, vingt fois plus qu'en août 2014. **L'Allemagne contrôle sa frontière, mais elle reste l'eldorado. Toujours ouverte aux demandeurs d'asile, elle s'apprête à rehausser son estimation de 800.000 à 1 million cette année.**

«Diktats» dignes de l'URSS

Au sommet qui s'annonce, le contentieux le plus bruyant portera sur un partage du fardeau à l'échelle de l'UE. Jean-Claude Juncker a lancé le sujet, avant d'être relayé au plus haut niveau par la chancelière Merkel et le président Hollande. Jusqu'ici, l'entreprise a fait long feu, comme en témoigne **le raté, lundi, des ministres de l'Intérieur. Les 28 ne se sont entendus ni sur le contingent de 160.000 proposé, ni sur son caractère (obligatoire?), ni sur les clefs de répartition nationale, ni même sur le nombre de réfugiés dont la Grèce, la Hongrie et l'Italie devraient être soulagées.**

Cette question des «quotas», partie d'une intention louable, empoisonne la négociation et divise jusqu'au gouvernement allemand. Hier, Angela Merkel a dû recadrer son ministre de l'Intérieur **Thomas de Maizière qui, ulcéré par le dernier huis clos de Bruxelles, suggérait de couper dans les subventions de l'UE aux pays récalcitrants.** Au niveau européen, **la crispation diplomatique est aussi palpable et se pose, en filigrane, la question de savoir si l'équation ne devrait pas être posée autrement.**

Avec les «quotas», les aigreurs habituelles s'exacerbent sur le Vieux Continent. La Grèce et l'Italie s'étranglent de la lenteur des secours sur la rive nord de la Méditerranée. Le Royaume-Uni est une fois de plus vilipendé pour les dispenses dont il jouit. L'Allemagne et la France s'indignent du manque de solidarité d'une Europe centrale «choyée» depuis une génération. **La Hongrie et ses voisins slaves reprochent à Berlin de semer le chaos aux frontières. Et, accessoirement, de recourir à des «diktats» dignes de l'ancien occupant soviétique.** Sur ces lignes, l'issue du rendez-vous attendu par Angela Merkel est jouée d'avance.

Construire une frontière extérieure

Entre Européens, il faudra sûrement trouver un terrain d'entente entre ceux qui accueillent généreusement les réfugiés et ceux qui sont tentés de leur fermer la porte au nez. **Mais le vrai défi de l'UE est ailleurs: c'est une frontière externe qui doit être massivement équipée et renforcée, si l'on veut éviter que l'espace de Schengen ne finisse par s'effondrer sur lui-même comme une rangée de dominos.** Les projets attendent depuis des mois dans les cartons de la Commission Juncker: **accroissement des moyens et des pouvoirs de Frontex, mise en place de centres de tri européens à l'atterrissage des migrants, enregistrement des réfugiés, renvoi rapide des déboutés du droit d'asile vers les pays de départ, aide massive à la Grèce, le maillon faible en première ligne.**

L'Europe a une frontière mais ni politique, ni commandement unique, ni service de renseignement pour la surveiller, comme l'ont montré de récentes défaillances dans la lutte contre le terrorisme. C'est un peu une question d'argent et, pour beaucoup, **une affaire de susceptibilités nationales.** Beau programme pour un sommet.

Crise des réfugiés: à quoi joue Angela Merkel ?

INFOGRAPHIE - Face à la crise migratoire qui submerge l'Allemagne, les contradictions de la chancelière sèment le trouble dans son pays et en Europe.

Elle semble perturbée jusqu'à en perdre son masque de Sphinx. Angela Merkel lâche aussi un léger rire en gagnant son pupitre. Elle n'a même pas laissé au chancelier autrichien Werner Faymann le temps de répondre à la dernière question posée en conférence de presse. Elle s'excuse et l'invite à poursuivre. La chancelière allemande, qui avait l'air pressé d'en finir, avait oublié un instant qu'il restait encore une intervention d'un journaliste! «Le chiffre d'un million de réfugiés à la fin de l'année est-il confirmé?» Elle avait répondu, sans confirmer, que la semaine dernière «le nombre de demandeurs d'asile était supérieur au nombre de places d'hébergement disponibles», puis avait fait mine de s'en aller. La journée de mardi s'annonçait encore longue pour elle: un Conseil des ministres extraordinaire sur le thème des demandeurs d'asile, puis une réunion d'urgence avec les représentants des Länder. La chancelière gère la crise dans l'instant.

Angela Merkel est prise dans les vents contraires de la crise migratoire. La politique du gouvernement est devenue illisible en Allemagne, comme à l'étranger. Après avoir donné le sentiment d'ouvrir largement les portes du pays, notamment aux Syriens qui sont presque certains d'obtenir l'asile, elle a fait croire, dimanche soir en annonçant le rétablissement des contrôles aux frontières, qu'elles pouvaient se refermer. La réalité est à chaque fois plus complexe et les migrants continuent d'entrer. Mais elle a voulu adresser un signal. «Il nous faut un nouvel esprit européen», a-t-elle réclamé mardi. Mais pour l'instant, bien qu'elle ait déjà haussé le ton, Angela Merkel n'a pas réussi à convaincre les Européens récalcitrants.

En déclarant fin août que l'Allemagne «réussirait» à surmonter le défi, la chancelière a pris un risque inhabituel. Et en expliquant la semaine dernière cette évidence que le droit d'asile «ne connaissait pas» de contingent maximal, elle a effrayé dans son camp. Personne ne sait outre-Rhin comment la crise va évoluer, à l'instar de ce ministre qui confie à ses proches: «Pour l'instant, beaucoup de questions sont posées. Mais nous n'avons pas beaucoup de réponses.» Lundi, le porte-parole de la chancelière avait tenté de rassurer: «Le gouvernement agit toujours comme la situation l'exige.»

L'Allemagne est submergée par un flot sans précédent de réfugiés. Le pays est pris au piège de son propre succès économique, qui le fait ressembler à une terre promise. En attendant, des milliers de demandeurs d'asile font toujours la queue pendant de longues heures devant les centres d'enregistrement. Désormais, il faut entre six et neuf mois pour obtenir une réponse, ce qui ne met pas un terme à la procédure, même en cas de refus. Bref, si le pays peut en théorie absorber le choc, il n'est plus capable de répondre au moment présent. Les Syriens sont les plus nombreux à demander l'asile. Émus par leurs destins, les Allemands ont ouvert largement leur cœur à ces réfugiés. L'élan de solidarité, notamment relayé par l'Église, est considérable, et Angela Merkel voulait en bénéficier. D'autant que l'Allemagne a besoin d'immigration pour relever le défi démographique. La chancelière aurait voulu saisir le moment pour «changer» le pays.

Tous les migrants ne sont toutefois pas accueillis de cette manière: ceux qui tentent seulement d'échapper à la misère sont jugés indésirables, mais l'engorgement du système leur permet de s'installer. Seulement 14 % des Allemands trouvent légitime l'immigration économique, selon un sondage ARD paru il y a quelques jours. Or, les uns sont aussi nombreux que les autres à tenter leur chance en Allemagne. Une angoisse sociale contre les «réfugiés économiques» commence à s'entendre dans le pays. «Il faut prendre cette peur au sérieux», assure le professeur de psychologie sociale, Ulrich Wagner, au *Spiegel*.

Aucun regret

L'opinion allemande est mouvante et Angela Merkel l'a bien compris. Elle a reçu les messages d'alerte successifs: ceux venus des Länder la semaine dernière, puis de la CSU, le parti bavarois allié de la CDU, qui a tiré la sonnette d'alarme. La situation va devenir incontrôlable. La décision de rétablir les contrôles aux frontières a été prise samedi par Angela Merkel entourée de ses ministres les plus importants.

La chancelière s'est trouvée contrainte d'agir, elle qui déteste prendre les décisions dans l'urgence. «Je ne pouvais pas attendre douze heures et réfléchir», s'est-elle défendue mardi. La dernière fois qu'elle a réagi sous le coup de l'instant, c'était en 2011 après la catastrophe de Fukushima au Japon. Elle avait annoncé que l'Allemagne renoncerait à l'énergie nucléaire: elle avait perçu que l'opinion avait basculé.

Mais cette fois, elle a sa part de responsabilité dans l'accélération des événements. Prudente au début de l'été, Angela Merkel s'est laissée griser: aux yeux du monde, elle était devenue la «mère des réfugiés». Les photos d'elle entourée de demandeurs d'asile ont fait le tour des réseaux sociaux. «Les nouvelles et les images se diffusaient en quelques secondes sur Internet et mettaient aussitôt des dizaines de milliers de personnes en mouvement en direction de l'Allemagne», a commenté lundi dans le *Süddeutsche Zeitung* le secrétaire d'État CDU, Jens Spahn. Pour Angela Merkel, il n'est pas question de regretter ses choix. Interrogée mardi sur son attitude et sa décision, il y a dix jours, de laisser venir les migrants bloqués en Hongrie, elle a répondu avec sévérité: «Je dois dire sincèrement que si nous commençons à devoir nous excuser lorsque l'on montre un visage amical dans des situations d'urgence, alors ce n'est plus mon pays.»

Angela Merkel a beaucoup fluctué entre raison et émotion. Début juillet, c'est la raison qui lui fait répondre à une Palestinienne que l'Allemagne ne peut pas accueillir des milliers de réfugiés. C'est l'émotion qui lui fait dire fin août son admiration pour ces migrants «qui surmontent des situations ou des peurs qui nous feraient, nous, vraisemblablement nous écrouler». Entre-temps, la chancelière a été choquée par la multiplication des agressions xénophobes contre des centres d'accueil, une «honte», a-t-elle déclaré. «Ce n'est pas le visage de l'Allemagne», a-t-elle insisté. Pour elle, fille de pasteur d'Allemagne de l'Est, c'est une ligne rouge intolérable. C'est peut-être ce qui a fait basculer son jugement.

Crise des migrants : assez de diffamation envers la Hongrie !

Par Georges KAROLYI

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TRIBUNE - Budapest applique à la lettre la convention de Schengen, explique l'ambassadeur de Hongrie en France.

Face à l'incroyable campagne médiatique qui se déchaîne en ce moment contre la Hongrie, je crois nécessaire d'apporter aux médias et à l'opinion française un certain nombre de précisions.

La Hongrie ne ferme pas sa frontière aux migrants. Elle la sécurise, comme le lui imposent les conventions européennes. Sa frontière avec la Serbie est à la fois frontière d'État, frontière de l'Union européenne et frontière de l'espace Schengen. La Convention de Schengen stipule que les frontières extérieures de l'espace qu'elle délimite ne peuvent être franchies «qu'aux points de passage officiels prévus à cet effet, et uniquement aux heures d'ouverture de ceux-ci». Ces termes peuvent paraître risibles dans la situation actuelle, mais ils forment le droit applicable. La Convention impose également aux pays concernés d'assumer la responsabilité de la protection et de la défense de cette frontière, par tout moyen approprié.

À l'époque où les accords de Schengen ont été conclus, leur respect, dans un esprit européen, reposait sur la confiance entre l'État qui supprime tout obstacle physique au passage de sa frontière et les voyageurs censés emprunter les points de passage officiels en présentant leurs papiers. Cette confiance a été annihilée par le flux migratoire auquel on assiste aujourd'hui. Cette rupture du respect des règles du jeu a changé la donne et impose d'empêcher physiquement, à titre temporaire, tant que les circonstances actuelles prévaudront, le passage de la frontière en dehors des endroits prévus à cet effet. C'est l'objet de la clôture élevée par la Hongrie. Un État qui est incapable de contrôler sa frontière n'est pas un État.

Dans le même temps, afin qu'aucun migrant ne soit empêché par principe de pénétrer en Hongrie sans voir sa demande examinée, et que cette entrée éventuelle se fasse dans des conditions contrôlables et civilisées, les points de passage seront multipliés. Les migrants qui s'y présenteront seront invités à se faire enregistrer et à déclarer s'ils demandent l'asile ou pas, conformément aux prescriptions des règlements de Dublin.

Dans l'affirmative, leur demande fera l'objet d'une instruction accélérée qui ne devrait pas dépasser dix à douze jours. Dans l'intervalle, les demandeurs d'asile seront abrités dans des structures d'accueil ouvertes, comme l'exige la réglementation européenne, où ils recevront, conformément à cette réglementation, le gîte, le couvert et une assistance médicale, en collaboration avec les organisations caritatives comme l'Ordre de Malte ou les Œuvres caritatives œcuméniques. Ceux dont la demande aura fait l'objet d'une décision favorable seront acheminés vers les centres d'hébergement prévus à cet effet, et dont le nombre est en train d'être accru. Les autres seront reconduits à la frontière, conformément au consensus qui prévaut parmi les États européens.

Il faut noter toutefois que, précisément pour ne pas être reconduits, pratiquement tous les entrants déposent une demande d'asile et n'en attendent pas l'issue, ou bien ils essaient d'échapper à l'enregistrement. Dans les deux cas, ces migrants entendent poursuivre leur route clandestinement, sans aucune garantie de sécurité.

La procédure observée par les autorités hongroises n'a rien de nouveau. Elles l'appliquent depuis que les circonstances l'y obligent et continueront tant que les conventions internationales seront ce qu'elles sont.

Près de 97 % des entrants illégaux ont jusqu'à présent été appréhendés et conduits vers les centres d'accueil pour être enregistrés. Certes, la plupart d'entre eux disparaissaient avant l'achèvement de l'instruction de leur demande. Il est impossible de l'empêcher du fait du caractère ouvert des structures d'accueil. La situation est devenue plus difficile à gérer à partir du moment, voici une quinzaine de jours, où les migrants ont massivement fait savoir qu'ils souhaitaient gagner l'Allemagne et qu'ils n'avaient aucune intention de se soumettre aux formalités administratives hongroises.

C'est à ce moment qu'ont commencé les désordres dont une certaine presse s'est faite l'écho avec tant de délectation. Contrairement à ce qui a été dit ou malencontreusement suggéré - des images de violences policières filmées en Macédoine ont été présentées comme ayant eu lieu en Hongrie -, ces désordres ont été gérés par les services de police hongrois avec un professionnalisme exemplaire compte tenu de la situation.

Dans les conditions extrêmement tendues que l'on connaît, avec désormais près de 4 000 entrées illégales par jour, la Hongrie exécute à la lettre les obligations que lui impose son appartenance à l'Union et à l'espace Schengen. Notre pays n'est pas responsable du souhait des migrants de poursuivre leur route vers d'autres destinations (Allemagne, Suède ou autre) ni du fait que nombre d'entre eux, pour cette raison, refusent de se soumettre à l'enregistrement ou quittent, aussitôt arrivés, les structures d'accueil ouvertes.

La Hongrie ne peut être blâmée de la décision de ces migrants qui, sous leur responsabilité ou sous la pression des passeurs, préfèrent continuer leur chemin vers la frontière autrichienne avec les drames que l'on a vus et au prix de leur installation spontanée et désordonnée dans des zones de transit temporaires où des conditions d'existence décentes ne peuvent leur être garanties.

Lorsqu'on porte une appréciation sur la politique de la Hongrie, je souhaite que l'on fasse l'effort de prendre connaissance des droits et des obligations de chacun.

128,46

Sécu : la nouvelle alerte de la Cour des comptes

Sans réforme structurelle, le retour à l'équilibre **des comptes** ne surviendra pas avant 2021.

Guichard, Guillaume

SOCIAL Treize ans de déficit, et ce n'est pas fini. La Cour des comptes a envoyé mardi sa fusée de détresse annuelle pour rappeler au gouvernement que les **comptes de la Sécu** sont toujours dans le rouge, et que cela n'est décidément pas normal. « *De premiers progrès ont été faits mais les déficits résistent opiniâtrement* », observe Didier Migaud, le premier président de la Cour des comptes, en présentant le rapport 2015 sur l'application des lois de financement de la Sécurité sociale. Avant d'insister : « *Il faut aller plus loin et plus vite.* »

En 2014, le déficit s'est certes réduit, mais en grande partie grâce à une hausse des prélèvements de 5,3 milliards d'euros (y compris l'affectation d'une partie plus importante de la TVA à l'Assurance-maladie). Sans cet apport de recettes fraîches, le trou de la Sécu se serait encore creusé. Pis, la baisse du déficit en 2015 pourrait se révéler infime (200 millions d'euros de moins que l'année précédente, à 13 milliards d'euros), même si le gouvernement table sur un meilleur chiffre que prévu.

Un point, en particulier, inquiète les experts comptables de la République : le gouvernement semble avoir en partie baissé les bras en matière de réduction du déficit de la Sécu. « *Si le retour à l'équilibre des comptes sociaux se poursuit, à un rythme modeste, il est désormais reporté à un terme encore indéterminé, en raison d'une trajectoire une nouvelle fois décalée* », se désole même Didier Migaud. Et ce, alors que les comptes devaient retourner dans le vert en 2017, selon la loi de financement rectificative de 2014 votée il y a un peu plus d'un an. Aujourd'hui, cette échéance semble avoir été repoussée *sine die*.

Anticipant une croissance moins forte que ce qu'il espérait un an auparavant, le gouvernement a en effet revu le chemin menant à l'équilibre des comptes de la Sécu. D'après ce nouveau tracé, le déficit devrait encore s'élever à 5 milliards d'euros en 2018. L'horizon du retour à l'équilibre se dérobe donc une nouvelle fois et l'objectif ne devrait pas être atteint avant 2021 dans le meilleur des cas, selon les calculs de la Cour.

Une dette à risque

« *Ce report à un terme de plus en plus éloigné est préoccupant* », insiste d'ailleurs Didier Migaud. En effet, les déficits s'additionnent année après année et viennent inexorablement grossir la dette sociale, pour représenter 158,8 milliards d'euros au total en fin d'année. Une dynamique d'autant plus préoccupante, que le gouvernement ne la transfère qu'en partie seulement à l'organisme chargé de la faire maigrir en l'écolant sur les marchés, à savoir la Caisse d'amortissement de la dette sociale (Cades). Par conséquent, 20 % de la dette sociale - soit 32 milliards - seront entassés à la fin 2015 chez le trésorier de la Sécu, l'Acoss (l'Agence centrale des organismes de sécurité sociale). Or, cette dernière ne peut qu'emprunter à très court terme pour financer le fardeau, ce qui expose la dette sociale « *au risque de remontée des taux d'intérêt* ». Bref, la facture pourrait grimper en flèche d'un coup si les taux remontaient.

Mais après ce tableau dépeint sans concession, la Cour envoie comme chaque année un message d'espoir au gouvernement : reboucher le trou de la Sécu est réalisable. « *Des réformes structurelles sont possibles. Elles sont indispensables. Elles ne peuvent être différées* », martèle Didier Migaud. Et que les Français ne s'inquiètent pas, ajoute-t-il. Non seulement les réformes proposées par la Cour permettraient de redresser les comptes, mais elles déboucheraient, aussi et surtout, sur « *l'amélioration de la qualité et l'efficacité de notre protection sociale* ».

Infirmiers et kinés dans le viseur

Général à elle seule la moitié du déficit (7,2 milliards en 2015), l'Assurance-maladie est particulièrement visée par les sages de la rue Cambon. Après avoir encouragé le développement de la chirurgie ambulatoire ou dénoncé la gabegie des transports sanitaires, ils visent cette année les dépenses en plein dérapage des soins infirmiers et de masseurs-kinésithérapeutes, ou proposent des économies en matière de dialyse.

Surtout, une ligne directrice devrait guider les réformes à venir, défend la Cour des comptes : la responsabilisation des acteurs - médecins, infirmiers, hôpitaux, etc. - sur le modèle allemand. À l'heure où les médecins français réclament des revalorisations tarifaires, elle glisse en substance que leurs confrères, outre-Rhin, ont davantage de responsabilités financières et gagnent beaucoup mieux leur vie. « *Nous ne sommes pas contre la Sécurité sociale, nous pensons même qu'elle est essentielle*, ajoute discrètement un magistrat de la Cour. *Nous souhaitons juste qu'elle en ait pour son argent.* » G. G.

Riskante Operationen

Das wahre Druckmittel in der Flüchtlingskrise, um Quoten durchzusetzen, lautet Mehrheitsabstimmung. Für den Zusammenhalt der EU wäre das allerdings eine höchst riskante Operation.

15.09.2015, von NIKOLAS BUSSE

In der EU mit ihren 28 unterschiedlichen Mitgliedstaaten gelingt selten etwas im ersten Anlauf, und in einer Krise schon gar nicht. Deshalb wäre es ein Wunder gewesen, wenn die Innenminister sich in Brüssel auf einen perfekten Plan zur Bewältigung der Flüchtlingskrise geeinigt hätten, sofern es so etwas überhaupt geben kann. Bundesinnenminister Thomas de Maizière hat die Ergebnisse des Treffens als „ersten wichtigen Schritt“ bezeichnet.



Autor: Nikolas Busse, Stellvertretender verantwortlicher Redakteur für Außenpolitik. Folgen:

Das ist eine zutreffende Beschreibung. Denn sie enthalten Punkte, welche die EU in den vergangenen Monaten sträflich vernachlässigt hat: **den raschen Aufbau der geplanten Aufnahmezentren in Italien und Griechenland, eine gemeinsame Linie zu sicheren Herkunftsländern, mehr Abschiebungen und mehr Geld für die Vereinten Nationen, damit die Lage in den nahöstlichen Flüchtlingslagern verbessert werden kann. All das sollte man nicht geringerschätzen. Die Massenwanderung ist nur mit vielen Einzelmaßnahmen in den Griff zu bekommen.**

Dass die Verteilung der Flüchtlinge der größte Streitpunkt bleibt, ist keine Überraschung. **Über Jahre hinweg war man in Europa daran gewöhnt, Asylbewerber als das Problem anderer Staaten zu betrachten oder es dazu zu machen.** Auch die Bundesregierung, die jetzt so vehement Solidarität einfordert, hat lange so gedacht. **Ungarn** versucht immer noch, diese Strategie auf die Spitze zu treiben, indem es die Transitrouten in Richtung Norden Stück für Stück abriegelt. **Selbst wenn die einzelnen Maßnahmen zur Grenzsicherung mit dem EU-Recht übereinstimmen, werden damit doch auch wieder politische Trennlinien auf dem Kontinent gezogen. Das kann vieles andere in Frage stellen.**

Deutschland und Österreich wollen nun ein rasches Gipfeltreffen der Staats- und Regierungschefs. Das ist sicherlich eine gute Idee, denn wie schon in der Eurokrise müssen Kompromisse gesucht werden. **Mit der Drohung, den östlichen Mitgliedstaaten die Hilfen zu kürzen, wird man nicht weit kommen, dafür ist die Finanzplanung der EU zu langfristige. Das wahre Druckmittel lautet Mehrheitsabstimmung.** Die von Berlin, Paris und Brüssel gewünschten Quoten ließen sich in diesem Fall **über den Kopf der Osteuropäer hinweg beschließen. Für den Zusammenhalt der EU wäre allerdings auch das eine höchst riskante Operation.**

Frankreich: Kein Kompromiss mit Syriens Machthaber Assad

Der französische Ministerpräsident bekräftigt die Entscheidung über den Einsatz der französischen Luftwaffe in Syrien. Eine Einigung mit dem syrischen Diktator schließt er aus.

15.09.2015

Die französische Regierung schließt eine Übereinkunft mit dem syrischen Machthaber Baschar al-Assad zur Beendigung des Bürgerkriegs aus. **„Wir werden nichts tun, was das Regime stärkt“**, sagte Ministerpräsident Manuel Valls am Dienstag vor der Nationalversammlung mit Verweis auf die geplanten französische Luftangriffe auf Stellungen der Extremisten-Miliz „Islamischer Staat“, (IS) in Syrien.

Der Entsendung von Bodentruppen erteilte Valls eine Absage: „Wenn wir zehntausende Soldaten schicken würden... geraten wir in die Falle, die uns die Islamisten gestellt haben“, fügte Valls hinzu. Gleichzeitig kündigte er an, Bodentruppen anderer Staaten der Region zu unterstützen, sollten diese gegen den **IS** vorgehen. Nähere Angaben dazu machte er indes nicht.

Frankreichs Präsident Francois Hollande hatte am Vortag Luftschläge gegen den IS in Syrien in Aussicht gestellt. **Eine derartige Intervention ist umstritten, weil sie zu einer Stärkung Assads führen könnte. Eine internationale Militärallianz unter Führung der Vereinigten Staaten fliegt seit Monaten Angriffe auf die Islamisten in Syrien und im benachbarten Irak. Dort beteiligt sich Frankreich bereits an den Angriffen.**

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/16/opinion/europes-spoilers-and-the-refugee-crisis.html?action=click&pgtype=Homepage&module=opinion-c-col-left-region®ion=opinion-c-col-left-region&WT.nav=opinion-c-col-left-region>

128,49

The Opinion Pages | EDITORIAL

Eastern Europe's Short Memory

By THE EDITORIAL BOARD SEPT. 15, 2015

Even as Europe's greatest refugee emergency since World War II grew more acute, prompting Germany and some other nations to temporarily shut their borders, European Union interior ministers [failed on Monday](#) to agree on even a limited mandatory distribution of refugees for resettlement among member states.

That tragic reaction was all the more shameful because those most adamantly opposed to quotas were some Eastern European countries that recently basked in and richly benefited from the embrace of their Western neighbors.

The Central and Eastern Europeans were not alone in their resistance, and there are explanations for their reaction. Most of the countries that were liberated from the Soviet yoke 25 years ago are still poorer than their neighbors and have not shed a sense of victimhood; many have never had large numbers of people from distant parts of the world on their lands; and many have only a limited familiarity with the crises of the Middle East.

All these things, however, are beside the point. The question before Europe's national leaders is not whether they should welcome immigrants but how to cope with a massive and fateful rush that has put an inordinate burden on the European countries where refugees first arrive: Greece, Italy and Hungary.

In this crisis, attempts to elude responsibility are morally repugnant. While the Eastern Europeans might have reason to be concerned about a sudden influx of foreigners, how does that give them a pass? The [proposal](#) by the president of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, to relocate 160,000 refugees from Greece, Italy and Hungary is an obvious first step, yet it met unyielding resistance — even from Hungary, which would be an initial beneficiary.

Hungary's prime minister, Viktor Orbán, has been among the most vocal in blocking any joint action, but he is not alone. He has argued that Germany is largely responsible for the mass migration because of its prosperity, generous asylum policies and — until this weekend — open borders, and he has made the specious argument that as a Christian country, Hungary should not be made to take in a lot of Muslims. Leaders of Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Poland, Romania and the Baltic States have all advanced similar arguments.

Exasperated by the lack of cooperation from other nations, Germany, which has accepted by far the largest number of refugees so far, temporarily imposed controls on its borders with Austria. That is regrettable, but it was apparently meant as a warning that unless there is an acknowledgment of the common problem, the entire structure of open borders at the heart of the European project could be in danger. In response, Austria, Slovakia and the Netherlands introduced their own [border controls](#) on Monday, and Hungary made [unauthorized entry](#) a crime.

These developments should be especially worrisome to the Eastern Europeans. Their inability to travel freely was an agonizing aspect of their decades under Communist dictatorship, and the generous welcome they received when they rejoined the ranks of Western liberal democracies was a great triumph for all of Europe. It would be a tragedy if those same eastern countries now contributed to the unraveling of European unity, just when it is so desperately needed.

128,50

Migrants : l'Europe des égoïsmes nationaux

LE MONDE | 15.09.2015 à 11h22 • Mis à jour le 15.09.2015 à 20h07

Editorial du *Monde*.

Il n'y aura pas de [politique](#) commune de l'[Union européenne](#) (UE) à l'égard des réfugiés fuyant les guerres de la banlieue sud de l'[Europe](#) – de la [Syrie](#) à l'[Irak](#). **Face à une tragédie humanitaire à ses marches, l'UE est incapable d'action collective.** Ses vingt-huit membres ne peuvent se [mettre](#) d'accord sur les quelques opérations de solidarité et de bon sens proposées par le président de la Commission, le Luxembourgeois Jean-Claude Juncker.

Au terme d'échanges peu aimables, le front du refus d'Europe centrale et orientale a empêché un accord en bonne et due forme qui aurait ressemblé à une réponse collective de l'Europe. Pas question pour ces pays-là d'accepter le principe d'une répartition, même décidée ensemble, des réfugiés – peu importe le nombre, c'est affaire de souveraineté. Si l'on avait été jusqu'au vote, sans doute y aurait-il eu une majorité qualifiée pour adopter le plan Juncker, mais on n'a pas voulu prendre le risque d'afficher ainsi la division de l'UE. L'Allemagne a dit, mardi matin, qu'elle se résignait mal à cet échec : elle menace les récalcitrants de sanctions financières. Elle a raison.

Laissons de côté le fait que l'attitude des obstructionnistes est peu conforme aux valeurs fondatrices de l'UE : **après tout, l'immigration ne fait pas partie, ou seulement très peu, des compétences communautaires.** Evitons les leçons de morale qui, venant du [monde](#) politico-médiatique, ont peu de chance de [convaincre](#) les Etats réfractaires – la Hongrie, la [Slovaquie](#), la Tchéquie, la [Roumanie](#), par exemple – et **encore moins des opinions publiques dont les hésitations, légitimes, sont exploitées par des partis sans scrupule à d'uniques fins électorales.** Tout cela serait contre-productif. **De même peut-on comprendre** que nombre de pays membres des accords de Schengen, qui instaurent la libre circulation de leurs ressortissants au sein de l'UE, aient provisoirement rétabli des contrôles aux frontières face à un afflux massif et soudain de réfugiés.

Mais il faut bien, pour autant, [tirer](#) une conclusion politique de cet échec des Européens à [décider](#) ensemble d'un minimum d'action collective face aux drames des réfugiés. Il n'est pas seulement le symbole d'une Europe qui se referme face aux malheurs de l'époque, une Europe qui entend [ignorer](#) la tragédie qui frappe à ses portes. **C'est le sens de l'Union européenne qui est remis en question. Elle prétend avoir une politique extérieure commune, défendre des valeurs universelles, afficher l'exemplarité de ses démocraties, en somme être autre chose qu'une simple zone de libre-échange.**

A ce premier grand test, elle répond par son absence. Elle réagit comme une association d'Etats liés par un accord de marché unique et pas grand-chose d'autre. **C'est une régression** par rapport à ses ambitions originelles. **C'est aussi un aveu d'impotence collective dangereuse.** Les guerres du [Proche-Orient](#) ne vont pas s'apaiser de sitôt. Même si l'Europe décide d'être relativement indifférente au sort des familles qui fuient la guerre et les persécutions les plus atroces, **elle n'échappera pas aux effets déstabilisateurs du chaos proche-oriental. Du seul point de vue de la défense de ses intérêts, elle doit agir collectivement. C'eût été bien de commencer par les réfugiés.**

128,51

Charlemagne

Leading from the front

Through yet another crisis, the EU is groping towards an expansion of its powers

Sep 12th 2015 | [From the print edition](#)



IT IS fair to say that Europe has not been living its finest hour. Over the last few months, as crises have erupted across the face of the continent like acne on an adolescent's brow, officials have struggled to cope with a flow of migrants unmatched in recent history. From Hungary to Greece, and from Denmark to Britain, governments have turned on each other, introducing border controls, erecting fences and suspending public transport. And with the numbers of refugees entering Greece now at 5,500 a day, there seems little immediate hope of respite.

As a classic collective-action problem, the migrant crisis looks tailor-made for the European Union. But the scene is set for even greater rows, because Jean-Claude Juncker, president of the European Commission (the EU's civil service), has abandoned the time-honoured method of slow consensus-seeking and alighted on a new tactic: brute force. Under a plan unveiled by the commission on September 9th, 160,000 asylum-seekers arriving in Greece, Hungary and Italy, the three main EU points of entry, would be relocated with little choice to most other EU countries over two years. Each would have to accept a quota of asylum-seekers, determined by a formula that incorporates population, GDP, unemployment and previous asylum efforts: Germany, for example, would take 31,000; France 24,000. (Britain and Denmark are allowed to opt out of such matters, and under the plan other countries will be able to skip their obligations in "exceptional" circumstances by paying a fee.)

The scheme will do only so much to relieve the burden on front-line states: more than 400,000 illicit migrants are expected to enter Italy and Greece this year alone. But by EU standards the change is ferociously ambitious—few national governments appreciate Eurocrats telling them whom they must accommodate inside their borders. Mr Juncker's plan is strongly opposed by several countries in central and eastern Europe, including the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia. None of them has much recent history of immigration, none is keen on more of it and none has been overburdened with asylum claims (although Hungary is traversed by thousands making their way to Germany from Greece and the Balkans). Viktor Orban, Hungary's prime minister, says the migrants are Germany's problem, not Europe's, because it is to Germany that they are largely headed.

In June, by uniting with other sceptics such as Spain, the easterners saw off an attempt by the commission to impose (far smaller) quotas, triggering in the process a screaming match between the Italian prime minister and the Lithuanian president. But in recent months, as the winds of European opinion have shifted and Germany, a

strong backer of Mr Juncker's plan, has found its voice, the sceptics have begun to look isolated. Although governments must vote on the relocation proposal, the naysayers will struggle to muster the votes needed to block it, and EU officials say this time they are minded to ignore them. In other words, Brussels will order governments to accept asylum-seekers that they do not want. Most will be Muslims.

That would be a "political disaster", says Radko Hokovský of European Values, a Czech think-tank. Populists will grow emboldened and citizens disillusioned. There will be emergency summits and bitter arguments; some fear splits as wide as those over the Iraq war. The row could spill over into other touchy subjects the EU must manage this autumn, notably the renewal of sanctions on Russia for its invasion of Ukraine, which expire in January. In the meantime the refugees flowing up through Greece, the Balkans and Hungary will keep up the pressure. Moreover, EU officials are discovering that their relocation plan is a lot harder to implement than they had imagined (a voluntary element is due to begin next month in Italy). No one has a convincing answer to the easterners' strongest retort: many migrants will simply leave countries they do not want to be in.

The integration tango

Such are the troubles of a policy forged in crisis. Veterans of the euro-zone's upheavals may detect a pattern: ill-thought integration can lead to big problems. Euro-zone members did not foresee that, to save the single currency, they would one day have to submit budgets to Brussels and sign up for whopping bail-outs. Similarly, the ex-communist countries that joined the EU in 2004, salivating at the prospect of subsidies and open labour markets, could not have guessed that barely a decade later they would be obliged to accept thousands of asylum-seekers. The free-travel Schengen area, which is tested whenever Europe faces a migrant surge, was initially an awkward bolt-on to European law; one Eurocrat called it "Europe's illegitimate child".

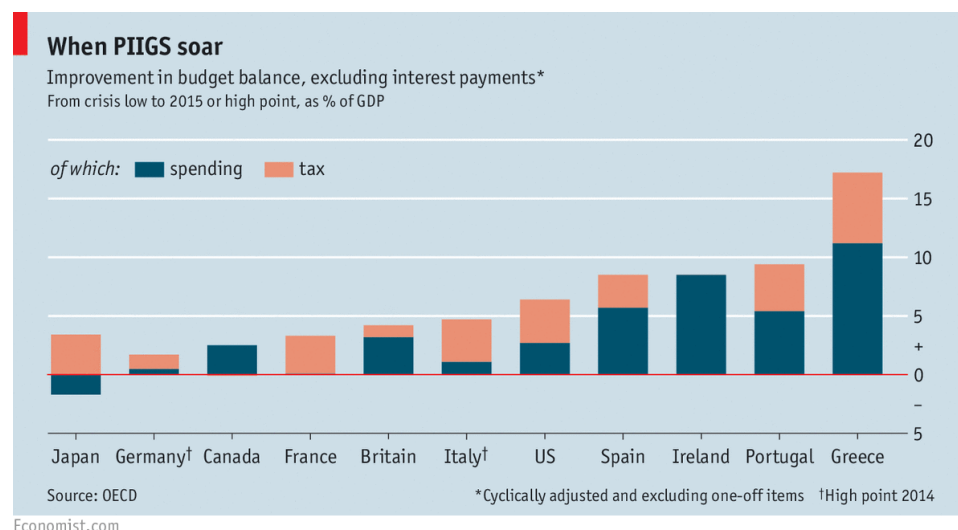
Such offspring, he added, are also "the fruit of love". That would not describe the rancorous atmosphere today. Yet officials quietly note that Europe's migration debate has advanced further in the last six months than it has for years. One says he has never seen such an appetite among governments for reform. Policymakers are fizzing with ideas, from the use of development aid to bring recalcitrant transit countries into line to the strengthening of a Europe-wide border guard. Once the principle of shared responsibility for migrants is established, says another official, the numbers of relocated migrants can be scaled up, and new programmes established, without too much wrangling. Even Britain, an evergreen sceptic of collective European action, has belatedly said it will resettle 20,000 Syrian refugees (from the Middle East, not Europe) over the next five years.

Still, one step at a time. Even if the new scheme works, national governments must soon face tough issues, including the integration of multitudes of newcomers and the co-ordination of asylum laws. Future rows will not make those discussions easier. But nor will they postpone the inevitable. The EU may yet improvise its way towards an immigration policy worthy of the name.

Prudence and profligacy

Austerity is hard to measure but, by any reckoning, Europe's periphery has purged

Sep 12th 2015 | [From the print edition](#)



THE word “austerity” entered the public discourse after the global recession punched a hole in public finances across the rich world. Governments scrambled to paint themselves as the most prudent, either to win votes (Britain), or to persuade their creditors that they could cut no more (Greece). But matching the rhetoric to the reality by measuring exactly how austere governments have been is not straightforward.

A simplistic approach would be to look at how much governments have managed to reduce borrowing (the difference between taxes and spending). But borrowing may change for reasons other than self-denial. In the middle of a debt crisis, ballooning spending on interest payments will mask efforts to squeeze public services or state pensions. By the same token, an economic recovery that nudges people off unemployment benefits and into jobs pulls down spending and boosts tax receipts, with the appearance, but not the pain, of austerity.

A better method is to look at changes in the cyclically adjusted primary budget balance—ie, the surplus or deficit after stripping out interest payments and temporary effects of the economic cycle. Isolating temporary effects is not an exact science, but the OECD, a club of mostly rich countries, has had a go. The change in this measure, from the point when public spending was at its most profligate to the moment when it was most restrained (or the projected balance for this year if belt-tightening continues), provides a fairer measure of austerity (see chart).

Portugal, Ireland, Italy, Greece and Spain—the PIIGS, as investment bankers’ shorthand has it—were in the direst fiscal straits in the crisis and, naturally, have been the most austere since. Italy has reduced its underlying primary deficit by 4.7% of GDP; the others, by more than 8% of GDP. These figures are huge: 8% of GDP is equivalent to average government spending on pensions in the OECD. No one should accuse the Greek government, in particular, of not cutting back enough: the figures reveal tightening of a whopping 17.2% of underlying GDP between 2009 and 2015. At the other end of the scale, Germany has barely had to cut back at all, and in fact the OECD expects it to loosen its purse-strings slightly this year. No wonder the PIIGS have squealed.

Even this measure of austerity is not perfect, however. By measuring from the high point of profligacy, it includes one-off borrowing intended to inject life into slumping economies. For example, the apparent 6.4% improvement in America's underlying primary balance rests in part on the expiry of a fiscal stimulus estimated by the IMF to be worth around 2% of GDP in 2009. Although withdrawing stimulus is painful, most would agree that this fiscal splurge in the base year makes governments appear to be donning a hairier shirt than they really are.

Cutting to stand still

The other caveat is that the measure obscures the distinction between countries that saw GDP growth and those that saw massive declines. When an economy is shrinking fast, even keeping spending flat as a share of GDP involves deep cuts in cash terms. Thus Greece has had to slash actual spending by more than a quarter to achieve an 11.2 percentage-point cut in spending as a share of GDP. The British government, in contrast, will have managed to reduce underlying spending, excluding debt interest, as a share of GDP by 3.2 percentage points, but economic growth has allowed it to achieve this by holding this measure of spending roughly constant in real terms (ie, after accounting for inflation).

Aggregate numbers mask other differences, too. Public-sector workers take little comfort from the knowledge that overall spending is buoyant if their salaries have been frozen while spending on social welfare has grown. The OECD's estimates suggest that this is indeed what has happened: in America, Britain and the PIIGS, spending on public services has been cut relative to spending on benefits and pensions. In Portugal general government consumption (a broad measure of spending on public services) has been slashed by almost a fifth in real terms since 2009, whereas social-security spending has crept up by 4%. And even rising spending on social welfare may feel austere if ageing populations are putting pressure on pension systems.

From any perspective, however, the recent bout of belt-tightening looks severe. A [paper](#) published last year by Julio Escolano, Laura Jaramillo, Carlos Mulas-Granados and Gilbert Terrier of the IMF puts the cuts in historical context. The authors compiled a database of 48 austerity drives in rich countries between 1945 and 2012, all aimed at steady public debt as a share of GDP. They find that around half of these consolidations amounted to 5% or more of GDP, and a quarter to 7.5% or more. Italy's recent experience is about average, therefore, and Britain's (so far) below par. But Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Spain have been far more austere than the norm.

Greece's recent privations are the most severe of all those that the authors evaluated. Second place is also taken by Greece, which underwent a previous bout of austerity in 1990 to secure (you guessed it) membership of the euro. Germany's fiscal retrenchment in 1996 earns fifth place. But that dose of Swabian spending restraint, which induced huge strikes, ultimately amounted to just 10% or so of GDP, a little over half of what Greece has endured since 2009.

Austerity has not been adopted at random. Those governments that have cut back the most were also those that spent most recklessly before. Greece may have tightened by 17% of GDP, but at its peak its underlying primary deficit was a clearly unsustainable 12%. Citizens of less spendthrift countries such as Germany are entitled to condemn the PIIGS' past excesses. They may legitimately rail about the pace of structural reform. But they cannot denounce them for doing too little on the public finances.

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"Eine Völkerwanderung, deren Nachschub unendlich ist"

Ungarns Außenminister Szijjártó lehnt eine EU-Flüchtlingsverteilung ab und lobt die "Verteidigung der Grenzen". Zugleich warnt er: 35 Millionen Menschen rund um Europa könnten Einwanderer werden.

Von [Boris Kálnoky](#), BudapestKorrespondent

Die Welt: Gestern traten die neuen Gesetze zum Grenzschutz in Kraft, der Zaun an der serbischen Grenze ist auch fast fertig. Wie viele Flüchtlinge schaffen es dann noch illegal nach Ungarn?

Péter Szijjártó: Sicher ist, dass wir nun in einer vorteilhafteren Ausgangslage sind als jemals zuvor in dieser Krise, mit einem physischen Grenzhindernis und strengen Gesetzen. Das Ziel ist, dass niemand die Grenze von Ungarn gesetzwidrig übertritt. Das kann natürlich keine endgültige Lösung sein, lösen muss man das Problem in Griechenland.

Die Welt: Viel Glück dabei.

Szijjártó: Es ist klar, dass Griechenland die Außengrenzen der EU nicht verteidigen kann. Deswegen sind wir für die Schaffung einer massiven neuen europäischen Grenzschutzorganisation, die in Griechenland die Außengrenze der EU verteidigen kann.

Die Welt: Wie viele Polizisten?

Szijjártó: Das muss Griechenland sagen, und das müssen die europäischen Institutionen klären, welche Form und wie viel Personal zweckmäßig sind.

Die Welt: Sie wollen ab sofort illegale Migranten verhaften. Wie soll das gehen, wenn auf jeden Polizisten an der Grenze täglich zwei Migranten kommen? Und wenn sie sich dann auch noch wehren?

Szijjártó: Der Zaun erleichtert uns die Arbeit. Ich glaube, da sind wir uns einig, dass die Grenze einfacher zu verteidigen ist, wenn es ein physisches Hindernis gibt. Unser Innenminister hat gesagt, dass sowohl die Polizei als auch der Rechtsvollzug für die neuen Aufgaben vorbereitet sind.

Die Welt: Wer über die grüne Grenze kommt, dem droht ab sofort Gefängnis. Sie haben doch gar keinen Platz in ihren Gefängnissen für Zehntausende neue Häftlinge, teilweise Familien mit Kleinkindern.

Szijjártó: Wie gesagt, der Innenminister hat gesagt, dass alles bereit ist. Kinder kommen bei uns übrigens nicht ins Gefängnis. Ich wäre überrascht, wenn ab jetzt Zehntausende Migranten illegal über die Grenze kämen. Wir haben entlang der Flüchtlingsrouten eine intensive Informationskampagne geführt, sie wissen, dass sich die Regeln geändert haben.

Die Welt: Und was ist, wenn Migranten massiv durch den Zaun brechen, mehrere Tausend an einer Stelle? Ungarn hat nur ein paar Tausend Polizisten und Soldaten, die schon jetzt am Ende ihrer Kräfte sind. Meinen Sie wirklich, sie können die Flüchtlinge zurückhalten?



Foto: dpa/Ungarns Außenminister sieht das Verhältnis zu Deutschland nicht belastet – das zu Österreich dagegen schon

Szigjártó: Ich glaube nicht, dass Tausende Migranten gemeinsam Straftaten in Ungarn begehen wollen. Aber wie gesagt, das Innenministerium hat gesagt, dass man dort auf alle Eventualitäten vorbereitet ist.

Die Welt: Auch auf Gewalt? Dürfen die Sicherheitskräfte scharfe Munition verwenden und wenn ja, in welchen Fällen?

Szigjártó: Nein. Niemand will Waffen gebrauchen.

Die Welt: Auch nicht in Notwehr?

Szigjártó: Sie reden da ja von Dingen, die noch nie vorgekommen sind in dieser Krise. Grundsätzlich bin ich der Meinung, dass die Migranten verstehen, dass sich die Gesetze in Ungarn geändert haben und dass sie das Land nur über die offiziellen Grenzübergänge betreten können.

Die Welt: Zur Außenpolitik. Noch vor Kurzem hieß es, die ungarische Außenpolitik lehnt sich an die deutsche an. Jetzt aber gibt es einen frontalen Konflikt in der Flüchtlingsfrage: Deutschland lässt sie rein, Ungarn schließt die Tore. Wie steht es um das deutsch-ungarische Verhältnis?

Szigjártó: Deutschland ist unser wichtigster strategischer Partner. In unsere außen- und wirtschaftspolitischen Entscheidungen beziehen wir die deutsche Haltung mit ein. Es ist aber meiner Meinung nach kein Teufelszeug, wenn wir auch Meinungsverschiedenheiten haben. Es ist eine sehr komplexe Frage, wir müssen das Problem beim Namen nennen, darüber reden und reale Antworten geben. Die Zusammenarbeit in anderen Bereichen wird davon aber nicht in Mitleidenschaft gezogen.

Die Welt: Und das ungarisch-österreichische Verhältnis?

Szigjártó: Da stehen die Dinge leider anders. Kanzler Werner Faymann hat alle Grenzen des guten Geschmacks überschritten, als er Ungarns Flüchtlingspolitik mit dem Holocaust verglichen hat. Das ist unwürdig für einen Politiker im 21. Jahrhundert. Solche Aussagen erschweren die Zusammenarbeit. Ich muss zugleich sagen, dass meine Zusammenarbeit mit meinem österreichischen Amtskollegen Sebastian Kurz weiterhin sehr gut ist.

Die Welt: Wie wird sich das in der Praxis auswirken? Werden österreichische Unternehmen in Ungarn leiden?

Szigjártó: Nein. Wir haben einen pragmatischen Ansatz in der wirtschaftlichen Zusammenarbeit, und Österreich ist ein wichtiger Partner. Aber nach solchen Aussagen wird sich die Zusammenarbeit auf politischer Ebene mit Faymann erschweren.

Die Welt: Zurück zu Deutschland. Aus Berlin kamen oft Vorwürfe, Ungarns Politik sei "unberechenbar". Wie berechenbar ist Deutschlands Flüchtlingspolitik? Einmal sind alle Syrer willkommen, dann wieder nicht, einmal ist die Grenze offen, dann wieder nicht. Können Sie da noch folgen?

Szigjártó: Es liegt mir fern, Deutschland zu kritisieren. Aber teilweise haben missverständliche Äußerungen aus Berlin uns Probleme bereitet, besonders jene ominöse Nachricht, alle syrischen Staatsbürger seien in Deutschland willkommen. Die direkte Folge war eine aggressivere Haltung der Migranten in Ungarn, sie kooperierten nicht mehr mit den Behörden.

Die Welt: Flüchtlinge haben Rechte.

Szijjártó: Ja, und auch Pflichten, wie Sie in der Flüchtlingskonvention nachlesen können. Da steht, dass sie die Gesetze des Gastlandes einhalten und den Anweisungen der Behörden Folge leisten müssen. Und nicht etwa, wie bei uns, öffentliche Plätze besetzen oder auf der Autobahn wandern. Sie sind anstatt zu den offiziellen Aufnahmezentren, wo sie Nahrung, Wasser, Unterkunft und ärztliche Verpflegung erhalten, zu öffentlichen Plätzen gegangen, und sie haben diese Verpflegung dort gefordert. Dies ist eine unakzeptable Vorgehensweise.

Die Welt: Noch mal: Wie berechenbar ist die deutsche Flüchtlingspolitik?

Szijjártó: Ich kann mich nur über die ungarische Einwanderungspolitik äußern, wir vertreten immer noch den gleichen Standpunkt. Wir verstehen die Lage, in der sich Deutschland befindet, und als die Regierung in Berlin beschloss, wieder Grenzkontrollen einzuführen, haben wir unsere Solidarität geäußert.

Die Welt: Sie verstehen Deutschland. Aber versteht Deutschland Sie?

Szijjártó: Wer sich aus den internationalen Medien informiert, kann die Lage nur schwer verstehen. Es läuft eine Pressekampagne gegen Ungarn. Aber da wir über die offiziellen Kanäle alle Informationen geben, denke ich, dass die Führer der Europäischen Länder die Lage bei uns genau verstehen müssen.

Die Welt: Frau Merkel hat in Brüssel und in der Europäischen Volkspartei bisher immer diskret ihre schützende Hand über Ungarn und Ministerpräsident Orbán gehalten. Ist es nicht gefährlich, in Konflikt mit ihr zu geraten?

Szijjártó: Es gibt Dinge, die wir aus unserer Lage heraus anders sehen. Das ist die natürliche Ordnung des Lebens.

Die Welt: Sie behaupten, Sie wollen an der serbischen Grenze ganz Europa schützen. Ist es nicht eher so, dass Sie Ungarn schützen wollen? Einwanderer umlenken, wenn sie schon nicht davon abzuhalten sind, in die reichen Länder zu ziehen? Und dann eine Umverteilung durch Quote ablehnen?

Szijjártó: Es gibt europäische Regeln. In den Schengen-Verträgen steht, dass die Grenze nur an den Übergängen und zu den Öffnungszeiten überquert werden kann und dass das jeweilige Mitgliedsland das durchsetzen muss. Was wir jetzt erleben ist eine unregelmäßige Völkerwanderung, und ich glaube, jene Analysen sind plausibel, die davon ausgehen, dass rund um Europa potenziell bis zu 35 Millionen Menschen sind, die zu Einwanderern werden können. Mit unserer Grenzverteidigung lindern wir den Druck auf Österreich und Deutschland.

Die Welt: Ja, aber der Punkt ist, dass Sie zugleich gegen eine Umverteilung der bereits angekommenen Flüchtlinge sind. Grenze zu, keine Umverteilung – das ist kein Schutz Europas, sondern nur Ungarns.

Szijjártó: In der Quotendebatte beschäftigen wir uns aber mit der falschen Frage. Sehen sie, bis jetzt sind allein bei uns dieses Jahr 200.000 Migrantinnen über die Grenze gekommen, und der aktuelle EU-Vorschlag will europaweit 160.000 umverteilen. Aber wir reden von einer Völkerwanderung, deren Nachschub unendlich ist. Und zudem wollen diese Menschen nicht zu uns. Wir können sie ja nicht hier festhalten, wenn sie uns zugeteilt werden. Es ist falsch, über Quoten zu reden, solange das Problem selbst nicht gelöst ist, nämlich der mangelnde Grenzschutz.

Die Welt: Polen hat erklärt, unter Umständen mehr Flüchtlinge aufnehmen zu wollen. Würde auch Ungarn "unter gewissen Umständen" mehr Menschen aufnehmen?

Szijjártó: Da reden wir schon wieder darüber, wie viele Menschen wir aufnehmen wollen, dabei wissen wir nicht, wie viele kommen und wer sie überhaupt sind. Das ist einfach verschwendete Energie, die wir in sinnvollere Fragen investieren sollten.

Die Welt: Ungarns Jugend verlässt das Land, zu wenige Kinder werden geboren. Ohne Migrantinnen gibt es bald niemanden mehr, mit dem die Wirtschaft arbeiten kann.

Szijjártó: Aber Einwanderung ist keine gute Antwort auf dieses Problem. Die Antwort ist eine aktive Familienpolitik, damit mehr Kinder geboren werden.

Die Welt: Viktor Orbán hat gesagt, Ungarn wolle insbesondere nicht mit vielen Muslimen zusammenleben. Wieso nicht?

Szijjártó: Jedes Land, jede Nation hat das Recht zu entscheiden, mit welchen Gemeinschaften sie ihr Schicksal teilen möchte. Frankreich zum Beispiel hat entschieden dass es mit einer großen muslimischen Gemeinschaft leben möchte. Die Ungarn haben so etwas nicht entschieden.

Die Welt: Wenn Sie Menschen aus anderen Kulturen und Glaubensrichtungen nicht aufnehmen wollen, ist das nicht Diskriminierung oder gar Rassismus?

Szijjártó: Davon kann keine Rede sein. Wie gesagt, die ungarische Nation muss das entscheiden, mit wem sie zusammenleben möchte, aber da geht es nicht um Diskriminierung. Jene Muslime, die unter Einhaltung unserer Gesetze zu uns gekommen sind, hier studieren oder arbeiten, sind wertvolle und geschätzte Mitglieder unserer Gesellschaft.

Die Welt: Erstmals seit der EU-Erweiterung tut sich eine Kluft auf zwischen der alten West-EU und den neuen Mitgliedern im Osten. Teilt sich Europa in Ost und West? Wird die sogenannte Visegrad-Gruppe – Ungarn, Polen, Slowakei und Tschechien – künftig eine prominentere Rolle spielen?

Szijjártó: Jedes EU-Land will die Einheit Europas erhalten. Wir auch. Gemeinsam sind wir stärker. Wir versuchen aber natürlich, innerhalb dieses Rahmens unsere Standpunkte verständlich zu machen.

Die Welt: Wer wird am Ende recht behalten – Frau Merkel, die in der Einwanderung die Zukunft Europas sieht, oder Orbán, der in der Einwanderung das Ende Europas sieht?

Szijjártó: Einwanderung kann nicht Europas Zukunftsfragen lösen. In der EU ist zurzeit die Arbeitslosigkeit sehr hoch. Die Frage der Gastarbeiter dürfen wir mit der Frage der Einwanderer nicht vermischen. Die Schlüsselfrage der Zukunft ist eine gute Familienpolitik, dies ist die Lösung der Bevölkerungsprobleme.

Ich habe mit meinem rumänischen Kollegen gesprochen und ihm signalisiert, dass sich die Lage ab dieser Woche verändern wird und dass sich die Einwanderungsflut unseren Informationen nach nicht lindern wird. Ihn habe ich gefragt, ob sie sich schon vorbereiten. Er hat gesagt, dass ihre Lage einfacher ist, da die Donau, als eine natürliche Grenze vieles löst. Zugleich sagte er, dass sich Rumänien weiterhin für den Schengen-Beitritt bewirbt. Ich habe ihn informiert, dass wir anfangen, die Verlängerung des Grenzzauns an der ungarisch-rumänischen Grenze in der Nähe der Dreiländergrenze vorzubereiten, damit wir gleich reagieren können, falls sich der Migrationsweg in diese Richtung umleitet.

• [OPINION COMMENTARY](#)

France's Quiet Reform Drive

A legal overhaul that's flying under the radar could open the door to major new investment.

By OLIVIER TAFFIN DE TILQUES And FRÉDÉRIC LACROIX

The package of reforms devised by Economy Minister Emmanuel Macron is getting most of the attention in France at the moment, since its passage through the National Assembly was so contentious. But another reform measure working its way through the system to little fanfare could also have a significant impact on the investment climate.

Paris is in the process of making what may be the most significant revisions to France's commercial laws since the Napoleonic Code was first introduced in 1804. The aim is to update contract laws that have long suffered a bad reputation for their lack of flexibility and legal security.

The code's section dealing with contract law remains substantially unchanged from 1804. This has left judges to adapt French law to dramatic changes in the corporate world. The corporate law now represents the idiosyncratic views of various judges and academics over the years, some of which aren't consistent with each other or with international best practices, and none of which represent the reasoned decisions of lawmakers considering the commercial and legal climate as a whole. This lends the law an element of impracticality and unpredictability.

After several false starts during the past decade, change may finally be on the way. The legislature on Feb. 16 authorized the government to reform the Civil Code, launching a 12-month window during which the government can act. Based on a draft ordinance released for public consultation on Feb. 25, officials are setting out to craft a code that will enhance both legal flexibility and certainty, which will make France a more appealing destination for business and investment.

Progress could be especially pronounced in the area of mergers and acquisitions. The proposed amendment would clarify the laws governing the so-called precontractual period, when parties are in serious merger talks but before a deal is finalized.

In M&A transactions, it's standard for one of the parties to make a unilateral promise to sell or buy, or for one party to grant preferential rights to some stakeholders, such as shareholders, in the event of a sale. These practices have developed long after France's code was written, and when case law has attempted to bridge the gap the result has often been out of line with accepted standards elsewhere.

The proposed code clarifies how such arrangements should be treated in the event of a dispute. In the context of a unilateral promise, for instance, the new code would prohibit the party making the promise from retracting the offer, which case law surprisingly allows until formal acceptance of the offer. The code also would declare void a contract with a third party if made in breach of a preference agreement. Both of these revisions would bring French law into line with legal standards in jurisdictions such as Britain.

The proposed legal reform fixes another major flaw in current French law by establishing a rule permitting judges to terminate a contract by reason of unpredictability. A long period of time can elapse between an initial offer and the conclusion of an M&A transaction, and during the intervening months economic conditions can change. French law currently doesn't provide any option to unilaterally withdraw or force a renegotiation of a transaction.

With a view to better protecting the parties, the proposed reform would allow one party to request a renegotiation of the deal, or ask a judge to modify or terminate the deal on the ground that performance of the contract under new circumstances would be excessively onerous. This is a principle borrowed from Anglo-Saxon common law, where in practice it encourages the parties to a merger to craft "material adverse change" clauses in their contracts that anticipate events that might disrupt a deal. This new proposal, which includes the risk of termination by a judge, will probably trigger the development of a French form of such a clause that parties can insert in their agreement.

Despite those significant improvements on current law, the proposed law does suffer some potential problems. It extends the concept of an unfair contract term, most common in consumer law, to business-to-business transactions. This

principle, which allows courts greater leeway to overturn contract conditions, might make sense when one of the parties is a consumer who wouldn't be expected to have detailed legal knowledge. But other jurisdictions generally assume that a corporation will have the resources to protect its rights during negotiations, and therefore defer as much as possible to the text of contracts. Doing otherwise introduces more unpredictability.

In the same vein, the proposed law provides for voiding a contract when one party is determined to have abused the necessity or economic dependence of its counterparty. Because the test is based on purely factual matters, any kind of imbalance in a contractual relationship could be challenged.

Previous reform efforts faltered mainly because of a lack of consensus and a sense that legal reform wasn't a priority. This time is different, because lawmakers now recognize that to make the French economy more competitive, France needs to adopt a commercial legal regime fully in line with global best practices. Doing so will send a strong signal to investors about the government's commitment to growth.

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Fortress Hungary: Orbán Profits from the Refugees

By Jan Puhl

In many respects, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán has emerged as the political victor in the refugee crisis. Voters support his hardline stance and other Eastern European countries are following his suit.

On Monday, Hungary closed the last remaining hole in the 175-kilometer (109 mile) fence it has been built along the southern border to Serbia, one of the final stations on the Western Balkan route to Europe that has been the focal point in recent days of tens of thousands of refugees making their way from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and North Africa. On Tuesday, a new law went into effect in Hungary making illegal border crossings an offense punishable by up to three years in jail. The developments came as Germany and Austria both imposed border controls to stem the massive influx of refugees on the final leg of the path to Western Europe.

Hungary's closure of its border with Serbia has led to confusion and desperation among refugees who had hoped to cross into Europe there. For the moment, nobody is being let through at all and Hungary has declared a state of emergency in two counties bordering Serbia to allow for the deployment of the military to assist police there. As part of its new crackdown, Hungary says it has arrested 60 people for damaging the border fence or attempting to cross.

The scenes of chaos the border closure has generated are consistent with those that have played out in Hungary over much of the last couple of weeks. And the cause is clear. The country, under the leadership of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, is downright inhospitable -- even hostile -- toward refugees.

In the town of Röszke, on the Hungarian border to Serbia, police could be seen in recent days wearing face masks and rubber gloves as they herded together thousands of new arrivals into registration camps that looked very much like improvised jails. The facilities have tents without rain protection, a lack of blankets, little food and medicines and a dearth of portable toilets, not to mention frequent tensions between refugees and police.

Hungary in recent days has been showing its ugly side to the world. Videos made the rounds of a Hungarian camera woman for a right-wing TV broadcaster tripping two children and kicking a refugee father as he held his child. She quickly became the public face of the nastiness emerging from Hungary. And although her employer has since fired her, the images remain.

Orbán: Criticism from Abroad 'Dishonest'

Anger is growing among Western European governments about Hungary's politics, but for Orbán, 52, who has been in office for five years, the predominant emotion seems to be self-satisfaction. During a meeting with Hungarian ambassadors on Sept. 8, Orbán said Hungary's response -- the construction of an anti-refugee fence of steel and razor wire -- was exemplary and he dismissed criticism from abroad as "dishonest."

Soon, Orbán said, Western governments in the European Union would recognize that the people of their countries no longer want to take in Muslim refugees. Just under 70 percent of Hungarians support Orbán's hardline approach. Indeed, when Orbán coopts issues like immigration from the far-right, it actually helps his party take votes away from the extremist Jobbik, which is currently stagnating in polls.

Just a short time ago, thousands of refugees could be seen crowding into Budapest's Keleti train station. For a brief window, they were able to travel freely to Austria and Germany with the support of the governments in Berlin and Vienna, but that came to an end on Sunday, when both countries reinstated border controls. Officials in Germany have said the controls are temporary, set up in order to give the states necessary breathing room to manage the refugees who have already arrived. But it is also clearly intended as a political message to other EU countries that Germany will insist that they share the burden of hosting refugees.

At a meeting Monday of EU interior ministers, officials agreed to distribute 40,000 migrants currently in Greece and Italy, but only on a voluntary basis. No deal is in sight for a further 120,000 asylum-seekers the European Commission would like to spread out among all EU member states.

Orbán may be leading the opposition, it's not as if he's isolated in Europe. Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic also continue to reject the idea of mandatory EU quotas.

Indeed, the Hungarian prime minister has so far emerged as the political victor in the European refugee crisis. But who is this man who has inflamed Brussels and yet has the enthusiastic support of voters at home?

A Politician Who Loves Conflict

"He's highly intelligent and he has a strong instinct for the mood in his country," says former Orbán confidant Gábor Fodor. "And he loves conflict -- that's where he excels as a politician." Fodor once shared a room with Orbán as a university student. Together, the two founded Fidesz, originally the "Alliance of Young Democrats," which today forms Hungary's nationalist-conservative government.

"Back then, though, we were alternative, liberal and radical," says Fodor, who is today a member of the Hungarian Liberal Party, part of a parliamentary opposition so hopelessly splintered that it represents no threat to Fidesz. "We rebelled against the Communist Party, and also against the church -- and Orbán was responsible for the radical elements."

Photos taken at the time show today's prime minister wearing his hair long and sporting sideburns. "He came from the countryside, he was the first person in his family to go to college and he wanted to get ahead," Fodor recalls.

But after the fall of the Iron Curtain, ideological divides began to emerge. "Orbán recognized that Hungary was lacking a modern conservative party and began steering Fidesz in that direction. One has to recognize that now as having been very far-sighted." Today, Fodor and Orbán are no longer on speaking terms. "Orbán is leading Hungary in the wrong direction," Fodor says.

Orbán was first elected to parliament in 1998. Initially, he didn't attract much attention in Europe, but that would change after the 2010 national election. Orbán secured a two-thirds majority for his party and began consolidating power in the political system around himself. He brought the public broadcasting system under his control, he curbed the Constitutional Court's power and he pushed through a new constitution with a nationalist preamble.

'Hungary Will Not Be a Colony!'

The 2008 economic crisis, which hit Hungary with a particular vengeance, contributed to Orbán's victory. The International Monetary Fund had to intervene with emergency loans, which Orbán paid back with great fanfare. "We solve our problems with a Hungarian heart and mind," he said again and again. He also stated that Hungarians are allergic to advice from other countries. "Hungary will not be a colony!" he said in March 2012. "We are more than familiar with the character of unsolicited comradely assistance, even if it comes wearing a finely tailored suit and not a uniform with shoulder patches."

It was a play on the old days of the Austrian Empire and the Soviet times, eras during which Hungary often had to take measures to defend itself against the influences of much greater powers. This time, it was Orbán defending his country against the paternalism of foreign powers. It's a message that has struck a chord among many voters. Orbán has done much to anger officials in Europe during his time as prime minister, but he has also been adept at shifting course in the face of criticism from Brussels just in time to prevent the EU from being able to take legal measures against Budapest's creeping attacks on democracy.

Throughout, Orbán has presented himself as being calm, confident and composed. He shuns folklore as a path to popularity, instead presenting himself as a pious church-goer. It is rare for Orbán to lash out at his domestic detractors, but when it comes to the EU, he can be quite fierce and sharp-tongued. One of Orbán's ruling principles is that of knowing where his enemies are. Sometimes he lashes out at the banks and others at energy utility companies if there's some way he can reduce financial burdens for his people. Orbán wants to be a fatherly leader -- strict domestically, upholding Christian traditions, and strong abroad, defending his country against the upheavals of globalization.

After his reelection in 2014, however, Orbán's public opinion numbers soon began tumbling. The economy grew only slowly, and allegations of corruption began to haunt the Fidesz party. The right-wing extremist Jobbik party managed to drive out a few Fidesz mayors in elections, but then the refugees came to Orbán's aid. Hungary lies at the end of the Western Balkans route, and an estimated 167,000 people have crossed the country so far this year on their way to Western Europe.

'You Cannot Take Away Hungarians' Jobs'

At first, in the context of a "national consultation," Orbán sent a questionnaire out to Hungarian citizens addressing the issue of foreigners. Around 1 million Hungarians responded, which Orbán interpreted as support for his hardline course.

In a second step, he had signs put up that were aimed at refugees, with slogans like, "If you come to Hungary, you cannot take away Hungarians' jobs." The signs were all in Hungarian, making it clear that the message was directed domestically, as if to reassure voters that the government was taking action.

Orbán's third and most spectacular step was the construction of the razor-wire fence along the Serbian border. The plan is to reinforce the bulwark as quickly as possible by enhancing it with four-meter (13 foot) steel fence.

The fourth step took place a week ago Friday, when Orbán met with his colleagues from Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic, countries that hold similar views on the refugee issue. Now, a new, anti-immigration eastern bloc is forming within the EU. And Orbán is its leader.

"We believe in values like patriotism, country, family, nation," says Gergely Gulyás, a Fidesz parliamentarian who briefly studied law in Hamburg and who speaks German and English. "I know we get bad press outside the country," Gulyás says. "In the media landscape, the left-wing and liberals dominate. They have zeroed in on us."

Gulyás, who is dressed in a dark blue banker's suit and has a giant office decorated with an EU flag, admires Orbán. When it comes to refugee policy, he claims, the prime minister took exactly the right action. "We want to decide ourselves how many Muslims we live with."

In order to put an end to the ugly scenes and the suffering at the border, he claims, Hungary "finally" needs to better secure its borders. The completion of the border fence this week and the new law on illegal crossings as well as a newly formed battalion of "border guards" who can arrest the refugees in certain areas are all part of the strategy.

'Orbán Is a Man of War'

There are some in Hungary who say it's the wrong strategy. "That will make everything even worse -- tens of thousands of people will be stuck on the Serbian side. How will the police keep these people from simply tearing down the fence?" asks Ferenc Gyurcsány.

Gyurcsány, who is on the opposite side of the political spectrum from Orbán, preceded him as prime minister. Nevertheless, he admires Orbán's hardness and political finesse. "Orbán is a man of war," he says.

Having become rich in the unregulated years of privatization, Gyurcsány has a mansion at the foot of Budapest's Castle Hill, two rooms of which he has emptied to accommodate refugees. Every evening at around 6 p.m., the people from a Budapest organization assisting refugees calls him in search of emergency housing. So far, he's had 36 guests. "They all continued onwards to Germany," he says.

Last week, Gyurcsány visited the overflowing Bicske refugee camp. Even though several thousand people cross the border every day, Hungary officially has little more than 6,000 spots available in refugee camps. "Orbán's government deliberately allowed the problem to get worse," says Gyurcsány.

It wouldn't have cost much to put up a few hundred more tents and print out some brochures in Arabic, Gyurcsány says. But Orbán instead focused on deterrence.

Gyurcsány leans back and says he still has hope. "Something has changed. The people have become more willing to help," he says. "It seems as though the mood is changing in Hungary. The photo of the drowned boy on the Turkish beach also touched the people here." Orbán, he claims, shouldn't be so heartless. "Otherwise he'll lose his fatherly aura."

But the prime minister has often shown that he can be flexible when it comes to his power. He told his ambassadors last Monday that he is not all that opposed to the EU refugee quota. Now, he claims, is simply not the time to discuss it. The diplomats were astounded.

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Unapologetic, Unequivocal: The Real Merkel Finally Stands up

A Commentary by [Roland Nelles](#)

German Chancellor Angela Merkel this week defended her embrace of refugees with an uncharacteristic outburst of compassion that is likely to go down in history. In doing so, she finally revealed a bit of her true political thinking.

In the course of her political career, journalists and indeed her own party colleagues have variously described Angela Merkel as a tactician, a strategist and a pragmatist. But she's mainly been seen as an equivocator, someone who plays her cards close to her chest.

But for all her hedging, [Merkel's](#) 10 years in the Chancellery have regularly been punctuated with short, sharp shocks of clarity, when her political grounding and mindset bubble to the surface. As a qualified physicist, she undoubtedly always took an interest in climate protection. She also stayed true to herself during the Greek crisis in the role of the Swabian housewife who steadfastly avoids overspending. It was a role that matched the frugality and modesty she favors in her private life.

The next crisis is now underway, and she has reacted indignantly to the criticism that Germany is allowing in too many [refugees](#). "If we now have to start apologizing for showing a friendly face in response to emergency situations, then that's not my country," she said on Tuesday. Although delivered in her usual sober way, it was an unexpectedly heartfelt comment that will be remembered for a long time to come.

Compassion

It wasn't a political tactician speaking this time, but a compassionate pastor's daughter from the eastern state of Brandenburg -- a politician who remains acutely aware of the Christian element in her party's agenda. In this respect she provides a welcome contrast to [Horst Seehofer](#), leader of the Christian Democrats' Bavarian sister party, the CSU. In his book, charity more or less stops at the garden fence.

But Angela Merkel has not necessarily turned her back on realpolitik completely. As the refugee crisis unfolds, she too will inevitably make compromises and alter direction. Among these compromises are the newly instated border controls. Germany cannot take in all the world's refugees, as Merkel well knows.

But she has now made it obvious that she won't be deviating from her basic course. She is sending a message against knee-jerk xenophobia. That the conservatism of Bavaria's lederhosen brigade and some of her own party colleagues has always remained a foreign concept to Angela Merkel has never been more apparent than it is now. Ten years in office have clearly changed Merkel. **She now has the strength and independence to state her opinion more stridently, even if it earns her the opprobrium of her allies.**

Ultimately, it demonstrates that she has truly arrived in the autumn of her leadership. From Helmut Schmidt to Helmut Kohl and Gerhard Schröder, many a chancellor has begun to speak more uninhibitedly towards the end of their time in office, swimming against the tide of their party's mainstream opinion and in the process putting distance between themselves and their own people.

At the end of the day, it's a primal human instinct. Who wants to spend their life watching what they say?

Hungary says a border fence with Romania may be next

A fight between two eastern European Union members may be more about politics than about refugees

Sep 16th 2015 | CHISINAU | Europe



IN 1946, as the Soviet Union consolidated its communist bloc throughout central and eastern Europe, Winston Churchill declared that an iron curtain had descended across the continent. Over the past few weeks, in the face of an influx of refugees from the Middle East, steel fences and checkpoints have been sprouting up in the continent's interior. Over the weekend Germany, Austria, the Netherlands and other countries introduced emergency border controls. The harshest barrier was erected by Hungary, which closed the last crossings through the 170-kilometre razor-wire fence it had completed in August along its border with Serbia, trapping thousands of exhausted asylum seekers on the far side. On Tuesday the country's prime minister, Viktor Orban, took Hungary's self-isolation to a new level, saying it may build a fence along its border with Romania if migrants detour to that route. Where the fence with Serbia runs along one of the European Union's external borders, a fence with Romania would divide one EU member from another.

Romania responded angrily. The foreign ministry said building a fence between two EU member states is "not in accordance with the European spirit." The prime minister, Victor Ponta, told Romanian television it showed that Hungary "has political decision-makers who are no better than those in Syria, Libya or other countries that refugees flee from." Mr Orban, a nationalist who has said he does not believe in liberal democracy, has provoked denunciations by fellow European leaders before. But being compared to Bashar al-Assad seemed to mark a new low.

In fact, Romania's criticisms were mainly a matter of political opportunity. Mr Ponta is in serious difficulty, facing an investigation by the country's powerful anti-corruption directorate over allegations of forgery and kickbacks. Getting into a spat with Mr Orban, who has made himself unpopular with all of his neighbours, is a clear political winner. It also allows Romania to present itself as a champion of EU rules and values, a useful gesture at a time when eastern European states have been criticised in Brussels for their unwillingness to accept asylum seekers. "[Mr Orban] makes it so easy," says Radu Magdin, a Romanian political analyst. "You can combine a political opportunity with being right on the merits. Such a chance doesn't come along often."

Mr Orban's motivations are similarly political. His Fidesz party has been losing support to a yet more chauvinistic right-wing party, Jobbik. Denying Muslim migrants entry into the country, even as a transit point on their way to Germany, has helped him regain popularity. Furthermore, conservative Hungarian voters take a dim view of Romania; the two countries have been bickering for decades over the status of the large Hungarian minority in the Romanian region of Transylvania. For Mr Orban, if his popular policies of cruelty to migrants happen to provoke a needless fight with Romania, that may simply be an added bonus.

The vision of a fence splitting Hungary and Transylvania seems like bad symbolism for Mr Orbán. The unity of Romania's ethnic Hungarians with the motherland has long been one of Fidesz's main ideological planks; it was during a trip to Transylvania in 2014 that Mr Orbán delivered his infamous speech denouncing liberal democracy. But a fence would have few practical consequences for Romania's Hungarians, who can already obtain Hungarian identification cards that let them traverse the border easily.

In any case, the fence is unlikely ever to be built. Initial reports from Serbia of the migrants' response to the closing of the Hungarian border suggest most are turning towards Croatia rather than trying to reach Romania, which would require crossing the River Danube. Migrants are unlikely to reach Romania via Bulgaria, which built its own border fence with Turkey last year.

But if the Hungarian-Romanian border fence is more a manufactured political dispute than a real proposal, that is a problem in itself. **The EU's ability to respond to the migrant crisis (as with the euro crisis before it) has been crippled by the temptation national leaders face to score political points at home by playing up their conflicts with Brussels, or with each other.** The prime ministers of Hungary and Romania both profited on Tuesday from a largely imaginary slap fight over a border fence that will probably never be built. Meanwhile, along the route from Greece to Serbia, hundreds of thousands of migrants are trapped in increasingly desperate circumstances, and the EU cannot reach agreement on how to cope with them.

128,67

RSA, APL, CMU... : ces aides dont bénéficient les migrants en France

Par [Marine Rabreau](#)

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Quand il s'agit de se partager un problème, l'Union européenne ne sait toujours pas faire. Les susceptibilités nationales des États membres **bloquent toute perspective rapide d'une stratégie d'envergure pour faire face à la crise des migrants. En attendant, les migrants** affluent par la Grèce, la Hongrie, la Serbie, la Croatie, la Roumanie...

Débordés, l'Autriche et l'Allemagne ont dû réinstaurer des contrôles à certaines frontières, et la France «n'hésitera pas» à le faire temporairement, a assuré Manuel Valls ce mercredi après-midi.

À ce stade, la France a prévu d'accueillir 24.031 réfugiés (en plus des 9100 initialement annoncés), principalement des Syriens, des Irakiens et des Érythréens. En 2014, un peu moins de 15.000 demandes d'asile avaient obtenu le statut de réfugié, soit 22% des dossiers contre 45% en moyenne en Europe. Pour 2015, François Hollande estime à environ 60.000 les demandes d'asile cette année, soit un niveau semblable à 2014, et comparable aux crises de 2001-2004 (ex-Yougoslavie, Bosnie, Algérie, Tchéchénie) mais bien moindre qu'en 1989 (Turcs et Zaïrois).

«La solidarité, c'est garantir un accueil des réfugiés et demandeurs d'asile», a estimé ce mercredi Manuel Valls, qui a annoncé le déblocage de 613 millions d'euros supplémentaires d'ici à 2017. En France, «toute personne qui souhaite solliciter la protection de notre pays doit être certaine (...) de bénéficier d'un accueil, d'un hébergement et d'une prise en charge optimaux», peut-on lire sur le site du ministère de l'Immigration. *Le Figaro* fait le tour des aides sociales dont bénéficient les migrants, selon qu'ils sont demandeurs d'asile - hébergés ou non - ou réfugiés.

• Le demandeur d'asile ne peut pas prétendre aux mêmes droits sociaux que les Français

Pour rappel, un «migrant» devient un «demandeur d'asile» dès lors qu'il a formulé une demande d'asile. Le demandeur d'asile devient «réfugié» s'il obtient une réponse favorable à sa demande. En France, la demande d'asile se fait auprès de l'Ofpra, l'Office français de protection des réfugiés et apatrides. Entre le jour de la demande d'asile et la réponse (positive ou négative) de l'Ofpra, le migrant ne peut pas prétendre aux aides et droits sociaux dont les Français et les étrangers «en situation régulière» peuvent bénéficier. En revanche, il peut toucher des **aides spécifiques**.

• L'allocation temporaire d'attente

Tant que le demandeur d'asile ne bénéficie pas d'un hébergement d'urgence, il peut toucher une «allocation temporaire d'attente» (ATA), qui s'élève à 11,45 euros par jour, soit **343,50 euros par mois** (pour un mois de 30 jours). Un montant est révisé une fois par an, en fonction de l'évolution des prix (hors tabac) prévue dans le rapport économique, social et financier annexé au projet de loi de finances de l'année. Elle est versée par Pôle emploi. L'ATA est donc versé le temps de la procédure de la demande d'asile, et peut être maintenue en cas de réexamen de la demande. L'allocation ne peut être demandée qu'une fois.

L'ATA est également ouverte aux bénéficiaires de la «protection temporaire» - un dispositif décidé au niveau européen en cas d'afflux massif de personnes déplacées -, ainsi qu'aux bénéficiaires de la «protection subsidiaire». Ce dernier s'adresse à un étranger qui ne remplit pas les conditions d'obtention du statut de réfugié, mais qui prouve qu'il est exposé à un risque d'atteinte grave (peine de mort ou torture notamment) dans son pays d'origine.

Dans tous les cas, pour obtenir l'ATA, il faut justifier de ressources inférieures au RSA (524,16 euros pour une personne seule). Outre l'ATA, pour ceux qui ne sont pas hébergés, les plate-formes d'accueil pour les demandeurs d'asile (les Pada, il y en a 34 en France) leur proposent un accompagnement administratif et social.

• L'allocation mensuelle de subsistance

Dès lors que le migrant demandeur d'asile se voit proposer un hébergement en Centre d'accueil de demandeurs d'asile ou Cada, il peut toucher, à la place de l'ATA, l'«allocation mensuelle de subsistance» (AMS), qui atteint **91 euros par mois. Soit trois euros par jour. Le montant plafond de cette AMS atteint 718 euros par mois, pour une famille avec 6 enfants** (voir ici pour consulter les montants des allocations prévues en fonction des situations). Cette allocation est versée par le Cada. **Si le demandeur d'asile refuse la place d'hébergement proposée, il ne peut prétendre à aucune aide financière de la part de l'État français.**

En France, on comptait **25.000 places Cada en juin 2015**. Le taux d'occupation frôlait alors les 95%. C'est ainsi que le ministre de l'Intérieur Bernard Cazeneuve a annoncé qu'une prime de 1000 euros par place serait versée aux communes créant des hébergements supplémentaires d'ici à 2017. **Le coût de l'hébergement des demandeurs d'asile est estimé à près de 350 millions d'euros par an.**

• L'accès aux soins, un droit fondamental

Tout demandeur d'asile en cours de procédure a accès au régime général d'assurance maladie, ou «couverture de base», qui est considéré comme un droit fondamental. Ils sont dispensés de la condition de résidence en France depuis plus de 3 mois pour en bénéficier. Les demandeurs d'asile qui souhaitent bénéficier de la couverture complémentaire (CMU-C) peuvent en faire la demande en même temps qu'ils constituent leur dossier de demande d'affiliation à la CMU de base, ce qui leur assure une prise en charge complète des frais de santé. Toutefois, les droits à la CMU-C ne sont ouverts qu'un mois après l'enregistrement du dossier.

• Les APL ne concernent pas les demandeurs d'asile...

Les demandeurs d'asile ne touchent pas d'allocations logement. Pour les étrangers, percevoir des APL nécessite de justifier d'un titre de séjour en cours de validité, ce qui n'est pas le cas des demandeurs d'asile. Idem pour l'allocation de logement sociale (ALS), qui cible principalement les jeunes, les étudiants, les ménages sans enfants et les personnes âgées et handicapées. Ainsi que l'allocation de logement familiale (ALF).

En revanche, c'est le cas des réfugiés: quand l'Ofpra accepte la demande d'asile, le candidat reçoit un récépissé de trois mois renouvelables portant la mention «reconnu réfugié». Ce qui lui ouvre le droit à la délivrance d'une carte de résident renouvelable tous les 10 ans, facilite son accès à la nationalité française et lui permet d'accéder aux mêmes droits sociaux (RSA, prestations familiales, CMU, APL, etc.) que les nationaux. Les réfugiés peuvent donc faire une demande de logement social, par exemple. Dans certaines situations de vulnérabilité particulières, accéder aux centres provisoires d'hébergement (CPH). En échange de ces droits, le réfugié doit suivre une formation civique et linguistique avant de passer un bilan de compétences professionnelles.

• ...tout comme le RSA

Pour toucher le RSA (Revenu de solidarité active), il faut avoir au moins 25 ans et être «en situation régulière en France», quelle que soit la nationalité. Cela signifie, pour un non-Européen, qu'il faut justifier d'une carte de résident, ou de justifier depuis au moins cinq ans d'un titre de séjour permettant de travailler en France. Avant la «loi Sarkozy» sur l'immigration de 2003, c'était trois ans. Les demandeurs d'asile n'ont donc pas accès au RSA. En revanche, les réfugiés, les apatrides et les bénéficiaires de la protection subsidiaire peuvent prétendre au RSA, sans condition de résidence de 5 ans en France.

Kopfschütteln über Madame Merkel

Frankreich ist irritiert über Merkels Flüchtlingspolitik. Präsident Hollande befürchtet eine Eskalation des innereuropäischen Streits über die Flüchtlingsfrage. Le Pen höhnt, Frankreich sei zum „Fußabtreter“ der Bundeskanzlerin geworden.

16.09.2015, von MICHAELA WIEGEL, PARIS

Frankreich fühlt sich von [Angela Merkel](#) düpiert. Die regierenden Sozialisten ringen nach Worten, um die Volten der Bundeskanzlerin in der Flüchtlingspolitik zu kommentieren. Wie gelähmt reagierten sie auf die Nachricht, dass an der Grenze zum Elsass deutsche Polizisten die Übergänge kontrollieren. Was sagt der französische Innenminister dazu? Er schweigt bislang, aber lässt durchsickern, wie irritiert man sei. Das kurze Techtelmechtel der französischen Linken mit der Kanzlerin als „Schutzherrin der Flüchtlinge“ ist schon wieder passé. „Sehr beunruhigend“ findet der sozialistische Abgeordnete Benoît Hamon das deutsche Polizeiaufgebot an den Grenzen und überhaupt den unsteten Kurs. Der sozialistische Abgeordnete Malek Boutih, der Premierminister Manuel Valls nahesteht, spricht von einer Demütigung Frankreichs. „Frau Merkel ist die beste Verbündete von Frau Le Pen geworden“, sagt Boutih. Er spielt auch auf die Symbolkraft der deutschen Grenzposten an, die ein Teilstück der deutsch-französischen Grenze überwachen. Seit Jahren verlangt der rechtspopulistische Front National, die Grenzzäune wieder hochzuziehen. Dass nun ausgerechnet Berlin dieser Forderung (wenn auch nur vorübergehend) nachkommt, erklärt die Verstimmung bei den Sozialisten.

Die Bundeskanzlerin habe einen enormen politischen Fehler begangen, als sie unilateral Flüchtlinge in den Schengen-Raum gelockt habe, kritisiert Boutih, der früher den Verband „SOS Rassismus“ leitete. Von einer gemeinsamen Verwaltung des Schengen-Raums, wie es angesichts der Krise geboten sei, habe sich Berlin verabschiedet. **Die Entscheidung zur Rückkehr zu Grenzkontrollen habe die Bundesregierung ebenfalls „unilateral“ getroffen,** bemängelt der Sozialist. Boutih spricht von einem „Wendepunkt im europäischen Einigungsprozess“. **Merkels Politik beschwöre Krisen in fast allen europäischen Ländern und auch in Frankreich herauf, so der Sozialist.**

Tatsächlich hat es sich die Opposition nicht nehmen lassen, Präsident [François Hollande](#) als treudummes Opfer einer kapriziösen Kanzlerin darzustellen. **Hollande zauderte lange, sich dem Aufnahme-Elan der Kanzlerin anzuschließen.** Deshalb stand er bei den Parteifreunden am Pranger, die ihm vorhielten, sich vor dem Front National zu ducken. **Doch gerade als Hollande zu einer Willkommensgeste bereit war und für aufnahmewillige Kommunen am Wochenende 1000 Euro pro Flüchtling lockergemacht hatte, schreckte ihn die Kanzlerin mit ihren „vorübergehenden“ Grenzkontrollen auf. Hollande war darauf nicht vorbereitet.**

Im Elysée-Palast herrscht seither „dicke Luft“, wie die Zeitung „Le Figaro“ schrieb. Der Vorstoß von Innenminister [Thomas de Maizière](#), renitente EU-Länder finanziell zu bestrafen, weckt weiteren Argwohn. Auch wenn sich die Kanzlerin davon distanzierte, **befürchtet Hollande eine Eskalation des innereuropäischen Streits über die Flüchtlingsfrage.** Offiziell unterstützt Paris das Verlangen der Bundeskanzlerin nach einem EU-Gipfeltreffen der Staats- und Regierungschefs. **Doch Berater im Elysée-Palast lassen durchblicken, dass das Vertrauen in die Strategie der Bundeskanzlerin begrenzt ist. Marine Le Pen höhnte jetzt, Frankreich sei zum „Fußabtreter“ der Bundeskanzlerin geworden.** Bei einem Treffen mit der rechtsextremen belgischen Partei Vlaams Belang bezeichnete sie Frau Merkel als „Kaiserin“, die ganz Europa ihre illegalen Einwanderer aufzwingen wolle. „Totale Verantwortungslosigkeit“ sei der Leitsatz der Kanzlerin.

[Nicolas Sarkozy](#) sagte gönnerisch, Frau Merkel habe halt die richtige Inspiration aus dem Elysée-Palast gefehlt. „Mit einer Woche Verspätung hat sie dann doch das getan, was wir wollten“, sagte Sarkozy. Der Vorsitzende der Republikaner (vormals UMP) hat am Mittwoch bei einer Parteisitzung seine Vorschläge wiederholt. **Er will die Schengen-Vereinbarung abwickeln und durch eine neue („Schengen II“) ersetzen, Sicherheitsverwahrungslager an den Außengrenzen der EU für Migranten einrichten und das Asylrecht einschränken. „Sofort“ sollen überall in der EU wieder Grenzkontrollen eingeführt werden.** Sarkozy will die Parteimitglieder über seine Vorschläge abstimmen lassen.

Sein früherer Berater, der Abgeordnete Henri Guaino, hielt der Bundeskanzlerin vor, sich seinerzeit dem französischen **Projekt einer Mittelmeerunion** widersetzt zu haben. Mit einer funktionierenden Mittelmeerunion wäre der **EU** das Flüchtlingsdrama erspart geblieben. Die Beschwerden aus Berlin über eine mangelnde Kooperation der EU-Partner hält Guaino für unangebracht. **„Angela Merkel hat unilaterale Entscheidungen getroffen, unilaterale Ankündigungen gemacht, und jetzt beschwert sie sich über mangelnde Kooperation. Das ist ein starkes Stück“**, sagte Guaino.

„François Hollande ist Angela Merkel wie ein Schaf gefolgt.“

Selbst der Deutschlandkenner Bruno Le Maire (Republikaner) sparte nicht mit Kritik. Die Bundeskanzlerin habe **„einen doppelten Fehler“** begangen, als sie zuerst die Arme zu weit geöffnet habe, um sie dann ohne Absprache mit den europäischen Partnerländern wieder zu schließen, sagte der frühere Europaminister. **„Wir brauchen dringend einen gemeinsamen europäischen Ansatz“**, forderte Le Maire. Der Abgeordnete Eric Ciotti (Republikaner) beschwerte sich: **„François Hollande ist Angela Merkel wie ein Schaf gefolgt.“** Der Präsident sei nur noch ein Mitläufer der Kanzlerin. **„Die Position Frankreichs in der Flüchtlingskrise ist unbekannt“**, sagte Ciotti.

In den französischen Medien, von denen Angela Merkel erst kürzlich als **„Retterin der Ehre der EU“** gefeiert wurde, häufen sich jetzt hämische Kommentare. **„Le Monde“** sagt das **„Ende des deutschen Europas“** vorher. Der frühere Berlin-Korrespondent der Zeitung Arnaud Leparmentier bezeichnet die Bundeskanzlerin als **„Neo-Bismarck“**; es gelinge ihr nicht, **„Gesinnungsethik und Verantwortungsethik miteinander zu versöhnen“**. **„Bei Angela Merkel waren wir in Sachen Krisenbewältigung mehr Seriosität und Besonnenheit gewöhnt“**, mäkelte „Le Figaro“.

Vielen Flüchtlingen droht Arbeitslosigkeit

Immer mehr Geringqualifizierte strömen nach Deutschland. Der Chef der Arbeitsagentur Weise dämpft im Gespräch mit der F.A.Z. übertriebene Erwartungen schneller Erfolge und fordert einfachere Verfahren.

17.09.2015, von SVEN ASTHEIMER

Die Flüchtlingswelle dürfte bald auch deutliche Spuren am deutschen Arbeitsmarkt hinterlassen. Auf die Frage, ob 2016 die Arbeitslosigkeit spürbar steigen werde, sagte **Frank-Jürgen Weise**, der Vorstandsvorsitzende der Bundesagentur für Arbeit, dieser Zeitung: „Wenn nichts passiert, ja.“ Entscheidend für die Entwicklung sei, ob weiterhin so viele Flüchtlinge kommen wie bislang. Für das laufende Jahr hält Weise an der Prognose von knapp 2,8 Millionen Arbeitslosen im Jahresdurchschnitt fest, da die Konjunktur gut sei und viele Flüchtlinge wegen des Registrierungsprozesses in der Arbeitsmarkt-Statistik schlicht noch nicht auftauchten. 2015 verzeichnet die Arbeitsagentur bislang rund 380 000 neue Arbeitssuchende aus den klassischen Herkunftsländern Afrikas oder des Nahen Ostens. Genauso viele Menschen aus diesen Regionen seien schon in Deutschland sozialversichert beschäftigt, weshalb Weise eine Vermittlung in Arbeit der bisherigen Neuankömmlinge für machbar hält. „Die Größenordnungen, die da sind, schaffen wir“, sagt der Agenturchef. „Die große Herausforderung werden die Menschen sein, die noch kommen werden.“

Neue Prognosen zur Arbeitslosigkeit wird die Behörde im Laufe des Herbstes vorlegen. Weise warnte vor zu hohen Erwartungen auf schnelle Integrationserfolge. „Die Ankunft von Hunderttausenden ist zunächst einmal eine Belastung für den Arbeitsmarkt.“ Viele verfügten nicht über die notwendigen Sprachkenntnisse, anderen mangle es an der nötigen Qualifikation.

Bundesarbeitsministerin Andrea Nahles (SPD) ging zuletzt davon aus, dass nicht einmal jeder Zehnte die nötigen Voraussetzungen mitbringe, um direkt einen Arbeitsplatz zu finden. Langfristig bezeichnete Weise die Asylbewerber jedoch als „große Bereicherung“ für Deutschland und dessen Wirtschaft, mit deren Hilfe es sogar gelingen könnte, die negativen Folgen des demographischen Wandels abzufedern. Bisherigen Berechnungen zufolge schrumpft die arbeitsfähige Bevölkerung bis 2030 um mehrere Millionen. Anhaltende Flüchtlingsströme würden diese Entwicklung jedoch erheblich verändern.

Für die kommenden Aufgaben werden zusätzliche Hilfen nötig. Weise rechnet damit, dass in den Agenturen und Jobcentern rund 3000 zusätzliche Mitarbeiter eingestellt werden müssen. Für 2016 rechnet das Arbeitsministerium mit Mehrkosten für Arbeitsmarktpolitik und Arbeitslosengeld II in Höhe von mindestens 3 Milliarden Euro. Für eine erfolgreiche Vermittlung müsse aber das gesamte Aufnahmeverfahren deutlich beschleunigt werden, fordert der Behördenmanager. Es dauere zu lange, ehe tatsächlich ein Arbeitsplatz für die **Flüchtlinge** gesucht werden könne.

Eine weitere Hürde ist die geringe Qualifikation vieler Flüchtlinge. Laut erster Daten der Agentur dürfte mehr als die Hälfte keine abgeschlossene Berufsausbildung haben. Zwischen 15 und 25 Prozent verfügen den Schätzungen zufolge über einen Hochschulabschluss. In allen Fällen muss jedoch ein Anerkennungsverfahren durchlaufen und festgestellt werden, was ein formaler Abschluss am deutschen Arbeitsmarkt wert ist. Rund zwei Drittel der Asylbewerber sind männlich. Für den Westbalkan ist die Frauenquote höher, allerdings sind hier die Anerkennungschancen minimal. Positiv für die Suche nach einem Arbeitsplatz wirkt sich aus Sicht von Weise aus, dass rund 80 Prozent der Asylbewerber jünger als 35 Jahre alt sind. In dieser Altersgruppe können leichter Abschlüsse erworben werden.

Viele sprächen höchstens Englisch

Selbst bei vorhandener Qualifikation stehen einer erfolgreichen Vermittlung an Arbeitgeber häufig noch mangelnde Deutschkenntnisse im Weg, sagt Weise. Viele Flüchtlinge sprächen höchstens rudimentär Englisch oder Französisch. Die **Arbeitsagentur** hat deshalb ihren Dolmetscherdienst erweitert, auf den per Videokonferenz nun alle Niederlassungen zugreifen können. Eine gelungene Integration setzt nach Weises Dafürhalten zudem einen aktiven Beitrag der Neuankömmlinge voraus. Diese Menschen seien nach Deutschland geflohen, weil sie das Gefühl hätten, hier einen sicheren Rechtsstaat vorzufinden. „Sie müssen auch ihren Beitrag leisten, diese Verhältnisse zu erhalten“, mahnt Weise.

Ein Lob spricht Weise der deutschen Wirtschaft aus. „Die Arbeitgeber geben ein gutes Bild ab“, sagte er. Es gebe viele Einzelaktionen, wie die Übernahme der Kosten für 20 000 Sprachkurse durch die Schnellrestaurantkette McDonald's, aber auch die klare Positionierung der großen Verbände, sich ergebende Chancen nutzen zu wollen. Auf die Forderungen, für Flüchtlinge Ausnahmen vom allgemeinen Mindestlohn von 8,50 Euro zu genehmigen, ging Weise nicht direkt ein. Sollten sie langzeitarbeitslos (länger als zwölf Monate) werden, bestehe ja schon die Möglichkeit für Abweichungen. „Unsere Aufgabe ist es aber, diese Menschen zu befähigen, dass sie mindestens 8,50 Euro in der Stunde verdient haben“, sagte Weise. Arbeitsministerin Nahles hat schon klargemacht, dass solche Ausnahmen mit ihr nicht zu machen seien. Die Gewerkschaften warnen vehement davor, dass durch einen solchen Niedriglohnsektor Flüchtlinge und Arbeitslose gegeneinander ausgespielt würden.

„Die vielen Geringqualifizierten bringen mehr Druck in die Arbeitswelt“, schätzt Weise. Mit starken Verdrängungseffekten zu Lasten von Langzeitarbeitslosen rechnet er zunächst jedoch nicht. Dank der guten Konjunktur der vergangenen Jahre herrsche in weiten Teilen Süddeutschlands Vollbeschäftigung, und vielerorts seien sogar Produktionshelfer schwer zu finden. Dort seien die Integrationschancen für Flüchtlinge sehr gut.

Ist das alles?

Womöglich muss der syrische Brandherd auch militärisch bekämpft werden. Von vornherein kann der Westen das nicht ausschließen – oder nehmen Terrormilizen an Therapiesitzungen teil?

16.09.2015, von **KLAUS-DIETER FRANKENBERGER**

Es ist notwendig, die intensiver werdende Diskussion, ob der syrische Brandherd auch militärisch bekämpft werden müsse, seriös zu führen. Nicht von vornherein dürfen Instrumente, über die westliche Staaten verfügen, ausgeschlossen werden – oder nehmen Terrormilizen an Therapiesitzungen teil? Natürlich wird man nach den gemischten, ja ernüchternden Erfahrungen westlicher Interventionen einem Militäreinsatz nicht heilsgewiss das Wort reden können.



Autor: Klaus-Dieter Frankenberger, verantwortlicher Redakteur für Außenpolitik. Folgen:

Schnell gerät man zwischen die Mühlsteine konkurrierender Gruppen; schnell werden aus Befreiern Besatzer, die Hass und Bomben auf sich ziehen. Aber seriös muss man bleiben.

Wenn Verteidigungsministerin von der Leyen ihre Abwehr in den Satz kleidet, die Bundeswehr sei bereits in hohem Maß im Kampf gegen den „Islamischen Staat“ engagiert, fragt man sich, ob man etwas verpasst hat. Die Bundeswehr darf nicht überfordert, ihre Leistungsfähigkeit aber (aus politischen Gründen?) auch nicht kleingeredet werden. Die Lieferung von ein paar Gewehren an irakische Kurden kann ja nicht alles sein. Überdies: Einfache Lösungen gibt es sowieso nicht.

128,73

Comment l'Europe a resserré ses frontières, expliqué en 4 cartes

Par [Service infographie du Figaro](#)

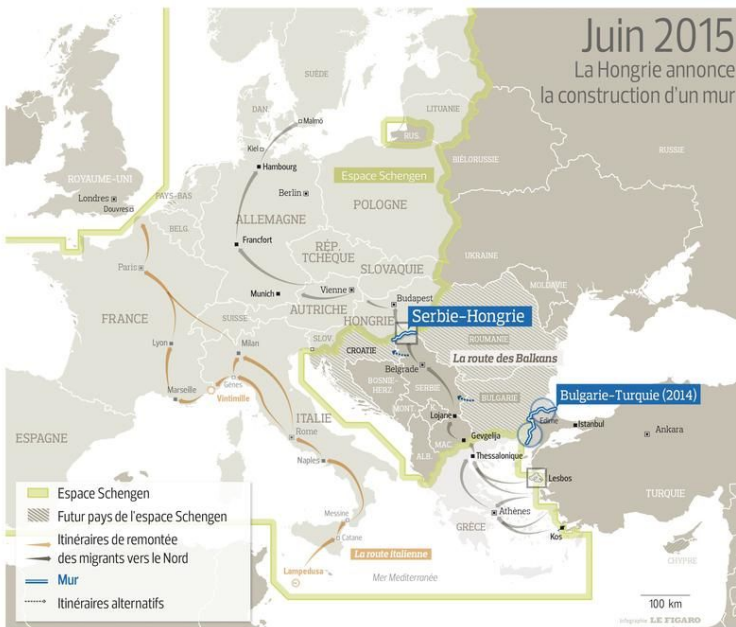
Mis à jour le 17/09/2015 à 11:24

INFOGRAPHIE - Face à l'afflux de réfugiés, les pays européens décident les uns après les autres de fermer ou contrôler davantage leurs frontières. Depuis plusieurs semaines, l'espace Schengen vacille. Comment en est-on arrivé là, expliqué en quatre cartes.

Mercredi, le Premier ministre Manuel Valls a ouvert la voie à un rétablissement temporaire des contrôles aux frontières. La France emboîterait ainsi le pas à plusieurs autres pays européens que la crise migratoire a poussé à déroger momentanément aux règles de libre-circulation de l'espace Schengen. Comment on en est arrivé là?



Mi-juin 2015, [la Hongrie annonce la fermeture de sa frontière avec la Serbie](#) avec la construction d'un mur pour contenir le flux de migrants toujours plus nombreux à emprunter la route des Balkans, moins périlleuse que la meurtrière route italienne. Ce n'est pas la première clotûre aux frontières extérieures de l'espace Schengen. Mais l'annonce envoie une [onde de choc à travers l'Europe](#).



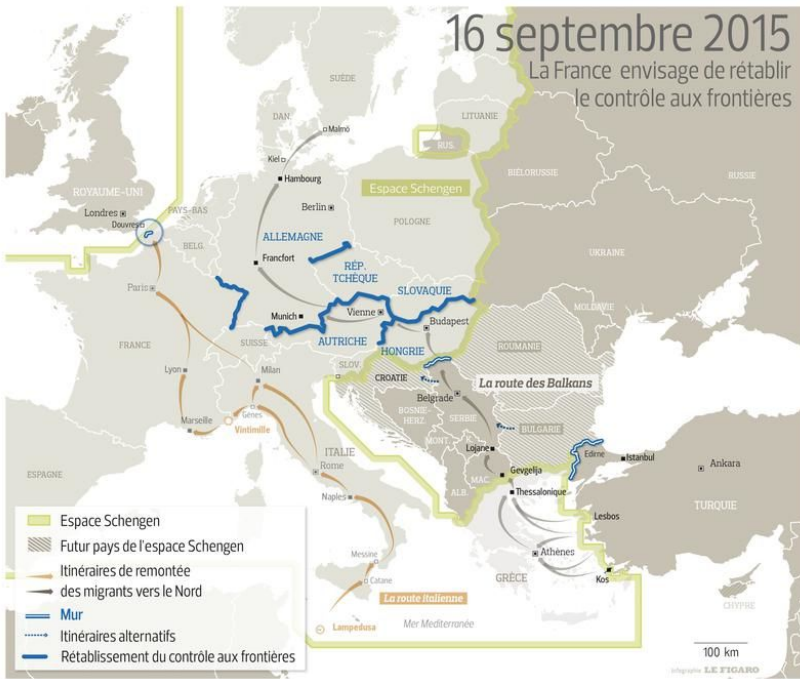
Nouveau de théâtre dimanche 13 septembre. L'Allemagne, après avoir accueilli en nombre les réfugiés frappant à sa porte, annonce [le rétablissement du contrôle aux frontières](#). Rapidement, l'Autriche, la Slovaquie, la Hongrie et la République tchèque lui emboitent le pas. Le 14 septembre, le contrôle aux frontières a été rétabli dans cinq pays européens et l'espace Schengen vacille.



Le 16 septembre, l'étau se resserre encore. La Hongrie a bouclé sa frontière avec la Serbie et envisage d'étendre sa clôture le long de la frontière roumaine. Bloqués en Serbie, les migrants sur une route qui passe par la Croatie. L'Allemagne étend ses contrôles à la frontière avec l'Alsace. Puis, dans la soirée, le Premier ministre Manuel Valls annonce que la France n'«hésitera pas» à rétablir temporairement les contrôles aux frontières, comme elle l'a déjà fait à la frontière franco-italienne au printemps, «si nécessaire dans les prochains jours ou prochaines semaines»,.

16 septembre 2015

La France envisage de rétablir le contrôle aux frontières



128,76

MAIN FOCUS

Putin calls for cooperation with Assad

Russian President Vladimir Putin appealed once again to the international community on Wednesday to forge an alliance with the Assad regime to fight the IS in Syria. Some commentators urge the West to cooperate with the Syrian president, arguing that only he can stabilise the country. Others warn against an immoral alliance.

Kurier - Austria

The world must work together on Syria solution

Russia, the US and the rest of the world must get their act together and tackle the causes of war, exodus and terror in Syria, demands the liberal daily Kurier: "Now we are paying the price for the West not having a dialogue with Vladimir Putin. We are paying the price for the alleged willingness of the Russians to have Assad step aside three years ago. And for the one-dimensional accusations that the US caused the chaos in the Middle East long ago (cue: Iraq). Or the less one-dimensional realisation that the West's naïve euphoria about the 'Arab Spring' in the Arab world has served no purpose. ... We would like to see the world leaders sit down at a table after five years and find a solution to end the madness in Syria. As quickly as possible." (17/09/2015)

[» full article \(external link, German\)](#)

Le Temps - Switzerland

West can hardly refuse Russia's proposal

Moscow's proposal for an international alliance against the IS terrorist organisation that would include the Assad regime is dangerously tempting, the liberal daily Le Temps comments: "The West has no other plan up its sleeve. It could be tempted

by this project which would also, perhaps, allow it to put an end to the almost-Cold-War in Europe. After all, was it not thanks to this same Russia that a [solution](#) was finally found on the question of chemical weapons in Syria, leading Bashar al-Assad to back down? The problem is that the Syrian army is responsible for roughly 80 percent of the 250,000 deaths so far in the war in Syria. Sooner or later it will be necessary to come to terms with this army: there are no other options. But in fighting against the jihad must we also absolve its murderous general staff, which has committed crimes against humanity? The combined threat of all the Islamic States in the world does not make this prospect any more moral." (17/09/2015)

[» full article \(external link, French\)](#)

24 Chasa - Bulgaria

Assad clearly the lesser evil

Europe must back Assad's war against the IS militarily if it wants to stop the flood of Syrian refugees, the daily 24 Chasa contends: "Regardless of whether he's good or evil, Assad is the only one who can establish a centrally administrated secular state. At the moment half the population lives in areas controlled by him, because they've chosen to side with the lesser evil. Assad is also the only one who can live in peace with the roughly two million Kurds. ... What would happen if his army suddenly gave up? In no time at all the cutthroats from the IS and al-Nusra would come and kill all the Christians and Shiites, after which they'd take their revenge on the Sunnis who cooperated with Satan. ... If Europe wants to prevent the refugee tsunami that would ensue, it will have to make the US, Turkey and Saudi Arabia reconsider their policies in the region." (16/09/2015)

Berlingske - Denmark

IS and Assad regime must go

Both the IS and the Assad regime must be defeated in order to tackle the evil that is causing the Syrians to flee at its root, the centre-left daily Berlingske urges: "The EU isn't the only structure that has had enough of this great wave of migration the likes of which we haven't seen since World War II. But unlike back then, we could now slide into a permanent crisis if the international community refuses to cooperate. In eight days' time the leaders of the world will meet at the UN General Assembly. There is much speculation about what will happen. We hope the US and Russia will join forces with the Arab countries and Turkey, first of all to establish a secure zone in Syria, but also to defeat both the IS and the Syrian regime in Damascus. Ground troops will be needed for that. But it's hard to imagine any other solution at present." (17/09/2015)

POLITICS

Trouw - Netherlands

Exodus to Europe: Hungary scraps asylum while EU looks on

Hungarian police used water cannons and tear gas against refugees trying to break through the border fence from Serbia on Wednesday. Europe must intervene now, the Christian-social daily Trouw urges: "An EU member state single-handedly turning Europe into an almost impregnable fortress is a new low point in the refugee crisis. This is the result of Europe's divisiveness: no decisions; complete arbitrariness. ... It is imperative that the countries of the EU finally recognise the gravity of the situation. Syria has been erased from the map. Europe must do its bit in taking in the refugees because Syria's neighbouring countries can no longer cope. The least that should be done now is a summit of heads of government. Because it is unacceptable that Hungary has simply abolished the right to asylum." (17/09/2015)

[» to the homepage \(Trouw\)](#)

More from the press review on the subject [» Crises / War](#), [» Human rights](#), [» Hungary](#), [» Eastern Europe](#)
Who's saying what [» Eastern Europe resists refugees](#)

Večernji List - Croatia

Exodus to Europe: Croatia not an end destination

Hundreds of refugees arrived in Croatia on Wednesday after the Hungary-Serbia border was [sealed off](#). The conservative daily Večernji List fears that many more are still to come: "In the short term Croatia may be flooded with refugees who have literally been driven here as if into a trap and are desperately seeking an exit into the Schengen Area because Orbán has built a fence. ... We must reach out a hand to all those who come across our border seeking help, but Croatia cannot and will not be the place for mass intake of refugees. We are too economically weak for that, and even if we wanted to take in tens of thousands we would have to put them behind bars. Because the day after tomorrow they would already be crossing mountains and fields to get to Germany instead." (17/09/2015)

Polityka - Poland

Exodus to Europe: Poland also responsible

If Poland continues to [refuse](#) to take in refugees from the Middle East it will be evading its historical responsibility, journalist and author Jacek Żakowski warns in the online edition of the centre-left news magazine Polityka: "Someone who has been observing the course of events in the Middle East should explain to the Poles why we bear partial responsibility for the fate of the inhabitants of Iraq and Syria who are now storming Europe's borders. ... We destroyed their world to secure advantages for ourselves. And if the politicians can be believed, we succeeded. I am not just thinking of the high salaries Polish soldiers in Iraq received. I am thinking about the main goal of strengthening the [American-Polish bond](#). ... And now payback time has come. We are now being flooded by a wave of refugees." (17/09/2015)

Only Debt Relief Will Do

By Marcello Minenna

17 septembre 2015

It's been a month since the eurozone approved an 86 billion euros (\$97.19 billion) bailout loan to Greece, yet the country's creditors have yet to come to a decision regarding debt relief for Athens. Now with a parliamentary election on Sunday that may not return a conclusive result, it looks like that decision will be further delayed.

Markets have been eager for a sign of what the creditors might do. Christine Lagarde, managing director of the International Monetary Fund, signaled recently that her institution would support lengthening bond maturities to 30 years or lowering interest rates, but not forgiving any debt outright. This is significant because the IMF has led the charge for debt restructuring, and markets rejoiced at the prospect that investors would not be required to take haircuts. Greek bond yields collapsed, with the 10-year bond reaching 8.4% implicit yield after a peak of 13% in mid-June.

But the truth is that this form of debt relief will do nothing to reduce the burden or the riskiness of Greece's debt. Such a restructuring merely substitutes one risk for another: The debt would no longer carry the risks associated with an overwhelming burden due relatively soon, but instead would carry the risks of long-term economic and political variables associated with any longer-term debt.

The problem with the debate about Greek debt relief is that neither the creditors nor Athens are willing to contemplate what would be the obvious solution if Greece were a private-sector borrower. If we imagine Greece's debt as a private loan from a bank, it would have long ago been reclassified as a nonperforming loan and reposted on the bank's balance sheet at its current market value. The difference would have been recorded as a loss.

Similarly, Greece could have offered a haircut on its existing debt, reducing its debt burden to about 150 billion euros from 310 billion euros, bringing its debt-to-GDP ratio to a level closer to Germany's. This would have reflected a marking-to-market at the face value of Greek debt over the summer, before the bailout plan triggered a sharp increase.

A comparable scenario unfolded in March 2012, when Greek bonds held by the private sector underwent a nominal haircut of 50% (about 100 billion euros) but whose effective size was closer to 70%. That haircut wasn't far from the market's valuation of Greece's public debt at the time.

The difference this time is that around 80% of Greek bonds are now held by the European Central Bank, the European Financial Stability Facility, eurozone governments or the IMF. A market solution would have required a political endorsement.

But precisely because so much of Greece's debt is held by public creditors, these creditors are more likely to prescribe to the usual "extend and pretend" recipe of deferring risk. A write-off now would entail significant political risks today, as German and other voters object to relief for a profligate Greece. A longer time horizon for Greek risk suits today's politicians much better.

Recent history indicates that extending bond maturities to avoid losses to public creditors is no solution. Today this could prove more harmful than ever because Greece is facing years of deflation. This trend, which is afflicting all of the eurozone despite the ECB's purchases of sovereign bonds under its quantitative easing program, will depress nominal GDP and exacerbate the debt-to-GDP ratio.

The more time is added to bond maturities, the more perverse effects will be free to operate in the Greek economy. This puts Greece on a path of unsustainability even steeper than its current one.

Extend and Pretend for Migrants

The European Union's plan for immigration is as nonexistent as its plan for debt.

By HOLMAN W. JENKINS, JR.

Sept. 15, 2015 6:32 p.m. ET

In the immediate refugee crisis many Europeans are acting on their humanitarian instincts, and that's laudable. Angela Merkel, Germany's leader, has been beatified for spontaneously throwing open her country's doors to an estimated 800,000 Middle Eastern immigrants.

But Ms. Merkel has been busy for five years trying to save the eurozone by throwing extend-and-pretend money at Greece and other countries. She knew these loans weren't a solution for Europe's debt and stagnation problems; they were meant to stop the European Union from blowing up in the meantime. Her refugee policy is also partly a case of extend-and-pretend. Germany stepped up to forestall an outbreak of defiance of the EU's open-borders mandate by front-line European states, triggering a crisis of Brussels's authority.

Though it may be a humanitarian necessity too, her immigration initiative amounts to yet another time-buying exercise for a European unity project that seems more troubled by the day.

By now, if you're of an academic bent, you're recalling the "social trust" literature. It doesn't promise well for this experiment.

High levels of social trust, according to this literature, are what make Europe's extensive welfare states possible, beginning with its model form, in Scandinavia. Citizens pay more than half their incomes in taxes because they value the government services they get, and because they believe others are paying too and not cheating to receive benefits they don't need.

"We've always had a great trust in other people in Scandinavia, and this trust is the cornerstone of our welfare state," explained one of the leading "trust" researchers, Christian Bjornskov of Denmark's Aarhus University, to the publication ScienceNordic three years ago.

Less felicitously, he added: "The welfare state would collapse in a country like Greece, where distrust and corruption are widespread. It's a very human reaction to take as much as you can if you feel that others are doing the same."

A mischievous addition to this literature is a 2001 Harvard paper by economists Alberto Alesina, Edward Glaeser and Bruce Sacerdote suggesting that "racial animosity" by a majority of voters explains why the U.S. hasn't adopted a European-style welfare state. But any society as dynamic, multicultural and multiethnic as the U.S. would be unlikely to generate the requisite social trust, so rounding it down to American racism is a bit of a cheap shot.

More worrisome might be a 2014 survey by French economists Yann Algan, Pierre Cahuc and Marc Sangnier. Voter support for an extensive welfare state -- which is not the same as saying it will be democratically sustainable in the long run -- is actually "twin peaked," the authors tell us.

By "twin peaked," they mean supported by civic-minded voters who exhibit high trust, but also by "untrustworthy individuals . . . because they expect to benefit without bearing the costs."

To counter our gloom comes Thomas Piketty, the instant sage of the left after he published a book last year decrying the political influence of the rich. He now says a flood of energetic immigrants is just the medicine Europe's stagnant economies need.

But to benefit, these countries would have to become favorable to growth again. If European capitals aren't willing to reform their domestic economies to bring relief to their own taxpayers and armies of youthful unemployed, why would they do so to accommodate a deluge of uninvited strangers? They wouldn't.

In July, Denmark elected a government pledged to cut benefits and family rights for immigrants; now the Danish government is advertising its immigrant-unfriendly policies in Lebanese newspapers to discourage migrants.

A poll last month finds the anti-immigrant Sweden Democrats Party is now that country's biggest. In Norway and Finland, where immigration has been surging, so too has the influence of populist parties campaigning against "welfare tourism" and an Islamicization of Europe.

And these are the nicey-nice trusting peoples of Scandinavia. Never mind the already powerful anti-immigrant sentiments loose in France and Germany.

It would be pleasant to think that Europeans, following the logic of their humanitarian impulse, would now overhaul their economies to accommodate job seekers and entrepreneurs from the Middle East, and welcome, by the way, the creative destruction that would befall every vested and uncompetitive interest in their domestic economies.

That would be quite a reversal of a long-run trend. The disease (to use a possibly inapt metaphor) started in Europe with the sclerosis of the 1970s, spread to Japan, now entering its third "lost decade," and has come to the U.S. with the anemic post-2008 recovery.

Though hope is always a comfort, throwing a destabilizing immigration crisis into Europe's mix right now does not seem a formula for good outcomes.

128,80

Germany Works to Get Migrants Jobs

By LIZ ALDERMANSEPT. 17, 2015

PASSAU, Germany — As [Germany](#) struggles with a surge of migrants and has at least temporarily clamped down on new arrivals, Nematullah Jasor may serve as a symbol of the way forward.

One afternoon last week, Mr. Jasor, 22, walked with a light step around the cavernous factory floor of ZF Friedrichshafen, a large German industrial company that recently hired him as an apprentice in this small town on the border with Austria that has become a major landing point for migrants.

Just a few years earlier, Mr. Jasor faced threats on his life back home in Afghanistan, where Taliban insurgents had threatened to kill him if he did not join the group and stop his computer science studies at the local university.

After learning German quickly and proving to be a skilled employee, Mr. Jasor is on track for a permanent job once he completes his apprenticeship in making machine and auto parts. More than any other European country now contending with an influx of migrants and refugees, Germany — with Europe's biggest economy, an aging population and more than a half-million jobs currently unfilled — sees the migration wave as not only a challenge but an opportunity.

“Germany will benefit from people like Nematullah,” said Roland Biebl, Mr. Jasor's supervisor. “It's in everyone's interest to integrate them.”

Although Germany has temporarily placed tight controls on the border across the country's south to stem the tide of people seeking asylum, the government is intent on assimilating those it lets in. With at least 800,000 migrants expected this year alone, Chancellor [Angela Merkel](#) and the nation's biggest businesses have been mounting a vocal campaign to get migrants into jobs as a way of quickly integrating them into German society. Rather than risk letting the migrants become wards of the state, the idea is to help as many as possible start contributing to the economy.

Advocates of fast-tracking employment say that Germany, Europe's largest economy, has enough jobs to accommodate the flood of new arrivals — and in fact is facing the threat of a labor shortage and a growing bill for pensions and health care, as more and more of the country's aging population reaches retirement. Refugees like Mr. Jasor, as well as many asylum-seekers who have arrived from Syria, are educated and bring employable skills that could help alleviate the labor squeeze.

Last week, big employers including Deutsche Post and the automaker Daimler called for an overhaul of German labor laws to let asylum-seekers get to work quickly. Ms. Merkel, who met with industry leaders, announced that Germany would accelerate the asylum process and make it easier for those allowed to stay to enter the work force. An additional 2 billion euros, or nearly \$2.3 billion, will be spent to help people learn German, which is essential for any job.

On Monday, Germany's four main employers' associations said they supported the government's decision to temporarily slow the flow of migrants to avoid burdening the asylum system. But in a joint statement, the organizations, which represent hundreds of thousands of companies, renewed the call to give approved migrants faster access to the labor market and to language and skills training.

“That is the best way for permanent integration,” the organizations said in the statement.

Some Germans fear that the influx could threaten their own jobs and drive wages down. Recently, Marine Le Pen, the head of the far-right National Front party in France, accused Ms. Merkel of encouraging immigration to “recruit slaves.” But political proponents and many businesses see an opportunity to welcome a wave of motivated, mostly younger people into the German labor force.

“There is something to be said about thinking of refugees not just as victims but as potential contributors to societies and economies in the future,” said Elizabeth Collett, a policy fellow at the Migration Policy Institute Europe, based in Brussels.

Despite a five-year economic crisis in Europe, unemployment in this country of 82 million is at a 30-year low of [4.6 percent](#). Nearly 597,000 jobs are open in health and hospice care, engineering, carpentry, fast food — the list goes on.

Analysts said Germans and other European nationals were not filling those jobs because they did not have the right experience or education or, in the case of low-skilled work, because they did not want the jobs.

The labor shortage has persisted even after tens of thousands of young people from Greece, Spain and other crisis-hit eurozone economies have flocked to Germany in recent years to find employment.

“We don't see evidence that refugees will be stealing jobs,” said Alexander Wilhelm, a labor market expert at the Confederation of German Employers' Associations. “We have record-high underemployment and record-high job openings. So for the moment, the labor market is capable of giving new opportunities.”

Ms. Merkel and many German companies say change is possible. They point to the reunification of East and West Germany and Germany's previous absorption of European migrants during difficult economic circumstances.

That has not always worked seamlessly.

In the 1960s, "guest worker" programs bringing Turks and others to fill factory labor shortages stoked friction and gave rise to ethnic enclaves.

And not everyone has the requisite skills.

Of the migrants who settled in Germany from 1985 to 2013, for example, 73 percent of men and 48 percent of women wound up working, compared with 83 percent of men and 73 percent of women in the total German labor force, according to the Cologne Institute of Economic Research.

Migrants coming in now from the Middle East may take longer to learn German or adapt to European culture, making the transition more difficult, the institute added. Others may be suffering trauma from war and their harrowing odyssey to Europe.

Whether the push to employ asylum-seekers proves more than a token gesture remains to be seen. So far, few German companies have hired more than a handful of migrants.

Daimler's chief executive, Dieter Zetsche, told German news outlets last week that the migrants coming now were the kind of workers the country needed. But his company had taken just four migrants into vocational jobs, a spokesman said, in a work force of nearly 169,000.

Other companies are doing a bit more. Two hours northwest of Passau, the German industrial giant [Siemens](#) started a pilot project in the spring, taking 10 migrants from Syria and elsewhere as interns at its Erlangen operation, which has 33,000 employees. This autumn, it plans to expand the program to nine sites around the country.

At [ZF](#), which has 49,000 workers in Germany and is the largest employer in Passau, Mr. Jasor is the only refugee to be hired. There are no immediate plans to seek others, since the company, a powerhouse in gears and transmissions, has plenty of skilled applicants, said Gernot Hein, a spokesman.

But that could change, he said, especially with Ms. Merkel leading the charge. "We see it as a freedom project," Mr. Hein said. "We must include refugees in the labor force and not just leave them on the street."

That view has made Mr. Jasor fall in love with Germany. After fleeing Afghanistan in 2011, he took a perilous route through Iran and then Turkey, where he worked odd jobs to save money and studied German using a Turkish textbook. Later, a smuggler helped get him through Eastern Europe to the border of Germany.

"I've been through so many countries, and Germany has the best people," said Mr. Jasor, a sunny, soft-spoken man who teared up as he thought of the parents he had left behind in Afghanistan. "No one has made me feel like an outsider."

Mr. Jasor, who is Muslim, prays regularly, but his German colleagues do not seem to mind, he said. Out of curiosity, he went to Mass one Sunday at a local church, and he has returned several times since to learn more about Christianity and to make friends.

After his shift at ZF ended one recent afternoon, Mr. Jasor made his way to the migrant home where he lives on the outskirts of Passau. As an apprentice, he now earns 945 euros a month before taxes, and he pays 208 euros a month to rent a small room, instead of having the government continue to subsidize it for him.

On the floor of his room, a thin blue mattress lay next to a black carpet adorned with a red rose. A rickety desk held German language books, which Mr. Jasor studies at night. The verdant, rolling hills flanking the Danube rise into view through his small window.

Outside, a cacophony of voices filled the air; 95 migrants from Afghanistan, Syria, Nigeria and other countries crowded the other rooms, and rows of strollers and laundry racks lined the hallway. On this day, community volunteers took the migrants for a cruise on the Danube to see the sights, and now they had gathered on the ground floor to discuss the trip in German.

Mr. Jasor was one of the few who had a job and could not take the tour. But that was fine with him.

"I want to work," he said. "That is my dream. I will save money to get my own apartment and have a family."

He gazed out the window toward the warm, setting sun.

"This is my future," Mr. Jasor said. "My future is Germany."

128,82

Réfugiés syriens : pourquoi cet afflux soudain vers l'Union européenne ?

Dernière modification : 08/09/2015

L'année 2015 devrait enregistrer un afflux record de réfugiés en Europe, dont une majorité de ressortissants syriens. Décryptage d'un phénomène qui a connu une accélération soudaine ces dernières semaines.

Le phénomène fait la une des médias occidentaux et bouscule la classe politique européenne. Depuis quelques semaines, [un afflux de migrants et de réfugiés déferle sur l'Europe](#), à tel point que l'année 2015 devrait enregistrer un chiffre record selon [le Haut Commissariat aux réfugiés de l'ONU \(HCR\)](#).

Sans surprise, le contingent le plus important de réfugiés provient d'une Syrie ravagée par la guerre. Victimes d'une crise humanitaire persistante et pris en étau entre les forces du régime de Bachar al-Assad et les jihadistes [de l'organisation de l'État islamique \(EI\)](#), les réfugiés syriens constituent le plus important contingent de demandeurs d'asile dans l'Union européenne.

Pour comprendre ce phénomène, France 24 a interrogé Yves Pascouau, directeur du programme migration et diversité à l'European Policy Centre, à Bruxelles, et chercheur associé [à l'Institut Jacques Delors à Paris](#), spécialiste des questions d'immigration, d'asile et d'intégration.

France 24 : Comment expliquez-vous cet afflux massif et soudain de réfugiés syriens vers l'Union européenne ?

Yves Pascouau : La première explication est factuelle. Le conflit syrien ne connaît pas de répit, par conséquent il continue de jeter des familles sur les routes de l'exode. La très grande majorité de ces réfugiés s'est installée dans les pays limitrophes de la Syrie, à savoir dans l'ordre d'importance de l'accueil, la Turquie, le Liban, la Jordanie et l'Irak. Il s'agissait pour eux de chercher le plus rapidement possible à fuir leur pays pour sauver leur vie. Dans un premier temps, ils y ont trouvé des conditions de protection temporairement acceptables, même si une majorité d'entre eux vit sous le seuil de pauvreté. Sauf qu'au fil du temps, et face à la saturation de ces pays littéralement submergés et dépourvus d'une aide internationale à la hauteur des enjeux, je pense au Liban notamment qui a vu sa population augmenter de 25 % à cause de cet afflux, **et à la dégradation des conditions d'accueil, certains de ces réfugiés ont mécaniquement décidé de chercher à vivre ailleurs. D'autant plus qu'ils ont bien compris que la situation ne risquait pas de s'arranger en Syrie, et qu'il n'était pas question pour eux d'y retourner de sitôt. Cette recherche de dignité et d'un meilleur niveau de protection (juridique, hébergement, etc.) les a poussés à demander l'asile au sein de l'Union européenne. Je pense notamment à l'Allemagne, qui répond à ces critères, suite aux annonces récentes de la chancelière Angela Merkel, qui a assoupli les conditions d'asile pour les Syriens.** Il faut également évoquer, concernant ce phénomène, les **conditions météorologiques**, puisque l'été est considéré comme une période où les voies de passage sont moins risquées, notamment en Méditerranée. Enfin, l'ouverture d'une porte terrestre vers l'Union européenne, celle des Balkans occidentaux via la Turquie et la Grèce, moins coûteuse et moins dangereuse, a accéléré le mouvement migratoire depuis la fin 2014.

Quel est le profil de ces réfugiés syriens qui choisissent l'UE comme terre d'exil ?

D'après les observations qui ont été faites sur ces populations jusqu'ici, il ne s'agit pas forcément, contrairement aux clichés, de personnes totalement démunies. Qu'on soit pauvre ou riche, l'objectif reste le même quand on quitte son pays : sauver sa vie.

Visiblement donc, il s'agit de Syriens souvent éduqués et qualifiés, puisque la Syrie est un pays qui a formé son élite, qui ont les moyens de prendre la route. Ou de continuer leur périple après s'être installé pendant un moment dans un des pays limitrophes de la Syrie. Certains ont pu, pendant ce temps, reconstituer un capital, ou récolter de l'argent auprès de leurs familles en Europe par exemple, pour entreprendre leur long voyage.

S'agit-il dans leur cas d'un exode temporaire ou d'une migration définitive ?

Les réfugiés syriens, conscients de la dégradation de la situation dans leur pays, et de l'étendue des destructions des logements et des infrastructures, sont partis pour s'installer durablement dans leur pays d'accueil. Ils ne rentreront pas avant la fin du conflit. **Les demandeurs d'asile vont bénéficier d'un titre de séjour valable entre 5 et 10 ans, donc il s'agit au minimum d'un séjour de moyen terme. Il faut donc préparer l'avenir, et commencer à penser leur intégration en évaluant leurs compétences et en reconnaissant leurs diplômes. Ces personnes, fortes d'une soif de vivre extrêmement puissante et d'un dynamisme incroyable, n'ont qu'une seule idée en tête : reconstruire leur vie. Ils ne viennent pas en Europe pour être assistés.**

Merkels Worte und Taten

Merkels Politik der Kehrtwenden hat offenbar nicht nur vielen europäischen Ländern eine Flüchtlingskrise beschert, sondern nebenher eher Deutschland als Ungarn isoliert. Zudem steht die warmherzige Aufnahme der Flüchtlinge in den Gemeinden im scharfen Kontrast zum politischen Stillstand. Ein Kommentar.

17.09.2015, von **HOLGER STELTZNER**

Bei aller Begeisterung über die Willkommenskultur sollte es die Deutschen interessieren, was ihre Nachbarn dazu sagen, dass Angela Merkel erst im Alleingang die Arme für Flüchtlinge ohne Rücksicht auf den gemeinsamen Schengen-Raum weit öffnete und dann panikartig ebenfalls ohne Absprache mit den Partnern Grenzkontrollen einführte. Die harschen Reaktionen unserer Nachbarn sind mehr als deutlich – und ungewohnt offen.



Autor: Holger Steltzner, Herausgeber. Folgen:

Betroffenheit dürfe nicht der einzige Leitfaden öffentlichen Handelns sein, lässt Frankreichs Premierminister wissen. **Deutschlands Versuch, mit finanziellen Drohungen andere Länder zur Aufnahme von Flüchtlingen zu zwingen, halten nicht nur die Tschechen oder Balten für Erpressung.** Er sei überrascht, wie „beinahe aggressiv“ Deutschland anderen Vorschriften machen wolle, stellt der Regierungschef Litauens fest. Offenbar hat Merkels Politik der Kehrtwenden nicht nur vielen europäischen Ländern eine Flüchtlingskrise beschert, sondern **nebenher in Europa eher Deutschland als Ungarn isoliert.**

Innerhalb Deutschlands steht die beeindruckend **warmherzige Aufnahme** der Flüchtlinge in den Gemeinden im **scharfen Kontrast zum politischen Stillstand.** **Welche Gesetze hat denn die große Koalition geändert, ausgesetzt oder eingeführt, um flexibler und schneller zu reagieren? Wieso werden Asylverfahren aus den Balkanstaaten noch immer nicht in einem vereinfachten Verfahren kurzfristig abgeschlossen? Warum darf das Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge, bei dem der Antrag auf Asyl gestellt werden muss, keine Daten an die Bundesagentur für Arbeit weitergeben?**

Der mehr oder weniger freiwillige Rücktritt des Präsidenten des Flüchtlingsamtes lenkt zum einen von seinem Dienstherrn, dem Innenminister Thomas de Maizière, ab. Zum anderen macht das den Weg frei für ein zupackendes Krisenmanagement. Nun soll der Vorstandsvorsitzende der Bundesagentur für Arbeit, Frank-Jürgen Weise, die Aufnahme und Integration der Flüchtlinge koordinieren. Das ist eine gute Entscheidung, weil Weise die Agentur für Arbeit modernisierte, ohne laufend auf das Beamtenrecht zu schießen. Außerdem entscheidet der Arbeitsmarkt darüber, ob die Integration der Flüchtlinge gelingt. Das wird viel schwieriger als die meisten glauben – und es wird viel länger dauern.

128,84

Crise des migrants : une petite histoire de la Hongrie

Par [Christian Combaz](#)

Mis à jour le 17/09/2015 à 16:46

Christian Combaz est l'auteur de De l'Est, de la Peste et du reste (Laffont, 1993) et du Roman de Budapest (2005).

Il existe un mot qui sert à définir le comportement des électeurs, des citoyens et des peuples quand il échappe à l'analyse de leurs élus, de leurs concitoyens, de leurs partenaires diplomatiques: l'irrationnel. On l'applique souvent en ce moment à la Hongrie mais pour quiconque y a vécu, et s'est penché sur le passé de ce pays qui a subi une transfusion complète au 17ème siècle, puis a été mutilé par plusieurs opérations chirurgicales en 1921, l'irrationnel n'échappe pas à toute tentative d'explication.

On ne peut pas mettre un peuple entier, qui a été martyrisé pendant un siècle, sous thérapie forcée en lui répétant que ses craintes sont vaines et que tout va bien se passer.

La première tient à la façon dont un pays de huit millions d'habitants seulement peut percevoir, en quelques mois, l'arrivée, le transit forcé, le campement provisoire, voire l'établissement durable d'une population largement musulmane qui peut représenter, même temporairement une part non négligeable son effectif alors que le pourcentage était pratiquement nul il y a moins d'un an. Pour les commentateurs européens et pour Mme Merkel, les Hongrois devraient rester dans le rationnel mais à ce stade c'est déjà difficile. La chose se complique si l'on examine l'histoire du pays. Dans la série «le saviez-vous?», dans les dernières années du règne de Louis XIV, trois millions de Hongrois ont été réduits en esclavage par les Turcs et dispersés à travers la Turquie après une invasion complète de leur territoire, un anéantissement de leur culture, une multiplication des écoles coraniques, le tout dans un pays aussi farouchement catholique que pouvait l'être la France des abbayes cisterciennes. Malgré une lobotomie permanente sur le thème «c'est du passé tout ça», les Hongrois d'aujourd'hui, dont l'esprit de famille est obsessionnel, ne peuvent pas oublier les cruautés et les dévastations commises, car leur littérature et leurs livres d'histoire sont pleins de ce désastre quasi-biblique. On a beau leur dire, et nous dire, «vous mélangez tout, les deux situations n'ont rien à voir», il n'appartient à personne de se glisser dans l'imaginaire des Hongrois pour décréter qu'il doivent cesser de faire des cauchemars à propos des grandes invasions qu'ils ont subies. On ne peut pas mettre un peuple entier, qui a été martyrisé pendant un siècle, sous thérapie forcée en lui répétant que ses craintes sont vaines et que tout va bien se passer. Mais il existe un troisième volet de l'irrationnel, qui serait la conséquence directe des leçons de bonne conduite européenne qu'on inflige en ce moment aux Hongrois: il s'agit d'un peuple farouche, susceptible, qui est un peu la Corse des pays de l'Est, une nation humiliée par le traité de Trianon, dont un tiers de la population s'est retrouvé chez ses voisins sur un trait de plume de Clemenceau, et qui ne demande qu'à retrouver l'unité perdue sur un thème vraiment fédérateur.

Lequel? Devinez.

Fragen an Bodo Ramelow

Der Ministerpräsident des Freistaates Thüringen war in der Sendung „Maybrit Illner“ zwar nicht zu Gast. Nach dem Auftritt seiner Parteivorsitzenden Katja Kipping sollte er aber dringend einige Fragen beantworten.

18.09.2015, von FRANK LÜBBERDING

Gestern Abend drohte der kroatische Innenminister offen mit der Schließung der Grenze, wenn Serbien weiterhin den ungehinderten Zug von Flüchtlingen in den EU-Staat zulassen sollte. Gleichzeitig wurde der Ministerpräsident des Landes deutlich. Griechenland erlaube es täglich tausenden Menschen von der Türkei aus in den Schengenraum einzureisen. Er nannte die Türkei einen „sicheren Drittstaat“.

Über Mazedonien und Serbien kommen diese Menschen jetzt nach Kroatien, um von dort aus über Österreich nach Deutschland einzureisen. Das Land kann diese Menschen weder alle aufnehmen, noch einfach weiterschicken. Kroatien ist nach wenigen Tagen in der gleichen Situation, die Ungarn erst nach Monaten erlebt hat. Der Staat ist völlig überfordert und steht am Rande der Panik.

Mit einem guten Gefühl den Fernseher ausschalten?

Und was passiert gestern Abend bei [Maybrit Illner](#)? Ihre Gäste diskutieren über Ungarn, wie schon in den vergangenen Wochen. Nun braucht niemand den Kulturkampf des Viktor Orban gegen den Islam mitzumachen. Genauso kann man die Lebensumstände der Flüchtlinge in Ungarn kritisieren. Aber das ändert nichts an der richtigen Analyse Orbans über die Folgen dieser modernen Völkerwanderung.

Die EU hat keine Außengrenzen mehr und keine Flüchtlingspolitik, die diesen Namen verdient. Deutschland noch nicht einmal mehr ein funktionierendes Asylverfahren, wie der Rücktritt des Präsidenten des Bundesamtes für Migration und Flüchtlinge deutlich machte. Insofern passte der Titel dieser Sendung: „Millionen auf der Flucht – wie schaffen wir das?“

Der CSU-Generalsekretär [Andreas Scheuer](#) brachte das gut auf den Punkt. Wie soll der Zuschauer „jetzt mit einem guten Gefühl den Fernseher ausschalten“? Die Voraussetzung wäre eine nüchterne Analyse, die sich nicht lediglich in der Artikulation guten Willens dokumentiert. Ulrich Reitz vom Focus sprach etwa die abzusehenden Verteilungskämpfe in dieser Gesellschaft an. Die Konkurrenz gerade der sozial schwächeren Schichten mit den Flüchtlingen um Jobs und Wohnraum. „Das müssen wir verhindern“, so Thomas Oppermann, Vorsitzender der SPD- Bundestagsfraktion. Das war schon bisher auf den Immobilienmärkten in den Ballungsräumen nicht gelungen, trotz Mietpreisbremse. Das soll sich jetzt mit Investitionen in den sozialen Wohnungsbau ändern, deren Realisierung Jahre dauern wird? Oder will man wie nach dem Krieg provisorische Barackensiedlungen errichten?

Remscheid schafft es

Da sind alle Kommunen in Nordrhein-Westfalen an den Grenzen ihrer Möglichkeiten angekommen. Aber ausgerechnet die Ordnungsdezernentin der Stadt Remscheid, Barbara Reul-Nocke (CDU), vermittelt den Eindruck, das alles zu schaffen. Die Bezirksregierung in Arnsberg ist in diesem Bundesland für die Unterbringung der Flüchtlinge zuständig. Deren Mitarbeiter wissen jetzt, wo noch freie Kapazitäten zu finden sind: in Remscheid. Immerhin ein Grund zum Optimismus.

Es fanden sich bei Frau Illner noch weitere originelle Ideen. Diana Henniges, Flüchtlingshelferin aus Berlin, wurde gebeten, eine Zuschauerfrage zu beantworten: Wo sollen die Lehrer, Ärzte, Dolmetscher, Sozialarbeiter und Polizisten herkommen, die man angesichts dieser für Nachkriegsverhältnisse historisch beispiellosen Zuwanderung braucht? „Unter den Arbeitslosen“, und Flüchtlingen so ist hinzuzufügen, „findet man bestimmt viele, die diese Jobs machen wollen“, so Frau Henniges.

Die Politik versuchte schon vor dieser Zuwanderung, auf den zunehmenden Ärztemangel in der Grundversorgung zu reagieren. Die Personalplanung bei Lehrern und Polizisten ist langwierig und teuer. Diese Lehrer und Polizisten werden erst in Jahren zur Verfügung stehen. Wie nennt man diese Unkenntnis über elementare Sachverhalte in dieser Gesellschaft? Ignoranz? Oder doch anders?

Ist es damit zu entschuldigen, dass sich Frau Henniges ehrenamtlich engagiert? Sie äußert sich zu einer zentralen Zukunftsfrage dieser Gesellschaft, allerdings ohne jede Sachkenntnis. Man kann darin das Niveau der Debatte erkennen. Es hat ihr übrigens niemand der anderen Gäste widersprochen. Weder [Oppermann](#), noch Scheuer, die es beide besser wissen müssen.

„Ihre Hetze ist ja nicht zu ertragen“

Auch nicht [Bodo Ramelow](#). Obwohl man das dem Ministerpräsidenten Thüringens durchaus zutrauen sollte. Der Politiker der Linken war gestern Abend nicht dabei. Aber dafür Katja Kipping. Ramelow sollte einige Fragen beantworten, die sich aus den Ausführungen seiner Parteivorsitzenden ergeben. Ist er wie Frau Kipping der Meinung, dass es keine Obergrenze bei der Aufnahme von Flüchtlingen geben darf? Weil unser Staat wegen der Ausbeutung der Staaten des Südens kein moralisches Recht dazu hat? Das müssen übrigens Syrien oder der Irak sein. Dort kommen die meisten Flüchtlinge her.

Ramelow sitzt mit dem bayerischen Ministerpräsidenten Horst Seehofer in der Ministerpräsidentenkonferenz. Teilt er die Auffassung von Frau [Kipping](#), die CSU mache mit ihrer Argumentation Ausschreitungen wie damals in Rostock-Lichtenhagen möglich? Kann Ramelow folgendem Satz zustimmen: „Ihre Hetze ist ja nicht zu ertragen.“ Das richtete seine Parteifreundin an Scheuer. Dieser hatte lediglich auf die geltende Rechtslage hingewiesen, Armutsflüchtlingen keinen dauerhaften Aufenthaltsstatus zu gewähren. Ist das die Tonlage des Thüringer Ministerpräsidenten, der in den vergangenen Wochen anders redete und handelte? Nämlich mit der Ernsthaftigkeit, die von einem Ministerpräsidenten zum Wohl seines Bundeslandes in diesem Ausnahmezustand zu erwarten ist.

Beutet der Steuerzahler Syrien aus?

Frau Kipping ist nicht im Ehrenamt tätig. Sie hat ihr gesamtes Berufsleben als Abgeordnete im Deutschen [Bundestag](#) verbracht, alimentiert von dem Steuerzahler, dem sie offenkundig die Ausbeutung Syriens vorwirft. Gleichzeitig ist sie Vorsitzende der größten Oppositionspartei im Deutschen Bundestag. Ihr Wort hat Gewicht. Sie wird eingeladen in die wichtigsten deutschen Talkshows. Ist Bodo Ramelow der Meinung, seine Parteivorsitzende handelt in dieser für ihn auch schwierigen Situation angemessen? Die deutsche Politik hat in kurzer Frist wichtige Entscheidungen zu treffen. Ramelow hat sie umzusetzen. Der Bundesaußenminister fliegt heute in die Türkei, um mit der Regierung in Ankara über die Flüchtlingskrise zu reden.

Ramelow muss als Ministerpräsident die Flüchtlinge unterbringen, die ihm zugewiesen werden. Er muss ihnen eine Perspektive vermitteln, auch ohne kurzfristig die Lehrer, Ärzte und Polizisten einstellen zu können, die er braucht. Ramelow muss die Haushaltsmittel zur Verfügung stellen, die für andere Aufgaben fehlen werden. Da sollte er sich nichts vormachen. Er hat die Akzeptanz in der Bevölkerung zu sichern, die nicht selbstverständlich ist. Das alles muss Bodo Ramelow leisten.

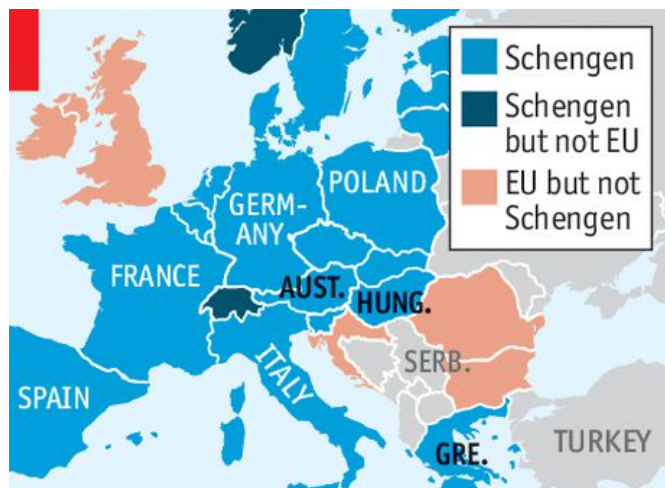
Es geht ihm nicht anders als seinen fünfzehn Amtskollegen in Deutschland. Zu ihnen gehört [Horst Seehofer](#). Kann sich der Ministerpräsident des Freistaates Thüringen eine solche Parteivorsitzende leisten, die nichts von dem verstanden hat, worum es geht? Diese Frage muss er beantworten. Ihm geht es damit nicht anders als der Bundeskanzlerin.

Es gibt mittlerweile Zweifel daran, ob wir das schaffen werden, wenn sich an der Debatte über dieses Thema nichts ändern sollte. Frau Kipping, so ist zu vermuten, wird dann aber keine Rolle mehr in der deutschen Politik spielen.

Shooting Schengen

Only an EU-wide agreement on asylum can save passport-free travel in Europe

Sep 19th 2015 | [From the print edition](#)



Economist.com

WHAT happens at Europe's borders often telegraphs momentous change. The Soviet blockade of Berlin in 1948 foreshadowed the cold war. The scrapping of a Hungarian fence on the frontier with Austria in May 1989 doomed Soviet rule in Eastern Europe months before protests toppled its leaders. **Now the re-imposition of some border controls by Germany and Austria, to stanch the flow of refugees and migrants, is the harbinger of something dramatic: the erosion and possible demise of the Schengen free-travel area, one of the European Union's most striking achievements.**

For the past two decades anyone in the 26 European countries of the Schengen area, including some outside the EU (but excluding Britain and Ireland), could travel within this zone without being troubled by customs or passport controls. Named after the town in Luxembourg where the agreement was signed, **Schengen makes trade and travel easier, and is a tangible manifestation of the EU's "ever closer union".**

But as with that other grand project, the euro, Schengen is only a partial act of integration: external borders, migration policies and policing remain in the hands of national governments. As with the euro, an outside shock has destabilised Schengen and embittered relations between EU states. The influx of migrants has made a joke of the EU's asylum rules. **Refugees are supposed to seek sanctuary in the first EU country they reach—typically Italy or Greece. But Schengen makes it easy for them to push on to the country most likely to welcome them, or where they can find friends, relatives and jobs.**

Many head for prosperous, generous Germany. **Angela Merkel, the chancellor, at first cast aside the rules to preserve Schengen, amid touching scenes of Germans welcoming refugees.** But, unable to cope, she now wants to restore order to the system. So Germany has imposed border controls on the frontier with Austria, which has restricted movement across the frontier with Hungary, which has in turn started imprisoning migrants who cross illegally from Serbia.

Schengen rules allow countries to impose temporary controls to deal with extraordinary events. **Yet the impact of Germany's action is far-reaching. If such a big place at the heart of the EU can break the unspoken**

taboo against suspending Schengen, then others will have fewer qualms about following suit. In France, for example, politicians from the centre- and far-right may well actively work for Schengen's abolition.

Suspending Schengen is just a sticking plaster for Europe's refugee crisis, which could persist for many years; migrants arriving in Europe will search for weak points at frontiers and burst through them. The crisis demands interventions at every stage, from working for a ceasefire in Syria to helping Turkey and Lebanon deal with their vastly larger numbers of refugees. Crucially, at home, Europeans must share the task of taking in asylum-seekers, hard though this will be. (If sent to a less-attractive country, some may head straight back to Germany.) **Yet few places seem to share Germany's *Willkommenskultur*.** At a meeting of interior ministers on September 14th eastern European countries blocked plans for 120,000 refugees to be resettled across the EU under a system of quotas.

The stakes in Europe

This beggar-thy-neighbour mindset is reckless. It will ultimately lead to the breakdown of Schengen, and a European freedom will have been lost. The idea that EU leaders can act in the common interest will have suffered yet another blow. **The crisis has already strengthened anti-immigrant, anti-EU populist parties; its chaotic mismanagement will boost them still further. And it will do nothing to help pro-Europeans arguing the merits of staying in the EU in Britain's looming referendum. If the euro zone is stagnant, Britain leaves and Europeans can no longer travel freely, citizens might then ask: what exactly is the point of the EU?**

OlgrichSep 17th, 23:16

"If the euro zone is stagnant, Britain leaves and Europeans can no longer travel freely, citizens might then ask: what exactly is the point of the EU?"

An excellent question.

Schengen (borderless within Schengen's borders! did nobody get the irony?) and the varying social benefits within EU countries are obvious magnets. Of course these poor desperate people are seeking the best "deal". The first country they manage to get to is better than the one they are fleeing and still "many head for prosperous, generous Germany".

So, what IS the point of the EU, in reality?

A magnificent dream, exposed by the harsh reality of waking up.

PS. Don't even mention the Euro, another ill-thought-through sub-group.

LuftwaffeSep 17th, 20:34

"But Schengen makes it easy for them to push on to the country most likely to welcome them, or where they can find friends, relatives and jobs."

Yeah, money received as support has nothing to do with it. Who do you want to fool, Economist?

"with Hungary, which has in turn started imprisoning migrants who cross illegally from Serbia."

FALSE. Those crossing the border illegally are tried, receive court expulsion orders for 1-2 years from Schengen Area and then they are expelled, NOT imprisoned.

"If sent to a less-attractive country, some may head straight back to Germany."

Some? LOL. Again, who do you want to fool, Economist?

The famous quota system is unworkable because the asylees' freedom of movement in practice cannot be limited.

CourtjesterSep 17th, 16:43

Even an EU-wide agreement will not be good enough; as economic prospects will still differ wildly. First to be witnessed by "poverty migration" from Bulgaria and the lot for a while, if there is a way to gain access to more beneficial work conditions/social welfare, people will move.[not to mention the brain drain] Wait till Ukraine fall's apart for real, the party is only about to start.

It might have escaped TE's notice, however one of the EU courts issued a major ruling, allowing the Germans to deny welfare claims of those who obviously do not seek work from outside Germany. Schengen is not so much the issue, the uncontrolled access to social welfare/better work prospects, via asylum or intra EU migration is the much bigger draw here, as long as the big economic divide exists inside the EU.

And there are stark moral choices to be made - you cannot solve the poverty/war refugee issues of the world by migration to Europe without destroying it. Currently it is only border fences and tear gas; what will be the next step?

The only solution is not only a EU wide rule for people asylum seekers, you need a EU wide retreat of access to national social welfare systems as well, i.e. linked to valid work contracts after so many months, etc. Needed is a clear agreement, when and how economic migrants from outside the EU are admitted, EU wide. Not only to save the Schengen treaty, by the way.

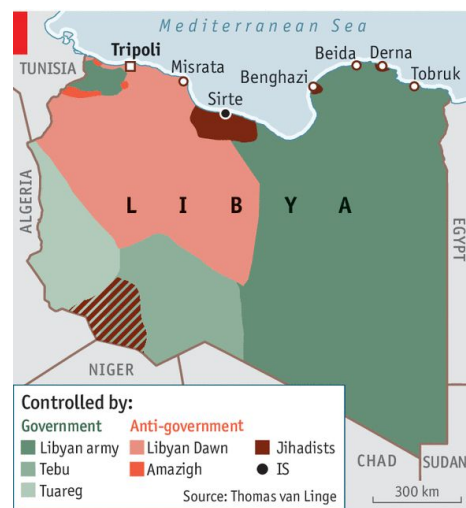
And last but not least, if the US, Russia and other meddling powers would stop to issue proxy provocations, [Syria surely being one, Ukraine anybody?] and destroy entire countries in the process.... **The refugee crisis will not abate.**

Libya's civil war

Running out of time

Who can pull Libya out of the abyss?

Sep 19th 2015 | BEIRUT | [From the print edition](#)



PEACE envoys in the Middle East have a thankless task. That is certainly true of Bernardino León, the Spanish diplomat who heads the UN's mission to Libya. For months Mr León has been knocking heads together in the hope of bringing some semblance of unity to the country. But as *The Economist* went to press, the talks were faltering, days before the deadline of September 20th that Mr León has set.

Like previous rounds of jaw-jaw, the talks seek a power-sharing arrangement that would rid divided Libya of its parallel parliaments, governments and courts. Under the deal being proposed, the factions would form a government of national accord. The House of Representatives (HOR), the internationally recognised parliament in the eastern city of Tobruk, would have the primary legislative role. Much of the negotiation concerned the future role of members of the self-declared parliament still in Tripoli, known as the General National Council.

On September 15th the internationally recognised government in the east (based in the city of Beida rather than Tobruk) appeared to reject the deal after Mr León said amendments could be made to the draft, at the GNC's request. A day later, the HOR turned up the pressure, saying it might stop exports to oil companies still dealing with the rival authorities in Tripoli.

There is little doubt that Libya needs a political agreement, and fast. The civil war that has raged since the downfall of Colonel Muammar Qaddafi has ruined the few institutions that existed. The country is thought to have used up a quarter of its foreign reserves last year. The next 18 months will see severe austerity measures. **Jihadists of all stripes have fed off the chaos.**

Most worrying is Libya's Islamic State (IS) franchise. Since getting booted out of Derna, in the east, it has bedded down in Sirte, Qaddafi's hometown. Two attacks in Tunisia, in the Bardo museum in Tunis and at a beach resort in Sousse, have been linked to men who trained in Libya.

Although some militias have declared a truce to focus on IS, most of them, including the force controlled by Khalifa al-Haftar, a former general who is affiliated with the Beida government, are more interested in fighting each other than defeating IS. That is why talk is growing in Western capitals of possible operations against IS in Libya. It is unclear whether this would be an extension of the coalition against IS which is currently only operating in Syria and Iraq, or a new grouping. Egypt, which has seen several of its citizens beheaded by IS in Libya, is one Arab country urging action.

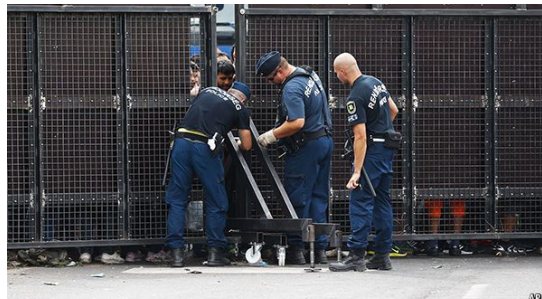
Still, as with Iraq and Syria, Libya's underlying problems need to be solved alongside any military action. In theory that should be easier in Libya: there is not much ideological difference between the various factions. Mr León describes this as the "very last moment" for Libyans to come together. Alas, many ordinary Libyans gave up on their country a while ago.

[From the print edition: Middle East and Africa](#)

Europe starts putting up walls

Germany and other countries reimpose border controls

Sep 19th 2015 | BERLIN | [From the print edition](#)



“WE WILL manage,” said Angela Merkel, the German chancellor, in an attempt earlier this month to win public support for the refugees streaming into the country from the Middle East via the Balkans. Her phrase was both optimistic and familiar—it comes from the German version of the theme song of “Bob the Builder”, a children’s television series.

But within two weeks, on September 13th, Mrs Merkel performed a volte-face that stunned the European Union. Because Germany could not “manage” the influx of asylum-seekers and migrants, she reimposed controls along the border with Austria, accelerating an already galloping crisis. Austria, Slovakia and the Netherlands followed suit with controls of their own. They are said to be temporary and legal under the Schengen agreement that sets up free travel in most of the EU. And so they may be. But the crisis has a life of its own.

Hungary declared an emergency, sealed its border with Serbia with barbed-wire fences and began arresting those trying to cross. Police fired tear gas at them; 20 officers and many refugees were hurt. Growing numbers of refugees are now trapped on the Serbian side and have started evading the barrier by marching into Romania and Croatia, which are in the EU but not yet in Schengen. Hungary responded by saying it will extend the fence to its Romanian border. The cascade of events is likely to continue.

Mrs Merkel and her Austrian counterpart, Werner Faymann, meeting in Berlin on September 15th, called for an emergency EU summit. A day earlier the EU’s interior ministers had failed to reach agreement on a plan proposed by the European Commission for a binding quota system that would allocate 120,000 refugees among member states. The fiercest resistance came from eastern European countries. The plan could still be passed when the ministers next meet on September 22nd. But Germany’s interior minister, Thomas de Maizière, says that more pressure is needed. He proposes cutting EU subsidies to member states that refuse to take their share of refugees.

Disorder on the border

A potentially more effective way of exerting pressure involves extending German border controls to its eastern neighbours, Poland and the Czech Republic. The checks would not affect the legal rights of people seeking asylum in Germany (there or anywhere else) but merely move the burden of registering applicants from inland processing centres to the border. Yet controls would slow traffic and disrupt commerce, much of which benefits eastern Europe. Germany, ever sensitive about being seen as a bully, will think hard about increasing pressure overtly. Nonetheless, on September 7th Sigmar Gabriel, Germany’s vice-chancellor and economics minister, made a veiled threat. More border controls, he said, “would be a politically dramatic reverse for Europe, and I

think a mental one too. But it would also be a heavy economic blow...especially for those states that are now saying: 'We won't participate.'"

For now, Mrs Merkel is busy shoring up domestic support. She became a heroine of sorts to refugees and many citizens on September 4th when she allowed trains to carry stranded refugees from Hungary through Austria into Germany. Germans bearing flowers and sweets turned out to welcome them. But Mrs Merkel, who is usually more cautious, had acted without bringing along some of her closest political partners. The conservative Christian Social Union governs the state of Bavaria, which borders Austria, and was outraged by Mrs Merkel's welcoming stance, calling it a "grave mistake". Other regional and municipal governments joined in the criticism. So did some EU countries, accusing Mrs Merkel of encouraging even more refugees to come.

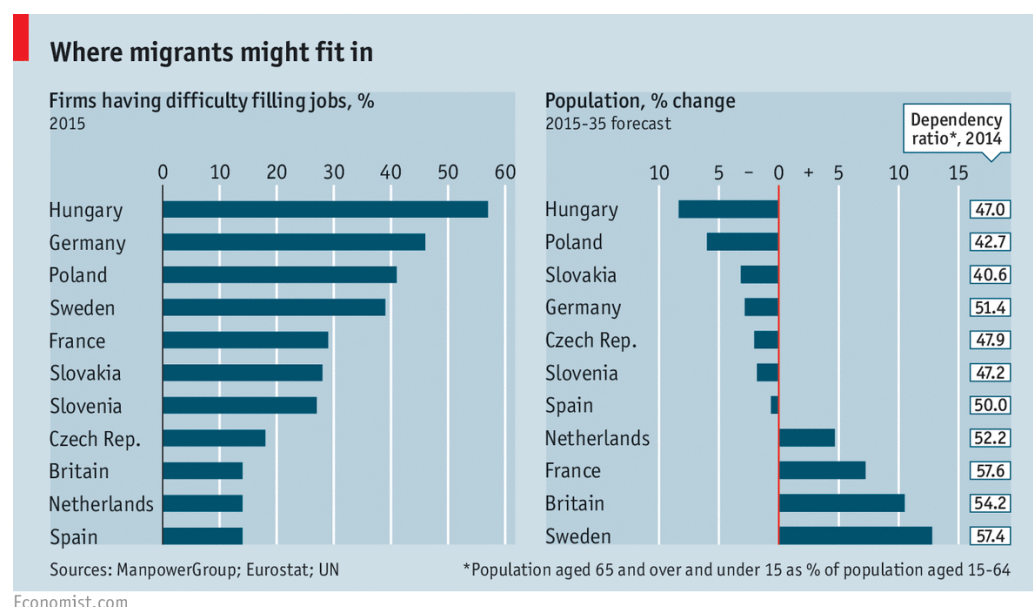
Germany's welcome mat could fray as the crisis grows. But Mrs Merkel is trying to retain her position as a champion of refugees. "If we now have to start apologising for showing a friendly face in an emergency, then this is not my country," she said defiantly on September 15th.

She is haunted by the spectre that EU countries could fail in their greatest humanitarian challenge yet, thus betraying their own values. Border controls appear to negate perhaps the most visible achievement of European integration. Unsurprisingly many Eurosceptics are celebrating. "Schengen surely can't survive now," tweeted Nigel Farage, the leader of Britain's UK Independence Party. "Bye-bye, Schengen," gloated Marine Le Pen, the leader of France's even more virulently anti-EU National Front.

More vacancies than visitors

Eastern Europe may not like refugees but needs them more than other countries

Sep 19th 2015 | BUDAPEST, PRAGUE AND WARSAW | [From the print edition](#)



Economist.com

WITH their pristine rooms and green courtyard, the new psychiatric clinic and geriatric and dermatological wards cost \$19m. But what the hospital in Bydgoszcz in north-west Poland does not have is enough nurses and carers. As a result it can only fill half of its 236 beds. Such labour shortages are common in eastern Europe. Construction, manufacturing and technology firms are struggling to find enough workers. And shortages are likely to get worse as populations age rapidly.

Meanwhile, eastern European governments have been among the most vocal opponents of plans to relocate refugees across the EU. Poles and Czechs have joined Hungarians in refusing to accommodate migrants, who are often young and educated. This ignores economic logic.

A survey by ManpowerGroup, a consultancy, found that two out of five firms in Poland struggle to fill vacancies. In Hungary, almost half could not get the staff they need. In the Czech Republic and Slovakia fewer employers report difficulties (18% and 28%) but the share has been climbing steadily over the past few years.

IT firms, which face a crunch everywhere in Europe, struggle the most. Their best employees are lured to western Europe or America by higher salaries. Poland may be thriving as a back office for European business, but in 2014 it needed 50,000 more IT workers than it could find. In Slovakia, the 50,000-strong IT sector could expand by 10,000 overnight if people were available. "The education system is good at producing scientists, but not coders," says Radovan Durana, an economist at the Institute of Economic and Social Studies in Bratislava. In Hungary, it is engineers who are in particularly short supply. Although Budapest is cheaper than Berlin, many graduates move to Germany, where pay is 150% higher.

So far skill shortages have not stopped national economies from growing. Poland and Hungary will expand by around 2.8-3.3% this year. But they could do much better. GDP per person in 2014 was less than 68% of the EU average. Labour shortfalls also increase pension deficits and leave holes in public finances.

Many eastern countries are failing to reach their considerable potential. Slovakia produces nearly 1m cars per year, the most per capita in the world. In August, Jaguar Land Rover announced plans to open its first continental European plant near the city of Nitra, costing €1.4 billion (\$1.6 billion) by 2018. Local suppliers should be among the main beneficiaries, but a survey by PwC, a consulting firm, found that nearly 80% already lack skilled labour.

The public sector is no better off. Poland has five nurses per 1,000 inhabitants—compared with 13 in Germany. Of those only 1% are under 25, and 29% are due to retire by 2022. The average age among specialist doctors is 55. Maciej Hamankiewicz, president of Poland's Supreme Medical Council, warns that patients may not receive proper care.

In Hungary, the crisis in the health system is even worse. Some 40% of doctors are over 60 and more than 200 medical practices have no doctor at all, mostly in the poorer eastern and northern regions. At Almasi Balogh Pal Hospital in Ozd, 55 doctors work nonstop to serve a city of 80,000 people. A hospital director says adverts for recruits get no response.

Reality check

It is Panglossian to expect refugees from far away to plug skill gaps instantly. Reliable data on what migrants know how to do are scarce. However, there is ample evidence that Syrians, the single largest group of arrivals, are relatively well-educated. Many Syrian doctors were trained in the Soviet Union and speak fluent Russian. Within minutes at one Budapest train station an *Economist* correspondent came across a Syrian lawyer, a mechanical engineer, an agricultural engineer and a physics teacher, all of whom spoke good English.

Even less capable refugees could have plenty of jobs to choose from. The Polish ministry of labour has identified large shortages of manual workers in agriculture and construction. The Hungarian economy ministry points to demand for carpenters, shop assistants, gardeners and bakers. Poland is already importing tens of thousands of seasonal workers from neighbouring Ukraine.

As populations age, workforces will keep shrinking. In Hungary birth rates are declining and lifespans are stretching. Many of the young emigrate. The population is forecast to shrink by 8% between now and 2035, while Poland faces a shrinkage of 6% (see chart). These figures still underestimate the problem, since official forecasts take people registered in a census as the baseline population, even though many live abroad and may not return.

Some eastern European officials insist they can fill skill gaps by drawing in labour from neighbouring countries with cultures more similar to their own, such as Bulgaria and Romania, which are EU members but not yet part of the Schengen travel zone. That too may be wishful thinking. Bulgarians and Romanians can already move around freely in Europe if they show their passports, and few head for other former Warsaw Pact countries. Meanwhile, both countries' populations are ageing fast.

In the Balkans, wages are often lower than farther north, and employment in Poland or Hungary may seem attractive. But populations in the former Yugoslavia are old and shrinking; many of the young have already left. In Bosnia and Herzegovina the population was 4.4m in 1991, but now is 3.8m, and by 2050 the UN predicts it will fall by a further fifth, to 3.1m.

Immigration critics are right that integrating outsiders into countries with difficult languages and fragile public services is hard. But the rewards are obvious. "Poland is not likely to catch up with the West without opening up to foreign workers," says Marcin Piatkowski, an economist at the World Bank.

Orban the archetype

One man epitomises hostile views on migrants widely held by his people

Sep 19th 2015 | BUDAPEST | [From the print edition](#)

HE ORDERED a fence topped with razor-wire along the 175-kilometre border with Serbia. He cast Christian Europe as battling Muslim hordes for survival, stirring memories of ancient battles against Ottoman invaders and shattering political taboos. Viktor Orban, Hungary's prime minister, is a pugnacious opponent of immigration. His stance is shared not only by many of his people but also by plenty in other eastern European countries. Whereas 96% of Germans approve in principle of taking in refugees (and 59% support taking in more now), 71% of Czechs are against taking any. [How to explain this discrepancy?](#)

Throughout history Hungarians and their neighbours have benefited mightily from migration and the charity of others. The second world war, the Russian invasions of Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968, Poland's tortured 20th century—all have produced waves of refugees. Hungary has a tradition of welcoming strangers. Indeed, the Magyars themselves are comparatively recent arrivals in Europe, having come from the Urals just over a millennium ago. St Stephen, Hungary's first Christian king, advised his son, St Emeric, in 1036 to “make the strangers welcome in this land, let them keep their languages and customs, for weak and fragile is the realm which is based on a single language or a single set of customs.”

Mr Orban's personal journey is a good starting point for understanding how things have changed. He shot to fame in June 1989 after speaking in front of 250,000 at the reburial of Imre Nagy, the leader of Hungary's failed 1956 revolution. A founder of the Alliance of Young Democrats, or Fidesz in Hungarian, he demanded that the Russians depart. Within months the communist government folded.

But like his countrymen, Mr Orban found operating in freedom a tougher task than expected. Competition became stiffer. He groped his way ahead in elections, won power in 1998 but lost it again, and was in the wilderness for eight years from 2002 until finally tightening his grip on power by embracing semi-authoritarian tactics. Former allies were cast aside. Foes fared worse. Success came from strength rather than co-operation, he surmised.

Many of his countrymen learnt a similar lesson. A quarter-century after tearing down the Iron Curtain they still feel like second-class citizens in Europe and if anything expect to receive aid rather than give it. Unlike their prime minister, who is fluent in English, two out of three Hungarians cannot speak a foreign language. Contact with different races is minimal across the region. Poland is 98% white and 94% Catholic. Many social spheres remain deeply insular and conservative.

Mr Orban, born in 1963, may now move in elevated circles but he comes from the same stock. He grew up in a village outside Budapest. Every summer he worked on a collective farm. Suspicion was everywhere under communist rule. Politics was impossible to discuss outside trusted company. “People did not gather because that could be dangerous,” he says. “Family was the only thing that could defend you from the outside world.” **Sealed off behind the Iron Curtain, life remained mostly unchanged for decades. The great social debates in the postwar West—feminism, anti-racism, gay rights, the end of deference to authority—went pretty much unnoticed, and still mystify supporters of Mr Orban.**

His worldview was shaped, he says, by an Hungarian epic called “Miklos Toldi”, describing a 14th century nobleman who protects women and children. “There is no shame in being strong and successful and we should not pretend that we are all equal,” he says.

Mr Orban's politics is based on such beliefs, says Gyorgy Schopflin, an ally and Fidesz member of the European parliament. **The prime minister wants a Europe where Christian and national traditions—which he believes are under threat—are taken seriously. The assumption in the West that post-communist societies would seamlessly absorb Western liberal mores on immigration and multiculturalism was profoundly wrong, according to Mr Schopflin.** “These countries are still defining their identities,” he says. “They don't want to adopt the Western approach.”

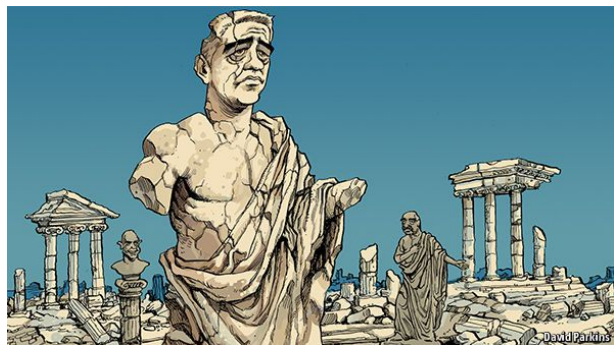
In a region with recent memories of being ruled from Moscow, sovereignty remains a powerful rallying point. Talk of compulsory quotas for accepting asylum-seekers raises hackles. Yet despite such sentiments as well as Mr Orban's hard line, **Hungary is still a society in flux. The tens of thousands of refugees pouring through the country have triggered the largest volunteer response since the end of communism. Some citizens drive out to the roads where migrants tramp towards Austria and hand out food. Others join well-organised rotas at the main train stations, distributing food, clothes and water, running ad-hoc nurseries, taking the sick to hospital or even holding concerts.**

Ferenc Gyurcsany, a former prime minister, hosted several refugees in his home, as a growing number of Hungarians are doing. **Mr Orban says he does not rule out hosting a refugee family himself, telling a German newspaper that he would consider it as long as others did not “take it as an encouragement” to come to Europe.**

Still standing, somehow

After a disastrous year Greece's prime minister may yet win re-election. But the fire has gone

Sep 19th 2015 | [From the print edition](#)



A RECENT cartoon in *Kathimerini*, a Greek newspaper, depicts Alexis Tsipras, the prime minister, waking up in a cold sweat. “I had a nightmare!” he exclaims to his partner. “What was it?” she asks. “That I was re-elected!” he replies.

Poor Mr Tsipras. Swept to power on a wave of anti-austerity hope in January, for six months he and his leftist government captivated the world as they battled to convince euro-zone partners to lend Greece more money without the tough conditions of two previous bail-outs, saw banks forced to close and came close to losing the euro.

Today Mr Tsipras cuts a diminished figure. He capitulated before Greece's creditors and signed a third programme under duress. The country still lives under capital controls. The economy is even more of a wreck. His party has split. The demagogue who once promised to upend Greek politics seems worn out. In calling an election on September 20th to renew his mandate, **Mr Tsipras offers an awkward proposition for Greek voters: that they should choose him to implement the bail-out he denounces. Little wonder the campaign is dull. Watching this spectacle after the high drama of the summer is like sitting through a B-movie after a session of Hitchcock, says George Pagoulatos, a professor at the Athens University of Economics and Business.**

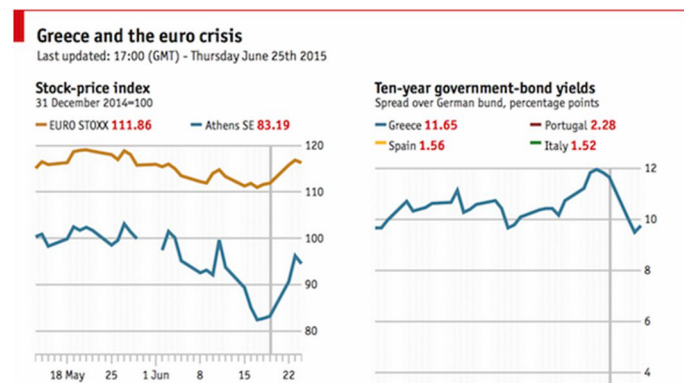
Mr Tsipras is largely the author of his fate. He demonstrated diplomatic and economic ineptitude from the start. His pick for finance minister, **Yanis Varoufakis, a vain economics professor with an unparalleled ability to inspire loathing in his negotiating partners,** was only the first of his many missteps. The referendum he called in June on a bail-out offer that would expire by the time of the vote made little legal sense and triggered the capital controls that set back Greece's fragile recovery; soon afterwards he was obliged to sign a much tougher deal. **Yet voters cheered his defiance of the German imperium.** For a moment it seemed as if Mr Tsipras could lead Greeks anywhere—including, perhaps, out of the euro zone and even the European Union.

One useful truth has emerged from this wild ride: that Greece's euro membership is incompatible with the anti-austerity message Syriza once peddled. But it was a costly experiment. The economy may shrink by around 2% this year, after returning to growth in 2014 (output has shrunk by a quarter from an admittedly unsustainable pre-crisis level). Unemployment, which had been dribbling down from a high of nearly 28%, is creeping up again. Capital controls are suffocating businesses, particularly importers. Taxes will soon go up. Many Greeks now talk of their suffering as another historical calamity to be endured, like occupation by the Turks and the Nazis.

Polls show Syriza neck-and-neck with its rival, the centre-right New Democracy. But in office neither party will have much room for manoeuvre. The bail-out sets the parameters for policy. An ever-vigilant euro zone, scorched by the experiences of this year's negotiations, will pounce on the first sign of deviation from the path Greece has agreed to follow in exchange for its rescue funds. Coalition partners will act as a further check on adventurism.

With a lot less at stake in this election, the candidates have been reduced to making personal jabs. New Democracy's leader, Evangelos Meimarakis, an affable old-timer, charges Mr Tsipras with reckless incompetence. Mr Tsipras's pitch is

that of the heroic failure, who fought hard for his country but could not overcome the mighty Angela Merkel and her euro-zone factotums. He adds that Mr Meimarakis's party has not been cleansed of the corrupt habits that marked its recent turns in office. But that is an old line, and anyway ignores the reality of Syriza's brief term: **it turns out that the new party is as attached to the Greek traditions of clientelism and patronage as the old ones were.**



Daily dispatches: What news from Athens?

Is Greece thus condemned to an eternity of economic drudgery? Not necessarily. **There are lots of good things on offer for the next government should its creditors consider it to be behaving**, notes Mujtaba Rahman, at the Eurasia Group, a consultancy. These include public funds to recapitalise the battered banks, inclusion in the European Central Bank's quantitative easing scheme and the biggest prize of all: **a restructuring of Greece's public debt, probably through an extension of maturities.**

Whatever government emerges from the election will therefore have good reason to get moving on the many reforms it must enact before the bail-out's first review later this year. One observer who has discussed the bail-out with the economics teams of the main parties says it is hard to tell them apart. **Even Mr Tsipras has softened his tone towards its provisions (although if Syriza loses, it might return to hell-raising in opposition).**

Trouble ahead

The bigger battles will come next year, when the austerity implied by the bail-out's fiscal targets start to bite and reform fatigue sets in. Tough battles with interest groups such as farmers lie ahead. **None of the stewards of previous programmes has come anywhere close to implementing reforms properly.** And today, says Wolfango Piccoli of Teneo, a risk-analysis firm, **the Greek bureaucracy is, if anything, even less capable of executing reforms than in the past.** Slippage seems inevitable, although the absence of large debt repayments before next July should at least provide respite from the question of Grexit.

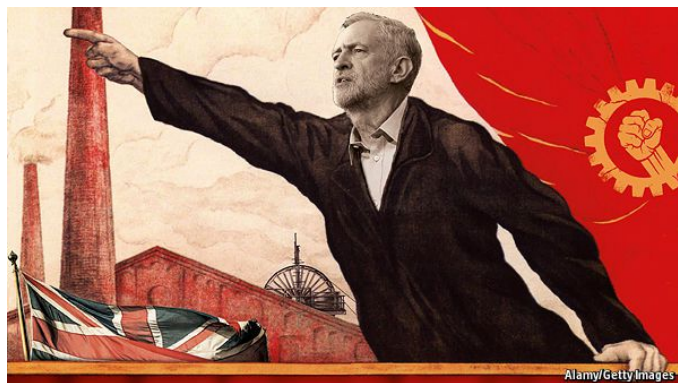
If he wins re-election, Mr Tsipras will find himself in precisely the same position as in January: overseeing a broken economy and relying on rescue funds. He will need to draw on serious reserves of statesmanship to manage a controversial bail-out that will hurt before it heals, without succumbing to the temptations of populism. That will be neither dream nor nightmare, but the prosaic reality of governing a troubled country that has never been in a position to afford the indulgences of radicalism—least of all now.

[From the print edition: Europe](#)

Backwards, comrades!

Jeremy Corbyn is leading Britain's left into a political timewarp. Some old ideological battles must be re-fought

Sep 19th 2015 | [From the print edition](#)



BEFORE he had finished belting out his first celebratory rendition of “The Red Flag”, a hymn to class struggle, some of Jeremy Corbyn’s colleagues in Labour’s shadow cabinet had already handed in their resignations. A 66-year-old socialist, Mr Corbyn has spent 32 years as one of the hardest of hardline left-wingers in the House of Commons and a serial rebel on the Labour backbenches. On September 12th he flattened three moderate rivals (see [article](#)) to become leader of Britain’s main opposition party. Labour MPs are stunned—and perhaps none more so than Mr Corbyn himself.

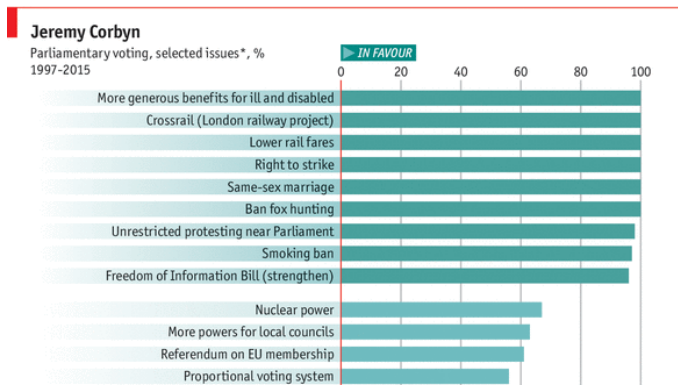
Two views are emerging of Labour’s new leader. The more sympathetic is that, whatever you think of his ideology, Mr Corbyn will at least enrich Britain by injecting fresh ideas into a stale debate. Voters who previously felt uninspired by the say-anything, spin-everything candidates who dominate modern politics have been energised by Mr Corbyn’s willingness to speak his mind and condemn the sterile compromises of the centre left. The other is that Mr Corbyn does not matter because he is unelectable and he cannot last. His significance will be to usher in a second successive Conservative government in the election of 2020—and perhaps a third in 2025.

Cowards flinch and traitors sneer

Start with the ideas. In recent decades the left has had the better of the social arguments—on gay rights, say, or the role of women and the status of the church—but the right has won most of the economic ones. Just as the Tory party has become more socially liberal, so, under Neil Kinnock and then Tony Blair, Labour dropped its old commitment to public ownership and accepted that markets had a role in providing public services. Mr Blair’s government put monetary policy in the hands of an independent Bank of England and embraced the free movement of people and goods within Europe.

The argument today has moved on—to the growing inequality that is a side-effect of new technology and globalisation; to the nature of employment, pensions and benefits in an Uberising labour market of self-employed workers (see [article](#)); and to the need for efficient government and welfare systems. Fresh thinking on all this would be welcome—indeed it should be natural territory for the progressive left. But Mr Corbyn is stuck in the past. His “new politics” has nothing to offer but the exhausted, hollow formulas which his predecessors abandoned for the very good reason that they failed.

Only in the timewarp of Mr Corbyn’s hard-left fraternity could a programme of renationalisation and enhanced trade-union activism be the solution to inequality. If just spending more money were the secret of world-class public services, Britain, which cut almost 1m public-sector jobs in the previous parliament, would have been a cauldron of discontent. In fact voters’ satisfaction with public services rose. If you could create macroeconomic stability by bringing the Bank of England back under the government’s thumb, then Britain would not have spent the post-war decades lurching from politically engineered booms to post-election busts.



What does Jeremy Corbyn stand for? See how he voted in parliament across a number of issues

Time and again, Mr Corbyn spots a genuine problem only to respond with a flawed policy. He is right that Britain sorely lacks housing. But rent controls would only exacerbate the shortage. The previous Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition government should indeed have been less austere. It could have boosted demand by spending more on infrastructure. But Mr Corbyn's notion of "people's QE"—getting the Bank of England to print money to pay for projects—threatens to become an incontinent fiscal stimulus by the backdoor (rather than serve as an unorthodox form of monetary policy when interest rates are at zero). There is no denying that young people have been harmed by Tory policies that favour the old. But scrapping university-tuition fees would be regressive and counterproductive. For proof, consider that in England more poor students go to university than when higher education was free, whereas in Scotland, whose devolved government has abolished tuition fees, universities are facing a funding crisis and attract no more poor students than they did.

To see where Mr Corbyn's heart lies, you have only to look at the company he has kept. He admires the late Hugo Chávez for his legacy in Venezuela. No matter that *chavismo* has wrecked the economy and hollowed out democracy. He indulges Vladimir Putin's authoritarian kleptocracy in Russia and blames NATO for provoking its invasion of Ukraine. He entertains Hamas, which has repeatedly used violence against Israel and admires Syriza, the radical left party that has governed Greece with almost unmatched incompetence. Yet he is stridently anti-American, anti-Israel and anti-NATO and quietly anti-European Union (apparently, it's a free-market conspiracy—see [article](#)). He even scolded China's Communist Party for its free-market excesses.

To argue that Mr Corbyn's ideas will improve the quality of political discourse in Britain just because they are different is about as wise as Mr Corbyn's refusal this week to sing the national anthem at a service to commemorate the Battle of Britain. Policies this flawed will crowd out debate, not enrich it.

The Corbyn of history

Perhaps that doesn't matter. Mr Corbyn had no expectation of winning the leadership, and for a man who has never had to compromise, the drudgery of party management, media appearances and relentless scrutiny must be a hardship. Even if he is not pushed, he may not choose to stay for long.

Yet the leader of the opposition is one Tory meltdown away from power. Even if Mr Corbyn fails ever to become prime minister, as is likely, he will still leave his mark on the Labour Party. The populism and discontent that brought him the leadership will not just subside. The loathing of Westminster that he represents and the fantasies that he spins will make the task for the next centrist Labour leader all the harder. There is nothing to celebrate about Mr Corbyn's elevation. For Britain, it is a grave misfortune.

Flüchtlinge kosten zehn Milliarden Euro

Das Ifo-Institut rechnet damit, dass dem Staat durch die Flüchtlinge Kosten von zehn Milliarden Euro entstehen. Die meisten seien nicht gut genug für den deutschen Arbeitsmarkt qualifiziert.

Nach Einschätzung des Münchner Ifo-Instituts sind die meisten Flüchtlinge nicht gut genug für den deutschen Arbeitsmarkt qualifiziert.

Damit die Flüchtlingskrise den Steuerzahler jedoch nicht dauerhaft überlaste, müssten die Zuwanderer so schnell wie möglich bezahlte Jobs annehmen, erläuterten die Wirtschaftsexperten in einer Mitteilung vom Sonntag: "Es steht zu befürchten, dass viele von ihnen bei einem Mindestlohn von 8,50 Euro keine Beschäftigung finden, weil ihre Produktivität schlicht zu gering ist." Das Institut plädiert deshalb dafür, den Mindestlohn abzusenken.

Die Experten rechnen damit, dass dem Staat durch den Zuzugsstrom von Flüchtlingen Mehrkosten von zehn Milliarden Euro entstehen. Von einer ähnlichen Größenordnung gingen zuletzt auch die Schätzungen der Bundesregierung aus.

Hoher Anteil von Analphabeten

Nicht erfasst in seinen Berechnungen hat das Institut Kosten für Bildung. Um aber die Migranten fit für den Arbeitsmarkt zu machen, müsse der Staat neben Deutschkursen auch in die Berufsbildung investieren. Das werde weitere Kosten verursachen.

Der Anteil von Analphabeten in den Herkunftsstaaten sei meist hoch, in Afghanistan etwa liege er bei mehr als 50 Prozent bei den 14- bis 29-Jährigen. Der Anteil der Hochschulabsolventen betrage selbst im vergleichsweise hoch entwickelten Syrien nur sechs Prozent. Zudem seien in vielen Fällen die Abschlüsse nicht gleichwertig.

Die Experten sprachen sich zugleich dagegen aus, die Hartz-IV-Regelsätze anzuheben, da dies nach ihrer Auffassung den Anreiz für Migranten, eine Arbeitsstelle anzutreten, verringern könnte. Die Ifo-Prognosen basieren auf der Zahl von 800.000 Flüchtlingen, die in diesem Jahr in Deutschland erwartet werden.

Nahles rechnet mit mehr Arbeitslosigkeit

Arbeitsministerin Andrea Nahles (SPD) erwartet derweil angesichts der vielen [Flüchtlinge](#) mehr Arbeitslosigkeit in [Deutschland](#). "Wir denken, dass im nächsten Jahr der Zustrom auf den deutschen Arbeitsmarkt deutlich ansteigt. Ich rechne auch damit, dass die Arbeitslosenzahlen steigen", sagte Nahles im Deutschlandfunk.

Nahles will drohende Härten durch die starke Zuwanderung nicht verschweigen. Die Arbeitsagenturen seien herausgefordert. "Damit sich niemand Illusionen macht: Wir sind gut, wir können auch viele Leute vermitteln, aber es wird nicht von heute auf morgen erfolgen, und deswegen wird erst mal die Arbeitslosenzahl steigen", sagte die Ministerin.

Asylbewerber dürfen zunächst gar nicht in Deutschland arbeiten. In den ersten drei Monaten ist ihnen das komplett verwehrt. Erst nach 15 Monaten fällt zudem die "Vorrangprüfung": Steht ein Deutscher oder ein EU-Bürger für den Job zur Verfügung, bekommen Asylbewerber keine Beschäftigungserlaubnis. Die Arbeitgeber fordern eine Senkung dieser Fristen.

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Abandoning Syria: Few Options Left for Stopping the War

By Christoph Reuter in Beirut

An exodus of tens of thousands is hemorrhaging out of Syria and into Europe. After four years of civil war horrors, people have given up completely on their country. Is there a shred of hope left for stopping the conflict and rebuilding?

Both men were Syrians -- a taxi driver and his passenger. They met during an hour-long drive in April from the airport in the southern Turkish city of Adana toward the east. Within a few minutes, they realized that they were from the same place, the northern port city of Latakia, which is controlled by the Syrian regime.

Things got tricky when the two men began to wonder whose side the other had been on.

They avoided direct questions for a while. Before, on the other side of the border, they may have shot at each other. But now they were sitting in the same car. Eventually, the driver began to tell his story. He had been a bank manager and had told jokes about Syrian dictator Bashar Assad. After an informer betrayed him to the government, a man from Syrian intelligence gave him a warning, saying: "Get out now. They're coming to get you in half an hour."

Then the second man told his story. He had been an architecture student. "I had nothing against Assad," he said. But checkpoints had been erected everywhere in recent weeks, where young men were forcibly recruited into the army. "I didn't want to die," he explained. The driver chuckled briefly, and then the two men went silent for a while.

"It's over," the driver finally said. "Yes," his passenger replied. They spent the rest of the trip discussing the best routes to Europe.

Can the Horrors Be Stopped?

A country is hemorrhaging people. Hundreds of thousands of Syrians are on the road, traveling to Germany, Sweden and the Netherlands, or they have already arrived, and millions will follow suit. The exodus is putting a long-ignored question back onto the political agenda in the West: What can be done to stop the horrors in Syria?

Four years after the beginning of the uprising, a quarter of a million are dead and the political proposals by the United Nations, the German foreign minister, the United States government and others sound very much like proposals in 2011: Negotiate, apply pressure and seek a political solution. The situation is complicated by announcements from France and Great Britain of their intention to participate in air strikes against the Islamic State (IS) in Syria. But what they overlook is that the overwhelming majority of Syrians are not fleeing from IS, but from Assad's barrel bombs, the Syrian Air Force and the generally hopeless situation.

IS primarily controls sparsely populated desert areas in eastern Syria. According to reports by the Syrian Network for Human Rights, Assad's soldiers killed about 11,500 people between January and August, while IS killed 1,800. Among civilians, at least 10 times as many people die as a result of the regime's attacks than at the hands of IS.

IS has made adjustments to cope with the air strikes. Its troops now tend to operate in towns, in which they prevent the residents from fleeing by erecting checkpoints and imposing draconian punishments. This prevents Western forces from effectively attacking IS.

The Assad Question

The refugees are responsible for growing political pressure to find ways out of the war, but their plight does nothing to change the status quo, which has led to the failure of every negotiated solution to date. Russia and Iran want to keep Assad in power, and the West is unwilling to overthrow him and oppose the Russian veto in the UN Security Council or jeopardize Iran's compliance with the nuclear treaty. Two UN special envoys have already failed to resolve this conflict situation, and a third one is heading in the same direction. Staffan de Mistura has announced new negotiations for October and wants to introduce decentralized task forces, but he has not even mentioned the central issue: Should the goal be to remove Assad or to allow him to remain in power?

The world had already made more headway in earlier negotiations. When influential Syrians from both camps met for secret negotiations at Château de Bossey on Lake Geneva in October 2013, everyone, after initial difficulties, was surprisingly in agreement. Even an advisor to Assad was acquiescent and was not opposed to a peaceful solution. "We will fight down to the last building in Damascus. But what happens after that? The country is ruined. No side can win or stop fighting."

The meetings were hosted by Switzerland's Center for Humanitarian Dialogue. As one participant recalls, both sides were exhausted and prepared to make extensive compromises. In the end, the negotiations failed because of one person: Assad. Everything was negotiable, but he had to go, the representatives of the opposition demanded. The participants agreed that a solution was in the hands of the Americans and the Russians.

If there is any solution for Syria anymore, it would have to be similar to the tentative plans suggested in 2013, which called for exiling Assad, his clan, key generals and their families. Those also included extensive amnesties for combatants on both sides, power to be handed over to local authorities -- and a common fight against IS. But this type of solution would have required military pressure on Assad, which Washington was never willing to agree to. Even a proposal to install no-fly zones in several Syrian border regions, so that people there could survive without air strikes, was repeatedly rejected.

But then, in August of this year, there was a brief moment when Western diplomats hoped that Iran's leadership could be willing to agree to Assad's removal in return for concessions. The Iranians had already secured extensive control over what happened in Damascus by having generals and intelligence chiefs who opposed them removed.

One notable deposition involved the longtime head of Syria's Republican Guard, Dhu al-Himma Shalish, a close relative of Assad. "With that, the Iranians have direct physical access to Bashar," said one Western diplomat with good contacts in Damascus. The Iranians also could have deposed Assad, but they didn't want to.

Meanwhile, the Russians have arrived. In recent days, several Russian navy transport ships have landed in Latakia harbor, fully loaded with armored vehicles and other military equipment. Some 300 soldiers with Russia's 810th naval infantry brigade are reportedly also on board. Three giant Antonov 124 cargo aircraft and a passenger jet landed at the nearby airport. Mobile housing for 1,000 men and a command post to monitor air traffic have reportedly been installed. Russia is upping the ante on its already massive military aid for Assad.

It is doing so under the pretext of a joint fight with the West against the "terrorists." But Russia has a very different notion of what constitutes a terrorist than the US or Europe. Putin subscribes to Assad's definition, which ranges from rebel groups supported by the US to IS militants. Based on the involvement of Russian troops in fighting in the east of the Latakia province, it's clear who Moscow sees as the prime target: Syrian rebels. The Islamic State isn't to be found anywhere near that particular theater of battle.

Different Countries, Different Goals

It is unclear what President Vladimir Putin's strategic goals are in Syria. Is he merely trying to secure Assad's home region in the mountains between Latakia and Tartus, and preserve Russia's only naval base in the Mediterranean? Or does Russia intend to re-establish its vassal Assad's control over the entire country?

The Iranian Revolutionary Guards already failed in a similar attempt. In 2012, they began sending their own troops and combatants with the Lebanese Hezbollah group to Syria, as well as arranging for the deployment of thousands of Iraqis and Afghans. Despite these efforts, the Syrian regime is running out of troops. The fronts are softening in the north and south, and IS has been able to capture natural gas fields and the ancient city of Palmyra in the east. Analysts estimate that this year the Assad regime has lost about a fifth of the territory it controlled in 2014.

There has been little international support for the Syrian rebels -- a product of the fact that individual countries are pursuing different goals. The US only wants to fight IS and has implemented a \$500-million program to train Syrian fighters. Most of the 54 men in the first of these US-trained units were abducted by radicals with the al-Nusra Front, because the group believed it was the target of the campaign. Saudi Arabia and Qatar tend to fund Islamist groups, which the United States mistrusts. And Turkey is seeking allies for its war against Kurdish separatists with the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).

A negotiated solution still seems a long way off, at least as long as Assad remains in power. Negotiations can only succeed if both parties stand to benefit. But from the very beginning, Assad and his top leaders chose a path that permits only victory or defeat. And Russia supports them on this path.

Putin is now counting on those in the West who believe that the priority is to fight IS, and that this requires supporting Assad. But his ongoing rule is the original reason for the conflict. Besides, Assad is unable to fulfill these expectations because he controls less and less territory. He has no lack of weapons, aircraft or funds, but he does lack soldiers.

The only way Syria can survive as a nation is if the two large camps, consisting of the moderate rebels and the Syrian army, band together against IS to preserve the country. This could easily work without Assad, but not with him.

Failure to Act

Since the days of his father, dynasty founder Hafez Assad, fear was always a major component in Syria's principle of rule. It not only includes subjects' fear of those in power, but also their own followers' fear of everyone else. The Alawite religious community, to which the Assads belong, makes up one-tenth of the Syrian population. The most effective way to preserve the Alawites' unconditional loyalty was not preferential treatment but fear of the Sunni majority. And this fear was systematically stoked with such campaigns as the bloody suppression of a rebellion by the Muslim Brotherhood in Hama in 1982. Even after Hafez's death, any attempt at conciliation was blocked. Fear of revenge by their enemies has turned the Alawites into perfect hostages of Assad. The president, in turn, fears that negotiations will lead to his demise, and that loyalties could be destroyed and pave the way for new protests, because tens of thousands of Alawites have also died defending the family dictatorship without the promised victory ever materializing.

Two years ago, it still would have been possible for the West to intervene on behalf of the moderate rebels. But skeptics feared that intervention in Syria would lead to more violence and deaths, the triumph of jihadist radicals and the collapse of public order. All of these things have occurred -- not because, but despite the fact that the West did not intervene.

If US President Barack Obama had ordered air strikes on the military's nerve centers following Assad's poison gas attacks on the Damascus suburbs, the regime probably would have collapsed. At the time, intelligence services were already observing efforts by officers and soldiers to defect. But Obama apparently was unwilling to risk an overthrow of Assad and the resulting power vacuum.

But what could have been worse than what happened after that? In September 2013, IS had not yet begun its victory march, around 130,000 people who are now dead were still alive, and it would have been much easier to preserve the entire country than it is today.

There are many indications today that a partition of Syria is the most likely future scenario. Iran and Hezbollah have withdrawn their forces from large parts of the north and south since the beginning of the year. They want to focus on defending the core region controlled by Assad, which they can hold -- the densely populated strip from Damascus to Latakia.

A partition of Syria would probably be the biggest favor the world could do for IS. A Russian-Iranian protectorate in the west would stand in the way of any unification of the entire country, and it would mean abandoning the rest of the country -- to the delight of IS "Caliph" Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, who knows that the Syrian rebels alone cannot defeat Islamic State.

No Way Back

The gradual dissolution of Syria makes it extremely difficult to find a solution for the entire country. Two other parties to the conflict have already taken control of large portions of the country. In the north, troops with the YPG, the Syrian branch of the PKK, control the three traditionally Kurdish areas along the Turkish border. And even though the Kurdish party leadership in Syria consistently denies wanting to establish its own state, this is precisely what Western intelligence officials believe it intends to do. This is why the Turkish government is doing everything in its power to prevent the YPG from capturing more territory. Hezbollah, in turn, has captured a broad strip of land along the Lebanese border in a move that could disrupt the country's delicate confessional balance.

It may simply be too late for Syria.

The hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees apparently agree. It is often overlooked that their exodus to Europe has only just begun. Many Syrians were already leaving the country before, but now everyone wants to leave -- not just opponents of the regime, but also those who had kept a low profile, Assad's followers and supporters. Syrians in all political camps have lost faith in their country's future.

The wars for control over the decaying country make a peaceful solution virtually impossible. These wars know no borders, as evidenced by IS' campaign of conquest in Iraq and Ankara's fight against the PKK. The longer all of this lasts, the more difficult it will be to stop Syria's demise. And the longer the hundreds of thousands who have left remain in exile, the more unlikely they are to return. A bombed city can be rebuilt, but a destroyed country, abandoned by those who want to live a life of dignity, work and raise children, is a different story.

Translated from the German by Christopher Sultan.

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SEP 18, 2015 13

The Roots of German Openness

[Dominique Moisi](#)

Dominique Moisi, a professor at L'Institut d'études politiques de Paris (Sciences Po), is Senior Adviser at the French Institute for International Affairs (IFRI) and a visiting professor at King's College London. He is the author of *The Geopolitics of Emotion: How Cultures of Fear, Humiliation, and Ho...* [read more](#)

PARIS – “Germany, Germany,” shout thousands of refugees, faced with the obvious bad will of Hungary’s political authorities, in front of Budapest’s Keleti railway station. They are dreaming of Germany – not any European country, but specifically Germany – the way, more than a century ago, Europe’s poor, fleeing misery – and, in some cases, pogroms – dreamed of America.

This represents a dramatic shift from the past. What a contrast between the photo, taken less than 80 years ago in the Warsaw Ghetto, of a small Jewish child with raised arms and fearful eyes, and one taken a few days ago in Munich of a smiling refugee boy, his head protected by a policeman’s hat. For the first child, Germany meant certain death; for the second, it offers hope for a better life.

And Germany does not represent just an abstract hope; the country is welcoming more migrants than any of its European counterparts, with Chancellor Angela Merkel having [announced](#) that the country will take at least 800,000 asylum-seekers this year. How can a country move so rapidly from darkness to light?

No one can deny the role of schools, civic and business leaders, and, of course, external forces in bringing about this change. But nor should one underestimate the importance of political leadership.

Events can create politicians. Before the Berlin Wall fell, Helmut Kohl was essentially a provincial West German political figure; the likes of French President François Mitterrand looked down on him with a certain condescension. Then, as Chancellor – a position he held for 16 years – Kohl played a key role in German reunification and, together with Mitterrand and others, drafted the Maastricht Treaty that created the European Union.

Events have similarly transformed Merkel from a cautiously calculating and often-slow decision-maker into a moral force. With firmness and clarity, Merkel has condemned all forms of xenophobia and criticized her European counterparts for refusing to accept refugees. Rather than worrying about offending people or losing the next election, she is following the diktat of her conscience. The daughter of a Protestant pastor raised in East Germany during Communist rule, she is standing up for Christian Democratic values. Indeed, at a time when most European political leaders are lacking in inspiration and direction, if not courage, Merkel has emerged as Europe’s moral compass.

It is time for the rest of the EU’s leaders to get on the right path. When history knocks at the door so powerfully – this time, in the form of hundreds of thousands of refugees – one cannot waste time appeasing or, worse, courting populist movements. That is the surest route to losing one’s soul – and the next election.

Of course, one must not be naive. Politics and morality are not always compatible, and Germany is in a very different situation from the rest of Europe. With its shrinking and aging population, Germany needs more young, motivated people to keep its economy thriving – [a need that refugees can fill](#). By contrast, France and many other European countries face more favorable demographic conditions and worse economic conditions, including high unemployment.

After years of destabilizing economic crisis, which has yet to be fully overcome, most European societies feel wholly unprepared – socially, economically, politically, and even psychologically – to receive the flood of refugees. If Germany behaves in a more dignified manner, it is thanks not just to Merkel’s political leadership, but also to the fact that Germans are more secure than most Europeans. It is easier to become open to others when you are confident in yourself.

But one must not underestimate the endurance of values like tolerance and solidarity within European societies. With this in mind, EU leaders should be working to encourage and harness the generosity of some, while containing and resisting the selfishness and xenophobia of others. To be successful, however, there must be burden sharing. If those whose instinct is to be generous are left alone to shoulder the burden, that generosity will not last for long.

In the long run, a society can advance only through openness and tolerance. Rejecting diversity – whether by suppressing differences at home or cutting off outsiders – accelerates decay. To reverse the formula of former Czech President Václav Klaus, the suicide of Europe will come not from accepting the flow of refugees, but from closing our doors to them and washing our hands of their fate.

Likewise, Hungary is not protecting Europe by building walls to keep the refugees out. On the contrary, it is not only controverting Europe’s fundamental values; it is also undermining Europe’s interests. After all, the United States would not have become the leading world power in less than two centuries without the successive waves of migrants that landed on its shores.

Europe needs refugees to prosper, and the refugees need Europe to survive.

Read more at <https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/germany-merkel-leadership-in-refugee-crisis-by-dominique-moisi-2015-09#PrImAlbRWaolweJk.99>

128,106

THE DIRTY DOZEN

12 people who ruined Schengen

By [MICHAEL BINYON](#)

Updated 9/19/15, 6:57 AM CET

Germany's [imposition](#) of border controls to stem the vast influx of refugees and migrants looks like a deathblow to the Schengen agreement and the free movement of people around the 26 European countries that have abolished internal passport controls. But it is not Chancellor Angela Merkel who has ruined Schengen — she still insists the measures are temporary. It is nationalists, dictators, criminals and human traffickers outside Europe who are undermining this rare milestone of integration. Several prominent politicians also have to shoulder the blame, either through ignorance, insouciance or malign intent. Here are the Dirty Dozen:

Bashar al-Assad



YURI KADOBNOV/AFP/Getty

The brutal civil war unleashed by the Syrian dictator has killed more than 200,000 people and made 9 million Syrians homeless, of whom 3 million have fled abroad — largely to Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan. The atrocities inflicted by government forces, the despair and suffering of civilians, the physical ruin of the country and the likely continuation of the war for years has driven more and more refugees to seek shelter in Europe. Syrians make up the bulk of those now being trafficked across the Mediterranean and flooding across Europe's borders.

Viktor Orbán



Getty

The hard-line right-wing Hungarian prime minister has opposed what he called the EU's "[misguided immigration policy](#)" and has appalled Muslim refugees by saying he was defending the [Christian nature of Europe](#) against a Muslim influx. A maverick politician, whose nationalist and authoritarian policies have provoked opposition in Brussels, he has raised the temperature over the migrants by building a razor-wire fence with Serbia and evicting migrants from trains, leading to [distressing photographs](#) of the confrontations. By insisting migrants were a German, not a European, problem he has further weakened Europe's ability to find a common solution.

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan



EV Archive

An ambitious and autocratic Islamist, Turkish President Erdoğan's renewed military confrontation with the Kurds is seen as an appeal for Turkish nationalist support in the run-up to fresh elections. The renewed violence has prompted thousands of Kurds to flee, many into Greece. Turkey has made little effort to police its frontiers with Greece or stop the tide of refugees being smuggled on ships to Greek islands. Anger at the EU's restrictive visa policy on Turkey and attempts to rally dwindling support for his AK party may lie behind his prickly relations with Brussels.

George W. Bush



Getty

The 2003 invasion of Iraq and the subsequent heavy-handed U.S. occupation policies radicalized the shattered nation, fanning sectarian tensions, spawning virulent anti-Western jihadist movements and eventually bolstering the so-called Islamic State. The fragmentation of Iraq, the cycle of Sunni-Shia retaliation, and explosion of terrorist violence in Syria and the Levant have hugely increased refugee numbers fleeing to the West. Former U.S. President Bush shares responsibility for the political destabilization of the entire region.

Barack Obama



Getty

Washington's [failure](#) to take an early and tough stand on Syria or to arm moderate rebels opened the door to ISIL and violent Islamist extremism. This is now threatening Europe directly, with lone-wolf jihadist operations inspired by ISIL and Islamist radicals. European security officials are warning of a large number of home-grown jihadists returning to Europe after training and fighting in Syria and are calling for tougher controls on immigration and emigration — not easy to enforce in a border-free Europe.

David Cameron



EPA

Britain's opt-out from the 1985 Schengen agreement has been used in London to avoid taking part in any joint EU action to resettle migrants or to accept responsibility for those trying to reach Britain. British ships have rescued leaky vessels floundering in the Mediterranean but have refused to accept responsibility for those picked up. Migrants bound for Britain have been able to get no farther than Calais, and the resulting chaos at the port city has angered France and prompted calls for restrictions to stop migrants crossing Europe and ending up in Calais.

The people smugglers



A man arrested in Austria on suspicion of smuggling migrants (Getty)

Gang leaders, usually from Libya, the Middle East or Africa, who have exploited the desperation of refugees and migrants to reach Europe. Their brutal tactics, blackmail, extortion and callousness have shocked European public opinion, as more and more victims have drowned in the Mediterranean or suffocated in sealed trucks. European voters have demanded tougher action to smash the gangs and prevent human trafficking, and many Europeans have called for border controls to prevent the traffickers being able to take advantage of the lack of police controls and inspections.

Marine Le Pen



Getty

As leader of France's National Front party, Le Pen is one of the most vocal political leaders in Europe demanding a reintroduction of border controls to deal with the migration crisis. Last year she visited the camps set up by migrants in Calais and insisted it was "time to wage war" on the freedom to enter France unchecked. Her anti-immigration party came first in the European elections, prompting other French parties and politicians to echo her themes to woo voters. Her [accusation](#) that Chancellor Angela Merkel was using massive immigration as a source of slave labor infuriated Germany, but has influenced political opinion there.

Ayoub el-Khazani



Facebook

His [attempt](#) to murder passengers on a train from Amsterdam to Paris in August was foiled by American and British passengers. But questions were immediately raised asking why he was able to cross the frontier from Belgium carrying weapons, although his links to radical Islam were known to security forces. A history of drug trafficking and the ease with which he had moved from Spain to France and then Belgium as well as his visits to Turkey prompted accusations that Europe's security forces are not properly sharing intelligence to foil cross-border terrorism.

Mehdi Nemmouche



Federal Police building in Brussels, where Nemmouche was detained

In May 2014 he opened fire at the Jewish museum in Brussels, killing four people. He was able to escape back into France because there were no checks at the Belgian border. He was later arrested in Marseilles. He is suspected of having fought for the Islamic State in Syria and was one of the first European volunteers to return to commit atrocities in Europe. Jewish groups called for greater co-ordination among European intelligence agencies and a pan-European task force to counter anti-Semitism.

Isaias Afewerki



ASHRAF SHAZLY/AFP/Getty

An authoritarian who has consistently refused to call elections, the president of Eritrea's increasingly dictatorial regime has driven many young Eritreans to flee abroad, risking being imprisoned or shot for crossing the border illegally. Poverty, political persecution, human rights abuses and the conscription of young men for unlimited periods for use as virtual slave labor have made Eritreans among the most desperate in Africa to reach Europe. Amnesty International claims he has jailed at least 10,000 political prisoners and that torture is widespread.

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi



EPA

Self-proclaimed caliph of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria and former leader of al-Qaeda in Iraq, his uncompromising terrorist regime in eastern Syria and western Iraq has gratuitously murdered thousands from religious minorities, moderate Muslims and political opponents, while sophisticated online jihadist messages have lured thousands of foreign Muslims to fight in Syria, unchecked at any internal EU borders. The terror spread by his supporters is the main force driving many refugees to leave the Middle East region and seek shelter in Europe.

Michael Binyon is a foreign affairs analyst and former diplomatic editor of the Times of London.

128,110

Migrant Crisis Pulls at European Unity

Harsh words over border policy erodes trust between member states

By **SIMON NIXON**
Sept. 20, 2015 1:32 p.m. ET

The European project is in deep trouble. It was already in trouble following the Greek debt crisis and facing major challenges in the shape of the planned British referendum on European Union membership and the need to strengthen the way the eurozone works.

But the migration crisis has eclipsed all these concerns: the trust between member states that is vital to underpin the decades-old process of deeper European integration is evaporating.

Border controls have reappeared between member states where none have existed for 25 years. Increasingly harsh words have been exchanged between national governments under pressure from anxious voters.

There is broad acknowledgment across Europe that the situation risks spinning out of control.

European leaders meeting for an emergency summit on Wednesday will face a clear choice: they can opt for "more Europe," agreeing that this is a common European crisis that demands a common response, or they can reject a European solution, in which case each member state will defend its own interests as best it can.

No one knows for sure which direction they will go, which is why European Council President Donald Tusk hesitated until late last week to call a meeting. With no clear proposals on the table or consensus on how to proceed, there is a high risk that the meeting will only deepen divisions.

Ultimately the answer is likely to be more Europe, if only because the alternative is so alarming. Front-line states, which now include Croatia and Slovenia as well as Greece, Hungary and Italy, are struggling to control their borders, to register and fingerprint asylum seekers as required under EU rules, and to shelter and feed the numbers seeking protection.

Without a common European response, the system risks collapsing: front-line states will try to shift the burden by allowing asylum seekers to pass through unregistered, inevitably leading to further border controls and the collapse of the EU's open-borders zone known as Schengen.

But no one is under any illusion that formulating a common response will be easy. The first step is a deal on the resettlement of 160,000 asylum-seekers currently in front-line states across the EU.

This now looks likely to be agreed to by interior ministers on Tuesday, despite serious misgivings among some member states.

No one claims that this will solve the crisis, but the proposal has acquired important symbolic value to show solidarity with front-line states and acknowledge shared responsibility for managing the crisis.

But a deal to resettle 160,000 out of the half a million or so refugees estimated to have entered the EU this year alone merely clears the way for leaders to discuss thornier issues.

Top of the agenda will be the question of how the EU can secure its external borders to deter illegal crossings. This is likely to include a discussion of what role fences of the sort that Hungary has constructed along its border with Serbia should play in border security.

Some EU officials have criticized Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, branding the fence as un-European. But there is growing recognition that Mr. Orban is simply trying to fulfill his obligations under EU law to ensure that refugees enter EU territory legally and register their asylum application at their first point of arrival.

European leaders will also need to come to a clearer position on what to do with asylum seekers when they arrive in the EU, including how to shelter them, how to speed up the processing of their asylum applications and their return to their home countries if their applications fail.

The European Commission, the EU's executive arm, has proposed the creation of "hot spots" -- EU-funded and staffed registration points for arriving migrants -- to help alleviate pressure on national asylum facilities.

But there is little consensus on how these hot spots should operate: some member states argue that asylum seekers should be required to stay in them until their applications have been processed; others argue that forcing people to remain effectively in camps is morally and practically impossible.

Other difficult discussions will be needed on what the EU's policy should be toward countries the refugees are transiting through to reach Europe, and of course the crisis countries themselves that people are fleeing.

And inevitably whenever there is any discussion of "more Europe," there is the question of who will pay. Few expect clear answers to any of these questions to emerge from Wednesday's summit. European leaders will have succeeded if they stop the situation sliding further out of control.

128,112

Alexis Tsipras's Syriza Set to Return to Power After Resounding Greek Election Victory

Re-election win may reassure markets and European officials that Greece will stick to its bailout plan

By **NEKTARIA STAMOULI** and **STELIOS BOURAS**

Updated Sept. 20, 2015 8:06 p.m. ET

ATHENS—Alexis Tsipras was set to return to Greece's premiership after a resounding re-election victory, only this time with a mandate to carry out the very kind of harsh austerity that he was previously elected to resist.

The outcome of Sunday's vote makes the 41-year-old leader the first Greek prime minister to win re-election during the country's six-year debt crisis and may ease tensions with European authorities that have roiled markets, and Greece's economy, over much of this year.

Mr. Tsipras's continuing popularity, amid missteps and reversals during his first turbulent spell in office, suggests that he and his left-wing Syriza party retain the authority to carry out the bailout deal he agreed to with Greece's European creditors this summer, despite the painful fiscal belt-tightening it calls for.

Syriza officials said Sunday they would seek a repeat of their coalition earlier this year with the right-wing nationalist Independent Greeks party, which confirmed it wants to renew its ruling pact with Syriza.

"Syriza proved it is too strong to die," Mr. Tsipras said late Sunday while appearing at a victory rally with Independent Greeks leader Panos Kammenos. "Today around Europe, Greece and the Greek people are synonymous with struggle and dignity," he said.

The re-election of Mr. Tsipras may reassure financial markets, as well as officials in Europe, that Greece will stick to its bailout commitments and enter a period of greater political calm. Many political analysts said before the election that Syriza could be a greater threat to Greece's bailout plan in opposition than in government.

Still, the expected exclusion of pro-European centrist parties from the next government is likely to disappoint many European officials and means the potential for diplomatic clashes between Athens and its creditors remains.

The previous Syriza-led coalition government riled European authorities with its staunch rejection of creditors' economic demands and flirtation with bankruptcy, before eventually caving in to German-led pressure for a bailout deal in July. The confrontation triggered bank runs in Greece and left the country's economy saddled with capital controls that are impairing its economic recovery from a long slump.

Syriza and Independent Greeks signed the bailout only under heavy economic pressure and remain at heart antiestablishment parties deeply skeptical of the eurozone's economic orthodoxy. Although Mr. Tsipras has vowed to carry out the bailout program he signed, he has never endorsed the economic policies it contains, instead stating that creditors left him no choice.

He is expected to abide by the deal in the short term. But Syriza's weak conviction in the economic philosophy behind the program—and the party's long-standing tendency to squabble internally—mean that full implementation of the deal in the medium- to longer-term isn't guaranteed, analysts say.

"The issue of ownership of the program remains unresolved," said Wolf Piccoli, managing director of New York-based political risk consultancy Teneo Intelligence. Syriza and Independent Greeks lack personnel with experience of government, and passing laws through parliament may prove easier than turning reforms into a new reality on the ground, he added.

An important factor in favor of greater stability in the months ahead is that Syriza's parliamentary caucus is likely to be more loyal to Mr. Tsipras and more politically pragmatic than earlier this year.

Many of the figures who took a hard-line stance against the creditors no longer represent Syriza in parliament, including former Finance Minister Yanis Varoufakis, and the far-left rebels who formed a breakaway party in August called Popular Unity. That party, which argued for leaving the euro rather than continuing with austerity, failed on Sunday to reach the threshold of 3% of the national vote for entering Greece's parliament.

Syriza was on course to win Sunday's elections by more than seven percentage points over rival conservatives New Democracy, according to Interior Ministry figures. With 93% of the votes counted, Syriza was set to win around 35.5% of votes, the ministry said. The figures showed about 28% supporting New Democracy, whose leader Vagelis Meimarakis conceded defeat and congratulated Mr. Tsipras late Sunday.

The projected result confounded opinion polls that had suggested a much closer race, and possibly even a defeat for Mr. Tsipras's party.

But antipathy to Greece's more established political parties—widely blamed for misgoverning the country over recent decades and bringing about the crisis—appears to have outweighed disillusionment with Syriza's climb down on bailout terms.

"Mr. Tsipras is the rising star inside the country once again," said Theodore Couloumbis, emeritus professor of politics at Athens University. "He has emerged as supreme inside his own party and the country."

In the middle-class Athenian neighborhood of Ilioupoli, architect Dimitris Rizos was among the many Syriza supporters who chose to overlook this year's setbacks and back Mr. Tsipras again.

"I'm sad but not disappointed, because I believe Mr. Tsipras did everything he could. He is not lying to us on that as the previous governments did," Mr. Rizos said, voicing a widespread mistrust of Greece's political old guard that has helped turn Syriza from a marginal opposition group into the country's strongest political force in only a few years.

Mr. Rizos said he saw Syriza as the party best able to tackle tax evasion and corruption, two of the chronic problems that helped wreck Greece's public finances in the lead-up to the debt crisis.

In a sign of disillusionment among an electorate exhausted by this year's tumultuous clashes between Greece and its European creditors, though, many more voters stayed home than in January's elections. Turnout slumped to 55% from 64% in January.

Based on the official projection, Syriza seems to have done roughly as well as in January, indicating that many Greeks chose to stick firmly with Mr. Tsipras despite his failure to keep his promise to free the country from the tight control that creditors have exercised over Greece's economic policies since 2010.

The projected outcome gives Syriza and Independent Greeks a slim majority of 155 seats in Greece's 300-seat parliament. If his majority is eroded, though, Mr. Tsipras is likely to be able to count on the support of other parties in implementing the bailout deal.

"Mr. Tsipras also has the backup of Socialists Pasok and centrists To Potami in the parliament in case something goes wrong," Mr. Couloumbis said.

Putin's Syria Tour de Force

Before: Russia is 'doomed to fail.' Now: Obama is happy to talk.

Vladimir Putin doesn't seem to share President Obama's definition of "smarter." Ten days ago Mr. Obama declared that the Russian President's military deployments in Syria were "doomed to fail" and the Kremlin was "going to have to start getting a little smarter." Mr. Putin then began sending fighter jets, and now it looks like Mr. Obama is the one who has been taken to school.

That's the only way to read Secretary of Defense Ash Carter's call on Friday to Russian counterpart Sergei Shoigu to explore what a Pentagon spokesman called "mechanisms for deconfliction" in Syria. In addition to the jets, Russia is sending T-90 tanks, howitzers, troop-transport and attack helicopters, a company of armed Marines, and further equipment to establish an air base near the coastal Syrian city of Latakia. Mr. Shoigu describes the build-up as "defensive in nature."

Sure, as in Ukraine. Along with Iran, Russia is the Bashar Assad regime's principal sponsor, providing weapons, diplomatic protection at the United Nations, and now direct military support. Mr. Putin sees an opportunity to rescue his client in Damascus, strengthen ties with Iran, establish a large military footprint along the eastern Mediterranean, further reduce U.S. influence, and create diplomatic leverage that he can use to ease Western sanctions imposed in response to his invasion of Ukraine. On present course he'll accomplish all of the above.

A typical U.S. President would be angry and embarrassed. But Mr. Obama has gone from warning Russia that its intervention could "risk confrontation" with the U.S., to seeking face-to-face talks with Moscow in order to find "common ground," as Secretary of State John Kerry said in London last week.

There is a need to make sure U.S. jets don't become targets of Russian anti-aircraft missiles, but Mr. Kerry is walking into another Putin snare. After failing at two previous attempts, the Secretary of State wants to restart peace talks in Geneva to reach a political settlement for the Syrian civil war -- and this time he's willing to be especially flexible about Mr. Assad's grip on power.

"We're not being doctrinaire about the specific date or time, we're open," he said, discussing the timetable for the Syrian dictator to step down. Mr. Assad, he added, would not have to leave "on day one or month one or whatever. There's a process by which all the parties have to come together and reach an understanding of how this can best be achieved."

That sounds like an Administration moving to reverse its demand for Mr. Assad's ouster. It also coincides with the Administration's admission that its feeble attempts to arm a credible opposition to the Assad regime have failed -- a failure for which White House spokesman Josh Earnest had the ill grace to blame on critics of Mr. Obama's Syria policy.

Mr. Kerry says the new focus is targeting Islamic State and hoping that the 50-year-old Mr. Assad will shuffle himself off-stage, perhaps to return to his former ophthalmology practice. What the Secretary didn't explain is why Mr. Assad's opponents would stop fighting when their central goal is to oust the dictator and crush his power base. Nor did he explain how the Obama Administration intends to foster a political settlement in Syria that would necessarily involve groups such as Islamic State, the al Qaeda-linked Nusra Front, and the Iranian-backed Hezbollah.

The only hope the U.S. now has of a decent settlement in Syria is to create no-fly and no-drive zones, on the model of what the U.S. did in northern Iraq in the 1990s, with the explicit aim of protecting civilians and arming a credible militia to destroy Islamic State and the Assad regime. Syrians would fight for such a group if they were convinced the U.S. was committed to victory. That's not going to happen while Mr. Obama is President, but it's the right formula for the next one.

Meantime, Mr. Putin must be amazed at his luck in having Mr. Obama as President. Look for Russian negotiators to link talks over Syria to U.S. support for the government in Kiev, or military deployments in the Baltics, or enforcement of the nuclear agreement with Iran. Mr. Putin will keep stealing Mr. Obama's lunch money as long as this weakest of Presidents lets him.

A Third Try for Greece

Syriza retains power to implement the EU's bailout terms.

By the recent standards of Greek democracy, Sunday's parliamentary election lacked the usual drama. Membership in the eurozone was not at issue, as it seemed to be in July's bailout referendum, and none of the leading parties were promoting Argentina-style economic cures, as the governing Syriza party was when it took office in January.

Official projections showed Syriza came first in a low-turnout election, and its leader, Alexis Tsipras, is on track to stay in office. But he is a chastened Prime Minister whose party lost some parliamentary seats while abandoning its fiery economic rhetoric.

Meanwhile, nearly 75% of voters cast their ballots for parties that promised to implement the bailout package that Mr. Tsipras struck with creditors in August. If Greeks had been given a choice between the economic agendas of Germany's Angela Merkel or Argentina's Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner, the German Chancellor who in the past was a foil for Syriza would have won in a rout.

Still, this status quo result is not the political transformation Greece needs. Voters re-elected the party least disposed to implement the privatizations, product-market liberalizations and other supply-side reforms demanded by the August bailout. This will exacerbate **the main flaw in the deal, which is that it imposed high taxes on the private economy while leaving reform commitments largely unenforceable.**

A breakthrough will come when voters demand bolder pro-growth measures that go beyond the liberalization and privatization targets called for by the bailout agreement. The right-of-center New Democracy party, which came in second with about 28% of the vote, made some tentative nods in that direction under its caretaker leader, Evangelos Meimarakis. **But its conversion to market liberalism from patronage politics remains in an early stage.**

Meantime, the risk remains that grudging and partial implementation of a flawed deal will consign Greece to another period of politically toxic low growth. **That's a recipe for another Greek drama, a tragic one, unless Greek voters can raise their sights higher than their leaders.**

Migrations Démographie Vérités et mensonges

Emilie Lanez



Ce qu'il faut savoir. Crise de réfugiés, surpopulation, réchauffement... Enquête sur des bouleversements historiques qui n'inquiètent pas que les Européens.

Il y eut ces images, terribles, titillant nos consciences encore estivales. Le cadavre d'Aylan Kurdi, 3 ans, noyé sur une plage de Bodrum, ce camion-corbillard cachant 70 corps asphyxiés et ces hordes humaines agrippées aux barbelés d'un camp de transit hongrois. Vint alors le temps, fugace, de la liesse hospitalière : par dizaines de milliers, des réfugiés acclamés par des bénévoles allemands leur distribuant couvertures et encouragements, et en France, même en France, des mairies, des associations, des artistes, des bénévoles proposant une chambre, un studio, de l'aide... Une semaine d'euphorie généreuse et brouillonne. Puis, le week-end dernier, la volte-face. Brutale, inquiète. L'Allemagne, la terre promise, n'en peut plus. En deux jours, 19 000 demandeurs d'asile sont arrivés dans la seule ville de Munich, 63 000 en Bavière, dans toute la République fédérale les gares débordent, les municipalités s'affolent. De l'autre côté du Rhin, chez nous, la voix insistante de ceux qui se demandent si, dans ces flots chassés par la folie de Daech, il n'y aurait pas des terroristes s'infiltrant sur notre sol, ces autres encore qui, de bonne foi, s'étonnent que nos caisses étatiques trouvent 1 000 euros pour chaque réfugié alors que des clochards dorment sur nos trottoirs et qu'à Calais le camp de Sangatte, ingérable, menace depuis des mois l'ordre public. Une lente, insidieuse et réelle panique. Le 13 septembre, l'Allemagne annonce qu'elle ferme - provisoirement - ses frontières au sud. Le lendemain, l'Autriche et la Slovaquie font de même. La Pologne pourrait les imiter. La Hongrie clôt son principal point de passage avec la Serbie. Réunis à Bruxelles, les 28 ministres européens échouent à répartir entre eux 120 000 demandeurs d'asile, un échec presque dérisoire, tant ce chiffre paraît aujourd'hui déconnecté de la réalité. Plutôt que des quotas de répartition, l'Union prend le dossier à rebours; il ne s'agit plus d'organiser leur destination finale, mais de filtrer ceux qui arrivent sur son seuil. Car voilà l'encombrante réalité : ces hommes, ces femmes, ces enfants qui, par milliers, tentent de trouver l'asile en Europe ne fuient pas tous la guerre en Syrie. Certes, les Syriens forment le gros du contingent - 23 % des procédures d'enregistrement -, mais ils sont mêlés à beaucoup d'exilés venus des Balkans. Albanais, Kosovars, Serbes, Macédoniens, Bosniaques - 46 % des procédures -, des migrants économiques qui espèrent, dans nos pays, une vie meilleure.

Nous vivons le mouvement de réfugiés le plus important depuis la Seconde Guerre mondiale. Son ampleur a de quoi donner le tournis aux esprits les plus hospitaliers : 432 000 migrants ont traversé cette année la Méditerranée, soit à ce jour, et ce n'est pas fini, le double de l'an passé. La Grèce explose : 310 000 arrivées; 170 000 en Hongrie; l'Allemagne, qui déclarait voilà peu en accueillir 800 000, pourrait devoir en héberger bien plus. Selon l'agence européenne de contrôle des frontières, Frontex, 1 million tenteront cette année de trouver asile en Europe. Est-ce un chiffre insupportable ? Oui et non. Non, si l'on raisonne abstraitement. Non, car cela équivaut à 10 personnes dans chacune des 103 000 communes que comptent nos 28 pays. Dix personnes, 2 familles, voilà qui devrait pouvoir s'organiser, peut-on, en théorie, considérer. D'autant que nous disposons d'économies riches, d'administrations efficaces et de systèmes sanitaires et scolaires éprouvés.

La France n'est pas, tant s'en faut, menacée d'un choc migratoire. Si l'on compare son pourcentage d'immigrés rapporté à sa population totale, elle paraît même de moins en moins attractive, n'étant désormais que le 5e pays

d'immigration en Europe, loin derrière l'Allemagne, l'Espagne, le Royaume-Uni et l'Italie. A l'évidence, ces statistiques sont entachées d'une certaine froideur comptable. Ces migrants n'obéissent pas aux jolis schémas de répartition et si, en théorie, chaque commune française pourrait, parmi ce million attendu, recueillir 10 migrants, leur trouver du travail, en réalité ils confluent massivement vers les mêmes endroits : Ile-de-France, Rhône-Alpes, Bretagne et région Centre, posant là des soucis aigus d'intégration.

1 million de réfugiés en Europe, est-ce tant, alors que la Turquie, le Liban et la Jordanie abritent à eux seuls 4 millions de Syriens ? Au Liban, il y a 1 réfugié pour 4 habitants. En Turquie - pays comptant le plus grand nombre de réfugiés au monde -, ce sont 2 millions de demandeurs d'asile. Et, dans la petite Jordanie, 630 000 personnes sont installées dans les camps de toile du Haut-Commissariat aux réfugiés. 86 % des migrants de toute la planète ont transporté leur misère dans des pays en développement, 6 millions d'entre eux vivent dans des économies dont le revenu moyen annuel est inférieur à 4 500 euros. Des comparaisons qui invitent l'Europe à se montrer à la hauteur, digne de sa relative opulence. S'il advenait qu'à la fin de l'année civile l'Europe ait reçu 1 million de réfugiés, il en faudrait encore cinq fois plus pour que ceux-ci atteignent 1 % de la population totale de l'UE, soit 510 millions d'habitants.

Le phénomène, d'une fulgurance frappante, est en réalité une accélération d'un mouvement de fond. En quinze ans, l'UE s'est dotée de 20 millions de nouveaux habitants; 4 millions correspondent au « solde naturel », ce sont des naissances, supérieures au nombre de décès; 16 millions viennent du « solde migratoire ». Selon Eurostat, l'Europe croît ainsi de 1,2 million de personnes en moyenne chaque année depuis quinze ans. Un chiffre qui ne tient nullement compte de la crise actuelle et qui pourrait, en 2015, doubler. Pour autant, « *il faut dépasser l'émotion et envisager que ce mouvement ne va pas révolutionner le paysage démographique de l'Europe* », pondère Gilles Pison, démographe à l'Ined et rédacteur en chef de *Population - Sociétés*, auteur d'un instructif « **La démographie mondiale** » (Rue des Ecoles), « *la population de l'Europe ne pourra se maintenir à terme à son niveau que grâce à une immigration importante, même si sa fécondité se relevait* ». D'après les prospectives d'Eurostat, l'Europe perdra en 2080 1,5 million d'habitants par an. Elle se videra car elle recensera plus de morts que de naissances.

Demain, le réchauffement... A ce rythme, elle comptera 400 millions de citoyens en 2080 - 100 de moins qu'aujourd'hui -, la ramenant au niveau de 1960. Pour combler ce déficit démographique, l'immigration est une opportunité. « *Les flux migratoires sont composés de personnes assez jeunes, assez qualifiées et qui ne sont pas pauvres. Il faut de l'argent pour émigrer* », ajoute Pison. Le spécialiste relativise plus encore en notant que la planète comptait 2,3 % de migrants en 1960 (personnes vivant dans un autre pays que celui de leur naissance), 2,9 % aujourd'hui. La progression est modérée : 97 % des Terriens vivent là où ils sont nés. Sur 7,3 milliards d'humains, 230 millions sont des immigrés.

Seulement, tout pourrait s'accélérer. Le réchauffement climatique poussera en 2050 - demain, donc ! - vers l'exil entre 50 et 200 millions de nouveaux migrants. Et ce n'est pas là le plus puissant des chocs migratoires à venir. Le continent africain, dont la population sera de 1 milliard en 2050, et du double en 2100, connaîtra inéluctablement une très forte poussée migratoire. Dans les trente ans qui viennent, l'Afrique passera d'une population à 70 % rurale à une population à 70 % urbaine; or l'urbanisation est un puissant facteur de migration internationale, tant elle invite ces jeunes citadins à rêver d'un ailleurs prospère, à portée de main, de téléphone, d'écran d'ordinateur. Demain donc, une Europe vieillie et riche confrontée à la poussée pressante d'une Afrique jeune et pauvre. Sommes nous prêts ? « *La plus grande crise de réfugiés depuis la Seconde Guerre mondiale* » n'est pas la dernière. Mais à l'évidence la plus urgente.

Wer kommt da eigentlich zu uns?

Aus Syrien kommen nicht nur Ärzte, das stimmt. Aber die Syrer sind gebildeter als andere Flüchtlinge. Noch fehlen viele Daten über die Menschen, die in Deutschland Asyl suchen. Was es gibt, haben wir ausgewertet.

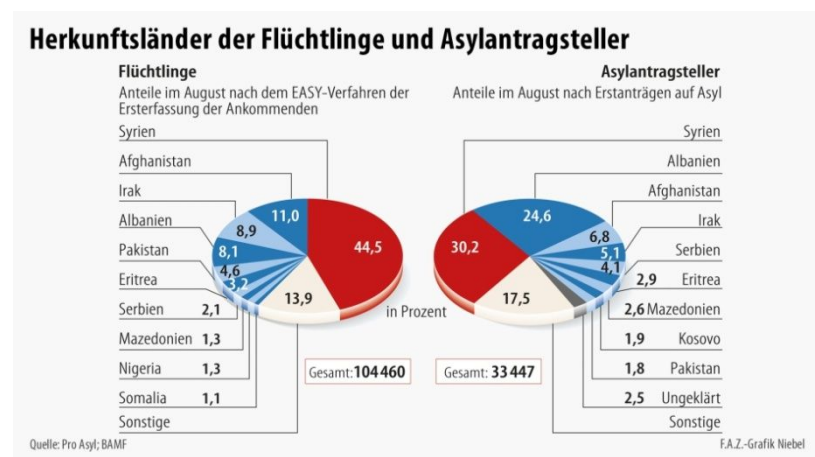
21.09.2015, von THOMAS GUTSCHKER UND UTA RASCHE

Um zu ermessen, was Deutschland in den nächsten Jahren an Integration zu leisten hat, muss man mehr über die Menschen wissen, die hier Asyl suchen. Woher kommen sie, was haben sie gelernt, wie werden sie sich verhalten? So viel steht fest: Die Herausforderung ist gewaltig. Eine Situation wie jetzt gab es noch nie. Allein im August kamen 105.000 Migranten nach Deutschland. Fast die Hälfte (45 Prozent) von ihnen waren Syrer. In der Statistik folgen Afghanen (11 Prozent), Iraker (9 Prozent), Albaner (8 Prozent), Pakistaner (5 Prozent) und Eritreer (3 Prozent). Die meisten von ihnen werden dauerhaft in Deutschland bleiben. Wer aus Bürgerkriegsgebieten geflohen ist, erhält mit hoher Wahrscheinlichkeit Asyl. Die Menschen vom Westbalkan hingegen nicht. Das hat sich inzwischen in diesen Ländern herumgesprochen. Zeitungsanzeigen der **Bundesregierung** halfen dabei. Anfang des Jahres waren noch mehr als 40 Prozent der Asylbewerber Kosovaren, nun tauchen sie in der Statistik kaum noch auf.

Die Statistik: Das ist ein eigenes Problem. Das Bundesamt für Migration und **Flüchtlinge**, kurz Bamf, behandelt die Zahl der Flüchtlinge wie ein Staatsgeheimnis. Angaben macht die Behörde nur zu den Asylanträgen, die schon gestellt wurden. Deshalb gibt es eine Verzerrung. Daten aus diesem Jahr beziehen sich auf Leute, die schon länger im Land sind. Albaner und Kosovaren sind statistisch überzeichnet, Syrer, Afghanen und Iraker sind untergewichtet. Das muss man wissen, um die Daten richtig einzuordnen, die uns das Bamf für das erste Halbjahr 2015 genannt hat.

Die Altersstruktur ist positiv

Die Asylbewerber sind demnach deutlich jünger als die heimische Bevölkerung. Ein Viertel sind Kinder. Ein weiteres Viertel ist zwischen 16 und 25 Jahre alt, ein drittes Viertel zwischen 15 und 35 Jahren. Es kamen doppelt so viele Männer wie Frauen. Offenbar schicken Familien ihre belastbarsten und kräftigsten Mitglieder vor, nicht selten Jugendliche. Es hat sich bis an den Hindukusch herumgesprochen, dass Minderjährige aus Deutschland nicht abgeschoben werden.



Die Altersstruktur ist positiv: Viele Migranten sind im richtigen Alter, um sich hier eine Existenz aufzubauen. Sie werden sehr lange arbeiten, bevor sie das Rentenalter erreichen. Es wird es in den nächsten Jahren noch einen erheblichen Nachzug von Familienmitgliedern geben. Die Kinder dürfen ihre Eltern und minderjährigen Geschwister nachholen, Männer ihre Ehefrauen und Kinder – nicht aber die Großeltern. Es gibt Bedingungen: Wer Familienmitglieder nachholt, muss über ausreichend Wohnraum verfügen und für deren Lebensunterhalt aufkommen können; Nachziehende müssen Deutschkenntnisse vorweisen.

Es kommen überwiegend Muslime: Das gilt für siebzig Prozent der Antragsteller im laufenden Jahr. 18 Prozent sind Christen (vor allem aus Syrien), fünf Prozent Yeziden (aus dem Nordirak). Es macht freilich einen großen Unterschied, ob ein Muslim aus Afghanistan oder aus Syrien kommt. Die Syrer sind in einer verhältnismäßig modernen Gesellschaft aufgewachsen, mit gleichen Rechten für Frauen und Männer. Dagegen verbergen Afghanen ihre Frauen vor den Blicken anderer Männer. Für diese Menschen dürfte der Kulturschock in Deutschland groß sein.

Jeder vierte Syrer hat studiert

Wer einen Asylantrag stellt, wird auch zu Bildung und Ausbildung befragt; diese Angaben sind freiwillig. Das Bamf hat für uns die Angaben von gut 100.000 Asylsuchenden aus dem laufenden Jahr ausgewertet. Das Ergebnis: 13 Prozent haben eine Hochschule besucht, 18 Prozent ein Gymnasium, 30 Prozent waren auf einer Mittelschule, 24 Prozent nur auf einer Grundschule; acht Prozent verfügen über gar keine Schulbildung. Knapp die Hälfte gab an, aus guten oder durchschnittlichen wirtschaftlichen Verhältnissen zu stammen.

Syrer haben ein deutlich höheres Bildungsniveau. Hier gaben mehr als 60 Prozent an, dass sie aus durchschnittlichen oder sogar guten wirtschaftlichen Verhältnissen stammen. Ein Viertel hat studiert, ein weiteres Viertel war auf dem Gymnasium, ein Viertel auf der Mittelschule und 17 Prozent lediglich auf der Grundschule. Für andere Herkunftsländer gibt es solche Einzelauswertungen noch nicht.

Zwar sind die Bildungsabschlüsse nicht ohne weiteres mit deutschen Standards zu vergleichen. Außerdem müssen auch gut Ausgebildete erst einmal Deutsch lernen. Doch gilt zugleich: Formale Bildung gibt keinen Hinweis auf den „Hunger“ eines Migranten, sich in Deutschland zu behaupten. Die Bundesagentur für Arbeit versucht mit einem Modellprojekt zu ermitteln, wie sich Asylbewerber in den Arbeitsmarkt integrieren. Erste Erkenntnis: Nur jeder Zehnte kann direkt vermittelt werden. Arbeitsministerin Nahles hat sich in letzter Zeit öfter darauf berufen. Doch ist Vorsicht geboten. Die Zahl wurde in einem Modellprojekt ermittelt und bezieht sich auf nur gut 800 Asylbewerber. Ein Teil der Bewerber steckt noch im Sprachkurs und hat sich gar nicht beworben. Ein anderer verschwindet vom Schirm, sobald [Asyl](#) genehmigt wurde. Es ist zu früh, aus dem Projekt weitreichende Schlüsse zu ziehen.

Auffälligkeiten in der Kriminalstatistik

Zur Frage nach der Integration gehört auch, in welchem Umfang Asylbewerber in Deutschland straffällig werden. In der Polizeilichen Kriminalstatistik kommen sie überdurchschnittlich oft vor. Die [Polizei](#) verdächtigte sie 2014 fast zehnmals so häufig einer Straftat (2,5 Prozent der Fälle), wie es ihrem Anteil an der Bevölkerung (0,28 Prozent) entspräche. Dabei sind Straftaten gegen das Ausländerrecht schon herausgerechnet. Besonders bei kleineren Delikten, etwa Taschendiebstählen, fällt der Verdacht oft auf einen Asylbewerber. Auch in sieben Prozent der „räuberischen Diebstähle“ verdächtigt die Polizei diese Gruppe. Das hängt mit der schlechteren wirtschaftlichen Lage der Migranten zusammen.

Allerdings sind Asylbewerber auch bei Körperverletzungen überdurchschnittlich häufig tatverdächtig – in 8,5 Prozent der Fälle. Am häufigsten werden sie verantwortlich gemacht für ein Delikt, das mit dem Leben in Sammelunterkünften im Zusammenhang steht: Fast jeder dritte Tatverdacht für die Beteiligung an einer Schlägerei fällt auf Asylbewerber (28 Prozent). In den Heimen treffen Menschen unterschiedlicher Kulturen aufeinander, die sich kaum miteinander verständigen können. Oder strenggläubig Muslime teilen sich ein Zimmer mit solchen, die wegen der Taliban oder des IS ihr Land verlassen haben.

Angehörige von Volksgruppen, die im Bürgerkrieg gegeneinander kämpften, drängen sich hintereinander in der Essensschlange. In den vergangenen Wochen wurde immer wieder über solche Vorfälle berichtet: So eskalierte im August in einer Erstaufnahmeeinrichtung im thüringischen Suhl ein Streit bei einem Fußballspiel zwischen Afrikanern und Menschen vom Balkan. 80 Männer sollen an der Schlägerei beteiligt gewesen sein. Wenig später riss in der gleichen Unterkunft ein junger Afghane Seiten aus einem Koran, in denen es um Gewalt ging, und steckte sie demonstrativ ins Klo. Da gingen andere Bewohner auf ihn los; es flogen Eisenstangen, Steine, Betonklötze und Möbel.

Kein dramatischer Anstieg zu erwarten

Auch bei fünf Prozent der Morde im Zusammenhang mit Raub, in vier Prozent der Totschlags-Delikte und bei fünf Prozent der Vergewaltigungen fällt der Verdacht auf einen Asylbewerber. Manchmal kommt es zu sogenannten Ehrenmorden. So erstach in Wiesbaden ein Eritreer seine ebenfalls aus Eritrea stammende frühere Freundin. Weil er sie bereits einmal angegriffen hatte, zog sie aus dessen Wohnung in eine Flüchtlingsunterkunft. Die Behörden hatten ihr geraten, in ein Frauenhaus zu ziehen, doch sie hatte das abgelehnt.

In der Kriminalstatistik sammelt das Bundeskriminalamt Angaben aus allen Polizeidienststellen. Die Verdächtigen werden nach ihrer Herkunft und der Art ihres Aufenthalts unterschieden. Daneben gibt es die Verurteilten-Statistik des Statistischen Bundesamts. Sie unterscheidet jedoch nicht nach dem Aufenthaltsstatus der Verurteilten, sondern nur nach ihrer Nationalität. Die Verbrechen liegen oft Jahre zurück – weshalb man die Zahl der Verurteilten nicht in Zusammenhang mit der Zahl der Asylbewerber bringen kann. Insgesamt stellt selbst eine Million Asylbewerber nur einen kleinen Teil der Bevölkerung in Deutschland dar. Vor einem dramatischen Anstieg der Kriminalität braucht also niemand Angst zu haben.

Quelle: F.A.S.

Mr. Putin's

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/21/opinion/mr-putins-mixed-messages-on-syria.html?action=click&pgtype=Homepage&module=opinion-c-col-left-region®ion=opinion-c-col-left-region&WT.nav=opinion-c-col-left-region&r=0>

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Mixed Messages on Syria

By THE EDITORIAL BOARD SEPT. 21, 2015

President Vladimir Putin of Russia is trying to have it both ways in Syria. He is dangerously building up Russia's military presence there, while positioning himself as the world's savior against Islamic extremists and [holding](#) high-level military-to-military talks with the United States. President Obama should go one step further and be prepared to meet Mr. Putin later this month when the two are at the United Nations. If there is to be a solution to the Islamic State's advance and to Syria's war, both Russia and America will have to be involved.

Mr. Putin is expected to use his speech to the United Nations General Assembly to make the case for an international coalition against the Islamic State, apparently ignoring the one already being led by the United States. But his buildup also serves his effort to save his imperiled client, President Bashar al-Assad, and may also be intended to establish a Russian military outpost in the Middle East.

Mr. Obama considers Mr. Putin a thug, his advisers say, and Mr. Putin considers Mr. Obama weak. Mr. Obama has had little to do with Mr. Putin since the Russian leader invaded Ukraine and annexed Crimea. Some administration officials worry that agreeing to a meeting, which the Kremlin apparently requested, will play into Mr. Putin's hands. But it would be a mistake for Mr. Obama not to engage, especially on an issue this serious and when tensions are rising. If Mr. Putin does not come to the meeting prepared to be a problem-solver, it will be obvious and Mr. Obama should call him on it.

The truth is, both men are in a bind. America's [fight against ISIS](#) is failing; a stark indicator was the Pentagon's admission that its \$500 million program to train moderate Syrian opposition forces to fight ISIS has only four or five fighters who are actually on the battlefield. Meanwhile, Mr. Putin's ally, Mr. Assad, is in danger of falling, which would destroy the last threads holding the state together, open the door to a takeover by the Islamic State and jeopardize Russia's last foothold in the Middle East. Mr. Obama and Mr. Putin should be able to find common cause in battling the Islamic State, which is destabilizing the region and training a generation of foreign fighters, some of whom have already returned home to Europe, Russia and Central Asia.

The Islamic State cannot be confronted effectively unless there is a political settlement in Syria between Mr. Assad's regime and opposition forces. The main impediment has been Mr. Putin's insistence that Mr. Assad remain in power. But Russia previously agreed on the need for a transition in Syria and a compromise seems obvious.

Secretary of State John Kerry, speaking in London on Friday, made it clear that America would be looking for "common ground" in Syria, which could mean keeping Mr. Assad in power temporarily during a transition. The Russians should accept that Mr. Assad must go within a specific time frame, say six months. The objective is a transition government that includes elements of the Assad regime and the opposition. Iran should be part of any deal.

America should be aware that Mr. Putin's motivations are decidedly mixed and that he may not care nearly as much about joining the fight against the Islamic State as propping up his old ally. But with that in mind there is no reason not to test him.

Syriza defies the polls with comfortable re-election win

Despite a U-turn on accepting austerity, Alexis Tsipras remains in charge

Sep 20th 2015 | ATHENS | Europe



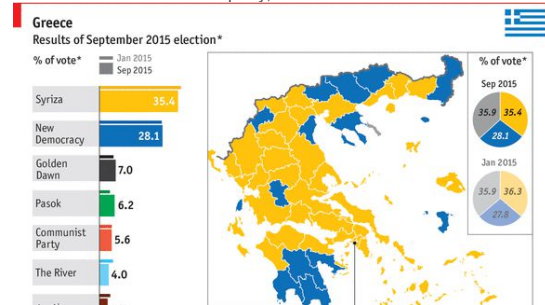
IN THE end the left-wing Syriza party proved more resilient than many Greeks, including opinion pollsters, had expected. With nearly all the votes counted after a snap general election on Sunday, the party led by Alexis Tsipras, the prime minister (pictured), had won 35.4% of the vote to 28.3% for the centre-right New Democracy party. The pollsters had claimed the election was too close to call, with less than two percentage points separating the parties. Official projections gave Syriza 145 seats in the 300-member parliament, only four fewer than it won in the general election that swept the party into power in January.

Mr Tsipras quickly announced he would resume co-operating with Independent Greeks (ANEL), a small nationalist party that won 3.6% of the vote and 10 seats. (That result too surprised the pollsters, who had predicted it would fall short of the 3% threshold for entering parliament.) This unlikely partnership worked smoothly during Syriza's first term despite being criticised as opportunist by party hardliners.

But the coalition looks more vulnerable than it did the first time round, with only 155 seats in parliament compared to 162 last time. Mr Tsipras had been expected to form a more broadly-based coalition with two small centre-left parties, the Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement (Pasok) and To Potami (The River), which won 17 and 10 seats respectively. Such a government would have been assured of the stability needed to implement the tough reforms Mr Tsipras reluctantly agreed to in July in return for Greece's €86 billion (\$95 billion) bail-out. To the disappointment of Greece's creditors, that broader coalition is not now likely to happen: neither party is keen to serve alongside ANEL.

Even though Sunday's election appeared to be a re-run of the January poll, there was one noticeable difference. Voter participation was just over 55% compared with 63% in January, the lowest in memory. One reason was that the campaign failed to generate any major divisive issues: all the mainstream parties backed the new bail-out agreement. Another was that many Syriza voters feel betrayed by Mr Tsipras's reversal of his pledge to end austerity. Rather than switch to another party, they opted to abstain. A third is that Greek voters are tired of being called to the polls. Sunday's general election was the fifth in six years, and the third national ballot this year. (Voters rejected a previous bail-out proposal at a referendum in July.)

The neo-Nazi Golden Dawn party, which increased its share of the vote to 7.9% from 6.8% in January to stay in third place, lost fewer voters than other parties.



The September 2015 election in graphics

Mr Tsipras was mobbed by cheering, flag-waving supporters as he arrived at Syriza's campaign headquarters. In his victory speech, he insisted that Syriza intends to serve out its full four-year mandate. Many are not convinced. Hardline Syriza rebels opposed to the new bail-out brought down the previous government, forcing the election. (Their new party, Popular Unity, failed to win enough votes to enter parliament.) But there are fresh rumblings among senior Syriza officials who dislike Mr Tsipras's increasingly high-handed ways. Many observers are not convinced the new government will last any longer than its predecessor.

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Refugees and Reform in Europe

[Mohamed A. El-Erian](#)

Mohamed A. El-Erian, Chief Economic Adviser at Allianz and a member of its International Executive Committee, is Chairman of US President Barack Obama's Global Development Council. He previously served as CEO and co-Chief Investment Officer of PIMCO. He was named one of *Foreign Policy's* Top 100 Glob... [read more](#)

LAGUNA BEACH – There is a simple truth beneath the growing human tragedy of Europe's refugee crisis, and the European Union cannot address the massive influx of exhausted, desperate people in a manner compatible with its values unless governments and citizens acknowledge it. Simply put, the historic challenge confronting Europe also offers historic opportunities. The question is whether Europe's politicians – who have failed to deliver on far less complicated issues over which they had a lot more control – can seize the moment.

The scale of the challenge is immense, with the flow of refugees extremely difficult to monitor and channel, let alone limit. Fleeing war and oppression, tens of thousands of people are risking life and limb to find refuge in Europe – a phenomenon that will continue as long as chaos persists in countries of origin, such as Syria, and countries facilitating transit, such as Iraq and Libya.

In the meantime, Europe's transport networks are under stress, as are shelters, border crossings, and registration centers. Common asylum policies – including, for example, the basic rule that asylum-seekers should be registered at their point of entry into the EU – are not functioning or are being bypassed. And the cherished concept of effortless travel within the border-free Schengen Area is under threat.

These problems are aggravated by coordination failures. Attitudes toward refugees vary widely across countries, with Germany taking a particularly [enlightened approach](#) that contrasts sharply with Hungary's notably heartless one. Some countries, such as the Czech Republic, have blocked deals to share the burden fairly among European Union members, including through mandatory quotas.

Add to that the preferences of the refugees – who, after risking everything to get to Europe, have strong feelings about where they would like to settle – and the policy challenges are enormous, particularly in the short run. European politicians have yet to catch up with the reality on the ground, let alone get ahead of it. And their failure is exacerbating the risks to the [EU's political cohesion](#) that emerged over the Greek crisis.

Politicians have a powerful incentive to get Europe's response to the refugee crisis right. Beyond the need to alleviate the human misery that fills television screens and front pages of newspapers lies the imperative not to miss the significant medium-term opportunities that migration provides.

Although there are pockets of high unemployment in Europe today, the ratio of workers to elderly people will decline considerably in the longer term. And, already, labor-market flexibility has been undermined by structural inertia, including difficulties in retooling and retraining workers, particularly the long-term unemployed.

As the German government and some corporate leaders, including the CEO of Daimler-Benz, have already recognized, an open-minded approach to refugee absorption and integration can help to mitigate some of Europe's protracted structural problems. After all, a significant proportion of the incoming refugee population is said to be educated, motivated, and committed to building a better future in their new homes. Capitalizing on this, European decision-makers can turn a severe short-term challenge into a powerful long-term advantage.

An enlightened policy response to the refugee crisis could help Europe in other ways as well. Already, it is unlocking additional fiscal outlays in countries like Germany – which, despite having the means, did not

previously have the will to spend – thereby helping to alleviate an aggregate-demand imbalance that, together with structural impediments to growth and excessive indebtedness in some countries, has held back the region's recovery.

The current situation could also provide the catalyst needed to make decisive progress on the EU's incomplete political, institutional, and financial architecture. And it could compel Europe to overcome the political obstacles blocking solutions to longstanding problems, such as providing the cover needed for certain European creditors to grant deeper debt relief for Greece, whose already-massive fiscal and employment problems are being exacerbated by the influx of refugees. It can even drive Europe to modernize its governance framework, which allows a few small countries to derail decisions supported by the vast majority of EU members.

Pessimists would immediately point out that Europe has struggled to come together even on far less complex and more controllable issues, such as the protracted economic and financial crisis in Greece. Yet history also suggests that shocks of the scale and scope of the current refugee crisis have the potential to spur remarkable policy responses.

Europe has the opportunity to turn today's refugee crisis into a catalyst for renewal and progress. Let us hope that its politicians stop bickering and start working together to take advantage of this opening. If they fail, the momentum behind regional integration – which has brought peace, prosperity, and hope to hundreds of millions of people – will weaken considerably, to the detriment of all.

