

In Frankreich hat sich die Zahl radikalisierte Islamisten verdoppelt

Ein zunächst als geheim eingestufter Bericht zeigt: Im Vergleich zum Vorjahr hat sich die Zahl radikalisierte Islamisten in Frankreich mehr als verdoppelt. Grund dafür ist laut Experten eine „Islamisierung der Radikalität“.

03.02.2016, von MICHAELA WIEGEL, PARIS

Eine neue Statistik über radikalisierte **Islamisten** in Frankreich hat das Land am Dienstag aufgeschreckt. 8250 Personen werden inzwischen als Gefährder eingestuft, das sind mehr als doppelt so viele wie im März 2015 (3100). Die Zahl stammt vom französischen Innenministerium und fußt auf Erhebungen von Polizei, Gendarmerie und dem Bildungsministerium. 4590 Fällen von Radikalisierung wurde dank der vom Innenministerium eingerichteten Notrufnummer „Antischihad“ für Familienangehörige nachgegangen.



Autorin: Michaela Wiegel, Politische Korrespondentin mit Sitz in Paris.Folgen:

Die Statistik sollte wohl zunächst geheim gehalten werden, wurde aber von der Zeitung „Le Figaro“ am Dienstag veröffentlicht und von Regierungsseite nicht dementiert. 70 Prozent der Gefährder sind Männer. Der Anteil der Minderjährigen liegt inzwischen bei 20 Prozent. Bei 38 Prozent handelt es sich um Konvertiten, ein Prozentsatz, der stark angestiegen ist.

Der Islamforscher Olivier Roy ist deshalb der Meinung, dass nicht von einer Radikalisierung des Islam, sondern von einer „Islamisierung der Radikalität“ gesprochen werden muss. Inzwischen sind so gute wie alle Landesteile, auch die Bretagne und Elsass-Lothringen von dem Phänomen betroffen. Die großen urbanen Ballungszentren mit ihren Vorortsiedlungen bilden dabei weiterhin die Hochburgen für Gefährder: Paris, Lyon, Toulouse und Nizza nehmen Spitzenplätze ein. In der Statistik fehlen indessen Angaben über die Staatsbürgerschaft und Herkunft der Gefährder.

Kepel!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

139,2

Islamisme : 8250 individus radicalisés en France

Par [Christophe Cornevin](#)

Mis à jour le 02/02/2016 à 23:51

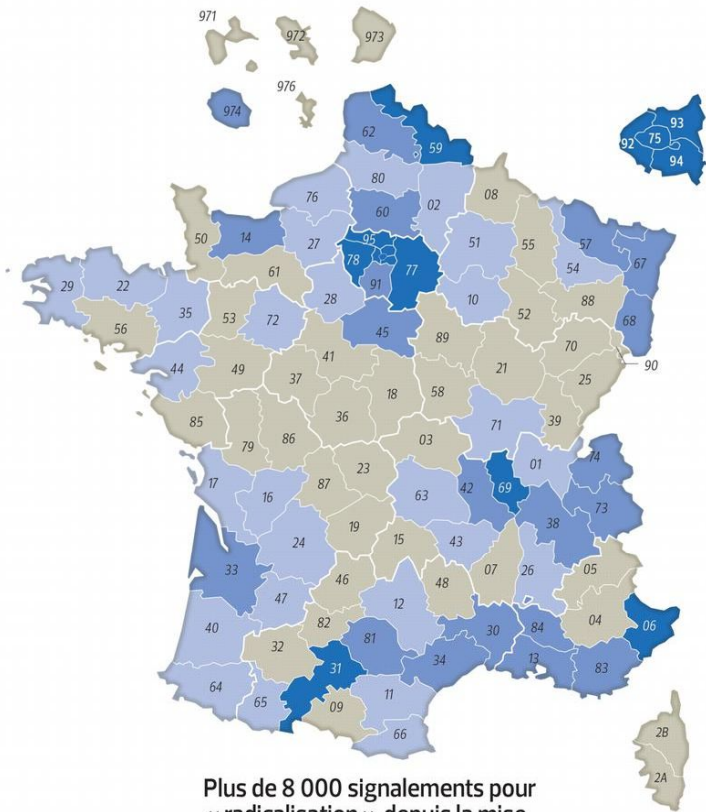


INFOGRAPHIE - *Le Figaro* dévoile en exclusivité la carte de France des personnes signalées pour «radicalisation». Le phénomène a doublé en moins d'un an et touche de plus en plus d'adolescents et de femmes.

Ils ont été repérés par leur entourage ou par les services de l'État (police, gendarmerie, Éducation nationale) en raison d'un repli identitaire, d'une apologie du terrorisme ou de leur hostilité aux institutions. Un dernier bilan officiel établi le 28 janvier, dont *Le Figaro* dévoile le détail, révèle que 8250 personnes ont été signalées comme radicalisées sur l'ensemble du territoire contre 4015 en mars dernier, soit plus qu'un doublement en moins d'un an. Contrairement à une idée reçue, ces individus «ne basculent quasiment jamais en pianotant seuls sur leur ordinateur. Le déclencheur est dans 95% des cas lié à un contact humain», précise-t-on à l'Unité de coordination de la lutte antiterroriste. Si la contagion a gagné tout le pays, Paris, l'Île-de-France et le Sud-Est comptent le plus grand nombre de cas recensés.

- PLUS DE 200 SIGNALEMENTS
DEPUIS AVRIL 2014
- ENTRE 100 ET 200
- ENTRE 50 ET 100
- MOINS DE 50

DOM-TOM



**Plus de 8 000 signalements pour
« radicalisation » depuis la mise
en place de la plateforme antidjihad**

8 250

signalements pour "radicalisation"



Hommes



Majeurs

...et aussi :



4 848 sites Internet, comptes
Twitter ou Facebook bloqués



275 interdictions
de sortie du territoire



78 interdictions
administratives du territoire



112 éloignements
de ressortissants français
depuis la Turquie

139,4

World

A Divided Libya Struggles Against Islamic State Attacks;

Rival factions are locked in a political battle to form a unity government capable of defending Libya and its oil industry from militant aggression

[Benoit Faucon](#), [Tamer El-Ghobashy](#)

4 février 2016

[The Wall Street Journal Online](#)

MELLITAH TERMINAL, Libya—A 9-foot-high wall built of fabric, sand and steel that can withstand a car bomb surrounds this seaside oil-and-gas complex, a barrier against militant attacks that many in Libya hope will soon be fortified by a national army under a central command.

Two rival factions that have spent years fighting for control of Libya are now locked in a political battle to form a unity government capable of defending their country and its oil industry against escalating attacks by [Islamic State](#).

The political standoff has swelled U.S. worries of Libya turning into a hub for international [Islamic State](#) operations. Top national security advisers met last week with President [Barack Obama](#) over [Islamic State](#) as military leaders increasingly point to the need for stepped-up operations against the militant group, including in Libya.

[Libya's National Oil Co.](#), among the country's last functioning institutions since the fall of dictator Moammar Gadhafi in 2011, issued a "cry for help" last month amid killings, car bombings, gas line sabotage and the burning of oil storage tanks by extremists. The attacks appeared aimed at undermining the peace process and Libya's oil industry, which supplies 95% of state revenues.

[Islamic State](#) "fills the void" left by the lack of a unified government, said Fathi Ali Bashaagha, a Libyan lawmaker helping negotiate a [United Nations](#)-brokered power-sharing agreement between the two rival factions. Libya's fight against extremists has fallen largely to militias with varying allegiances.

The government talks, which have dragged for months, gained new urgency for Libya and the West with the stepped-up assaults. The U.S., which has conducted drone surveillance in Libya, said last week a small group of U.S. military personnel in Libya has been collecting intelligence and coordinating assistance.

Wait and see

The Obama administration, concerned for months about the threat posed by [Islamic State](#) in Libya, has, along with European allies, taken a wait-and-see approach as it awaits formation of a unity government.

"Right now, the international community has no government to work with," said Mr. Bashaagha, the Libyan lawmaker. "We have only one key and if we lose this key, we lose everything."

A newly created Libyan parliament took halting steps toward peace last week, voting to accept formation of the U.N.-brokered unity government that unites the two factions that have split the country. But the parliament this week also rejected creation of a 32-member cabinet and set a deadline of Feb. 4 for agreement on a cabinet made up of fewer government ministers.

The U.N. envoy to Libya, Martin Kobler, said last week that changes could be made to the peace agreement to bring the sides together.

[European Union](#) foreign ministers have said over the past year they may target with sanctions those who stand in the way of an agreement. The [EU](#)'s 28 member states could decide on an asset freeze and travel ban as early as Monday, targeting members of the factions engaged in violence and refusing to abide by the U.N. deal.

At stake are Libya's 47 billion barrels of crude reserves, the largest in Africa and the source of virtually all of the country's wealth. "We can stabilize," said Mustafa Sanallah, the chairman of Libya's National Oil Co. "Or we can descend into chaos."

Islamic State has tightened its grip on the city of Sirte, a port connecting with Libya's so-called oil crescent on the central coast and the only territory held by the extremist group outside of Syria and Iraq.

"They will be looking to seize more here, and look for more ways to fund their operations and taking the oil ports and fields in east Libya would be a very big win for them, one we can't afford," said Ismail Shoukry, Libya's head of military intelligence for the region that includes Sirte.

Islamic State last month launched attacks in Ras Lanuf, about 400 miles east of Tripoli, setting fire to oil-storage tanks and severing a gas line that supplied cities to the west, a security official said. Earlier in the month, attackers used machine guns and car bombs in Ras Lanuf and the nearby port city of Es Sider. The assaults killed at least 10 guards and set on fire at least seven tanks at both facilities, Libyan officials said.

The Islamic State attacks hamper an already struggling oil industry. Libya produces about 400,000 barrels a day, a quarter or so of its capacity.

The extremist group has urged recruits to head to Libya to help form a militant base with strategic proximity to Europe. Libya is a launching point for migrants headed to Italy, giving Islamic State access to the human-smuggling network. The country also supplies Europe with oil and natural gas.

Attacks on Libyan oil facilities test the ability of Islamic State to spread beyond its strongholds in Syria and Iraq, where it has seen recent setbacks.

"The control of the Islamic State over this region will lead to economic breakdowns especially for Italy and the rest of the European states," Islamic State's leader in Libya, Abul Mughirah al Qahtani, told the group's magazine last fall. He was killed in November in a U.S. drone strike, the first Islamic State militant successfully targeted outside of Iraq and Syria, officials said.

Conflict between rival militias has also posed problems for oil production. An Islamist-leaning government has operated out of the capital Tripoli in the western half of Libya. A rival government is based in the eastern city of Bayda. Those two sides clashed violently until the U.N.-brokered agreement was reached in December.

The peace agreement calls for creation of a national army, as well as placing the central bank and national oil company under control of the new central government.

Competing factions

The council responsible for forming a cabinet is working to pare down a 32-ministry government that was rejected by parliament a week ago. The proposed cabinet was larded with redundant ministries, reflecting the difficulty of forming an inclusive government from Libya's competing political and military factions.

In the absence of a central military command or national police force, many Libyan oil facilities fall under the protection of the Petroleum Facility Guard, a loosely knit group under the direction of militia leaders around the country. "We need help on the ground," said Mohamed Boubagousha, a guard official in the eastern oil port of Sidra.

The 9-foot-high wall that surrounds the Mellitah Oil and Gas Complex, on the Mediterranean coast in Libya's northwestern corner, is large enough to encircle Central Park in New York City. It was built last summer after Islamic State opened training camps about 12 miles east.

Western and Libyan security officials believe Islamic State plans to attack Mellitah from an encampment about 12 miles away in palm groves near the town of Sabratha. Workers at the oil-and-gas complex said the facility was prepared for any assault.

"We have to be ready for the worst," said Mayuf Rabia, chief security officer of the sprawling facility, a 90-minute drive west from Tripoli on a road controlled by militias.

Three boats are moored nearby to carry off employees in case of attack. The company plans to install watchtowers and remote cameras, said Mustafa Ali Elfard, manager of the complex.

The plant supplies 10% of Italy's natural gas imports via a pipeline running beneath the Mediterranean Sea. It is jointly owned by Libya's National Oil Co. and Italy's largest oil company, Eni SpA, which declined to comment on the plant's security arrangements.

Italy's defense minister Roberta Pinotti discussed the Islamic State's threat in Libya with French and U.S. officials in Paris last month, saying outside military action required approval by a Libyan unity government.

Fears extend to Libya's offshore oil industry, according to interviews aboard the Farwah production vessel, a facility in the Mediterranean about 60 miles off the coast. Migrants heading from Libya to Italy sometimes pass and ask for medical help, food or water, said workers, who worry whether the next group might be Islamic State militants in disguise.

One worker, recalling the date of the Paris attacks, said: "We fear they could do like they did Nov. 13."

Islamic State surfaced a year ago in Libya with a deadly attack on a luxury hotel in Tripoli, followed by the beheading of 21 Coptic Christian Egyptians. The group, flying its black flag, later led a parade of fighters and vehicles rigged with heavy weapons through Sirte and launched its first oil-field assaults, driving out most expatriate workers of international oil companies.

Libya's oil industry has so far withstood the attacks. It continues to transfer oil revenue around the country, enabling the payment of wages to public employees.

Islamic State doesn't have control of Libyan oil fields to put them into production. In Syria and Iraq, by contrast, the group and its local allies pump oil and refine it for sale to the Syrian government in Damascus and to traders in Turkey.

For now, Islamic State is working to sabotage Libyan facilities, causing trouble for the economy and the few remaining European countries that rely on Libyan energy. A Libyan official said the group was likely using the attacks to seize gasoline for sale through black market networks that smuggle fuel to Tunisia and Malta.

The group has used social media and its magazine to recruit extremists with technical expertise to Libya, Mr. Shoukry said, suggesting it was only a matter of time before Islamic State tries to employ seized oil facilities to feed the oil market through the port in Sirte.

Libyan oil workers who are in the cross hairs of Islamic State say the threat isn't far from their minds.

Not long ago at Mellitah, members of the plant's staff were startled from their bunks one night by gunshots, prompting fears of an Islamic State attack. The facility is a maze of pipes and storage tanks loaded with natural gas that can easily ignite.

The shots turned out to be a gunfight between members of two local armed groups over a kidnapping.

Coming to work requires a steely resolve, one Mellitah worker said.

"Do I look scared?" he asked.

139,7

• [EUROPE FILE](#)

David Cameron's Remarkable EU Deal

Move to allow U.K. to restrict benefits for migrants is substantial concession

By

[SIMON NIXON](#)

Updated Feb. 3, 2016 6:02 p.m. ET

David Cameron's renegotiation of the terms of Britain's membership in the EU has been derided as a missed opportunity that achieved little. Yet viewed through European eyes, what the prime minister has negotiated is a very big deal indeed, Simon Nixon writes.

David Cameron's renegotiation of the terms of Britain's membership in the European Union has been derided as a gigantic missed opportunity that achieved very little. But this is only half right.

It is true that the U.K. prime minister dropped some of his most eye-catching early demands, including an opt-out from EU social and employment law, even before the process started.

Much of the 16-page draft deal circulated by European Council President Donald Tusk on Tuesday simply reiterates existing rights; there is nothing to which Mr. Cameron has agreed that requires a change in the EU treaties and little that even requires changes in secondary legislation.

The section on boosting EU competitiveness rehashes initiatives already under way; the proposal for a new mechanism to allow national parliaments to block legislation is too complicated to be workable. The planned new safeguards for non-eurozone members are a nonsolution to a largely theoretical problem, a straw man talked up by both sides to lend excitement to the process, according to a senior EU official.

Meanwhile, the proposed "emergency brake" allowing the U.K. government to deny EU migrants full access to certain welfare payments for up to four years falls short of what Mr. Cameron originally demanded.

And yet, viewed through European eyes, what Mr. Cameron has negotiated is a very big deal indeed.

In particular, the decision to allow the U.K. to restrict welfare to migrants is a substantial concession since it allows the government to introduce blatant discrimination against EU citizens, effectively requiring them to pay a higher tax rate for the same job.

Ever since Mr. Cameron first made this demand in November 2014, EU officials have warned that it was politically and legally impossible. Indeed, there is no guarantee that EU leaders or the European Parliament will give their necessary blessing to the plan.

The EU has tried to sugar the pill: The emergency brake will apply only to new arrivals whose access to benefits will be increased over the four years; the brake will also be time limited, although for how long will be up to European leaders to decide at the summit on Feb. 18-19.

The European Commission has cleverly presented the emergency brake as a permissible measure to address the unintended consequences of the UK's decision not to restrict the right of Central and Eastern Europeans to move to Britain for seven years after they joined the EU. This can't hide the fact, however, that the grounds for granting this emergency brake are flimsy.

After all, it is hard for the U.K. to maintain that EU migration is putting its public services under intolerable strain when it continues to allow high levels of migration from outside the EU over which it has total control.

Nor is it clear how restricting welfare will ease the pressure on public services given that few economists believe this will have any impact on migration levels. And the U.K. can hardly claim that migration is putting its public finances under strain when studies show that migrants are net contributors to the U.K. budget.

Many in Brussels and elsewhere in the EU are deeply uncomfortable at what Mr. Cameron is being offered and the precedent it sets. The fact that the EU's leadership is prepared to contemplate even a temporary breach of a core principle of the single free market is evidence of how seriously they take the risk of Brexit and the damage this might inflict on the rest of Europe.

Why does Mr. Cameron not get more credit at home for this achievement? One reason may be a lack of appreciation of what membership in a single market entails, resulting in an exaggerated view of what his renegotiation could possibly have delivered. There is more than a whiff of imperial nostalgia about British euroskepticism, a yearning for the time when the U.K. parliament could lay down the rules for a quarter of the world.

But in a single market comprising 28 sovereign states, one country can't unilaterally pick and choose which rules to respect and which to discard while continuing to enjoy untrammelled access to the markets of the other 27.

Many may also have underestimated the extent to which the single market was the product of decades of negotiation and compromise, a complex web of reciprocal rights and responsibilities.

When Margaret Thatcher helped launch it in 1986, she set in train a slow-motion—admittedly, extremely slow-motion—revolution in Europe that is forcing once largely closed, highly protectionist economies to adapt to a world of free movement of goods, capital, labor and services.

The U.K. has been arguably the biggest beneficiary of these freedoms because it is the most open. But rules that the U.K. finds onerous may have been an essential quid pro quo to persuade others to accept the political, economic and social risks of this radical agenda.

What Mr. Cameron clearly recognized early in his renegotiation is that either you are in the single market or you are not. This is essentially the choice that lies at the heart of the referendum.

Like Mr. Cameron, British business and the City of London have clearly concluded that the benefits of the single market outweigh its burdens, that it is better to have some say over the rules of the U.K.'s largest export market than none at all. Now they will have to persuade the country.

Mobile Static From Brussels

Opposition to telecom mergers hurts digital innovation.

Feb. 3, 2016 7:10 p.m. ET

Brussels faces another test of its ability to promote a digital economy for Europe, and on current evidence it's failing again. Look no further than its hostility to a proposed tie-up between two of Britain's mobile-phone networks, Three and O2, on which Brussels is expected to rule this spring.

The deal, in which Three's owner, Hutchison Whampoa of Hong Kong, would buy O2 from Spain's Telefonica for around GBP 10.5 billion (\$15.13 billion), is **the latest attempt to rationalize Europe's market for mobile-phone services.** Britain, which now has four network operators, would be left with three. **The combined company would be the country's largest in number of subscribers, ahead of EE and Vodafone.**

That's plenty competitive for a country of Britain's size, especially considering that **recent waves of consolidation have also left Austria, Germany and Ireland with three operators each -- and each time with Brussels's approval. Consolidation gives the remaining operators the scope to set prices at a level that will sustain investments in new technologies.**

But that's not how Competition Commissioner Margrethe Vestager, who took office in 2014, sees things. Ms. Vestager last year effectively blocked the proposed tie-up between Telenor and Telia in her native Denmark, **and she has expressed a general view that four is the magic number of operators.** Her view is shared by Sharon White, head of Britain's telecom regulator Ofcom, who came out against the Three-O2 deal this week.

This isn't fact-based policy making. Some studies have found average monthly tariffs increase in markets that have undergone consolidation. But data also suggest that those price hikes have been accompanied by heavier usage of mobile services, meaning the average price a user pays per unit of data sent or received has fallen.

This is particularly so as **competition from new technologies challenges established operators.** Revenue from text messaging already has plummeted as free or nearly free services such as Apple's iMessage and Facebook's WhatsApp proliferate. **The current threat is the expansion of Wi-Fi coverage that allows users to surf the Web or make phone calls over the Internet without paying an operator for data transmission or calling minutes.**

These and numerous other developments impose as much pricing discipline on a mobile operator as its peers do. **The point of consolidation is for operators to try to find a market structure that will allow them to fund investments in new technologies, too -- investments that over time lead to lower prices and better services for consumers.** **If Europe wants a thriving digital economy, the best policy for Brussels is to get out of its way.**

http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/04/us/politics/obama-muslims-baltimore-mosque.html?hp&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&clickSource=story-heading&module=photo-spot-region®ion=top-news&WT.nav=top-news&_r=0

139,10

Obama at Mosque: Islam Is 'Part of America'

On his first visit to a mosque in the United States since taking office, President Obama deplored the recent “inexcusable political rhetoric” against Muslims.

Obama, in Mosque Visit, Denounces Anti-Muslim Bias

By GARDINER HARRIS FEB. 3, 2016



President Obama greeted families in an overflow room after speaking at the Islamic Society of Baltimore mosque. Credit Drew Angerer for The New York Times

WASHINGTON — [President Obama](#) on Wednesday embraced Muslims in the United States as part of “one American family” and implicitly criticized the Republican presidential candidates in a warning to citizens to not be “bystanders to bigotry.”

In a visit to the Islamic Society of Baltimore, his first to a mosque in the United States as president, Mr. Obama recited phrases from the Quran and praised American Muslims as a crucial part of America’s history and vital to the nation’s future.

“And so if we’re serious about freedom of religion — and I’m speaking now to my fellow Christians who remain the majority in this country — we have to understand an attack on one faith is an attack on all our faiths,” Mr. Obama said.

Although Mr. Obama never mentioned Republican presidential candidates like Donald J. Trump, who has called for a temporary ban on Muslims entering the United States, the targets in his remarks were clear. “We have to reject a politics that seeks to manipulate prejudice or bias, and targets people because of religion,” he said.

The speech served as a bookend to a 2009 address [Mr. Obama delivered](#) at Cairo University, where he called for “a new beginning between the United States and Muslims around the world.” In Baltimore, the president did not talk about intractable international conflicts like the Israeli-Palestinian dispute and focused instead on the more prosaic reality of vandalized mosques and bullied American Muslim children.

“These children are just like mine,” Mr. Obama said. “And the notion that they would be filled with doubt and questioning their places in this great country of ours at a time when they’ve got enough to worry about — it’s hard being a teenager already — that’s not who we are.”

Although President George W. Bush visited a mosque in Washington within six days of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks to reassure American Muslims, Mr. Obama, a Christian, brushed aside requests for a visit for years in part because 43 percent of Republicans and 29 percent of Americans think he is a Muslim, according to a [CNN/ORC poll](#) last September. Aides feared a mosque visit would feed into that perception.

But in the final year of his presidency, Mr. Obama has lost much of his reticence in addressing issues like race, addiction and religion, often in very personal terms. Administration officials said there had been little internal debate about Mr. Obama visiting an American mosque since talk about it began at the White House last fall.

In an aside that drew considerable laughter, Mr. Obama told the crowd at the mosque that controversy over a president’s religion is not new. “By the way, Thomas Jefferson’s opponents tried to stir things up by suggesting he was a Muslim — so I was not the first,” he said, adding: “I’m in good company.”

For Mr. Obama, the remarks were also an admission of how little progress has been made since the speech in Cairo, where he called for “a sustained effort to listen to each other, to learn from each other, to respect one another, and to seek common ground.” In his speech on Wednesday, he suggested that his hopes for a reconciliation had been dashed, but he called on all Americans to stick by the country’s founding ideals.

Muslims in the audience hailed the address.

“I think it was one of the best speeches he’s ever given,” said Representative André Carson, an Indiana Democrat. Representative Keith Ellison, a Minnesota Democrat, said the speech “hit me in the heart” and was a vital antidote to growing intolerance.

“I have a 19-year-old daughter who is a Muslim and wants to contribute to her nation, and it bugs me that someone who says he wants to be president would want to exclude her,” Mr. Ellison said.

But Morton Klein, president of the Zionist Organization of America, one of the country’s oldest and largest pro-Israel organizations, denounced Mr. Obama for visiting a mosque whose leaders, Mr. Klein said, have among other issues criticized Israeli military actions. “Going to such a mosque only encourages radical Muslims to harm Americans,” Mr. Klein said.

White House and Islamic Society of Baltimore officials did not respond to Mr. Klein’s criticism. Ibrahim Hooper, a spokesman for the Council on American-Islamic Relations, said that “any mosque would have been attacked similarly.”

Concerns about Muslims and Syrian refugees in the United States grew after terrorist [attacks in Paris](#) in November claimed the lives of 130 people and after a mass shooting by a husband-and-wife team in San Bernardino, Calif., in December left 14 people dead and 22 seriously wounded.

Since then, attacks on American Muslims and mosques have spiked, according to the Council on American-Islamic Relations. At a meeting at the White House last month, prominent American Muslims pleaded with senior administration officials to have the president visit a mosque in the hope of stemming such attacks.

A portion of Mr. Obama’s speech in Baltimore was a kind of primer, in which he offered “some basic facts” on Islam and the United States that he said the news media had failed to communicate.

Among those facts: Islam is a religion of peace. Some of the earliest Americans were Muslim. Jefferson and other founding fathers sought to guarantee the freedom of Muslims to worship. Muslims are everywhere in American society as doctors, teachers, soldiers and sports stars.

Mr. Obama said that too many Americans heard about Islam only after terrorist attacks, and that this must change. “Our television shows should have some Muslim characters that are unrelated to national security,” he said. “It’s not that hard to do. There was a time when there were no black people on television.”

Mr. Obama also said that anyone who suggested that the United States was at war with Islam not only legitimized such groups as the Islamic State but also played into their hands. “That kind of mind-set helps our enemies,” he said. “It helps our enemies recruit. It makes us all less safe.”

Doris Kearns Goodwin, a presidential scholar, likened Mr. Obama’s visit and warnings against anti-Muslim language to warnings made by two other presidents at the end of their terms.

“George Washington warned his countrymen against the increasing power of factions which kindle animosity of one against the other, while Eisenhower warned against the unwarranted influence of the military industrial complex,” she wrote in an email.

Mr. Obama ended his speech by reminding Muslim Americans, “You are not alone, your fellow Americans stand with you.” And he reminded others that the country’s diversity “is not a weakness, that is one of our greatest strengths.”

“We are one American family,” he said. “We will rise and fall together.”

<http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/02/04/world/europe/migrant-crisis-by-the-numbers.html?hp&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&clickSource=story-heading&module=second-column-region®ion=top-news&WT.nav=top-news>

139,12

The Migrant Crisis: No End in Sight

By **RUSSELL GOLDMAN** FEB. 3, 2016

The perilous flight of refugees continues, with some 67,000 asylum seekers traveling to Europe last month. Meanwhile, the European Union and international donors are poised to increase their aid to one desperate group: Syrians displaced by war.

The refugees keep coming.

Forced from their homes by war and economic deprivation, tens of thousands of migrants made the perilous journey to Europe last month.

These asylum seekers, the latest surge in a great tide of human movement, have braved winter weather, stormy seas and closed borders in their escape from the Middle East, Afghanistan and Africa.

On Thursday in London, the European Union and international donors are expected to pledge to increase their aid to Syrians displaced by war.

The toll, whether measured in lives or in dollars, is staggering.

More People, Fewer Choices

More than **67,000 migrants** have arrived in Europe by sea since the start of the year. By comparison, **5,000** migrants made the journey across the Mediterranean in January 2015, according to the International Organization for Migration.

These newcomers join more than **one million** people who sought refuge in Europe last year. But more telling than the total number of migrants is the number who have been formally resettled: **190** in 2015, despite pledges to relocate almost 200,000.

“We have to go,” said Mohamed Salem Abraham, a 17-year-old Afghan trying to make his way to Germany. Mohamed arrived in Greece two months ago after traveling through Iran and catching a leaky boat from Turkey. “What is the choice — to stay in our country and be killed, or come to Europe where we can be free?”

Desperate Children

This year, **368** people have died making the journey across the Mediterranean, 60 of them children, [migration figures show](#).

Since the beginning of the year **19,781** minors have arrived in Europe, almost one-third of the total number of people making the journey.

On Saturday, **10 children drowned** when a boat carrying them and their families crashed on rocks near Ayvacik, a Turkish resort town. Photos of at least two of the children, their lifeless bodies on a rocky shore, were disturbingly similar to the photographs of the **3-year-old Syrian boy Alan Kurdi** that circulated on the Internet in September. The public outcry over repeated images of smartly dressed children washed up on Europe’s shores has been muted.

Women and children now make up most of the migrants entering Europe, surpassing [single men, who were once the majority of travelers](#), according to Unicef.

For children, the journey is far more dangerous than a single boat trip. At least **10,000** unaccompanied minors have disappeared in Europe over the past year, according to Europol, the European division of Interpol. Many of those children have slipped through the bureaucratic cracks and found shelter with family members, but the police warned that many others have likely been kidnapped by traffickers.

New Restrictions

Citizens from **149** countries applied for asylum in Europe in 2015, according to the [European Union](#), but the vast majority came from just three places: Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Germany, followed by Hungary and Sweden, received the most asylum applicants last year.

During the first half of 2015, **668,000** immigrants, including other Europeans and asylum seekers, entered Germany, according to the German Interior Ministry, and the total for last year is expected to be around one million.

It is increasingly difficult for those who arrive in Greece and elsewhere to make their way to northern Europe as more countries [close their borders](#) to migrants.

Mounting Costs

Leaders from Europe and other world powers, including the United States, are expected to double, to \$2 billion, the amount of aid they pledged to Syrian migrants last year. That is in addition to nearly **\$3 billion** European Union leaders [pledged to Turkey](#) in November to help its government keep refugees from leaving that country for Europe.

139,14

Is Schengen on the verge of collapse?

Faced with hundreds of thousands of refugees on the move, several Schengen countries have reintroduced temporary border controls. French experts estimate that the EU economy would lose around 100 billion euros if permanent border controls are introduced in the Schengen zone. Can the Europe without borders still be saved?

ÚJ SZÓ (SLOWAKED) (SK) / 04 February 2016

Small states pay the price

The likely collapse of the Schengen system would have a major negative impact on export-oriented countries in particular, warns economist Zsolt Gál in the Slovakian daily Új Szó:

“Will illegal immigration be curbed and will the Schengen system be reformed enough to avoid its collapse? As things look now the answer to both questions is no. The flood of refugees won't dwindle and because of the EU's cumbersome decision-making system it doesn't seem likely that the member states will agree on a compromise that stops the influx with laws and effective border protection. It's obvious that if this is the case small EU states like Slovakia which are very export-oriented will pay the price when exports of all kinds are constantly delayed at national borders.”

- **Zsolt Gál**
- **Original article**

EESTI PÄEVALEHT (EE) / 04 February 2016

Schengen could very soon be history

The freedom of movement within the Schengen Area could collapse in a matter of weeks, MEP and former Foreign Minister Urmas Paet writes in the liberal daily Eesti Päevaleht:

“The EU's agreements with Turkey have failed to have any effect, and the situation in the refugee camps is dismal. So far neither the common border controls and coastal surveillance, nor the so-called blue cards for legal immigration have had any impact, and there is no sign of a common asylum policy. ... It is high time we changed our policy. Because if we don't do something soon freedom of movement in the Schengen Area will be history in a matter of weeks. Europe is in an extraordinary situation and it needs extraordinary measures to get a grip on events and preserve cohesion in the EU. The only way to save the Schengen Area is to create a pan-European border control authority and coastal surveillance.”

- **Urmas Paet**
- **Original article**

ILTALEHTI (FI) / 04 February 2016

No alternative to even stricter policy

Finnish President Sauli Niinistö warned on Wednesday that Europe would not be able to cope with uncontrolled migration movements like the one it is currently facing for long. Such statements could lead to an even stricter refugee policy, the tabloid Iltalehti fears:

“We must respect human rights, but like Niinistö we must also see the problems associated with the increasingly uncontrolled immigration. And we must not close our eyes to the fact that the refugees who are suffering most are not receiving any help. ... It would be regrettable if the president's realism were used to push through an even stricter immigration policy. But that will no doubt be the case. ... Defence Minister Jussi Niinistö has already interpreted the statement as a clear message of support for a more rigid refugee policy.”

- **Original article**

JORNAL I (PT) / 25 January 2016

Cornerstone of European project must be protected

Europe and the Portuguese government in particular must fight to preserve Schengen, the daily I warns:

“Like all other countries and nations involved in the European project, Portugal benefits in many ways from the Schengen Area. It would be disastrous if it were to come to an end. So there seems to be only one option: to fight for Schengen. Our government should do this too, because the higher interests of the nation demand it. Schengen stands for business and jobs - for much more than security or even security mania. Many of those pushing for Schengen's demise are the same old Eurosceptics as ever. ... It's regrettable that the talk about terrorism, economic migrants and the flood of refugees is being used to destroy a cornerstone of the European project.”

- **Feliciano Barreiras Duarte**

- [to the homepage](#)

SALZBURGER NACHRICHTEN (AT) / 26 January 2016

Border controls not the end for Europe

People shouldn't overreact to the reintroduction of border controls in the Schengen Area, the Christian daily Salzburger Nachrichten warns:

“Countries are allowed to reintroduce border controls in exceptional circumstances and for a certain period of time, as long as they report it to the EU Commission. Moreover the reintroduction of controls within the Schengen zone doesn't necessarily mean that 'the borders are being sealed'. EU citizens can continue to cross borders freely and retain their right to freedom of movement. Goods, too, can circulate freely within the Schengen Area. And even without Schengen the single market would still work. For one thing it's older than Schengen, so it was already in place and functioning before the agreement. And for another not all the countries of the single market are part of the Schengen zone, for instance the UK, which is an important member of the single market.”

- **Stephanie Pack**

- [Original article](#)

24 CHASA (BG) / 25 January 2016

Bring peace to Middle East rather than closing borders

Closing borders is futile because only an end to the wars in the Middle East can have a lasting impact in reducing the number of refugees coming to Europe, the daily 24 Chasa writes:

“The refugee problem must be tackled at its root. The Middle East must be pacified, the civil war in Syria must end and the IS must be destroyed. Russia's provocations must stop and the EU must fulfill its obligations to Turkey and vice versa. A new way to manage the flow of refugees must be found because the Dublin Regulation can't be enforced. ... All that will take years, and even if Europe masters the challenge it must realise that the mass of refugees fleeing the civil war in Syria is just the beginning. ... All those who believe we can seal ourselves off by closing our borders are closing their eyes to reality.”

- **Kapka Todorova**

- [Original article](#)

HANDELSBLATT (DE) / 25 January 2016

Control borders for three years

To buy time in the refugee crisis the EU should temporarily suspend the Schengen Agreement, the liberal business daily Handelsblatt urges:

“The wave of refugees is threatening the Schengen Area because adequate controls on the outer borders can't be guaranteed. Cooperation among police authorities as stipulated in the agreement isn't happening where it should. ... A realistic approach would be to redouble all efforts to secure the outer borders, to ensure cross-border police cooperation, to fight criminal smugglers, to ensure uniform application of the Geneva refugee convention and to set rules for distributing the refugees. We should plan in a period of say three years for this. During this period the Schengen agreement should be suspended - by all parties! This makes sense not only for Europe, but also for the individual member states.”

- **Manfred Lahnstein**

- [to the homepage](#)

Mini Schengen out of the question

Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte has called on Europe to come up with a solution to the refugee crisis within two months. But his Plan B - a mini Schengen - would have disastrous consequences, warns the Christian social daily Trouw:

“This plan would be a defeat. It foresees a very trimmed down Schengen zone in which free travel in Europe is limited to just a handful of countries. That in itself would be bad enough. But above all this plan threatens to further erode the EU and consequently also jeopardise the single market and the euro. ... Plan B must not be an option. The Dutch EU Council presidency must put all its energy into finding a way out of this impasse together with Turkey. If it doesn't, we'll be facing not just a refugee crisis but a European crisis to boot.”

- [to the homepage](#)

Member states need to agree on action

The Danish Liberal Alliance party has suggested that Denmark stop taking in refugees for two years and put the money into refugee camps in the Middle East instead. The conservative daily Berlingske Tidende warns the EU against wasting more time, otherwise such proposals will become the reality:

“The longer it takes for the EU to reach an agreement, the more countries will come up with protective measures of their own. The controls are becoming tighter, to the point that soon we'll no longer be able to speak of free movement and open internal borders. That would deal a tragic blow to cooperation and growth in the EU. ... First of all the checking, sorting and sending back of refugees must take place in Greece and Italy. If these countries can't do that on their own they'll have to hand over responsibility to the EU. The countries that are blocking a joint EU solution are to blame when other governments start coming up with increasingly creative solutions against migration.”

- [Original article](#)

The EU has always pulled through so far

Despite all predictions to the contrary the liberal daily Karjalainen is convinced that the EU won't fail because of the refugee crisis:

“All over Europe the stance vis-a-vis refugees has hardened. To overcome the crisis cooperation is needed, because the states won't manage it on their own. Finland also has an EU outer border and Finland's border is no longer completely protected. But there is no reason to believe that the EU will collapse because of the refugee crisis. That was already supposed to happen because of the economic crisis but in the end the EU got its act together and solved the problems. It's typical of the EU to have problems agreeing on something but to manage it in the end - albeit at the last minute.”

A Mosque as Extremist Megaphone

Even in leading Islamic institutions like Al Aqsa in Jerusalem, praising Islamist radicalism is common.

By Steven Stalinsky

4 février 2016

[The Wall Street Journal \(Europe Edition\)](#)

President Obama on Wednesday was scheduled to visit a U.S. mosque for the first time in his presidency. According to the White House, during this visit he planned to "celebrate the contributions Muslim Americans make to our nation and reaffirm the importance of religious freedom to our way of life." Over the past two years, in the president's efforts to counter violent extremism, he has emphasized the responsibility of Muslim "scholars and clerics" to help ensure that mosques aren't used as a platform to preach Islamist extremism.

Such extremism isn't limited to out-of-the-way mosques where radical clerics operate in the shadows. It is occurring in mainstream and leading mosques world-wide, including at one of the most important religious institutions in Islam, the Al Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem.

Consider a Jan. 16 sermon at Al Aqsa by Sheikh Abu Taqi Al-Din Al-Dari, a Palestinian cleric who called for jihad against the West and Europe, and for the burgeoning Islamic State to "conquer Rome, Washington and Paris."

Despite Al Aqsa's importance to Islam -- it is considered the religion's holiest site outside Saudi Arabia -- few Westerners are aware of the content of the sermons, lectures and lessons offered there. Many of these sermons are posted on the mosque's two official YouTube channels and have been translated from the Arabic by my organization, the Middle East Media Research Institute.

What we have found at Al Aqsa is a steady stream of calls for jihad and martyrdom, venomous attacks on Jews, Christians and other non-Muslims, and praise for al Qaeda, Islamic State and other jihadist groups.

Calls for the destruction of the U.S. and the West, including promises that Islam will take over the world, are other common themes. On July 24 last year, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Dweik -- a frequent lecturer at the mosque and Palestinian cleric, like the other religious leaders quoted here -- said: "The caliphate will come to be, and the nuclear bomb will be produced," adding that this future Islamic caliphate -- will "fight the U.S. and will bring it down" and "eliminate the West in its entirety."

On July 6, 2015, Sheikh Muhammad Abed, known as "Abu Abdallah," declared that from "the land of the Prophet's nocturnal journey" -- a reference to Jerusalem -- "armies will set out to conquer Rome, to conquer Constantinople," and then he added to the list "Washington and London."

In an Oct. 27 address at Al Aqsa, Sheikh Khaled Al-Maghrabi called for the annihilation of the Jews all over the world, providing justification by quoting the well-known hadith (sayings of the Prophet Muhammad) of the stone and the tree: "Oh Muslim there is a Jew behind me, come and kill him." Earlier at the mosque, on May 29, Sheikh Al-Maghrabi explained why Jews were killed in the Holocaust. "On Passover," he said, the Jews "would knead the dough for these matzos with children's blood. When this was discovered, the Israelites were expelled across Europe . . . It got to the point where they were burned in Germany."

Such anti-Semitism is familiar at Al Aqsa. In another sermon there, on Nov. 28, 2014, cleric Omar Abu Sara called the Jews -- to whom he said "every single vile trait has been attributed" -- the "most evil creatures to have walked this Earth." He added that "it was the Jews whom Allah turned into apes and pigs."

If incendiary sermons such as those at Al Aqsa were being delivered in any Western city, authorities wouldn't tolerate them. Over the past year in Europe, several sheikhs have been prosecuted or expelled for similarly extremist rhetoric. In Germany, an imam from Denmark who spoke in 2014 at the Al Nur mosque in Berlin faced criminal charges after calling for the killing of Jews, saying: "Count them and kill them to the very last one." Two months ago, he was fined 1,300 euros (\$1,418). Italian, Spanish and Danish authorities have handled similar matters involving hateful sermons.

At Al Aqsa, support is also strong for jihadist groups. On June 26, Palestinian cleric Issam Amira praised an Islamic State-inspired attack in the small French town of Saint-Quentin-Fallavier, southeast of Lyon, after an Islamist radical decapitated his employer and then crashed his vehicle, causing an explosion. "The Muslims have given rise to ISIS, and to vehicular attackers," the cleric said. "They are courageous." He added his wish that "Allah soon reward the Islamic nation with a second rightly guided caliphate." Destroying "the Jewish entity" -- Israel -- could then be achieved, he said.

Al Qaeda also comes in for praise at Al Aqsa. The day Osama bin Laden was killed, May 2, 2011, an unnamed preacher eulogized him. In an Al Aqsa video uploaded to YouTube, the speaker vowed that despite bin Laden's death, the "nation of one billion Muslims will give birth to hundreds of millions" of bin Ladens. Then came a threat to President Obama: "You personally gave the order to kill Muslims. . . . The day will soon come when you find yourself hanging from the gallows."

Our research at Memri indicates that the hateful rhetoric on display at Al Aqsa is hardly unique to that institution -- similar incitements can be found at prominent mosques and Islamic institutes throughout the world. Our video archive at memritv.org contains thousands of examples.

A year ago in Washington, at the opening of the Summit on Countering Violent Extremism, President Obama urged Muslims to "push back" against extremism in mosques. Acknowledging the Islamist threat, and those who support it, must be part of any realistic attempt at countering violent extremism.

Mr. Stalinsky is the executive director of the Middle East Media Research Institute (Memri).

139,19

A plan for Europe's refugees

How to manage the migrant crisis

A European problem demands a common, coherent EU policy. Let refugees in, but regulate the flow

Feb 6th 2016 | [From the print edition](#)

REFUGEES are reasonable people in desperate circumstances. Life for many of the 1m-odd asylum-seekers who have fled Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and other war-torn countries for Europe in the past year has become intolerable. Europe is peaceful, rich and accessible. Most people would rather not abandon their homes and start again among strangers. But when the alternative is the threat of death from barrel-bombs and sabre-wielding fanatics, they make the only rational choice.

The flow of refugees would have been manageable if European Union countries had worked together, as Angela Merkel, Germany's chancellor, has always wished (and *The Economist* urged). Instead Germany and Sweden have been left to cope alone. Today their willingness to do so is exhausted. Unless Europe soon restores order, political pressure will force Mrs Merkel to clamp down unilaterally, starting a wave of border closures (see article). More worrying, the migrant crisis is feeding xenophobia and political populism. The divisive forces of right-wing nationalism have already taken hold in parts of eastern Europe. If they spread westward into Germany, France and Italy then the EU could tear itself apart.

The situation today is a mess. Refugees have been free to sail across the Mediterranean, register and make for whichever country seems most welcoming. Many economic migrants with no claim to asylum have found a place in the queue by lying about where they came from. This free-for-all must be replaced by a system in which asylum applicants are screened when they first reach Europe's borders—or better still, before they cross the Mediterranean. Those who are ineligible for asylum should be sent back without delay; those likely to qualify should be sent on to countries willing to accept them.

Order on the border

Creating a well-regulated system requires three steps. The first is to curb the “push factors” that encourage people to risk the crossing, by beefing up aid to refugees, particularly to the victims of the civil wars in Syria and Iraq, including the huge number who have fled to neighbouring countries such as Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon. The second is to review asylum claims while refugees are still in centres in the Middle East or in the “hotspots” (mainly in Greece and Italy), where they go when they first arrive in the EU. The third element is to insist that asylum-seekers stay put until their applications are processed, rather than jumping on a train to Germany.

All these steps are fraught with difficulty. Consider the “push factors” first. The prospect of ending Syria's civil war is as remote as ever: peace talks in Geneva this week were suspended without progress. But the EU could do a lot more to help refugees and their host countries. Scandalously, aid for Syrians was cut in 2015 even as the war grew bloodier: aid agencies got a bit more than half of what they needed last year, according to the UN. Donors at a conference on Syria in London this week were asked for \$9 billion for 2016—about as much as Germans spend on chocolate every year. Far more is needed and will be needed every year for several years.

Europe's money should be used not only to feed and house refugees but also to coax host countries into letting them work. For the first four years of the conflict Syrians were denied work permits in Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon. Recently Turkey has begun to grant them. Donors should press Jordan and Lebanon to follow. European cash could help teach the 400,000 refugee children in Turkey who have no classes.

Sometimes the answer is no

The next task is to require asylum-seekers to register and be sorted as close to home as possible, probably Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan. Ideally those who travelled by boat to Europe would be sent back to a camp in one of those three countries—to prove that they had just wasted their precious savings paying people-traffickers to take them on a pointless journey. But that would meet legal and political objections, partly because of Turkey’s human-rights record (see our [special report this week](#)). So, there should also be processing camps in the first EU country they reach, probably Greece or Italy.

The cost of this should fall on the whole EU, since the aim is to establish control over its external borders. Dealmaking is possible. In exchange for hosting large refugee hotspots and camps on its soil, Greece should get help with its debt and budgets which it has long sought to ease its economic crisis.

Refugees will fall in with this scheme (rather than cross the EU illegally) only if they are confident that genuine applications will be accepted within a reasonable time. So the EU needs to spend what it takes to sort through their claims swiftly. And member states ought to agree to accept substantial numbers of bona fide asylum claimants. Some refugees may prefer Germany to, say, France—and there is little to stop them crossing borders once they are inside the Schengen area. But, if they are properly looked after, most will stay put.

The crisis needs a bigger resettlement programme than the one run by the UN’s refugee agency, which has only 160,000 spaces. Countries outside the EU, including the Gulf states, can play their part. Priority should go to refugees who apply for asylum while still in Turkey, Jordan or Lebanon—to reduce the incentive for refugees to board leaky boats to Greece.

Ineligible migrants will have to be refused entry or deported. This will be legally difficult, and it is impossible to repatriate people to some countries, such as Syria. But if the system is not to be overwhelmed or seen as unfair and illegitimate by EU citizens, the sorting must be efficient and enforceable. EU governments should sign and implement readmission agreements allowing rejected migrants to be sent home quickly to, say, Morocco or Algeria. If such agreements are impossible (or if, as with Pakistan, governments fail to honour them), the prospect of waiting indefinitely in Greece will make economic migrants who want to reach Germany hesitate before coming.

Once these measures are in place, it will become possible to take the most controversial step: halting the uncontrolled migrant flow across Greece’s northern border with Macedonia. It has become clear over the past five months that Europe cannot gain control over the numbers or the nature of the migrant stream while border officials wave asylum-seekers through and bid them safe travel to northern Europe.

Since the start of the refugee crisis, we have argued that Europe should welcome persecuted people and carefully manage their entry into European society. Our views have not changed. Countries have a moral and legal duty to provide sanctuary to those who flee grave danger. That approach is disruptive in the short term, but in the medium term, so long as they are allowed to work, refugees assimilate and more than pay for themselves. By contrast, the chaos of recent months shows what happens when politicians fail to take a pan-European approach to what is clearly a pan-European problem. The plan we outline would require a big chunk of cash and a lot of testy negotiations. But it is in every country’s interest to help—because all of them would be worse off if the EU lapses into a xenophobic free-for-all.

There is an encouraging precedent, too. When more than 1m “boat people” fled Vietnam after the communists took over in 1975, they went initially to refugee camps in Hong Kong and other parts of Asia before being sent to America, Europe, Australia and wherever else would take them. They arrived with nothing but adapted astonishingly fast: the median household income for Vietnamese-Americans, for example, is now above the national average. No one in America now frets that the boat people will not fit in.

Bargeld ist Freiheit

Der Kampf gegen das Bargeld setzt am falschen Ende an: Das Problem sind nicht die Kriminellen, sondern die Feinde von Freiheit und Vermögen - und die sitzen in den Finanzministerien und Staatsbanken.

05.02.2016, von **HOLGER STELTZNER**



© DPA Gelebte Freiheit: Bargeld war immer schon Schutz vor Bevormundung und staatlichem Zugriff.

„Geld ist geprägte Freiheit“, hat der russische Schriftsteller Fjodor Dostojewski im 19. Jahrhundert über seine Zeit im Straflager geschrieben. Er meinte Bargeld, moderne Zahlungsmittel gab es noch nicht. Doch nur die digitale Zahlung ermöglicht die totale Kontrolle durch Staaten, Finanzinstitute oder Internetanbieter. Was damals galt, gilt heute erst recht. Im 21. Jahrhundert erfolgt der digitale Zugriff auf das Innere unserer Köpfe mit der Wucht einer Exponentialfunktion. In der digitalen Welt wird alles mit allem vernetzt sein, wird alles aufgezeichnet, augenblicklich verwertet, ist die Analyse von Unmengen Daten in Echtzeit das moderne Gold, ist Big Data für alle Geschäft und Schicksal zugleich. In einer Welt, in der alles, was man kauft und konsumiert, verfolgt wird, gibt es keine Privatheit mehr, zählt das Recht an den eigenen Daten nichts, herrscht die perfekte Kontrolle – mit allen denkbaren politischen, wirtschaftlichen oder kriminellen Konsequenzen.



Autor: Holger Steltzner, Herausgeber.Folgen:

In der digitalen Welt kann nur das Bargeld den Menschen vor einer grenzenlosen Verfolgung schützen. Deshalb ist Bargeld nicht nur Geld, sondern zugleich privates Vermögen und gelebte Freiheit. Weil die Leute das spüren, reagieren viele Deutsche empört auf den Angriff auf das Bargeld, den die große Koalition plant, indem das von der **CDU** geführte Finanzministerium eine Grenze für Bargeldzahlung einführen will und die SPD große Geldscheine gleich ganz verbieten möchte. Da ist es nicht mehr weit bis zur Abschaffung von Bargeld, wie das Nachbarland Dänemark zeigt, wo vom nächsten Jahr an die Notenbank keine Banknoten mehr drucken will.

Kampf gegen Terror ist vorgeschoben

Beim Feldzug gegen das Bargeld geht es um mehr als das Bezahlen. Ginge es nur darum, könnte man die Leute einfach selbst entscheiden lassen, wie sie künftig zahlen wollen. Es geht um das Ende von Privatheit und selbstbestimmter Entscheidung, um Lenkung von Verhalten und um den Zugriff auf das Vermögen. Der Bevormundung des Bürgers wäre in einer solchen Welt keine Grenze gesetzt, Geld wäre kein privates Eigentum mehr. Der Übergewichtige könnte mit seiner Karte auf einmal die Kalorienbombe nicht mehr zahlen, der Alkoholiker sich die Weinflasche nicht mehr besorgen, und am „Veggie Day“ dürfte man mit seinem Smartphone kein Fleisch mehr kaufen. Der Zugriff des Fiskus auf das Konto des Bürgers wäre selbstverständlich. Und in totalitären Staaten gäbe es kein Entrinnen vor Überwachung und Unterdrückung.

Der *war on cash* startete vor Jahren in Amerika, seit in dieser Frage das Silicon Valley (Digitalisierung), die Wall Street (Kartenzahlung) und Washington (Kontrolle) an einem Strang ziehen. Geldwäscher, Steuerhinterzieher und Kriminelle müssten bekämpft werden, hieß es zunächst. Seitdem jedoch der automatische Datenaustausch

zwischen Banken und Finanzbehörden über Grenzen hinweg das Bankgeheimnis abgelöst hat und die Cyber-Mafia im Internet immer bessere Geschäfte macht, braucht man neue Argumente. Plötzlich soll mit dem „Krieg gegen Cash“ der Kampf gegen den islamistischen Terror gewonnen werden. Das ist Unfug. Glaubt wirklich jemand, das Verbot einer Barzahlung ab 5000 Euro hält einen IS-Terroristen vom Abfeuern einer Kalaschnikow ab? Beim Geld wird so getan, als gäbe es in der digitalen Welt keine Kriminelle, keine Terroristen. Aber wie kommen dann IS-Propagandafilme und die schrecklichen Kopfabsehneideos ins Netz? Warum gibt es das Darknet überhaupt, wo Terroristen, Perverse und Kriminelle alles kaufen können, was das böse Herz begehrt?

Umverteilung droht

Andere Motive sind für den Krieg gegen Cash wichtiger, aber über sie wird weniger geredet. Hier kommen die Notenbanken ins Spiel, auch die Europäische Zentralbank, deren Präsident Draghi schon laut darüber nachdenkt, wie er am besten die Abschaffung der 500-Euro-Note kommuniziert, die der EZB-Rat noch gar nicht beschlossen hat. Ohne Bargeld wären die Bürger den Negativzinsen der Zentralbanken ausgeliefert. Davon träumen auch viele Finanzminister und keynesianische Ökonomen.

Negative Zinsen trieben den Konsum und die Konjunktur an, hieß es vor vier Jahren, als der Bund erstmals Anleihen mit Strafzinsen verkaufte. Immer mehr Anleger bezahlen inzwischen die Schuldner, damit diese Geld von ihnen nehmen. Doch selbst mit solch einer Finanzakrobatik kann die EZB das Wachstum nicht erzwingen, wie man heute weiß. Längst hätten die Regierungen die Ursachen für die Wachstumsschwäche anpacken müssen, anstatt der EZB zu applaudieren, wenn sie Staatsfinanzierung betreibt, indem sie Staatsanleihen aufkauft. Offenbar wird mit den Strafzinsen ein anderes Ziel verfolgt. Durch negative Zinsen soll Vermögen von Gläubigern zu Schuldnern umverteilt werden.

Kriminelle seien nicht das Problem, sondern die Finanzministerien und die Staatsbanken, sagt der deutsche Philosoph Peter Sloterdijk: „Wenn die Inflation wirklich bei 4 Prozent läge, wie Krugman und seine Kumpane fordern, käme das in 25 Jahren einer globalen Konfiskation des Volksvermögens gleich. Was den Leuten vorschwebt, ist die Synthese von Inflationssozialismus und Fiskalsozialismus.“

Bundesbank warnt vor Bargeld-Begrenzung

Nach dem Willen der Bundesregierung sollen Barzahlungen über 5000 Euro bald illegal sein. Bundesbankpräsident Jens Weidmann wendet sich nun energisch dagegen. Und er hat ein wichtiges Argument.

• 5. Februar



Foto: dpa Bundesbankpräsident Weidmann verweist darauf, dass Banknoten das einzige gesetzliche Zahlungsmittel sind

Die Bundesbank lehnt die von der Bundesregierung geplante Obergrenze für Bargeldzahlungen ab. **"Es wäre fatal, wenn die Bürger den Eindruck bekämen, dass ihnen das Bargeld nach und nach entzogen wird"**, sagte Bundesbankpräsident Jens Weidmann der "Bild"-Zeitung. "Der Bürger soll selbst entscheiden können, ob er lieber Bargeld nutzen oder bargeldlos bezahlen möchte."

Die Regierung dürfe bei der "Diskussion über Barzahlungen nicht vergessen, dass Banknoten das einzige gesetzliche Zahlungsmittel sind", nannte Weidmann dem Blatt als wichtiges Argument. **Zugleich sei eine Abschaffung des Bargelds aus geldpolitischer Sicht "nicht die angemessene Antwort auf die Herausforderung des Niedrigzinsumfeldes". Wichtiger sei es, das Wirtschaftswachstum dauerhaft zu stärken, "damit die Zinsen auch wieder steigen können".**

Die Bundesregierung hatte am Mittwoch angekündigt, sich im Kampf gegen Geldwäsche und Terrorismusfinanzierung für eine EU-weit einheitliche Obergrenze bei Bargeldzahlungen einzusetzen. "Wir haben an eine Größenordnung von 5000 Euro gedacht", sagte ein Sprecher des Finanzministeriums. Bargeldtransaktionen verliefen anonym und seien im Gegensatz zu kontenbasierten Transaktionen nicht überprüfbar, begründete das Ministerium den Vorstoß.

Unterschiedliche Reaktionen aus den Koalitionsparteien

In den Koalitionsparteien waren die Reaktionen darauf unterschiedlich. "Es ist bekannt, dass über den Bargeldhandel beim Auto- oder Immobilienkauf Schwarzgeld gewaschen wird", erklärte Lothar Binding, der finanzpolitische Sprecher der SPD, gegenüber Bloomberg News. Deshalb unterstütze die SPD Pläne für eine Obergrenze im Bargeldhandel.

Vieles lasse darauf schließen, dass Kriminelle aus Ländern wie Belgien, Spanien oder Frankreich, die bereits eine Bargeldschwelle haben, in Deutschland ihr illegales Geld waschen, heißt es zudem in einem SPD-Positionspapier. Deutschland sei deshalb für die internationale Organisierte Kriminalität und die Mafia ein beliebtes Ziel. "Eine Bargeldschwelle in Deutschland beseitigt diesen zweifelhaften Standortvorteil", schreiben die SPD-Autoren in dem Papier, das die Bundestagsfraktion im Februar verabschieden will.

CDU/CSU-Fraktionsvize Ralph Brinkhaus äußerte sich dagegen zurückhaltend: **"Eine Beschränkung des Bargeldverkehrs ist ein erheblicher Eingriff in die Freiheitsrechte der Bürgerinnen und Bürger". Jede**

elektronische Zahlung hinterlasse Datenspuren und könne nachverfolgt werden. Bei einer Gesetzesinitiative sei deshalb "Vorsicht geboten".

EZB prüft Abschaffung des 500-Euro-Scheins

Die Europäische Zentralbank prüft unterdessen die [Abschaffung des 500-Euro-Scheins](#). Zwar hätten die Währungshüter noch keine Entscheidung über die höchste Banknote in der Euro-Zone gefällt, sagte EZB-Präsident Mario Draghi vor EU-Abgeordneten laut der am Donnerstag von der EZB übermittelten Abschrift der Äußerungen.

Das EZB-Direktorium erwäge dies aber schon seit geraumer Zeit, und inzwischen gebe es auch technische Arbeiten dazu. Fraglich sei aber noch, wie man am besten eine Entscheidung umsetze und kommuniziere. "Wir wollen etwas ändern, aber wir möchten es in einer geordneten Weise ändern", so Draghi.

Über die Abschaffung des 500-Euro-Scheins muss letztendlich der EZB-Rat entscheiden, in dem die Notenbank-Chefs aller 19 Länder des Währungsraums sitzen. **In Deutschland spielen Barzahlungen nach wie vor eine viel größere Rolle als in vielen anderen Länder Europas. Nach einer Bundesbank-Studie zum Zahlungsverhalten 2014 werden in Deutschland immer noch fast 80 Prozent aller Einkäufe bar bezahlt.**

139,25

- [OPINION](#)
- [COMMENTARY](#)

The Global Axis of Quantitative Easing

The BOJ and ECB compete to drive down the yen and the euro.

By **DIANA CHOYLEVA**

Feb. 4, 2016 2:14 p.m. ET

Major central banks have been under so much pressure in recent years to jump-start their stalled domestic economies that they've taken their eyes off the real economic prize: an end to global savings imbalances. This lapse is most obvious in the case of the [Bank of Japan](#) and the [European Central Bank](#). The BOJ has already helped ruin a golden opportunity to put global growth back on track, and [the ECB](#) looks set to follow its misguided lead.

The key is China, which still is at the center of a global savings glut. Households, firms and the state all save excessively to produce a national savings rate that for the past 10 years has hovered around 50% of gross domestic product. Beijing used to either recycle its nation's savings into low-yielding U.S. Treasuries, stoking America's debt crisis, or pour them into wasteful investment at home, driving up demand and prices in commodity markets while flooding the world with an excess supply of manufactured goods.

Over the past two years Chinese policy makers have started to make real progress liberalizing the country's financial markets, thus addressing one of the underlying causes of the malign savings glut. Ensuring China can generate a sustainable increase in household consumption over time would be highly beneficial for the world economy, which eight years after the global financial crisis is still short of genuine consumer demand.

Eliminating past excesses and shedding its reliance on investment has been a painful process for China, which naturally has been accompanied by a structural weakening of growth. It hasn't helped that among the major economies China has been the only country with an overvalued currency. Its real effective exchange rate has been well above its long-term average, spurring its manufacturers to cut yuan export prices continually for more than three years.

The solution, both for China's sake and for the sake of fostering stronger, better-balanced global growth, is for the leading central banks to allow China to effect an orderly depreciation of the yuan to smooth its difficult adjustment. If both investment and export income dwindle at the same time as China tries to reduce its pile of bad debts, it will be very difficult for the Chinese economy not to slump into recession.

Freeing capital outflows in China and making its exchange rate market-driven is highly likely to weaken the yuan and push up domestic interest rates. Higher interest rates would transfer income from firms to households as savers get rewarded properly. Allowing savers to earn more return from less saving is the fastest way for China to lower its exorbitant savings rate.

At the same time, the resulting disinflationary pressures from stronger currencies in Europe, the U.S. and Japan would provide a further windfall for consumers in those places, who have already benefitted from a slump in commodity prices caused partly by weaker Chinese growth. Rising consumption thanks to cheaper imports would also help revive business investment.

Unfortunately, the leading central banks are far from willing to allow the yuan to depreciate as China liberalizes capital outflows. The BOJ's Governor Haruhiko Kuroda has urged China to tighten its capital controls as Japan's central bank last week cut its official interest rate into negative territory. The unexpected easing sent the

yen tumbling further and put pressure on the ECB to relax its own policy next month, something ECB President Mario Draghi had practically promised to do anyway.

The U.S. Federal Reserve last year increased its policy rate by a quarter-point and has signaled further increases may be delayed, somewhat undermining the recent trend toward dollar strength. The Bank of England keeps delaying its own rate rise, undermining the pound against the dollar and the euro and in effect achieving a competitive devaluation.

The risk that the global currency war will enter a dangerous phase has thus increased. Policy makers are acting locally instead of reasoning globally. But central bankers aren't the only ones to blame. Both the eurozone and Japan need deep policy reforms that are outside the remit of the ECB and the BOJ. But the BOJ has acted irresponsibly by focusing on pushing down its exchange rate, thus boosting corporate earnings and exacerbating Japan's own savings glut, which is mainly on corporate balance sheets. **Instead it should allow the yen to appreciate.**

The ECB's mistake wasn't that it launched an asset-purchase program, known as quantitative easing, but that it did so too late, inflicting huge income losses and mass unemployment on crisis economies such as Greece. **Now, instead of expanding QE to further devalue the euro, the ECB should concentrate on pushing through the clean-up of bad debt and rely on its existing QE program to ease the pain.**

That's unlikely to happen. Mr. Draghi faces enormous pressure from politicians and markets to continue expanding asset purchases and push the ECB's deposit rate deeper into negative territory. Since this is all geared toward driving down the euro, it amounts to another beggar-thy-neighbor devaluation when the currency already is hovering close to a 13-year low against the dollar.

To the extent eurozone policy makers worry about imbalances, they have focused on fixing the currency union's internal imbalances by imposing drastic fiscal adjustments on smaller economies while hoping a cheaper euro benefits larger exporters. This is a policy that has already added to the global savings glut by increasing the eurozone's current-account surplus. In a world of inadequate demand, it's hard to see how this approach will work.

Ms. Choyleva is chief economist and head of research at Lombard Street Research.

139,27

OPINION

• COMMENTARY

The Right Mix of Migrants to Meet Germany's Needs

The most important thing a foreigner needs in order to integrate into a new society is a job.

By KLAUS F. ZIMMERMANN

Feb. 4, 2016 2:17 p.m. ET

The debate inside Germany over refugees is becoming ever more heated, dividing Germans between those wanting to welcome as many people as possible and those who wish to close their doors completely.

What's getting lost in all this is the long-term perspective. From the viewpoints of both demographics and economics, Germany needs a regular inflow of immigrants, including refugees. Some estimates have put the number at a net gain of several hundred thousand people every year for many years to come. At a minimum, there needs to be at least twice the past decade's average of 200,000 people. The question is what the proper composition of this immigrant inflow should be.

For reasons of compassion, it behooves Germany to take in a sizable number of refugees, primarily from war-torn Syria. Yet Germany also needs to be prudent. There must be a clearer sense of what is actually feasible, and what the nation's long-term needs will be.

A comprehensive approach would be best realized by the long-overdue passage of the Immigration Act, which spells out specific criteria and procedures for new arrivals. As an aging country with a highly developed economy, it's quite easy to foresee when and for whom integration in Germany will work.

The most important thing a foreigner needs in order to integrate into a new society is a job. If an immigrant can start work right away, integration will be quick. He will immediately become a productive member of his new society and his personal life will gain additional meaning and direction, with many direct opportunities to learn about his newly adopted country.

But for all the compassion that Germans feel for the refugees, there are also undeniable facts that they must heed. The reality is that the need for low- and even medium-skilled manufacturing workers has been greatly diminished since the 1960s. Today, more and more tasks are being completed by industrial robots.

The challenge therefore is to pass an Immigration Act that, like Australia and Canada, matches the skills of these new arrivals with the needs of the nation. Germany must attract productive workers from all over the world, not just one war-torn region. Leaving it up to the migrants to unilaterally choose the country they want to live in will undoubtedly lead to predictable problems. Skill mismatches will result in high unemployment; language deficits can become a barrier to integration.

Integrating refugees is a very costly and time-consuming undertaking. That task must be shouldered, but it must be properly balanced with other goals.

If Germany doesn't work hard to help integrate its newest arrivals into its economy and society, there is a very great risk that Chancellor Angela Merkel's present open-arms policy will soon lead to a backlash. A mismanaged refugee crisis could convince many Germans to take the opposite stance, believing that they no longer want any more foreigners in their midst. This has already happened in Sweden and other countries that have long practiced great openness to refugees.

In past decades, Germany has made great strides with the integration of foreigners. Those achievements must be defended prudently and balanced with the country's demographic challenges. Indiscriminately admitting all refugees from war, including often illiterate and unskilled youths, is bound to undermine these very impressive gains.

Mr. Zimmermann is the founding director of the Institute for the Study of Labor in Bonn, Germany.

"Kein idealisiertes Bild von Flüchtlingen zeichnen"

Tübingens Grünen-Oberbürgermeister Palmer warnt vor falscher Toleranz: Wenn man Straftaten von Asylbewerbern verschweige, stärke man nur Ausländerfeinde. Nun werde Deutschland "erwachsen".

Von [Claudia Kade](#)Redakteurin Innenpolitik



• Video teilen

Auto Start: an|aus

Der Grünen-Oberbürgermeister von Tübingen, Boris Palmer, hat sich in einem "Welt"-Interview zur Flüchtlings-Krise geäußert. Er warnte vor falscher Toleranz und sieht den sozialen Zusammenhalt in Gefahr. Quelle: Die Welt

Die Welt: Herr Palmer, sind Sie angesichts der Geschehnisse von Köln froh, dass bei Ihnen in Tübingen nicht in großem Stil Karneval gefeiert wird?

Boris Palmer: Karneval gibt es bei uns nicht, nur Fasnet und die auch nur in katholischen Vororten. In Tübingen sind wir solchen Umtrieben abhold. Ich bin froh, dass wir uns über die Sicherheit bei solchen Großveranstaltungen daher keine Sorgen machen müssen.

Die Welt: Befürchten Sie dennoch, dass es in Ihrer Stadt zu [Übergriffen von Asylbewerbern](#) auf Frauen kommt?

Palmer: Die Bürger haben diese Sorgen. Immer wenn neue Flüchtlingsunterkünfte eingerichtet werden, kommen in der Nachbarschaft solche Befürchtungen auf. Ich glaube, dass ein Gewaltausbruch wie in Köln in Tübingen wenig wahrscheinlich ist.

Aber auch als OB einer sehr sicheren Mittelstadt muss ich eingestehen: Wenn es uns nicht gelingt, die problematische Unterbringung in Großunterkünften und Turnhallen rasch aufzulösen und [den Flüchtlingen](#) Ausbildung oder Arbeit zu verschaffen, dann wächst die Gefahr, dass unter so vielen jungen Männern ohne Aufgabe einige auf Abwege geraten.

Die Welt: Ein [Schwimmbadverbot](#) in Nordrhein-Westfalen, die Idee eines Discoverbots in Freiburg – sind wir doch nicht mehr so offen, wie wir dachten?

Palmer: Deutschland macht insgesamt einen rasanten Wandel durch. Ich kann nachvollziehen, dass [Diskothekenbetreiber](#) besorgt sind um ihr Geschäft, wenn die jungen Frauen wegbleiben, und dass in Schwimmbädern manchen Menschen mulmig wird, wenn in großer Zahl junge Männer auftauchen, die in ihrer Heimat noch nie eine Frau im Bikini gesehen haben. Ich war skeptisch gegenüber der Euphorie zu Beginn des

massiven Flüchtlingszuzugs im vorigen Sommer, weil ich den Kater fürchtete, den wir jetzt haben. Wir müssen aufpassen, dass das Pendel nicht in Richtung Fremdenfeindlichkeit ausschlägt.

Die Welt: Erleben wir einen Paradigmenwechsel im Umgang mit Ausländern?

Palmer: Immer mehr Menschen sagen, dauerhaft können wir nicht [eine Million Asylsuchende](#) pro Jahr aufnehmen. Und dann tritt auch noch ein schwerwiegendes Folgeproblem auf: Viele Migranten, die schon lange bei uns leben und sich in den vergangenen Jahren hier gut integriert gefühlt haben, sehen sich jetzt plötzlich wieder ausgegrenzt.

Sie berichten, dass sie für Asylbewerber gehalten werden und die Menschen die Straßenseite wechseln. Nach Köln ist es für hier geborene Menschen mit ausländischen Wurzeln zum Problem geworden, mit gewalttätigen Asylbewerbern in einen Topf geworfen zu werden. Das gefährdet den Zusammenhalt. Diese Entwicklung ist bereits im Gang.

Die Welt: Was ist zu tun?

Palmer: Wir müssen die Flüchtlinge möglichst schnell integrieren und die Zahl der Neuankömmlinge begrenzen. Wenn beides nicht gelingt, sind die Auswirkungen auf den sozialen Zusammenhalt nicht abschätzbar. Die Lage ist fragil. Es kann einiges ins Rutschen kommen. Deshalb wäre es jetzt so wichtig, ein Einwanderungsgesetz zu beschließen. Wer sich an unsere Gesetze hält, Deutsch lernt und an einem Arbeitsplatz bewährt, sollte aus dem Asylverfahren auf ein Einwanderungsticket wechseln .

Die Welt: Lange Zeit haben auch die Grünen Asylsuchende in erster Linie als Opfer betrachtet. Inzwischen werden sie auch als Täter benannt. Werden die Deutschen im Umgang mit Ausländern erwachsen?

Palmer: Erst mal ist es sehr erfreulich, dass die Deutschen aus der Nazizeit die Lehre gezogen haben, dass Antisemitismus, Rassismus, Ausgrenzung und Stigmatisierung von Anfang an bekämpft werden müssen. Diese Immunisierung funktioniert, in kaum einem anderen europäischen Land sind Rechtsextremisten so erfolglos wie in Deutschland. Das muss man festhalten.

Aber schon Aristoteles wusste, dass jede Übertreibung von Übel ist. Dass Straftaten von Asylbewerbern nicht klar benannt wurden, aus Angst, damit Ausländerfeinden in die Hände zu spielen, war ein Fehler. In diesem Sinne werden wir erwachsen, weil wir jetzt sagen: Unabhängig davon, woher der Täter stammt, bleibt eine Straftat eben eine Straftat. Es gibt keine mildernden Umstände oder Rechtfertigungen mehr, der Öffentlichkeit die Probleme im Zusammenleben mit Eingewanderten vorzuenthalten.

Die Welt: Hat [Political Correctness](#) diesen Reifeprozess zu lange behindert?

Palmer: Wenn damit gemeint ist, dass zum Schutz von Schwachen bestimmte Diskussionen vermieden wurden, dann bin ich froh, dass wir inzwischen einen Schritt weitergekommen sind. Denn gerade dadurch, dass drängende Probleme von der Politik ausgeblendet werden, entsteht ein Nährboden für Rechtspopulisten. Das dürfen wir nicht zulassen.

”

Die grüne Wählerschaft wird so lange zu Merkel stehen, wie sie im Vergleich zu anderen Unionspolitikern wie Wolfgang Schäuble oder Horst Seehofer die flüchtlingsfreundlichste Politik garantiert

“

Die Welt: Gefährdet diese neue Widersprüchlichkeit im Bild der Flüchtlingsgruppe die Aufnahmebereitschaft im Land?

Palmer: Es ist genau umgekehrt. Die Aufnahmebereitschaft würde dann gefährdet, wenn wir ein hehres und idealisiertes Bild von Flüchtlingen zeichnen und behaupten, dass diese Menschen alle vom Krieg verfolgt sind, keine anderen Motive als das blanke Überleben haben, über eine gute Ausbildung verfügen und uns in tiefer Dankbarkeit verbunden sind. Diese Menschen gibt es. Aber auf manche trifft wenig oder gar nichts davon zu. Und die Hilfsbereitschaft endet in dem Moment, in dem die Bürger diese Diskrepanz erleben. Deshalb ist Realismus alternativlos.

Die Welt: Die Grünen tragen die Flüchtlingspolitik der Kanzlerin weitgehend mit, obwohl Merkel eine härtere Gangart gegen Integrationsunwillige einlegt. Ziehen nun auch die Grünen die Zügel an?

Palmer: Bei den Grünen-Anhängern ist die Zustimmung zu Angela Merkel größer als unter Unionsanhängern, wenn ich die Umfragen richtig gelesen habe. Und die grüne Wählerschaft wird so lange zu Merkel stehen, wie sie im Vergleich zu anderen Unionspolitikern wie Wolfgang Schäuble oder Horst Seehofer die flüchtlingsfreundlichste Politik garantiert.

Die Welt: Wie bewerten Sie die Einschränkung des Familiennachzugs, den die schwarz-rote Koalition in Berlin beschlossen hat?

Palmer: Das ist eher Symbolpolitik. Der Familiennachzug funktioniert im Moment sowieso nicht, weil die Behörden überlastet sind und sich nicht darum kümmern können. Hier blockiert sich das System selbst. Aber auf mittlere Sicht bin ich sicher: Wir tun uns keinen Gefallen, wenn wir Familien dauerhaft auseinanderreißen.

Die Welt: Ist es richtig, dass weitere Länder Nordafrikas zu sicheren Herkunftsstaaten erklärt werden sollen?

Palmer: Wir Grüne haben das Instrument der sicheren Herkunftsstaaten abgelehnt und tun uns deshalb schwer, einer Ausweitung zuzustimmen. Wegen der großen staatspolitischen Verantwortung, die wir in neun Landesregierungen mittragen, können wir uns einen Blockadekurs aber derzeit nicht leisten. Ich hoffe, dass es durch das Verhandlungsgeschick der Länder mit grüner Regierungsbeteiligung gelingt, den Grünen im Bundesrat eine Zustimmung zum [Asylpaket II](#) insgesamt zu ermöglichen.

Nachdem die Bundesregierung drei Monate für eine Einigung auf das Gesetzespaket benötigt hat, dürfen wir jetzt nicht in der Länderkammer auch noch monatelang darüber streiten. Dazu sind die Probleme in den Ländern und Kommunen einfach zu groß.

Die Welt: Oder ist das Vorgehen der Grünen nur dem Wahlkampf in drei Bundesländern geschuldet?

Palmer: Nein, wir machen uns keinen schlanken Fuß. Das würde uns die Bevölkerung sehr übel nehmen. Und das entspricht auch nicht unserem Selbstverständnis. Wir sind aus einer Anti-Parteien-Partei zu einer staatstragenden Partei geworden. Aber eines stimmt: Der künftige Kurs der Grünen hängt davon ab, ob Winfried Kretschmann als Ministerpräsident wiedergewählt wird.

Wie sich der Einzug des 500-Euro-Scheins rechnet

Deutschland erwägt eine Grenze für Bargeldzahlungen von 5000 Euro, während die EZB den 500-Euro-Schein abschaffen will. Begründet werden beide Vorstöße mit einer besseren Bekämpfung von Kriminalität. Doch im Fall der EZB hat der Schritt ganz andere Gründe.

07.02.2016, von HANS-WERNER SINN



© DPADer 500-Euro-Schein: Ist er bald Geschichte?

Auf französischen Druck hin erwägt Deutschland, die Bargeldzahlungen von mehr als 5000 Euro zu verbieten. Gleichzeitig erwägt die Europäische Zentralbank, die 500-Euro-Scheine abzuschaffen. Als Begründung wird von Medien berichtet, dass die EZB die Kriminalität einschränken will. Aber der EZB-Präsident selbst sagt, die EZB überlege noch, wie sie ihre Absicht am besten kommunizieren sollte. Das macht stutzig. Macht die EZB neuerdings neben der ihr verbotenen Fiskalpolitik auch noch Justizpolitik? Was geht hier vor?

Es geht in Wahrheit um etwas ganz anderes als die Kriminalität von Kleinganoven. Es geht um den Wunsch der EZB, die Einlagenzinsen noch weiter in den negativen Bereich zu schieben. Derzeit verlangt die EZB einen Strafzins von 0,3 Prozent für das Geld, das Banken bei ihr einlegen. Am liebsten würde sie noch mehr verlangen, doch kann sie nicht weiter gehen, weil Banken dann lieber Bargeld horten. Das Einzige, was sie davon abhält, nur noch Bargeld zu halten, sind die Kosten der Aufbewahrung der Banknoten in den Tresoren. Die Tresorkosten implizieren eine natürliche Obergrenze für den Strafzins.

Ende Dezember wurden 307 Milliarden Euro, also 28 Prozent des Euro-Bargelds, in Form von 500-Euro-Scheinen gehalten. Von wem sie gehalten wurden, ist nicht klar. Dazu gehörten vermutlich auch Kriminelle, doch vor allen dürfte das Geld in Osteuropa und der Türkei als Wertaufbewahrungsmittel gedient haben, wie schon seinerzeit die 1000-D-Mark-Banknoten. Immerhin zirkulierte damals ein Drittel der D-Mark-Banknoten im Ausland.

Strafzinsen auf Bankkonten von Kunden?

Außerdem halten die Banken aus den genannten Gründen nun auch selbst immer mehr Bargeld. **Wenn die Banken nun gezwungen werden, statt der 500-Euro-Scheine die etwas kleineren 200-Euro-Scheine zu halten, steigen die Tresorkosten etwa auf das Zweieinhalbfache.** Unter der Annahme, dass der genannte Strafzins von 0,3 Prozent, den die Banken auf ihre Einlagen bei der Notenbank zahlen, bereits durch die Tresorkosten limitiert wurde, **könnte die EZB diesen Strafzins nach der Abschaffung der 500-Euro-Scheine rechnerisch auf das Zweieinhalbfache, also auf 0,75 Prozent erhöhen.**

Es ist sehr wahrscheinlich, dass die Kunden der Banken dann auch Strafzinsen auf ihre Bankkonten zahlen müssen, wie es jetzt schon in Einzelfällen beobachtet werden kann. Das gesamte Laufzeitspektrum der ohnehin minimalen Zinsen auf Finanzanlagen würde dann noch weiter gegen null

gedrückt, und mindestens die Zinsen für kurzfristige, liquide Anlagen würden negativ. **Vermutlich würden auch Zinsen auf Staatspapiere für einige Länder negativ.**

Wenn die EZB diese Begründung offiziell kommunizieren würde, wäre ihr ein Proteststurm bei den Sparern gewiss. Deshalb wäre es kommunikativ in der Tat geschickter, die Bekämpfung der Kriminalität in den Vordergrund zu stellen. Dafür hat die EZB zwar kein Mandat, doch wen schert heute noch die Rechtslage. Wichtiger ist es, dass man eine Begründung für das Fernsehen hat und dann seine eigentliche Agenda verfolgen kann.

Nullzinsgrenze für Südeuropa immer noch zu hoch

Dafür, dass die Zinsen in den negativen Bereich gedrückt werden sollen, **gibt es seriöse und weniger seriöse ökonomische Gründe. Ein seriöser Grund ist, dass man auf diese Weise die Wirtschaft ankurbeln will.** Angesichts der **verheerenden Wettbewerbslage der Volkswirtschaften Südeuropas ist die Nullzinsgrenze, die aus der Möglichkeit der Bargeldhaltung resultiert, offenbar noch immer zu hoch, als dass die Konjunktur dort anspringt.**

Der Harvard-Ökonom Alvin Hansen hat ein ähnliches Phänomen schon **1938 unter dem Begriff der „säkularen Stagnation“** diskutiert. **Ein weniger seriöser Grund in die Sphäre der negativen Zinsen liegt darin, dass die EZB auf diese Weise den überschuldeten Staaten und Haushalten Südeuropas helfen kann, mit ihren Budgets zurechtzukommen. Anstatt Zinsen für ihre Schulden zahlen zu müssen, erhalten die überschuldeten Staaten Zinsen von den Sparern, die ihnen ihr sauer verdientes Geld geliehen haben. Auf diese Weise lässt sich der Lebensstandard in den Schuldenländern halten, und die Schulden werden von den Gläubigern selbst getilgt.**

Schon durch die bisherigen Zinssenkungen, die der Euro zum Beispiel Italien bescherte, hat der italienische Staat jährlich mehr Geld gespart, als er an Mehrwertsteuern einnimmt. **Was nun geplant ist, könnte auf eine gewaltige offene Entschuldungsaktion durch Negativzinsen hinauslaufen, welche die bisherigen Zinsvorteile nochmals stark vergrößert.**

Deutschland würde leiden

Schon seit Jahren lassen sich **viele der EZB-Maßnahmen am besten durch das Interesse der hochverschuldeten und nicht mehr wettbewerbsfähigen mediterranen Krisenländer sowie auch Frankreichs erklären,** das in Südeuropa wichtige Absatzmärkte hat und auch ansonsten dorthin orientiert ist. Ob es um die Käufe der Staatspapiere der Krisenländer im Rahmen des **Securities Markets Programme**, um die außergewöhnlichen Freiheiten bei der Bedienung der lokalen Druckerpressen (Schrottpfänder, Ela, Anfa, widergespiegelt in den **Target-Salden**) oder das **unbegrenzte Sicherungsversprechen für die Käufe der Staatspapiere dieser Länder im Rahmen des OMT-Programms ging,** das vom deutschen Verfassungsgericht heftig kritisiert wurde:

Immer konnte man die Handlungen der EZB am besten verstehen, wenn man die salbungsvollen Formulierungen ihrer Kommunikationsabteilung überhörte und sich fragte, was wohl die Maßnahmen waren, die man zur **Vermeidung und Verschleppung von Staatskonkursen in Südeuropa** benötigen würde.

Für Deutschland wären negative Zinsen alles andere als angenehm, denn Deutschland ist der Land der Sparer. Auch wenn der überschuldete deutsche Fiskus profitierte, **würde Deutschland insgesamt unter negativen Zinsen leiden, denn die Deutschen exportieren über ihre Leistungsbilanzüberschüsse mehr Ersparnisse als jedes andere Land der Erde. Deutschland ist nach China der größte Nettogläubiger der Welt.**

Es geht ja nur um Kleinganoven

Ein Nettogläubiger profitiert nicht, wenn die Zinsen negativ werden, sondern er erleidet Verluste. Kapitalgedeckte Riester-Renten, Lebensversicherungen und Sparbücher werden bei negativen Zinsen zu Wohlstandsfallen, weil sich dort das Sparkapital Jahr um Jahr verringert, anstatt durch Zins und Zinseszins zu wachsen. Bedenkt man, dass man früher durch jahrzehntelanges Sparen damit rechnen konnte, dass das Dreifache der Ersparnis für die Rente zur Verfügung stand, **so kommt bei negativen Zinsen nicht mal die Ersparnis selbst zurück.**

Im Vergleich zu den gesamten Nettokapitalerträgen, die Deutschland noch im Jahr **2007** auf sein Nettoauslandsvermögen verdient hatte, **bedeuteten die niedrigen Zinsen zuletzt einen jährlichen Verlust an Kapitalerträgen von etwa 68 Milliarden Euro, während die südeuropäischen Krisenländer in ihrer Gesamtheit jährlich etwa 85 Milliarden Euro an Gewinnen erzielten.**

Gelänge es der EZB, die durchschnittlichen Marktrenditen um weitere 0,45 Prozentpunkte zu senken, wie es wegen der Erhöhung der Tresorkosten zu erwarten ist, stiege der jährliche deutsche Verlust bei den Kapitalerträgen um weitere 8 Milliarden Euro, und die Südländer hätten einen zusätzlichen jährlichen Vorteil von 10 Milliarden Euro. **Ein Schelm, wer Böses dabei denkt. Das sind sicher nur unbeabsichtigte Nebeneffekte einer dem Gemeinwohl dienenden EZB-Politik. Es geht ja nur um Kleinganoven.**

Hans-Werner Sinn ist Präsident des Münchener Ifo-Instituts.

Quelle: F.A.Z.

Vierzig Prozent der Migranten haben keine Aussicht auf Schutz

Auch im Januar kamen jeden Tag rund 2000 Migranten von der Türkei aus in die EU. **Der Anteil der Syrer auf der Balkanroute ist dabei jedoch von 69 auf 39 Prozent gesunken.** Zwei andere Herkunftsländer hingegen stiegen prozentual.

07.02.2016

Nach Einschätzung der EU-Kommission haben etwa 40 Prozent der Migranten, die zuletzt über die Balkanroute wanderten, keine realistische Aussicht auf Asyl oder Flüchtlingsschutz in der Europäischen Union. Das berichtet die Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung (F.A.S.) unter Berufung auf einen hohen Kommissionsbeamten.

In dieser Zahl schlägt sich nieder, dass laut der Grenzschutzagentur Frontex im Januar nur noch 39 Prozent der Migranten, die von der Türkei nach Griechenland kamen, Syrer waren – verglichen mit 69 Prozent im September 2015. Dagegen stieg der Anteil von Irakern von 8 auf 25 Prozent, der von Afghanen von 18 auf 24 Prozent. Diese Gruppen haben geringere Anerkennungsquoten als Syrer. Hinzu kam ein größerer Anteil von Maghrebinern, die in aller Regel als Wirtschaftsflüchtlinge eingestuft werden.

Wie die F.A.S. weiter berichtet, erreichten im Januar 60.466 Migranten von der Türkei aus Griechenland. **Das entsprach einem Tagesdurchschnitt von 1951 Personen – verglichen mit 3497 Personen im Dezember und 6929 Personen im bisherigen Spitzenmonat Oktober 2015.**

Eine Spur von Häme

Die Silvesternacht in Köln bleibt ein wichtiges Thema der Berichterstattung. Auch Medien aus anderen europäischen Ländern beschäftigen die Ereignisse. Die französischen Intellektuellen reagieren spät, aber bestimmt.

06.02.2016, von **LENA BOPP**

Es hat eine Weile gedauert, bis man in Frankreich die Ereignisse aus der Silvesternacht in Köln nicht nur als eine innerdeutsche Angelegenheit, sondern als Problem zu begreifen begann, das andere Gesellschaften gleichfalls betrifft. Natürlich in abgewandelter Form – massenhafte sexuelle Übergriffe wie in Köln hat es in Frankreich nicht gegeben. Aber schockierende Erfahrungen mit Menschen, die man, jetzt mehr als früher, als Fremde empfindet, hat das Land im vergangenen Jahr zur Genüge gemacht. Und so bildet beides die Grundlage für die nun geäußerten, heftigen, teils auch sarkastischen Vorwürfe der Naivität an die Deutschen und für die einigermaßen ernüchternden Hinweise auf das, was man von den hierzulande diskutierten Integrationsmethoden zu erwarten habe.



Autorin: Lena Bopp, Redakteurin im Feuilleton.Folgen:

Claude Habib, eine eigentlich auf die französische Literatur des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts spezialisierte Professorin an der Pariser Sorbonne, schreibt Frankreich gerade in letzterem Punkt süffisant eine langjährige Erfahrung zu, bemerkt **in ihrem Beitrag für die Zeitung „Le Monde“** dann aber lapidar, dass die vielzitierte Bildung keine Erfolge gebracht habe, wie man im eigenen Land ja sehen könne: „Die Feindseligkeit gegenüber der Geschlechtervielfalt ist intakt.“ Und zwar nicht nur bei Islamisten, sondern auch bei jenen freundlichen arabischen Lebensmittelhändlern, deren Läden in den großen Städten bis spät in die Nacht geöffnet, aber in den Abendstunden stets von Männern, nie von ihren Frauen geführt seien. Überhaupt hätten französische Frauen viel früher als die deutschen gelernt, dass es in gewissen Zonen zu bestimmten Zeiten eben gelte, die Blicke zu senken und die Röcke gegen Hosen zu tauschen. „Die ‚verlorenen Gebiete der Republik‘ sind zunächst für die Frauen verlorengegangen“, schreibt Habib. Und zwar aufgrund desselben „Cocktails von Einschüchterung und Belästigung“ wie in Köln, der, weil er langsamer und leiser daherkam als nun in Deutschland, nur weniger Beachtung fand.

Zusammenstoß der Zivilisationen im Alltag

Ähnlich unsentimental und sogar mit einem Hauch von Häme fasste auch der **Philosoph Alain Finkielkraut** die Reaktionen auf die Silvesternacht zusammen, die Deutschland, nach dem vorangegangenen Willkommensrausch, mit einem heftigen Kater habe erwachen lassen. Die Deutschen hätten die Ankunft der Flüchtlinge als Gelegenheit zur Tilgung eines Schandflecks gesehen. „Hitlers Deutschland verherrlichte die Lebenskraft, Merkels Deutschland ergreift Partei für die Schwachen“, sagte er in einem Interview. Nun müssten sie feststellen, dass Migranten aber mehr seien als nur mittellos und Reisende ohne Gepäck. „Einer großen Zahl“ von ihnen unterstellt er, nicht „die leiseste Absicht“ einer Anpassung an die Sitten und grundlegenden Rechte westlicher Gesellschaften zu haben. Köln habe uns entdecken lassen, so zitiert Finkielkraut den Politiker Jean-Louis Bourlanges, was ein „Zusammenstoß der Zivilisationen im Alltag“ bedeute.

Köln ist die „europäische Kulturhauptstadt der Konfrontation“

Diesen Zusammenstoß hat auch der algerische Schriftsteller Kamel Daoud beobachtet, im Gegensatz zu nahezu allen anderen allerdings aus einer Perspektive, die den auch von ihm sogenannten „Anderen“ die Gnade einer eigenen Kultur zuteilwerden lässt. Sie sei es vor allem, sagte **Daoud der italienischen Zeitung „La Repubblica“**, die dem Flüchtling angesichts der Entwurzelung und dem auch von ihm als solchen empfundenen Schock in der neuen Zivilisation bleibe. Asyl bedeute, nicht nur Körper zu retten, sondern auch Seelen zu heilen. Worauf er diese Heilung bezieht, erläuterte der Autor des sehr erfolgreichen, in Kürze auch auf Deutsch erscheinenden Romans

„Meursault – Eine Gegendarstellung“ in einem ebenso deutlichen wie sarkastischen Kommentar für das Magazin „Le Point“: Man mache sich keine Vorstellung von der „großen sexuellen Misere“ der muslimischen Länder. Die unerträgliche Spannung zwischen der Verschleierung im Diesseits und der versprochenen Orgie im Jenseits löse sich entweder durch Aggression und Explosion oder durch Verleugnung und Verschleierung. „In den ‚Ländern Allahs‘ ist der Sex ein Versprechen durch den Tod, nicht durch die Liebe, und die Sexualität ist ein Verbrechen, es sei denn, sie ist durch die Religion kodifiziert und als irdisches Verlangen folglich getötet.“

Köln als „europäische Kulturhauptstadt der Konfrontation“ hat Kamel Daoud zufolge eine intellektuelle Verkrampfung provoziert, die nur noch extreme Positionen hervorbringt. Zu denen er selbst allerdings auch keine Alternative anzubieten weiß. Claude Habib immerhin plädiert für eine systematische, angemessene Bestrafung von sexuellen Misshandlungen und nimmt die mediale Berichterstattung in die Pflicht, die, anders als ihrer Ansicht nach in Frankreich lange geschehen, aufmerksam und objektiv über sexuelle Übergriffe von Immigranten informieren muss. Bleibt nur die Frage, welche die Soziologin Nacira Guénif ebenfalls in „Le Monde“ aufwirft und die all jene Frauen betrifft, die selbst auf der Flucht sind und dort womöglich ebenfalls Opfer ähnlicher Verbrechen werden. Nicht alle Misshandlungen würden gleich bewertet, sondern die Frauen zum Maßstab genommen, denen sie zustoßen - und zwar von Medien, die angesichts abgestandener Stereotype über unzivilisierte Araber, Muslime und Schwarze in Erstarrung verfallen seien.

Quelle: F.A.Z.

139,38

Le Point.fr

Le Point.fr, no. 201601

En toute liberté, lundi 1 février 2016

La machine à fabriquer des fonctionnaires et des chômeurs

Par Jean Nouailhac

Les dernières nouvelles du front social sont tellement mauvaises que le "modèle social français" commence à être sérieusement remis en question.

L'alerte rouge a été déclenchée par l'économiste et spécialiste de la finance Philippe Dessertine lors de l'émission télévisée *C dans l'air* du 18 janvier dernier sur France 5. Il avait fait le calcul que sur les deux années 2014 et 2015 la France avait créé 39 % des nouveaux emplois publics de toute la zone euro, contre seulement 2,7 % des emplois privés de cette même zone euro. C'est l'Iref, l'Institut de recherches économiques et fiscales, sous la signature de Thierry Benne, qui a révélé cette information dans son dernier bulletin mis en ligne fin janvier.

Avec 66,6 millions d'habitants, la France représente à peine 20 % de la population totale des 19 pays de la zone euro - 340 millions d'habitants - et « elle crée pratiquement deux fois plus d'emplois publics que la moyenne des autres pays de la zone euro, précise l'Iref. À l'inverse, elle génère à peine 14 % des emplois privés qu'elle devrait créer pour se situer simplement dans la moyenne européenne. » Ces éléments confirment clairement l'inquiétante dérive des effectifs de l'emploi public, « ce qui signifie inévitablement davantage de charges, davantage d'impôts et, ceux-ci ne suffisant guère, davantage de déficit et, au final, davantage de dette publique, ajoute Thierry Benne. Et qu'on ne nous accuse pas de vouloir supprimer des soldats, des gendarmes ou des policiers, conclut-il, tout analyste sérieux sait que les trois fonctions publiques - et surtout la territoriale - regorgent de postes en doublon ou en sous-emploi manifeste et qu'une réorganisation sérieuse des services aboutirait à une compression non négligeable des effectifs. »

« François Hollande a réussi à inverser la courbe... de l'emploi »

Quant aux créations de vrais emplois, c'est-à-dire d'emplois marchands, une étude de Standard & Poor's sur 27 mois, de juillet 2013 à septembre 2015, nous apprend que la France, pendant cette période, n'a créé que 57 000 emplois privés face à 482 000 en Allemagne, 651 000 en Espagne et 288 000 en Italie, un pays pourtant en récession. Comme l'écrit ironiquement Éric Le Boucher dans *Les Échos*, « François Hollande a réussi à inverser la courbe... de l'emploi ».

Sur le front du chômage, les statistiques de l'année 2015 qui sont maintenant connues n'apportent que peu de changements dans l'effondrement de notre marché du travail. La plupart des journaux, des radios et des télévisions n'ont communiqué que sur les chiffres de la seule métropole mis en avant par l'Insee, ce qui arrange bien les pouvoirs publics, alors que nous avons également outre-mer des départements très atteints qu'on a souvent tendance à oublier. Voici donc les chiffres complets pour la France entière au 31 décembre 2015 et leur évolution sur un an. Catégorie A : 3 848 300 chômeurs (+ 2,3 %); catégories A, B, C : 5 779 600 (+ 4,8 %); et enfin les cinq catégories réunies, A, B, C, D, E : 6 510 300 (+ 4,9 %). Ce + 4,9 % sur un an est absolument pathétique et scandaleux !

Les deux dernières catégories, D et E, concernent des chômeurs à 100 %, mais qui ne sont pas tenus de rechercher un emploi. Ils sont ainsi 730 000 au 31 décembre 2015 en « stages parking » ou en emplois aidés,

sortis des statistiques A, B, C, les plus utilisées par les journalistes et les médias, et donc les plus visibles. C'est dans ces catégories D et E que seront comptabilisés les 500 000 chômeurs que François Hollande espère avoir « en formation » dans un an, ce qui les sortirait des chiffres « visibles » et permettrait au président, du moins le pense-t-il, d'inverser cette fameuse courbe du chômage, avec le risque que cela lui revienne dans la figure. Notre président est peut-être très doué pour jouer au bonneteau, mais, apparemment, il ne connaît rien au boomerang !

Il sera horriblement difficile de sortir de cet enfer

Quoi qu'il en soit, nous aurons réussi à inscrire dans les statistiques 6,5 millions de chômeurs assistés par les contribuables à la fin de l'année 2015, soit 1 million de plus que lors de l'arrivée de Hollande à l'Élysée. Et n'oublions pas les 2,5 millions de foyers bénéficiaires du RSA ! Un véritable désastre se prépare, un enfer dont il sera horriblement difficile de sortir.

Les fonctionnaires et les chômeurs se trouvent être situés exactement aux deux extrémités de la planète sociale. En haut, au pôle Nord, une garantie de l'emploi à vie avec un travail tranquille et rarement fatigant, un bon salaire et une belle retraite. En bas, au pôle Sud, 9 millions d'intermittents du chômage et du RSA en assistance temporaire ou définitive, une tragédie quotidienne avec souvent, pour finir, une retraite de gueux, de misérable, de serf de la République et l'obligation de trouver des petits boulots au noir pour survivre. Et, en plus, devoir supporter ces gens du pôle Nord qui vous observent avec méfiance et commisération...

Les présidents et les Premiers ministres, Mitterrand, Mauroy, Chirac, Rocard, Cresson, Bérégovoy, Balladur, à nouveau Chirac, Juppé, Jospin, Raffarin, de Villepin, Sarkozy, Fillon, Hollande, Ayrault, Valls, qui ont dirigé successivement le pays pendant les trente-cinq dernières années, ont osé appeler cette fabrique de fonctionnaires et de chômeurs un « modèle social », et même un « modèle social français », comme s'il était exemplaire, comme si l'on pouvait s'en vanter !

Si la France n'a plus que cela comme modèle à proposer à l'univers, c'est qu'elle est très gravement malade dans sa tête. Avec les politiciens égocentriques et les bureaucrates incompetents qui dirigent ce pays depuis si longtemps, nous sommes tombés tellement bas que la seule vraie question que l'on peut se poser aujourd'hui est de savoir si nous pourrions réussir à nous en relever un jour. À moins qu'un nouveau venu ne décide enfin de s'y attaquer franchement et frontalement. Qui osera ?

139,40



Le Figaro.fr

vendredi 5 février 2016 - 19:40 UTC +01:00

VOX

Jean-Yves Camus : «Immigration et multiculturalisme dopent les euroseptiques»

Passot, Vianney

INTERVIEW - Coauteur avec Nicolas Lebourg des *Droites extrêmes en Europe* (Seuil), le politologue Jean-Yves Camus analyse les points de convergences des partis souverainistes en Europe.

LE FIGARO. - Le vendredi 29 janvier s'est tenue à Milan une convention du groupe parlementaire Europe des nations et des libertés, fondé par Marine Le Pen...

Jean-Yves CAMUS . - Ce genre d'événement transnational n'est pas nouveau. Jean-Marie Le Pen participait déjà à ces réunions dans les années 1990, et en assurait déjà la présidence. L'existence de partis transnationaux est reconnue par les instances européennes, ils sont dotés de financements et de moyens humains, et Marine Le Pen en profite. Ce qui est nouveau, ce sont les partis qui sont derrière elle, différents de ceux qui suivaient son père. On remarque aussi la présence d'un mouvement italien désormais important: la Ligue du Nord, résolument tournée vers le Front national, qui dispose, et la presse ne l'a pas souligné, d'un élu puissant: Luca Zaia, président de la région Vénétie depuis 2010. Cela montre bien la volonté du Front national de s'allier avec des partis influents, contrairement à ce que faisait Jean-Marie Le Pen.

Tous ces partis sont-ils comparables?

Selon un petit dénominateur commun, oui: ils sont nationalistes et euroseptiques, opposés à l'immigration et au multiculturalisme. Mais ils sont extrêmement hétérogènes: certains ont des racines dans l'extrême droite historique, d'autres sont dirigés par des hommes ayant fait la majorité de leur carrière dans des partis classiques de droite dite *mainstream*, conservatrice et libérale, puis ont choisi de s'en distinguer, notamment sur les questions de l'Europe et de l'identité. Comme Geert Wilders aux Pays-Bas, comme le Parti roumain uni, dont personne n'a parlé, dirigé lui aussi par quelqu'un qui a fait sa carrière au sein de la droite libérale classique: Bogdan Diaconu. Puis il a fondé son parti, qui n'est donc pas un parti d'extrême droite traditionnelle.

Ya-t-il un populisme de droite et un populisme de gauche?

On peut même aller plus loin, puisque le populisme s'est manifesté historiquement dans trois grandes familles: d'abord la droite, la gauche, mais il y a aussi un populisme que l'on appelait agrarien, qui a largement disparu avec la paysannerie. Le populisme est pluriel dans son expression, mais repose sur le même schéma: le manichéisme entre le peuple, naturellement conscient de ses intérêts, et les élites, nécessairement corrompues. Le modèle de gouvernement proposé est donc toujours fondé sur le lien direct entre le tribun et le peuple.

La question du Brexit banalise-t-elle les programmes des partis populistes?

Ils le sont déjà, mais en cas de Brexit l'eurosepticisme se trouverait validé, et par un gouvernement qui n'est pas d'extrême droite. La question du Brexit vient de l'entrée même de la Grande-Bretagne dans l'UE, qui n'a jamais fait l'unanimité, et d'une volonté qui est surtout anglaise. Les Écossais n'y songent pas.

De quel parti européen le FN est-il le plus proche?

Ça dépend des sujets. Sur l'Europe, de tous ceux qui étaient présents à Milan. Sur la ligne économique, celle de Florian Philippot est très spécifique, mais celle de Marion Maréchal-Le Pen est plus commune: libérale, proche du FPÖ autrichien ou du PVV hollandais. Sur l'islam, le PVV en a aussi en a fait son cheval de bataille mais il va plus loin: il veut interdire la construction de mosquées, ce que ne fait pas le Front national.

En France, il y a d'autres eurosceptiques comme Nicolas Dupont-Aignan ou Philippe de Villiers, mais tous deux restent sourds aux appels du pied du Front national. Quoi qu'il en soit, ce parti n'a d'avenir que s'il reste un parti eurosceptique. Il peut moduler sa position sur la sortie de l'euro, qui ne parle pas à son jeune électorat, mais s'il abandonne sa position de principe sur l'UE, il perdra sa spécificité, et donc, sa force

139,42

Europe's migrant crisis

Forming an orderly queue

Europe desperately needs to control the wave of migrants breaking over its borders. This is how to go about it

Feb 6th 2016 | BERLIN, BRUSSELS, GEVGELIJA, IZMIR AND LESBOS | [From the print edition](#)



SYRIA'S five-year civil war has killed hundreds of thousands of people and displaced millions more. It has sucked regional powers into a geopolitical vortex. It has inspired terrorists and fanatics, and exported violence to a historically volatile region. It has also given rise to Europe's worst refugee crisis in recent times.

The numbers are, in themselves, not overwhelming: the European Union, with a population of 500m, received 1m illegal migrants last year, slightly fewer than the number of Syrian refugees accepted by Lebanon, which has only 5m people. But the chaos of the flows and the determination of migrants to reach a handful of wealthy countries has set governments against each other and opened cracks in Europe's piecemeal approach to asylum. No country can resolve the problem alone. But most have responded by unilaterally closing borders and tightening asylum rules, leaving migrants to endure dangerous journeys at the hands of criminal smuggling networks—which elude every attempt at disruption.

An ever-growing number of border controls undermines the EU's supposedly border-free Schengen area, hampering trade, commuting and tourism (see [article](#)). Political pressure at home may yet force Angela Merkel, Germany's chancellor, to close her country's doors, setting off border closures across the continent. Jean-Claude Juncker, the president of the European Commission, says the end of Schengen could cause the collapse of the euro and even the single market, one of the EU's outstanding achievements. That is an exaggeration, but it would threaten European co-operation in other areas and knock back a club already beset by crises.

More broadly, the migrant crisis is fuelling the rise of right-wing populist parties across Europe. Anti-immigrant violence is growing in countries that have shouldered the largest burden: this week a German police chief spoke of a "pogrom atmosphere" after a spate of attacks on asylum centres. The Paris killings and sexual assaults by asylum-seekers in Cologne have added terrorism and cultural neuralgia to a toxic brew. Xenophobic nationalism has already set parts of eastern Europe against Germany. The resentments that it creates are a threat to the EU, too.

While Europeans bicker, the migrant situation remains grave. The death rate in the Aegean Sea has soared in wintry conditions: 365 migrants crossing from Turkey to Greece died or went missing last month (see chart 1).

Registered daily arrivals in the Greek islands fell to just under 2,000 in January compared with almost 7,000 last October. But Germany is taking in 3,000 migrants a day, suggesting that the true number reaching Europe is somewhat higher. When spring arrives the flows will surely return to their autumn peaks.

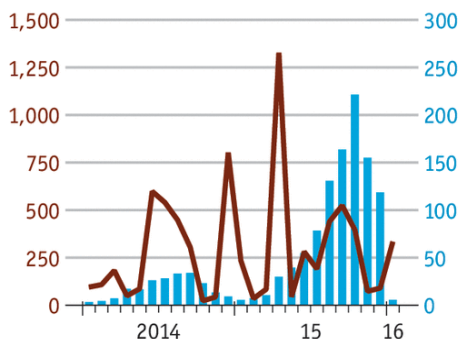
The cruel sea

1

Migrants crossing the Mediterranean

Dead and missing

Arrivals, '000



Sources: International Organisation of Migration; UNHCR

Economist.com

Most proposed solutions look unfeasible, repugnant or pointless. A settlement in Syria is more remote than ever. This week the latest attempt to start peace talks were suspended without making progress. Libya, the gateway to Italy, has no functioning government. Inside Europe, the fences built by politicians like Hungary's prime minister, Viktor Orban, merely displace the problem. Yet EU governments are bound by law to provide refuge to those fleeing war. They cannot push back migrant-laden boats from Greece (as a Belgian politician reportedly suggested). Ejecting Greece from Schengen, as some urge, would deter nobody, for it shares no land borders with other Schengen countries.

Plans cooked up in Brussels, meanwhile, are too ambitious, leaving governments to squabble while the migrants pour in. A quota scheme to relocate asylum-seekers across Europe has succeeded only in reviving an east-west split in the EU. Mutual recognition of positive asylum decisions across the EU, which would give refugees the freedom of movement that ordinary citizens enjoy, is years away.

Instead, the priority must be to restore a sense of order to the migrant flows. That will help overburdened countries like Germany plan for arrivals and reassure worried citizens who see no end in sight. Europe also needs to get much better at distinguishing refugees with a genuine claim for international protection from migrants fleeing hardship, a growing number of whom have started to join the highway to Europe.

These immediate measures should buy time for Europeans to provide protection for those who need it, to work out how to share the asylum burden more equitably and ultimately to accept more refugees in an orderly fashion. But for that to happen, all the pieces in the puzzle need to fall into place, and in the right order.

The work begins in Turkey, partly because it hosts 2.7m refugees, most of them Syrian, and partly because it has become a gathering ground for refugees and migrants from elsewhere. There are two parts to the European strategy. The first is a deal hastily assembled last year that rewards Turkey for reducing the migrant flows—including a pledge of €3 billion (\$3.3 billion) to help refugees and visa-free access to the EU for Turks in exchange for the implementation of a plan to take back migrants.

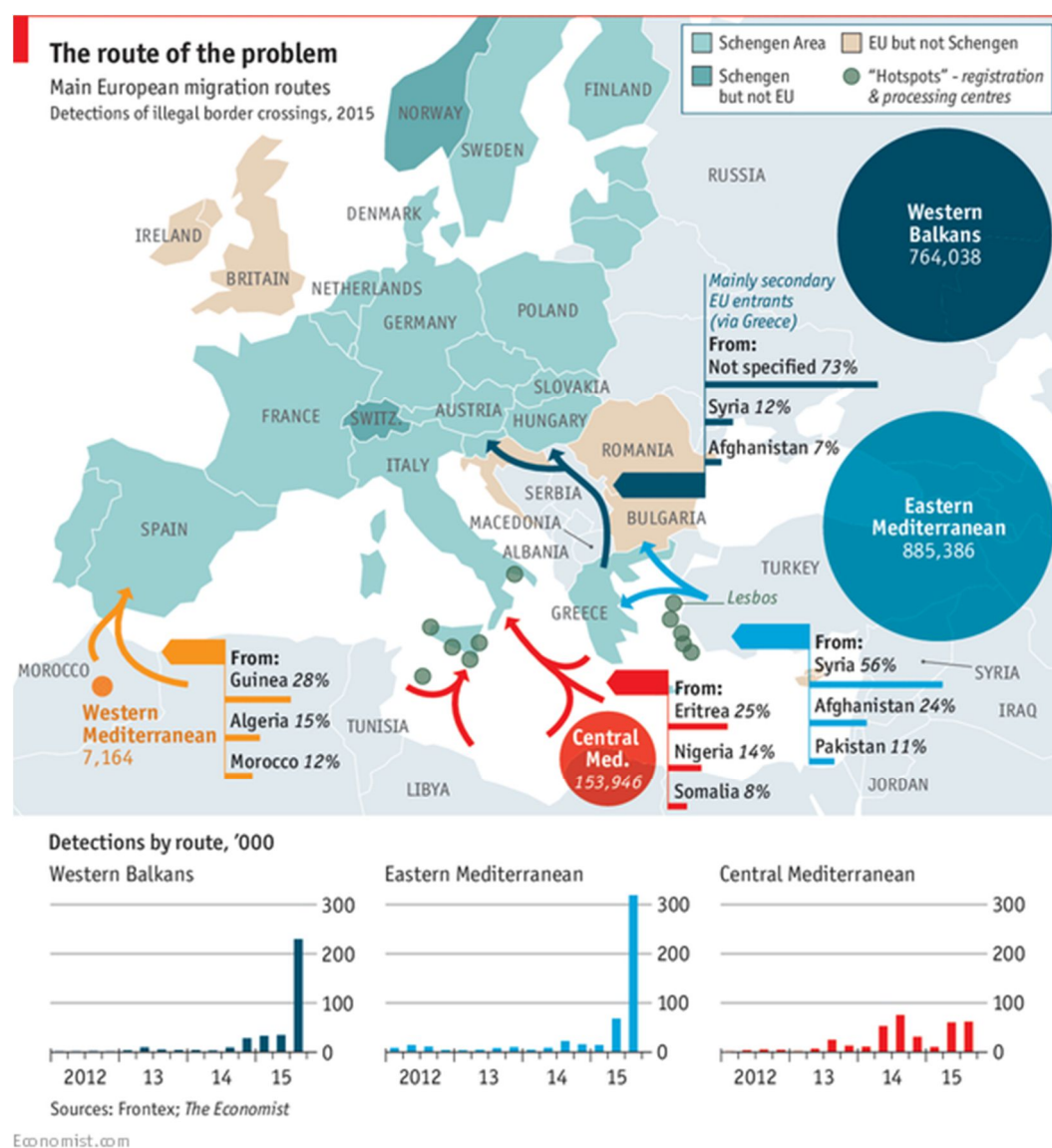
The grand bargains envisaged in the deal are probably too ambitious in the limited time Europe has; all EU governments will have to approve the visa deal, which seems unlikely. The EU dithered before finding the cash this week—and then it is only a fraction of what is needed. The agreement has had some effect: Turkish police targeting smugglers have made 3,700 arrests. But the number of migrants landing on Greek shores has not fallen by as much as the Europeans had hoped.

Other elements of the deal might prove more fruitful. Turkey recently introduced a limited work-permit scheme for Syrian refugees. Freeing tens of thousands of them from the grip of the country's vast grey economy could help keep some in place. It has also slashed the number of Syrians arriving from Jordan and Lebanon, many of whom were travelling onwards to Europe, by imposing visa requirements.

Unburdening the poor

Much more must be done to ensure that the burden on those countries does not become intolerable. This is the second part of Europe's approach. Together, Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon host over 5m refugees, including 2m children. Most are poor. Under huge strain, governments are now doing their best to keep refugees out. Some 20,000 Syrians languish in the desert next to Jordan, which refuses to let most in. Lebanon has closed its borders.

Conditions inside these countries are bad and getting worse, making the hazardous journey to Europe seem more appealing. Half the Syrians in Jordan say they want to leave. Up to 150,000 Syrians sailed from Lebanon to Turkey last summer, seeking to join the migrant trail to Europe.



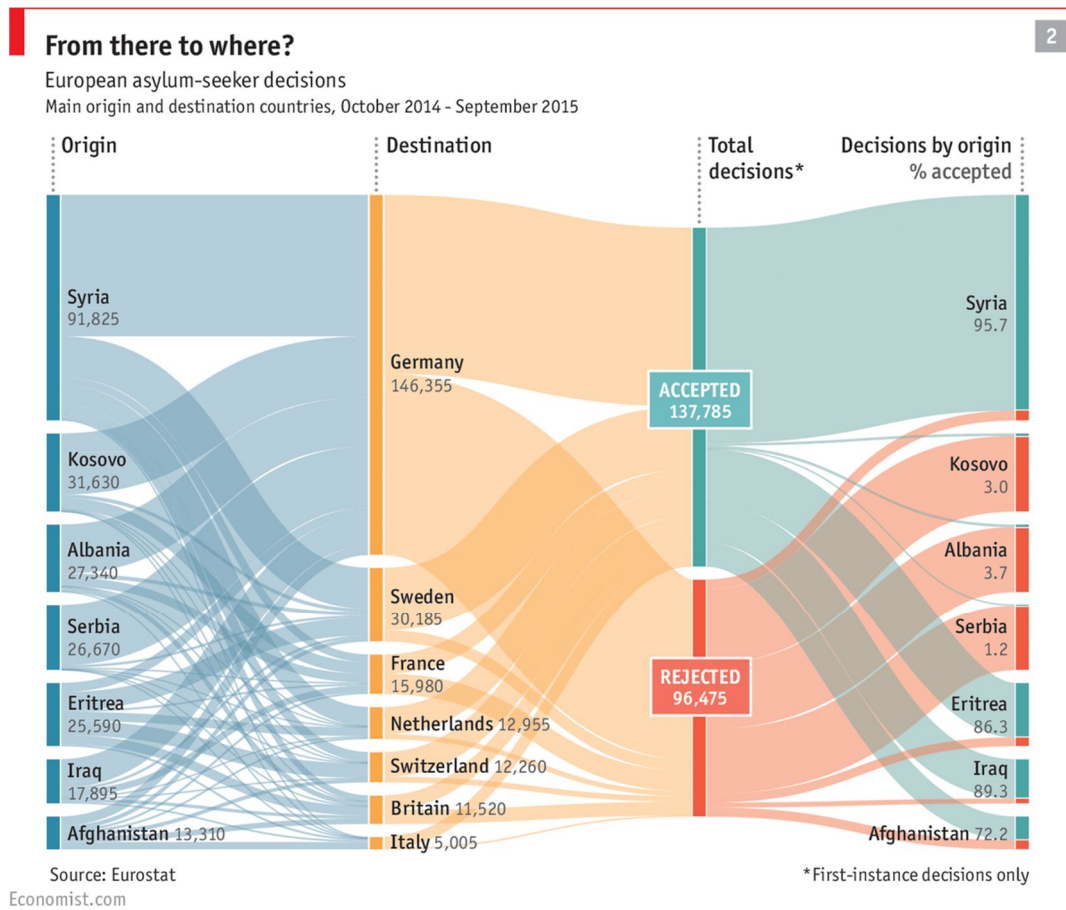
A donors' conference in London on February 4th, as we went to press, aimed to secure nearly \$9 billion of funding for the region. Britain this week pledged £1.2 billion (\$1.75 billion) of new money. Cash is needed for schools and overburdened infrastructure, such as Lebanon's strained water supply. One idea is for donors to press Jordan and Lebanon to ease restrictions on refugees seeking jobs. European countries can help by ensuring that markets are open. If refugees have reasons to stay, fewer will risk the trek to Europe.

Stemming the flow across the Aegean saves lives and dents the smugglers' profits. But the clamour to reach Europe will continue: routes are too well established, smuggling networks too strong and demand too robust. Perhaps two-thirds of Syrians reaching Greece are fleeing the country directly rather than upping sticks from Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon.

Large numbers will therefore continue to land in Greece. In response the EU has tried to establish "hotspots" on the five islands where most migrants land. But only one of these processing and registration centres, on Lesbos, is fully functional. (Of the six in Italy, one is reportedly working well.) Here, migrants are screened, fingerprinted and interviewed. Interpreters test the claims of self-identified Syrians; many other Arabs claim to come from Syria to improve their chances of getting asylum. Identity cards are checked for fraud under ultraviolet lights. At the end, confirmed north Africans are taken to Athens, from where they are supposed to lodge an asylum claim or face deportation. Most others are given a document that allows them to move on to the Greek mainland independently. Most do so immediately.

On other Greek islands locals have held up the establishment of hotspots, fearing the impact on tourism. The army is now responsible for opening the remaining four; officials say all will be operational by mid-March. But a spring surge could still overwhelm the hotspots, and there is plenty of anecdotal evidence of migrants evading registration or gaming the system.

A bigger problem is that registering immigrants will not stop them moving on if they have no fear of being sent back. Since November officials on Greek-Macedonian border have only let through Syrians, Iraqis and Afghans, who have good grounds for asylum (see chart 2). Other countries on the route are starting to do the same. The idea is that word of stricter controls will spread, deterring some from making the journey in the first place. Sub-Saharan Africans, once a common sight in the Serbian border town of Presevo, are almost entirely gone, bar the odd Somali. North Africans are trying to get across, but must use smugglers or act alone, traipsing through woods or ripping up fences. Some are robbed or beaten. Many freely admit that they are coming to Europe for a better life.



Making borders harder to cross is one thing. But Germany and the European Commission are considering sealing Macedonia's border with Greece altogether. Nikola Poposki, Macedonia's foreign minister, says that is not feasible, and that the priority is clamping down on illegal routes. But border closures farther up the line would leave Macedonia with no choice, if it wanted to avoid a vast build-up of migrants on its own soil.

Sealing the border to asylum-seekers could create huge bottlenecks in Greece. The EU's relocation scheme, which aims to move 66,400 asylum-seekers from Greece (and 39,600 from Italy), is supposed to tackle this problem. For Brussels bureaucrats the plan holds much promise: it turns unpredictable flows of asylum-seekers into orderly distribution and shares the burden equitably across Europe. "It is not for migrants or refugees to choose where to go," says Dimitris Avramopoulos, the EU's migration commissioner.

But fewer than 500 asylum-seekers have been moved so far. EU countries have refused to play their part, smothering the process in red tape. The migrants who agree to move are often woefully ill-informed. One group of Eritreans, preparing to leave Rome for Sweden, remarked to journalists that they were looking forward to leaving Italy's cold weather behind.

The EU is sticking to its guns, but even the most optimistic projection will not cope with the short-term build-up in Greece should its northern border close. The government expects to have 40,000 reception places ready in a few months, but may need many more. The UNHCR and EU governments are preparing support. In exchange for Greek co-operation some in Berlin and Brussels have murmured about treating Greece's vast public-debt pile more leniently when the issue comes up later this year.

If there is an iron law of illegal migration, it is that border closures shift routes—even fewer people take them. Anticipating a sealing of Greece's northern border, criminals in neighbouring Albania are sniffing out smuggling opportunities. Officials have observed more flows through Bosnia via Serbia. Italy fears the re-emergence of the central Mediterranean route, which is more dangerous than the Aegean crossing. More could cross into Norway or Finland via Russia. It is harder than ever to predict what sort of diversion will emerge, says Elizabeth Collett of the Migration Policy Institute Europe, a think-tank.

Europe's hardening mood appears to be inspiring many to move now, before it is too late. "You can feel the fear," says a UNICEF worker on the Macedonian border. "They want to get through as fast as possible." It is only that rapid flow that stopped Greece from collapsing under the weight of migrants last year. No one can be sure that this year will be better. "We may be talking about millions of people," says a Greek official. "No matter what contingency we put in place, it will overtake us."

Too hot to handle?

One way to alleviate Greece's burden would be to hasten the return of some migrants to Turkey from Greece. "Hot returns" of migrants whose asylum bids fail, or who choose not to lodge one, are controversial. But an existing deal between Greece and Turkey to send back asylum-seekers could work if Greece declares Turkey a safe place for third-country nationals and Turkey upgrades its rules to allow them to apply for full asylum (currently only Europeans are eligible). In theory returns could take place in days; in practice it is often more complicated. The aim should be to convince nationals with little chance of protection, such as Moroccans or Pakistanis, that there is no prospect of moving on if they reach Greece. Sources say Turkey may be willing to take such people back, though not the far larger numbers of Syrians or Afghans.

But deporting failed asylum-seekers once they have reached their chosen destination is hard. Some disappear; others exploit generous legal systems. In Germany three-quarters obtain temporary permission to stay after their asylum bids fail, often on dubious grounds like the absence of a passport or self-diagnosed post-traumatic stress disorder. Sweden's recent announcement that 80,000 of its asylum-seekers were probably eligible for deportation is more a cry of despair than a plan for action. Countries are often reluctant to accept the return of

their nationals, not least because they can be a useful source of remittances. No wonder just 40% of failed asylum-seekers across the EU are returned.

So what will work? Not simply dumping people on planes, as Greece learned in December when most of the 39 Pakistanis it returned home were sent straight back by the authorities in Islamabad on spurious administrative grounds. Similarly, there has been a misguided focus on the bureaucratic fictions of readmission agreements cooked up by the EU with sending countries. Instead European governments must build partnerships with their developing-world counterparts that go far beyond migration policy. The success stories in Europe involve bilateral relationships with long and deep histories: Britain and Pakistan, Spain and Morocco, Italy and Tunisia.

The focus should thus be political, not legal. The Germans are thinking about how trade and aid may be used as diplomatic leverage and a source of jobs, particularly with countries that rely on remittances. Improved channels for legal labour migration would help. Governments might also club together to forge return deals with sending countries. The EU is working on a common list of “safe countries”, to which it is assumed most asylum-seekers can be returned. Last year Germany slashed claims from Kosovars and Albanians by placing their countries on its own such list. This week it did the same for Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia.

Let's get resettling

Rich countries should not rely on poor ones to shoulder as much of the refugee burden as they have. Once flows have started to fall, Europe could begin a much more ambitious attempt to resettle refugees directly from the region around Syria. A starting point might be 250,000 a year, with the bulk coming from Turkey. To reach this number countries may need to be less picky about who they take in. Some may want to work with Turkey directly, bypassing the UNHCR, which usually brokers resettlements. EU countries could join forces in identifying and screening candidates to save time and money. Reuniting divided families will be a priority.

Countries such as Germany and Netherlands will have to be in the vanguard of resettlement; with luck, others will follow. The failed attempt to impose relocation by diktat from Brussels shows that quotas inspire only rancour. But some of the huge unused relocation numbers (from within Europe) can be shifted to the politically easier task of resettlement (from outside). Britain and France can do much better.

A series of international refugee conferences this year, culminating with a summit in New York in September, will offer a chance to do more. European action might inspire rich countries like Canada and Australia to chip in. The Gulf states could add to their informal share of Syrians by formally resettling more. The presidential campaign may rule out any contributions from America before November, but after that, if there is international momentum, even a Republican president might help.

The consequences of inaction look clear: tighter borders, more people-smuggling, misery for refugees. Crucially, if the numbers do not fall Germany may lose its appetite for a European solution and follow the unilateral course charted by others. Yet there is an astonishing lack of real urgency among Europe's leaders. Only Mrs Merkel appears to think beyond the constraints of national politics.

That may not change. But even self-interest demands a more pressing approach. Otherwise governments that value Schengen may find themselves locked out of it, and countries that thought themselves immune to migration may see their territory turned into refugee marching grounds. Failure to contain the crisis would be a terrible outcome for Europe as it battles to hold itself together. It would be worse still for the refugees it has a duty to care for.

139,48

Schengen's economic impact

Putting up barriers

A permanent reintroduction of border controls would harm trade in Europe

Feb 6th 2016 | [From the print edition](#)



LONG lines of lorries once blotted the chocolate-box alpine landscape of the Brenner Pass, an important road link between southern and northern Europe. The Schengen agreement, which came into effect in 1995 and has now abolished border controls between 26 European countries, kept those lorries moving. But where trucks go, so do refugees. To stem the flow Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Norway and Sweden have temporarily reintroduced controls. Others have increased spot checks in border regions.

Open borders ease the flow of exports as well as individuals. Every year people make 1.3 billion crossings of the EU's internal borders along with 57m trucks carrying €2.8 trillion (\$3.7 trillion) of goods. As well as speeding the passage of Greek olives and German dishwashers, borderless travel allows hotels in the east of Germany to have their sheets cleaned in Poland, where wages are lower, and workers in Italy to commute to Switzerland (also in Schengen though not in the EU), where wages are higher.

Reintroducing controls such as checking passports and searching lorries is mostly an irritation, though the costs are mounting. A strategy unit of the French government estimates that in the short term border checks within Schengen would cost France €1 billion-2 billion a year by disrupting tourism, cross-border workers and trade. If Schengen collapses the economic consequences would be more serious, it says: curtailing the free passage of goods permanently would amount to a 3% tax on trade within Schengen. The overall effect of hampering cross-border activity would reduce output in the Schengen area by 0.8%, or €110 billion, over the next decade.

Not only will money have to be found to patrol long-abandoned frontiers. Around 1.7m Europeans cross a border to get to work and in some regions as much as a third of the workforce makes this trip daily. Malmo in Sweden and Copenhagen, the Danish capital, have in effect become one big city. Border controls at the bridge that connects them add around 30 minutes each way. A nuisance could become a deterrent to cross-border employment, reducing job opportunities and the pool of labour employers can draw upon.

The greatest pain will be felt by exporters. Over a third of road-freight traffic in Schengen crosses a border. Delays are creeping up. Around Salzburg in Austria lorries now sit for up to three hours before getting into Germany. Strict EU rules dictate that such waiting times still count as hours behind the wheel for drivers, who are obliged to rest when they hit an upper limit. If waiting becomes a permanent feature DSLV, a German

association of shippers, puts the direct costs at €3 billion a year for the EU as a whole, based on a one-hour delay for every lorry.

Businesses likely to suffer most include those with perishable goods, such as fruit, vegetables and fish. Others will pass on costs. Suppliers will need to store extra inventory across the continent to ensure customers get deliveries on time. The German chamber of commerce says that once indirect costs, such as renting storage and the impact on transit-trade with non-EU countries, are taken into account the extra costs for Germany alone could run to €10 billion per year.

Calculations of potential costs depend on what happens if Schengen disappears: will spot-checks merely increase or will countries reintroduce border posts with barriers and barbed wire? Many firms, particularly those used to sending goods to non-Schengen countries such as Britain, may adapt swiftly to stricter border checks. Far worse than the direct costs to trade, says Guntram Wolff from Bruegel, a Brussels-based think-tank, would be the signal that European integration can go into reverse.

[From the print edition: Briefing](#)

139,50

Free exchange

The Italian job

Reviving Italy's economy will require sacrifices not just from Italians, but also from Europe

Jan 30th 2016 | ROME | [From the print edition](#)



TO LOSE Greece or Portugal may be regarded as a misfortune; to lose Italy looks like carelessness. It is hard to imagine the single currency surviving a showdown with Italy, the currency club's third-biggest economy (and the world's eighth-biggest, just ahead of Brazil). Perhaps that explains the recent pugnacity of Matteo Renzi, Italy's prime minister, regarding European fiscal rules. In an article published in the *Guardian* newspaper in mid-January, he sounded positively Greek, complaining that the European Union's "fixation on austerity is actually destroying growth". His finance minister, Pier Carlo Padoan, has been tangling with the European Commission over how to deal with the €350 billion (\$382 billion) of bad loans clogging up the Italian banking system. Mr Renzi is demanding the Eurocrats' forbearance as he tries to restart Italy's long-stalled economy.

Italy's experience within the euro zone has been miserable. It has been in recession for five of the past eight years. Real (ie, adjusted for inflation) GDP per person is lower than in 1999. Sovereign debt has risen above 130% of GDP. Worse, Italy's economy is woefully uncompetitive. Since 1998 productivity has fallen steadily. Labour costs, however, have not (see chart). Since Italy joined the euro, exports have ceased to be a driver of growth, which has consequently slowed. A slowdown is not something a country with such daunting debts can afford.

Mr Renzi came into office at a propitious moment, in early 2014. The tight fiscal and monetary policy that had contributed to the euro zone's poor performance in the years after the financial crisis was becoming less of a drag. Soon afterwards the ECB began to use quantitative easing to pep up domestic demand, with salutary effects on Italian interest rates.

But the problem of competitiveness remains. There is no shortage of explanations for Italy's slump in productivity. Thanks to punitive regulation of labour and product markets, it is one of the most expensive places in the rich world to start a new business. Taxes and red tape strongly discourage productive firms from

growing very large. Nearly 70% of Italian workers labour in firms with fewer than 50 employees, compared with about a third in America. The government taxes income from labour far more heavily than consumption, discouraging work (and encouraging evasion). Perhaps most worrying, the share of young Italian workers with a university degree is among the lowest in the rich world. At just under 10%, the share of highly educated Italians living abroad is also among the highest in the rich world.

The slowdown in productivity occurred just as Italy joined the single currency. Some economists see this as coincidental. The euro was born just as the global economy was undergoing a rapid bout of globalisation. Italy's small firms did not scale up to capitalise on emerging-market demand, as Germany's did. By the same token, its under-skilled population could not take advantage of the rising return to trade in professional services, as firms in America and Britain did.

But such problems were predictable. Whereas many euro-area governments prepared for a world in which they could not depreciate by adopting structural reforms, Italy was a laggard. Once the euro was in place, Italian wages rose as capital flowed in from northern Europe. Exporters grew ever less competitive, and workers and capital shifted from manufacturing to services, where productivity was even lower.

Rome is where the Hartz is

Mr Renzi wants to alter this dynamic. He has in mind something truly ambitious—an overhaul of the labour market not unlike Germany's sweeping Hartz reforms, which are often credited with the rejuvenation of its economy a decade ago. He has taken steps in this direction—adopting rules to make it easier to sack workers, for instance. But even Mr Renzi's advisers acknowledge that progress has been frustratingly slow.

The IMF reckons that Italy's economy will manage growth of just over 1% a year over the next three years. A recent analysis by economists at the European Commission found that a truly ambitious reform plan could boost GDP substantially—by nearly 24% relative to their baseline forecast. But that gain would materialise over the course of half a century, with very little of the benefit coming during the first decade.

Rather than waiting for productivity to rise, a quicker route to faster growth is to drive down wages. The Hartz reforms succeeded in part because they prompted a decline in real wages in Germany. Real GDP per person has soared in Germany since the introduction of the euro, but workers' pay has not. Reforms that decentralised collective bargaining in Italy, and that therefore helped to contain wages in less productive regions and firms, would be a step in the right direction, reckons Pietro Reichlin of LUISS, a university in Rome. Indeed, Mr Renzi's advisers suggest that the government may seek to impose a decentralised wage-setting process if negotiations between trade unions and industry do not yield one.

Yet even the benefits of wage restraint could be disappointing. Germany's competitiveness drive occurred during an era of relatively strong global growth and relatively buoyant inflation, which made the suppression of real wages both less painful and less noticeable. Italy will enjoy no such help. Any growth scheme that rests on falling wages is unlikely to endear Italians to Mr Renzi. For his reforms to work, he will need time that voters are unlikely to grant him. Keeping Italy happy enough to stay in the euro zone will, in the short term, take much faster growth across the euro area as a whole, fostered by continued dovishness from the ECB and less finickiness from the European Commission. The deal that Mr Padoa-Schioppa and the commission struck this week to allow a state guarantee for sales of Italian banks' bad debts is a step in the right direction. If the euro area is to keep Italy on board, it will need to become a bit less austere and a bit more Italian.

139,52

Buttonwood

The crazy world of credit

Where negative yields and worries about default coincide

Jan 30th 2016 | [From the print edition](#)



Economist.com

THERE was much talk at Davos, the global elite's annual get-together in Switzerland, of wealth inequality: the gap between the haves and the have-nots. The corporate-bond market is currently displaying a similar divide—between the have-yields and the yield-nots.

According to Bank of America Merrill Lynch (BAML), around €65 billion (\$71 billion) of European corporate bonds are trading on negative yields; in other words, investors lose money by holding them. Yet the rates paid by issuers of low-quality or junk bonds have been soaring.

The spread (the interest premium over government borrowing rates) paid by junk-bond issuers has risen by nearly three-and-a-half percentage points since March last year (see chart). The gap is now nearly as great as it was during the euro crisis of 2011, although it is less than half as wide as it was after Lehman Brothers collapsed in 2008.

Odd though it may seem, these market movements are part of the same trend. As January's stockmarket wobbles have shown, investors are very nervous and are looking for safety. Certain corporate-bond issuers, such as Nestlé, a Swiss foods group, are perceived to be very safe. Since the yields on Swiss government bonds (even those with a ten-year maturity) are also negative, it is no great surprise that Nestlé bonds fall into the same camp.

Similarly, investors are willing to accept negative yields on German and Dutch government bonds with maturities of two and five years. Better to suffer a small loss from owning them than risk a big loss by buying a

junk bond, which might default. Historically, the average recovery rate on unsecured bonds that default has been just 40 cents on the dollar. Given that risk, investors are demanding a much higher yield from junk bonds.

The proportion of junk bonds deemed “distressed” (defined as having a yield ten percentage points higher than Treasury bonds) is 29.6%, up from 13.5% a year ago. That is the highest ratio since 2009, according to S&P. Unsurprisingly, given the fall in energy prices, the oil and gas sector accounts for the biggest share of issuers in distress, at 30% of the total. The default rate, at 2.77%, has virtually doubled from the low of 2014 (although it is still below the historical average of 4.3%).

Matt King, a credit strategist at Citigroup, thinks the reason for the turmoil is the reduced support that central banks are offering financial markets. For several years the Federal Reserve and the Bank of England used quantitative easing (or QE, the creation of money to buy assets) to drive down yields on government bonds and thus encourage investors to buy riskier assets, both equities and corporate bonds. Both have now stopped using QE (although they have yet to sell their piles of acquired assets); the Fed has also raised interest rates.

Although the European Central Bank and the Bank of Japan are still buying bonds, their efforts are being offset at the global level by sales by emerging-market central banks, including China. Net asset purchases by global central banks dipped last summer (coinciding with another market downturn) and recent data show they have done so again.

Given this backdrop, investors are sensitive to bad news. The fall in commodity prices and the slowdown in emerging markets are two adverse developments; those sectors were “where the growth was”, as Mr King points out. Corporate-bond investors have also noticed that profit forecasts have been revised lower in recent months in every industry in America. In short, Mr King concludes: “When monetary stimulus’s effect on markets fails to be matched by a corresponding improvement in the real economy, we are inevitably vulnerable to a correction.”

The big issue for the corporate-bond markets is whether the sell-off is self-perpetuating. According to BAML, investors in high-yield bonds globally have withdrawn \$4.9 billion in the past seven weeks, equivalent to 5% of their assets under management. Those withdrawals force fund managers to sell bonds, creating bigger losses for the remaining investors and encouraging more withdrawals. The impact is exacerbated by the poor liquidity of corporate-bond markets. Banks have reduced their market-making activities in the wake of regulations imposed after the financial crisis of 2007-08.

The sell-off will be stopped if yields rise to a level where long-term investors (pension funds and insurance companies, for example) think the bonds are a bargain. But those investors probably need a dose of good news to persuade them to open their wallets.

Economist.com/blogs/buttonwood

[From the print edition: Finance and economics](#)

139,54

Charlemagne

Value shoppers

Europe promised a principled foreign policy. Now it is desperate for quick deals

Jan 30th 2016 | [From the print edition](#)



NOTHING excites the febrile intellects of Brussels more than analysing the theoretical underpinnings of European foreign policy. Entire tracts are devoted to the security strategy of the European Union, its neighbourhood policy, the countless “tools”, “instruments” and “levers” it has designed to help it advance its global concerns. A keen student can lose himself for hours in strategy papers and advisory memos to the policymakers supposedly shaping Europe’s place in the world.

When the EU signed a German-inspired deal with Turkey to help stem the flow of refugees late last year, none of this mattered a jot. Presented by European officials as a hard-nosed piece of statecraft, the “action plan” offers Turkey money, the prospect of visa-free travel inside the EU and an acceleration of its membership bid so long as the Turks keep the migrants away. It was one of the most important European foreign-policy initiatives in years, but there was not a sniff of strategy to it. It reeked of desperation.

Turkey-watchers in Europe and liberals inside Turkey were united in outrage. The Europeans were averting their gaze as Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Turkey’s president, was locking up journalists, harassing the opposition and prosecuting a bloody war against unruly Kurds—in an official EU candidate country, no less. The European Commission even postponed publication of its highly critical annual report on Turkey’s membership bid while Mr Erdogan’s party campaigned in national elections.

The deal seemed emblematic of a “realist” turn in European foreign policy. Ideas such as slashing aid to countries that refuse to accept the return of failed asylum-seekers are doing the rounds. Officials in international-development agencies tear their hair out as carefully nurtured relationships in Africa are tossed aside to make way for quick-and-dirty deals to ship back rejected migrants. Southern European countries fret that a plan to open EU markets to Middle Eastern exports (to create jobs for refugees) will crowd out their manufacturers.

This is not the *Weltinnenpolitik* (global domestic policy) that grand thinkers like Jürgen Habermas thought regional clubs such as the EU were well placed to cultivate. Instead, to borrow from the late American neoconservative Irving Kristol, Europeans have started to resemble liberals mugged by reality. It is easy to bleat about human

rights when you are living in a peaceful, postmodern paradise; less so when you have millions of illegal migrants barging through your back door.

Europeans are hardly new to *Realpolitik* (the clue is in the word). There has long been a division of foreign-policy labour within the EU, says Michael Leigh of the German Marshall Fund, a think-tank. Larger countries delegated values-based policy to Brussels while they got on with the hard stuff, such as security or access to oil. For every pious expression of support for international justice or condemnation of capital punishment, there was a shabby energy deal or quiet support for a useful dictator. Some feel this category includes the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline, which would run directly from Russia to Germany under the Baltic Sea and could undermine the EU's energy policy, but which has the support of Angela Merkel, Germany's chancellor.

Tougher than they look

Even in its soft and fuzzy days, the EU was not toothless. Its strongest tool—the attraction of membership—combined European interests and values in one package. Enlargement to the east brought stability to the region while strengthening the rule of law and democratic institutions inside candidate countries. (Maintaining them once countries have joined has proved harder, as the recent examples of Hungary and Poland demonstrate.) Globally, Europeans have, in their gentle way, sought to bolster a rules-based order that has enabled their exporters to flourish.

That looked like the future, once. But today's threats lead down a different path. Europe's power no longer extends outward; instead, the surrounding countries have turned their pathologies on Europe. Enlargement is off the table—even in the Balkans the EU's main interest is in keeping order, as millions of migrants tramp through a historically unstable region. Russia's bloody intervention in Ukraine tore up the European belief that borders may not be changed by force—and Europe initially struggled to respond. It dithered again last year as the stream of migrants coming through Greece swelled, eventually leaving Mrs Merkel with little choice but to shower gifts upon Mr Erdogan in the hope of an agreement to stanch the flow.

The Turkey deal may yet work (although Charlemagne is struggling to find anyone who believes that it will). If it cuts the number of refugees and the borderless Schengen area survives, a European ideal will have been saved. Optimists think that, even if it flops, the EU's relations with an important neighbour will have emerged from the deep freeze. Denouncing Mr Erdogan's power grabs through bloodless progress reports had little effect; now EU politicians can slip their concerns into exchanges on refugees, as some visiting commissioners did this week in Ankara. The crisis may also force the EU to look outward again. Tunisia, notes Jan Techau of Carnegie Europe, another think-tank, is crawling with European diplomats and money, testament to the EU's desperation to preserve a rare success from the Arab spring.

But these are slim hopes. Europe's vulnerabilities are on full display. Some future Qaddafi will be alert to the concessions he might win by threatening to unleash hordes of migrants upon European shores. Finland and Norway fear that Vladimir Putin may decide to do precisely that by waving through a host of Syrians and Afghans. As for Turkey, had the Europeans woken up to the coming danger last spring, they might not have found themselves compromising their values so grubbily in the autumn. That would have been the strategic thing to do. Time to dust off some of those far-sighted think-tank reports.

139,56

Illiberal central Europe

Big, bad Visegrad

The migration crisis has given an unsettling new direction to an old alliance

Jan 30th 2016 | BUDAPEST, PRAGUE AND WARSAW | [From the print edition](#)

WHEN Middle Eastern refugees began arriving in Europe last year, Martina Scheibova, a consultant in Prague, felt sympathy for them. Now she is less sure. They create a “clash of cultures”, she says anxiously. Such fears are shared by many Europeans. But unlike Germans or Swedes, Ms Scheibova is unlikely to encounter many refugees. Czech public opinion is solidly against taking in asylum-seekers; Milos Zeman, the Czech Republic’s populist president, calls Muslim refugees “practically impossible” to integrate. In the past year, the country has accepted just 520.

The backlash against refugees can be felt across Europe. Xenophobic parties are at record levels in polls in Sweden and the Netherlands, and even in Germany the Eurosceptic, far-right Alternative für Deutschland party is polling in double digits. But central Europe’s response has been particularly strong. Anti-migrant sentiment has unified the “Visegrad group” of Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic—normally a disparate bunch who agree on some subjects (like opposing Europe’s climate policies) but are divided on others (like Russia). Rather than noisy opposition groups, it is governments in these countries who trumpet some of the most extreme views. And they are taking advantage of anti-migrant fervour to implement an illiberal agenda on other fronts, too.

Viktor Orban, Hungary’s prime minister, has been the loudest of the anti-immigrant voices. Mr Orban began inveighing against migrants early in 2015, after the *Charlie Hebdo* attacks in Paris, when the numbers arriving in Europe were still relatively low. His government now wants to introduce anti-terror laws that worry civil libertarians, though the details are vague. Fidesz, Mr Orban’s party, pioneered Europe’s illiberal wave: when it came to power in 2010 it limited the constitutional court’s powers, packed it with cronies and introduced a new constitution. Fidesz changed the electoral system, helping it win again in 2014, says Andras Biro-Nagy of Policy Solutions, a think-tank. A new media regulator was set up, headed by a Fidesz stalwart. Public television channels were stuffed with pro-Fidesz journalists, while foreign media were taxed more heavily than domestic ones. (The tax was rescinded after criticism from the main foreign channel, RTL Klub.)



For Visegrad, the game-changer was the November election victory in Poland of the nationalist conservative Law and Justice party (PiS). Jaroslaw Kaczynski, the party leader, has admired Mr Orban for years. Konrad Szymanski, the deputy foreign minister for European affairs, says Poland now plans to beef up its co-operation with the Visegrad group. The government is dead against any further European deals to allocate refugees among member states. Meanwhile, since taking power in November, PiS has sacked the heads of the security and intelligence services, weakened the constitutional tribunal (and packed it with its own supporters), and passed a new media law that lets it install loyalists to head the public radio and TV channels. The European Commission is examining whether all this violates Poland's commitments to the rule of law.

Politics in Slovakia and the Czech Republic are a bit different, but in both countries politicians have jumped on the issue of refugees. In December Robert Fico, the prime minister of Slovakia (who is seeking re-election in March), launched a legal challenge to the EU's migration policy, which he describes as "ritual suicide". (Hungary filed a challenge soon after.) Bohuslav Sobotka, the Czech prime minister, is less bombastic than Mr Zeman, but he too rejects refugee quotas. Conditions for those already in the country are shoddy.

These populist politics have been a hit with voters. Last spring Fidesz was falling in the polls, while support for Jobbik, a far-right party, was surging. Today Fidesz would win a majority again. Support for Mr Fico's Smer party had stalled last year, but since the refugee crisis erupted it has been rising. PiS's support base is among disgruntled older voters, who are particularly fearful of immigration. This week, at a meeting staged by a conservative group in Warsaw on whether Poland was threatened by a "colour revolution", the question of what to call refugees came up. A woman in the audience suggested "invaders". A speaker opted for "Islamists".

The newfound unity between the four countries delights populist politicians. "Probably the only good thing in the whole migration crisis is that the V4 [Visegrad group] has found a common voice and strategy," says Marton Gyongyosi of Jobbik. The group "allows three small countries to punch above their weight", says Gyorgy Schopflin, a Fidesz MEP.

The Visegrad group once aimed to accelerate its members' integration into the EU. Its turn towards illiberalism presents Europe with a problem. Since new rules came into force in 2014, the group no longer has a blocking minority in the European Council. But it can cause headaches, particularly if it influences neighbours such as Romania or Bulgaria. Meanwhile, polls show trust in the EU has fallen in all four countries. In fact, Visegrad countries rely heavily on EU funding—it amounted to 6% of GDP in Hungary in 2013. Yet many are disappointed in Europe. "People thought we would have the same living standards as Austrians or Britons," says Ferenc Gyurcsany, who served as Hungary's prime minister from 2004 to 2009.

Rising Euroscepticism could backfire on the group. Informal talks on the next multi-year EU budget have begun, and Germany has hinted that it will favour countries that share the burden of refugees. Already many European officials are growing impatient with the group. Milan Nic of the Central European Policy Institute recalls the days when Austrian politicians, for example, used to talk about the Visegrad group with respect. "Nowadays", he says, "Visegrad is like a bad word."

[From the print edition: Europe](#)

139,58

8. Februar 2016, 06:41 Uhr

Euro-Raum

Europa braucht ein gemeinsames Finanzministerium



Der Gouverneur der französischen Notenbank, François Villeroy de Galhau (links) und Bundesbankpräsident Jens Weidmann, plädieren für umfassende Reformen.

(Foto: AFP, Reuters)

Das Vertrauen in den Euro-Raum muss wiederhergestellt werden. Eine stärkere Integration scheint dazu der naheliegende Weg zu sein.

Gastbeitrag von François Villeroy de Galhau und Jens Weidmann

Europa steht heute am Scheideweg. Die Schuldenkrise ist noch immer nicht vollständig überwunden und die Arbeitslosigkeit in vielen Mitgliedstaaten hoch. Es müssen Antworten auf den zunehmenden Terrorismus und den massiven Zustrom von Flüchtlingen gefunden werden. Sowohl in Frankreich als auch in Deutschland haben manche vielleicht den Eindruck, es fehle in all diesen Fragen merklich an europäischer Solidarität.

Andere gehen sogar so weit, das Projekt Europa grundsätzlich infrage zu stellen, und in zahlreichen Mitgliedstaaten sind verstärkt nationalistische Tendenzen zu beobachten. Für uns beide als überzeugte Europäer kann die Zukunft Europas jedoch nicht in einer Renationalisierung liegen, sondern vielmehr darin, seine Grundlagen zu festigen. Was die Europäer eint, sind verbindende Werte, ein faires Sozialmodell und eine solide Währung. Dies sind Trümpfe, auf die wir setzen sollten.

Die Staatsschuldenkrise hat jedoch das Vertrauen in die Europäische Währungsunion (EWU) erschüttert. Trotz der vielfältigen Maßnahmen, die ergriffen wurden, um die Stabilität der EWU zu verbessern, **weist ihr Ordnungsrahmen nach wie vor gravierende Schwachstellen auf.** Hinzu kommt die verhaltene wirtschaftliche Dynamik im Euro-Raum. Die Geldpolitik hat zwar viel für die Konjunktur des Euro-Raums getan, sie kann aber kein nachhaltiges Wirtschaftswachstum schaffen und steht daher nicht im Fokus dieses Beitrags. Hier sind andere wirtschaftspolitische Maßnahmen erforderlich.

Um Wohlstand und Stabilität im Euro-Raum wirklich zu stärken, müssen **drei wirtschaftliche Eckpfeiler** errichtet werden: **entschlossene Programme für Strukturreformen auf nationaler Ebene, eine**

ambitionierte Finanzierungs- und Investitionsunion sowie ein verbesserter wirtschaftspolitischer Ordnungsrahmen im Euro-Raum.

Strukturreformen für nachhaltiges Wirtschaftswachstum

Entschlossene nationale Strukturreformprogramme sind der Schlüssel zu mehr Wachstum und Beschäftigung. Beginnen wir mit **Frankreich**: Offenkundig müssen das **Funktionieren des Arbeitsmarkts verbessert** und der **Dualismus zwischen befristeten und unbefristeten Arbeitsverträgen angegangen** werden. Neben der Steuergutschrift für Wettbewerbsfähigkeit und Beschäftigung (*CICE*) sind weitere Maßnahmen zur Verringerung der Kosten gering qualifizierter Arbeitsplätze zu ergreifen. **Das Bildungs- und Ausbildungssystem muss umgestaltet werden, um jungen Menschen Wege in die Beschäftigung zu öffnen - hier könnte die Förderung der beruflichen Ausbildung die beste Lösung sein.**

Auf den Waren- und Dienstleistungsmärkten muss der Wettbewerb durch den Abbau von Markteintritts- und -austrittsbeschränkungen gestärkt werden; dies gilt insbesondere für den **Dienstleistungssektor**. Mit Blick auf die **staatliche Verschuldung sollten Anstrengungen unternommen werden, um diese auf ein tragfähigeres Niveau zurückzuführen. Hierzu muss die Haushaltsdisziplin durch eine strengere Ausgabenpolitik verbessert werden.**

In Deutschland muss beim demografischen Wandel angesetzt werden

Obwohl sich die Konjunkturlage in **Deutschland** günstiger darstellt, sind auch hier weitere Reformen notwendig: Infolge des **demografischen Wandels ist mit einem Rückgang der Erwerbspersonenzahl zu rechnen** - daran wird auch der derzeitige starke Zustrom von Flüchtlingen nichts Wesentliches ändern. Dies wird das Wirtschaftswachstum längere Zeit dämpfen.

Was die demografischen Belastungen betrifft, so kann an zwei zentralen Hebeln angesetzt werden: an der **Anhebung des Renteneintrittsalters, um mit der steigenden Lebenserwartung Schritt zu halten, und an der Erhöhung der Erwerbsquote**, insbesondere durch **die Förderung der Erwerbsbeteiligung von Frauen**. Die Infrastrukturen für Kinderbetreuung und Erziehung müssen verbessert und ausgebaut werden. Durch eine Änderung des Steuer- und Transfersystems in Deutschland können die Anreize zur Aufnahme einer Erwerbstätigkeit erhöht werden. **Es bedarf entschlossener politischer Maßnahmen, um Flüchtlingen mit Bleiberecht die für eine erfolgreiche Teilnahme am Arbeitsmarkt notwendigen sprachlichen und beruflichen Qualifikationen zu vermitteln.**

Und schließlich ließen sich Hemmnisse für das Produktivitätswachstum beseitigen, indem Markteintrittsbarrieren gesenkt werden - zum Beispiel durch eine Liberalisierung und Deregulierung der freien Berufe oder den Abbau von Hindernissen bei Unternehmensgründungen.

Neben Strukturreformen auf nationaler Ebene werden auch wachstumsfördernde Maßnahmen auf europäischer Ebene benötigt. Wenn es gelingt, die bestehenden **Hindernisse für einen gemeinsamen Dienstleistungsmarkt und einen gemeinsamen digitalen Markt in Europa zu beseitigen, dann liegt darin eine Chance, die durch die Integration der Warenmärkte erzielten Wohlstandszuwächse zu vervielfachen.**

Was fehlt, ist eine gemeinsame "Finanzierungs- und Investitionsunion"

Der zweite Meilenstein auf dem Weg zur Stärkung des Euro-Raums ist die Errichtung einer ambitionierten "Finanzierungs- und Investitionsunion". Eine der zentralen Herausforderungen, denen sich der Euro-Raum

gegenübersieht, besteht nämlich in der Diskrepanz zwischen hohen Spareinlagen und einem Mangel an geeigneter Investitionsfinanzierung. Wir müssen diese in Europa besser zusammen bringen, und dabei dürfte Eigenkapital der vielversprechendste Weg sein.

So ist der Anteil an Eigenkapital der Unternehmen in Europa nur halb so hoch ist wie der in den Vereinigten Staaten - und der Anteil ihrer Fremdfinanzierung entsprechend höher. Das hat Nachteile, denn die Finanzierung über Eigenkapital bietet bessere Möglichkeiten der Risiko- und Chancenteilung sowie der Innovationsförderung. So werden wirtschaftliche Schocks in einzelnen Bundesstaaten der Vereinigten Staaten beispielsweise zu rund 40 % durch den integrierten Markt für Eigenkapital abgefangen, da die Gewinne und Verluste der Unternehmen auf die Eigentümer im gesamten Land verteilt werden.

Im Euro-Raum gibt es diese Form der Risikoteilung praktisch nicht. Eine Annäherung an das Niveau der USA würde die Währungsunion wesentlich stabilisieren. Einige der Themen werden auch von der Europäischen Kommission im Rahmen ihres Projekts zur Schaffung einer Kapitalmarktunion angegangen. Für sich genommen sind Initiativen wie die Kapitalmarktunion, der Juncker-Investitionsplan und die Vollendung der Bankenunion - sobald die Voraussetzungen dafür erfüllt sind - vielleicht nicht besonders aufsehenerregend. Doch in einer auf einander abgestimmten Form und unter der neuen Bezeichnung "Finanzierungs- und Investitionsunion" werden sie im Verbund dafür sorgen, dass in Europa Spareinlagen besser in produktive Investitionen gelenkt werden.

Eine stärkere finanzpolitische Integration ist erforderlich

Was schließlich die Finanz- und Wirtschaftspolitik anbelangt, so muss der Ordnungsrahmen des Euro-Raums gestärkt werden. Die derzeitige Asymmetrie zwischen nationaler Souveränität und gemeinschaftlicher Solidarität stellt eine Gefahr für die Stabilität unserer Währungsunion dar. Bedauerlicherweise konnte der als Sicherungsmechanismus geschaffene Koordinierungsrahmen nicht verhindern, dass sich die öffentlichen Finanzen verschlechtert und wirtschaftliche Ungleichgewichte aufgebaut haben, was nicht zuletzt die Griechenlandkrise gezeigt hat. Wir stehen nun ganz eindeutig an einem Scheideweg und müssen uns der Frage stellen, wie wir uns aus dieser misslichen Lage befreien wollen.

Eine stärkere Integration scheint der naheliegend Weg zu sein, um das Vertrauen in den Euro-Raum wiederherzustellen, denn dies würde die Entwicklung gemeinsamer Strategien für die Staatsfinanzen und für Reformen begünstigen und damit das Wachstum fördern. Zu diesem Zweck müssten die Euro-Länder natürlich in erheblichem Maße Souveränität und Befugnisse auf die europäische Ebene übertragen, was wiederum eine größere demokratische Rechenschaftspflicht erfordern würde. In einem solchen neuen Rahmen würde der Euro-Raum auf einem stärkeren institutionellen Fundament ruhen, dem die zentrale Idee der währungspolitischen Integration in Europa zugrunde läge - die Idee, dass die Währungsunion Stabilität und Wachstum gewährleistet.

Den neuen Rahmen zu gestalten wäre Aufgabe der Politik, doch könnte sie sich dabei beispielsweise an folgenden Eckpunkten orientieren: Aufbau einer effizienten und weniger fragmentierten europäischen Verwaltung, Schaffung eines gemeinsamen Finanzministeriums für den Euro-Raum in Verbindung mit einem unabhängigen Fiskalrat sowie der Bildung eines stärkeren politischen Gremiums, das politische Entscheidungen trifft und der parlamentarischen Kontrolle unterliegt. Diese neuen Institutionen könnten dafür sorgen, das Gleichgewicht zwischen Haftung und Kontrolle wiederherzustellen.

Dezentraler Ansatz als letzter gangbarer Weg

Sollten die Regierungen und Parlamente im Euro-Raum jedoch vor der politischen Dimension einer umfassenden Union zurückschrecken, dann bliebe nur noch ein gangbarer Weg übrig - ein dezentraler Ansatz auf der Grundlage von Eigenverantwortung mit strengeren Regeln. Dabei müssten die Fiskalregeln, die insbesondere durch den Fiskalpakt und das Europäische Semester bereits gestärkt wurden, gehärtet werden. Bei einer solchen Ausweitung der Eigenverantwortung müsste auch sichergestellt werden, dass Risiken, und zwar auch die mit Forderungen an Staaten verbundenen Risiken, von allen Beteiligten angemessen berücksichtigt werden - nicht zuletzt, um die Anfälligkeit der Banken zu verringern, sollten einzelne Länder in eine finanzielle Schieflage geraten.

Ferner wäre zu prüfen, wie private Anleger stärker in die ESM-Rettungsprogramme eingebunden werden können und wie eine Restrukturierung von Staatsschulden gestaltet werden kann, ohne die Finanzstabilität im gesamten Euro-Raum zu gefährden. Würde man diesen Weg beschreiten, so könnten die Euro-Länder ihre nationale Souveränität behalten - bei entsprechend geringerer Solidarität. Dies wäre die andere Möglichkeit, Haftung und Kontrolle wieder in Einklang zu bringen.

Renforcer l'intégration européenne pour restaurer la confiance, par les dirigeants de la Banque de France et de la Deutsche Bundesbank

LE MONDE ECONOMIE | 07.02.2016 à 20h03 • Mis à jour le 07.02.2016 à 20h46 | Par Jens Weidmann (Président de la Deutsche Bundesbank) et François Villeroy de Galhau (Gouverneur de la Banque de France)

Les Etats membres doivent procéder à un plus grand partage de la souveraineté économique, fiscale et budgétaire.

Aujourd'hui, l'Europe se trouve à la croisée des chemins. La crise de la dette n'est pas complètement terminée et, dans de nombreux Etats membres, le chômage demeure élevé. La montée du terrorisme et l'afflux massif de réfugiés sont des questions qui ne pourront rester sans réponse. En France comme en Allemagne, certains peuvent avoir le sentiment d'une absence notable de solidarité européenne sur ces deux points. D'autres vont même jusqu'à remettre fondamentalement en question le projet européen, et les tendances nationalistes s'exacerbent dans plusieurs Etats membres. Pourtant, en tant qu'Européens engagés, nous considérons tous deux que l'avenir de l'Europe ne peut se bâtir sur une renationalisation, mais qu'il passe, au contraire, par un renforcement de ses fondations. Les Européens partagent des valeurs fortes, un modèle social équitable et une monnaie solide. Nous devons nous appuyer sur ces atouts.

Cela étant, la crise de la dette souveraine a ébranlé la confiance placée dans l'Union économique et monétaire (UEM) européenne. Malgré les différentes mesures mises en oeuvre en vue d'améliorer la stabilité de l'UEM, son cadre structurel présente toujours de graves insuffisances. Qui plus est, la zone euro souffre de la faiblesse de la croissance économique. Si la politique monétaire a apporté un grand soutien à l'économie de la zone euro, elle ne peut toutefois pas générer une croissance économique durable et, par conséquent, ne constitue pas l'objet principal de notre tribune. A cet égard, d'autres types de politique économique doivent intervenir.

Pour mener à bien le renforcement de la prospérité et de la stabilité dans la zone euro, il convient d'ériger trois piliers économiques : des programmes de réformes structurelles nationales menés avec détermination, une union de financement et d'investissement ambitieuse et une meilleure gouvernance économique.

Fardeau démographique

Des programmes de réformes structurelles nationales menés avec détermination sont essentiels pour renforcer la croissance et l'emploi. Commençons par la France. Le fonctionnement du marché du travail doit manifestement être amélioré et il convient de traiter la question de la dualité entre les contrats à durée déterminée (CDD) et les contrats à durée indéterminée (CDI); au-delà du crédit d'impôt pour la compétitivité et l'emploi (CICE), il faut encore réduire le coût des emplois non qualifiés; le système d'éducation et de formation doit être réorganisé afin de créer des voies d'accès à l'emploi pour les jeunes, et à cet égard, la promotion de l'apprentissage pourrait constituer la meilleure voie à suivre. Sur les marchés des biens et des services, la concurrence doit être renforcée en supprimant les barrières à l'entrée et à la sortie, notamment dans le secteur des services. S'agissant de la dette publique, il convient de poursuivre les efforts engagés afin d'atteindre des niveaux plus soutenables. A cette fin, la discipline budgétaire doit être renforcée au moyen d'une gestion plus rigoureuse des dépenses.

En dépit de sa situation économique plus favorable, l'Allemagne doit, elle aussi, poursuivre sur la voie de la réforme : les évolutions démographiques devraient entraîner une diminution de la population active - et l'afflux de réfugiés que l'on observe actuellement ne changera pas la donne de manière significative. Il en résultera un ralentissement de la croissance à long terme. Deux leviers principaux permettent d'agir sur ce fardeau démographique : relever l'âge du départ à la retraite pour être en phase

avec l'augmentation de l'espérance de vie; accroître le taux d'activité, notamment en encourageant davantage de femmes à rejoindre la population active. Les infrastructures d'accueil et d'éducation des enfants doivent être améliorées et développées.

Le régime fiscal et de redistribution allemand peut être modifié de manière à accroître les incitations à la recherche d'un emploi rémunéré. Des mesures décisives de politique économique doivent être prises afin d'apporter aux réfugiés qui resteront dans le pays les connaissances linguistiques et les compétences professionnelles nécessaires pour réussir sur le marché du travail. Et les obstacles à l'augmentation de la productivité pourraient être supprimés en réduisant les barrières à l'entrée sur le marché, par exemple par la libéralisation et la déréglementation des professions libérales ou par l'élimination des freins à la création d'entreprise.

Une épargne insuffisamment mobilisée

Outre les réformes structurelles à l'échelle nationale, des mesures de renforcement de la croissance sont nécessaires au niveau européen. La suppression des barrières existantes à la création d'un marché commun dans le domaine des services et du numérique renferme la promesse d'une multiplication des gains issus de l'intégration des marchés des biens.

La deuxième étape importante sur la voie du renforcement de la zone euro a trait à la mise en oeuvre d'un programme ambitieux d'« union de financement et d'investissement ». En effet, l'un des principaux défis que doit relever la zone euro concerne le paradoxe d'une épargne abondante qui n'est pas suffisamment mobilisée au bénéfice de l'investissement productif. L'Europe peut mieux faire pour rapprocher les deux, et l'émission d'actions semble être l'évolution la plus prometteuse en ce sens.

Chacun sait que le financement des entreprises par émission d'actions est deux fois moins important en Europe qu'aux Etats-Unis, et le financement par endettement deux fois plus élevé. Cela est regrettable car le financement par émission d'actions est le meilleur moyen de partager les risques et les opportunités, et aussi de soutenir l'innovation. Par exemple, le marché boursier américain, qui présente une forte intégration, est capable d'amortir 40 % environ d'un choc économique spécifique à un Etat, les bénéfices et les pertes des entreprises étant distribués à leurs propriétaires sur l'ensemble du territoire américain.

Partage de souveraineté

Dans la zone euro, cette forme de partage des risques est pratiquement inexistante. En se rapprochant des niveaux américains, la zone euro deviendrait une union monétaire beaucoup plus résistante. Le projet de la Commission européenne de créer une « union des marchés de capitaux » apporte des réponses à certains de ces problèmes. Prises individuellement, des initiatives telles que l'« union des marchés de capitaux », le plan Juncker pour l'investissement et l'achèvement de l'union bancaire - une fois les conditions préalables réunies - ne seraient pas vraiment marquantes, alors que sous une forme plus rationalisée et rebaptisée « union de financement et d'investissement », elles seront collectivement capables de mieux canaliser l'épargne vers des investissements productifs en Europe.

Enfin, s'agissant des politiques budgétaire et économique, la gouvernance de la zone euro doit être renforcée. L'asymétrie actuelle entre souveraineté nationale et solidarité commune constitue une menace pour la stabilité de notre union monétaire. Malheureusement, le cadre de coordination qui avait été mis en place comme garde-fou n'a pas permis d'éviter la détérioration des finances publiques et l'accumulation de déséquilibres économiques, comme l'a notamment montré la crise grecque. Nous nous trouvons clairement à la croisée des chemins et la question à laquelle nous devons répondre à présent est la suivante : comment sortir de cette situation sous-optimale ?

Une plus grande intégration semble être la solution la plus simple pour restaurer la confiance dans la zone euro, car elle favoriserait des stratégies communes en matière de finances publiques et de réformes et par là, la croissance. Pour cela, il faudrait clairement que les Etats membres de la zone euro consentent à un partage de la souveraineté et des pouvoirs au niveau européen, ce qui exigerait alors une plus grande responsabilité démocratique.

Dans ce nouveau cadre, la zone euro reposerait sur une base institutionnelle plus solide, qui devrait se fonder sur l'idée centrale de l'intégration monétaire européenne, selon laquelle l'UEM apporte stabilité et croissance. Il appartient aux hommes politiques de concevoir le nouveau cadre mais ils pourraient partir, par exemple, des éléments suivants : une administration européenne efficace et moins fragmentée pour construire un Trésor commun à la zone euro, conjointement avec un conseil budgétaire indépendant; un organe politique plus fort pour prendre les décisions politiques, sous contrôle parlementaire. Ces nouvelles institutions permettraient de rétablir l'équilibre entre responsabilité et contrôle.

Responsabilité et contrôle

Toutefois, si les gouvernements et les parlements de la zone euro reculaient devant la dimension politique d'une véritable union, il ne resterait comme option envisageable qu'une approche décentralisée fondée sur la responsabilité individuelle et des règles encore plus fortes. Dans ce scénario, les règles budgétaires, qui ont déjà été renforcées notamment par le biais du pacte budgétaire et du Semestre européen, devraient être complétées. Dans un tel régime de responsabilité individuelle accrue, il faudrait aussi nous assurer que le risque, y compris celui lié aux expositions souveraines, est dûment pris en compte par tous les acteurs, ne serait-ce que pour réduire la vulnérabilité des banques en cas de perturbations affectant ladette souveraine.

De plus, il serait nécessaire d'examiner comment mieux associer les investisseurs privés dans les plans de sauvetage du Mécanisme européen de stabilité (MES) et comment concevoir un processus de restructuration des dettes souveraines qui ne mette pas en péril la stabilité financière de la zone euro dans son ensemble. Aller dans cette direction permettrait de conserver la souveraineté nationale au sein de la zone euro, avec un niveau de solidarité proportionnellement réduit. Cela constituerait l'autre option vers le rééquilibrage entre responsabilité et contrôle.

François Villeroy de Galhau est gouverneur de la Banque de France; Jens Weidmann est président de la Deutsche Bundesbank.

Ce texte est publié simultanément en allemand par la *Süddeutsche Zeitung*.

Das Durchwinken soll ein Ende haben

Auf der Balkanroute sollen die Migranten – auch Bürgerkriegsflüchtlinge – bald an der Grenze zu Mazedonien gestoppt werden. Damit die Umverteilung der Flüchtlinge gelingt, will die EU-Kommission zudem „Blaue Briefe“ verschicken.

07.02.2016, von THOMAS GUTSCHKER

Auf der Balkan-Route nähert sich das Durchwinken von Migranten nach Deutschland seinem Ende. Gemäß Recherchen der Frankfurter Allgemeinen Sonntagszeitung zeichnet sich ab, dass die Grenze zwischen Griechenland und Mazedonien in den nächsten Wochen weitgehend geschlossen wird – auch für Bürgerkriegsflüchtlinge. Offen erscheint momentan nur, ob die Griechen oder die Mazedonier dafür sorgen. Mazedonien wird zunehmend von Staaten bei der Grenzsicherung unterstützt, die den Flüchtlingsstrom stoppen wollen. Die EU-Kommission will hingegen, dass Griechenland selbst Migranten aufhält – und die Last dann mit den anderen Mitgliedstaaten teilt.



Autor: Thomas Gutschker, Redakteur im Ressort Politik in der Frankfurter Allgemeinen Sonntagszeitung.Folgen:

Das soll bald möglich sein, weil der lange schleppende Aufbau von „Hotspots“ für die Registrierung und Verteilung von **Flüchtlingen** nun vorangeht. Die griechische Regierung hat die Armee mit den Arbeiten betreut – auf Brüsseler Wunsch. Bis zum nächsten Gipfeltreffen am 18. und 19. Februar sollen die Hotspots auf fünf Ägäis-Inseln weitgehend fertig sein. Griechenland macht auch Fortschritte beim Bau zusätzlicher Unterkünfte. Die Regierung und das UN-Flüchtlingshilfswerk haben in wenigen Wochen zusammen 32.000 Plätze geschaffen. Bis Ende des Monats könnte das Ziel von 50.000 Plätzen erreicht sein.

Damit wäre eine wesentliche Zusage erfüllt, die Griechenland bei einem Westbalkan-Gipfel im September gegeben hatte. EU-Kommissionspräsident **Juncker** machte sich schon damals dafür stark, die „Politik des Durchwinkens“ zu beenden. Sein Plan sah vor, dass über die Schutzbedürftigkeit von Flüchtlingen direkt in Griechenland und Italien entschieden wird. Von sogenannten Hotspots aus sollen dann bis zu 160.000 Flüchtlinge auf die Mitgliedstaaten verteilt werden. So haben es die Innenminister mit großer Mehrheit beschlossen. Die Staaten haben kurzfristig aber erst 4500 Plätze für Griechenland angeboten, bisher wurden von dort nur 202 Personen umgesiedelt. Die Kommission will deshalb nun „Blaue Briefe“ versenden – eine Vorstufe zu Vertragsverletzungsverfahren. Intern wird erwartet, dass die Kooperationsbereitschaft steigt, sobald die Balkan-Route dicht ist. Denn dann entfällt das Argument der Umverteilungsgegner, sie wollten Angela Merkel nicht dabei helfen, noch mehr Flüchtlinge nach Europa zu holen.

Juncker für Rückkehr zum Dublin-Verfahren

Juncker hat signalisiert, dass er die Rückkehr zum sogenannten Dublin-Verfahren nunmehr für geboten hält. Demnach müssen Flüchtlinge im ersten EU-Staat um Schutz nachsuchen, den sie erreichen. Dem slowenischen Ministerpräsidenten Cerar schrieb Juncker Ende Januar, dass die Mitgliedstaaten Migranten an ihrer Grenze zurückweisen sollten, „die keinen Asylantrag gestellt haben, obwohl sie dazu Gelegenheit hatten“. Im vergangenen Jahr kamen 860.000 Migranten über die Ägäis in die **EU**, davon stellten jedoch nur 12.000 einen Asylantrag in Griechenland.

Anzeige

Juncker schrieb weiter, auch Mazedonien solle nur Personen einreisen lassen, die in dem Land um Asyl bitten. Die Regierung in Skopje schleust bislang Flüchtlinge in Zügen weiter Richtung Serbien. Seit November lässt sie nur noch Syrer, Afghanen und Iraker passieren – neuerdings müssen sie zusätzlich Deutschland oder Österreich als Ziel angeben. Künftig müsse es genau andersherum sein, heißt es in der EU-Kommission: Wer Deutschland und Österreich als Ziel nenne, sei abzuweisen.

Mazedonien sorgt sich wie die anderen Staaten auf der Balkan-Route darüber, dass es zu einem Rückstau der Migranten kommt, wenn an einer Stelle die Grenzen abrupt geschlossen werden. Seit November hat es schon dreimal seinen Übergang bei der nordgriechischen Stadt Idomeni vorübergehend abgeriegelt und in der Umgebung einen Stacheldrahtzaun gebaut. Der mazedonische Außenminister Poposki sagte kürzlich, eine Schließung der Grenze zu

Griechenland sei nur die „zweitschlechteste Option“ – verglichen mit der schlechtesten, dass jedes einzelne Land auf der Balkan-Route seine Grenzen schließen müsse.

So sehen es auch die Nachbarstaaten. Mazedonien wird deshalb seit Dezember von Slowenien, Serbien und den Visegrád-Staaten Ungarn, Slowakei und Tschechische Republik bei der Grenzsicherung unterstützt. Derzeit sind 50 bis 90 Grenzbeamte aus diesen Ländern im Einsatz. Die Visegrád-Staaten haben in Brüssel intern angekündigt, dass sie Mitte des Monats ihre Kontingente weiter aufstocken werden. Der ungarische Regierungschef **Viktor Orbán** hatte Anfang Januar gefordert, Europa müsse eine weitere „Verteidigungslinie“ an der Nordgrenze Griechenlands errichten.

Zehn Millionen Euro für die Grenzsicherung in Mazedonien?

Auch Österreich macht in diese Richtung Druck, seitdem die Regierung eine Obergrenze für Flüchtlinge beschlossen hat. Verteidigungsminister Doskozil brachte am Freitag sogar den Einsatz von Soldaten im Rahmen einer „militärisch-zivil gemischten Mission“ auf dem Balkan ins Gespräch. Außenminister Kurz sagte, Mazedonien und andere Balkan-Staaten seien bereit, mit EU-Ländern zusammenzuarbeiten, um „den Flüchtlingszustrom zu reduzieren, zu drosseln, vielleicht sogar zu stoppen“. Die Außenminister der Staaten an der Balkan-Route berieten am Samstag in Amsterdam über mögliche Maßnahmen. Die niederländische Ratspräsidentschaft und die EU-Kommission warben bei der Sitzung für ein abgestimmtes europäisches Vorgehen. Sie stellten Mazedonien zehn Millionen Euro für die Grenzsicherung in Aussicht.

Die EU-Kommission dringt darauf, dass die Griechen ihre Nordgrenze selbst schützen. Ministerpräsident Tsipras hatte sich lange dagegen gewehrt, weil er sein Land angesichts des Zustroms überfordert sah. Anfang Dezember stimmte er nach massivem Druck aus Brüssel einem Einsatz der EU-Grenzschutzbehörde Frontex an der Grenze zu Mazedonien zu. Es gibt zwar einen Operationsplan, bislang ist aber nur ein kleines Vorausteam im Einsatz. Die Mitgliedstaaten müssen noch 400 weitere Beamte abstellen. Und Athen muss dafür sorgen, dass sie untergebracht werden können. Frontex darf nach geltendem Recht nur auf griechischer Seite patrouillieren.

„Signal der Abschreckung“ gegenüber Wirtschaftsflüchtlingen

In der EU-Kommission wird nicht verhohlen, dass es um ein Signal der „Abschreckung“ gegenüber Wirtschaftsflüchtlingen geht. Deren Anteil ist stark gestiegen. Nach Einschätzung eines hohen Kommissionsbeamten haben 40 Prozent der Migranten, die zuletzt kamen, keine Aussicht auf Schutz. Der Anteil der Syrer betrug im Januar nur noch 39 Prozent (nach 69 Prozent im September). Gestiegen ist dagegen der Anteil von Irakern und Afghanen, die geringere Anerkennungsquoten haben, sowie von Maghrebiniern, die durchweg als Wirtschaftsflüchtlinge gelten. Der Zeitpunkt für eine Grenzschließung erscheint günstig, weil im Januar nur noch 2000 Migranten am Tag über die Ägäis kamen (nach 3500 im Dezember). Auf diesem Niveau könnte Griechenland etwa einen Monat lang Flüchtlinge selbst unterbringen.

Bislang hält der Flüchtlingszustrom nach Griechenland weiter fast unvermindert an. Mehr als 68.000 Menschen setzten seit Jahresbeginn von der türkischen Ägäisküste zu den griechischen Inseln über, teilte das UN-Flüchtlingshilfswerk UNHCR am Sonntag mit. Allein in den ersten sechs Februartagen kamen demnach 7521 Migranten nach Griechenland, im ganzen Februar 2015 waren es 2873. Mindestens 366 Menschen überlebten die Überfahrt nicht oder werden vermisst. Fast alle Migranten versuchen, von Griechenland aus auf der sogenannten Balkanroute weiter Richtung Österreich und Deutschland zu gelangen.

Es kommt auf die Türkei an

Wenn die Abschreckung funktioniert, werden sich künftig weniger Migranten auf den Weg über die Ägäis machen. Hier kommt es auch auf die Hilfe der Türkei an. Wer das griechische Festland erreicht, könnte versuchen, nach Albanien auszuweichen und von dort mit dem Schiff nach Italien zu gelangen. Sollten die Unterkunftsplätze in Griechenland nicht reichen, müsste die Grenze nach Mazedonien wohl wie ein Ventil geöffnet werden, um Druck abzulassen. „Man kann nur so lange dichtmachen, wie in Griechenland menschenwürdige Zustände herrschen“, heißt es in der EU-Kommission.

139,67

• [OPINION](#)

• [REVIEW & OUTLOOK](#)

Syria's Peace of the Grave

Assad and Russia expand their assault on Aleppo as Kerry prattles on.

Feb. 7, 2016 5:50 p.m. ET

President Obama and John Kerry are lucky the presidential primaries are occupying Washington's attention, because otherwise more people might notice the human and strategic catastrophe unfolding in Syria. Even as the Secretary of State was touting his Syrian peace talks in Geneva last week, Bashar Assad, Russia and Iran were expanding their bloody siege against the opposition around Aleppo.

The peace talks in Geneva "adjourned" last week not long after they began, and no wonder. **There was no peace to talk about. Mr. Kerry had graciously not insisted on an immediate cease fire as a condition of the talks, so Mr. Assad used the diplomatic cover to ramp up his assault on the moderate Sunni opposition to his Alawite regime. Backed by Russian air power, Hezbollah and elite Iranian troops, Mr. Assad's forces are trying to wipe out what's left of the opposition that isn't allied with Islamic State or the jihadist Nusra Front.**

Their strategic goal is to retake what was once Syria's commercial capital while carving out a safe area in Syria's west for Alawite control. Mr. Assad also wants to deny opposition access to the Mediterranean coast as well to the border areas with Turkey. The Free Syrian Army has used those areas for periodic resupply and refuge.

With Mr. Assad's position fortified, he and his backers will be only too happy to return to the talks later this month in a much stronger position. Mr. Kerry, who has never met a concession he wouldn't make, has already conceded to allow an interim government to form with Mr. Assad still in power. So much for Mr. Obama's 2011 pledge that Mr. Assad must "step aside." Syria may then concede to elections down the road that the regime can control.

The Assad assault is also escalating Syria's human tragedy. **As many as 70,000 refugees are massed along the Turkish border as they flee the regime's indiscriminate bombing against fighters and civilians. Ankara has periodically provided refuge to Syrians during the five-year civil war, but it is under increasing pressure from domestic public opinion and Europe to stop the human flow.**

The Syrian disaster is becoming so painfully obvious that **even members of the pro-Obama national security establishment are calling for the President to drop his let-it-burn policy.** Veteran diplomats Nicholas Burns and James Jeffrey wrote last week in the Washington Post that **the Syrian war "has metastasized into neighboring countries and the heart of Europe. It could destabilize the Middle East for a generation."** No kidding.

The duo called for more U.S. help for "the moderate Sunni and Kurdish forces" as well "the creation of a safe zone in northern Syria to protect civilians, along with a no-fly zone to enforce it." We wonder where these fellows were five years ago when we and Senators John McCain and Lindsey Graham were calling for precisely these steps, but maybe they can shame Mr. Kerry at the next Council on Foreign Relations meeting.

In other Syria news, Mr. Kerry trumpeted U.S. contributions at a United Nations conference in London last week to drum up financial support **for the refugees, who total an estimated 11 million during the civil war in addition to more than 250,000 dead. The U.S. has pledged nearly \$1 billion, and if nothing else perhaps the money can buy more coffins.**

139,68

FEB 5, 2016 11

Japan's Wrong Way Out

By Adair Turner, a former chairman of the United Kingdom's Financial Services Authority and former member of the UK's Financial Policy Committee, Chairman of the Institute for New Economic Thinking. His latest book is [Between Debt and the Devil](#).

Financial markets were surprised by the Bank of Japan's recent introduction of negative interest rates on some commercial bank reserves. They shouldn't have been. The BOJ clearly needed to take some new policy action to achieve its target of 2% inflation. But neither negative interest rates nor further expansion of the BOJ's already huge program of quantitative easing (QE) will be sufficient to offset the strong deflationary forces that Japan now faces.

In 2013 the BOJ predicted that its QE operations would deliver 2% inflation within two years. But in 2015, core inflation (excluding volatile items such as food) was only 0.5%. With consumer spending and average earnings falling in December, the 2% target increasingly looks out of reach.

The unanticipated severity of China's downturn is the latest factor upsetting the BOJ's forecasts. But that slowdown is the predictable (and predicted) consequence of debt dynamics with roots going back to 2008.

Excessive private credit growth in the advanced economies before 2008 left many companies and households overleveraged, and their attempted deleveraging after the global financial crisis erupted that year threatened Chinese exports, employment, and growth. To offset that danger, China's rulers unleashed an enormous credit-fueled investment boom, pushing the debt/GDP ratio from around 130% to more than 230%, and the investment rate from 41% of GDP to 47%. This in turn drove a global commodity boom, and strong demand for capital-goods imports from countries such as South Korea, Japan, and Germany.

But the inevitable consequence within China was wasteful construction investment and enormous overcapacity in heavy industrial sectors such as steel, cement, and glass. So even though service-sector expansion supports strong employment growth (with 13.1 million new urban jobs created in 2015), the Chinese industrial sector is in the midst of a hard landing.

Indeed, official survey results suggest that [manufacturing has contracted](#) for six months in a row. This, in turn, has reduced demand for commodities, driving countries such as Russia and Brazil into recession, and posing a major threat to African growth. Lower industrial imports are having a major impact on many Asian economies as well. South Korea's exports fell 18% year on year in January, and Japan's fell 8% in December.

In the eurozone, annual inflation is running at 0.2% – still far below the European Central Bank's target, and German exports to China are down 4%. As a result, at its March meeting, the ECB's Governing Council may also consider moving interest rates further into negative territory, or increasing the scale of its QE program.

But it is increasingly clear that ultra-low short and long-term interest rates are not boosting nominal demand. Nor should that surprise us. Japan's experience since 1990 teaches us that once companies feel overleveraged, pushing low interest rates still lower has little impact on their investment decisions. Cutting Japan's ten-year yield from 0.2% to 0.1%, and Germany's from 0.5% to 0.35% – the movements over the last week – just doesn't make a significant difference to consumption and investment decisions in the real economy.

The BOJ's announcement of a negative interest rate certainly did produce a currency depreciation. But a lower yen would help Japanese exporters only if China, the eurozone, and South Korea – all themselves struggling with deflationary pressures – do not match Japan's rate cuts.

At the global level, currency depreciation is a zero-sum game – we cannot escape a global debt overhang by depreciating against other planets. And if multiple currencies all depreciate against the US dollar, the resulting impact on the US manufacturing industry could slow the American economy, undermining its import demand and thus hurting the world's exporters. Forecasts for US economic growth have been revised downward significantly since the Federal Reserve's interest-rate hike in December.

Depressed equity markets and falling bond yields worldwide in January 2016 thus illustrate the global nature of the problem we face. Demand is still depressed by the overhang of debt accumulated before 2008. Indeed, this pre-2008 debt has not gone away; it has simply been shifted between sectors and countries.

Total global debt (public and private combined) has increased from around 180% to more than 210% of world GDP. Faced with this reality, markets are increasingly concerned that governments and central banks are running out of ammunition to offset global deflation, with the only tools available those that simply redistribute demand among countries.

But the fact is that central banks and governments together *never* run out of policy ammunition to offset deflation, because they can always finance tax cuts or increase public expenditure with printed money. This is precisely what the Japanese authorities should do now, permanently writing off some of the BOJ's huge holdings of Japanese government bonds and canceling the planned sales-tax increase which, if it goes ahead in April 2017, will further depress Japanese growth and inflation.

Such a policy, as I set out in [a paper](#) at the IMF's 16th Annual Research Conference in November, is undoubtedly technically possible. And it does not, contrary to some objections, involve commitment to perpetually low interest rates. Rather, it is the only way by which Japan can now escape from a debt trap so deep that only zero interest rates make it sustainable.

There are no credible scenarios in which Japanese government debt can ever be repaid in the normal sense of the word "repay": and none in which the bulk of the BOJ's holdings of Japanese government bonds will ever be sold back to the private sector. The sooner that reality is admitted, the sooner Japan will have some chance of meeting its inflation targets and stimulating total demand, rather than seeking to shift it away from other countries.

Weidmann: Euro-Finanzminister nicht durchsetzbar

Bundesbankpräsident Jens Weidmann hat mit seinem französischen Kollegen einen Artikel über die Zukunft der Euro-Zone geschrieben. Gegen dessen Wahrnehmung wehrt er sich nun.

08.02.2016



© DPA Jens Weidmann hält nicht für realistisch, dass die Mitgliedsländer der Währungsunion auf soviel Souveränität verzichten, um einen Euro-Finanzminister zu ermöglichen.

Bundesbankpräsident Jens Weidmann ist dem Eindruck entgegengetreten, er strebe in naher Zukunft die Schaffung eines Euro-Finanzministeriums an. **„Ich sehe gegenwärtig keine politischen Mehrheiten für eine solche zentrale Lösung“, sagte Weidmann gegenüber FAZ.NET.**

Zuvor war in Medienberichten der Eindruck entstanden, Weidmann plädiere gemeinsam mit dem französischen Notenbankchef Francois Villeroy de Galhau für die Einrichtung eines europäischen Finanzministeriums. **Für Weidmann ist dies jedoch nur eine theoretische Option, die er aber derzeit nicht für machbar hält. Daher plädiert er für eine Stärkung der geltenden Regeln.**

Es gelte „unverändert der auf dem Prinzip der Eigenverantwortung basierende Rahmen des Maastricht-Vertrages“, sagte der deutsche Notenbankchef. „Diesen gilt es nachhaltig zu stärken. Solange kein umfassender Souveränitätsverzicht beschlossen wird, ist dies der Weg, der Haftung und Kontrolle in Einklang bringt.“

Quelle: ppl.

139,70

FEB 5, 2016 11

The Great Populists

Jacek Rostowski was Poland's Minister of Finance and Deputy Prime Minister from 2007 to 2013.

WARSAW – The first challenge to the Western hegemony that followed the collapse of Communism in Europe was the emergence of the so-called BRICS countries – Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa – in the 2000s. Rapidly growing and collectively accounting for nearly half of the world's population, the rise of the BRICS seemed set to tip the balance of power away from the United States and Western Europe.

Today, the BRICS look like [less of a geopolitical threat](#) to the West. Russia, Brazil, and South Africa are in severe economic straits, and China is wobbling. Only India maintains its luster. And yet the West is coming under pressure again, including in its own backyard. This time, the challenge is political, not economic: the rise of politicians who relish conflict and disdain national and international law and democratic norms.

I call such leaders “PEKOs,” after the four most prominent examples of their kind: Russian President Vladimir Putin, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the Polish politician Jarosław Kaczyński, and Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán.

PEKOs do not view politics as the management of collective emotions in order to achieve broad policy goals: faster economic growth, a more equitable distribution of income, or greater national security, power, and prestige. Instead, they regard politics as an endless series of intrigues and purges aimed at preserving personal power and privilege.

The PEKOs share the Russian revolutionary Vladimir Lenin's belief that “[politics must take precedence over economics](#).” Indeed, they value it over every other kind of policy consideration. Politics is not a means to an end, but the air they breathe, and policies are merely instruments in their endless struggle to stay alive.

It would be a mistake, however, to think of the PEKOs as today's equivalent of the “Great Dictators” of the 1930s. The PEKOs may be nationalists, but their opinions would not have been out of place in the drawing rooms of Europe before World War I (the same cannot be said of the Nazis or the Spanish Falange).

Nor is their economic approach necessarily statist. Putin certainly has strong *dirigiste* leanings, but if Orbán and Kaczyński are deserving of the label, then so was French President Charles de Gaulle. And Erdoğan has actually dismantled Kemalist statism in Turkey and introduced free-market policies.

The biggest difference between the Great Dictators and the PEKOs is that the latter regularly have to face their electorates. Indeed, their confrontational politics is the central element of their survival strategy. Each one of them has gained (or maintained) power by polarizing their societies and mobilizing their electoral base.

The PEKOs' political style has been enabled by modern news media, which, scrambling for audience share, simplify and sensationalize issues. Starkly antagonistic statements and positions tend to gain the most exposure. This gives confrontational politicians a powerful advantage, and produces the electoral polarization on which the PEKOs have fed.

This political strategy is undoubtedly effective. In Russia, for example, real wages fell by [more than 9%](#) in 2015, and the share of Russian families that cannot afford adequate food or clothing has increased from 22% to 39%. And yet Putin's approval rating remains at 80%.

Unlike the emergence of the BRICS, which ultimately was a boon to the world economy, the rise of the PEKOs poses a real threat – especially as they begin to apply their confrontational approach to foreign affairs and global economic governance. International firms should be particularly concerned. Having spread their operations across the world during the quarter-century since the fall of Communism, they have become dependent on rules-based stability and economic integration. Their fortunes will increasingly depend on developing strategies to avoid (or at least hedge) the new risks posed by PEKOs.

To make matters worse, the PEKO phenomenon seems to be capable of spreading even to the heart of the West. Examples include Scottish and Catalan nationalists and British politicians campaigning to pull the United Kingdom out of the European Union. Those who champion these causes have been shockingly dismissive of the massive economic damage their proposals would likely cause their own societies.

Similarly, in at least two major Western democracies, serious candidates for the highest office are acting like PEKOs: US Presidential candidate Donald Trump and the French National Front leader Marine Le Pen, who will seek her country's presidency in 2017. If their bids for power succeed, the dangers posed to global stability will rise by an order of magnitude.

139,72

Flüchtlingskrise

Auf Partnersuche

Die Bombenangriffe Russlands auf Syrien zeigen das Dilemma auf: Es ist schwierig, die Flüchtlingskrise als Gemeinschaftsaufgabe wahrzunehmen. Es gibt viele Heuchler – und keiner will der Dumme sein.

08.02.2016, von **KLAUS-DIETER FRANKENBERGER**



© APDie Türkei ist ein wichtiger Partner für Deutschland bei der Bewältigung der Flüchtlingskrise.

Nicht nur erschreckt, „entsetzt“ ist die Bundeskanzlerin über das Leid der syrischen Zivilbevölkerung, das angerichtet wird von Bombenangriffen, „vorrangig von russischer Seite“. Das ist eine etwas verschachtelte Formulierung eines Sachverhalts, der vollkommen klar ist. Aber immerhin hat **Angela Merkel** Ross und Reiter genannt. Die russischen Bombenangriffe gegen Stellungen der Rebellen und gegen zivile Ziele treiben wieder Zehntausende in die Flucht, schaffen „Nachschub“ für den großen Exodus und damit für die Flüchtlingskrise in Europa, deren politische Folgen immer besorgniserregender werden.



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

Merkel hat Russland auf die Verpflichtung zur Einhaltung der entsprechenden UN-Resolution hingewiesen, der Moskau selbst zugestimmt hat. Ansonsten sind die Stimmen, die von **Präsident Putin** die sofortige Einstellung der Angriffe fordern, ziemlich dünn. Man hört sie kaum. Welche Heuchelei ist da am Werk!

Das russische Vorgehen – eiskalt, wie man es von Präsident Putin kennt –, zeigt, wie schwierig es ist, die **Flüchtlingskrise** als internationale Gemeinschaftsaufgabe in den Griff zu bekommen. Viele Akteure, EU-Mitglieder und andere Länder, müssen in der Praxis in dieselbe Richtung ziehen wollen. Bislang haben die Bemühungen, etwa das Schlüssel Land Türkei dazu zu bewegen, den Strom der Flüchtlinge und sonstigen Migranten zu drosseln – von stoppen will man gar nicht mehr reden –, nicht gefruchtet.

Am Montag hat Merkel abermals versucht, auf die türkische Führung einzuwirken. Sie hat EU-Gelder, deutsche Polizisten (zur Grenzsicherung) und das Engagement von Hilfsorganisationen in Aussicht gestellt. Auch den Vorschlag, der Türkei Kontingente syrischer Flüchtlinge abzunehmen, hat die Kanzlerin wiederholt.

Wird Merkel dieses Mal mehr Erfolg haben als zuletzt? In der EU kann sie nur noch mit der Unterstützung weniger rechnen; zu groß sind die Flüchtlingszahlen und die damit einhergehenden Belastungen gewesen. Es hat die Zeit der nationalen Maßnahmen und der Abriegelung begonnen.

Die Hoffnung auf eine große, faire europäische Lösung löst sich in Luft auf. **Man kann es Türken und Griechen nicht verdenken, dass sie die Last der Krise nicht allein tragen wollen.** Wer will schon der Dumme sein? Merkel hat nicht mehr viel Zeit für den Weg aus einer verzweifelten Lage, für die viele ihr eine Mitschuld geben, die aber, in welcher Form auch immer, alle trifft.

Will Germany Give Up on Integration?



Ivan Krastev FEB. 8, 2016

SOFIA, Bulgaria — The millions of people storming the borders of the European Union today are right to believe that migration is the best revolution. It is a revolution of the individual, not the masses. The European Union is more attractive than any 20th-century utopia, for the simple reason that it exists. **But as it looks today, the migrants' revolution could easily inspire a counterrevolution in Europe.**

The myriad acts of solidarity toward refugees fleeing war and persecution that we saw months ago are today **overshadowed by their inverse: a raging anxiety that these same foreigners will compromise Europe's welfare model and historic culture.** Cellphone images of foreign-looking men attacking and abusing German women during New Year's in Cologne crystallized the fear that liberal governments are too weak and confused to defend Europe, and that the situation with migration is spiraling out of control.

Even before Cologne, a majority of Germans had started to doubt that their country could integrate those hundreds of thousands of Syrians, Afghans and others who have arrived in the last year. **Chancellor Angela Merkel, who until recently was the symbol of the European Union's self-confidence and resilience, is now portrayed as a Gorbachev-like figure, noble but naïve, somebody whose "Wir schaffen es" — "We can do it" — policy has put Europe at risk.**

But it is not only the refugees who have arrived, and those on the way, that keep Berlin's government on the edge of a nervous breakdown. **Germany has a second, less discussed but no less disturbing integration problem: European integration itself.**

Berlin finds itself surrounded by anti-austerity governments in the south — Greece, Spain, Portugal, Italy — and anti-refugee governments in the East. While the south challenges Berlin's financial policies and rules, Central Europeans are challenging its model of the open society.

The refugee crisis has fueled mistrust and misunderstanding between Europe's East and West. Germans blamed Central Europeans for lack of solidarity and compassion. Central Europeans blame Germany for "moral imperialism." **For both, the crisis has revealed the hidden tensions of the process of European integration.**

Central Europe's resentment toward Germany in many respects is similar to the resentment of second-generation Turkish immigrants in Germany today.

Unlike the first generation of immigrants, who were eager to prove their utility to the host state, the second generation, while better integrated, expresses humiliation at having to imbibe the norms of others. Many in this

second generation have graduated from German schools and were socialized in Germany, but they are using their education and freedom to grapple with their complex identities, and chafing under parental and social pressure to conform. These children of immigrants don't dream of returning to their familial or national past. But they are eager to make their way, and frustrated by the prospect of being second-class citizens.

This is what's happening in Central Europe. **The first generation of post-Communist governments and leaders were obsessed with being better Europeans than even Westerners — more liberal, more loyal to the European Union, more ready to sacrifice national interests for European values. Only a few years ago, Central Europeans trusted Brussels more than their own governments.**

This is no longer the case. Recent public opinion surveys suggest that even many of the Poles who oppose the new, right-wing government's takeover of the Constitutional Tribunal — a dangerous, anti-democratic move — refuse to endorse possible sanctions by the European Union against Poland.

And herein lies the unnoticed danger that Central Europe's illiberalism poses to the European Union. It is not simply that Berlin is unhappy with the rise of illiberal governments in the region. It is being forced to question some of its fundamental assumptions about the future of the union. **“I can comprehend only with difficulty,” Germany's president, Joachim Gauck, confessed, “when precisely those nations whose citizens, once themselves politically oppressed and who experienced solidarity, in turn withdraw their solidarity for the oppressed.”** Germany and Central Europe are torn apart not simply by policy differences; they are profoundly disappointed with each other.

Over the past 25 years Germany has been the strongest proponent of the union's enlargement toward the East. Berlin had clear economic and geopolitical interests driving its policy, as it is the largest investor and trading partner of the region. Germany's trade with Poland alone outstrips its trade with Russia.

But that bundle of common interests might not be enough to sustain German enthusiasm about the union in its present form. Faced with the twin challenges of integrating the refugees and reintegrating the East, **Berlin might well decide to back a two-tiered union — a move that would effectively end the postwar unification project.** One already hears rumblings about such a step in many West European capitals; the next year will show if they amount to anything.

If Central Europeans have learned anything from the implosion of the Soviet Union and Tito's Yugoslavia, it's that in the absence of war, the collapse of empire begins on the periphery, but ends only when the center revolts. It was Russia's decision to exit from the Soviet Union (not the Baltic republics' aspiration to become independent) that buried the Soviet Union. **So, too, Germany's change of heart about Central Europe may represent the final straw of the European Union as we know it. To borrow the classic joke about the Jewish telegram: “Start to worry. Details to follow.”**

Ivan Krastev is the chairman of the Center for Liberal Strategies in Sofia, Bulgaria, and a permanent fellow at the Institute for Human Sciences in Vienna.

Die Flüchtlingskrise kann rechtsstaatlich bewältigt werden

Solange die Bundesregierung Flüchtlinge an der Grenze nicht zurückweist, setzt sie deutsche Gesetze aus. Denn auch mit Blick auf europäische Normen ist die Grenzsicherung legitimiert. Eine Rückkehr zum Recht ist geboten. Ein Gastbeitrag.

09.02.2016, von ALEXANDER PEUKERT, CHRISTIAN HILLGRUBER, ULRICH FOERSTE, HOLM PUTZKE



© AFP/Flüchtlinge an der bayerischen Grenze bei Wegscheid.

Die Bindung der Exekutive an Gesetz und Recht zählt zu den Errungenschaften der Moderne und zur Verfassungsidentität der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Auf ihre Einhaltung kommt es gerade in historischen Ausnahmesituationen wie der gegenwärtigen Flüchtlingskrise an. Die von einigen vertretene Lesart des europäischen und deutschen Rechts, nach der eine Politik offener Grenzen rechtskonform sein soll, teilen wir nicht. Vielmehr ist, wie im Folgenden dargelegt wird, eine Zurückweisung von Drittstaatsangehörigen an der deutsch-österreichischen Grenze innerhalb des vom Europarecht gesetzten Rechtsrahmens zulässig – auf diesem Standpunkt steht mittlerweile offenbar auch die **Bundesregierung (BT-Drucks. 18/7311, S. 3, 5)** – und zudem jedenfalls nach deutschem Recht grundsätzlich geboten.

Wie der Bundesminister des Inneren bereits bei der Einführung von Grenzkontrollen am 13. September 2015 (**BT-Drucks. 18/7311, S. 2 f.**) zutreffend festgestellt hat, ist Deutschland nach EU-Asylrecht „für den **allergrößten Teil der Schutzsuchenden nicht zuständig**“. Zuständig sind nach der **Dublin III-Verordnung** vielmehr in der Regel die Ersteinreisestaaten. Der Umstand, dass Aufnahme- und Asylverfahren in Griechenland und gegebenenfalls weiteren Ländern entlang der Balkanroute systemische Mängel aufweisen, führt nicht automatisch dazu, dass die verbliebenen Mitgliedstaaten einspringen müssen. Eine derartige Pflicht zum Selbsteintritt hat der Gerichtshof der **Europäischen Union** wiederholt **ausdrücklich abgelehnt**.

Einige Fachleute vertreten die Auffassung, die Zuständigkeit Deutschlands ergebe sich daraus, dass die Schutzanträge erstmals in Deutschland gestellt werden (**Art. 3 Abs. 2 Unterabs. 1 und Abs. 1 Dublin III**). Denn dieser Auffangtatbestand der Dublin III-Verordnung greife bereits dann, wenn ein Antrag „an der Grenze“ gestellt wird. In dieser Situation sei zur Prüfung des Antrags die Einreise zu gestatten. Spätere Überstellungen in die eigentlich zuständigen Ersteinreisestaaten seien dann aber teils wegen systemischer Mängel der dortigen Asylsysteme unzulässig, teils aufgrund der hohen Antragszahlen praktisch nicht realisierbar.

Diese Auffassung widerspricht den Grundgedanken des Gemeinsamen Europäischen Asylsystems in seinem Zusammenspiel mit dem **Schengener Grenzkodex**. Sie läuft darauf hinaus, dass sich die Drittstaatsangehörigen für sie zuständigen Staat aussuchen können. Diese Lösung war im Zuge der Vorarbeiten zur Dublin III-Verordnung zwar insbesondere von zivilgesellschaftlichen Organisationen gefordert worden. Unter den Mitgliedstaaten fehlte aber der politische Wille, die Prüfungszuständigkeit an den Ort der Antragstellung zu knüpfen (**KOM/2008/820, S. 5**). Deshalb hielt der europäische Gesetzgeber am Grundprinzip der Dublin II-Verordnung fest, „wonach für die Prüfung eines Asylantrags in erster Linie der Mitgliedstaat zuständig sein sollte, der bei der Einreise des Asylbewerbers und dessen Aufenthalt in den Hoheitsgebieten der Mitgliedstaaten maßgeblich beteiligt war“ (**KOM/2008/820, S. 3**; Standpunkt des Rates v. 6.6.2013: **Abl. C 177/E30**). Das ist nicht nur der Ersteinreisestaat. Am Aufenthalt in den Hoheitsgebieten der Mitgliedstaaten ist vielmehr auch derjenige Mitgliedstaat maßgeblich beteiligt, der Drittstaatsangehörige oder Staatenlose ohne

Rücksicht auf Aufenthaltstitel und Schutzbegehren in sein Hoheitsgebiet einreisen lässt und diese sogar bis an die nächste Staatsgrenze weiterleitet.

Eine Einreiseverweigerung ist zulässig

Solange an einer solchen Binnengrenze keine systematischen Grenzkontrollen erfolgen, lässt sich diese Verantwortung von Transitstaaten allerdings nicht wirksam aktivieren. Der Zielstaat muss es dann faktisch hinnehmen, dass nach einer unerlaubten Einreise in seinem Hoheitsgebiet erstmals Schutzanträge gestellt werden, die dann im Inland zu prüfen sind. Nun führt Deutschland aber im Einklang mit dem Schengener Grenzkodex bereits seit dem 13. September 2015 an der Binnengrenze zu Österreich wieder Grenzkontrollen durch, da die öffentliche Ordnung und innere Sicherheit durch einen unkontrollierten Zustrom schwerwiegend bedroht ist (**Art. 72 EUV; Art. 23 Grenzkodex**). Für diese Grenzkontrollen gelten die an den Außengrenzen der Union maßgeblichen Vorschriften des Schengener Grenzkodex entsprechend (**Art. 28 Grenzkodex**). Demnach ist Drittstaatsangehörigen, die nicht alle formellen Einreisevoraussetzungen erfüllen, die Einreise zu verweigern (**Art. 13 Abs. 1 S. 1 Grenzkodex**). Davon ausgenommen sind diejenigen Drittstaatsangehörigen, denen ein Mitgliedstaat aus humanitären Gründen oder aus Gründen des nationalen Interesses oder aufgrund völkerrechtlicher Verpflichtungen die Einreise in sein Hoheitsgebiet gestattet, wozu **Art. 5 Abs. 4 lit. c Grenzkodex** ermächtigt.

Der entscheidende Punkt ist nun, dass eine solche Einreiseverweigerung auch unter asylrechtlichen Gesichtspunkten europarechtlich zulässig – und, wie zu zeigen sein wird, jedenfalls national sogar geboten – ist, wenn bei den zuständigen deutschen Grenzbehörden (§§ **13 Abs. 3, 18 Abs. 1 AsylG**) ein internationaler Schutzantrag gestellt wird. Dies ergibt sich in erster Linie aus **Art. 20 Abs. 4 der Dublin III-Verordnung**. Diese Vorschrift wurde in der bisherigen Diskussion um die Legalität der Grenzöffnung nicht hinreichend berücksichtigt. Sie besagt, dass ein solcher Schutzantrag die deutschen Behörden nicht einmal dazu verpflichtet, das dem eigentlichen Asylverfahren noch vorgelagerte „Verfahren zur Bestimmung des zuständigen Mitgliedstaats einzuleiten“ (**Art. 20 Abs. 1 Dublin III**).

Die Durchführung dieses Zuständigkeitsprüfungsverfahrens und eines sich hieran gegebenenfalls anschließenden materiellen Asylverfahrens obliegt nach **Art. 20 Abs. 4 Unterabs. 1 S. 1 Dublin III** vielmehr Österreich. Das gilt unabhängig davon, ob Grenzüberschrittskontrolle und Antragstellung auf deutschem Territorium oder unmittelbar auf der Grenzlinie erfolgen. Denn nach dem Schengener Grenzkodex hat ein Drittstaatsangehöriger das Hoheitsgebiet eines Mitgliedstaates de iure noch nicht betreten, wenn ihm bei Grenzüberschrittskontrollen „an einer Grenzübergangsstelle“ die Einreise verweigert wurde (**Art. 13 Abs. 4 in Verbindung mit Art. 2 Nr. 8-10 und 13 Grenzkodex**, entsprechend **§ 13 Abs. 2 S. 1 AufenthG**). Folglich hält sich ein Antragsteller gemäß **Art. 20 Abs. 4 Unterabs. 1 S. 1 Dublin III** noch „im Hoheitsgebiet“ Österreichs auf, „während“ er bei den deutschen Grenzbehörden einen Schutzantrag stellt, ohne jedoch die deutsche Grenzübergangsstelle bereits passiert zu haben.

Keine menschenunwürdige Härte

Rechtsfolge der Stellung eines internationalen Schutzantrags an der deutsch-österreichischen Grenze ist also nicht etwa eine Pflicht zur Einreiseerlaubnis. Vielmehr „wird“ der Aufenthaltsstaat „unverzüglich von dem mit dem Antrag befassten Mitgliedstaat unterrichtet und gilt dann für die Zwecke dieser Verordnung als der Mitgliedstaat, bei dem der Antrag auf internationalen Schutz gestellt wurde“ (**Art. 20 Abs. 4 Unterabs. 1 S. 2 Dublin III**). Diese Rechtsfolge steht also nicht im Ermessen deutscher Grenzbehörden. Aufgrund dieser, für Anträge an Binnengrenzen vorrangigen Zuständigkeitsregel gibt es keine Grundlage für eine deutsche Auffangzuständigkeit nach **Art. 3 Dublin III**. Diese Zuständigkeit trifft vielmehr den Aufenthaltsstaat, also vorliegend Österreich.

Dieses Ergebnis entspricht der historischen Regelungsabsicht des europäischen Gesetzgebers. In der Begründung des Kommissionsvorschlags zu **Art. 4 Abs. 4 Dublin II** – der in der Sache unverändert gebliebenen

Vorgängernorm des **Art. 20 Abs. 4 Dublin III** – heißt es: „Der Mitgliedstaat, in dessen Hoheitsgebiet sich der Asylsuchende befindet, ist verpflichtet, das Verfahren zur Bestimmung des zuständigen Mitgliedstaats durchzuführen, auch wenn der Asylbewerber seinen Antrag bei einer Behörde eines anderen Mitgliedstaats, beispielsweise einer diplomatischen oder konsularischen Vertretung *oder an der Grenze* stellt. Nach diesem Absatz kann der Mitgliedstaat, der infolge der Anwesenheit des Asylbewerbers in seinem Hoheitsgebiet zuständig ist, mit dem Asylantrag befasst werden.“ (**KOM(2001) 447**, Hervorhebung der Verfasser). Das ist auch sinnvoll, denn es wird Transitländern ein Anreiz genommen, Sekundärmigration in andere Mitgliedstaaten zu dulden oder gar zu fördern.

Für die Antragsteller bedeutet ein solches Vorgehen keine unzumutbare, gar menschenunwürdige Härte. Sie werden gemäß **Art. 20 Abs. 4 Unterabs. 2 Dublin III** „schriftlich von dieser Änderung der Zuständigkeit prüfenden Mitgliedstaats und dem Zeitpunkt, zu dem sie erfolgt ist, unterrichtet.“ Diese Informationspflicht ließe sich selbst bei einer hohen Zahl von Anträgen praktisch umsetzen. Sie versetzt die Antragsteller in die Lage, ihre unionsrechtlich verbürgten Rechte bei einem eindeutig identifizierten Mitgliedstaat geltend zu machen. Es droht also weder ein „refugee in orbit“ noch ein Verstoß gegen das Refoulement-Verbot der **Genfer Flüchtlingskonvention**. Es wird lediglich die Verantwortung desjenigen Mitgliedstaates aktiviert, der die Anwesenheit des Drittstaatsangehörigen an der deutschen Grenze ermöglicht hat. Sollte sich im Rahmen der Zuständigkeitsprüfung herausstellen, dass Deutschland für bestimmte Antragsteller zuständig ist, weil sich deren Familienangehörige bereits hier befinden (**Art. 8-11, 16 Dublin III**), hat Österreich ein Aufnahmeverfahren nach **Art. 21 Dublin III** durchzuführen.

Deutsches Recht kommt zur Anwendung

Als Zwischenergebnis ist festzuhalten, dass internationale Schutzanträge, die „an der Grenze“ gestellt werden, nach der im Verhältnis zu **Art. 3 Dublin III** spezielleren Regelung des **Art. 20 Abs. 4 Dublin III** nicht zu einer Auffangzuständigkeit Deutschlands führen. Damit bleibt als Grundlage einer Einreiseerlaubnis wegen Zuständigkeit nach EU-Recht nur noch die Ermessensklausel des **Art. 17 Abs. 1 Dublin III**. Es ist aber **unstreitig**, dass es sich hierbei um eine Ausnahmeregelung handelt, die aus Sicht des Unionsrechts jedenfalls keine zeitlich und zahlenmäßig unbegrenzte Einreiseerlaubnis rechtfertigt. Denn eine solch pauschale Aussetzung des Dublin-Systems im Namen der Grundrechte setzte nach zutreffender Auffassung des Gerichtshofs der Europäischen Union den „Daseinsgrund der Union und die Verwirklichung des Raums der Freiheit, der Sicherheit und des Rechts, konkret des Gemeinsamen Europäischen Asylsystems, das auf gegenseitigem Vertrauen und einer Vermutung der Beachtung des Unionsrechts, genauer der Grundrechte, durch die anderen Mitgliedstaaten gründet“, aufs Spiel (**verbundene Rechtssachen C-411/10 und C-493/10**, Rn. 83). In der Tat beruft sich die Bundesregierung laut **Bundesjustizminister Maas** bereits seit November 2015 auch gar nicht mehr auf das Selbsteintrittsrecht.

Wenn die deutschen Grenzbehörden aber unter keinem unionsrechtlichen Gesichtspunkt verpflichtet sind, Drittstaatsangehörigen ohne gültigen Aufenthaltstitel die Einreise zu erlauben, so kommt wieder das – insoweit nicht durch in der Anwendung vorrangiges Europarecht überlagerte – deutsche Recht und in asylrechtlicher Hinsicht die Drittstaatenregelung zur Geltung. Demnach kann sich von vornherein nicht auf das Asylgrundrecht berufen, wer aus einem Mitgliedstaat der **EU** wie z.B. Österreich einreist (**Art. 16a Abs. 2 S. 1 GG** in Verbindung mit **§ 26a Abs. 1 S. 1 AsylG**). In dieser Situation ist „dem Ausländer ... die Einreise zu verweigern“ (**§ 18 Abs. 2 Nr. 1 AsylG**). Ausnahmen bestehen nur insoweit, als gemäß **§ 18 Abs. 4 AsylG** von der Einreiseverweigerung abzusehen ist, soweit entweder die Bundesrepublik Deutschland auf Grund von Rechtsvorschriften der Europäischen Union für die Durchführung eines Asylverfahrens zuständig ist (Nr. 1), was vorliegend gerade nicht der Fall ist, oder das Bundesministerium des Innern es aus völkerrechtlichen oder humanitären Gründen oder zur Wahrung politischer Interessen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland angeordnet hat (Nr. 2). Mit der zweiten Ausnahme greift der nationale Gesetzgeber die Ermessensregelung des **Art. 5 Abs. 4 lit. c Grenzkodex** auf.

Es gibt keine Rechtfertigung

Für die Ausnahmeregelung des § 18 Abs. 4 Nr. 2 AsylG (und ihre europarechtliche Grundlage: Art. 5 Abs. 4 lit. c Grenzkodex) gilt freilich dasselbe wie für das Selbsteintrittsrecht nach Art. 17 Abs. 1 Dublin III: Sie ist auf Einzelfälle zugeschnitten und deckt daher nicht Einreiseerlaubnisse für eine unbestimmte Vielzahl von Drittstaatsangehörigen über einen längeren, nicht definierten Zeitraum; denn andernfalls würde praktisch der Gesetzesbefehl des § 18 Abs. 2 Asylgesetz suspendiert, was nur der Gesetzgeber selbst tun kann. Nichts anderes als Gesetzessuspension aber ist es, wenn generell „Maßnahmen der Zurückweisung an der Grenze mit Bezug auf um Schutz nachsuchende Drittstaatsangehörige [...] derzeit nicht zur Anwendung [kommen]“ (Antwort der Bundesregierung auf eine Kleine Anfrage, BT-Drucks. 18/7311, S. 2). Auch sonst sind alle Ausländer, die ohne gültigen Aufenthaltstitel unerlaubt einreisen wollen, „an der Grenze“ zurückzuweisen (§ 15 Abs. 1 AufenthG). Sollten grenzpolizeiliche Maßnahmen zur Verhinderung unbefugter Grenzübertritte erforderlich werden, müssen diese – gemessen an den damit verfolgten Zielen – selbstverständlich verhältnismäßig sein (Art. 6 Abs. 1 Unterabs. 2 Grenzkodex).

Eine übergesetzliche Rechtfertigung, sich angesichts der aktuellen Situation dieser demokratisch legitimierten Rechtslage zu entziehen, gibt es nicht. Die Menschenwürdegarantie des Art. 1 Abs. 1 GG gebietet ebenso wenig wie die Genfer Flüchtlingskonvention, allen Einreisewilligen Aufenthalt zu gewähren.

Die **Flüchtlingskrise** lässt sich im Rahmen des Rechts und nur im Rahmen des Rechts, nicht unter Außerachtlassung desselben lösen. Zum Recht zurückzukehren ist weder inhuman noch politische Schwäche; ganz im Gegenteil. Die Stärke einer Demokratie zeigt sich nicht zuletzt in ihrer Fähigkeit zur Selbstkorrektur.

Die Verfasser sind Professoren an den juristischen Fakultäten der Universitäten Frankfurt am Main, Bonn, Osnabrück und Passau.

139,79

Greece's Prime Minister on the Ropes

By Yannis Palaiologos

9 février 2016

[The Wall Street Journal \(Europe Edition\)](#)

January was a bad month for Greece's Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras. The election of Kyriakos Mitsotakis on Jan. 10 to the leadership of the official opposition and the rise of mass protests against the government's plans for pension reform have decisively altered Greek politics in ways that undermine Mr. Tsipras's plans for a more stable second term.

To start, Greece's economic pain is back in the news. Technocrats representing the country's creditors arrived in Athens last week for the first review of Greece's progress in fulfilling the terms of its August bailout. There's already been an uproar, especially among farmers and the self-employed, in reaction to Mr. Tsipras's proposal to increase contributions, limit early retirement and cut pay-outs on pensions. **But creditors, especially the International Monetary Fund, are likely to continue insisting that current retirees swallow further cuts in order to achieve a reduction in pension spending equal to 1% of gross domestic product this year.**

Athens and its creditors also will have to agree on the fiscal measures for the entire 2016-18 period, by the end of which Greece is required to have achieved a primary surplus of 3.5% of GDP. With this government, that's likely to mean more tax hikes. The finance ministry has already proposed an increase of the top tax rate to 50% for individuals making more than 60,000 euros, or about \$67,000

Mr. Tsipras needs a successful review from the creditors if there are to be any talks about debt relief. Its completion will also determine whether the European Central Bank will accept Greek sovereign bonds as collateral again, and whether Greek debt might be included in the ECB's asset-purchase program, or quantitative easing.

As if all this wasn't enough, the refugee crisis shows no sign of abating. The Greek islands received more than 60,000 people in January, despite inclement weather, compared with 1,694 people a year earlier. And that's still less than the numbers expected this spring.

The pressure now is for Athens to regain control of its sea borders. If this isn't done by late April, the European Commission has threatened to suspend Greece from the Schengen area for up to two years. A de facto eviction may happen even sooner if Macedonia decides to seal off its border with Greece.

Nor are domestic politics offering Mr. Tsipras much relief. The prime minister had hoped that Vagelis Meimarakis, the opposition New Democracy party's interim leader whom he soundly beat in the September elections, would be elected as the party's new president. Mr. Meimarakis probably would have been open to offering at least tacit support to Mr. Tsipras's government in its negotiations with creditors. Smaller centrist parties would then have fallen into line.

Instead, the victory of Mr. Mitsotakis, a liberal reformist who has staked his credibility on his vow not to help prop up Mr. Tsipras, has had a dramatic effect. New Democracy is now polling ahead of Mr. Tsipras's far-left Syriza party. With Mr. Mitsotakis threatening to make significant inroads into the support base of the centrist parties, the desire of these parties to ally themselves with Syriza has been dampened.

All this could have been to Greece's benefit. Mr. Tsipras could have been motivated to focus on reaching a deal with creditors and selling it to the people. The opposing philosophies of Messrs. Tsipras and Mitsotakis might have led to some instructive political clashes on the best ways to implement the bailout.

Instead, Greece is dreading the prospect of yet another early election. Mr. Tsipras's political talents seem to be deserting him. The rage of Greece's farmers in particular, on whose tractors he climbed as opposition leader to promise that all their demands would be met under his government, has unnerved him.

With a credible alternative in Mr. Mitsotakis, creditors are now even less likely to be flexible with Mr. Tsipras. Unless something gives -- the protesters, the creditors or the opposition in Parliament -- the prime minister may decide that the best way out for him is to go the polls once again in resistance mode, and leave the hard work of completing the first review to Mr. Mitsotakis.

This remains an unlikely scenario. Mr. Tsipras knows that **another early election would be the perfect excuse for those who have been agitating for Greece's removal, first from Schengen area and then from the euro.** At a minimum, the implementation of the bailout program would be delayed. There would be fiscal slippage. Investments would decline. The prime minister is also aware that he may never recover politically if he calls another election and loses.

And yet, after the events of these past few weeks, it's hard to see how he will manage to complete the review and keep the bailout program on track. The turbulence is set to continue, and his destination remains unclear.

Mr. Palaiologos, a journalist at Kathimerini newspaper in Athens, is the author of "The Thirteenth Labour of Hercules" (Portobello Books, 2014).

139,81

What can Merkel's visit to Ankara achieve?

While thousands of Syrians are still stranded on the Border with Turkey German Chancellor Angela Merkel has met with the Turkish leadership to discuss the refugee crisis. But Turkey can't solve the problem for Europe, commentators stress, lamenting that the EU is no longer in a position to stand up to Ankara.

February 9



DIE PRESSE (AT) / 09 February 2016

Europe must act on its own

Rather than relying on Ankara Europe must determine its own course of action in the refugee crisis, the centre-right daily Die Presse believes:

“Indispensable in this regard is efficient monitoring of the external border. In view of the open internal borders it would only be consistent for the EU to carry out this task jointly, rather than leaving it to Greece alone. Secondly, Europe must be more generous to Syria's neighbours, who are sheltering millions of refugees. ... Thirdly, if the EU wants to respect its ideals and international law it must continue to take in refugees, but in a controlled and measured way so as not to put excessive demands on its own societies. And fourthly the EU must learn to adopt an adequate security policy in the buffer zones to the Middle East. However that will take the longest. Merkel will have far less time to get a grip on the problem. With or without Turkey.”

Share on

RADIKAL (TR) / 09 February 2016

EU has no strategy whatsoever

Angela Merkel's third visit to Turkey in four months shows just how planless the EU is in the refugee crisis, **the liberal Internet paper Radikal** contends:

“The EU has neither a strategy nor a policy for dealing with the refugees. **All it wants is for the refugees to be kept in Turkey and prevented from reaching the EU.** And it wants to achieve that goal with the promise of three billion euros in aid - which for now remains nothing more than a promise. ... The refugee crisis is of such significance for the EU and Germany that the EU leaders - and of course Merkel as well - have stopped even mentioning topics they formerly held so dear such as press freedom and the independence of the judiciary. All for fear of angering Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu and President Tayyip Erdoğan.”

- Murat Yetkin
- Original article

Moral authority gambled away

Europe will all but stop criticising human rights abuses in Turkey, the public broadcaster Deutschlandfunk believes:

“Merkel's latest visit to Ankara was the best example of this. Clear words on human rights abuses were absent. **The EU got itself into this situation.** A continent that is unable to agree on the fair distribution of people fleeing bombs can hardly lecture a country that is sheltering three million refugees on human rights. And nor is the EU in a position to dictate rules to Ankara regarding the Aleppo refugees. It would be extremely hypocritical of Europe to recommend that Turkey open its borders while at the same time sealing its own. The example of Turkey illustrates how the Nobel Peace Prize winner is in the process of losing its moral clout.”

- Kai Küstner
- Original article

Athens clearly has nothing more to say

Athens is being completely ignored, complains the liberal online paper To Vima after Merkel's visit to Turkey:

“Now Greece is losing out also as regards sovereignty over its external borders. ... Our 'friend and ally' Germany and our other, even better 'friend' and even closer 'ally' Turkey are sidestepping Athens and making bilateral decisions for resolving the refugee problem. ... There can be no doubt that after the refugees the next victim will be Greece. Our country will 'drown' somewhere in the Aegean, which will end up under a form of multinational rule with the Germans and the Turks in the leading role, and on the borders of the Republic of Macedonia where the leading European countries will seal themselves off from Greece. Does Greece actually exist anymore?”

„Ich sehe den inneren Frieden in unserem Land in Gefahr“

Der saarländische Innenminister und Vorsitzende der Innenministerkonferenz, Klaus Bouillon, spricht im Interview über Massenmigration – und zeigt Verständnis für griechische Grenzschützer, die Flüchtlinge durchwinken.

10.02.2016, von JUSTUS BENDER UND TIMO FRASCH



© CORNELIA SICK, „Wir haben am Anfang alle Fehler gemacht“: Klaus Bouillon (CDU)

Herr Minister, erst redeten viele Politiker von Willkommenskultur, dann von Abschiebung und Rückführung. Verstehen Sie das?



Autor: Justus Bender, Redakteur in der Politik.Folgen:



Autor: Timo Fresch, Politischer Korrespondent für Hessen, Rheinland-Pfalz und das Saarland mit Sitz in Wiesbaden.Folgen:

Bei den Politikern in Berlin herrschte am Anfang, als die Flüchtlinge kamen, eine gewisse Euphorie. Dann haben sie gemerkt, dass nicht alles Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen ist, und machen jetzt eine Kehrtwende. In Berlin sitzen viele Astronauten. Die fliegen im Weltall zehn Sekunden über Deutschland und sagen dann: Alles in Ordnung in unserem Land. Andere stehen unten in den Straßen und arbeiten 365 Tage im Jahr an der Lösung der Probleme.

Ist die Kanzlerin so eine Astronautin?

Nein. Ich muss sagen, ich bin begeistert von den Gesprächen mit ihr. Ich hätte mir nie vorgestellt, dass sie so im Detail drin ist. Sie weiß genau, wie die Lage vor Ort ist.

Sind dann die Anwürfe aus der CSU falsch, wonach Merkel die hohen Asylbewerberzahlen mitverursacht hat und die Probleme an Ort und Stelle nicht kennt?

Sie kennt die Probleme genau. Und auch ohne sie hätten wir sehr viele Flüchtlinge in Deutschland. Schon bevor die Kanzlerin im September aus humanitären Gründen die Grenze für die Budapester Flüchtlinge öffnete, rechnete die Bundesregierung mit 800.000 Flüchtlingen. Aber von diesem Pferd kommt sie nicht mehr herunter. Es ist mittlerweile die breite Meinung, dass sie die Flüchtlingskrise mitverursacht hat. Mir ist wichtiger als Schuldzuweisung und ‚Hätte, Wenn und Aber-Diskussionen‘, dass Deutschland endlich weltweit das klare Signal setzt, dass bei uns eine faktische Grenze der Integration in Sicht ist.

Bis vor ein paar Jahren waren Sie noch Bürgermeister einer Kleinstadt. Prägt das Ihre jetzige Arbeit?

Absolut. Sie kennen das Drei-Säle-Modell? Kreißsaal, Hörsaal, Plenarsaal. Es gibt in der Politik zu viele, die zu wenig Erfahrung außerhalb von Parlamenten gesammelt haben. Und die sollen auf einmal Verantwortung übernehmen? Das ist manchmal schwierig.

Mittlerweile sind Sie Vorsitzender der Innenministerkonferenz. Wie unterscheidet sich die große Politik von der kleinen?

Wieso ist die kommunale Politik eine kleine und die nationale Politik eine große? Die kommunale Politik ist manchmal schwieriger, da sind Sie viel näher dran an den Leuten. Und müssen permanent dafür gradestehen, wie es vor Ort läuft, ob die Versprechen gehalten werden. Da machen Sie einen Neujahrsempfang und müssen den Leuten erklären, warum Sie die Versprechen des Vorjahres nicht eingehalten haben. Die große Politik ist hingegen oft die Kunst des Ungefähren.

Können Sie als Mann der Praxis schon ein Ende der Flüchtlingskrise absehen?

Das wird noch lange so weitergehen. Die eigentliche Problematik kommt erst noch: Wir haben viel zu wenige Wohnungen für diejenigen, die das Recht haben, dauerhaft bei uns zu bleiben. Wo sollen die Leute denn leben? Ich rede mir bei dem Thema den Mund fuselig.

Mit wem reden Sie?

Zum Beispiel mit den Bürgermeistern. Die hatten anfangs Probleme, Wohnungen für Flüchtlinge anzumieten. Da habe ich die Kollegen überzeugt, Zehnjahresverträge abzuschließen. Als die Russlanddeutschen in den achtziger Jahren kamen, habe ich als Bürgermeister sogar Verträge über fünfzehn Jahre abgeschlossen. Hier hat der Vermieter einen sicheren Zahlungspartner. Das war ein harter Ritt, die Kommunen davon zu überzeugen. Aber es hat dazu geführt, dass wir viele, viele Mietverträge abschließen konnten.

Tritt der Staat damit nicht in Konkurrenz zu privaten Mietern?

Nein. Die Bedingung ist, dass kein Vermieter sagt: Ich werfe einheimische Mieter raus und vermiete an Flüchtlinge.

Das Saarland ist ein kleines Bundesland. Wie viele Flüchtlinge wohnen dort?

Wir haben 13.600 Flüchtlinge dezentral untergebracht. Aber es kommen immer mehr, und zwar nicht solche, die uns zugeteilt werden, sondern Illegale, also unregistrierte Migranten. Allein im Januar waren das 1560. Rechnen Sie das mal zwölf. Ich will mir das gar nicht vorstellen.

Warum wollen viele Flüchtlinge ausgerechnet ins Saarland?

Wir haben vor allem Syrer. Die sehen auf ihren Smartphones, dass die gute Betreuung in unserer Erstaufnahmeeinrichtung in Lebach gelobt wird. Wir haben hier eine gute medizinische Betreuung, zwei Praxen, 24-Stunden-Dienste. Die Bearbeitungszeit ist sehr kurz, es gibt eine Veranstaltungshalle mit Programm. Wir

erklären auch die Kultur und die Regeln unseres Landes. An Weihnachten haben wir Geschenke an die Kinder verteilt, das treibt Ihnen die Tränen in die Augen. Diese Kinder sind unsere Chance.

Werden Sie Opfer Ihres eigenen Erfolgs?

Das kriege ich schon manchmal vorgeworfen.

Würden Sie die Betreuung bewusst schlechter machen, kämen wahrscheinlich weniger Flüchtlinge ins Saarland.

Dann hätten wir aber andere Probleme. Es gibt bisher so gut wie keine Störfälle, so gut wie keine Aggression. Ein, zwei Idioten gibt es natürlich immer, die Alkohol getrunken haben und das nicht vertragen.

Welche Probleme bleiben dennoch?

Mit den Syrern klappt alles gut. Sie kommen gerne in die Sprachkurse und entschuldigen sich, wenn sie nicht können. Viele aus den anderen Ländern haben gar keine Lust. Natürlich gibt es aber je nach Nationalität auch Probleme mit Kriminalität. Es ist doch ein offenes Geheimnis, dass wir mit Kosovaren, Marokkanern und Tunesiern – die zudem oft keine Bleibeperspektive haben – in vielen Fällen richtig Probleme haben.

Woran liegt das?

Es liegt daran, dass sich viele nicht in die Gesellschaft integrieren wollen und in Parallelgesellschaften abtauchen.

Wenn Flüchtlinge kriminell sind, ist das für einen Innenminister ein Zwiespalt. Einerseits will man die Bevölkerung nicht aufwiegeln, andererseits auch nichts vertuschen. Wie lösen Sie das?

Ganz unkompliziert. Nach den Vorfällen in Köln haben alle gefragt: Warum haben die Polizisten nicht aufgeschrieben, dass die Täter zum Teil Flüchtlinge waren? Das hatte einen Grund. 2007 hat die Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Kriminalbeamten eine Empfehlung herausgegeben, darin hieß es, Herkunft und Nationalität sollen Polizisten nur dann erwähnen, wenn es besondere sachliche Gründe gibt. Jetzt versetzen Sie sich in die Lage eines Polizisten. Zehn Ausländer haben geklaut – ist das jetzt ein besonderer Grund? Dann sagt der Polizist: O je, wenn ich jetzt schreibe, das waren Ausländer, krieg' ich Ärger. Dadurch sind Vorkommnisse und Missverständnisse nicht mehr beim Namen genannt worden. Ich habe diesen Maulkorberlass sofort gestrichen. Jetzt steht nur noch drin: Die polizeiliche Tätigkeit darf nicht diskriminierend und nicht ehrverletzend sein.

Muss die Politik schon reagieren, wenn Menschen Angst haben, oder erst, wenn ihre Ängste auch begründet sind?

Schon die Angst ist ein Problem. Das Sicherheitsgefühl unserer Bevölkerung ist eine tragende Säule für jede Demokratie. Die Frauen sind verängstigt. Es gab ja mehrfach Übergriffe in den Schwimmbädern. Das darf man doch nicht verniedlichen. Wir müssen alles tun, um die Sicherheit der Bevölkerung zu garantieren, auch das Sicherheitsgefühl wieder zu stärken. Wenn die Menschen meinen, der Staat kann uns nicht schützen, dann haben wir doch verloren.

Sie beschreiben die Flüchtlingskrise vor allem als bürokratisches Problem. Ist sie auch mehr als das?

Am Anfang war die Bürokratie das Haupthindernis. Mittlerweile nicht mehr, wir kriegen das im Laufe des Jahres in den Griff. Unsere Schwachstelle war: Es ging uns zu gut in Deutschland. Wir mussten erst wach werden.

Dann hat die Krise ihr Gutes?

Meine These ist folgende: Durch die Krise sind Schwachstellen aufgedeckt worden. Nach dieser Krise wird Deutschland stärker sein als je zuvor und sicherer auch. Wir werden Ende des Jahres alle Landesaufnahmestellen miteinander vernetzt haben. Wenn dann einer kommt, nehmen wir Fingerabdrücke, beugen somit Missbrauch vor. Wir gehen gestärkt aus dieser Situation heraus. Wir werden das schaffen.

Und wie?

Die Krise muss international gelöst werden. Wenn ich diesen lahmen Apparat in Brüssel sehe, denke ich, der ist völlig gescheitert. Wenn andere EU-Länder keine Flüchtlinge aufnehmen wollen, gibt es nur ein Mittel: Man muss denen Gelder streichen. Wie lange will man noch diskutieren? Die EU gibt es offenbar leider nur noch auf dem Papier. Meines Erachtens sind wir auf dem Weg zu einer Gemeinschaft von lauter Egoisten. Diese Länder müssen das finanziell spüren.

© REUTERS, REUTERS/Griechische Küstenwache rettet Flüchtlinge

Geht das denn so einfach?

Für mich ist das eine Art Notwehr. Entweder alle halten sich an die Regeln oder die Regeln sind außer Kraft gesetzt.

Dann wäre Europa wohl völlig am Ende.

Ja, aber wenn es keine internationale Lösung gibt, dann sind die Staaten, die hunderttausend Flüchtlinge aufnehmen und auch noch viele Millionen an die Länder zahlen, die sich nicht beteiligen, irgendwann am Ende.

Können Sie verstehen, dass Grenzschützer in Griechenland zu den Flüchtlingen sagen: Hier ist die Straße nach Deutschland?

Das muss man verstehen. Wir haben jahrelang zugeschaut, wie die Italiener und Griechen die Gelackmeierten waren. Deswegen geht es nur mit einer gleichmäßigen Verteilung auf alle. Bei 500 Millionen ist eine Million Flüchtlinge eigentlich kein Thema. Aber wenn die Million sich inzwischen eigentlich nur noch auf Deutschland verteilt, ist es ein Problem. In den vergangenen Monaten ging doch gar nichts voran. Wenn jetzt unkontrolliert noch mehr kommen, dann sehe ich den inneren Frieden in unserem Land wirklich in Gefahr. Das wollen wir doch nicht.

Würden Sie sagen, das Dublin-Abkommen über die Zuständigkeit der EU-Länder für Asylverfahren ist tot?

Völlig tot. Es war, um der Ehrlichkeit willen gesagt, immer ungerecht, und es ist tot.

Ist es realistisch, dass auf dem nächsten EU-Gipfel Lösungen gefunden werden?

Ich kann das nicht beurteilen, aber ich bin eher skeptisch aus den Erfahrungen. Das ist doch ein Debattierclub geworden, den kaum noch einer ernst nimmt.

Ist die Flüchtlingspolitik der Kanzlerin gescheitert?

Noch nicht, aber es wird eng, wenn der Zustrom so weitergeht. Deshalb kämpft sie mit allem, was sie hat. Die Bundesregierung arbeitet sehr hart, die Gespräche finden vielerorts und auf allen Ebenen statt. Aber die Zeit drängt.

Was passiert, wenn die Bundesregierung scheitert?

Wenn es ohne Reduzierung der Flüchtlingszahlen weitergeht, werden wir integrationspolitisch scheitern. Dann wird sich Deutschland verändern, dann bekommen wir Unruhen, sozialen Unfrieden.

Sie sprechen recht unverblümt. Ist es das Fehlen dieser Ehrlichkeit, von der momentan Rechtspopulisten profitieren?

Mag sein. Wir haben am Anfang alle Fehler gemacht, auch die Medien. Es war eine Willkommenswelle, Negatives wollte keiner hören und keiner senden. Man musste den Eindruck gewinnen, es kämen nur Ärzte und Ingenieure nach Deutschland. Heute haben wir den umgekehrten Wettbewerb und viele rufen: Raus! So geht es aber auch nicht. Ich bin hart attackiert worden, als ich im September im Parlament von meiner Arbeit in der Erstaufnahmeeinrichtung erzählt habe. Es wurde nicht gerne gehört, wenn ich gesagt habe, dass manche Flüchtlinge von einer Frau kein Essen annehmen und oftmals Frauen nicht respektieren. Die Ängste der Leute wurden am Anfang nicht ernst genommen. Dabei kann man die AfD mit ihren dumpfen Parolen leicht demaskieren.

Wie denn?

Indem man fragt, was sie machen würden, wenn sie Verantwortung tragen würden. Welche Programme sie haben für die realen Probleme und die realen Chancen, sie stänkern nämlich nur, ich kenne keine ernstzunehmenden Vorschläge von denen. Mit diesen Leuten ist kein Staat zu machen. Und wenn die Flüchtlingskrise gelöst ist, fällt die AfD in sich zusammen.

Und wenn Deutsche sagen, die Welt ist schon kompliziert genug, wir haben keine Lust, uns über Jahre anzustrengen, damit die Integration der Flüchtlinge gelingt?

Ich sage denen: Solange du in deinen Kreisen nicht gestört bist, sollte es dir doch egal sein. In vielen Regionen im Saarland stören die Menschen keinen, im Gegenteil: 3000 Kinder in saarländischen Schulen sind 3000 hoffnungsvolle Zukunftsfälle. Und wenn man sieht, in den Kindergärten und Grundschulen, wie schnell das geht, dann darf man nicht kapitulieren vor einigen Halbwüchsigen und auch nicht vor einigen Kriminellen, die in Deutschland nichts zu suchen haben, die wir aber auch abschieben müssen. Und wenn man die Bevölkerungsstruktur betrachtet, muss man sagen: Wir brauchen doch die Menschen, wir brauchen sie, wir haben Leerstände. Finanziell gesehen, wird es die Bundesrepublik schaffen. Das gibt sogar einen neuen Boom für die Bauwirtschaft, wir merken es im Saarland schon. Wir brauchen Polizisten, Lehrer, Erzieher, Dolmetscher. Das ist ein Konjunkturprogramm von vielen Milliarden.

139,86

Closing the Balkan Route: Will Greece Become a Refugee Bottleneck?

By [Giorgos Christides](#), [Juliane von Mittelstaedt](#), [Peter Müller](#) and [Maximilian Popp](#)



With EU officials considering border closures along the Balkan refugee route, Greece is worried that it will become overwhelmed by migrants. The EU has chastised Greece for not securing its external border, but failings can be found in Brussels too.

At five o'clock in the morning last Tuesday: Macedonia has once again closed its border, and just a few hours later, chaos reigns. Eighty buses with 4,000 refugees have been stopped by the Greek police 20 kilometers from the frontier and they are now waiting in a gas-station parking lot. Bus drivers argue, refugees jostle on the overfilled lot and overwhelmed police officers yell orders. "Macedonia, Macedonia," the people waiting scream, "open the border!"

But today, the border remains closed to most people. And if it were up to Brussels and the Germans, it would remain that way -- that is, to anyone not from Syria, Iraq or Afghanistan. Since mid-November, Macedonia has tightened its border controls and whoever isn't from one these three countries is turned away. Now, many people's dreams of Europe come to an end here, in Idomene.

For it has recently become clear that Turkey is both unable and unwilling to stop the flow of refugees. As a result, the EU is placing its bets on Macedonia, with a plan that has the support of European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker.

Last year, the majority of the over 850,000 refugees traveling along the Balkan route went through Macedonia. If authorities have their way, that will come to an end. "Macedonia is our second line of defense," says a high-ranking EU official. Several EU states have approved the deployment of 82 officers in Macedonia with the task of improving border protection. Financial support is to follow.

If Macedonia reduces the number of people it allows into the country, it will lessen the pressure on Germany and Austria. It will also mean that more people will stay in Greece -- and, Brussels hopes, place additional pressure on Greece to better protect its borders.



DER SPIEGEL

Map: Greece's refugee conundrum.

Idomene is a case study of what would happen were Europe to seal its borders and shut down the Balkan Route, the path most migrants take on their way to Germany and the rest of Europe. The result would be a massive backup of hundreds of thousands of refugees in Greece.

And this in a country that is in a deep recession, and where every fourth citizen is unemployed. It is a country where angry farmers, teachers, doctors, lawyers, taxi drivers and ferry workers -- actually everyone -- is opposed to the government's austerity measures. And it is a country that is once again in danger of sliding into its next big political crisis. The country will face big problems if Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras can't find a compromise with the country's international creditors, who are pushing for tough reforms. Or if Greece is made to bear the burden of the refugee crisis.

'Greece is Like Afghanistan'

When Macedonia closes its border for even just a few hours, thousands of people accumulate: including children, the elderly, pregnant women, sick people. There may be a reception center, with tents, blankets and toilets, directly next to the border fence with a capacity of 1,200 people, but when it's full, most people spend their nights outside, often for days at a time.

At the same time, thousands of people are arriving on the Greek islands every day -- over 67,000 in January alone. And according to UNICEF, more than a third of the arrivals are minors; almost two thirds of the people who are passing the Macedonian border are women and children. They are making the risky crossing in winter out of fear that the route to the north will soon be shut off. Some 400 people have already drowned this year, including many children. For now, the impending closure of the border is more of a draw than a deterrent.

Mukhtar from Herat, Afghanistan intends to wait at the border until it is open again, no matter how long it takes. He is 18 years old and travelling alone. He fled his country's poverty and hopelessness and almost drowned shortly before reaching the Greek island of Chios, he says, but the Greek coast guard saved him. Like almost all of the other people here, he wants to go to Germany, "the only country where refugees are being helped." Apply for asylum in Greece? Mukhtar laughs. "Greece is like Afghanistan, there is nothing here for us refugees."

Mukhtar has the right passport and will likely ultimately be allowed to cross. But what happens to those who are not allowed to continue their journey? What does it mean for Greece if Europe is drawing its "second line of defense" here?

Many will try to cross into Europe anyway, illegally via the Macedonian border with the help of fake documents or by following the new routes through Albania and Croatia -- or by boat to Italy. But all others are stuck in Greece.

This despite the fact that since 2011, Germany has declined to send refugees back to Greece, which the Dublin Regulation stipulates, out of human rights considerations. The German Interior Ministry just extended the pause in deportations until June. According to a report by the Gemeinsames Analyse- und Strategiezentrum illegale Migration (Joint Analysis and Strategy Center on Illegal Immigration), many refugees in Greece live on the streets, even children and neo-nazis periodically hunt them down. The conditions for many refugees in Greece are described by the German authorities as "inhumane." And still, the country is potentially being turned into a giant refugee camp.

According to a confidential memo from the German Foreign Office, a backup of refugees would "inevitably lead to uncontrollable humanitarian conditions and security problems within days." Migration researcher Franck Düvell from Oxford University warns that it would lead to "downright apocalyptic scenarios": Greece would collapse within a few weeks, he believes.

Criticism of Athens

Officials in Brussels are seemingly aware of this, which is why they are currently trying to balance partial border closings, the imposition of better controls in Greece and the public admonishing of Athens.

In a confidential, but perhaps not entirely accidentally leaked, report, the EU Commission describes the findings of its inspectors on the islands of Chios and Samos and on the land border with Turkey in November. Their conclusion: Greece has "seriously neglected" its duty to control its outer borders.

The list of shortcomings, the report claims, is long: The registration of the refugees isn't working, because there aren't devices for taking fingerprints and the Internet sometimes stops working; there aren't enough officials; there are too few boats to guard the coast; passports are not being compared with databases, including those of Interpol.

"The major culprit isn't Greece," Greek Minister of Immigration Policy Ioannis Mouzalas says. He admits that registration in the initial reception centers known as "hotspots" is going slowly, and that things are behind schedule. But he claims the EU report is exaggerated, and that, either way, it is now outdated. Additionally, he claims, the EU has only sent Greece 800 of the 1,800 requested Frontex officials, and financial help for the purchase of fingerprint readers only came the previous week. He argues that the delays are a "convenient excuse" for the EU.

Mouzalas is furious that Greece is being pilloried while the most important mechanism to solve the problem is not being implemented: the distribution quota. Last fall, European leaders agreed to redistribute 66,400 refugees from Greece. So far, nine countries have only offered up 305 spots. Only 157 people have been relocated, a mere 10 to Germany. "Instead of chastising Greece ..., it would be more productive to do something about those states that sabotage the relocation scheme," says Mouzalas.

Migration researcher Düvell also finds the EU's accusations "deeply unfair, cynical and shameful." He has conducted research himself in Greece and in Turkey -- and has come to the conclusion that it is impossible for Athens to stop migration to Europe, or even slow it down, on its own. "The EU member states are needed. They need to find a way to fairly distribute asylum-seekers across Europe," says Düvell. Brussels's criticism, he argues, is a "cheap trick," in order to "distract people from the failures of the EU states in the refugee crisis."

Misplaced Anger

A confidential report by the German parliament administration from January 29 likewise suggests that the EU redistribution program is in danger of falling apart due to the lack in willingness by member states to take in refugees.

The criticism of Greece also seems unfair because international law makes it illegal to simply send refugees back to Turkey. In the past, the Greeks were reprimanded for pushing away boats with refugees and Alexis Tsipras' government has mostly stopped these "push-backs." Now it is being criticized for doing the opposite. The German government is aware of this dilemma: According to an internal report by the "hotspot" commissioner of the German government from December, Turkey is the "central player in the reduction" of the numbers of refugees. "The Greeks can only save the refugees, but not stop the smugglers."

For this reason, the Netherlands government has pushed for a plan in which refugees would be directly sent back from the Greek islands to Turkey on ferries. In return, the EU member states should then be willing to accept a contingent of 250,000 refugees every year from Turkey. But that is unrealistic as long as the Europe-wide distribution doesn't work.

And regardless, the suggestion is legally problematic for two reasons: For one, the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights stipulates that asylum applications must be individually evaluated. And although Greece just declared Turkey to be a "secure third country" to which refugees may be deported, mass returns are unlikely, Düvell believes.

He asks, "Why should Erdogan act as Europe's bouncer?" The memo by the European Commission therefore exists to justify the upcoming extension of the temporary border controls, like those that have been introduced in Germany and Austria. According to the Schengen Border Code, there needs to be a lack in supervision of the outer borders for the closure of the interior borders to be allowable. The ultimate goal is that of saving Schengen: An end to the free movement of goods and people would be especially damaging to Germany and the northern countries.

Mouzalas, the Greek Minister of Immigration Policy, also believes that Brussel's threats to kick his country out of the Schengen Zone amount to fear-mongering and, legally speaking, nonsense. Anyways: "Whatever happens with Schengen, the migrant flows will not be affected."

He is much more afraid that the countries on the Balkan route will close down their borders -- all the way to the north. For this reason, he is putting his faith in the most hated woman in his homeland: the German chancellor. "Angela Merkel is under pressure, so I fear that at some point the German border will close." And then he says something that is very unusual for a Greek. "Germany is right now the voice of reason in Europe."

Eroded Trust

In order to avoid giving the Europeans a reason to shut the borders, Tsipras has now decreed that, by mid-February, all five "hotspots" and two new reception centers shall be operational. In order for that to happen quickly, he has assigned the task to the army. One of the reception centers is to be built west of Thessaloniki, on Military Base 1090. A ghost town, with roofless barracks, covered in garbage and weeds, the only living things are a couple of growling, snarling guard dogs. In fewer than two weeks, 4,000 refugees are to be housed here.

The Delta municipality, in which the military base is located, is poor, there are drug dealers and criminals. "The government didn't even ask us in advance," complains Delta's mayor, Mimis Fotopoulos. "The people here aren't so concerned about the refugees themselves," he says. "They are concerned because they don't trust the government to enforce law and order. And they don't trust Europe, which seems to want to unload its problems onto Greece."

Only on one point are the citizens of Delta optimistic: They think it's completely unrealistic that the military base will be ready to house refugees in two weeks.

139,89

L'appel de 80 économistes pour « sortir de l'impasse économique »

LE MONDE ECONOMIE | 10.02.2016 à 06h37 • Mis à jour le 10.02.2016 à 11h15 | Par Collectif

Réagir Classer

Collectif

Il est possible de réenchanter l'avenir, y compris en matière économique. Tel est le sens de cet appel. La gravité de la situation l'exige : nous tenons aujourd'hui à souligner ensemble en tant qu'économistes – par-delà nos sensibilités très diverses – que des alternatives crédibles existent pour sortir de l'impasse.

Le chômage, la précarité, la difficulté à boucler ses fins de mois, marquent la vie de millions de nos concitoyens. Aux souffrances de la vie matérielle s'ajoutent la perte d'espérance, le sentiment que l'avenir est bouché pour notre pays et nos enfants. Les élections régionales ont, après bien d'autres, sonné l'alarme. Les causes de la désespérance sociale ne sont pas qu'économiques, mais nul espoir ne renaîtra si la donne ne change pas en la matière.

Que faire ? Les partisans du libéralisme économique plaident pour réduire plus drastiquement encore la dépense publique, démanteler le droit du travail, remettre en cause la pourtant si indispensable réduction du temps de travail et diminuer le coût du travail par la compression des salaires et des prestations sociales. Cette thérapie de choc a été appliquée en Europe du Sud (Espagne, Grèce, Portugal...). Elle y a entraîné un effondrement de l'activité, une explosion du chômage et de la pauvreté.

La dette publique elle-même s'est fortement accrue, la réduction du produit intérieur brut (PIB) entraînant spontanément une contraction des recettes et une hausse du rapport dette sur PIB. Les pays européens sont ainsi engagés dans une course mortifère à la compétitivité par l'austérité dont l'objectif se résume à prendre des parts de marché et des emplois aux pays voisins.

Il est temps d'abandonner cette politique qui conduit à l'enlisement sans fin dans la crise. Pour répondre à l'urgence économique et sociale, redonner espoir aux classes populaires, nous proposons à nos concitoyens, aux mouvements associatifs, syndicaux et politiques d'ouvrir un débat sur la mise en œuvre d'un plan de sortie de crise autour de trois volets.

Un nouveau pacte productif à la fois écologique et social

Les besoins ne manquent pas : investissements pour réduire les émissions de gaz à effet de serre (rénovation thermique des bâtiments, transports collectifs, énergies renouvelables...) ; construction de logements ; programmes urbains afin de mettre fin aux ghettos, de refaire mixité et égalité ; nouveau pacte social en faveur de l'éducation, de l'hôpital, de la culture, de la sécurité et de la justice ; aide aux personnes en perte d'autonomie et accueil de la petite enfance. Non délocalisables, ces activités permettraient de créer des centaines de milliers d'emplois. Autour d'elles, il est possible de retrouver le chemin d'un nouveau type de plein-emploi avec des emplois de qualité, sans discrimination selon le sexe ou l'origine.

IL EST DE TEMPS DE REMETTRE EN CAUSE CES RÈGLES NÉOLIBÉRALES QUI ONT FAIT DE L'UNION EUROPÉENNE LE GRAND MALADE DE L'ÉCONOMIE MONDIALE

La reconstruction sur de nouvelles bases de notre économie suppose de sortir de la logique du mépris généralisé. Des chômeurs soupçonnés d'être responsables de leur situation, alors que c'est l'organisation défailante de l'économie qui est fautive. Des pauvres suspectés d'être un fardeau social, alors que la société ne

leur alloue que de faibles ressources. Des fonctionnaires accusés de n'être pas productifs, alors qu'ils contribuent au PIB et que leur production, les services publics, permet de réduire massivement les inégalités. Des travailleurs du privé accusés d'être des nantis indûment protégés par le droit du travail, alors que les conditions de travail sont de plus en plus difficiles.

Cette reconstruction exige la mobilisation de l'ensemble de la société. Les services publics qui demandent à être pleinement réhabilités afin que les fonctionnaires assument mieux leurs missions d'intérêt général, de façon moins bureaucratique, en associant les usagers. L'économie sociale et solidaire, indispensable pour le développement de biens communs, pour que l'économie collaborative et du partage qui se développe ne soit pas synonyme d'« uberisation », de précarité aggravée.

Les entreprises, où les collectifs de travail, avec des salariés d'autant plus impliqués qu'ils sont respectés et reconnus, doivent être reconstruits contre les logiques financières et spéculatives qui dominent aujourd'hui la plupart des grands groupes et écrasent les sous-traitants. Les cadres dirigeants, les chefs d'entreprise, souvent étranglés par les exigences des banques et des actionnaires, doivent se dissocier de la stratégie agressive du Medef pour s'inscrire pleinement dans la transition écologique et sociale.

Un programme de soutien à l'activité et à l'emploi

Les enquêtes auprès des entreprises le montrent, ce sont avant tout les carnets de commandes dégarnis qui bloquent l'activité, l'emploi et l'investissement. Les besoins ne manquent pourtant pas, nous venons de le voir. Afin de les satisfaire, nous proposons un programme de soutien de 40 milliards d'euros par an, financé pour une part par le redéploiement de sommes consacrées au pacte de responsabilité, dont l'échec en matière d'emploi et d'investissement est patent, pour une autre part par un recours à l'endettement, à l'instar de ce que n'ont pas hésité à faire les Etats-Unis.

Les règles européennes ne permettent pas ces politiques de relance

C'est le dernier volet : il est temps de remettre en cause ces règles néolibérales qui font que l'Union est devenue le grand malade de l'économie mondiale. L'excédent commercial de la zone euro s'élève à 3 % de son PIB, ce qui témoigne d'une demande interne clairement insuffisante. Cela justifie une hausse des salaires et des prestations sociales, en particulier de l'ordre de 10 % pour les bas revenus.

Cette hausse devrait être plus importante dans les pays qui accumulent des excédents commerciaux excessifs (8 % du PIB en Allemagne, deux fois plus qu'en Chine). L'introduction de l'euro dans des économies hétérogènes et sans mécanismes correcteurs a conduit à des déséquilibres majeurs. L'euro est de facto sous-évalué pour l'Allemagne, surévalué pour les pays d'Europe du Sud dont la France. Les règles néolibérales actuelles demandent à ces derniers de regagner en compétitivité par la déflation interne (baisse des salaires et des dépenses publiques), ce qui alimente leur récession, et partant limite leurs investissements et donc leurs possibilités de redressement.

C'est l'inverse qu'il convient à présent de promouvoir : la hausse des dépenses dans les pays excédentaires permettrait de réduire par le haut les déséquilibres commerciaux et de juguler les pressions déflationnistes que la Banque centrale européenne ne peut contrecarrer seule. Au-delà du plan Juncker, qui n'est quasiment pas financé, un véritable plan d'investissement européen, centré sur la transition écologique et déployé de façon plus ample dans les pays en difficulté, doit enfin voir le jour.

La France doit proposer cette réorientation à ses partenaires européens et notamment à l'Allemagne (laquelle vient déjà d'engager plus de 10 milliards d'euros afin d'accueillir les réfugiés). En cas de blocage, elle devra proposer aux pays qui le souhaitent (le Portugal, la Grèce mais aussi d'autres, dont l'Italie et l'Espagne, ces quatre pays représentant avec la France plus de 50 % du PIB de la zone euro) de s'inscrire dans un pacte de reconstruction faisant primer l'urgence économique et sociale sur les règles néolibérales.

Accompagnée de mesures visant à réorganiser drastiquement les banques, à rompre avec la finance libéralisée et le dumping fiscal et social, y compris au sein même de l'Union, cette stratégie est la seule à même de refaire l'Europe.

La France meurtrie a besoin d'un nouvel horizon. La sortie du sombre tunnel politique dans lequel elle est engagée ne passe pas uniquement par l'économie. Mais elle restera hors de portée si l'on s'acharne à poursuivre des politiques néolibérales qui creusent les inégalités, alimentent le désastre social. Il est temps de mettre en œuvre une politique économique alternative.

Un collectif

Michel Aglietta, Bruno Amable, Philippe Askenazy, Michaël Assous, Philippe Batifoulier, Mathieu Béraud, Eric Berr, Frédéric Boccard, Mireille Bruyère, Gunther Capelle-Blancard, David Cayla, Virgile Chassagnon, Gabriel Colletis, Laurent Cordonnier, Benjamin Coriat, Jézabel Couppey-Soubeyran, Nathalie Coutinet, Thomas Dallery, Hervé Defalvard, Jean-Paul Domin, Ali Douai, Gérard Duménil, Cédric Durand, Anne Eydoux, Olivier Favereau, David Flacher, Anne Fretel, Jean Gadrey, Jérôme Gautié, Jérôme Gleizes, Mathilde Guergoat-Larivière, Jean-Marie Harribey, Eric Heyer, Liêm Hoang-Ngoc, Michel Husson, Sophie Jallais, Florence Jany-Catrice, Esther Jeffers, Thierry Kirat, Agnès Labrousse, Thomas Lamarche, Dany Lang, Edwin Le Héron, Philippe Légé, Jonathan Marie, Catherine Mathieu, Montalban Matthieu, Jérôme Maucourant, François Morin, Léonard Moulin, Stefano Palombarini, Corinne Perraudin, Héroïse Petit, Mathieu Plane, Dominique Plihon, Jean-François Ponsot, Thomas Porcher, Nicolas Postel, Muriel Pucci, Philippe Quirion, Christophe Ramaux, Gilles Raveaud, Antoine Rebérioux, Sandra Rigot, Sandrine Rousseau, Laurence Scialom, Francisco Serranito, Richard Sobel, Henri Sterdyniak, Yamina Tadjeddine, Nadine Thevenot, Xavier Timbeau, Bruno Tinel, Hélène Tordjman, Aurélie Trouvé, Julie Valentin, Daniel Vasseur, Sébastien Villemot, Olivier Weinstein, Michaël Zemmour.

En savoir plus sur http://www.lemonde.fr/economie/article/2016/02/10/pour-sortir-de-Limpasse-economique_4862431_3234.html#O6YXGqR9kdlDG1h1.9

139,92

Turkey

Erdogan's new sultanate

Under Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his AK party, Turkey has become richer and more confident. But the party's iron grip is becoming counterproductive, says Max Rodenbeck

Feb 6th 2016 | [From the print edition](#)



SEEN IN SILHOUETTE from a commuter ferry bustling across the Bosphorus, parts of Istanbul seem to have changed little from centuries past. Looking to the west, towards Europe, the old walled city is still capped by multiple domes and spiky minarets. But turn to the east, towards Asia, and a different picture unfolds.

Standing as sentries to the narrow strait, giant gantry cranes heave containers onto waiting ships. Beyond them, along the low-slung Marmara shore, march soaring ranks of high-rise buildings. To the north, the hills on the Asian side of the Bosphorus prickle with a metallic forest of communications towers. And on the highest of those hills rises a startling mirror to the old Istanbul: the giant bulbous dome and six rocket-like minarets of a colossal new mosque (pictured). When finished later this year, this will be Turkey's biggest-ever house of prayer.

The scale and symbolism of the mosque, like so much of the frenzied construction that is reshaping this city, reflect the will and vision of one man: Recep Tayyip Erdogan. After over two decades in power, from 1994 as mayor of Istanbul, from 2003 as Turkey's prime minister and since August 2014 as president, Mr Erdogan towers over his country's political landscape. To detractors he is a would-be sultan, implacable, cunning and reckless in his ambition. To admirers he is the embodiment of a revived national spirit, a man of the people elevated to worldly glory, a pugnacious righter of wrongs and a bold defender of the faith.

Mr Erdogan has presided over some startling transformations. In two short decades his country, and most dramatically its long-neglected Anatolian hinterland, has moved from relative poverty and provincialism to relative wealth and sophistication. An inward-looking nation that exported little except labour has become a regional economic powerhouse, a tourist magnet as well as a haven for refugees, and an increasingly important global hub for energy, trade and transport.

In many ways Turkey's 78m people have never had it so good. Since the 1990s the proportion of those living below the official poverty line has declined from the teens to low single digits, and the share of the middle class has doubled to over 40%. By every measure of living standards, the gap between Turkey and fellow members of the OECD, a club of mostly rich countries, has shrunk markedly.

Under the subtle but relentless Islamising influence of the Justice and Development (AK) party, co-founded and led by Mr Erdogan until he became the nation's (theoretically non-partisan) president, the Sunni Muslim component of Turkey's complex national identity has strengthened. The long shadow of Kemal Ataturk, the ruthless moderniser who 90 years ago built a secular republic on the ashes of the Ottoman Empire, has faded. The AK party has marched the army, long given to ejecting elected governments from power, back to its barracks. Turkey has resumed its role as turntable between east and west.

When the AK party stumbled badly in parliamentary elections in June 2015, pundits were quick to herald an end to Mr Erdogan's long winning streak. Whiffs of corruption and abuse of power had tainted his party, and terrorist acts by Islamic State (IS) and the influx of more than 2m Syrian refugees into the country had made Turks question his judgment.

Who dares, wins

Shorn of a parliamentary majority for the first time since 2002, the AK party should have sought a coalition partner, but instead Mr Erdogan boldly gambled on a new election on November 1st. To everyone's astonishment his party surged back, trouncing a trio of rival parties. With 317 seats in the Grand National Assembly, Turkey's unicameral 550-seat parliament, the party can now again legislate at will.



However, its majority is insufficient to allow it to revise Turkey's 1982 constitution on its own. That was what Mr Erdogan had been trying to achieve in the June election, in the hope of creating a presidential system that would greatly widen his ostensibly limited (but in fact extensive) powers as president. In the absence of a two-thirds majority, he must work in tandem with his hand-picked prime minister, Ahmet Davutoglu, who is a less divisive figure.

Ahead of the November election Mr Erdogan wisely toned down rhetoric about expanding his own powers but quietly strengthened his control over the party. At a party meeting last September he engineered the replacement of 31 members (out of 50) of the party's politburo with people personally loyal to him. One of these, his son-in law, is now also a cabinet minister; and one of the party's new members of parliament is Mr Erdogan's former chauffeur.

Today there is no doubt about who is boss. Bureaucrats in Ankara, the capital, respond to the merest whisper from the *saray* (palace), the grandiose 1,000-room presidential complex, built atop a hill on the city's outskirts at a reported cost of \$615m and opened in 2014. The famously short-fused Mr Erdogan will almost certainly continue to dominate Turkish politics until the end of his term in 2019, and very possibly beyond: some say he has set his sights on 2023, the 100th anniversary of the Turkish republic. By then he would have served at the helm of the Turkish state for far longer than Ataturk himself.

To his party's pious core constituency, that is something to rejoice in. Much of the country's urban working class, as well as those living in the stretch of central Anatolia sometimes known as Turkey's Koran belt, share this cult-like devotion to the former food vendor and semi-professional footballer turned statesman. Other AK voters, such as small businessmen and property developers, may be warier of Mr Erdogan. They support the party mainly because of its record of economic growth and relative stability after decades of turbulence. The

AK's swift comeback between the June and November polls reflected fear of a return to political volatility as much as enthusiasm for its policies.



The collapse last summer of peace talks between the government and the Kurdistan Workers' party (PKK), an armed rebel group, raises the spectre of more bloodshed. The talks had made little progress but did much to calm the restless south-east, a region dominated by ethnic Kurds, who make up 15-20% of Turkey's population nationwide. Fighting in the region in the 1980s and 1990s had left some 40,000 soldiers, rebels and civilians dead and displaced perhaps 1m Kurds from their homes. Soon after the June election, clashes between security forces and Kurdish activists, which had been suspended for two years, resumed. In the months since, heavily armed police have clamped curfews on Kurdish towns. The clashes have left well over a hundred civilians dead, in addition to scores of Turkish security men and, says the Turkish army, more than 400 alleged PKK guerrillas.

At the same time Mr Erdogan faces rising economic headwinds. Between 2002 and 2007 Turkey's GDP grew at an annual average of 6.8% and its exports tripled, but since then GDP growth has settled at around 3.5% a year and exports have remained virtually flat. Income per person, which the AK party four years ago rashly promised would rise to \$25,000 a year within a decade, is stuck at around \$10,000.

None of this is disastrous, and Turkey's economy is far more robust than it used to be. The trouble is that Mr Erdogan's government has continued to behave as if the good times had kept rolling. Although the country's chronic current-account deficit has narrowed lately, thanks to falling energy prices, Turkey relies heavily on foreign capital and is finding it increasingly difficult to attract money from abroad. Yet in recent years its government has shied away from reforms to boost the meagre domestic savings rate or promote industry, even as a consumer credit binge and heavy infrastructure spending have crowded out private investment. Rigid labour and tax rules remain a burden. Mr Erdogan himself has shaken confidence further by bullying his central bank to keep money cheap and by hitting the business interests of political rivals. Without a serious policy shift, including an effort to deal with concerns about institutional independence and the rule of law, Turkey's economy will continue to underperform.

Darker scenarios have less to do with the country's domestic market than with geopolitics. Because of the way it straddles cultures and continents, Turkey has always held a complicated hand. In recent years the mayhem on its southern borders, coupled with renewed tension pitting its NATO and European allies against an expansionist Russia, have made its position all the more delicate. Yet Mr Erdogan's government has failed to show much diplomatic finesse.

Everyone agrees that Turkey has been immensely generous in accommodating well over 2m refugees from Syria's civil war. It has also worked hard to resolve long-standing squabbles with neighbours such as Greece,

Bulgaria, Cyprus and Armenia. But it has often appeared aloof and suspicious, failing to communicate effectively or to work with allies.

The most important of these, and Turkey's dominant trading partner, is the European Union. Fear of a continuing tidal wave of migrants has lately prompted Europe to proffer aid and a resumption of stalled talks on Turkish membership in exchange for tighter border controls. But there is little warmth in the relationship. Most European governments still see Turkey as a buffer more than a partner. And Mr Erdogan's government has appeared more concerned to extract concessions than to adopt European norms as a good thing in their own right.

The danger of isolation was sharply underlined in November when Turkish jets shot down a Russian fighter over Syria that had briefly entered its air space. The Russian president, Vladimir Putin, swiftly responded with a broadside of sanctions. The Russian measures could trim up to 0.7% from Turkish GDP growth this year, according to the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

With lukewarm support from its allies, Turkey has tried to calm the excitement. But given its support for militias fighting against Syria's president, Bashar al-Assad, and Russia's growing military commitment to his survival, there could well be more clashes. Turkey seems in danger of stumbling into an unplanned but potentially costly fight. It imports most of its gas from Russia, and Turkish construction firms have well over \$10 billion-worth of Russian contracts on their books.

Worried voters in November rallied behind Mr Erdogan, backing a strong, tested government

Now Turkey faces a new threat. A double suicide-bombing in Ankara on October 10th last year aimed at a march by leftist trade unions and Kurdish activists killed more than 100 people. In January suicide-bombers struck again, this time in the heart of Istanbul, killing ten tourists. Both attacks were attributed to Islamic State. In a country that has long seen itself as insulated from Middle Eastern turmoil, the intrusion of violent radical Islam came as a particular shock. Worse, it partly reflected Mr Erdogan's slowness to recognise the danger of blow-back from his own policies in Syria, where Turkey for too long indulged radical Islamists so long as they opposed the Assad regime.

Rather than blame the party in power for such setbacks, worried voters in November rallied behind Mr Erdogan, backing a strong, tested government rather than risk rule by a possibly weaker coalition. It helped that the ruling party, in effect, controls Turkey's mainstream media, which pumped up nationalism in the face of danger. Mr Erdogan had carried the 2014 presidential election with a slim majority of 52%, and his AK party, for all its success, enjoys the support of just half the Turkish public. Many of the rest remain sceptical or even bitterly opposed to him.

This special report will argue that Turkey's leaders, with their ambitions still set on mastery, are not doing nearly enough to heal such internal rifts. The Kurdish issue looms as one big danger, and so does the Turkish economy's growing vulnerability to external shocks. Mr Erdogan's blustering, bulldozing style, together with his party's growing intolerance for dissent, portends trouble.

139,96

• [OPINION](#)

• [COMMENTARY](#)

The Reforms That Saved Spain Could Also Save Europe

Overhauls after the crisis boosted employment and growth. It would be a mistake to reverse course.

By LUIS DE GUINDOS

Feb. 10, 2016 2:42 p.m. ET

Recently the [International Monetary Fund](#) and the [European Commission](#) again revised upwards their growth forecast for the Spanish economy. The Commission improves the outlook for Spain in 2016 while lowering the growth forecast for the eurozone as a whole, widening the difference between the two. Spain's economy is now growing at a stable rate of 3.5%. And this is happening amid an international deceleration filled with uncertainties.

This situation differs substantially from four years ago. When we came into office at the end of 2011, we found an economy in recession, losing hundreds of thousands of jobs, with a negative balance of trade, a public deficit above 9% of gross domestic product, a private debt amounting to more than 200% of GDP, and a financial system badly in need of capital and restructuring.

No other government among the big countries of Europe has had to deal with all those difficulties simultaneously. As the eurozone's fourth-largest economy, we represented a risk to the European project and became the target of attacks from those who believed the single currency was not viable.

Today the panorama is completely different. Our rising exports and increased foreign investment in Spain show that we are competitive. For the third year in a row, our current-account surplus will equal 2% of GDP. In 2015, we created more than half a million jobs. The reduction of unemployment has been historic. New credit is flowing to businesses and households. Our small- and medium-size firms can finance themselves at cheaper interest rates than their German peers, something unimaginable four years ago.

All this has been compatible with a process of orderly deleveraging that we have boosted and that must go on. Without the important reforms implemented during this term, this would simply have been impossible. The restructuring of the financial sector, with an increase in provisions for real-estate loans, the recapitalization of some entities and the creation of Sareb -- the so-called bad bank -- have been fundamental to the strong rebound of the Spanish economy.

We carried out a labor reform that increased flexibility and decentralized collective bargaining. Layoffs are no longer the only alternative for companies in difficulty. Wage moderation has since settled into Spain's culture of labor relations, favored by a very subdued inflation that has improved households' real disposable incomes. A significant tax cut has benefited the purchasing power of taxpayers and improved the labor market.

To meet the challenge of an aging population the previous Socialist government delayed the retirement age. This government penalized early retirement and deployed a sustainability factor that links the future evolution of pensions to life expectancy.

We have created a bankruptcy and "fresh start" system to help highly indebted but viable companies to emerge from the crisis. And we have adopted numerous reforms for the goods and services markets, such as the liberalization of opening hours and rent, and the creation of a single market in Spain. Those reforms have had a very positive impact on economic activity.

We have been one of the most reformist governments not only in Spain's recent history but also in the eurozone as a whole. Many European countries are now discussing and exploring our reform achievements. These are

reforms that can be followed by other countries in similar difficulties that need to increase growth. In Spain we could rely on a culture of effort and solid family ties.

The challenge now is to maintain a reform agenda to overcome our main vulnerabilities. If we succeed, Spain will maintain a growth rate of 3% in the near future.

One point of discussion concerns fiscal reform. The European Commission estimates our future deficit to be about half a percentage point higher than our own estimate, as a percentage of GDP. However, nobody can call into question the fiscal consolidation effort undertaken by Spain. We were able to halve the deficit of 9% in just four years. And in 2015, for the first time since the crisis began, the public-debt-to-GDP ratio stabilized slightly below 100%.

The difference between the deficit projections of the Commission and of the government is remediable. In 2016 it is possible to bring the deficit below 3% of GDP. But we must maintain growth momentum.

The biggest mistake would be to reverse reforms. Should this occur, given the vulnerabilities that still persist, confidence could take a hit, hurting growth and jobs. Then it would be impossible for Spain to bring its deficit this year below 3%. We would return to the vicious circle that we have seen in other European countries, a circle of more cuts and less growth.

Undoubtedly, the next Spanish government will have to submit an addendum to the already-approved budget. However, what will ensure its achievement won't be fiscal-policy measures, but maintaining and deepening the reforms undertaken. For Spain, growth is the key.

Mr. de Guindos is the acting minister of economy and competitiveness in Spain.

139,98

EUROPE

Greece Under Pressure to Better Manage Migrant Influx

European Commission criticizes country for failing to protect its external borders

By VALENTINA POP

Feb. 10, 2016 9:54 a.m. ET

BRUSSELS—The European Commission is increasing pressure on Greece to better manage the influx of migrants, as the continent struggles to avoid a repeat of last year's massive migration wave.

"We have lost time; this is unacceptable. A significant number of migrants is still expected to come this year," European Migration Commissioner Dimitris Avramopoulos said Wednesday at a news conference.

Mr. Avramopoulos presented a state of play of Europe's measures aimed at stemming the tide that has brought more than one million people since last summer.

Greece bore the brunt of the commission's criticism for failing to protect its external borders—both with Turkey, where most of the migrants are coming, and with Macedonia, where many migrants continue their journey through the Balkans to Germany or Scandinavia.

The commission warned Greece that its Balkan neighbors may seal off their borders completely if the flow of migrants isn't reduced. "This requires better control (with European Union support and assistance) of the border between Greece and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia," the commission said.

The commission said Greece should allow for more EU border guards to be deployed on its side of the border and to give them extra responsibilities. At the end of January, a handful of EU border guards were deployed on the Greek side of the Macedonian border, but they were only performing desk duties in the refugee camp at Idomeni.

On the Macedonian side, at Gevgelija, several European nations sent border guards who were jointly patrolling with Macedonian police.

In Athens, Greek officials said the government may consider a beefed-up presence of EU border guards, as long as their job remains just to register people.

The commission said earlier this month that because Greece is failing to properly secure the bloc's external borders, other countries in the border-free Schengen area could keep border checks in place for up to two years. EU ministers on Friday are likely to adopt a decision that will give Greece three months to beef up its border controls or face a de facto suspension from Schengen, two diplomats familiar with the talks said.

The commission also put forward a to-do list on how to improve facilities for refugees and migrants, so that other EU countries can again send migrants back to Greece. Under current EU rules, migrants can be sent to the first country of arrival, where they should file for asylum. But Greece has been exempt from such transfers for the past five years because of what are considered its inhumane reception conditions.

Greece needs to report back by March 4 and then monthly on how it is progressing on setting up proper facilities.

Greece is also lagging behind in setting so-called hot spots, registration centers where all migrants are to be fingerprinted and checked against security databases. In addition, Greece's registration papers given to migrants lack any security features and are easy to forge or swap, the commission said.

Since some migrants refuse to be fingerprinted, Greece must change its laws to allow for a “proportionate use of coercion” and stop migrants from leaving the country unregistered.

Greece and Turkey also need to make better use of an existing bilateral agreement allowing Athens to send back migrants who don't qualify for asylum, the commission said. Last year, Turkey accepted only eight of the 5,148 people requested by Greece to be sent back.

Other EU countries were also criticized for not living up to their commitments on taking in registered asylum seekers from Italy and Greece under an EU redistribution program and for failing to pay their pledged contributions of humanitarian aid, with a total shortfall of €2.1 billion.

139,100

EU Border Office Chief on Refugee Crisis: 'We Should Have No Illusions'

Interview Conducted By *Peter Müller*

Vehicles carry concrete blocks used in construction of a fence along the Turkish-Syria border in the western countryside of Ras al-Ain, Syria.

As head of the EU border agency Frontex, Fabrice Leggeri has one of the hardest jobs in Europe. Tasked with protecting the external borders of the Schengen area, he is keenly aware of just how fragile the zone has become as a result of the refugee crisis.

Fabrice Leggeri knows his borders. He headed a unit within the French Interior Ministry that dealt with cross-border traffic, and he helped draft the communique to the European Commission that recommended creating Frontex, the European Union's external border agency. Since Leggeri took up his position as the head of Frontex in January 2015, Europe's migrant crisis has taken on a whole new dimension. Millions of refugees fleeing war and poverty have flocked to the Continent, and their arrival has tested the very limits of one of the EU's greatest achievements: its open borders. Leggeri knows the stakes are high: If his agency can't manage to secure Europe's outer borders, Schengen could collapse.

SPIEGEL: Mr. Leggeri, Turkey is seen as playing a crucial role in handling the refugee crisis. Is the government there doing enough to limit the influx of migrants to Europe?

Leggeri: No. Taking care of 2 million Syrian refugees is, of course, a burden for Turkey. I appreciate that. But if Ankara is going to demand sweeping concessions, such as a relaxation of visa requirements for its citizens, we Europeans should be able to expect more in return in the form of more stringent border controls.

SPIEGEL: As the head of the EU border agency Frontex, what do you have in mind?

Leggeri: Turkey should make life more difficult for the human-traffickers. These are organized criminals we're talking about. The Turkish police have the responsibility and the opportunity to put them out of business. At the very least, we expect Turkey to provide us with information: How many refugees can we expect? And where are they going to arrive?

SPIEGEL: Once migrants are at sea, the Greek coast guard has no other choice but to bring them back to Greece.

Leggeri: People in need of protection must have access to a safe country. The Turkish coast guard should work with the Turkish police to prevent migrants and refugees from putting their lives in danger. But that's not what's happening. Frontex and the Greek coast guard rescued more than 100,000 refugees from rubber dinghies last year and brought them to Greece.

SPIEGEL: At the moment, the number of refugees is decreasing slightly compared to last autumn. Why?

Leggeri: This seems to be due to the winter weather. We won't be able to say whether cooperating with Turkey has already begun to show positive results for at least another few weeks. Despite the bad weather, between 2,000-3,000 people are arriving in Greece each day.



 DER SPIEGEL

Refugees arriving in Greece by sea

SPIEGEL: The UN refugee agency estimates that a million refugees could try and reach the EU via Turkey this year. Is this realistic?

Leggeri: Yes. We should have no illusions: As long as the bloodshed in Syria continues, refugees will keep coming. Even if all we're able to do is keep the numbers stable, that would already be an achievement.

SPIEGEL: Three thousand people per day for 365 days ...

Leggeri: ... is still 1 million refugees a year. I'm familiar with the math.

SPIEGEL: Amnesty International reports that Turkey has sent hundreds of Syrian and Iraqi refugees back to their home countries.

Leggeri: I can't confirm those reports. One thing is clear: Turkey is a candidate country for EU accession. It is required to offer sanctuary to people in need of protection. It may not simply send them back into danger.



 AP

Frontex Executive Director Fabrice Leggeri: "We should have no illusions: As long as the bloodshed in Syria continues, refugees will keep coming."

SPIEGEL: The European Commission wants to make Frontex a proper border protection force with the authority to override the laws of individual Schengen states if necessary to secure the bloc's external borders. What do you think of this plan?

Leggeri: There's no way around it. In a sense, 10 years have been lost since Frontex was founded. Our agents still have no access to the Schengen Information System, for instance, and are thus sometimes unable to help the national authorities as they would like. If we can't protect our external borders, Schengen will fail.

SPIEGEL: In Brussels and Berlin, a discussion is currently taking place about the possibility of kicking Greece out of Schengen. What do you think about these considerations?

Leggeri: Frontex's role is to support the member states in order to ensure a more effective management of the EU's external borders. Our highest priority continues to be the EU-Turkish border. Greece recently requested more border guards to be stationed on the Greek side of the country's border with Macedonia. But the purpose would be to register migrants, not to close the border.

139,102

German Cabinet Approves Measures Tightening Asylum Rules

By ALISON SMALEFEB. 3, 2016

Photo

BERLIN — The German cabinet took significant steps on Wednesday toward toughening asylum rules in the wake of [the Cologne assaults](#), approving among other measures a two-year ban on family reunifications and excluding three North African countries from its asylum list.

The steps came just a week after the cabinet moved to make it easier [to deport migrants](#) who commit crimes, deepening a new and harsher line by the government of Chancellor [Angela Merkel](#), who has come under mounting criticism for her asylum policies.

The measures approved Wednesday, which also included a plan to house asylum seekers in special facilities to speed their applications, must be submitted to Parliament, where they seem certain to pass.

The steps were clearly intended to make [Germany](#) less welcoming for migrants, and to blunt opponents of Ms. Merkel's decision to throw open the doors to about a million asylum seekers last year.

In addition, deportees who are sick and have previously claimed that they must stay in Germany for medical care will have to leave if health care in their home countries is deemed sufficient.

The cabinet also designated [Morocco](#), [Tunisia](#) and [Algeria](#) as safe states, meaning those who have arrived from the three North African countries now face deportation.

The push against allowing citizens of those countries to stay has gained momentum since the New Year's Eve assaults in Cologne by men largely described as Arab or North African in appearance. The police in Cologne and nearby Düsseldorf have also raided North African communities in the two cities in a crackdown on crime.

Since the assaults, Ms. Merkel has promised a “palpable reduction” in the number of migrants arriving. But she has refused to bow to demands from her own conservative camp to set a cap in 2016. Instead, she has accelerated diplomacy in Europe and several measures at home aimed at curbing the influx.

Germany continues — with little success so far — to ask [European Union](#) partners to help redistribute refugees across the 28 member states, and is pushing to secure a deal with Turkey that would curb the number of migrants crossing the Aegean Sea from Turkey to Greece.

Elections loom in three of Germany's 16 states in mid-March, lending extra urgency to the quest to reduce the refugee flow. Opinion polls uniformly predict that an anti-immigrant, right-wing party, the Alternative for Germany, will enter all three state Parliaments.

Asked for figures on how many refugees would be affected by the two-year ban on family reunifications, which was first proposed in November, Interior Minister Thomas de Maizière declined to specify, but noted that it would not apply to those seeking asylum because of targeted persecution.

The government will also continue to issue entry permits to relatives, almost all Syrians, waiting in the overcrowded refugee camps of Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan.

Mr. de Maizière, who has just returned from a two-day trip to [Afghanistan](#) to try to reduce the flow of migrants from there, said he would travel soon to Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia to negotiate the return of those countries' citizens. The minister said more measures would be needed to reduce the influx of migrants, but

cited the package approved Wednesday as evidence of the government's resolve to keep working toward its goals.

The number of Algerians seeking asylum increased to almost 2,300 in December from 840 in June, and applicants from Morocco went to 2,896 from 368, according to the German authorities.

The number of Afghan applicants last year hovered around 150,000, second only to the number of Syrians seeking asylum here.

Mr. de Maizière said on Wednesday that Afghanistan — where German soldiers are still deployed and German police are training Afghan forces — could not be considered a safe country.

But he insisted that there were “safe areas” there, and renewed his plea, also made on Afghan television during his visit, that Afghans stay home and not risk their lives and savings on a perilous trek to Germany, which may well send them back.

139,104

How Germany Will Cope With the Refugee Crisis

My government has been very clear: Those who want to stay must adhere to our laws and respect our values.
By PETER WITTIG

Feb. 9, 2016 7:11 p.m. ET

Germany took in 1.1 million refugees in 2015, the equivalent of the U.S. receiving 4.4 million people. The huge number has presented our country with daunting challenges.

One is the refugees' cultural background, the fact that many of them are young men, and the behavior of some of these young men during the assaults on women in Cologne on New Year's Eve. **Another challenge is that the crisis is open-ended. The influx from Syria and other war-ravaged countries has slowed, but there is no telling how many more refugees will arrive this year.**

Coping with these refugees will require time, energy and money, and **stemming the flow is essential. But the government knows that it must not abandon Germany's constitutional commitment to offer haven for people fleeing persecution and civil war. We will deal with the crisis because we must, and we will handle it because we can.**

This won't be easy. There is no single lever to pull. Instead, **it will take a set of measures.** These include aiding countries along the route that people are taking to safety, reducing the numbers of those seeking political asylum without sufficient legal or humanitarian grounds and repatriating those already in Germany without such grounds, integrating those who stay, and countering human trafficking.

Germany can do this only with its European partners. European unity has so far been far from perfect, given the various pressures European governments are experiencing. **But we remain committed to a European approach to the refugee crisis.**

The most important sources of the crisis are the protracted civil war in Syria and the horrific crimes of Islamic State. Putting an end to both will require concerted international efforts. Chancellor Angela Merkel co-hosted the recent donor conference in London, which raised \$11 billion in humanitarian aid for Syrian refugees -- including a \$2.5 billion pledge by Germany.

Meanwhile, the assaults in Cologne have intensified the debate over integration. **My government has been very clear: Those who want to stay in Germany must adhere to our laws and respect our values. They are the laws and values of a secular Western democracy, with equal rights for women and men, with equal protection for all religious beliefs and sexual orientations, and with a firm commitment to Germany's special responsibility toward Israel. We will not tolerate any violation of these fundamentals - not by Germans, and not by refugees.**

Germany has experience assimilating large numbers of immigrants: Beginning in the 1950s, millions of foreign nationals who became known as "**guest workers**" arrived from southern Europe, including Turkey. **Integrating them into German society was not without its problems and backlashes, but by and large we succeeded. Today, around 5% of Germany's population is Muslim, and this population is not a source of great friction.**

The vast majority of today's refugees have come to Germany precisely because of the absence of values-based rule of law in their home countries. They desire freedom from religious persecution, sectarian violence, or war waged against them by their own government. We must do all we can to help them successfully integrate.

Ordinary Germans are doing so, by volunteering for language training, providing community support, organizing food and clothing drives, and assisting with the small challenges of daily life. **The government has eased restrictions and streamlined procedures to make it easier for refugees to work, and reduced the wait time for asylum applications to be processed by two months. We have also made background checks and registration of every refugee the norm again.**

The refugee crisis is a test for Germany unlike any other in the past 70 years. But we will resolve the crisis -- because it is in our own best interest, and because our values compel us to do so.

Mr. Wittig is Germany's ambassador to the United States.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/12/opinion/louise-mensch-britain-better-off-out-of-europe.html?action=click&pgtype=Homepage&clickSource=story-heading&module=opinion-c-col-right-region®ion=opinion-c-col-right-region&WT.nav=opinion-c-col-right-region&mtref=international.nytimes.com&gwh=7EED66C8B0B95F8BFC3655BE8B0C962E&gwt=pay&assetType=opinion>

139,106

Britain, better-off out of Europe

By LOUISE MENSCH, a columnist for The Sun on Sunday and the author, most recently, of the novel "Career Game," was a Conservative member of Parliament from 2010 to 2012.

12 février 2016

[International New York Times](#)

Valentine's Day is the traditional feast of love. But this February, Britons are more fixated on a political divorce.

"Brexit," the shorthand term for a British exit from the [European Union](#), is finally on the table. For many of my compatriots, the idea is not a negative one; indeed, an escape from the ever greater encroachment of the European superstate on our national sovereignty is a goal we have devoutly wished for since Prime Minister John Major signed the Maastricht Treaty back in 1992. Today, at last, we are positively giddy at the thought of freedom.

The Conservative prime minister, [David Cameron](#), is delivering on his election promise of a referendum on membership in the union, with a vote due by the end of 2017. It will probably be held sooner, in June or September.

Mr. Cameron would prefer Britain to stay in the union. Polls indicate that he is likely to be disappointed. Earlier this month, he returned from Brussels with a package of proposals so weak that Britain's newspapers united against it.

His so-called brake on welfare benefits for European immigrants, for example, would require the agreement of other countries, would not be applied for more than a year and would eventually be phased out. Mr. Cameron also failed in his attempt to prevent child benefits being sent abroad for workers in Britain with dependents elsewhere in Europe.

After these terms were announced, the pro-exit camp's lead in polls soared to nine points. One recent survey of Conservative Party members found that more than 70 percent supported Brexit.

The European summit meeting next week could be Mr. Cameron's last chance to improve his deal. But with the president of the European Parliament, Martin Schulz, touring Britain and helpfully telling us that he would reverse any British gains, Mr. Cameron's prospects are not promising.

The mood of the country, though, is optimistic. An amicable divorce, many consider, is better than a bad marriage. Brexit campaigners are excited by the possibilities of an independent future in the world. We believe that this vision is better not just for Britain, but also for our European allies.

Brexit offers Britons more money, more control, free trade and planned immigration.

First, the cash. Britain sends about 55 million pounds, or about \$80 million, per day to Brussels. To place that in context, Daniel Hannan, a Conservative member of the [European Parliament](#), calculated that all the austerity cuts that the chancellor of the Exchequer, [George Osborne](#), made during the last Parliament amounted to £36 billion,

while Britain's contribution to the [European Union](#) in the same period was £87 billion. Mr. Osborne could reverse every cut in public spending and still pay the deficit down faster if Britain were outside the [European Union](#).

Of course, it is not quite that simple. The union returns some of that money through spending in Britain, though not nearly the amount it takes out. In 2015, Britain's net contribution was £8.5 billion; in 2016, it is forecast to top £11 billion. If we ended these payments, we could end our austerity measures.

The second issue is the wave of illegal immigrants effectively invited into Europe by Germany's chancellor, [Angela Merkel](#). A growing proportion of Britons believes their country should accept fewer refugees; Turkey, where a majority of these migrants have come from, is already a safe destination.

We also note that many are young men, of fighting age, who appear to have abandoned their families; the recent sexual assaults on women in Cologne by marauding groups of migrants have confirmed the fears of many in Britain. With no curbs on the free movement of migrants under Europe's Schengen Agreement, British voters expect a wave of unwanted immigration once these migrants are given asylum elsewhere in Europe. We are unwilling to close our eyes to this, and we want our borders back.

Brexit was never a left-right issue. In the 1970s and '80s, it was supported by both Margaret Thatcher and the left-wing politician Tony Benn. The Labour member of Parliament Kate Hoey told me she believes the [European Union](#) stands for big business and tramples down British workers' wages even as it exploits East European ones. Ms. Hoey's view is supported by the left-wing labor union R.M.T. The fact that Conservative budget cuts are dwarfed by payments to the [European Union](#) is also not lost on liberal voters.

On the right, Conservative cabinet ministers likely to lead the "out" campaign are the business secretary, Sajid Javid, son of a bus driver from Pakistan, and Priti Patel, the employment minister, daughter of Indian immigrants from Uganda. Facing such campaigners, the bien-pensant pro-European left will have a hard time stigmatizing the Brexit coalition as anti-business "Little Englanders."

The case for leaving the union is, indeed, a positive one. Britain is the world's fifth-largest economy, with deep ties to the English-speaking world. We are not anti-immigrant; rather, we wish to manage our own immigration policy. We are pro-free trade, and as the [European Union](#)'s chief export market, we will not need to pay for access to its markets; and we want more freedom to trade with India, China and the rest of the world.

The pro-European camp used to tell us that joining the euro was a good idea, and that to stay outside presaged disaster; instead, we've seen a meltdown in Greece. The sky did not fall in Britain because we kept the pound and prospered.

We do not plan to cut off our European allies. Post-Brexit, we would continue to trade with our European friends as we have for a thousand years. The [European Union](#), however, is a relic of the '70s — about as relevant as bell-bottom jeans. Indeed, the last time Britons were consulted on membership was 1975, when I was 4 years old.

Europe is our past and future. We don't want to leave the Continent, just a failing bureaucracy.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/12/world/europe/nato-aegean-migrant-crisis.html?ref=europe&mtref=www.nytimes.com&gwh=95583DD23244650598C5BFB934DDAAEE&gwt=pay>

139,108

World; Europe

NATO Will Send Ships to Aegean Sea to Deter Human Trafficking

[Sewell Chan](#)

By MICHAEL S. SCHMIDT and SEWELL CHAN

12 février 2016

BRUSSELS — With more than a million migrants having reached Europe in the last year and many more on the way, NATO stepped tentatively into the crisis for the first time on Thursday, saying it would deploy ships to the Aegean Sea in an attempt to stop smugglers from moving migrants from Turkey to Greece.

But while the hastily made decision reflected the growing urgency of the situation, it was not clear that it would have much practical effect on the flow of refugees fleeing Syria's five-year civil war: The alliance said it would not seek to block the often rickety and overcrowded migrant vessels or turn them back, and military officials were scrambling to determine precisely what role their warships would play.

NATO's secretary general, Jens Stoltenberg, said that "this is not about stopping or pushing back refugee boats."

Gen. Philip M. Breedlove of the United States Air Force, NATO's supreme allied commander for Europe, subsequently told reporters here that his staff was figuring out the rules of engagement and how to deal with refugee boats that are intercepted.

"This mission has literally come together in the last 20 hours, and I have been tasked now to go back and define the mission," General Breedlove said. "We had some very rapid decision making and now we have to go out to do some military work."

Adding more military muscle to what has largely been treated in Europe as a humanitarian issue reflected concerns across the Continent that further waves of refugees are likely to head toward Greece and beyond in coming weeks amid intensified fighting in Syria and improving weather.

Calling on NATO to help patrol the Aegean was first raised as a possibility on Monday during talks between Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany, whose country is the main destination for the migrants reaching Europe, and President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey, which is confronting a new mass of refugees along its border with Syria.

Officials said three NATO vessels, from Canada, Germany and Turkey, were being deployed to the Aegean Sea under the command of Jörg Klein, a German rear admiral. The group will focus on monitoring the waterways and on providing intelligence to the European Union. There was no indication that any vessels from the United States would participate directly in the effort.

NATO will also enhance its surveillance of the Turkey-Syria border, monitoring the movement of migrants and the activities of smugglers, officials said.

Ivo H. Daalder, a former American ambassador to NATO, said the military alliance had refrained from direct involvement in the migrant crisis before because European Union officials had insisted that they were handling the situation.

The European Union has a border agency, Frontex, but it lacks substantial resources and in essence relies on national authorities, like the Italian Navy and the Greek Coast Guard. It failed to prevent the deaths of 3,800 people who drowned in the Mediterranean last year while trying to enter the European Union, and more than 400 have drowned this year already.

“The E.U. obviously wasn’t doing enough, and NATO can do more,” Mr. Daalder, now the president of the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, said in a phone interview. “Clearly, the U.S. supported it.”

He added: “This is not the solution to the migrant and refugee crisis, but it represents an acknowledgment that not enough is being done to address the crisis.”

NATO, like the European Union, operates by consensus. Jeffrey Rathke, a former American diplomat and NATO official now at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, said the announcement reflected the reality that “Frontex is not able to cope with the situation” and that the United States and Turkey, which are members of NATO but not of the European Union, could do more.

“Could and should NATO have done this earlier?” he asked. “I’d say yes — but that doesn’t mean they shouldn’t do this now.”

The American defense secretary, Ashton B. Carter, said that three NATO members — Germany, Greece and Turkey — had asked NATO for help with the sea patrols, as they struggle to deal with the huge number of refugees who have fled violence in Afghanistan, Eritrea and Iraq, as well as Syria and other conflict-torn countries. They have been joined by migrants fleeing poverty in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, many of them ineligible for political asylum.

The NATO defense ministers “tasked NATO military authorities to provide its advice for options for implementing it,” Mr. Carter said, calling the human traffickers “a criminal syndicate which is exploiting these poor people.”

NATO has a track record of search-and-rescue and antipiracy efforts, but whether it can actually curb human traffickers in this case remains to be seen. While the migrants typically rely on people smugglers for help in getting to Turkey and then across the sea to Greece and onward to northern Europe, they are often determined to make the voyage alone despite the risks — and the people running the smuggling rings are rarely on the vessels they send toward Greece.

“The people piloting the ships from Turkey to Greece are relatively low-level people,” Mr. Rathke said. “But having Turkey and Greek vessels, led by Germany, will provide an opportunity for greater cooperation which, frankly, hasn’t functioned well to date.”

Ian O. Lesser, a foreign policy expert at the German Marshall Fund of the United States, said the announcement was “in some sense symbolic, but also meaningful: NATO’s strategy in the years ahead is going to be driven not only by what’s happening in the east, with Russia, but also in the south, with the Mediterranean, as a result of the chaos in the Middle East and North Africa.”

Also on Thursday, the German government said it would extend controls on its borders for an additional three months. Germany established patrols, notably along its southern border with Austria, in mid-September because about 13,000 people were arriving in the southern city of Munich every day.

Although the number of arrivals has since dropped by half, the German government is still struggling to find shelter for all of the new ones, while bracing for more.

“A lasting and clear relaxation of the influx of people from other countries into Germany that would be necessary to lift the temporary border controls is not foreseeable at this time,” the Interior Ministry said on Thursday, adding that it had coordinated with Austria and its other European partners.

The German government also agreed on Thursday to permit the family members of refugees who had entered the country as unaccompanied minors to enter the country in cases of particular hardship. The agreement allows family reunifications only when “urgent humanitarian reasons” justify the granting of asylum to the children’s parents.

In the Aegean resort town of Bodrum, Turkey, on Thursday, the trial of two Syrians, Muwafaka Alabash and Asem Alfrhad, opened. They are accused of causing the drownings of a 3-year-old Syrian, Alan Kurdi, and of four other migrants, including the boy’s mother and brother, in September. Images of the boy’s lifeless body lying face down on a beach in Bodrum helped focus world attention on the crisis.

The two men each face up to 35 years in prison if convicted of charges of human smuggling and causing the deaths of five people “through deliberate negligence.”

Michael S. Schmidt reported from Brussels, and Sewell Chan from London. Melissa Eddy contributed reporting from Berlin.

* [How a Record Number of Migrants Made Their Way to Europe](#)

Defense Minister Michael Fallon of Britain, left, Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg of NATO, second left, and the American defense secretary, Ashton B. Carter, right, at a meeting in NATO’s headquarters in Brussels on Thursday. | Thierry Charlier/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images | Ursula von der Leyen of Germany and Ashton B. Carter of the United States described NATO’s reasoning for sending ships to the Aegean Sea to stop the smuggling of migrants. | By REUTERS

Collateral Damage in the Currency War

12 février 2016

[The Wall Street Journal \(Europe Edition\)](#)

Prosperous Sweden wouldn't normally be a candidate for easier monetary policy, but then these aren't normal monetary times. **So it's hard to fault the Riksbank for cutting its negative policy rate again, to minus-0.5% from minus-0.35%, despite strong economic growth and a real-estate bubble.**

Judged solely by Sweden's domestic economy, negative rates haven't been the right policy for some time and the central bank knows it. **The economy is expected to grow about 3.5% this year, with unemployment predicted to fall to 6.8% from 7.4% last year. Negative rates are fuelling a housing boom, with prices rising nearly 20% in some areas last year.** The Riksbank's announcement Thursday included a plea to other policy makers to tamp down on this asset bubble as best they can.

Yet it's not clear how the Riksbank could raise rates now, let alone curtail its asset-purchase program. **Consumer-price inflation is the one economic statistic that isn't budging, sitting at 0.1% in December, far off the Riksbank's mandate of around 2%.**

Little wonder. The competitive devaluations engineered by the Riksbank's neighbors, the European Central Bank and the Bank of England, keep threatening to push up the value of the Swedish krona relative to the euro and the pound, a trend that will deflate krona-denominated prices for imports. Despite recent krona stability, **another euro devaluation is likely next month when ECB President Mario Draghi delivers his next expansion of asset-buying.** Thursday's move in Stockholm is pre-emptive self-defense.

The dilemma is whether to accept disorderly deflation now or try to keep pace with devaluations in the eurozone, Britain and Japan. There's no good answer, as **the Swiss** discovered in January 2015. **They effectively chose deflation by breaking the franc's peg to the euro and trying to manage the consequences of a stronger currency with negative rates. They've been stuck with anemic growth but also the risk of a housing bubble in some areas.**

Sweden, Switzerland and Denmark (which faces its own battle to maintain its peg to the euro) are relative small fry compared to the large economies fighting today's currency wars. **But a healthy global monetary system would not create such collateral damage.**

[HTTP://WWW.WSJ.COM/ARTICLES/Britain-Eyes-Switzerlands-Arms-Length-Relationship-With-Europe-1455222486](http://www.wsj.com/articles/Britain-Eyes-Switzerlands-Arms-Length-Relationship-With-Europe-1455222486)

139,112

[EUROPE](#)

[BRUSSELS BEAT](#)

Britain Eyes Switzerland's Arms-Length Relationship With Europe

But many in bloc are unhappy with the Swiss arrangements, unlikely to replicate it

Swiss President Johann Schneider-Ammann, left, and European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker ahead of a meeting in Brussels last month. *PHOTO: YVES HERMAN/REUTERS*



By [STEPHEN FIDLER](#)

Feb. 11, 2016 3:28 p.m. ET

Switzerland is sometimes held out by British euroskeptics as an ideal role model for the [U.K. outside the European Union](#). The Alpine country has a free-trade agreement with the 28-nation bloc and more than 100 other accords covering their relationship.

Trouble is that many in the EU don't want even Switzerland to have a Swiss-style relationship with the bloc. The idea that they would willingly negotiate Swiss-style arrangements with an economy four times larger seems far-fetched.

Both the U.K. and Switzerland are awkward customers for the EU from their different vantage points inside and outside the bloc. The U.K. has been long criticized by other EU governments as seeking to cherry-pick the benefits and minimize the responsibilities of membership. The Swiss are viewed as cherry-pickers too but they have an alibi—a system of government that depends heavily on referendums.

It was a 1992 referendum that decided that Switzerland wouldn't join the EU's internal market with the other members of the European Free Trade Association: Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein. That left the economic relationship to be negotiated on a piecemeal basis.

Alexis Lautenberg, a former Swiss diplomat who is now chairman of the Swiss Finance Council, representing the interests of the country's two big banks, said the current "relationship between the EU and Switzerland isn't the product of determined intention" and would be impossible to replicate.



[ENLARGE](#)

An old steam roller painted with the EU stars standing in Kloten, Switzerland, during the 2014 campaign over a Swiss referendum to reimpose curbs on immigration. *PHOTO: STEFFEN SCHMIDT/KEYSTONE/ASSOCIATED PRESS*

Neither is it an ideal or reliable way to gain easy access to the roughly 500 million people in the EU market.

The Swiss government has to keep constant watch on EU regulation to make sure its own standards are in alignment. In some sectors, including services, which encompasses large parts of finance, the Swiss are outside the EU market, meaning they can't retail their services to EU customers.

One common factor is that there is no body set up for settling disputes, which many inside the EU see as a failing that needs correcting before further agreements are made.

Pressure was therefore already growing on Brussels to establish institutions to manage the relationship, and resistance mounting to prolonging the current ad hoc arrangements. Then, two years ago in another referendum, the Swiss voted to restrict immigration.

That decision, which must be implemented by early 2017, upsets perhaps the most important agreement between the EU and Switzerland: one guaranteeing free movement of people.

EU leaders responded by declaring that “free movement of persons is a fundamental pillar of EU policy” that couldn't be separated from the internal market. It said that if this agreement was abrogated, six other agreements negotiated at the same time—covering issues such as air transport, road traffic and agriculture would be undermined.

Relations are now in the deep-freeze, although the official position, from European Commission spokesman Margaritis Schinas, is that “Talks are ongoing with the Swiss.”

Two bilateral accords have been put on hold: one close to final agreement on electricity and another in its early stages, on financial services that would give Swiss banks access to EU markets.

On free movement, the EU wants to do nothing that could influence the British [debate over whether to leave the EU or stay](#). EU and British negotiators hope to have the U.K. referendum out of the way in June, meaning discussions with the Swiss won't start in earnest before then.

Among those following Switzerland is U.K. Prime Minister [David Cameron](#), who said last month he was “watching closely the Swiss attempts to renegotiate its position.”

He added “there is no guarantee of Swiss access to any part of the single market without agreement in this area [of free movement.] That is worth thinking about carefully in terms of the relationship between a country—particularly a small country outside the EU—and the rest of the EU.”

Mr. Cameron seems to accept the view, widely held in Brussels, that free movement of people is a price of access to the single market. If the U.K. wants to regain powers over migration from other European countries, it will have to leave not only the EU but also the internal market.

For Switzerland, its situation appears to be becoming more difficult. On the one hand, the EU is demanding institutional arrangements that would need to be put to a Swiss referendum; on the other, the EU's deteriorating image among Swiss voters—as among many inside the bloc—would likely lead to a rejection.

The arrangement is precarious. So among those who don't see Switzerland as a template for the U.K. are some prominent Swiss. “I don't think that what we have set up by trial and error can be considered as a precedent or a model to be followed by others,” Mr. Lautenberg said.

139,114

British Influence and Prosperity Depend on Staying in the EU

By Ed Balls

12 février 2016

[The Wall Street Journal](#)

In the coming months, Britain will make a momentous decision: whether to stay in the European Union or leave and go it alone. The outcome will have a long and lasting impact, on the jobs and living standards of British citizens, on the fortunes of many global companies, and on the U.K.'s influence across the world.

Similar concerns were at play more than a decade ago when the U.K. decided to stay out of the single European currency. Not adopting the euro was the right decision then. Staying in the EU would be the right decision today.

To the outsider the referendum must seem like madness. With the global economy in a perilous state, why choose such an inauspicious time to put Britain's most important trading relationship up in the air? The reality is that Prime Minister David Cameron never wanted this referendum; I joined him in the House of Commons voting against such a move only five years ago. But he was forced to change his mind to shore up his right-wing base -- successfully as it turned out -- before last year's election.

There are two central issues at work in this matter. The first is the woeful failure of the European single currency, alongside Britain's refusal in 2003 to join it, which accentuated the divide between Britain and the Continent. As the eurozone lurches from crisis to crisis, many British voters understandably -- but wrongly -- think Britain would be better off leaving the EU entirely.

But there is a second, bigger problem. Originally, the European project was conceived as a means to ensure security and prosperity in Western Europe, a nonaggression pact and a free-trade economic area.

Two things have changed. First, the EU has been transformed from a small club to a Continent-wide economic partnership. And free trade in goods and capital has been matched by the free movement of labor on a scale totally unanticipated by the EU's founding fathers.

In Britain, the scale of migration by East European workers seeking jobs across the English Channel has been the biggest driver of anti-EU sentiment by far. And the current refugee chaos is pouring fuel on that fire.

Mr. Cameron recently has been bargaining to renegotiate aspects of Britain's membership, aiming to use the concessions to bolster his campaign for staying in. While he has achieved the helpful goal of limiting benefits paid to migrant workers, Europe's leaders have shown no interest in revisiting the rules on free movement of labor. But I believe it is just a matter of time before they do.

If Europe does not eventually agree to restore borders and impose controls on economic migration, the initiative will pass to populist forces on the far left and right whose aims are not to manage globalization fairly, but to exploit prejudice and rig markets in favor of homegrown producers.

Those necessary EU changes will not come quickly enough for Britain's referendum, but that is all the more reason why Britain must retain its influence in Europe to fight and win these arguments in the years to come.

Which brings me back to Britain's original decision not to join the euro.

Twenty years ago, just before Tony Blair's government took office, I was struck by how often the "influence" argument was put to me by American colleagues. Yes, they said, the single currency is a risky project -- but surely Britain would be better able to influence it from the inside than by staying out.

I agreed with them that protecting Britain's influence was paramount, but I reached the opposite conclusion about the euro. I believed that Britain's influence depended ultimately on its economic prosperity, and that if joining the single currency crippled that prosperity, British influence would wither away as well.

That was why I spent the next seven years working hard to ensure we stayed out.

By contrast, in the current debate on Britain's EU membership, that same trade-off between having a seat at the table and risking economic prosperity doesn't exist. In fact, the reverse is true.

Leaving the EU would both weaken Britain's voice on the big global issues and damage the nation's economy. With half of U.K. trade tied up in Europe, and many U.S. and Asian multinationals currently basing their European headquarters in London, walking away now would cost us investment, jobs and income, as well as influence.

So unlike the decision to stay out of the euro, we would both be worse off economically and marginalized politically if we choose to leave the EU. The ability of the British government to help reform the world economy, tackle security threats, promote good corporate behavior, and manage globalization and migration fairly would be set back at just the time we need a strong U.K. voice on all those matters. That's why Britain must stay in.

Mr. Balls, a senior fellow at Harvard's Kennedy School, is a former U.K. cabinet minister and chief economic adviser to the British Treasury.

139,116

Opinion

Explaining Bernie's 'Socialism';

He perfects the strategy of denying the funding dilemma of the welfare state.

[Holman W. Jenkins](#)

10 février 2016

In the 1940s, many Western societies began adopting single-payer health systems as a way to expand access to the relatively few things medical care at the time could do for patients.

This was an agenda that, for obvious reason, could appeal to both consumers and providers of health care.

We live in a different time. If the U.S. were to embark on a single-payer system today, as Bernie Sanders proposes, it would not be doing so to expand access—though that slogan would still be used—but for a very different reason: to deny and limit care in order to control spending.

This agenda would be popular with neither patients nor providers, and therefore would be dead in the water—as liberal authorities, from the New York Times's Paul Krugman to Henry J. Aaron of the Brookings Institution, have suddenly discovered an urgency to point out to Democratic voters infatuated with Bernie Sanders.

Mr. Sanders knows it too. His socialism is farcical in a country that can't afford the entitlements it already has.

The one zinger that has found its mark during the current campaign has been Chelsea Clinton's claim that his plan endangers Medicare, which Mr. Sanders now brings up constantly in order to refute it. Mr. Sanders knows that seniors aren't stupid. They vote, and if they took his plan seriously, they would turn out in droves to protect Medicare from being raided by other age groups.

Take another farcical element of Mr. Sanders's farcical socialism. He tweaks Hillary over \$675,000 in speaking fees from Goldman Sachs. Unmentioned by the scourge of big money is Bill Clinton's far more egregious buckraking.

By the estimate of IBT Media, Mr. Clinton collected between \$54 million and \$141 million from governments and arms manufacturers who had arms-deal approvals pending before his wife's State Department. His own disclosures indicate at least \$20 million in speaking fees from banks and businesses since his wife began publicly eyeing the presidency.

A Washington Post investigation finds a “substantial overlap between the Clinton political machinery and the [charitable] foundation” and that “many of the foundation's biggest donors are foreigners who are legally barred from giving to U.S. political candidates.”

Yet all this goes unremarked by Mr. Sanders, that ferocious denouncer of monied corruption. Why? For the same reason that Bill Clinton's reckless influence-peddling goes uniformly uncriticized inside the Democratic Party. Because **that's the price of Mr. Clinton forgetting what a Clinton presidency was all about.**

He enacted welfare reform. He spoke enthusiastically of fully funded personal Social Security accounts. He speculated about the possibility of converting Medicare into a means-tested program of private insurance vouchers.

This Bill Clinton you don't hear from anymore. **One could easily forget he's not only the last, but the most prominent, of the once-numerous Blue Dog Democrats, who did not make a profession, as their party does now, of ignoring the long-term funding dilemma of the U.S. retirement programs.**

Mr. Sanders, far from being a radical departure, is merely a perfection of what Democrats have offered since the Clinton era, namely denial.

Ignore the problem. If forced to acknowledge it, insist there's no problem because the rich will pay. In the meantime, savage every reform proposal as an attack on "unmet needs." Collect the political rents from serving as defender of every spending interest in our overcommitted republic.

When pressed, even Bernie admits that some additional, unspecified "political revolution" would be necessary before his socialist plans became actionable in America. Meanwhile, what would a President Bernie do in office? You already have the answer.

With the latest report of the Social Security and Medicare Trustees, the programs' unfunded liabilities, in present value terms, are \$60 trillion. **The worker-to-retiree ratio, which was 5.0 when Medicare was created in the mid-1960s, today is 2.5, and headed for less than 2.0 after 2030.** Left out of this calculation, of course, is the growing rank of non-retired entitlement recipients whom taxpayers must also support.

You don't hear about any of this from Democrats. One reason is that Bill Clinton, the most active, ubiquitous of our ex-presidents, has utterly dropped the subject in return for his party's indulgence of his fundraising that knows no limits, and no concern about propriety or conflicts of interest.

You don't hear much about it from Republicans either. **The Bill Clinton years may leave much to be criticized, but when both parties acknowledged a reality, there was at least a chance of doing something about it.** That ended in 2000, when fully one-fifth of Al Gore's convention delegates were public-sector union representatives, placed there to quash any mention of entitlement reform in the Democratic platform.

And that suits a lot of Democrats just fine, including Bernie, who, for all his exotic pretenses, is just another machine Democrat.

Boundless Crises, Reckless Spoilers, and Helpless Guardians

Wolfgang Ischinger

Wolfgang Ischinger, former German Ambassador to the United States, is Chairman of the Munich Security Conference and Professor for Security Policy and Diplomatic Practice at the Hertie School of Governance in Berlin.

MUNICH – The international order may be in its worst shape since the end of the Cold War. Those trying to keep the peace are overwhelmed and often helpless in the face of seemingly endless crises and reckless spoilers. When world leaders convene in Germany for the 52nd Munich Security Conference this weekend, they will attempt to chart a path through some very dangerous territory.

To be sure, the past year has seen its share of good news. Sustained diplomatic efforts brought about two breakthroughs with potentially far-reaching positive implications: the deal on Iran’s nuclear program and the Paris climate agreement. But the rest of the picture is bleak.

The big crises of the day transcend – and even call into question – international borders. The wars in Syria and Iraq have not only fueled the dissolution of political order in the Middle East, but have also left Europe struggling to find a common solution to the influx of refugees. Not since the end of World War II have so many people been driven from their homes.

Indeed, the Middle East has come to epitomize the way a conflict can make itself felt far beyond the battleground. The conflict in Syria has long since ceased to be a civil war; it has become a full-fledged regional crisis. The Islamic State – with its territorial base, aggressive online presence, and international network of militants (including followers in Europe) – has proved to be a truly global organization.

Elsewhere, the outlook is no brighter. In Libya, Mali, and Afghanistan, states have collapsed or are at risk of failing. Relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia could hardly be worse, absent direct military confrontation. Tensions between Turkey and Russia have grown precipitously. And, online, governments and private actors alike are abusing the modern world’s interconnectedness, threatening sensitive information and critical infrastructure across the globe.

Instead of the “ring of well governed countries” the European Union envisaged in its 2003 Security Strategy, the continent has come to be surrounded by a “ring of fire.” Europe’s security is under threat once again; military exercises are being conducted with increasing frequency, and the Ukraine crisis remains unresolved.

Nonetheless, major political figures seem to believe that they can respond to transnational challenges by seeking refuge in national myopia. This futile approach will produce only pseudo-solutions – or worse. Some governments have responded to the migration crisis with beggar-thy-neighbor policies, forcing adjacent countries to bear the brunt of the burden, and consequently, a core component of European integration – the border-free Schengen Area – is under threat.

Even the traditional supporters of a liberal global order, one based on multilateralism and international law, seem to be struggling to believe in their ability to shape events. Claims that the United States is retreating from the international arena are probably exaggerated, but in at least two of the defining conflicts of recent years – Ukraine and Syria – the US has not played as prominent a diplomatic role as it once would have.

Europe has been handicapped by several major problems: a shaky consensus on sanctions against Russia; continuing questions surrounding the euro; the threat of a British exit from the EU; and a resurgence of

illiberal nationalism and populism. If Europe keeps spiraling into dysfunction, it will not be able to play a meaningful role in the future.

As states fail and governments crumble, rogue leaders are stepping into the power vacuums. In Afghanistan, the Taliban's resurgence is undermining more than a decade of progress. In Africa and the Middle East, local strongmen and Islamist extremists are blocking progress toward peace or unleashing more strife.

Meanwhile, tensions between some of the world's most powerful countries are starting to rise. Russia under President Vladimir Putin has been keen to demonstrate that it is a global player – even as its economy suffers from international sanctions, plunging oil prices, and a lack of modernization. There have been a few signs of a potential rapprochement between Russia and the West, but disagreements over Syria loom large, especially after Russia supported an advance on rebel-held Aleppo by the Syrian government, which brought a rapid end to the latest round of peace talks in Geneva. Russia's failure to implement major parts of the Minsk Agreement in Ukraine is another important sticking point.

China is beginning to involve itself more in global issues. But instead of becoming a responsible stakeholder in the liberal international order, it seems to have chosen to focus on creating parallel governance structures, which it can shape according to its own preferences. And its increasing assertiveness – most visibly in the East and South China Seas – continues to worry its smaller neighbors, who wish for a stronger US role in the region.

We are likely to be entering a period of growing risk, rising uncertainty, and fundamental transformation – the beginning of a less stable international era. Responsible leaders must work together to reconstruct the international order, strengthen institutional arrangements, and stem spreading chaos.

The risk of a major interstate war may still be remote, but for the first time since the end of the Cold War the escalation of violence between major powers cannot be dismissed as an unrealistic nightmare. Were that to happen, the challenges facing the world today would pale in comparison.

Part of this article is based on an essay in the Munich Security Report 2016, which was published on the occasion of the 52nd Munich Security Conference.

139,120

New Greek bailout, same as the old Greek bailout

Bad news for Europe: Greek debt is back on the agenda.

2/11/16, 5:30 AM CET

BERLIN — A quorum of Europe’s leading financial technocrats gathered last week for the painful ritual of assessing the status of Greece’s bailout.

The meeting followed a familiar script: Greece’s creditors complained Athens had yet to deliver the required data. The Greeks protested, explaining that they had sent the information — the night before.

Greece is back. Just not in the way Europe had hoped.

Six months after receiving a third make-or-break bailout, Greece is again veering off course, sparking concerns among creditors that Athens is reverting to the bait-and-switch tactics that took the country to the brink last summer.

At issue is the evaluation of Greece’s reform progress. In order to receive further installments as part of its latest rescue, which could be as much as €86 billion, Greece needs a passing grade. Creditors say the delays in providing data and other information, common during Greece’s previous reviews, are little more than transparent tactics meant to slow down and complicate the process.

Greek Finance Minister Euclid Tsakalotos said Monday he expected the review, originally scheduled for the fall, to be completed within weeks.

Athens blames the Washington-based organization for imposing harsh remedies on the Greek economy that have done more harm than good

Yet Greece’s creditors, a group that includes other eurozone countries, the International Monetary Fund and the European Central Bank, maintain the review is nowhere near complete and worry Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras is preparing for another extended confrontation over the bailout terms as pressure builds on his leftist government to reject the planned spending cuts.

Greece’s next major debt repayment is on July 20, when about €2.3 billion in bonds held by the ECB become due. The review, overseen by technical experts from the European institutions and the IMF, must be concluded well before then in order for the funds to be released on time.

“If the review is due for completion in May or June, we will be in serious trouble,” Tsakalotos told MPs in Athens Monday.

Unreasonable demands

One reason for the rush is the IMF. Though party to previous bailouts, the fund has said it would only join the latest rescue if convinced Greece’s debt load is sustainable. It can only make that determination once the review has been completed.

Greece would prefer for the IMF not to participate.



Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras speaks to German Chancellor Angela Merkel | John Thys/AFP/Getty

Athens blames the Washington-based organization for imposing harsh remedies on the Greek economy that have done more harm than good. But Germany has made its continued participation in rescue contingent on the IMF joining. If the IMF backs out, Chancellor Angela Merkel would have difficulty winning approval for further disbursements from the Bundestag, the German parliament.

Tsipras met with German Chancellor Angela Merkel in London last week and will meet French President François Hollande in Paris next week before the European summit to try to resolve the impasse.

Tsipras' trump card may be the refugee crisis. Berlin is desperate to reduce the influx from Turkey and has been pressuring Athens to do more to help manage the crisis by registering the refugees and patrolling its coastal border with Turkey. Some European officials speculate privately that Tsipras could make leniency on Greece's review a condition for his cooperation in dealing with the refugees.

Greek officials reject suggestions that they are responsible for delays in completing the review, insisting that they have acted in good faith. They accuse Germany and its northern European allies of making unrealistic demands in the hope of toppling the government.

The election of Kyriakos Mitsotakis, a pro-reform free marketeer, to the leadership of the opposition New Democracy party last month has presented creditors with an attractive alternative to Syriza, Tsipras' allies argue. The center-right New Democracy, a member of the European People's Party bloc alongside Merkel's Christian Democrats, has pulled ahead of Syriza in some recent polls.

Such conspiracy theories have been a common refrain throughout Greece's long-running debt crisis and have generally proved to be wide of the mark.

Pension pushback

What is clear is that Athens has yet to fulfil key markers in the bailout agreement it reached with creditors in July.

Under the agreement, Greece should have established a €50 billion privatization fund to pay down its debt by the end of 2015. The move, widely viewed in Greece as a fire sale of state property, requires a complicated thicket of legislation before it can go forward. The fund is particularly important to Germany and France, which made the privatizations a condition for a deal during the all-night negotiations that led to the bailout in July.

Economists warn the increased contributions, tantamount to a further tax increase, could dent Greece's fragile economy.

Creditors also complain that Athens has made little headway in pushing through the promised reform of the federal administration, a bloated bureaucracy plagued by years of patronage.

Athens' biggest challenge, however, is pension reform. Creditors want Greece to cut existing pensions, arguing that doing so is necessary to put Greek debt on sustainable

footing. Greece spends the equivalent of about 15 percent of its GDP on pensions, nearly double the average for other advanced economies. Shortfalls in recent years have put enormous strain on the government's budget.

Tsipras has so far refused to make cuts, proposing instead to raise pension contributions for future retirees. Pensioners comprise a key Syriza constituency and Tsipras can't afford to lose their support. He also argues that many Greek families are now surviving on a single pension and that further cuts would only exacerbate the poverty that has hit many in the country in recent years.

But raising contributions is no less controversial.

Economists warn the increased contributions, tantamount to a further tax increase, could dent Greece's fragile economy.

Greeks have returned to the streets in force in recent weeks to protest the proposed pension reform. Hardest hit would be the self-employed, including many doctors, lawyers and other professionals, as well as farmers.

Opponents of the reform [staged](#) a general strike last week that effectively shut down the country. The upheaval has renewed doubts over Greece's prospects. In recent days, yields on Greek government debt, a key indicator of investor confidence, have shot up, reflecting the unease. Greece's stock market, meanwhile, fell to its lowest level since 1989 this week.

139,123

Nato sends ships to the Aegean

At the request of Berlin, Athens and Ankara, Nato will deploy ships to the Aegean under German command. Some commentators hope the mission will be more effective in fighting people smugglers and improve cooperation between Turkey and Greece. Others warn that just going after rubber boats won't solve the refugee crisis.

Share debate on



OPEN/CLOSE ALL QUOTES

PRÁVO (CZ) / 12 February 2016

Nato finally tackling people smuggling

Nato has finally dropped its neutral stance in the refugee crisis and is helping to clamp down on people smuggling, the left-leaning daily Právo writes approvingly:

“One figure shows how crucial this operation is: since the start of the year 75,000 people have crossed the Aegean, ten times as many as in the same period last year. Germany played a key role in passing the Nato resolution. That comes as no surprise, since what happens in the Aegean could determine Angela Merkel's political fate. This transatlantic wake-up call comes at a time when President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is threatening to send migrants on to Greece or Bulgaria any time now if the EU refuses to boost its aid to Turkey to six billion euros. We may well have to get ready for more unpleasant surprises.”

- [Miloš Balabán](#)
- [to the homepage](#)

Share on



SÜDDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG (DE) / 12 February 2016

Mission brings Greeks and Turks closer

The Nato deployment in the Mediterranean will promote trust between two partners, the centre-left daily Süddeutsche Zeitung comments:

“Greece and Turkey, although Nato partners, barely work together in the fight against the smuggler organisations in the Aegean. Under Nato's aegis a Nato ship can supply both sides with precise information. So this is less a militarisation of the refugee policy than a measure to build trust between the Greeks and the Turks. Working to sort out the chaos in the Aegean and save people from drowning in the sea can hardly be classified as an act of war. Looking to the EU for help is no good. Turkey wouldn't tolerate an EU mission like that off the Libyan coast. Naturally Nato won't solve the refugee crisis. But if it manages to help defuse the situation that will already be a useful contribution.”

- [Daniel Brössler](#)
- [Original article](#)

Share on



DELO (SI) / 12 February 2016

Hunting rubber dinghies merely pro forma

The Nato operations won't achieve a thing, the centre-left daily Delo is convinced:

“Even if they've agreed to go after rubber dinghies in the Aegean, the Nato generals know perfectly well that the refugee crisis can't be solved in this way. Because tomorrow a new refugee crisis could break out somewhere else. Refugees will always be nothing more than a yardstick for measuring the gravity of the crises they are fleeing. There are many other crises apart from Syria and the entire Nato fleet still wouldn't be enough to chase down all the dinghies. So the announced operations are nothing more than a waste of time and resources. A ploy with which European politicians hope to show their voters that they are capable of decisive action.”

- [Damijan Slabe](#)
- [to the homepage](#)

Share on



[NEUE ZÜRCHER ZEITUNG \(CH\)](#) / 12 February 2016

Operation can't replace refugee aid

The Nato operation in the Aegean can't replace crucial humanitarian aid for the refugees, the centre-right daily Neue Zürcher Zeitung argues:

“Simply driving the Syrian refugees back to Turkey cannot be a solution to the crisis. ... Turkey is already offering a secure refuge to 2.5 million migrants, and that number is growing every day. As justified as it is to criticise Ankara's tough stance, one can understand President Erdoğan's demand that the critics should also do more to help the refugees. Both Turkey and Syria's other similarly overburdened neighbours Lebanon and Jordan need Europe's help. Primarily in the form of more money and aid, but also through greater readiness to provide additional protection and security to helpless Syrians through selective resettlement. Should that help not be forthcoming, even the most modern warships in the Mediterranean won't stop the desperate war refugees from embarking on the dangerous journey to Europe.”

- [Peter Rasonyi](#)
- [Original article](#)

Share on



[TAGESSCHAU.DE \(DE\)](#) / 11 February 2016

Europe's appeal to Nato an embarrassment

The EU's call for Nato missions in the Aegean is a shameful act of despair, the public broadcaster tagesschau.de believes:

“Should it come to this, American ships will patrol the waters of the European Union because the Europeans can't do it themselves. That is the image such missions would send out to the world. An embarrassment. ... What's also completely unclear is what will happen with the situation that Nato is supposed to shed light on. Knowing where the rafts launch from and what routes they take is one thing. But in fact Nato should also be able to stop the boats, identify the smugglers and above all take on board the refugees - as the EU-led mission is already doing off the Libyan coast. And then that leaves the question of what should be done with the rescued migrants.”

- [Christoph Prössl](#)
- [Original article](#)

Share on



[EL PERIÓDICO DE CATALUNYA \(ES\)](#) / 10 February 2016

International community reveals its helplessness

The appeal to Nato highlights the international community's total helplessness in the face of the Syrian war and the refugee crisis, the centre-left daily El Periódico de Catalunya surmises:

“The advance of the government troops on [Aleppo](#) has another serious consequence: the [peace talks in Geneva](#) will end practically before they even get started. Any chance of successful negotiations has disappeared for now. Ankara

and Berlin's appeal to Nato to get involved in border controls is a desperate call in view of a situation no one can or wants to deal with, neither individual states nor the European Union as a community. This call for help from the Atlantic alliance is proof that the international system has failed miserably after almost five years of war. And Nato's timid response likewise.”

- [to the homepage](#)

Share on



POLITIS (CY) / 09 February 2016

Athens' incompetence to blame

Athens has carelessly left it to Turkey to play the leading role in overcoming the refugee crisis, the liberal daily Politis writes regarding the possibility of a UN operation in the Aegean Sea:

“The refugee crisis is enhancing Turkey's geopolitical importance and we must wait and see what that means for the balance of power in the Middle East. ... The EU is now turning to Ankara and Macedonia (where the fence on the border with Greece is being extended) to control the wave of refugees. Greece has failed miserably to show that it can provide stability by protecting the EU outer borders effectively. On the contrary, Greece has put the ball in Turkey's court - with the result that Erdoğan is now ready to show everyone who's boss in the Middle East.”

139,126

Analysts: Refugees 'may end up boosting European economies'

EurActiv.com with AFP

16 Sep 2015 - 08:40

European nations overwhelmed by the biggest refugee crisis since World War II may end up boosting their economies if they just let the migrants in, analysts say.

More than 430,000 people have crossed the Mediterranean to Europe so far this year. Nearly 2,750 have died, and more arrive every day, many fleeing war zones in Syria and Afghanistan.

The challenge has left the European Union scrambling for answers, with member nations disagreeing Monday over a proposal to share out 120,000 refugees and ease the burden on frontline states.

But beyond the immediate logistical challenges and predominant humanitarian concerns, the economic impact of the tide of refugees moving to Europe is slight, and may well be positive, analysts say.

Welcoming refugees offers Europe the chance "not only to honour its position as a democratic Union that is wealthy and respectful of tradition, but also to expand its growth prospects," Patrick Artus, economist at French investment bank Natixis, said in a recent report.

Holger Schmieding, economist at the German investment bank Berenberg, estimated that the arrival of refugees could boost economic output in the eurozone by 0.2 percent as of the second half of 2015.

>>**Read:** [Why Angela Merkel is so generous to the refugees](#)

Migrants play an important role in economic expansion and in periods of decline, said historian Nancy Green, researcher at the School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences in Paris.

New arrivals often work in sectors where conditions are viewed as unsatisfactory for native-born workers, she said, citing the clothing and steel industries of the 19th and 20th centuries and the services industries of today.

"Our continent could and should become a great land for immigration in the 21st century," influential French economist Thomas Piketty wrote in a recent column in *Liberation*.

The costs to national budgets are minimal, too, according to a report issued last year by the club of advanced economies, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.

'Impact close to zero'

"The impact of the cumulative waves of migration that arrived over the past 50 years in OECD countries is on average close to zero," it said, citing new studies showing that the cost or benefit to the public purse rarely exceeds 0.5 percent of total economic output.

"Welcoming refugees is a humanitarian decision, it can never be an economic decision," stressed Jean-Christophe Dumont, specialist in migration at the OECD. "It has a cost over several years and it is not major," he added.

People fleeing war have not prepared their migration nor chosen their destination, Dumont said.

"They have gone through a traumatic situation, they need time to recover. We cannot expect them to start answering job advertisements when they get off the bus," the analyst said.

Refugees arriving in Europe would need five or six years to match the employment level of migrants who enter to join families already resident in their host nations, and 15 years to match that of the native-born workforce, he said.

Refugees, like other migrants, do not aim to be dependent on welfare, Dumont added. "They want to rebuild, to have a better life for their children, to work," he said.

>>**Read:** [INFOGRAPHIC: The facts about asylum seekers in Europe](#)

Economic studies show that the impact of migration is minor, both on the labour market and public finances, according to El Mouhoub Mouhoud, economics analyst at the Paris Dauphine University.

'Refugees are an investment

"It is not the same thing for a country like Lebanon which in the space of a few years admitted the equivalent of one quarter of its population," Mouhoud said.

The new arrivals are increasingly well qualified because the poorest lack the means to leave, he added.

"When we say we cannot take in the destitute of the world, we are wrong. It is not the destitute who we are taking in despite appearances," the analyst said.

Marcel Fratzscher, head of the German economic research institute DIW said the refugees should not be seen as a financial burden. "The refugees are an investment, it is not money lost."

Standard & Poor's said that the budgetary impact on European nations wouldn't put their credit ratings at risk, but the influx of potential workers would also not help them cope with ageing societies.

But it said the refugee crisis could expose the EU's inability to find cooperative solutions and distract it from other challenges.

"If mishandled, Europe's approach to solving the refugee influx may lead to increased populism and xenophobia, diverting attention from budgetary and structural reforms," said Standard & Poor's in a report.

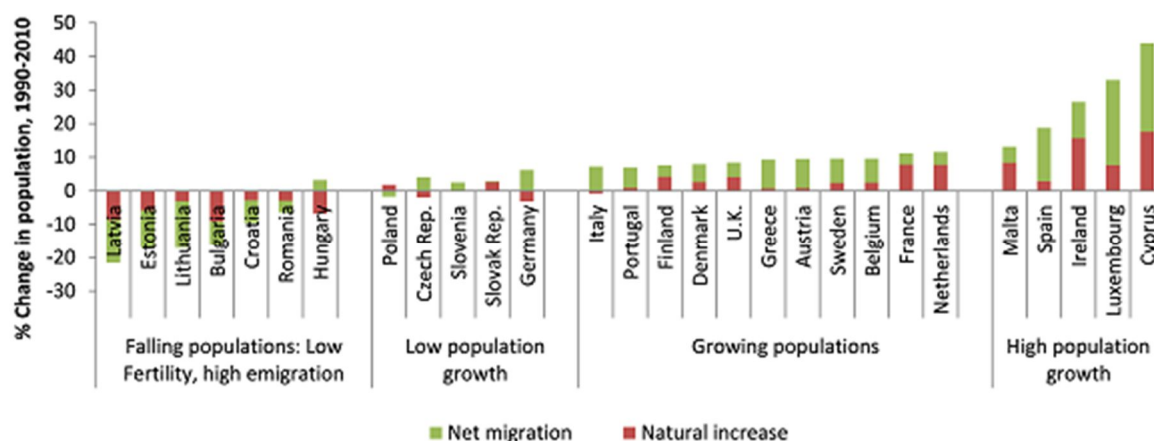
Is the refugee crisis an opportunity for an aging Europe?

Europe is facing the biggest inflow of migrants in decades. The number of refugees from conflict zones in Syria, Iraq, and elsewhere arriving at southern European shores is rising by the day. The resulting surge of asylum claims in the European Union (EU) have exposed divisions between EU member states over how to react. Governments in Central Europe and the Baltics have rejected the [proposals by the European Commission](#) to use mandatory quotas to distribute refugees across all 28 member states and come out against taking in significant numbers of refugees.

But wait a minute. Opposition to immigration appears counterintuitive for countries that face the prospect of aging and rapid population declines. For example, the Baltic countries and Bulgaria have already seen their populations shrink by more than 15 percent since 1990, Croatia by 10 percent, and Romania and Hungary by more than 5 percent. The share of the population aged 65 and above in the countries of Central Europe and the Baltics increased by more than a third between 1990 and 2010. Unlike in Western Europe, where people are living longer, [aging in Central Europe and the Baltic countries has been driven significant emigration](#), especially of young people of child-bearing age and often to [Western Europe](#), and by substantial drops in fertility. Fertility rates in Central Europe and the Baltic countries today are generally below 1.6. They are as low as 1.3 in Poland, Hungary, and Slovakia—far below the replacement fertility rate of 2.1. Population projections suggest that aging and demographic decline will continue and even accelerate, putting economic growth at risk and adding to fiscal pressures through a greater reliance on old age pensions and health services.

Figure 1: Low fertility and high emigration have led to falling or stagnating populations in Central Europe and the Baltics

Cumulative population change 1990-2010, in percent



Source: Based on United Nations' Population Division (2013). Definitions: (i) Natural increase in the population: births minus deaths; (ii) Net migration: total number of immigrants less the number of emigrants.

How can Europe turn this challenge around? Countries can minimize economic and social consequences of demographic change through [policies that makes smaller workforces more productive](#), including through improvements in workers' skills and health so that they can be employed more productively and during longer working lives. Given the vast size of emigration from countries in Central Europe and the Baltics over the last two decades, immigration will not make up for the decline in working-age populations. But with refugee numbers in Europe surging, immigration will gradually become an element of the policy response. The real policy question for the countries of Central Europe and the Baltics today is therefore not whether to accept migrants or not but, rather, how to turn the challenge of today's refugee crisis into an opportunity. At a minimum, the examples of [Turkey and Jordan](#) show that hosting far larger numbers of refugees than Europe need not be an economic drag.

Given the terrible and intractable conditions in their countries of origin, refugees from Syria, Iraq, and Eritrea arriving in Europe today are likely to stay for a while. This suggests that once short-term humanitarian emergency needs are met, they require stable housing, schooling, health, and employment solutions for the medium term. For example, since large numbers of refugees are coming with children of schooling age, schools need capacity for introductory classes to allow children to learn the language of the host country and to get integrated into general classrooms. Education systems in countries in Central Europe and the Baltics [are adjusting to declining student numbers](#), so there should be infrastructure and teacher capacity to accommodate incoming refugee children and youth.

Many migrants arriving in Europe today come with the skills and motivation to be successful and to make a contribution to their host countries' economies. Many come with children. They have the potential to not just alleviate declining numbers of workers but also to boost innovation through bringing fresh ideas and perspectives. Integrating migrants is challenging. I can think of plenty of examples across Europe where integration has not been successful. But there are others. Take the example of the [Vietnamese community](#) that has been living in the Czech Republic for decades. There are more than [60,000 ethnic Vietnamese in the Czech Republic today](#)—20 times more than the European Commission's refugee quota would allocate to the country. Many Vietnamese have excelled in education and are active in the business community. Examples of both failure and success of integration provide lessons to inform policy about how to make Europe's response to the refugee crisis not just an essential humanitarian act but also a smart investment in its economic prosperity.

[Christian Bodewig](#)

Germany and the Refugee Crisis: It's not about the economy

Published on Friday, 11 December 2015 08:17

Category: [Articles and Commentary](#)

Written by [Sebastian Plóciennik](#)



A quick look at recent economic data leaves little doubt about German prowess. While most Eurozone countries have been stagnating for years, Germany has enjoyed stable growth. The country's record of international trade is also impressive: the trade surplus last year was over 200 billion euros. What's more, Germany almost has full employment. These guys seem to have their feet firmly fixed on the economic ground.

[Photo by Shutterstock](#)

When comparing these successes with the recent decision to open borders to thousands or even millions of refugees, it is difficult not to think it was a well-thought decision made after solid, Teutonic analyses of possible gains and losses. It seems impossible Berlin decided to go for a risky economic adventure. To put it bluntly, refugees were economically needed in Germany.

Many economists claim immigration generally boosts a country's competitiveness because it raises the labour supply and decreases labour costs for entrepreneurs, leaving them more space for investment. Immigrants bring new experiences and qualifications that also enrich the economy. Even helping them through government spending can boost the economy. They are usually more willing to open new enterprises. However, sometimes they take jobs making them unpopular with local people.

It is expected that by 2030, Germany's economically active population will decrease by 6 million. Labour costs are currently high and there are lot of vacancies in many different sectors of the economy. Germany's experience with immigration can hardly be called negative. After the Second World War, the country accepted numerous Gastarbeiters ("guest workers") from Southern Europe and later from Turkey, Eastern Europe and the Balkans as well as so-called "late refugees" of German origin from post-Soviet states. During the 1990s, the scale of inflow of people to Germany was higher than to traditional immigrant destinations such as the US, Australia and Canada. Today, there are over 15 million people of immigrant origin living in Germany. The common perception of them is that they have helped strengthen and enrich the German economy.

This time, however, as a growing number of Germans fear, it might be different. The enthusiasm that could be observed in August among many people who welcomed refugees with open arms has disappeared. In October's poll conducted by

Mannheimer Forschungsgruppe, 51 percent of respondents expressed their doubts as to whether the country is able to manage the number of the refugees entering the country.

It is the scale of the influx of immigrants that influenced social moods to the largest extent. A few years ago, 500,000 immigrants per year was brought up in public discussions as the highest manageable number. However, according to the German Institute for Economic Research (DIW), in 2015 there will be 1.5 million and the same number in 2016. Only in 2017 will the inflow drop to 500,000-700,000. Bearing in mind some of the immigrants are expected to return to their countries of origin, Germany is expected to absorb more than 4 million immigrants by the year 2020.

There is not one particular reason why German people are beginning to fear refugees. The most radical xenophobes perceive them as warriors in the so-called clash of civilisations and jihadists of the Islamic State; they refuse them any ability to integrate into German society and culture. These fears are clearly expressed in PEGIDA's demonstrations and arson against the refugee shelters. After the Paris attacks, they may feel their views have been confirmed. But the majority of sceptics have doubts of the economic impact, if it is impossible to easily integrate such a huge group of people into the German economy, and that the first victim of this inflow will be Germany's current economic prosperity.

The refugees' qualification levels are the root of much of the concern. At first sight, these fears may seem exaggerated. According to the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees' data, eight per cent of the refugees coming to Germany have no education at all, 24 per cent have an elementary education, 17.5 per cent graduated from high school and only 13 per cent hold a university degree. But this data, which was collected voluntarily, is incomplete and does not fully reflect the problem's core because it cannot be easily compared with the German education system. Ludger Wößmann, an economist at IfO, claims it is more reliable to combine different international statistics. Some of them show that while 16 per cent of young Germans do not possess so-called "basic competencies", in Syrians' or Albanians' cases, this number is as high as 60 per cent or more. Also, the great majority of them do not know the German language, meaning the state will need to invest around 900 euros per person each year into expensive language courses. Their education's next phase will not be cheap either. Vocational schools cost 7,000 euros per year per person for and university education up to 10,000 euros (this data comes from an overview of several surveys made by economist Daniel Stelter). Together, it makes up billions of euros, but hopefully will raise refugees' qualifications. Without necessary training and education, they will not survive in a highly competitive German labour market. In case these plans fail, Berlin, Munich and Hamburg will face a rising problem of social exclusion and ghettoized suburbs.

Another issue that is an object of concern is Germany's social policy. It is clear the current situation requires the creation of expensive new asylum centres, apartments and shelters. Even more money will be consumed by a relatively generous benefits system which, as critics fear, can encourage asylum seekers to live at the state's expense, rather than mobilise to seek a job and/or education. During the first 15 months, asylum seekers receive up to 143 euros per person. Other benefits such as food or accommodation are given directly. Later, these people are included in the Hartz IV "basic protection" general system; they are entitled to receive 392 euros per month and accommodation costs are covered by the state. It is questionable whether there is a real threat of misuse, but the government does not want to take too many risks like Denmark and Norway and considers lowering benefits for them by effectively charging for compulsory language and integration courses. However, the Constitutional Court in Karlsruhe ruled in 2012 that refugees must receive the same benefits other people are entitled to.

Third, Germans ask themselves if their labour market's ability to integrate refugees is really as high as many assume. So far, the situation has been excellent, but it could change as a result of, for example, an economic crisis in China. The first victims of a potential crisis would be low-paying services which do not require highly qualified workers, services in which immigrants are most likely to find employment. This is not the only reason for anxiety. Many experts suggest

Germany's most recent social gain, the minimum wage, makes it more difficult to employ immigrants whose productivity may frequently not justify 8.50 euros per hour.

In September of 2015, trade unions and employers agreed the minimum wage is a sacred thing that should not change. But it is increasingly clear some exceptions may be necessary instead of, as was suggested before the refugee crisis, raising the minimum wage. The truth is Germany should create a *carte blanche* system for asylum seekers with no payment regulations, strengthened by some benefits for companies that decide to employ them. Some economists also worry that digitalisation and automation of certain services make a great number of job places unnecessary. A future with automatic gas stations, cars with no drivers and factories without workers is coming. There are voices in German public debate stating it is also time to stop thinking about traditional employment's expansion and start thinking about basic income, like Finland already has. Facing the above-mentioned challenges, DIW's prediction should be observed: their notion that the employment rate among new immigrants will rise to 41 per cent in ten years may be too optimistic.

This entirely new immigration policy's cost is one more factor that makes people afraid. Estimates made by German economic research institutes suggest the cost is between 12,000 and 20,000 euros per person each year. This only includes the costs of basic care and accommodation and not additional services such as language courses. Within the next five years, these costs are expected to amount to 140 billion euros. Some analysts think the new immigration policy can be a type of cyclical programme for hard times in the global economy. Building an infrastructure for refugees can help Germany remain on the growth tract. But common opinions state that Germany might forget the ambitious goal of balanced public finances and face rising taxes, which are usually negative for economic growth.

So it is quite speculative to talk about granted advantages of the refugees' inflow and there is no challenge to find arguments for scepticism. How do we thus interpret Angela Merkel's decision to pursue the "open door" policy towards refugees?

The first explanation leads to the conclusion that Merkel made a horrible mistake by following the advice of small but powerful German economic lobbies which see immigration as a chance to overcome the demographic crisis and moderate labour costs. Very recent considerations regarding controlling the border and tightening rules for asylum seekers are evidence that Berlin is heading towards a revised position. The second conclusion is that an inflow of immigrants is a matter of long term advantages for Germany and requires short term costs. If there is enough money and investment becomes efficient, the country will be a winner during the current crisis. But there is also a third explanation which may actually be the most accurate one. Angela Merkel, was driven by humanitarian motives while handling the refugee crisis and was willing to help the refugees because of Germany's dismal past. She wanted to solidify her country's moral transformation during a time of rising nationalism and Euro-scepticism in other parts of Europe. So the decision was perhaps not about the economy after all.

Translated by Bartosz Marcinkowski

EU officials find that most of the ‘refugees’ are not refugees. What a mess

Douglas Murray

Douglas Murray

30 January 2016

Even EU officials are now finally admitting that a lot – or, rather, most – of the people we have been calling ‘refugees’ are not refugees. They are economic migrants with no more right to be called European citizens than anybody else in the world. Even Frans Timmermans, Vice President of the European Commission, made this point this week. In his accounting, at least 60pc of the people who are here [are economic migrants who should not be here](#) – are from North African states such as Morocco and Tunisia. As he told Dutch television:-

“These are people that you can assume have no reason to apply for refugee status.”

Swedish officials are coming to a similar conclusion, saying that [as many as 80,000 of the mainly young men who have gone to Sweden as ‘refugees’ in the past year alone are no such thing.](#)

Now there are the usual attempts to crowd-please from certain politicians and officials who are talking about how they might have to deport these people. But they won’t, will they? Does anybody honestly believe that the Swedish authorities are currently preparing to deport 80,000 fake asylum seekers from their country?

Or let us assume that the 60pc figure is correct for Germany and that 60pc of the people who have arrived in Germany in the past year alone should not be there. Given that it has taken in more than a million people in the last twelve months, is Germany now going to deport as many as three quarters of a million fake asylum seekers from its territory? Of course not. They will not even attempt it. Everybody in Europe knows that. And everybody following events and weighing up their chances from outside Europe knows that.

Everybody on earth now knows that Europe’s present leaders lack either the will or the means to enforce their own laws. So more people will come next year, and the year after that and the year after that. All in the knowledge that once you’re in, you’re in. If the facts were otherwise then Sweden, Germany and other countries across the continent would currently be preparing to ship hundreds of thousands of people out of Europe and back to their countries of origin. But they’re not.

And so the numbers coming in will increase, and the politicians will keep posing, and the European peoples will rightly get more and more enraged at the fact that their continent is being taken away from them. Eventually perhaps even the constant bogeyman warnings about the ‘far-right’ will lose their capacity to scare. Not good times ahead, I’d say.

Still, at least we all listened to Benedict Cumberbatch.

139,134

German Companies Race to Sign Up Migrant Workers

[Friedrich Geiger](#)

By Friedrich Geiger

4 décembre 2015

BERLIN--German companies are scrambling to connect almost 1 million immigrants with jobs--but the rich seam of fresh labor is throwing up manifold challenges.

The rush to recruit migrants is partly altruistic, borne of a concern for the wider society. Assimilating the new arrivals quickly could prevent them from drifting toward radicalism, and reduce strain on Germany's public services. Yet there is also a clear benefit for German businesses blighted by an aging, overstretched workforce.

Germany's adjusted unemployment rate dipped to 6.3% in November, its lowest level in almost 24 years. With so few people available to fill the gaps in the private sector, migrants provide an obvious opportunity.

Yet, while overall joblessness continues to fall, unemployment among working-age migrants from the Middle East and Africa hit 42.1% in September, according to Germany's Federal Employment Agency, up 4.4% from a year earlier--highlighting the challenge authorities face.

Companies ranging from family shops to [BASF SE](#), the world's largest chemicals firm, have opened their doors to immigrants from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq and other countries.

At [Workeer.de](#), a website dedicated to providing openings for migrants which was launched in the summer, more than 1000 employers offer work, traineeships and internships. Among them are a bakery seeking a sales assistant in Heidelberg, a publisher looking for a website tester in Berlin and a telecommunications company offering a bookkeeping internship in Leipzig.

But despite everyone's best intentions, few of the newcomers speak German, and most lack proof of education or professional training. Registering to work legally in Germany can take months.

Language is the biggest impediment to employment, said 92% of the companies recently polled by economic think tank [ifo Institut](#).

"Language is key to integration," said Jürgen Wurstthorn, spokesman for Germany's Federal Employment Agency. Gaining proficiency to work in mid-skilled positions, such as geriatric nurse or craftsman, can take at least six months, he said.

The agency plans to offer language courses for about 100,000 migrants and other organizations also offer free classes.

Yet, despite the various complications, many companies are pressing ahead.

Tannert Dentaltechnik GmbH, a maker of dentures and fillings in Dortmund, recently hired an apprentice from Syria. Co-owner Anne Tannert-Horst said she was glad to fill the vacancy. "We had a lot of trouble finding apprentices," Ms. Tannert-Horst said.

The 18-year-old apprentice, who has been in Germany for more than a year and had previously carried out an internship with the company, began vocational training that mixes work and schooling on September 1. Ms. Tannert-Horst said she and her staff "don't notice large cultural differences" with the apprentice, other than that he avoids eating pork.

Bayerischer Hof, a luxury hotel in Munich, said 10 of its staff came to Germany as refugees in recent years. Among them is Dalivar-Khan Zadran, a Syrian who started his apprenticeship in September.

"Mr. Zadran is a very committed trainee," said human resources manager Thomas Hintermayer, "but in school, he still struggles with the German language."

B+B Automations- und Steuerungstechnik GmbH, a producer of manufacturing machinery, recently posted an ad seeking a software developer on [Workeer.de](#). B+B co-owner Alexander Beck said the post was open for months before he received a letter from the regional chamber of commerce in November promoting the site.

Mr. Beck quickly received five applications, mostly from Syrians, and three applicants looked promising, he said.

"I don't mind where they come from, as long as they fit in and work well," he said. "They'll get proper pay, comparable to Germans."

Software company [SAP SE](#) plans to offer 100 internships and at least 10 additional apprenticeships for refugees. Steel company [ThyssenKrupp AG](#) said it would create around 150 apprenticeships for refugees over the next two years, roughly 230 less-formal internships and further positions for specialist workers and university graduates.

Railway operator Deutsche Bahn AG is offering internships and training 15 migrants for up to 28 months as skilled electronic technicians.

Big companies that have large human-resources departments are helping train immigrants who may end up working for other companies. Chemical group [BASF](#) offers a program for 50 migrants that includes training and job-search support. Engineering conglomerate [Siemens AG](#) plans to offer internships for 100 migrants and language courses and training for an additional 64. [Deutsche Telekom AG](#) offers internships for more than 70 migrants.

[Daimler AG](#), maker of [Mercedes-Benz](#) vehicles, plans to offer hundreds of places in a "bridge internship" aimed at integrating foreigners. The first batch of 40 migrants started internships in November at a Daimler plant in Stuttgart.

The group, hailing from Afghanistan, Eritrea, Gambia, Nigeria, Pakistan and Syria, will stay at the plant for 14 weeks. They work in axle production and logistics and receive related training for almost four hours a day, and German language lessons for the same amount of time.

Municipalities and business groups are also working to find apprenticeships for refugees.

In Munich, the chamber of commerce and an alliance of upscale hotels recently held a one-day introduction to the hospitality industry for about 250 migrant schoolchildren. The chamber of commerce says at least 10,000 vocational training positions remained vacant in Bavaria when the school year started in late summer.

In Dortmund, the Skilled Crafts Chamber in August launched vocational training for 22 migrants. They had learned German for three months and did internships before their formal traineeships started.

"We're hearing from the businesses training refugees that they're very highly motivated," said project manager Kathrin Engel. "They see it as a chance to make it in Germany."

139,136

European Union Predicts Economic Gains From Influx of Migrants

By JAMES KANTER NOV. 5, 2015
Photo



Nematullah Jasar, right, an Afghan refugee who arrived in Germany in 2013, now works in the town of Passau. European officials predict that migrants will provide at least a small economic lift in the next three years. Credit: Vancon Laetitia for The New York Times

BRUSSELS — [European Union](#) officials on Thursday put a positive economic spin on the bloc's refugee crisis.

In [a forecast](#), officials predicted that the three million migrants expected over the next three years would provide at least a small lift — a net gain of perhaps a quarter of 1 percent to the European economy by 2017.

With that prediction, the [European Commission](#), the bloc's executive arm, used one of its periodic economic forecasts to wade into one of the most divisive issues Europe has faced in decades: migration.

The arrival this year of [large numbers of people](#) from Syria and other war-torn countries has driven a wedge between countries like Germany that have sought a more accommodating stance and those like Hungary, which want [far tighter border controls](#).

The commission, in its autumn economic forecast, said “the arrival of large numbers of asylum seekers” would require increases in public spending to manage the influx — spending that would provide a stimulus to the European economy.

There would also be an additional positive impact from the increase in workers, “provided the right policies are in place to facilitate access to the labor market,” the commission said in a news release.

Some analysts questioned whether the European Commission was being too optimistic in its forecast — whether because too few of the newcomers will have the right job skills or be young enough to make long-term contributions to the economy, or because too few countries are ready to absorb the migrants.

“Member states have very different philosophies about how soon migrants can actually be integrated into the labor market,” said Stephen Booth, the co-director of Open Europe, a research group in London. “Germany has been willing to allow those seeking asylum to take jobs more quickly than, say, countries like France.”

The commission's report acknowledged that the European recovery has been slow. And it warned against expectations of a rapid turnaround because of challenges that include the slowdown in China and regional tensions created by a standoff with Russia over Ukraine.

Still, the commission predicted that the economy of the 19-country eurozone would grow 1.6 percent for this year as a whole, followed by 1.8 percent in 2016 and 1.9 percent in 2017, aided in part by the impact of the migrant influx.

The forecast predicted even slightly better growth in all three years for the broader 28-member European Union, which includes countries that do not use the euro, like Britain and Hungary. Those two nations are among those that have resisted the commission's urging that all European Union members share the burden of absorbing the migrants to relieve pressure on front-line states like Italy and Greece, where many of the refugees enter Europe.

The projections in Thursday's report support a statement made in September by the commission's president, Jean-Claude Juncker, that migration could be an antidote to looming labor woes in Europe, where an aging population threatens economic growth. Migration should be a "well-managed resource" rather than a problem, Mr. Juncker said in his [State of the Union address](#) to the European Parliament.

Thursday's forecast also acknowledged the benefits, at least temporarily, of low oil prices and of the European Central Bank's bond-buying stimulus program.

Valdis Dombrovskis, the European Commission's vice president for the euro currency and social issues, said on Thursday in a statement accompanying the report that European governments needed to take "advantage of these temporary tailwinds" to carry out overhauls and help stabilize national finances.

"This is important," he said, "particularly against the backdrop of a slowing global economy, continuing tensions in our neighborhood and the need to manage the refugee crisis decisively and collectively."

Pierre Moscovici, the commissioner for economic and financial affairs, told a news conference shortly after the numbers were made public that migration would have only a "weak" impact on growth, but one that would be "positive for the E.U. as a whole."

The forecasts still needed to be checked over the coming months, Mr. Moscovici said. But the initial estimate "challenges some of our misconceptions" about migration, he said, apparently referring to the idea that asylum seekers would add an economic burden.

The commission expects asylum seekers this year to add about one million people to the European Union's population, which stood at 508.2 million in January. An additional 1.5 million will enter in 2016, and then a half-million more in 2017, the commission predicted. The total would increase in the European Union's population by 0.4 percent "at most," assuming that some asylum applications are rejected, the commission said.

Germany has been one of the countries most welcoming to asylum seekers, and has been attempting to [help migrants find jobs](#). The European Commission's report presented two simulations of the employment impact for Germany. One scenario assumed that the new arrivals would have skills comparable to the current German population, which the report said would expand Germany's economy about 0.2 percent this year, and 0.4 percent next year.

In the other simulation, in which the new arrivals consisted only of low-skilled workers, the commission said the impact on German growth would be somewhat less.

But growth in the German economy might not be completely positive for Germany's workers, the commission acknowledged. In either scenario, employment would increase about 1 percent by the end of the decade, but there would also be "stronger downward pressure on real wages," according to the report.

And Carsten Brzeski, the chief economist at ING-DiBa bank in Frankfurt, was dubious about the reliability of even the near-term growth forecast for the euro area. He noted, for example, that new data on Thursday for German industrial orders showed an unexpected decline, mainly on weaker foreign demand.

"It is clear that the next months will be much more difficult for the eurozone economy than described by the commission's forecasts," said Mr. Brzeski. "There is a big portion of wishful thinking underlying the forecasts, and the downside risks should not be underestimated."

139,138

Germany's handling of immigration will shape the future of Europe

Can immigration improve Germany's precarious demographic situation?

BY: [GUNTRAM B. WOLFF](#) DATE: SEPTEMBER 11, 2015



FINANCIAL
TIMES

A short version of this op-ed was originally published in the [Financial Times](#)

When religious persecution around 1700 drove the Huguenots to Prussia's Berlin and Brandenburg, they added more than 1% to the native population and brought skills, knowledge and technology, with lasting positive effects on [Germany's productivity](#). 300 years later, religious persecution, war and poverty are driving hundreds of thousands to Germany again. [Germany's authorities](#) expect up to 800000 asylum seekers in 2015, an estimate that may be too high but would represent about 1% of Germany's population. Immigrants other than asylum seekers would increase that number to far more than 1 million. In 2014, more than 600000 asylum seekers reached the EU. How quickly these immigrants are integrated (or not) will be decisive for Germany's economy and Europe's monetary union.

Immigrants are significantly [younger than the domestic population](#). Given Germany's major [demographic challenges](#), this is welcome news. As Wolfgang Schäuble, Germany's finance minister, has pointed out, the immediate costs of handling refugees and immigrants are manageable. Long-term benefits to public finance and the sustainability of pensions can be substantial. [Research](#) has documented that foreigners currently living in Germany pay more to the state than they receive in social benefits. But the long-term benefits depend on whether and how immigrants are integrated into the German labour market.

Many immigrants bring specific skills and the ability and willingness to work. [German industry](#) has discovered this opportunity and has called for legal changes to facilitate the integration of qualified workers in the German labour market. Industry groups are calling for immigrants to be granted the right to apply for apprenticeship positions in Germany, in order to adapt and upgrade their skills. In the last few years, the integration of migrants in the German labour market has been [made easier](#), but significant obstacles remain, and Germany still has a reputation of being restrictive on immigration.

Opening the German labour market quickly and comprehensively to migrants would provide a boost to the German economy. The substantial increase in the labour supply should contribute to increased German output. More workers would mean more investments, increasing growth further. Immigrants would also need housing, benefiting the construction sector. The additional investments in the economy and immigrants' lower saving rates would boost German demand. The demand boost should also benefit Germany's neighbours and could help bring down Germany's current account surplus. In fact, countries with high immigration rates often run current account deficits, such as [Spain in the 2000s](#) and the [United States](#). The effect is unlikely to be as big in Germany – but additional workers will need capital and housing.

Some fear that immigrants will dampen wage growth, and make it harder for euro area countries to regain much needed competitiveness relative to Germany. However, the empirical evidence on wage effects is inconclusive. Relatively low-skilled immigrants could even contribute to higher wages for skilled German workers. Qualified

workers, such as nurses from Syria and Iraq, may however compete with German workers and potential immigrants from other euro area countries.

More immigrants entering Germany from outside the EU could make it more difficult for migrants from other euro area countries to find a job there. From 2009 to 2014, more than half a million immigrants arrived in Germany from Spain, Italy, Portugal and Greece. These numbers are small given the huge unemployment rates in Southern Europe. There is thus not enough migration within the euro area to make the currency union adapt to the shocks and reduce unemployment rates sufficiently. Immigration from outside Europe won't help bring down unemployment in Southern Europe – but it could at least contribute to adjustment in Germany, making job creation in Southern Europe easier.

Chancellor Angela Merkel has a historic chance to turn the refugee crisis into an opportunity for immigrants, for Germany and for Europe. Integrating large numbers of migrants is a huge challenge to society and to social cohesion. However if successful, it could boost Germany's economy – and contribute to re-balancing the monetary union.

Immigration could turn around Germany's main weakness – its precarious demographic situation – and help pay the pensions of tomorrow. Opening German borders to immigrants will change the economic and political balance in Europe for decades, as did the migration of Huguenots 300 years ago.

139,140

Immigration into the Welfare State

Hans-Werner Sinn, Professor of Economics and Public Finance at the University of Munich, is President of the Ifo Institute for Economic Research and serves on the German economy ministry's Advisory Council. He is the author, most recently, of *The Euro Trap: On Bursting Bubbles, Budgets, and Beliefs*.

MUNICH – The armed conflict destabilizing some Arab countries has unleashed a huge wave of refugees headed for Europe. About 1.1 million came to Germany alone in 2015. At the same time, the adoption of the principle of freedom of movement within Europe has triggered massive, but largely unnoticed, intra-European migration flows. In 2014, Germany experienced an unprecedented [net inflow](#) of 304,000 people from other EU countries, and the number was probably similar in 2015.

Some EU members, including Austria, Hungary, Slovenia, Spain, France, and the initially welcoming Denmark and Sweden, have reacted by practically suspending the Schengen Agreement and reinstating border controls. Economists are not really surprised at this. In the 1990s, dozens of academic papers addressed the issue of migration into welfare states, discussing many of the problems that are now becoming apparent. [I myself wrote much](#) on the subject at the time, trying – mostly in vain – to raise awareness among policymakers.

A fundamental issue is at stake. Welfare states are defined by the principle that those who enjoy above-average income pay more taxes and contributions than what they get back in the form of public services, while those with below-average earnings pay less than they receive. This redistribution, channeling net public resources toward lower-income households, is a sensible correction to the market economy, a kind of insurance against life's vicissitudes and the rigors of scarcity pricing that characterize the market economy and have little to do with equitableness.

Welfare states are fundamentally incompatible with the free movement of people between countries if the newcomers have immediate and full access to public benefits in their host countries. In such cases, countries can act as welfare magnets, attracting many more migrants than would be economically advisable, because the newcomers receive, in addition to their wages, a migration grant in the form of public transfers. Only if migrants received only wages could efficient self-regulation in migration be expected.

British Prime Minister David Cameron drew the right conclusion from this: Welfare magnetism not only leads to an inefficient geographical distribution of people; it also erodes and damages the magnet. That's why Cameron is demanding a limitation of the inclusion principle, even for intra-European economic migrants. Even if they find a job, says Cameron, migrants should get access to tax-financed welfare benefits only after four years. As it stands, a substantial waiting period is in force only for non-working EU migrants, who must be resident in the United Kingdom for five years to gain full access to public benefits.

The proposal does not necessarily imply hardship for EU migrants; it simply means that any support they may require over the four-year period is to be financed by their home country. There is indeed much to be said for frontloading the home-country principle in EU rules: a migrant's country of origin should continue to be responsible for providing social benefits for a certain number of years, until the inclusion principle is applied.

It is difficult to see why, for example, a German welfare recipient who is unfit for work should be supported by the Spanish state if he decides to live in Mallorca. It would be equally implausible to deny this person the right to choose his place of abode just to protect the Spanish state. If we are to take the free movement of people seriously, we should slaughter the sacred cow of immediate eligibility for host-state benefits.

This of course does not apply to economic migrants from non-EU countries, and even less to refugees. The home-country principle would usually be impossible to apply in these cases. But, for the same reasons outlined above, these migrants cannot be integrated by the hundreds of thousands into the welfare state without jeopardizing the system's viability.

Therefore, the currently prevailing wage-replacement benefit system, which is applied when recipients do not work, should be replaced with a system offering wage supplements and community work. This would lower the benefits' net costs and weaken incentives to migrate. Andrea Nahles, Germany's labor minister, recently suggested as much, defending what Germans call the one-euro-jobs concept, which basically converts welfare into a wage.

That is sound advice in an otherwise chaotic state of affairs. If freedom of movement within Europe is to be maintained – and if high inflows of non-EU citizens continue – European welfare states face a stark choice: adjust or collapse.

De l'incompatibilité de l'accueil des migrants avec l'Etat providence

Par Hans-Werner Sinn | 29/01/2016, 17:30 | 1040 mots



(Crédits : Reuters)

Les États-providence sont fondamentalement incompatibles avec la libre circulation des personnes d'un pays à l'autre, si les nouveaux arrivants ont immédiatement et pleinement accès aux prestations sociales de leur pays d'accueil. Par Hans-Werner Sinn, président d'honneur de l'institut de conjoncture Ifo

Le conflit armé qui déstabilise certains pays arabes a soulevé une énorme vague de réfugiés cherchant, pour beaucoup, à rejoindre l'Europe. En 2015, l'Allemagne a reçu à elle seule 1,1 million d'entre eux. Concomitamment, l'application du principe de libre circulation génère d'importants flux migratoires intra-européens, pourtant largement ignorés. En 2014, le [solde migratoire net](#) de l'Allemagne avec l'Union européenne était, fait sans précédent, de 304.000 personnes, et les chiffres de 2015 sont probablement comparables.

Certains États membres, dont l'Autriche, la Hongrie, la Slovaquie, l'Espagne et la France, ainsi que le Danemark et la Suède, qui, tous deux, s'étaient d'abord montrés accueillants, ont réagi en suspendant, de fait, les accords de Schengen et en rétablissant les contrôles aux frontières. Les économistes n'en sont pas réellement surpris. Dans les années 1990, des dizaines d'articles scientifiques ont paru sur la question des migrations dans les États-providence, qui envisageaient nombre des problèmes aujourd'hui d'actualité. J'ai moi-même [beaucoup écrit](#) à l'époque sur le sujet, tentant - en vain, le plus souvent - d'alerter l'attention des responsables politiques.

Les États providence incompatibles avec la libre circulation des personnes

L'enjeu est essentiel. Les États-providence se définissent par le principe de redistribution : ceux dont les revenus sont au-dessus de la moyenne paient plus d'impôts et cotisent plus qu'ils ne reçoivent en retour des services publics, tandis que ceux dont la rémunération est inférieure à la moyenne paient moins qu'ils ne reçoivent. Cette redistribution, qui draine les ressources publiques nettes vers les ménages à faibles revenus, apporte une correction sensible à l'économie de marché, sorte d'assurance contre les vicissitudes de la vie et la dure loi du prix de la rareté, qui caractérise le marché et n'a que peu à voir avec la justice sociale.

Les États-providence sont fondamentalement incompatibles avec la libre circulation des personnes d'un pays à l'autre si les nouveaux arrivants ont immédiatement et pleinement accès aux prestations sociales de leur pays d'accueil. Lorsque tel est le cas, ce pays fonctionne en effet comme une trappe à allocataires, où l'on s'installe en raison des prestations ; il attire les migrants en plus grand nombre qu'il ne le serait économiquement souhaitable puisque ces derniers y reçoivent, outre leur salaire, une subvention sous forme de transferts publics. On ne peut espérer d'autorégulation efficace des migrations que dans la mesure où les migrants ne perçoivent que leur salaire.

La proposition Cameron

Le Premier ministre britannique, David Cameron, en a tiré la conclusion qui s'imposait : l'attraction des prestations sociales conduit non seulement à une distribution géographique inefficace des populations ; mais elle use aussi et endommage les capacités du prestataire. C'est pourquoi David Cameron réclame de pouvoir poser des limites au principe d'intégration, qui s'appliquerait également aux migrants économiques intra-européens. Même s'ils trouvent un travail, argumente Cameron, les migrants ne devraient accéder aux allocations financées par la fiscalité qu'après quatre années de séjour. Pour le moment, une période d'attente significative n'est en vigueur que pour les migrants de l'UE sans emploi, qui doivent résider au Royaume-Uni depuis cinq ans pour obtenir le plein accès aux prestations publiques de sécurité sociale.

Des aides financées par le pays d'origine

La proposition ne se traduira pas nécessairement par des conditions de vie difficiles pour les migrants intra-européens ; elle signifie simplement que les aides dont ils pourraient avoir besoin sur cette période de quatre ans devront être financées par leur pays d'origine. Il y aurait évidemment beaucoup à dire en faveur de ce maintien temporaire du principe du pays d'origine et de la traduction de cette disposition dans les règles de l'UE : le pays d'origine du migrant continuerait alors d'être responsable du règlement des prestations sociales pendant un certain nombre d'années, jusqu'à ce que s'applique le principe d'intégration.

On voit mal pourquoi un Allemand, par exemple, en incapacité de travail et bénéficiant d'une allocation, devrait être pris en charge par l'État espagnol s'il décide de vivre à Majorque. Il serait en revanche invraisemblable de dénier à cette personne le droit d'élire domicile où bon lui semble dans l'UE sous prétexte de protéger l'État espagnol. Dès lors que nous entendons prendre au sérieux la liberté de circulation des personnes, nous devons accepter d'abattre la vache sacrée de l'éligibilité immédiate aux prestations sociales du pays d'accueil.

Compléments de salaire et des travaux d'intérêt général

Cela ne concerne évidemment pas les migrants économiques venant de pays extérieurs à l'Union européenne, et encore moins les réfugiés, puisqu'il est en général impossible de traduire en pratique, dans ces cas-là, le principe du pays d'origine. Mais pour les mêmes raisons que celles qui ont été exposées plus haut, ces migrants ne peuvent être intégrés par centaines de milliers à l'État-providence sans compromettre la viabilité du système.

Il faudrait par conséquent substituer au système d'indemnisations chômage qui prévaut aujourd'hui, applicable aux ayants-droit lorsque ceux-ci sont sans emploi, un système proposant des compléments de salaire et des travaux d'intérêt général. Le coût net des prestations s'en trouverait diminué et les incitations à migrer seraient moins fortes. C'est ce qu'a récemment suggéré la ministre du Travail allemande, Andrea Nahles, prenant la défense de ce que les Allemands appellent les « jobs à un euro », qui transforment précisément l'indemnisation en salaire.

Sage avis dans une situation par ailleurs fort embrouillée. Si l'Europe veut maintenir la libre circulation des personnes - et si l'arrivée massive de ressortissants non européens se poursuit -, les États-providence européens doivent choisir : s'adapter ou succomber.

Traduction François Boisivon

Hans-Werner Sinn, professeur d'économie et de finances publiques à l'université de Munich, également président de l'institut de recherche économique Ifo, siège au Conseil consultatif du ministère allemand de l'Économie. Il a tout récemment publié [The Euro Trap : On Bursting Bubbles, Budgets, and Beliefs](#).