

# Tackling the Root Causes of Displacement: The German Discourse

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# Abstract

In Germany, an important role is ascribed to development policy when considering the question of how to deal with the causes of displacement and irregular migration. Development policy seeks to enable (potential) migrants to enjoy brighter prospects in their countries of origin through job creation measures so that they do not embark on the dangerous journey to Europe (or Germany) in the first place.

The idea of deploying development cooperation as an instrument for tackling the root causes of displacement is not a new concept. In Germany, this notion was already a matter of debate back in the 1980s. In this context, the analysis of the impact of migration is at odds with important findings in migration and development research. There is, after all, a positive correlation between (socio-economic) development and migration: if employment and wages in a developing country rise, then international migration likewise increases.

An important conclusion for German development policy would therefore be that processes of (regular) migration must be promoted to a greater extent. Moreover, important principles of development cooperation, such as respect for human rights, must be upheld at all costs. If this is not the case, then we risk, unintentionally, playing an active part in exacerbating future processes of displacement and irregular migration.

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# Introduction

The issue of displacement and migration has dominated the public and political discourse in large parts of Europe more than almost any other issue at the latest since the peak of what is often referred to as the European “refugee crisis” in 2014/2015. This extremely heated debate has certainly been a significant factor behind the successes of right-wing populist parties across Europe. The election successes of the Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ) and the Italian “Lega”, as well as the rise of the Alternative for Germany (AFD) party clearly substantiate this trend. Especially in Germany, which, in absolute numbers, took in the most refugees of any European country with the influx of hundreds of thousands of refugees from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan in particular, the debate in recent years has not only revolved around the question of how to come to grips with this new situation through integration measures. Moreover, it was not long before general (and cross-party) calls for the causes of displacement also to be tackled began to make themselves heard. Due to the ongoing high numbers of asylum seekers from sub-Saharan Africa also after 2015, this debate has been characterised by a strong focus on Africa.

Development policy has a special role to play in this context in the discourse on the causes of displacement and is regarded by many as the most important tool for tackling the causes of migration. Michael Bohnet, former Director-General at the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), declared that the time of development policy had come.<sup>1</sup> A simple rationale is often proffered according to which development policy measures make a decisive contribution to generating economic growth and employment, i.e. brighter prospects for migrants to remain in their countries of origin. The underlying assumption is that it would then no longer be attractive for people to embark on the dangerous and expensive journey to Europe and, above all, to Germany.

The development policy challenge seems immense. At the end of 2017, some 68.5 million people were classified as refugees or internally displaced persons (IDPs) – however, the overwhelming majority of these people are currently living in countries of the global South and were displaced primarily

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1. M. Bohnet, “Die Stunde der Entwicklungspolitik”, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 7 April 2016, available at: [www.sueddeutsche.de](http://www.sueddeutsche.de).

as a result of armed conflicts.<sup>2</sup> However, the debate surrounding the root causes of displacement in Germany and Europe not only revolves around people fleeing armed conflicts, but also hones in on “irregular migration”<sup>3</sup> from a German and European perspective, particularly from sub-Saharan Africa to Europe. A large share of these migrants does not hail from countries wracked by civil war. These individuals are often motivated by a combination of traditional reasons such as the pursuit of brighter economic prospects and a range of other reasons to migrate, including violent conflicts below the threshold of an open, large-scale civil war or state repression, as well as weak state institutions. It is no coincidence that “mixed migration” is being used as a buzzword in this context with increasing frequency.<sup>4</sup>

A number of questions arise in this context: which motives or assumptions about interrelationships permeate the German debate on the root causes of displacement? How can the connection between development and migration be described from the perspective of development and migration research? How have displacement and migration developed as fields of action in German development policy in recent decades? Into which overarching political contexts has this development been embedded? Is there a “need for adaptation” here – again from the perspective of development and migration research?

These are the questions that this publication seeks to address. This article is structured as follows: first, the debate about the causes of migration and how to “tackle” them in Germany will be briefly outlined. The subsequent sections will focus on the fundamental relationship between (socio-economic) development and migration and the fields of action of displacement and migration in German development policy from the 1990s<sup>5</sup>

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2. *Global trends - Forced Displacement in 2017*, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Geneva, 2018.

3. The Global Commission on International Migration defines irregular migration as follows: “The term ‘irregular migration’ is commonly used to describe a variety of different phenomena involving people who enter or remain in a country of which they are not a citizen in breach of national laws. These include migrants who enter or remain in a country without authorization, those who are smuggled or trafficked across an international border, unsuccessful asylum seekers who fail to observe a deportation order and people who circumvent immigration controls through the arrangement of bogus marriages.” *Migration in an Interconnected World: New Directions for Action. Report of the Global Commission on International Migration*, Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM), Berlin, 2006, p. 32.

4. S. Angenendt and A. Koch, “‘Global Migration Governance’ im Zeitalter gemischter Wanderungen. Folgerungen für eine entwicklungsorientierte Migrationspolitik”, *SWP Studie*, No. 8, April 2017.

5. Cf. also B. Schraven and A. Heinrich, “Zwischen ‘Fluchtursachenbekämpfung’ und Steuerungsversuch: Flucht und Migration als Aktionsfelder der deutschen Entwicklungspolitik seit 1990”, in A. Bresselau von Bressensdorf (eds.), *Migration, Flucht und Asyl. Konzepte, Akteure und Praktiken seit dem Zweiten Weltkrieg in globaler Perspektive*, Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich (forthcoming).

to the present day. The conclusion and outlook will discuss the extent to which German development policy needs to adapt its approach to the issue of migration in particular.

# Themes and narrative of the German debate on the root causes of displacement

The German debate surrounding the causes of migration and how to tackle the same is by no means limited to a small group of development policy or humanitarian actors. Rather, a broad-based public discussion is taking place encompassing journalists, politicians from all political parties, church leaders and representatives of non-governmental organisations from a wide range of fields, as well as representatives from academia. Despite this diversity of stakeholders, a number of themes can be identified that clearly permeate the discourse.

The first theme is that of an impending or ongoing “invasion” or “Völkerwanderung” towards Europe – especially as far as sub-Saharan Africa is concerned. This theme, which is very much dominated by threat scenarios, largely lacks an empirical basis. After 2016, not only irregular migration as a whole, but also migration from Africa to Europe has declined once again – moreover, African asylum seekers have at no point in the past ten years accounted for more than 39% of the total number of first-time asylum seekers in the EU.<sup>6</sup> However, it has been observed for some time that the perception of migration to Europe has changed and is characterised by an increasing focus on security.<sup>7</sup> Even in left-liberal media, there has been talk of the threat posed by an African “Völkerwanderung”.<sup>8</sup> At the policy level, this perception manifests itself, for example, in European Union programmes focusing on migration control and border security, such as the

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6. *Statistiken über Asyl*, EUROSTAT, 25 June 2018, available at: [www.ec.europa.eu](http://www.ec.europa.eu). In addition, the majority of African migratory movements takes place within Africa. Two thirds of Africa’s international migrants live in another African country. Many processes of migration also take place within African sub-regions. B. Schraven, J. Leininger and E. Dick, “Entwicklungszusammenarbeit gegen Fluchtursachen – Kann das gelingen?”, *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, vol. 43-45, 2018, p. 18-19. African migration to North America and the Persian Gulf has also increased steadily in the course of the past 20 to 30 years. M.L. Flahaux and H. de Haas, “African Migration: Trends, Patterns, Drivers”, *Comparative Migration Studies*, vol. 4, No. 1, 2016, p. 15.

7. T. Faist, “The Migration-Security Nexus: International Migration and Security Before and After 9/11”, in Y. M. Bodemann and G. Yurdakul (eds.), *Migration, Citizenship, Ethnos*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2006, p. 103-119.

8. T. Sommer, “Millionen auf dem Sprung nach Norden”, *Zeit Online*, 21 March 2017, available at: [www.zeit.de](http://www.zeit.de).

Migration Partnerships and the Khartoum and Rabat Processes.<sup>9</sup> It also appears that the terms “migration” and “migrant” have developed an increasingly negative connotation in everyday language use. A distinction between displacement and migration is often barely made.<sup>10</sup>

Otherwise, it is striking that the causes of displacement and (irregular) migration are primarily explained in a monocausal manner by numerous and very different actors. Depending on their political or thematic focus, these narratives on the causes of migration may then consider or be based on factors such as climate change,<sup>11</sup> trade policy<sup>12</sup> or EU agricultural subsidies<sup>13</sup>. However, poverty, underdevelopment and the resulting lack of prospects are cited in particular as underlying causes,<sup>14</sup> which, in turn, helps to explain the special role played by development policy in this context. Not only is the diversity of causes of displacement or the rejection of monocausal explanations,<sup>15</sup> which are often called for by academics, not sufficiently taken into account, but the causes of underdevelopment or merely socio-economic characteristics of developing countries (such as low wage levels) are simply equated with causes of migration or displacement without critical empirical scrutiny. The perception of Africa as a “disaster continent”, wracked by wars, poverty, hunger, repression and a population explosion, also plays an important role as a narrative. This perception likewise hardly holds water when subjected to critical empirical scrutiny. Africa has become more peaceful and democratic in the past three decades, and poverty and malnutrition have also declined significantly.<sup>16</sup>

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9. C. Castillejo, “The European Union Trust Fund for Africa: A Glimpse of the Future for EU Development Cooperation”, in Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik. *Discussion Paper*, No. 22, 2016, p. 1-32, available at: [www.die-gdi.de](http://www.die-gdi.de).

10. *Ibid.*

11. E.g. Brot für die Welt, “Klimaflüchtlinge: Vor dem Klima auf der Flucht”, 2018, available at: [www.brot-fuer-die-welt.de](http://www.brot-fuer-die-welt.de).

12. E.g. H. Schumann, “Fluchtursachen Handelspolitik”, *Der Tagesspiegel*, 30 October 2016, available at: [www.tagesspiegel.de](http://www.tagesspiegel.de).

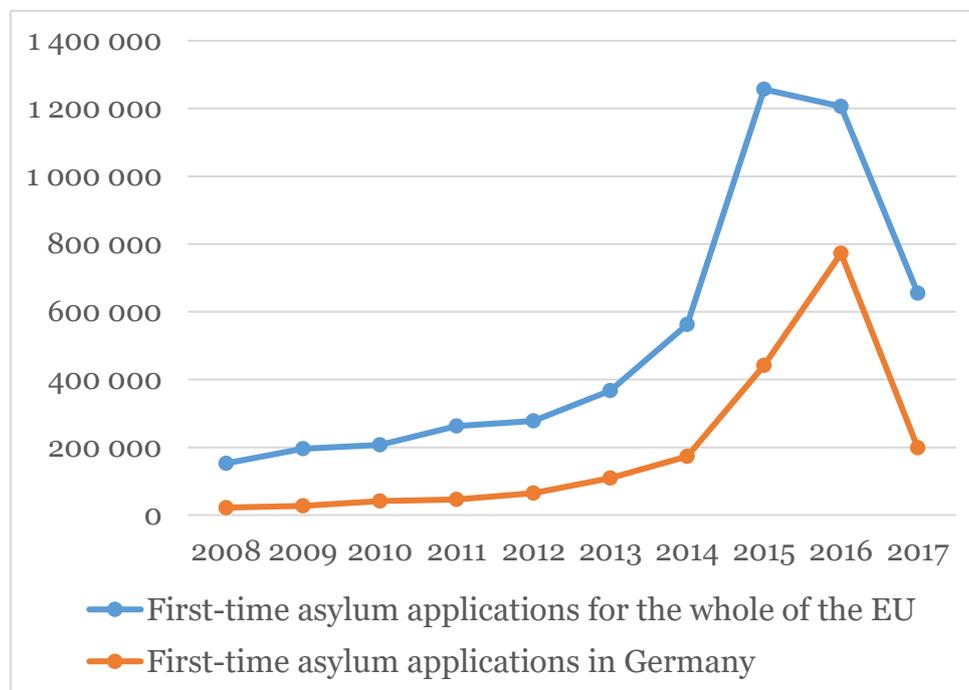
13. E.g. H. Prantl, “EU-Subventionen als Fluchtursache”, *sicherheits politik-blog*, 15 October 2015, available at: [www.sicherheitspolitik-blog.de](http://www.sicherheitspolitik-blog.de).

14. E.g. M. Beerman, “Fluchtursache Armut: Die Suche nach einem besseren Leben”, *Osnabrücker Zeitung*, 7 November 2015, available at: [www.noz.de](http://www.noz.de).

15. E.g. B. Schraven, B. Trautner, *et al.*, “Was kann Entwicklungspolitik zur Bekämpfung von Fluchtursachen beitragen”, in *Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik. Analysen und Stellungnahmen*, No. 14, 2015.

16. B. Schraven, J. Leininger and E. Dick, “Entwicklungszusammenarbeit gegen Fluchtursachen – Kann das gelingen?”, *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, vol. 43-35, 2018, p. 19-20.

**Figure 1: Number of first-time asylum applicants in the EU and Germany 2008-2017**



Source: *Statistiken über Asyl, EUROSTAT, 25 June 2018; Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF), "Aktuelle Zahlen zu Asyl", 8/2018, p. 3.*

A further theme that is directly related to this and which, above all, pervades the political discussion on the causes of displacement and how to tackle the same, is a strong sense of urgency to finally put in place measures to address the causes of migration. This burst of activity is not only limited to migration control measures, but is also bound up with the aforementioned objective of changing conditions in the countries of origin of (potential) refugees and irregular migrants in such a way that they enjoy brighter prospects for staying in their countries of origin. Here, too, a clear focus on Africa has been apparent since 2016 at the latest, as has the above-mentioned special role of development policy. Federal Minister of Economic Cooperation and Development Gerd Müller (CSU) summed up this determination by describing Africa and its development as “an immense task” facing Germany and Europe.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, a whole raft of development and Africa policy initiatives has been launched since 2015 under the auspices of tackling the root causes of displacement, the number and intensity of which are unprecedented. At the European level, the European Union Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa, which has a strong migration management

17. G. Mayntz, “Interview mit Entwicklungsminister Gerd Müller. ‘Afrika ist die Jahrhundertaufgabe für die EU’”, *RP Online*, 16 July 2018, available at: [rp-online.de](http://rp-online.de).

component in addition to food security, economic development and governance, is particularly worthy of mention. On the German side, a high level of activity has also developed in recent years with a focus on Africa or on tackling the root causes of displacement. In addition to the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development with its Marshall Plan with Africa (see below), other federal ministries such as the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWi) have also come up with their own Africa programmes.<sup>18</sup> However, business associations such as the Federation of German Industries (BDI) are also increasingly promoting the African continent as an “economic partner and future market”.<sup>19</sup>

It is interesting to note that there has also been a clear increase in research interest on this topic in Germany in the academic treatment of the causes of migration. While the German version of the Google Scholar search engine for academic documents yielded just 19 hits for 2008, the figure for 2017 is well in excess of 300 (see Figure 2). However, a systematic analysis of migration and refugee research in Germany also reveals that the causes of migration as a research field is much weaker than is the case for other fields, such as integration.<sup>20</sup>

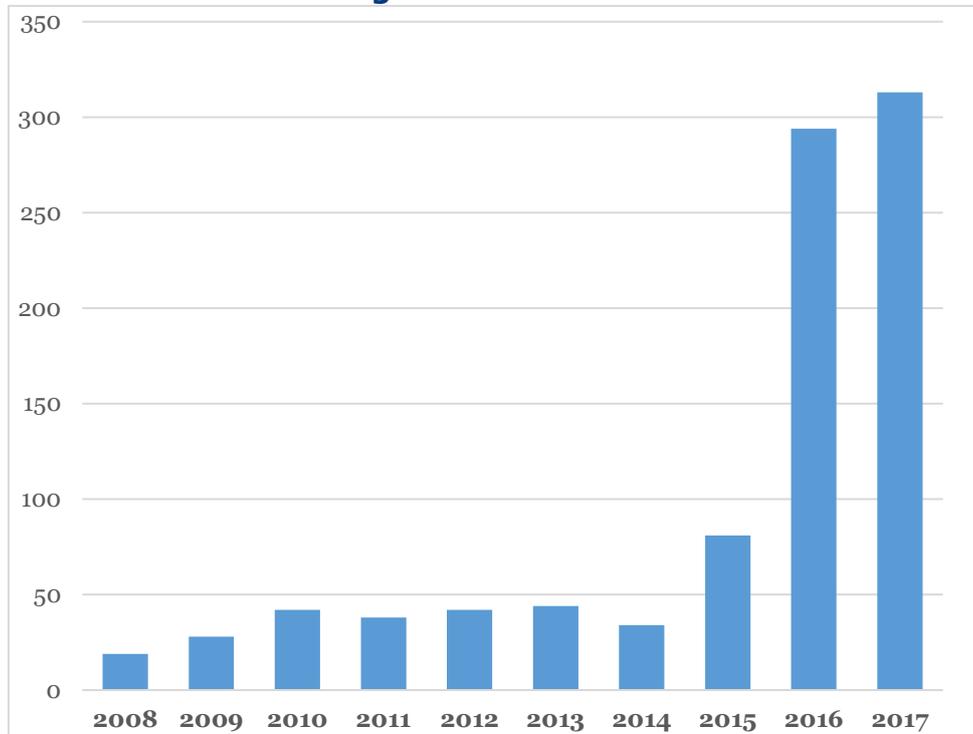
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18. Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWi), *Pro! Afrika. Perspektiven fördern, Chancen nutzen, Wirtschaft stärken*, 2018, available at: [www.bmwi.de](http://www.bmwi.de).

19. Federation of German Industries (BDI), *Chancenkontinent Afrika*, 2018, available at: [www.bdi.eu](http://www.bdi.eu).

20. J. O. Kleist, “Flucht- und Flüchtlingsforschung in Deutschland: Akteure, Themen und Strukturen”, *Flucht: Forschung und Transfer. State-of-Research Paper*, No. 01, February 2018, p. 23, available at: [www.flucht-forschung-transfer.de](http://www.flucht-forschung-transfer.de).

**Figure 2: Hits for the search term “causes of displacement” on Google Scholar 2008-2017**



Source: research on Google Scholar (5 September 2018).

# Migration and development – a special relationship

In order to answer the question as to whether and how development policy can combat the causes of displacement or reduce migration, it is important to bear in mind the aforementioned wide range of causes. The reduction of armed conflicts or human rights violations – the main causes of displacement and forced migration in the literal or narrower sense of the term – requires measures that promote democracy, social participation, functioning states and peaceful conflict resolution. Above all, as with other development cooperation measures (including economic promotion and job creation), a long-term perspective is required as positive effects are not likely to make themselves felt within the space of just a few months.<sup>21</sup> It is clear that especially states in which human rights are not respected, fragile conditions become more and more virulent or where large sections of the population do not participate in political or social processes are most likely to give rise to processes of migration due to conflicts, repression or human insecurity.<sup>22</sup>

However, if we focus only on migrants who leave their country of origin primarily in order to improve their economic situation, it is imperative to take a closer look at the relationship between socio-economic development and human mobility. Migration research comes to the unambiguous conclusion that this correlation is fundamentally a positive one, which clearly refutes the argument mentioned at the beginning of this publication, according to which greater development results in less migration as a consequence of brighter prospects for people to remain in their countries of origin. If wages and employment rise, more people will want to migrate, for example to improve their professional situation. It has been demonstrated for different time periods and geographical contexts that rising per capita incomes go hand in hand with rising rates of international migration. Above all, the term “migration hump” has become established as a term for this

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21. B. Schraven, J. Leininger and E. Dick, “Entwicklungszusammenarbeit gegen Fluchtursachen – Kann das gelingen?”, *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, vol. 43-45, 2018, p. 17-23.

22. B. Schraven, B. Trautner, J. Leininger, M. Loewe and J. Grävingholt, “Was kann Entwicklungspolitik zur Bekämpfung von Fluchtursachen beitragen”, in Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik. *Analysen und Stellungnahmen*, No. 14, 2015.

interrelationship between socio-economic development and emigration.<sup>23</sup> An increase in international migration often occurs when developing countries, according to the classification by the World Bank, transition from a “low income” country to a “middle income” country. Particularly poor countries such as Chad, Burundi and the Niger scarcely have any international migrants at all in the vast majority of cases. Only when countries have attained the status of “upper middle income” country do rates of emigration fall again.<sup>24</sup>

This connection cannot be explained solely by the fact that in economies experiencing growth more people can afford the necessary and usually relatively high costs of migration in the first place. Other factors also come into play here, including demographic considerations. Particularly in developing countries that are undergoing a phase of strong economic growth, improvements in health systems mean that birth rates are initially still high while child mortality rates decline, resulting in a particularly high proportion of children, adolescents and young adults in the total population. The youth unemployment that frequently occurs as a consequence increases the willingness of young people to migrate significantly. In addition, other factors typical of such growth situations may increase the propensity to emigrate. These include credit restrictions, rising income inequality, the decline in importance of certain economic sectors (especially agriculture), growing diaspora communities in the countries of immigration, which facilitate potential new migrants’ access to housing and the labour market, and the elimination of informal barriers (e.g. the recognition of certain educational or vocational qualifications) and formal barriers to migration (e.g. visa requirements). Both hurdles are mostly higher for people from poorer developing countries than for other migrant groups.<sup>25</sup>

It is not only the case that development conditions migration to a certain extent, but migration also has a positive impact on processes of development (see also below). Remittances from migrants to their families and relatives in the countries of origin play an important role in this context in particular. According to the World Bank, the total value of these remittances has been higher than all development aid combined since the

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23. P. L. Martin and E. J. Taylor, “The Anatomy of a Migration Hump”, in E. J. Taylor (ed.), *Development Strategy, Employment and Migration: Insights from Models*, Paris, OECD Publications, 1996, p. 43- 62.

24. When displayed as a graph, a complete “migration hump” cycle therefore has the appearance of an upside-down U, hence its name. B. Schraven, S. Angenendt and C. Martin-Shields, “Mehr Entwicklung – Mehr Migration? Der ‘migration hump’ und seine Bedeutung für die entwicklungspolitische Zusammenarbeit mit Subsahara-Afrika”, in Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik. *Analysen und Stellungnahmen*, No. 15, 2017, p.1-4.

25. M. A. Clemens, “Does Development Reduce Migration?”, *IZA Discussion Papers*, No. 8592, 2014.

mid-1990s. In 2016, the aggregate amount of these migrant transfers of funds to developing and emerging countries amounted to approximately 429 billion US dollars, which is more than three times the total for all ODA payments.<sup>26</sup> Although it is difficult to measure the direct impact of remittances on economic growth<sup>27</sup> and remittances can give rise to increasing social inequality, financial transfers are immensely important for emerging and developing countries. Their recipients also use this money to cover health and education expenses or reinvest it.<sup>28</sup>

The relationship between development and migration, as well as the impacts of remittances and other potentially positive (e.g. transfer of knowledge and ideas by migrants) and negative (e.g. brain drain, labour exploitation, the dangers of irregular migration for migrants) impacts of migration on human development, suggest the adoption of a policy on migration that is not geared to curbing migration. From the point of view of migration and development research, measures that create framework conditions that promote the positive potential of migration and minimise negative aspects appear to be more expedient here. Presented in July 2018, the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration sends an important signal in this respect. This (non-binding) compact places a strong focus on the rights, protection and improved living and working conditions of migrants and their families. Tackling exploitation, discrimination and human trafficking as well as expanding regular migration are also key elements. However, the compact also cites achieving holistic, secure and coordinated border management as another of its aims.<sup>29</sup>

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26. World Bank, *Migration and Development: A Role for the World Bank*, Washington, DC, 2016, p. 1-2.

27. M. A. Clemens and D. McKenzie, "Why Don't Remittances Appear to Affect Growth?" *The Economic Journal*, vol. 128, No. 612, 2018, p. 179-209.

28. H. de Haas, "International Migration, Remittances and Development: Myths and Facts", *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 26, No. 8, 2005, p. 1269-1284.

29. B. Schraven and E. Dick, "Ein 'Türöffner für Masseneinwanderung'? Was der Globale Migrationspakt wirklich bedeutet", Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik. *Die Aktuelle Kolumne*, 23 July 2018, p. 1-4.

# Migration in German development policy since 1990

## Caesuras and new conditions since 1990

Deploying the tools of development policy to tackle the causes of displacement and irregular migration is not a new idea. In Germany, its origins can be traced back to the 1980s. Up until the 1970s, concepts of modernisation and growth theory, according to which the countries of the so-called “Third World” were to follow the successful path of industrialisation in the West, constituted the defining basis of German and Western development policy.<sup>30</sup> In this context, mobility – especially the movement of people from rural areas to urban industrial or service centres – has long been regarded as part of a necessary process of economic and social transformation that had the potential to facilitate economic growth and prosperity in the first place.<sup>31</sup> Due to the oil crisis and the growing importance of environmental considerations, the belief in progress increasingly gave way to scepticism in the mid-1970s. This also had an impact on the development policy discourse surrounding migration. Migration as a whole – without distinguishing between voluntary forms of migration and forced migration – was increasingly regarded in development cooperation as a phenomenon that needed to be prevented.<sup>32</sup>

Increasing numbers of refugees worldwide towards the end of the 1970s – primarily due to the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in 1979 and the Iran-Iraq war from 1980 onwards – were the starting point for the idea in the Federal Republic of Germany to deploy the tools of development policy to prevent refugee movements. For the first time, the concept of “tackling the root causes of displacement” appeared in a 1980 draft UN resolution by the German Foreign Office, which sought to enshrine the

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30. A. Bresselau von Bressensdorf, “Fortschritt und Entwicklung. Die beiden deutschen Staaten in der Dritten Welt seit den 1960er Jahren” in D. Hoffmann and E. Seefried (ed.), *Plan und Planung. Deutsch-deutsche Vorgriffe auf die Zukunft*, De Gruyter, München, 2018, p.132.

31. H. de Haas, “The Migration and Development Pendulum: A Critical View on Research and Policy”, *International Migration*, vol. 50, No. 3, 2012, p. 8-25.

32. H. de Haas, “International Migration, Remittances and Development: Myths and Facts”, *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 26, No. 8, 2005, p. 1278.

prevention of new refugee flows in international politics. The resolution entitled “International cooperation to avert new flows of refugees”, adopted by the UN General Assembly at the end of 1986 after a period of long and arduous negotiation, cited socio-economic discrepancies between the “global North” and the “global South” as major causes of refugee flows in line with the German draft, in addition to repressive regimes.<sup>33</sup> This played more of a symbolic role with respect to German development policy, however.

The collapse of Yugoslavia from 1991, accompanied by civil war and ethnic cleansing, had a far more lasting impact on the role of migration and displacement in the context of German development policy, in addition to the global watershed of 1989/1990 and German reunification. The number of refugees arriving in Germany rose sharply. The year 1992, in which almost 450,000 people submitted first-time asylum applications in Germany,<sup>34</sup> marked the peak of this development. The political climate in Germany at that time was overshadowed by xenophobic attacks, the successes of right-wing radical parties such as the Republicans and the German People’s Union (DVU) in regional elections, and heated public and political debates on how to respond to this new social situation. In 1993, this culminated in what came to be known as the “asylum compromise”, introducing the concept of “safe third countries” and “safe countries of origin” to German asylum law, i.e. those in which refugees are not at risk of suffering persecution. The “asylum compromise” also led to a sharp decline in the number of asylum procedures in Germany.<sup>35</sup>

The European integration process also marked an important watershed during this period and there was an increased incentive to view development policy as an instrument for tackling the root causes of displacement. In the Maastricht Treaty, which entered into force in 1993, the Member States of the new European Union undertook to coordinate their development cooperation in “complementarity to the policies pursued by the Member States” and in cooperation with the relevant international organisations. Among other things, the Treaty defined the “sustainable economic and social development of the developing countries” and the “campaign against poverty” in these countries as objectives.<sup>36</sup> Since then, development policy measures of the nation states have been informed by common European guidelines; however, the Member States continue to determine specific

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33. A. Bresselau von Bressensdorf, “Das globale Flüchtlingsregime im Nahen und Mittleren Osten in den 1970er und 1980er Jahren”, *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, vol. 26-27, 2016, p. 33-34.

34. Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF), “Aktuelle Zahlen zu Asyl” 8/2018, p. 3.

35. K. Bade, *Migration, Flucht, Integration – Kritische Politikbegleitung von der ‘Gastarbeiterfrage’ bis zur ‘Flüchtlingskrise’: Erinnerungen und Beiträge*, Loeper Literaturverlag, Karlsruhe, 2017, p. 28-29.

36. European Union (EU), Treaty on the European Union, 7 February 1992, Brussels.

activities and the country focus of their respective development policy efforts for themselves.<sup>37</sup>

By contrast, the situation is different and more complicated in another area of European cooperation, namely asylum and migration policy. The cooperation in justice and home affairs policy enshrined in the Maastricht Treaty was also a consequence of the declared objective of guaranteeing the free movement of persons within the EU. France, the Benelux states and also the Federal Republic of Germany had already agreed to dismantle controls at their internal borders as part of the Schengen Agreement of 1985. The extension of the agreement to include the entirety of the European Union made it necessary to establish common controls of the EU's external borders as well as a coordinated migration and asylum policy.<sup>38</sup> Since the 1990s, the traditional competences of the nation states in this area of political cooperation have increasingly been transferred to the European level.<sup>39</sup>

These changed conditions have resulted in European governments facing something of a dilemma since then. On the one hand, national regulations in wide areas of asylum and migration policy are no longer viable or de facto no longer possible within the legal structure of the European Union.<sup>40</sup> On the other, immigration is a sensitive issue that requires governments to respond with a certain degree of flexibility to developments in their own countries – and this also includes the voting behaviour of their citizens. Since the national scope for shaping development policy is much greater than is the case in the area of asylum, it seems obvious from the standpoint of political decision-makers to harness development policy as an instrument for managing migration, and above all also to use it to restrict migration. The end of the Cold War, in which development cooperation was

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37. S. Steingäß, "Der Beitrag der EU zur Entwicklungszusammenarbeit", *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, vol. 7-9, 2015, p. 2, available at: [www.bpb.de](http://www.bpb.de).

38. G. Brunn, *Die Europäische Einigung: Von 1945 bis heute*, Reclam, Stuttgart, 2004, p. 276-277.

39. The Treaty of Amsterdam, which entered into force in 1999, transferred asylum and immigration into the sphere of common supranational competence. The Schengen Protocol to the Amsterdam Treaty made the Schengen Agreement part of the EU Treaties and has been applied almost throughout the EU since then. The aspect of forced migration was supplemented by the Dublin Convention, which has also been part of EU law (Dublin II) since 2003 as a regulation and was revised in 2013 (Dublin III). B. Schraven and A. Heinrich, "Zwischen 'Fluchtursachenbekämpfung' und Steuerungsversuch: Flucht und Migration als Aktionsfelder der deutschen Entwicklungspolitik seit 1990", in A. Bresselau von Bressensdorf (eds.), *Migration, Flucht und Asyl. Konzepte, Akteure und Praktiken seit dem Zweiten Weltkrieg in globaler Perspektive*, Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich (forthcoming).

40. S. Luft, *Die Flüchtlingskrise. Ursachen, Konflikte, Folgen*, Verlag C.H. Beck, München, 2016, p. 49-50.

always deployed as an instrument promoting bloc or geostrategic interests, then gave rise to a new drive to legitimise or reinvent development policy.<sup>41</sup>

## More than merely tackling the root causes of displacement?

As early as September 1990, the then Federal Minister of the Interior, Wolfgang Schäuble (CDU), presented a concept paper in which development cooperation played a central role as a means of “preventing future flows of refugees”. Under the heading of “tackling the root causes of displacement in the region”, the paper envisaged close coordination between domestic and development policy, with the aim of preventing future mass migration of refugees (to Germany).<sup>42</sup>

In this context, it is hardly surprising that German development policy and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development under its Minister at the time, Carl-Dieter Spranger, considered migration to be a rather negative phenomenon overall in the early 1990s – even though the official editions of the German Government’s Development Policy Report sometimes made a distinction between displacement and (voluntary) migration. The main reasons for migration cited by the Federal Government during this period were primarily poverty, as well as climate change and man-made disasters such as armed conflicts.<sup>43</sup>

From this perspective, the conclusion reached by the German Government’s 9th Development Policy Report of January 1993 appears to be quite convincing: “If poverty can be reduced, one of the most important causes of worldwide refugee and migration movements as well as a source of environmental destruction will be mitigated at the same time.”<sup>44</sup> Tackling the causes as well as the negative consequences of migration and displacement with development cooperation was not the only element of Carl-Dieter Spranger’s “refugee concept”, which was presented in 1994.<sup>45</sup> His concept rested on three pillars, which, to some extent, anticipated the approach taken by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development’s special initiative Tackling the Root Causes of Displacement, Reintegrating Refugees, which was launched by the Ministry in 2014,

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41. C. Hartmann, “Entwicklungspolitik im Wandel: ‘Neuerfindung’ oder neue Bescheidenheit?”, *Politische Bildung*, vol. 44, No. 3, 2011, p. 10-21.

42. D. Kohnert, “Harte Zeiten für Afrikas Flüchtlinge”, *Nord-Süd-Aktuell*, vol. 9, No. 2, 1995, p. 234.

43. Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), 9. “Bericht zur Entwicklungspolitik der Bundesregierung”, Bonn, 1993.

44. *Ibid.*, p. 33.

45. M. Bohnet, *Geschichte der deutschen Entwicklungspolitik*, Stuttgart, UTB, 2015, p. 152.

although its substance, especially with respect to measures in the area of refugee aid,<sup>46</sup> has changed considerably. The three pillars were as follows: “1. Improving living conditions, political conditions and disaster prevention in the countries of origin, 2. Supporting refugees in host countries through labour and training measures, preventing camp hospitalism and repairing damage caused by refugees, and 3. Creating opportunities for refugees to return to their countries of origin.”<sup>47</sup>

Spranger’s “refugee concept” and the fact that refugee aid developed into a particularly important pillar of the third-party business of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), i.e. contracts from outside the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development,<sup>48</sup> in the early 1990s did not mean, however, that the whole of German development policy was exclusively dedicated to the goal of tackling the root causes of displacement in the 1990s. Nor did it mean that tackling the root causes of displacement was the main argument used to legitimise German development cooperation. During this period, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development under Spranger’s leadership managed to formulate and implement development policy goals and measures relatively independently. It goes without saying that this was also a function of the sharp decline in the number of refugees in Germany following the aforementioned asylum compromise of 1993.<sup>49</sup> It is doubtful, however, that Germany’s development policy practice in the 1990s was a development policy “age of innocence”<sup>50</sup> that was, by and large, free from the realpolitik constraints of domestic or foreign policy. Certainly, however, development cooperation no longer strictly took geostrategic and ideological goals into account as was the case during the Cold War, and was thus able to focus more strongly on the needs of the recipient countries.<sup>51</sup> The Federal

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46. The transfer of responsibility for humanitarian aid to the Federal Foreign Office in 2012 and the extension of the focus of refugee assistance to include municipalities and countries taking in refugees are worthy of mention in this regard. Federal Foreign Office (FFO) and Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), “Joint press release by the Federal Foreign Office and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development on World Humanitarian Day” (Gemeinsame AA-BMZ-Pressemittlung zum Welttag der humanitären Hilfe), Berlin, 18 August 2013; Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), “Tackling the root causes of displacement, stabilising host regions, supporting refugees”, 2017, available at: [www.bmz.de](http://www.bmz.de).

47. Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), “10. Bericht zur Entwicklungspolitik der Bundesregierung”, Bonn, 1996, p. 12.

48. Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), *Jahresbericht 1996*, Eschborn, 1997, p. 39.

49. Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF), *Aktuelle Zahlen zu Asyl*, 8/2018, p. 3.

50. T. Elliesen, “Entwicklungshilfe: Die Zeit der Unschuld ist vorbei”, *Welt-sichten*, 28 November 2016, available at: [www.welt-sichten.org](http://www.welt-sichten.org).

51. C. Hartmann, “Entwicklungspolitik im Wandel: ‘Neuerfindung’ oder neue Bescheidenheit?”, *Politische Bildung*, vol. 44, No. 3, 2011, p. 15-16.

Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development defined five criteria for its cooperation with partner countries: respect for human rights, participation of the population in political events, safeguarding legal security and the rule of law; promoting market-economy and social structures as well as good governance. In a sense, this prefigured the “effectiveness debate” or agenda of the 2000s.<sup>52</sup>

From 1998, under the SPD-Green Federal Government and the new Minister at the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul (SPD), the fields of civilian crisis prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict peacebuilding also became considerably more important in German development policy.<sup>53</sup> Thus a genuine effort to tackle the root causes of displacement, which could not be construed out of hand as a general campaign to tackle migration, was accorded a higher profile.

Even though at the development policy level in Germany questions of migration and refugees took more of a back seat from the mid-1990s onwards, the political and, above all, scientific examination and assessment of migration gradually evolved during the course of the 1990s. New theories and concepts such as the sustainable livelihoods framework<sup>54</sup> and the new economics of labour migration<sup>55</sup> gave rise to new and more differentiated approaches to migration and the correlation between development and migration. Not least the issue of remittances with their clearly positive impact (see above) increasingly became a subject of research. The same applies to the concept of the “migration hump” (see above), which was also addressed by academic publications to an increasing extent in the 1990s. Interestingly, the Federal Government continued to maintain in 2001 that poverty in the global South was the most important cause of migration.<sup>56</sup> During the 1990s, there was also increasing criticism among academics of the political approach that was referred to in specialist literature as “sedentary bias”.<sup>57</sup> This term refers to the assumption that rising incomes, declining poverty rates and ultimately declining migration rates can be expected as a consequence of specific “interventions” (such as development

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52. Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), *Die Aid-Effectiveness-Agenda – Wirksamkeit der Zusammenarbeit steigern*, BMZ, 2018, available at: [www.bmz.de](http://www.bmz.de).

53. M. Bohnet, *Geschichte der deutschen Entwicklungspolitik*, UTB, Stuttgart, 2015, p. 145-156.

54. I. Scoones, “Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: A Framework of Analysis”, *IDS Working Paper*, No. 72, 1997.

55. O. Stark, *The Migration of Labour*, Blackwell Publishers, Cambridge 1991.

56. Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), “11. Bericht zur Entwicklungspolitik der Bundesregierung”, Bonn, 2001.

57. O. Bakewell, “Keeping them in their Place’: The Ambivalent Relationship between Migration and Development in Africa”, *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 29, No. 7, 2008, p. 1341-1358.

policy measures). This is hardly a plausible assumption for the reasons stated above.

The UN International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo in 1994, which primarily addressed the issue of reproductive health, sent an important political signal that governments should not attempt, or indeed are simply not in a position, to control demographic processes (including migration) according to any rigid plan, but should rather work to create favourable conditions. As a result, the potentially positive correlation between migration and development also came into the spotlight of development policy – albeit very gradually. In both German and international development policy, the issues of displacement and migration were accorded only marginal importance towards the end of the 1990s. This is reflected, for example, in the Millennium Development Goals, which were adopted at the Millennium Summit of the United Nations in 2000 and which make virtually no reference to migration.<sup>58</sup>

## Between new dynamics and lines of tradition

At the turn of the millennium, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development defined its policy in terms of a global structural policy that, in view of the accelerating pace of globalisation, was to play a decisive role in shaping economic, social, environmental and political processes. However, another change in German and international development policy was also clearly discernible during this period. There was, on the one hand, a clear focus on security issues. The Bundeswehr's deployments in Kosovo (from 1999) and Afghanistan (from 2001) also led to a growing amalgamation of foreign, defence and development policy issues and questions.<sup>59</sup> At the latest since the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, development policy was perceived by many to be an important instrument of peace work, conflict prevention and preventive security policy.<sup>60</sup> This, of course, is indicative of a certain proximity or analogy to the concept of development policy as a means of tackling the root causes of displacement.

On the other hand, issues of immigration and integration were discussed in the German public domain much more openly than ever before

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58. B. Schraven, N. Keijzer and A. Knoll, "Post-2015: Migration im Sinne einer nachhaltigen Entwicklung gestalten", in Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik. *Analysen und Stellungnahmen*, No. 1, 2014, p. 2-4.

59. M. Bohnet, *Geschichte der deutschen Entwicklungspolitik*, UTB, Stuttgart, 2015, p. 163-174.

60. E.g. Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD), 'Brot für die Welt': 11. September war Zäsur für die Entwicklungspolitik, 6 September 2011, available at: [www.ekd.de](http://www.ekd.de).

in the 2000s. The report by the Independent Commission on Immigration in 2001 and what became known as the Immigration Act, which was passed in 2004, shifted Germany away from a passive role and towards a proactive stance vis-à-vis policies for shaping and controlling immigration and integration.<sup>61</sup> At the same time, development policy increasingly emphasised the positive aspects of migration. Not only did the World Bank make investments in the field of migration and development with a particular focus on data on remittances,<sup>62</sup> but the Federal Government also acknowledged in its 13th Development Policy Report in 2008 that migration had both positive and negative aspects from a development policy perspective.<sup>63</sup> Back in the mid-2000s, GTZ launched a new field of action in the guise of the Migration and Development sector project, which has focused since then on remittances, diaspora activities and – albeit on a small scale – the promotion of development-oriented mobility.<sup>64</sup> Thus, on the whole, a rather pluralistic approach to processes of migration had evidently become established in German development policy as well, and little changed in this area under the CDU-FDP Federal Government in 2009 with Dirk Niebel (FDP) as Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development.<sup>65</sup> However, we should not overlook the fact that restrictive strategies for migration management held sway – and continue to do so to this day – primarily at EU level.<sup>66</sup>

However, an intensification of armed conflicts around the globe led to a sharp rise in the number of refugees worldwide from around 2010 onwards.<sup>67</sup> At the end of 2017, a new record of 68.5 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees was reached.<sup>68</sup> In 2014 – one year before the peak of what is often referred to as the European refugee crisis – the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development,

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61. K. Bade and J. Oltmer, *Normalfall Migration*, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, Bonn, 2004, p. 127-132.

62. World Bank, *Migration and Development: A Role for the World Bank*, Washington, DC, 2016, p. 27.

63. Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), “13. Bericht zur Entwicklungspolitik der Bundesregierung”, Bonn, 2008, p. 182.

64. German Development Agency (GIZ), *Migration und Entwicklung*, available at: [www.giz.de](http://www.giz.de).

65. Even though the German Government’s 14th Development Policy Report of 2013 cites migration as “a key challenge for the 21st century”, reference is made elsewhere to development opportunities owing to remittances and additional knowledge in the case of circular migration. Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, “The German Government’s 14th Development Policy Report”, Berlin, 2013, p. 23, p. 152.

66. This is illustrated, for example, by the EU’s Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM), which was established in 2005. Core elements of the GAMM are tackling irregular migration and repatriating irregular migrants. European Commission, *The Global Approach to Migration and Mobility*, Brussels, 2011.

67. Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), *Trends in Armed Conflicts, 1946-2015*, Oslo, 2016, p. 3.

68. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), *Global Trends - Forced Displacement in 2017*, Geneva, 2018.

now under the direction of Gerd Müller, placed the concept of tackling the root causes of displacement back at the centre of the development policy discourse in Germany. According to official statements by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, the establishment of the special initiative Tackling the Root Causes of Displacement, Reintegrating Refugees pursues both the goal of short-term support for refugees and host communities and the long-term objective of eliminating “structural causes of displacement [...] such as poverty, inequality and lack of food security”.<sup>69</sup> Traditional explanations and responses regarding human mobility, a lack of differentiation between displacement and migration and an overall rather negative connotation attached to processes of migration can be identified here. Large sections of “traditional” (predominantly) bilateral development cooperation are officially regarded by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development as a contribution to reducing the causes of displacement.<sup>70</sup>

In this context, the Marshall Plan with Africa presented at the beginning of 2017 is, to a certain extent, the centrepiece of the project. In addition to the pillar “economic activity, trade and employment”, it is also based on the pillars “peace, security and stability” and “democracy, rule of law and human rights”. The Marshall Plan also includes the promotion of (German) private investment on the African continent (BMZ, 2017a).<sup>71</sup> In an interview with the “Handelsblatt” in July 2018, Federal Minister Gerd Müller announced that the Marshall Plan and the Africa initiatives of other federal ministries (such as the Compacts with Africa of the Federal Ministry of Finance and the Africa initiatives of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development) were to be more closely coordinated. This was to be accompanied by a dedicated development investment act,<sup>72</sup> which was to be flanked by a further enhancement, as set out by the coalition agreement between the CDU/CSU and SPD, of the Policy Guidelines for Africa of the German Federal Government,<sup>73</sup> presented in

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69. Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), *Tackling the Root Causes of Displacement, Stabilising Host Regions, Supporting Refugees*, 2017 b, available at: [www.bmz.de](http://www.bmz.de).

70. According to the Ministry, three billion euros of new commitments were invested in “tackling” the causes of displacement, as well as refugee aid and reintegration measures in 2016. Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), *Flucht weltweit: Perspektiven durch Entwicklung*, Berlin, 2016, p. 35.

71. Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (BMZ), *Afrika und Europa – Neue Partnerschaft für Entwicklung, Frieden und Zukunft*, Berlin, 2017a.

72. D. Riedel, “Deutsche Wirtschaft begrüßt Gerd Müllers neuen Marshallplan für Afrika”, *Handelsblatt*, 9 July 2018, available at: [www.handelsblatt.com](http://www.handelsblatt.com).

73. CDU, CSU, SPD, *Ein neuer Aufbruch für Europa. Eine neue Dynamik für Deutschland. Ein neuer Zusammenhalt für unser Land, Coalition agreement*, draft, 2018, available at: [www.faz.net](http://www.faz.net).

2014 and perceived in many quarters to be incoherent, unimaginative and displaying little understanding for the African continent.<sup>74</sup>

The increasing importance of development policy brought about by the migration debate has also led to a significant increase in funding levels for German development cooperation. According to OECD figures, after years of stagnation, Germany's Official Development Aid (ODA) funds rose from 12.5 billion US dollars in 2013 to 23.8 billion US dollars in 2017, equivalent to a growth rate of 91% – whereas total ODA funds increased by only around 19% in the same period. Germany's share of total ODA increased from 10% in 2013 to just under 17% in 2017.<sup>75</sup>

Since 2014/2015, the discourse on the causes of displacement has also clearly been dominated by a very strong focus on Africa (see above). This goes hand in hand with a number of the EU's initiatives regarding Africa, migration and development policy. A centrepiece of the European agenda is, without a doubt, the EU Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa (EUTF for Africa), which was launched at the European-African Summit on Migration in Valletta in November 2015. In addition to the pillars of economic development, food security and governance, EUTF clearly focuses on measures in the field of migration management.<sup>76</sup> The subsequent intensification of European activities in the area of border management and security cooperation, particularly with important countries of origin and transit of irregular migrants, some of which are governed by authoritarian regimes, has led to accusations that Europe is seeking to "militarise development cooperation".<sup>77</sup> The vehemence of such arguments may be overdone. However, there are increasing signs that this activity has, in certain cases, resulted in the criminalisation of all forms of migration (especially in the countries of the West African Sahel) and to a significant strengthening of the security apparatus in regions strongly affected by conflicts and unstable conditions.<sup>78</sup>

Generally speaking, certain African regions (such as the Sahel, the Horn of Africa and parts of West Africa) have gained in prominence once again with respect to German development and policy on Africa in this context.

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74. K. Dörrie, "Deutsche Afrikapolitik – Von Frieden keine Spur", *Wissenschaft & Frieden*, vol. 1, 2015, p. 11-14.

75. OECD Data 2018, "Net ODA", 2018, available at: [www.oecd.org](http://www.oecd.org).

76. European Commission, "EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa", 2018, available at: [www.ec.europa.eu](http://www.ec.europa.eu).

77. C. Jakob and S. Schlindwein, *Diktatoren als Türsteher Europas: Wie die EU ihre Grenzen nach Afrika verlagert*, Ch. Links Verlag, Berlin, 2017.

78. A. Lebovich, "Halting Ambition: EU Migration and Security Policy in the Sahel", *ECFR Policy Brief*, European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR), Brussels, 2018.

The Alliance for the Sahel should also be viewed in this light. This joint initiative by Germany, France and the EU, adopted at the 19th Franco-German Council of Ministers in July 2017, is intended to create jobs and prospects in the Sahel in the fields of vocational training, agriculture and infrastructure. Its partner countries are Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, the Niger and Chad – all of which are former French colonies.<sup>79</sup>

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79. Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), “Deutschland und Frankreich bauen Zusammenarbeit mit Afrika aus”, 2017, available at: [www.bmz.de](http://www.bmz.de).

## Conclusion and outlook

The debate in Germany about the causes of displacement and tackling the root causes of displacement, which is very much dominated by a focus on security issues and simplistic explanations, has, to a certain extent, raised the profile of development policy, which is considered to have the potential to create brighter prospects for potential irregular migrants to remain in their countries of origin, thus preventing them from embarking on their dangerous journey to Europe or Germany in the first place. The notion of tackling the causes of displacement and irregular migration through development cooperation is nothing new. The phrase “tackling the root causes of displacement” first appeared as early as the 1980s. Combating the causes of displacement became particularly important as a political idea in the early 1990s. This was due both to a sharp rise in the number of asylum seekers in Germany and to fundamental changes in global and European conditions. Nevertheless, the 1990s was also a time when German and international development policy tentatively ushered in a different, positive approach to migration.

The correlation between development and migration is certainly a positive one. For example, remittances sent by migrants not only have a positive impact on processes of human development in the countries of origin. When countries develop socio-economically and average wages and employment rise, international migration also increases. This empirically well-documented correlation is clearly at odds with the intended outcome of tackling the root causes of displacement and irregular migration. It is therefore important to promote efforts to structure migration processes in a positive manner on the part of development policy, since if, for example, socio-economic and political development in large parts of sub-Saharan Africa continues to be positive, then the desire of many people to migrate would also increase – and not diminish. This would not only entail migration towards Europe, but also greater intra-African migration, for example.

In the medium term, Germany, like other countries, will presumably have to grant sub-Saharan Africa in particular greater opportunities for regular migration. German development policy should lend close support to such regular migration in the form of qualification measures, training partnerships and the active involvement of migrant organisations in order to minimise negative impacts and increase positive impacts for all those

concerned – for migrants, the countries of origin and the countries of immigration alike. Moreover, intraregional migration movements in the global South, which constitute a large part of global migration processes, should increasingly become part of the remit (not only) of German development policy. Here, too, it is important to protect migrants' rights, facilitate processes of migration and intensify exchanges between migrants and their home countries.

At the same time, it is important not to fall short of the standards and principles of development cooperation defined in the 1990s and 2000s. These not only comprise ownership, for example – i.e. the extent to which people in partner countries identify with development cooperation projects – but also respect for human rights. After all, strengthening and legitimising authoritarian regimes and ignoring human rights or democratic standards can ultimately help to exacerbate future conflicts, repression or fragile statehood. This could therefore also fuel future flows of refugees and “mixed migration”. In view of its cooperation with authoritarian regimes in Africa in the area of migration management, criticism of the EU is not entirely without justification.<sup>80</sup> The fact that the German Marshall Plan with Africa focuses not only on aspects such as economic development (or greater involvement on the part of the private sector), but also on democracy, human rights, governance and conflict transformation, can certainly be interpreted as a positive signal.

In Germany, this also necessitates a broader and more intensive discussion of what the actual causes of displacement and irregular migration are – and how these can be countered. The public and political discussion in Germany has so far been overshadowed by overly simplistic arguments. An important contribution would doubtlessly be to bolster research in this field. Moreover, the establishment of a commission on the causes of migration envisaged by the coalition agreement between the CDU/CSU and the SPD could provide important impetus in this respect.

Another equally crucial aspect is a more coherent approach to Germany's policy on Africa as a whole and a deeper partnership with African countries that goes beyond narrowly defined security and migration policy objectives. As an important development policy player at the European level, Germany could thus also work to achieve greater coherence and, above all, a closer alignment of development, security and migration policy objectives. Moreover, this could inject positive impetus into joint Franco-German cooperation with African countries, especially since France has, for some

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80. A. Koch, A. Weber and I. Werenfels, “Migrationsprofiteure? Autoritäre Staaten in Afrika und das europäische Migrationsmanagement”, *SWP Studie*, No. 3, April 2018.

time now, been at pains to distance itself from the traditional notion of “Françafrique”.<sup>81</sup>

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81. “Françafrique” not only encompasses “traditional diplomatic relations. It often refers to participation in electoral fraud, in (attempted) coups to support friendly political regimes or even in secret military operations against unpopular governments of African countries.” J. Thorel, *Der schwierige Abschied von der ‘Françafrique’*. Die französische Afrikapolitik zwischen Kontinuität und Wandel, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2013, available at: [www.bpb.de](http://www.bpb.de).

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