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The migration-development nexus in the EU migration policy frame: A frame analysis on the effects of the mass inflow of refugees and migrants in 2015

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ABSTRACT

From the year 2000, the EU migration policy frame had started to adopt the ‘migration-development mantra’, which regards migration as an engine for development and aims to align policies on migration and development to maximize their development potential. The European Commission framed migration as an opportunity that could be of benefit for sending countries, receiving countries and migrants alike. This framing constituted a major shift from the earlier dominant ‘securitarian’ migration policy frame.

This thesis uses a frame analysis approach to explore if the events of 2015, when the EU was faced with a mass inflow of refugees and migrants, provoked another frame shift in the area of migration and development. The frame analysis established that right after 2015, the EU migration policy frame has abandoned the migration-development mantra. Migration was no longer framed as a source for development, nor as an opportunity serving the interest of all partakers. Rather, the EU has become more focused on its own interests and benefits. Instead of using migration as a source for development in the benefit of migrant sending countries, development aimed to benefit the EU by addressing incoming irregular migration flows.

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Introduction

In social sciences migration and development have been debated for more than half a century. According to De Haas, one can distinguish two broad approaches within this debate: the migration optimists, that consider migration as having a general positive impact on the development process of migrant sending countries, and migration pessimists, that consider migration as cause of underdevelopment in migrant sending countries. From the 1950s, the debate about migration and development has swung back and forth from optimism to pessimism like a pendulum (De Haas, 2012: 8-12).

In the early 2000s, the migration optimists re-emerged and a new ‘migration-development mantra’ appeared in research and policy debates. This mantra, which is also often referred to as the migration-development nexus, regards migrants as resources for development in their countries of origin and encourages international actors and state governments to facilitate certain types of mobility in order to bring about development (Glick Schiller & Faist, 2009: 5). Migration is considered to generate development in several ways, through the transfer of social and financial remittances, through the engagement of migrant diasporas as collective development agents, through transfer of technology and skills, through ‘brain circulation’, a circular movement of skilled labour across nations, and through temporary migration (Castles, 2009; Sørensen, 2012; De Haas, 2010; De Haas, 2012). Therefore, the migration-development mantra considers migration as an engine for development and aims to align policies on migration and development (Nyberg-Sørensen, Van Hear & Engberg-Pedersen, 2002: 50).

From the year 2000, international organizations started to widely promote the linkage of development cooperation with migration policies in order to maximize the gains from international migration for sending as well as receiving countries (Lavenex & Kunz, 2008: 440). In 2005, the European Union (EU) started to increasingly stress the connection between migration and development, and the migration-development nexus emerged in the EU policy discourse. According to Lavenex and Kunz, the EU has altered its migration policy frame and started to include development issues such as legal migration opportunities and facilitation of remittances. This process included a shift in the existing policy frame, which required a major reorientation of the ways in which the migration problem was defined and dealt with in the EU policy (Lavenex & Kunz, 2008: 442).

Lavenex and Kunz argue that the shift in the EU migration policy frame was provoked not only by a shifting international debate, that adopted the migration-development mantra,

but also by the external shocks caused by the events in Ceuta and Melilla in 2005 (Lavenex & Kunz, 2008), where several Sub-Saharan migrants were shot when climbing the European fences in large groups (The Guardian, 2005).

In 2015, another external shock took place whereby Europe faced the largest inflow of refugees since the Second World War, and systematic deficiencies in the EU asylum cooperation became apparent (Niemann & Zaun, 2018: 3). The sudden inflow, covered extensively in the media with the use of images of migrant bodies in the Mediterranean Sea, created a humanitarian and political crisis as the EU struggled to respond to the situation (Evans, 2020). The events of 2015 have obviously affected the EU migration policy frame; however, this thesis will attempt to establish how this external shock affected the migration-development mantra that had recently been adopted into the EU migration policy frame. It will therefore aim to answer the following research question:

In what ways has the EU migration policy frame, which formerly incorporated the migration-development mantra, been influenced by the mass inflow of refugees in 2015?

Policy frames are considered to comprise of socially and politically constructed interpretations of problems of public policy. Within the migration-development mantra, the ‘problem’ of migration is constructed as a resource for development.

The thesis follows a constructivist approach and employs the method of frame analysis to establish the adoption of the migration-development mantra in the EU migration policy frame before 2015 and after 2015. The different policy frames will be compared, where after it will be attempted to link the identified differences to the external shock of 2015.

Literature review

How a policy problem is framed can be regarded as one of the most important factors in explaining policy formulation and development (Daviter, 2018: 91). Following the conceptualization of Rein and Schön (as cited in Lenschow & Zito, 1998: 415), framing is a way of selecting, organizing, interpreting, and making sense of a complex reality to provide guideposts for knowing, analysing, persuading and acting. A frame is often expressed through language and directs attention toward some elements while simultaneously diverting attention from other elements (Yanow, 2000: 9-10).

In particular, the concept of ‘issue framing’ forms a core part of agenda-setting theory (García, de Wolff & Yilmaz, 2018: 25). Within the literature on issue framing, two theoretical perspectives can be distinguished (Daviter, 2007: 656-657). The first perspective is based on the work of Schattschneider (1957, 1960) and ascribes frames the ability to manipulate the policy agenda as well as policy outcomes. This perspective points out how a plethora of actors, such as governments, NGOs, advocacy groups, scientists, reporters and news outlets, are involved in the framing of phenomena (Rothman, 2009: 39-44). The second perspective arose after the argumentative or constructivist turn in policy analysis and was shaped mainly by the work of Rein and Schön (1991, 1993, 1996, 1997) on policy frame analysis. Policy frame analysis aims to establish how the definition of policy problems affect policy making (García, de Wolff & Yilmaz, 2018; Daviter, 2007; Dekker, 2017, Van Hulst & Yanow, 2016).

European scholars have generally referenced to ‘policy frames’ when they analysed the role of ideas, knowledge, perceptions, beliefs, and normative assessments in migration policy-making (Pastore & Roman, 2020: 4) Literature on EU migration policy frames points towards dominance of a securitarian frame, whereby migration is regarded a national security risk by threatening territorial integrity, political independence, peace, social stability and cultural identity (Cortinovic, 2017; Sørensen, 2012). Within this policy frame migration is constructed as a problem and solutions are sought in policies that restrict migrant and refugee mobility.

Research of Lavenex and Kunz on EU migration policy frames, established the occurrence of a frame shift after 2005, whereby the migration policy frame was reoriented towards the realization of the ‘migration-development mantra’ (Lavenex & Kunz, 2008).

The frame shift was fuelled by the intensification of the international debate in the late 1990s on migration as a development resource. Research had made apparent that the volume of financial remittances exceeded that of official development aid (ODA) and reached similar

levels as foreign direct investment (FDI) (Lavenex & Kunz, 2008: 441). It became clear remittances constituted an important resource for many households in developing countries. Additionally, remittances were considered to have a more direct impact than development aid. On that account, the idea arose that remittances could be controlled and used to maximize their positive impact on development (Nyberg-Sørensen et al, 2002; Lavenex & Kunz, 2008).

Furthermore, several studies pointed at the potential positive influence of social remittances, that is the transfer of social capital, social ideas and social practices, on economic, political, and social transformation processes in migrant sending countries (De Haas, 2012: 16).

Research on the positive dimensions and possibilities in the migration-development nexus included four other ways in which migration can benefit development. First, the engagement of diasporas in stimulating development of migrant sending countries. In general, a diaspora is conceptualized as consisting of people that are scattered around different places outside their home country (Nyberg-Sørensen et al., 2002: 54). Migration research established that migrant diasporas form transnational communities through maintaining social, political, and economic linkages with their countries of origin. They are engaged in a variety of transnational practices such as investments, cultural exchange, and policy advocacy. The migration-development mantra considers this process beneficial in generating development and labels organized migrant diasporas as collective development agents (Sørensen, 2012: 65).

Second, migration is considered a resource for development by the role of returning migrants in the transfer of technology and skills from migrant receiving countries towards migrant sending countries. Return migrants, that bring back skills and (technological) knowledge, are considered important agents of change and innovation in the countries of origin (De Haas, 2010: 231).

The third way in which migration is regarded as beneficial for development, is by 'brain circulation'. This concept replaces the critical perspective of migration creating 'brain drain' in migrant sending countries. Brain circulation is the circular movement of skilled labour across nations that aims to create a global circulation of talents. It is not only considered beneficial for migrant sending countries, but for migrants and migrant receiving countries as well (Castles, 2009: 21).

The fourth way in which migration can be considered a tool for development is temporary migration. Temporary migration, also referred to as 'circular migration', is

assumed to stimulate development more than permanent migration and benefit migrants, migrant receiving, and migrant sending countries alike (De Haas, 2012:20).

The study of Lavenex and Kunz (2008) shows that the incorporation of the migration-development mantra in the EU migration policy frame was provoked by the external shocks caused by the events in Ceuta and Melilla in 2005, when EU border fences were assaulted by thousands of migrants.

In 2015 another external shock took place, when Europe was confronted with a sharply increasing influx of refugees and migrants. The EU's response to this situation has been dominated by the 'root causes approach' that comprises addressing push factors of migration, such as poverty, insecurity, inequality, and unemployment, through development assistance (Erstad, Bøås, Kugiel & Szymańska, 2020; Geiger & Pécout, 2013; Müller-Using & Vöpel, 2014).

Many studies have analysed the relation between migration and development within EU migration policy after 2015 by focussing on the root causes approach (Fratzke & Salant, 2018; Erstad, Bøås, Kugiel & Szymańska, 2020; Clemens & Postel, 2018). However, the evolution of migration-development mantra within EU migration policy after 2015 has not been researched yet. This thesis will therefore aim to fill this gap.

Since this study builds on the research of Lavenex and Kunz (2008), a policy frame will be conceptualized similarly as the ideational core of a particular policy field, which contains the dominant interpretation of the underlying social problem and expresses guidepost for action (Lavenex & Kunz, 2008: 442). Furthermore, the migration-development mantra will be conceptualized as a set of policy prescriptions to stimulate the development impact of migration.

Theoretical framework

Constructivism

This thesis is based on constructivist theory. According to Adler (as cited in Jung, 2019), constructivism can be regarded as social theory that emphasizes the significance of normative and material structures as well as the role of identity in the forming of interests and action in world politics.

In broad terms, constructivism assumes that the social norms and frameworks on which reality is based are constructed and redefined through permanent interaction (Saurugger, 2013: 890). This way of thinking has challenged the static material assumptions of realism and liberalism, the conventional international relations theories (Kinacıoğlu, M. & Gürzel, A.G., 2013: 591). According to constructivism, interests of actors are not solely deduced from material structure, but are shaped by social, political and economic contexts.

Furthermore, actors and structures are considered to co-constitute and co-determine each other. The structures that form the interests and identities of actors are produced, reproduced and altered by the actors' discursive practices (Copeland, 2000: 190). Therefore, constructivists assume interests change as actors change their understanding of their world (Saurugger, 2013: 191).

Emphasis is placed on intersubjective understandings consisting of shared norms, rules, meanings, languages, cultures, and ideologies that create identities and guide actions. Dominant intersubjective understandings form a base for people's interpretation of behaviour and determine people's customary actions, often referred to as 'practices' as well as the 'discourses', comprising language and techniques, used to maintain the practices.

From the constructivist perspective, individuals and groups are not merely shaped by their world, but possess the ability to change their world. People can alter conventional wisdoms and modus operandi by developing new normative, cultural, economic, social or political practices (Klotz & Lynch, 2007: 3-10).

In research, constructivist accounts have taken various forms. Conventional constructivism, using a more rationalist methodology, aims to analyse how ideational factors influence policy outcomes. Post-positivist constructivism, which lays emphasis on discourse, focuses on discursive practices shaping norms (Saurugger, 2013; Jung, 2019). Critical constructivism, analyses how social reality is constructed by focusing on the discursive

structures that consist of representations and linguistic elements (Arkan & Kinacioğlu, 2016: 383-384).

Constructivism in policy analysis

In the field of public policy analysis, constructivism has been very influential. Constructivist public policy analysis focuses on social construction of policy problems or frames of reference on which policy-making is based. This strand of research aims to analyse how ideational factors influence political action. Ideational factors are assumed to influence policy development in three ways; first, by constructing the problems and issues that enter the policy agenda; second, by framing the basic assumptions that influence the content of policy proposals; and third, ideas can act as discursive tools that shape imperatives for reform (Saurugger, 2013: 888-891).

In constructivist public policy analysis, attention is given to the embeddedness of actors in cognitive and normative frames. Public policy is regarded as the result of interaction between individuals whose interests are imbedded in specific social representations, values and norms.

The constructivist approach in analysing public policy is useful to better understand issue complexity and ambiguity in policy, explain legitimation strategies of actors in the policy-making processes, and explain policy change by analysing conflicts actors have within normative and cognitive frames (Saurugger, 2013: 899-900).

Constructivism in framing analysis

Framing analysis is a relatively new branch of research that aims to examine how problems of public policy are identified and defined. The study of framing is rooted in constructivist theory and understands policy problems as social and political constructions (Daviter, 2018: 91). Frames are regarded as 'interpretive schemata and ordering devices that are needed by policy-makers to structure the reality of a policy issue' (Dekker, 2017: 129). Policy-makers use frames, that encompass their worldviews and become part of their identities, to structure their perception of reality and to guide their course of action. The frames are considered to arise through political, intersubjective, processes involving communicative interaction and interpretation (Daviter, 2018: 91). However, they are not regarded as outcomes of political negotiation, rather within a policy field one frame can prevail and be elaborated extensively.

Nonetheless, policy frames are not static, but able to change over time. Within the field of frame analysis, a change in policy frames is referred to as a 'frame shift'. Frame shifts

affect policy-making. For instance, research of Dekker on migrant integration in Belgium and the Netherlands has shown how frame shifts influenced the definition of migrant integration and the chosen policy strategies (Dekker, 2017).

However, empirical studies on frame-shifts or reframing are rare and analytic models through which frame change can be explained are practically absent (Rein & Schön, 1991; Steensland, 2008). In general, research rarely analyses the process by which frames are constructed, tested, and transformed (Campbell, 2002: 27).

Nevertheless, Rein and Schön explicate that, as framing of policy issues always occurs within a nested context, a change in a feature of this context could lead to reframing of a policy issue and effectuate a frame shift (Rein & Schön, 1991: 271). Additionally, they explain that the reframing of policy issues on its turn shapes the nested context.

According to Cortinovic, a frame shift is often preceded by a struggle between alternative policy frames. Endogenous factors of the political system, such as institutional characteristics, as well as exogenous factors of the political system, such as global debates and external shocks, influence the struggle between alternative policy frames. These factors are considered as powerful mechanisms of policy change since they can be exploited by actors to change the substantive understanding of a policy problem and raise the sense of urgency and necessity for policy changes (Cortinovic, 2017: 477).

This thesis adopts a framing analysis approach in order to analyse the construction of the EU migration policy frame. As the dominant interpretation of a social problem is the foundation of a policy frame, this study aims to establish which dominant interpretation of migration as well as the link between migration and development was present in the EU migration policy frame before 2015 and after 2015. The framing analysis will therefore establish if a frame shift occurred after 2015, the year that was characterized by the mass inflow of refugees and migrants in the European Union.

Methods

This thesis builds on the research of Lavenex and Kunz which determined that in 2005 the European Union had started to revise its securitarian migration policy frame and adopt the migration-development mantra (Lavenex & Kunz. 2008: 450). They established that this change of course was caused by the international debate on the migration-development nexus and the external shocks provoked by the events in Ceuta and Melilla.

In 2015 another external shock took place when Europe was faced by an unprecedented high influx of refugees and migrants to which European leaders struggled to respond. This thesis attempts to establish how this external shock affected the EU migration policy frame that had recently adopted the migration-development mantra.

Through the method of framing analysis, this study examines the EU migration policy frame that adopted the migration-development mantra. This 'migration-development frame' is based on the ideational core that migration can benefit development in migrant sending countries and represents the dominant interpretation of migration as a tool for development.

This thesis first analyses the relation between migration and development in the EU migration-development frame from the period before the external shock of 2015. It does so by employing manual, computer-assisted qualitative content analysis (CAQCA). According to Boräng et al., this type of analysis is suitable for the identification of policy frames because it allows one to examine the manifest meanings and frequencies of words as well as their latent and contextual meanings. Central to this approach is the development of a codebook that reduces the number of meanings inherent in the policy documents and identifies the portions of the texts that are relevant to in order to identify policy arguments (Boräng et al., 2014: 193-194).

Following Eising, Rasch and Rozbicka (as cited in Boräng et al, 2014: 193), the qualitative content analysis was conducted by using MAXQDA software. Thirty policy European Commission (EC) communications, were selected for the manual, computer assisted qualitative content analysis. In order to avoid bias in the quantitative results, for each year two documents were selected. These documents were selected because they all concern EU policy that links migration with development, and were divided into two categories for the purposes of this study: documents from before 2015 and documents from after 2015. Furthermore, two European Commission Communications of 2015 were added in order to relate the findings of this frame analysis to the external shock of 2015.

At the start of the content analysis, a pre-defined coding scheme (appendix 1) was created that comprises the key elements of the migration-development mantra converted into policy options:

1. Facilitation of flows of remittances.
2. Engagement of diasporas in development of their migration sending country.
3. Promotion of circular migration and brain circulation.
4. Reduction of negative effects of brain drain.
5. Promotion of temporary migration
6. Promotion transfer of technology and skills

In the analysis of the EC communications from before 2015, the above 6 codes were attached to parts of the documents that fitted the description. Additionally, through the use of inductive coding, the codebook was adapted during the process of analysis and more codes were added. This analysis was completed by the overall description of the link between migration and development in the EU migration policy frame before 2015.

The second step in the content analysis considered the examining of the relation between migration and development in the EU migration policy frame from the period after the external shock of 2015. For this step, the same codebook was used and extended (appendix 2). This analysis resulted in an overall description of the link between migration and development in EU migration policy frame after 2015.

In the third step of the analysis, the retrieved EU migration policy frame from before 2015 was compared to the retrieved EU migration policy frame after 2015 in order to determine the differences regarding the adaptation of the migration-development mantra. Consequently, these differences were linked to the mass inflow of refugees in 2015 in order to answer in what ways the EU migration policy frame, which formerly incorporated the migration-development mantra, was affected by the events of 2015.

Analysis

Migration and development in the EU migration policy frame before 2015

From 2005 until 2014, the European Commission has defined migration generally in a positive way, as presenting opportunities for the receiving country, the sending country and the migrant alike. In 2011, the Commission stated:

'Good governance of migration and mobility of third countries nationals can create value on a daily basis for the development of millions of people, increase the EU's competitiveness and enrich European societies.' (Commission 2011b: 5)

However, the European Commission placed emphasis on how migration could benefit the European Union. In 2013, the Commission called for Europe to 'welcome diversity and make migration a dynamic force of growth and progress' (European Commission 2013a: 19). Migration was regarded as one of the solutions for Europe's declining working population and foreseen skills shortages in certain sectors (European Commission 2011a: 4). Furthermore, migrants were considered to bring economic dynamism, flexibility and innovation to European labour markets (European Commission 2011: 12). The European Commission therefore advocated further development of a common European policy on labour migration. Several initiatives were adopted to improve labour market access for migrants, promote and facilitate new forms of migration such as temporary and circular migration, and build capacity of employment services in third countries (Commission 2007a: 15). However, in 2014 it established that the potential of migration policy to economic growth and competitiveness was still underexploited (European Commission 2014b: 15).

Aside from the conviction that managing migration would benefit the EU and sending countries alike, the EU believed that it was a shared responsibility of countries of origin, transit and destination (Commission 2006a: 4). Therefore, cooperation was deemed necessary to manage migration. The EU aimed close, genuine, and balanced partnership with third countries. The Global Approach to Migration, adopted in December 2005, highlights the importance that was attached to partnership:

The Global Approach to Migration illustrates the ambition of the EU to establish an inter-sectoral framework to manage migration in a coherent way through political dialogue and close practical cooperation with third countries (Commission 2008a: 2).

Within the Global Approach, the three main areas of policy intervention were organizing legal migration, reinforcing the fight against irregular migration, and maximizing the mutual benefits of migration for development (European Commission 2011a: 15). In 2011, the Commission launched a second phase of the Global Approach to Migration by adopting the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM). The scope of the policy framework was broadened by the inclusion of ‘mobility’, international protection and the external dimension of asylum. Furthermore, the GAMM was considered ‘migrant-centred’, with a focus on protecting migrants’ human rights (European Commission 2011b: 6; European Commission 2014b: 2).

One of the GAMM’s pillars was the framework of Mobility Partnerships (MPs) that aimed to facilitate and organise legal migration, fight irregular migration, and take steps towards reinforcing the development outcomes of migration (European Commission, 2011a: 17). The Commission considered the successful implementation of Mobility Partnerships conditional upon the commitments of third countries. In 2007, the Commission stated:

Mobility Partnerships will be tailored to the specifics of each relevant third country, to the ambitions of the country concerned and of the EU, and to the level of commitments, which the third country is ready to take on in terms of action against illegal migration and facilitating reintegration of returnees, including efforts to provide returnees with employment opportunities. (Commission 2007b: 3)

The MPs followed a ‘more for more’ approach, which emphasized conditionality. If third countries showed general commitment and the MP functioned well, the EU would offer support in terms of capacity-building on migration management, information exchange, visa facilitation for third country nationals, and cooperation on all areas of shared interest (European Commission 2011b: 11).

Since cooperation and partnership played an important role in EU's migration management, the commission aimed to integrate migration issues into EU external policy (Commission 2009a: 24). Additionally, it was emphasized that migration issues ought to be incorporated into EU development policy as well (European Commission 2013b: 8).

The incorporation of migration matters in the EU development policy followed two directions. First, development policy was deployed to address the push factors or root causes of migration. Therefore, migration development assistance was targeted at creating income opportunities in sending countries, eradicating poverty, preventing conflict, stimulating economic development, promoting trade, promoting human rights and good governance, protecting the environment and assistance with attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (Commission 2006a: 8).

Second, development policy was deployed to improve the understanding of the migration and development dimension and strengthen the development-migration nexus (European Commission 2013b: 13). Consequently, development assistance was targeted at areas as the facilitation of remittance flows, the promotion and facilitation of the development role played by diasporas, and the promotion of circular migration, which was defined as 'a form of migration that allows some degree of legal mobility back and forth between two countries' (Commission 2007b: 8).

Between 2005 and 2011, the Commission held on to these two directions, whereby development could be used to address the root causes of migration and migration could be used to engender development. In 2005, the Commission stated:

'The EU has recognised on many occasions the importance of taking a balanced and comprehensive approach, aimed at promoting the synergies between migration and development, and based on a long term strategy to address the root causes of forced migration' (Commission 2005b: 2).

In 2005, the Commission explicated how the global debate on migration and development led them to develop concrete orientations for improving the impact of migration on development (Commission 2005a: 2). In the following years, the EU became a supporter and contributor to the international discourse on the migration-development nexus (European Commission 2014b: 1). The commission expressed its conviction that the links between

migration and development could be an important means of asserting development goals (Commission 2005a: 2). In the period thereafter, the commission continued to stipulate the positive links and synergies between migration and development as well as the potential of migration as development resource. The commission aimed to develop policies to improve the linkages between migration and development and exploit the development potential of migration. In 2011, the Commission stated:

'To offer international protection to those in need, and to improve the development impact of migration and mobility for its partners, the EU must be a leading actor in global governance' (European Commission 2011b: 21).

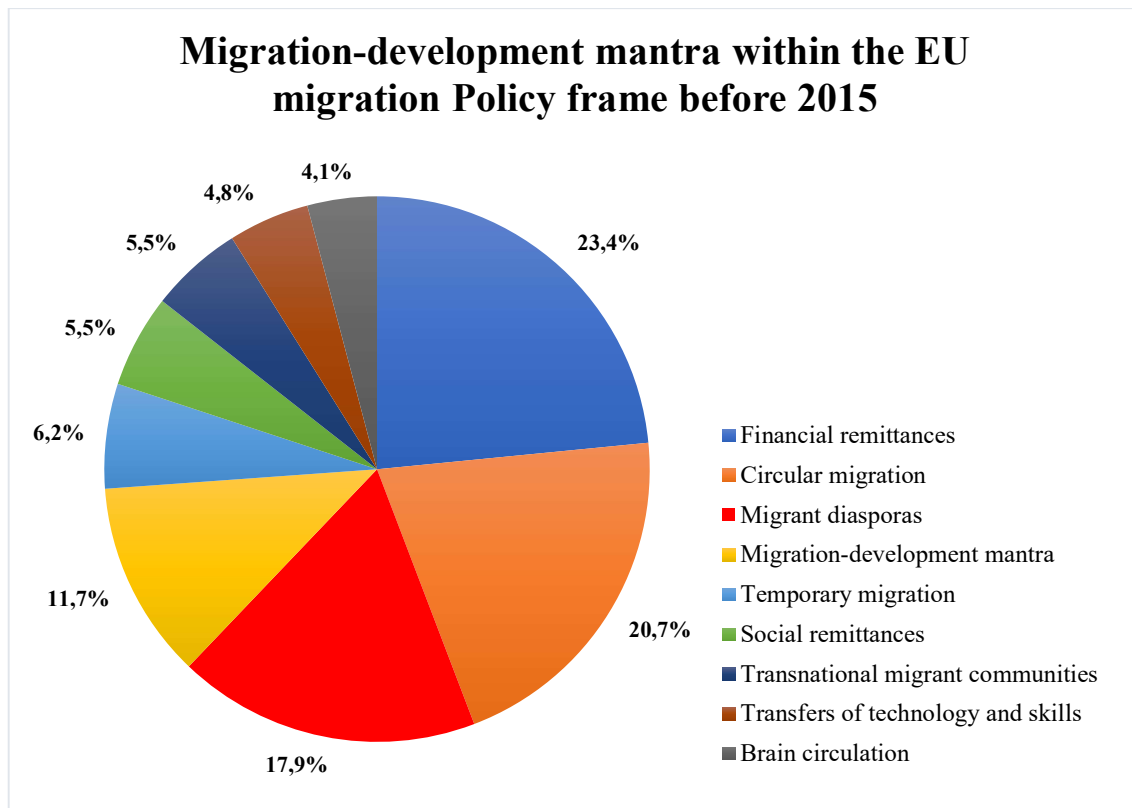
Within the Global Approach to Migration, adopted in 2005, 'maximizing the mutual benefits of migration for development' was one of the three main policy objectives. According to the Commission this represented a shift in EU migration policy framing. It stated:

The Global Approach reflects a major change in the external dimension of the European migration policy over recent years, namely the shift from a primarily security-centred approach focused on reducing migratory pressures, to a more transparent and balanced approach guided by a better understanding of all aspects relevant to migration, improving the accompanying measures to manage migratory flows, making migration and mobility positive forces for development, and giving greater consideration to decent work aspects in policies to better manage economic migration (Commission 2008a: 3).

Figure 1 shows that between 2005 and 2014, EU migration policies regarding the migration-development mantra mainly focused on financial remittances, circular migration, and migrant diasporas. In 2008, the Commission summed up in what ways the migration-development nexus was successfully strengthened within EU migration policy:

There are many ongoing and recent initiatives in the area of migration and development, such as initiatives encouraging the positive impact on development from the transfers of migrants' remittances and reducing the cost of remittance transfers. Other initiatives geared to enabling members of diasporas to contribute to their country of origin and the temporary return of highly qualified migrants have also been launched. They have proved a success along with initiatives concerning circular migration from a development perspective, and measures targeting brain drain and ethical recruitment, in particular regarding health care professionals. (Commission 2008a: 6-7)

Figure 1



A categorization of all coded segments relating to the migration-development mantra retrieved from European Commission Communications between 2005 and 2014.

For policy action on remittances, emphasis was placed on cooperation with developing countries, as well as institutions such as the World Bank and the European Investment Bank.

Policy mainly aimed at making remittance transfers cheaper, faster and safer, and enhancing the development impact of remittances in receiving countries (Commission 2005a: 3).

Policy action on circular migration addressed the facilitation of circular migration schemes and programmes. Circular migration was considered to entail two objectives, namely responding to EU's labour markets need and contributing to the development of countries of origin (Commission 2007b: 12). Moreover, circular migration was considered as a tool to mitigate brain drain, a negative consequence of migration for countries of origin.

For policy action on migrant diasporas, the European Union focused on encouraging and enabling diasporas to contribute to development. The EU helped developing countries build links with diasporas, supported projects in which diaspora members set up sustainable economic activity in their countries of origin, and organised exchanges with organisations representing diasporas (Commission 2005a; 2008a; 2009b; European Commission 2011b; 2013b; 2014b)

By strengthening the development-migration nexus, the EU aimed to enhance the potential positive impact migration could have on development of third countries and thereby seemed attentive to the interests of developing countries. In 2007, the Commission stated:

'In developing policies, the interests of third countries need to be taken into consideration, with a special focus on the risk of brain drain and possible measures to counter such risks.' (Commission 2007b: 13)

Brain drain is considered as a possible negative consequence of economic migration for development countries whereby shortages in human resources arise in specific sectors or occupations. The Commission proposed institutional partnership as well as dialogue and cooperation with developing countries to address the causes of brain drain. Furthermore, the Commission developed several policy initiatives to counter brain drain between 2005 and 2014: the establishment of an EU code of conduct which supports ethical recruitment that minimizes the negative consequences for developing countries, the promotion of circular migration and brain circulation, and training and capacity-building in developing countries to improve working conditions and increase work opportunities (Commission 2005a; 2006b; 2007a; 2007b; 2008a; 2008b; European Commission 2011b; 2013b).

In May 2013, the Commission aimed to take on a more ambitious approach to migration and development when it adopted a Communication on “Maximising the Development Impact of Migration”. In this Communication, the Commission stated:

It proposes a broadened approach to the migration-development nexus at EU level, which gives greater attention to South-South flows, effective integration of migration into national development and poverty reduction plans and the inclusion of refugees and other displaced persons in long-term development planning (European Commission 2014b: 18)

All in all, the frame analysis shows that the migration-development mantra had been firmly integrated into the EU migration policy frame before 2015. During this period, migration was framed as being mutually beneficial for sending countries, receiving countries and migrants alike. Migration was considered as a resource for development and the EU aimed, through the Global Approach to Migration, to reinforce the development outcomes of migration. Furthermore, the EU became a supporter and contributor to the international debate on the migration-development nexus.

EU migration policy before 2015 focussed on cooperation with third countries, Europe’s declining work population and the ensuing need of labour migrants, and the incorporation of migration issues into EU’s external and development policy. Development policy was deployed in two ways, first by addressing the root causes of migration and second by strengthening the migration-development nexus. The nexus occurred many times in the analysed Communications from 2005 until 2014. Within this period, policies to strengthen the migration-development nexus focused on the development potential of financial remittances, circular migration, and migrant diasporas.

Migration and development in the EU migration policy frame after 2015

After the mass inflow of refugees and migrants in 2015, due to the ongoing conflict in Syria, the Commission expressed how shocked it was by the plight of thousands of migrants risking their lives to cross the Mediterranean (European Commission, 2015a). Furthermore, the Commission argued that the collective European migration policy fell short in responding to this situation.

Therefore, the European Agenda on Migration in was presented, which set out different steps the European Union should take to build up a coherent and comprehensive approach to migration. Furthermore, the agenda was expected to reap the benefits and address the challenges that derive from migration (European Commission 2015a: 2). In addition to immediate action plans in response to the mass inflow of refugees and migrants, the agenda set out the following ‘four pillars to manage migration better’:

1. Reducing the incentives for irregular migration
2. Border management – saving lives and securing external borders
3. Europe’s duty to protect: a strong common asylum policy
4. A new policy on legal migration (European Commission 2015a: 6-17)

In June 2016, the European Union introduced the Migration Partnership Framework, whereby migration became fully embedded into the EU’s foreign policy. The framework, which had to be carried out in cooperation with partner countries, included a mix of short- and long-term actions. The short-term measures considered saving lives at sea and in the desert, fight migrant traffickers and smugglers, increasing returns of irregular migrant residing in the EU, and ensuring legal pathways to Europe for those in need, in particular with more resettlements for refugees. The long-term measures included addressing the root causes of irregular migration and fostering sustainable development in countries of origin (European Commission, 2017a).

Within the EU migration policy after 2015, partnership with African states has been a priority. In 2016, the Commission stated that migration was at the core of EU-Africa relations

(European Commission 2016b: 4). In 2016, the Migration Partnership Framework was launched with five African priority countries, selected because they were regarded as important countries of origin or transit of irregular migration, hosted large numbers of refugees and internally displaced people, and faced development and security challenges as well (European Commission 2016b: 4). The framework had the dual objective of encouraging stronger cooperation by third countries on migration, for instance on the fight against smuggling and readmission of third country nationals, and addressing the root causes of irregular migration through development cooperation (European Commission 2017b: 6).

Addressing the root causes of irregular migration rose to prominence in European migration policy after 2015. The Commission stated:

'To try to halt the human misery created by those who exploit migrants, we need to use the EU's global role and wide range of tools to address the root causes of migration. Some of these are deep-seated but must be addressed. (European Commission 2015a: 2).

The root causes of migration were fought by the EU through assistance for economic development, the creation of economic and employment opportunities, ensuring food and nutrition security, ensuring access to energy, and supporting good governance and respect of human rights (European Commission 2017b: 6).

Aside from development assistance to tackle the root causes of irregular migration, assistance was given to third countries in other areas relating to migration. The EU offered help in return and reintegration of third country nationals, migration management, actions against migrant smuggling and trafficking, campaigns raising awareness on the risks of irregular migration, border management, and the promotion of resilience and stability of communities where migration and smuggling were most prevalent. In 2016, the Commission stated:

'Migration-related issues are now playing a central role in the EU's deployment of financial assistance to key partners. (European Commission 2016b: 12)

Regarding the short-term measures of the Migration Partnership Framework, EU migration policy placed emphasis on the provision of humanitarian aid for vulnerable migrants and refugees. The Commission stated:

The humanitarian concerns have been at the forefront of EU action since the start of the crisis (European Commission 2018a: 3).

The other short-term measure of the Migration Partnership Framework concerned cooperation with third countries on fighting migrant traffickers and increasing returns of irregular migrants residing in the EU. Partnership was deemed essential in reducing irregular border crossings into the EU and the Union started to cooperate more closely with partner countries on migration management than ever before (European Commission 2019b: 1-2). In 2020, the Commission expressed how partnerships enabled the EU to fulfil its roles:

Working with partners also helps the EU to fulfil its obligations to provide protection to those in need, and to carry out its role as the world's major development donor (European Commission 2020b: 17)

Within the partnerships with third countries, the development of effective migration governance and management capacity was considered a key element (European Commission 2020b: 20). Furthermore, the EU aimed to cooperate on prevention of irregular migration, promotion of readmission and return of irregular migrants, fighting of migrant smuggling, tackling the root causes of migration, addressing specific needs of refugees and forcibly displaced people, and providing legal pathways of migration.

The main instrument to support the implementation on Partnerships was financial assistance. Additionally, a plethora of different EU policies were employed as sources of leverage and support for cooperation. Moreover, in case of non-cooperation by third countries, for instance on return and readmission agreements, the Commission proposed adopting restrictive visa measures for third countries (European Commission 2018a: 22; European Commission 2019b: 16). The Commission stated:

All incentives should be integrated to create the necessary leverage for cooperation, standing ready to provide greater support to those

partner countries, which make the greatest efforts, but being ready to draw the consequences if progress falls short (European Commission 2016b: 3)

One of the incentives the EU mobilised for cooperation with third countries was the creation of legal pathways for regular migration to the European Union. Additionally, this was regarded as a way to demonstrate solidarity and commitment towards third countries. The Commission stated:

“Building credibility to work with partners for a comprehensive migration policy also means providing legal pathways into the EU.” (European Commission 2018a: 11)

Furthermore, the provision of legal migration channels was considered beneficial in three ways: reducing irregular migration by providing safe and lawful alternatives to people that wish to migrate, addressing deficits in EU labour markets, and facilitating cooperation on prevention of irregular migration as well as readmission and return of irregular migrants (European Commission 2017b: 19). From 2018, the Commission supported several legal migration pilot projects, designed by Member States and key partner countries of origin and transit. Circular mobility schemes were often part of the pilot projects. The Commission stated:

Beyond the benefits that these pilot projects can directly bring to third countries and to the migrants themselves, they can also further incentivise partner countries’ engagement in effective migration management. The Commission therefore continues to encourage Member States to continue to develop pilot projects (European Commission 2019b: 19).

In 2020, the Commission proposed the launch of Talent Partnerships to facilitate legal migration and mobility with key partners. These Partnerships would serve a dual purpose: supporting labour mobility schemes and building capacity in areas as labour market or skills

intelligence, vocational education and training, integration of returning migrants, and diaspora mobilisation (European Commission, 2020b: 23)

The commission stated that intensified cooperation on legal migration with African states could be mutually beneficial by providing employment opportunities that match labour markets on both continents. Additionally, the Commission stated:

Projects on legal and circular migration and labour mobility with African countries and efforts to improve the development benefits of migration, including through facilitation of remittances, could significantly contribute to regular and safe migration and mobility (European Commission 2020a: 14).

Altogether, the frame analysis shows that within the EU migration policy frame after 2015 emphasis was placed at providing humanitarian aid, fighting migrant trafficking, increasing return of irregular migrants staying in the EU, creating legal pathways for migrants to the EU, providing development assistance to tackle to root causes of migration, and creating stronger partnerships with third countries. Migration-related issues were given a central role in financial development assistance to partner countries. Financial assistance and different EU policies were employed as sources of leverage and support for cooperation and more importance was attached to conditionality. One of the leverages for cooperation was the creation of legal pathways to the EU, which would be beneficial for the EU as well by addressing its labour markets deficits.

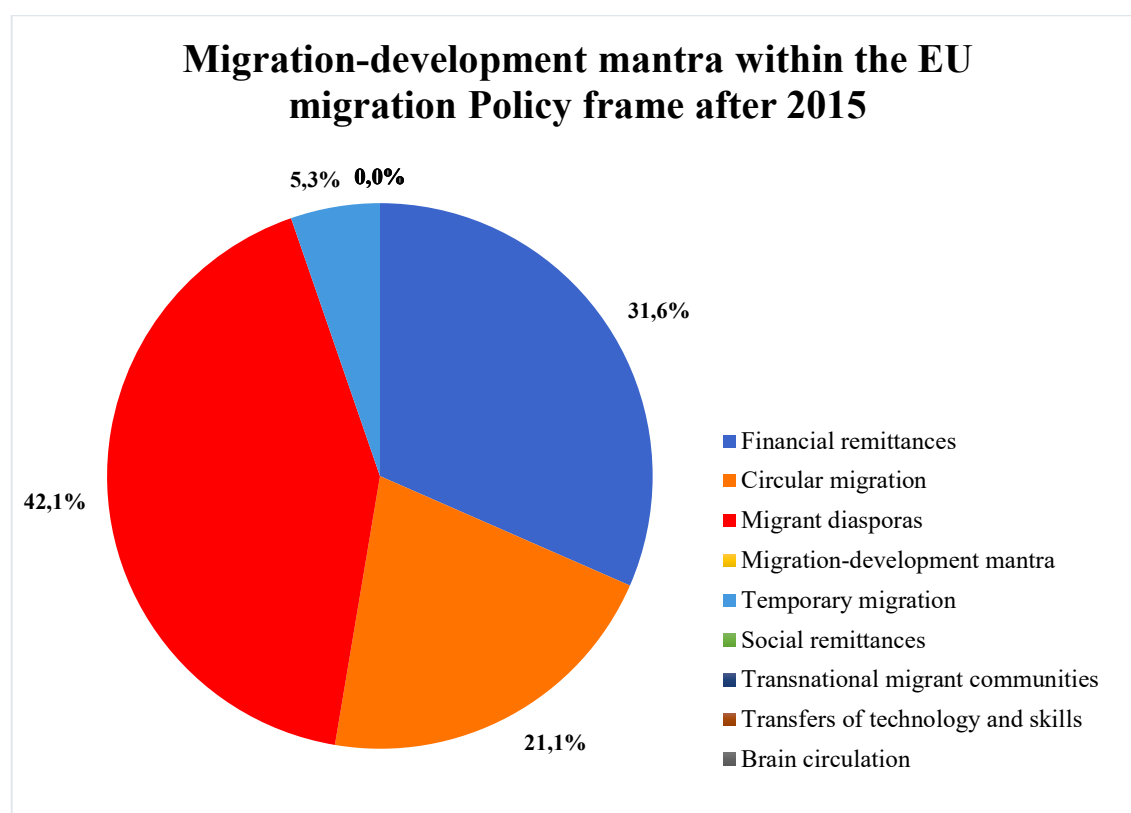
Within the EU migration policy frame after 2015, the link between migration and development became far less prominent. The term ‘migration-development nexus’ does not occur in the Communications between 2016 and 2020. From 2016 until 2019, the Communications did not define migration as a development resource. However, certain elements deriving from the migration-development mantra sporadically appeared after 2015, as is shown in figure 2.

After 2015, migrant diasporas are mentioned the most in the EC Communications, however in a different context than before 2015. The Communications after 2015 focus on ways in which diasporas could be deployed in EU migration management, for instance through organizing information and awareness raising campaigns on irregular migration and

through providing counter-narratives that could stop would-be migrants from deciding on irregular migration towards the EU. In 2017, the Commission stated:

The Commission will develop dedicated activities including the relevant diaspora within the EU, which, while playing an important role in the economic development of the home countries, can be mobilised to support measures taken at national and EU level aimed at reducing the irregular stay of migrants. (European Commission 2017b: 10)

Figure 2



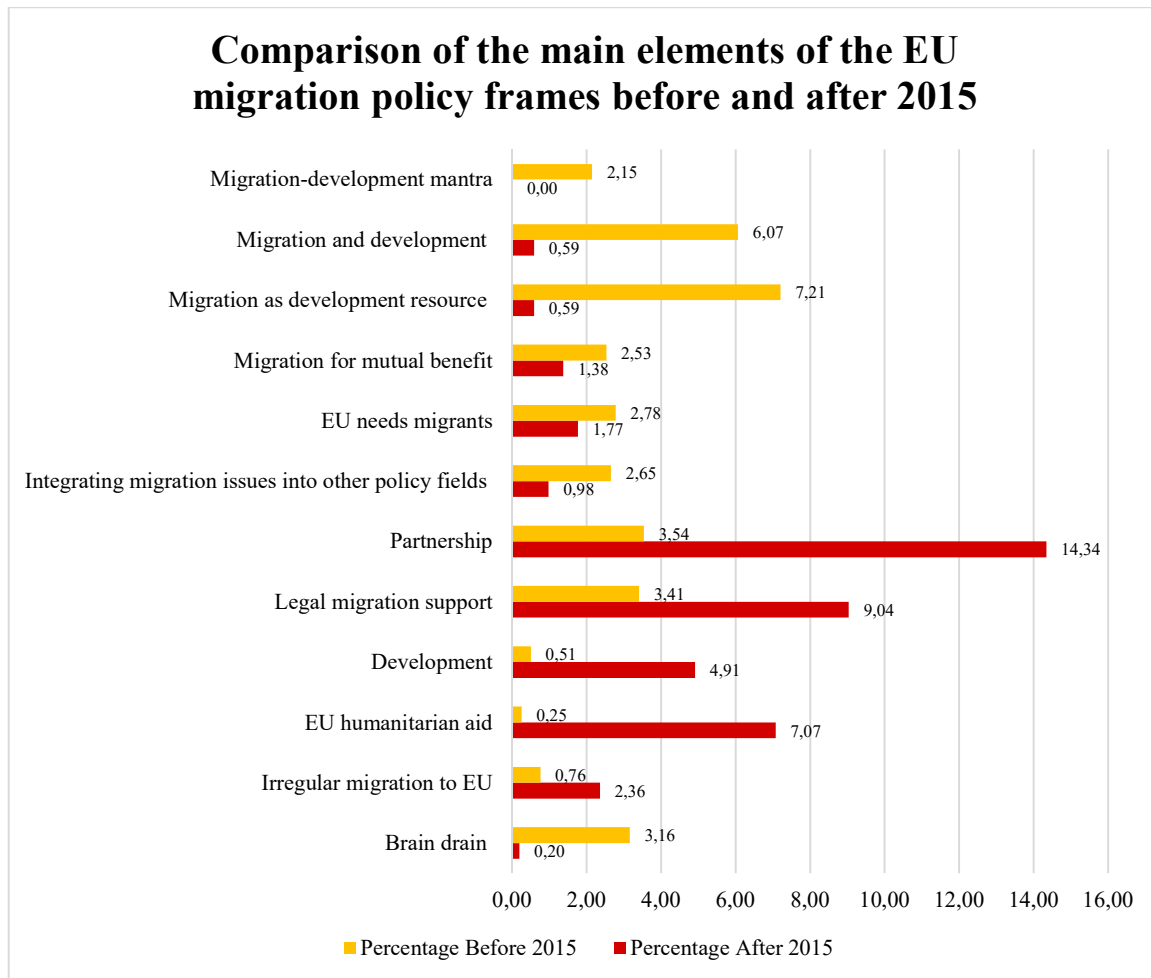
A categorization of all coded segments relating to the migration-development mantra retrieved from European Commission Communications between 2016 and 2020

Furthermore, the EC Communications after 2015 mention circular migration in the context of facilitating legal pathways to the European Union. Financial remittances to improve the development benefits of migration were also mentioned, however only in the Communications from 2020.

Comparison of the EU migration policy frames before and after 2015

Figure 3 shows the main elements retrieved from the frame analysis, whereby the difference between EU migration policy before and after 2015 is greatest.

Figure 3



A comparison of retrieved segments from two documents groups: European Commission Communications from 2005 until 2014 and European Commission Communications from 2016 until 2020. The percentages are regarded to the total amount of segments retrieved in each document group.

The figure makes clear that issues related to the migration-development mantra have become less prominent or even disappeared in the EU migration policy frame after 2015. However, the subject of development has been emphasized a lot more in the policy frame after 2015. Within this policy frame, migration and development became linked through the aim of providing development assistance for countries with a significant migration dimension

in order to address the root causes of migration. In the provision of financial development aid more emphasis was placed on conditionality.

Compared to the EU migration policy frame from before 2015, migration policy after 2015 prioritized on providing legal pathways for migration towards the EU. Although this could be an element of the migration-development mantra, whereby migration is supported in order to stimulate its development potential, the creation of legal migration options was framed as either a leverage for cooperation from third countries or as a benefit for the EU through reducing irregular migration or by addressing EU's labour markets deficits.

The effects of the mass influx of refugees and migrants in 2015 become clear when looking at the prominence of EU humanitarian aid in the EU migration policy frame. The events of 2015 also seem to have led the EU to develop a more inward-looking perspective. After 2015, the focus of EU migration policy appears to have shifted towards the interest of the European Union instead of the mutual benefit perspective. Between 2016 and 2019, the Commission mentioned only once that migration management should deliver mutual benefit (Commission 2016b, p 3).

When looking at the subject of brain drain, it furthermore becomes clear that the benefit or perspective of third countries has been placed into the background after 2015. From 2005 until 2014, EU migration policy took brain drain, a negative effect of migration for sending developing countries, into account, however after 2015 brain drain does not occur in the analysed communications anymore. Only in 2020 the term reoccurred in the Commissions communication.

In general, it appears that after 2015 migration was not framed as an opportunity anymore, but rather as an issue that needed to be managed by the European Union. The migration-development mantra disappeared from the EU migration policy frame. However, in 2020 the Commission stated:

EU cooperation with partner countries in the area of migration governance will continue to ensure the protection of the rights of migrants and refugees, combat discrimination and labour exploitation, and ensure that their basic needs are met through the provision of key services. Support may also be targeted at maximising the positive impact of migration and reducing the negative consequences for partner countries, for example by reducing the transfer costs of remittances, reducing “brain drain”,

or facilitating circular migration. (European Commission 2020b: 20)

In 2020, notions from the migration-development mantra have begun to reappear, however not as prominent as before 2015. Furthermore, it is stated very carefully. The Commission chose the phrasing ‘may also be targeted’ instead of ‘should be targeted’, thereby framing the mantra as a policy option instead of a policy goal.

Conclusion

This frame analysis first of all confirmed that the migration-development mantra was adopted in the EU migration policy frame between 2005 and 2014. During this period, migration was framed in a generally positive way, as a presenter of opportunities for all actors involved and as a resource for development. Maximizing the benefits of migration for development was one of the three spearheads of the European Union's Global Approach to Migration and attention was paid to the possible negative consequences of migration for migrant sending countries. In 2013, an optimistic Commission even proposed to broaden the approach to the migration-development mantra.

However, this frame analysis established that after 2015, the migration-development mantra, the perspective of migration for mutual benefit, and the attention for the down sides of migration for sending countries disappeared from the EU migration policy frame. Migration policy became more focused on the benefit of the European Union and the interest of migrant sending countries was placed in the background.

The analysis furthermore showed that the dominant interpretation of migration changed after 2015. Instead of framing migration as an opportunity for all parties involved, migration was now defined as a problem for the EU that needed to be managed. The link between migration and development was interpreted differently as well, and focussed on deploying development in migrant sending countries to address the root causes of migration and reduce EU's migrant influx.

The altered dominant interpretation of migration led to different policy strategies. In 2015, the Commission made clear that the adopted 'European Agenda on Migration' heralded a new approach towards migration. Regarding the link between migration and development, the root causes approach became a centrepiece in EU migration policy.

Altogether, this frame analysis established that after 2015, a frame shift occurred. The EU migration policy frame that adopted the migration-development mantra was replaced by a migration policy frame that mainly focussed on deploying development to tackle the root causes of irregular migration towards the EU.

As frame shifts are often preceded by a struggle between alternative policy frames (Cortinovic, 2017: 447), this frame analyse could lead to the conclusion that there existed a latent struggle between the root causes approach and the migration-development mantra.

Compared to the migration-development mantra, the root causes approach links migration and development in an opposite way. Instead of considering migration as a tool for development, development is seen as a tool for mitigating migration. After 2015, the root causes frame appeared to have won the struggle and became dominant.

Since 2015 was marked by the external shock created by a mass inflow of refugees and migrants, this frame analysis leads to the empirical implication that the shift in the EU migration policy frame was evoked by this external shock. One could assume that since the EU defined the events of 2015 as a crisis, urgency was felt to focus on EU interest and limit the inflow of migrants as soon as possible. However, further research should be conducted to establish how the events of 2015 caused the shift in the EU migration policy frame. Research could analyse the process by which frame was transformed as well as the influence of institutional characteristics and the actors involved.

Finally, this frame analysis established that the migration-development mantra reappeared in EU migration policy in 2020. This reinforces the implication that the frame shift was provoked by the external shock of 2015. Five years after the crisis, the crisis is averted, and the EU seems ready, yet reluctantly, to focus on the development potential of migration, as well as the interest of developing countries again.

This finding is also in accordance with the research of De Haas, that established how the debate on migration and development has swung back and forth like a pendulum (De Haas, 2012: 8-12). After five years of almost no attention for the migration-development mantra, the pendulum appears to have started to swing back towards adopting the mantra in the EU migration policy frame again.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Predefined code book

1. Migration
2. Development
3. Migration and development
4. Migration as development resource
5. Financial remittances
6. Social remittances
7. Migrant diasporas as collective development agents
8. Transnational practices of migrants
9. Transfers of technology and skills
10. Brain circulation
11. Circular migration
12. Temporary migration
13. Co-development
14. Selective migration

Appendix 2: Final code book

1. European Union

- 1.1. The Council
- 1.2. The European Council
- 1.3. European Commission

2. EU policy

- 2.1. European migration policy falls short
- 2.2. European Pact on Immigration and Asylum (2008)
- 2.3. Global Approach to Migration (2005)
 - 2.3.1. GAMM (Global Approach to Migration and Mobility) 2011
 - 2.3.2. Global Approach Africa
 - 2.3.3. Global approach Eastern and South-Eastern region
- 2.4. Hampton Court 2005: a comprehensive approach to migration
 - 2.4.1. Hampton Court follow up
- 2.5. New Pact on Migration and Asylum (2020)
 - 2.5.1. Common European Asylum System
- 2.6. Root causes approach
 - 2.6.1. EU Trust Fund for Africa
- 2.7. Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows (2007-2013)

3. Migration

- 3.1. Increased mobility
- 3.2. Migratory risk
- 3.3. Migration within developing countries
- 3.4. Rights of migrants
- 3.5. Migration as challenge of globalization
- 3.6. Push factors for migration
- 3.7. Pull factors for migration
- 3.8. Migration for mutual benefit
- 3.9. Benefits of legal migration

4. Migration and the EU

- 4.1. European increased inflow of refugees and migrants
- 4.2. Common European Asylum System
- 4.3. Protecting refugees and migrants outside the EU
- 4.4. European Agenda on Migration (2015)
- 4.5. The European Agenda on Migration
- 4.6. Border management
- 4.7. European Migration Network (EMN)
- 4.8. EU humanitarian aid
- 4.9. Targeting criminal smuggling networks

- 4.10. EU response to Arabic Spring: not only short-term but long-term
- 4.11. Irregular migration to EU
- 4.12. Support 'south-south' migration
- 4.13. Migration benefitting EU
- 4.14. EU common policy on immigration
- 4.15. Partnership
 - 4.15.1. Incentives and leverages for cooperation
 - 4.15.2. Partnership Framework Approach European Agenda on Migration
 - 4.15.3. Partnership to counter irregular migration flow
 - 4.15.4. Partnership with African States priority
 - 4.15.5. Mobility partnerships
 - 4.15.5.1. Commitments expected from third country (Mobility Partnership)
 - 4.15.6. Partnership with developing countries
 - 4.15.6.1. Capacity-building in partner countries
- 4.16. Aid in return for readmission
- 4.17. Voluntary return migration
- 4.18. EU needs migrants
 - 4.18.1. Migrant entrepreneurs
- 4.19. Legal migration support
 - 4.19.1. Private sponsorship for admission to EU
 - 4.19.2. Labour migration
 - 4.19.3. Include legal migration and integration measures in Global Approach
 - 4.19.4. Training for would-be migrants
 - 4.19.5. Providing info on possibilities legal employment in EU
- 4.20. Integrating migration issues into other policy fields
 - 4.20.1. Policy coherence for development
 - 4.20.2. EU's external relations
 - 4.20.3. EU development policies

5. Development

- 5.1. Development to counter irregular migration flows
 - 5.1.1. EU External Investment Plan
- 5.2. Effect of EU policies on developing countries
- 5.3. EU development cooperation

6. Migration and development

- 6.1. High-level Dialogue on migration and development (HLD)
- 6.2. Mix mantra and root causes
- 6.3. Migration-development debate
- 6.4. Downsides of link migration and development
 - 6.4.1. Brain drain
 - 6.4.1.1. Fostering institutional partnerships to mitigate brain drain
 - 6.4.1.2. EU code of conduct regarding brain drain

7. Migration as development resource

- 7.1. Mobility as development resource
- 7.2. Migrant-centred approach to migration and development
- 7.3. Increasing awareness of relevance migration for development

8. Migration-development mantra

8.1. Financial remittances

8.1.1. Facilitating contribution of remittances to development

8.1.1.1. Cheap, fast and secure sending of remittances

8.1.1.1.1. Create environment favourable for FDI (incl. remittances)

8.1.1.1.2. Improve access of migrants to financial services

8.1.1.1.3. Support new technologies for remittance services

8.1.1.1.4. Assistance with financial and economic infrastructure

8.1.1.1.5. Lowering cost of remittance flows

8.1.1.1.6. Improving transparency of remittance channels

8.1.1.1.7. Improve data on remittances

8.2. Social remittances

8.3. Migrant diasporas

8.4. Transnational practices of migrants

8.5. Transnational migrant communities

8.6. Transfers of technology and skills

8.7. Brain circulation

8.8. Circular migration

8.8.1. Temporary or virtual return

8.8.2. Facilitating return migration

8.9. Temporary migration

8.10. Co-development

8.11. Selective migration