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# The Migration–Development Nexus in EU External Relations

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**ABSTRACT** The linkage of development cooperation with migration policies has been promoted widely by international organizations from 2000 onwards. This paper analyses the factors that have prompted and impeded a reorientation of the dominant migration policy-frame within the EU towards the realization of a migration–development nexus. It is argued that external events such as the international debate on the migration–development nexus and the external shocks provoked by the events in Ceuta and Melilla prompted the EU to rethink its traditionally rather narrow approach, focusing on the repression of migration flows. However, the persistence of the established policy-frame and the existing institutional setting limit the scope for balanced policy coordination, introducing development mainly as an instrument of migration policy rather than the other way round. Challenging the literature that argues that there is a necessary trade-off between a development and a security-orientated migration policy, it is shown that this dichotomous juxtaposition hides the many ways in which different orientations can be combined, depending on the institutional context within which they are framed.

**KEY WORDS:** Migration–development nexus, EU migration policy, policy frames, policy coordination, EU development policy

## Introduction

Recent years have seen increasing attempts to link development with migration policies, accompanied by efforts to produce synergies for improved policy coordination. These attempts do not emerge in a void but meet on established approaches and institutional frameworks in the respective policy fields. The move towards the migration–development nexus has to be understood against the backdrop of a changing international environment and the

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limited success of cooperation efforts so far. On the one hand, increasing migration led to a growing awareness of migratory processes and their implications. On the other hand, given the ongoing crisis in development funding to finance the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs),<sup>1</sup> the international community is looking for alternative sources of finance, among which are remittances, money sent home by migrants abroad.

The linkage of development cooperation with migration policies has been promoted widely by international organizations from 2000 onwards. Although repatriation programmes, such as those administered by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) have always had a development component, it is only since the turn of the millennium that the nexus between development and migration is actively sought in an attempt to maximize the gains from international migration for both sending and receiving countries. This debate has reached a preliminary peak with the work of the UN Global Commission on International Migration and the UN High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development, which took place in the General Assembly in September 2006.

From its inception in the early 1990s, EU cooperation on immigration from third countries has rather followed a different focus which may be characterized as “migration–security nexus” (Geddes 2000, Guiraudon 2000, Kostakopoulou 2000, Lavenex 2001, Huysmans 2006), whereby uncontrolled migration is viewed as a potential threat to the security of the receiving country (Faist 2004, p. 6). However, the debate on the migration–development nexus within the international community, together with some longer-standing activities of EU member states, such as the French “co-development” policy, have not left the European Union unaffected. Since 2002, the Commission has issued a number of Communications linking migration and development policies, and some of the concepts have already found entry into the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and relations with African countries.

Highlighting the impact of institutions and ideational frames to the evolution of EU immigration policy, this article first explores the factors that sustain the emergence of a migration–development nexus in EU policy discourse and then investigates the conditions under which, and the ways in which, this nexus is materializing in concrete EU policies and instruments. After a very short summary of the general discussion on the migration–development nexus, the traditional security orientation of EU cooperation in immigration affairs is presented. Sections three and four highlight the influence of overarching international discourses and the implications of the crisis of the EU’s original security-focused approach for the potential re-framing of EU immigration policy. Scrutinizing the conditions for a such a re-framing of cooperation, it will be argued in section five that this will require institutional reforms and a cognitive reorientation in order to take into account the priorities and needs of sending countries. In institutional terms, it requires the opening up of the decision-making arena which has hitherto been dominated by the member states’ Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) Ministers who, by way of their professional background, focus more narrowly on the control

aspect of migration and the safeguarding of the national territory. The effective linkage of migration with development would require the involvement of other actors dealing with external relations more broadly and development cooperation in particular, as well as a closer coordination between DG Justice, Liberty and Security (JLS) and other Directorates General, such as Relex and Development.<sup>2</sup> Secondly, considering the securitarian approach dominating in EU migration policies so far, the realization of the migration–development nexus will require a re-framing of cooperation. In analysing the shape of this emerging new frame, the article will highlight the tensions between more rights-based approaches promoted in particular by supranational actors in the EU and more repressive ones promoted by intergovernmental actors in the Council and elsewhere. Whereas most of the literature concurs that there is a necessary trade-off between a development and a security-orientated migration policy, it will be shown that this dichotomous juxtaposition hides the many ways in which these different orientations can be combined, depending on the institutional context in which they are framed.

### **The Emergence of the Migration–Development Nexus**

The origin of the notion of the “migration–development nexus” is attributed commonly to an article by Sørensen *et al.* (2002).<sup>3</sup> At the heart of this new paradigm lies a major shift in thinking about migration and development. Traditionally, there was a tendency to perceive migration as either a completely distinct area of concern from development, or the outcome of lacking or failed development. For a long time, this conventional view was the mainstream approach within the international community, adopted by states and international institutions alike.<sup>4</sup> In the late 1990s, a new view emerged, whereby the two areas of migration and development became linked in the so-called “migration–development nexus” (Sørensen *et al.* 2002).<sup>5</sup> Migration is no longer seen as a “problem”, but as a “tool” for development. Within this approach, migration is taken as a fact and the aim is to manage migration and harness migration and remittances in such a way as to increase their impact on development in the countries of origin. Thus, the linkages between migration and development are perceived in a positive way and there is a tendency to instrumentalize migration and remittances for development. This shift was noted by the International Conference on Migrant Remittances in 2003, which concluded that “[Migration] is no longer simply seen as a failure of development but increasingly as an integral part of the whole process of development with a potentially important role to play in the alleviation of poverty” (Department for International Development & World Bank 2003, p. 11).

Within the migration–development nexus, remittances have become the centre of attention. As shown in Figure 1, the volume of remittances now exceeds by far that of official development aid (ODA) and has reached similar levels as foreign direct investment (FDI). The idea is to harness remittances in order to maximize their positive impacts on development and poverty reduction.

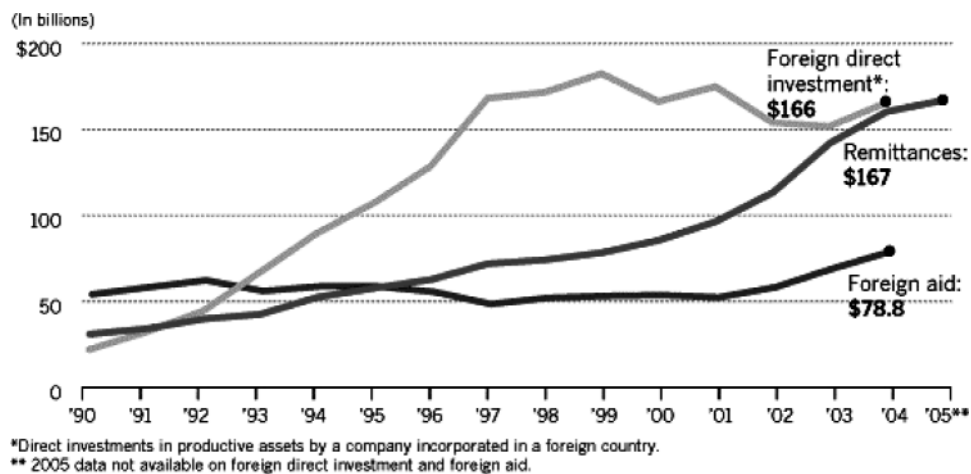


Figure 1. Remittances in relation to foreign aid and foreign direct investment. *Source:* World Bank.

The main actors that have shaped the debate around the migration–development nexus are international organizations (e.g. International Labour Organisation, International Organisation for Migration); international financial institutions (e.g. World Bank, International Monetary Fund, Regional Development Banks); national development agencies of migrant-receiving countries (e.g. DfID, USAID); NGOs (e.g. Women’s World Banking); government institutions of migrant-sending countries; and regional institutions, such as the EU. The emergence of the migration–development nexus has not meant a complete paradigm shift, as some have it, or the eradication of the conventional paradigm. Rather, different actors have adopted the new paradigm to different extents and in different ways, as shall be seen below.

### Theorizing the Migration–Development Nexus in the EU

The introduction of the migration–development nexus in the EU’s external relations cannot start from scratch, but meets an established institutional context of policy deliberation and policy making, as well as existing policy frames. The policy change involved in realizing this nexus requires an instance of “frame-shifting”, i.e. a major reorientation of the ways in which the migration problem is defined and dealt with in EU policy.

Policy frames can be defined as the ideational core of a particular policy field, which contains the dominant interpretation of the underlying social problem and expresses guideposts for action (Rein and Schon 1991).<sup>6</sup> In short, the common characteristics of these policy ideas are their social and inter-subjective nature in contrast to cognitive beliefs held by individuals, their relative stability and resistance to change, and their specificity to a concrete policy field. Policy frames contain both “factual” information about causal relationships and empirical facts, and “normative” devices with

prescriptive value as to the “goodness” and “badness” of political action. Once established, policy frames shape the actors’ perceptions and interpretations and influence the course of political action.

In studying the relationship between policy ideas and policy making, it is important to note that “ideas do not float freely” (Risse-Kappen 1994), and that the emergence and institutionalization of policy frames is usually characterized by the existence of conflicting views and political struggles over facts, values, interpretations and consequences. This dependency of frames from the advocacy activities of particular groups or organizations implies that their implementation in public policies will usually reflect the position of the most influential actors. Therefore, the distribution of power among the actors involved in framing processes, and the institutional procedures guiding their access and interaction in the relevant policy arena are crucial in examining the emergence and the effects of particular policy frames. Nevertheless, once implemented in public policies, these frames become independent from the underlying power relations and can continue to affect the course of policy making, even after the social power relations that facilitated their emergence have changed (Coleman 1998, p. 634).

Analysing the migration–development nexus in the context of the EU, one faces two coalitions of actors which have traditionally institutionalized their action in rather independent settings: the JHA ministers and DG JLS — who were hitherto exclusively responsible for immigration matters in the EU — and development actors within DG Development and the respective Council, who, together with DG Relex, coordinate development policy. Whereas the external dimension of migration policy cooperation has emerged prior to the embracing of the migration–development nexus, the latter’s realization requires a close coordination of activities between the two groups of actors.

Retracing the emergence of a foreign policy cooperation in migration matters and the incumbent policy frame, this article will highlight the ideational challenges behind the realization of a migration–development nexus. Added on to the EU agenda as measures to compensate for the potential security deficits of the abolition of internal border controls, and dominated by the activities of home affairs officials, European migration policies have been clearly dominated by a securitarian framing, focusing on the improvement of control capacities for the admission and rejection of third country nationals (Geddes 2000, Guiraudon 2000, Lavenex 2001, Huysmans 2006). From this perspective, the linkage with development would consist in using development cooperation as a means to control migration better or to alleviate migration pressure for the sake of receiving countries. This framing contrasts sharply with the more development-focused approach to the nexus between migration and development, proposed by the World Bank and the UN Dialogue presented below, which rather sees migration as a means to promote development goals for the sake of sending countries. In other words, the realization of a more development-orientated framing of the migration–development nexus in the EU would require a de-securitization of the dominant policy frame to take into consideration the priorities of sending countries in an attempt to balance the gains from cooperation.

The following sections analyse the emergence of the original policy frame before highlighting the factors that have induced a reorientation and scrutinizing the ways in which the coordination between migration and development policies is materializing in the EU.

### The Framing of External Migration Policy Cooperation Within the EU

From the second Schengen Agreement of 1990 to the early 2000s, cooperation on asylum and migration matters focused on limiting the access of “unwanted” third country nationals (Joppke 1998) by stepping up controls at the external borders, tightening entry requirements, restricting visa policies, limiting access to (full) asylum procedures, and adopting minimum standards on some aspects of asylum and refugee policy as well as other internationally codified human rights, such as family-reunification, and the rights of long-term third country nationals living in the EU.<sup>7</sup> Despite the Commission’s endeavours to promote a common approach towards economic migration, EU member states have hitherto forcefully objected the adoption of binding commitments in this area. A proposal for a directive of 2001 (Commission 2001) was simply discarded by the Council. In 2005, the Commission took two steps back and proposed a legally non-binding “green paper” on economic migration, and in the Nice Treaty as well as the stalled Constitutional Treaty, member states (in particular Germany) opposed the introduction of qualified majority voting and co-decision for economic migration.<sup>8</sup>

The external dimension of migration policy was officially embraced at the 1999 Tampere European Council where the EU Heads of State and Government declared that the EU “needs a comprehensive approach to migration addressing political, human rights and development issues in countries and regions of origin and transit ... Partnership with third countries concerned will also be a key element for the success of such a policy, with a view to promoting co-development” (European Council 1999).

Another early step towards the external dimension was the initiative of the Dutch Foreign Ministry of the same year for the creation of a High Level Working Group (HLWG) (van Selm 2002, Boswell 2003, pp. 628–632). The HLWG was set up by the General Affairs Council in December 1998 to establish a common, integrated, cross-pillar approach targeted at the situation in the most important countries of origin of asylum seekers and migrants. The Country Action Plans produced by the HLWG, which was composed mainly of JHA officials, however, perpetuated the restrictive control-orientated approach by focusing on issues of readmission and return of irregular migrants. These priorities corresponded to the general external JHA agenda. Initially, the HLWG and DG JLS also lacked own funds, and seemed to rely on the use of DG Development and DG Relex funds for the realization of its Action Plans (Boswell 2003, p. 631). In the light of the predominant restrictive approach to migration, these actors feared that by linking migration closer with external relations and development, their own agendas would be politicized and co-opted (*ibid.*).



Until 2005, the external dimension of EU migration policies has focused mainly on getting countries of origin and transit to sign readmission agreements — together with cooperation in the area of border controls. These agreements stipulate that the contracting parties have to take back their own nationals who have entered or stayed illegally in another country as well as nationals of non-contracting parties or stateless persons who have illegally entered or stayed on their territory, subject to certain conditions. A problem with the conclusion of readmission agreements is that as these “are solely in the interest of the Community, their successful conclusion depends very much on the ‘leverage’ at the Commission’s disposal. In that context it is important to note that, in the field of JHA, there is little that can be offered in return ...” (Commission 2002, p. 23).

Indeed, the difficulties in motivating countries such as Russia, Ukraine or Morocco to sign such agreements clearly show the limits of such a restrictive, unbalanced and EU-centred approach. To respond to this challenge, the Commission has first created a new budget line (B7-667) to support “Cooperation with third countries in the area of migration”. In 2004, this was replaced by a multi-annual financial framework for the years 2004–2008 with a total amount of €250 million (the so-called Aeneas Programme). Apart from the general goal to support third countries’ efforts to improve the management of migratory flows, the Aeneas Programme stresses in particular stimulation of third countries’ readiness to conclude readmission agreements, and assistance in coping with the consequences of such agreements.

The second measure to gain leverage towards third countries has been “increasing complementarity with other Community policies in order to help achieving the Community’s objectives in the field of return and readmission” (Commission 2002, p. 24). This was basically achieved by linking association and cooperation agreements with migration control policies as outlined in Article 13 of the Cotonou Agreement with the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries (2000) and in the Conclusions of the Seville European Council of June 2002. The so-called migration clause of Article 13 obliges both the EU and the ACP countries to take back their own citizens “without further formalities” as well as the possibility of permitting EU member states to return failed asylum seekers and irregular migrants who have transited through these third countries on their way to the EU. At the Seville European Council, a Spanish–British initiative to make development aid conditional on third countries cooperating on migration control was rejected, yet, the final conclusions did confirm a certain conditionality.

It was agreed that each future EU association or cooperation agreement should include a clause on joint management of migration flows and compulsory readmission in the event of illegal immigration. The handling of readmission clauses changed in so far as there is now an obligation to negotiate a supplementary treaty with the entire Community, not just individual member states. In addition, the EU policy is now that such clauses are mandatory: it will no longer sign any association or cooperation agreement unless the other side agrees to the standard obligations. The Seville Conclusions also decided that inadequate cooperation by a third state could hamper further



development of relations with the EU, following a systematic assessment of relations with that country. And, finally, if a non-EU state has demonstrated “an unjustified lack of cooperation in joint management of migration flows”, according to the Council following a unanimous vote, then the Council, after “full use of existing Community mechanisms”, could take “measures or positions” as part of the EU’s foreign policy or other policies, “while honouring the Union’s contractual commitments and not jeopardising development cooperation objectives” (European Council 2002).

The Seville Conclusions clearly demonstrate the securitarian approach to the link between migration and development adopted by the EU in this period:

The European Council considers that combating illegal immigration requires a greater effort on the part of the European Union and a targeted approach to the problem, with the use of all appropriate instruments in the context of the European Union’s external relations. To that end, in accordance with the Tampere European Council conclusions, an integrated, comprehensive and balanced approach to tackling the root causes of illegal immigration must remain the European Union’s constant long-term objective. With this in mind, the European Council points out that closer economic cooperation, trade expansion, development assistance and conflict prevention are all means of promoting economic prosperity in the countries concerned and thereby reducing the underlying causes of migration flows (European Council 2002).

Although the 2003 Thessaloniki European Council under the Greek Presidency put forward a more balanced and comprehensive approach, it is only since 2005 that development as a goal in itself has become linked with the issue of migration. This is mainly due to the activities of supranational actors in the Commission, and has been influenced by two factors: first, the intensifying international discourse on the migration–development nexus and, secondly, the crisis of the securitarian frame in EU migration policy. The next section summarizes the international discourse before turning to the factors that prompted a reorientation within the EU.

### The Migration–Development Nexus at the International Level

The emergence of the migration–development nexus at the international level can be traced in a few milestones. This is by no means an exhaustive list, but merely an account of some of the most significant events.<sup>9</sup> These milestones are also platforms where competing policy frames within the migration–development nexus at the international level have emerged and sometimes clashed.

The IOM was somewhat a pioneer of the new migration–development nexus paradigm. Linking migration to development and focusing on the positive linkages have been part of IOM’s mission right from the start<sup>10</sup> and came to the fore in the launch of its *Migration for Development* programmes

in 1964, and in the 1974 *Return of Talent Programme* for Latin Americans residing abroad.<sup>11</sup> However, within the broader international community, these were rather isolated efforts to link migration to development and are certainly to be understood in the *raison d'être* of the institution itself. The explicit focus on the potential of migrant remittance for development emerged only in the 1990s. The International Labour Organization (ILO) was among the first international institutions to point to the importance of migrant remittances. As early as 1949, the ILO *Convention on migration* No. 97 referred to the “earning and savings of the migrant” and urged countries to allow migrants to transfer remittances (International Labour Organisation 1949, Article 9). However, at this stage, the ILO did not yet make an explicit link between migration and development. This only happened in November 2000, when the ILO organized a conference on *Making the Best of Globalization: Migrant Worker Remittances and Micro-Finance* (ILO 2000, p. 2).

In response to growing awareness of the implications of international migration, the Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM) was established in 2003, on the encouragement of the UN Secretary-General.<sup>12</sup> Its mandate was among others to “analy[s] gaps in current policy approaches to migration and examin[e] inter-linkages with other issue-areas” such as development, trade, security and human rights.<sup>13</sup> In its Final Report, the GCIM emphasizes the positive nexus between migration and development and the way in which migration could contribute to the development of sending countries:

International migration has the potential to play a very positive role in the process of human development, bringing benefits to people in poorer and more prosperous countries alike. The Global Commission on International Migration underlines the need for the international community to maximize these benefits and to capitalize on the resourcefulness of people who seek to improve their lives by moving from one country to another (Global Commission on International Migration 2005, p. 5).

Before 2003, migration and development issues were of relatively minor concern to the World Bank. This changed with the publication of the *Global Development Finance Annual Report* in 2003, entitled “Worker’s Remittances: An Important and Stable Source of External Development Finance”, where the World Bank adopted the new paradigm by taking formal notice of remittances as a source of external development finance. This publication raised global awareness of the potential of migration for development. Chapter 7 suggested that remittances have become an important source of development financing, and discussed measures to increase remittances and thereby their positive impact on development (Ratha 2003, p. 157). In contrast to the rather broad focus of the ILO on migrants as workers with rights, and of the GCIM on the “resourcefulness of migrants”, the World Bank adopts a more narrow approach, emphasizing the financial aspects of migration and the transfer of remittances. Thus, at the international level one

can identify two main competing frames: one focusing from a human rights perspective on the migrants themselves, and another, more economic one, emphasizing finance and remittances.

A number of international meetings and conferences illustrate the competition between these different ways of framing the migration–development nexus. In 2003, the first international meeting focusing entirely on migrant remittances — entitled “International Conference on Migrant Remittances: Development Impact, Opportunities for the Financial Sector and Future Prospects” — took place in London, organized jointly by DfID and the World Bank in collaboration with the International Migration Policy Programme (IMP).<sup>14</sup> The objective of the conference was to bring together concerned stakeholders and strengthen the development impact of remittances (Department for International Development and World Bank 2003, p. 3). As revealed in the title and the Concluding Remarks, this conference emphasized the role of remittances in the migration–development nexus, which illustrates its rather narrow frame. In March 2006 the *Conference on Migration and Development* took place in Brussels, jointly organized by the Belgium government, the IOM, the World Bank and the European Commission.<sup>15</sup> The purpose of the conference was to discuss “how migration and related policies can contribute to economic development in countries of origin or transit, and how development policies in turn can address root causes of migration such as poverty and lack of socio-economic prospects, and ease the pressures on people to emigrate unwillingly” (IOM, World Bank and European Commission 2006). This conference in Brussels also aimed at preparing an input for the “United Nations High Level Dialogue Meeting on International Migration and Development”, held in September 2006 in New York. The UN High Level Dialogue was launched in 2003 in a Resolution by the General Assembly, “to discuss the multidimensional aspects of international migration and development in order to identify appropriate ways and means to maximize its development benefits and minimize its negative impacts” (United Nations 2006).<sup>16</sup>

Thus, bringing together many different actors in the field, the UN advocates a broad, rights-based framing of the migration–development nexus. This is also the focus of a recent study published by the OECD Development Centre (2007) entitled *Migration and Developing Countries*. The basic tenet of the study is that international migration contributes to economic growth and poverty reduction in the migrant-sending country through the three channels of labour supply, changes in productivity and remittances (OECD 2007, p. 12). The main recommendation is thus that OECD countries “look at their migration policies through a development lens”, whereas developing countries should “look at their development policies through a migration lens” (*ibid.*, p. 16). More concretely, the study puts forward two main measures for OECD countries. First, it suggests innovative circularity schemes (favoured by multi-use, multi-entry visas and work permits) which, in the case of highly skilled migrants, could mitigate crippling effects on social services in sending countries. For the low skilled, circular schemes could, according to the OECD, promote remittances and reduce the incidence of

irregular migration. The second main proposition is a better coordination of responsible actors and organizations at both the national and supranational level such as through inter-ministerial and interdepartmental initiatives and consultations between international organizations.

The aforementioned milestones in the emergence of the migration–development paradigm at the international level illustrate a number of points. The broad variety of institutions involved in the debate has generated conflicts over competing ways of framing the links between migration and development. Parallel to competing frames between different international institutions, there is also a competition of frames within institutions, between different departments (of both international organizations and states).<sup>17</sup> The major international conferences on the topic represent platforms for the competition between different frames. It is suggested that despite the recent OECD report, at the international level, there has been a general shift from a broader, more “rights-based” approach, towards a narrower “money-based” framing. Thereby, the focus was directed from the more general linkages between migration and development towards monetary aspects of the development impact of remittances. It is argued that this shift is linked to the changing influence of different international institutions in the framing of the issue at the international level. For a long time, the issue has been mainly in the domain of the ILO and the IOM, which adopted a broad approach focusing on protecting migrant’s rights and harnessing the potential development impact of their return to the country of origin. When the issue was taken up by international financial institutions — such as the World Bank, the IMF and different development banks — it was reframed in a more narrow way, whereby the focus shifted towards the financial aspects of migration — remittances — and their potential to reduce poverty and finance development. In the last few years, this framing has become dominant in the international community. This does not mean that institutions such as the ILO and the IOM are no longer active in the field, or no longer focus on their specific concerns: There is a continuous struggle over the framing of the issue, both within and between the different institutions. The UN High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development is the most recent example of this ongoing debate.

### **Towards a Nexus of Migration and Development Goals in the EU?**

Two main factors have prompted a reorientation of the dominant migration policy frame within the EU outlined above. First, the intensification of the migration–development discourse in international institutions has not left the EU unaffected: it has pushed the EU to rethink its approach to adopt the migration–development nexus and design measures to implement this shift. The preparations for the UN High Level Dialogue whereby the EU had to formulate its position, highlighted this process as they put a greater stress on the links between migration policy and the achievement of the MDGs.<sup>18</sup> A second factor was the external shock provoked by the events in Ceuta and Melilla which dramatically illustrated the limits of a purely repressive approach.

The move towards linking migration and development was facilitated by the mobilization of actors hitherto excluded from EU migration policy into European cooperation. This mobilization was, however, not uncontroversial. It started with development actors' reluctance to see development policy instruments mobilized for migration policy goals — and changed only in the context of the preparation of the UN High Level Dialogue and the parallel embracement of a “Global Approach” to migration by the EU. The decision at the turn of the millennium to mainstream migration control prerogatives into other external policies mobilized DG Relex and DG Development, which appointed one migration official each in 2001 and 2002 respectively to coordinate their policies. These actors' initial position was characterized by a clear reluctance to see their agenda changed under the influence of JHA prerogatives. This is visible in the Commission's (2002) Communication on “Integrating migration issues in the European Union's relations with their countries”. Whereas confirming the goal of linking cooperation and association agreements with migration control and, in particular, readmission clauses, the Communication stresses that such measures should not imply “over-turning” existing development approaches, but should be complementary to them. Despite this initial reluctance, the fact that a certain competence for migration matters was institutionalized facilitated the subsequent mobilization of these actors under a less security-orientated focus.

The “external shock” provoked by the incidents at the Spanish exclaves of Ceuta and Melilla in September/October 2005 and the blatant human rights violations that followed gave a further major impulse for a reconsideration of the original policy frame within the EU. These dramatic events were induced by the plans to step up the fences surrounding these exclaves, prompting an increase in flows of migrants attempting to climb over into EU territory. This led not only to violent interventions by Spanish border guards, but also to inhumane deportations by Moroccan authorities that provoked an outcry throughout the international community. Interviews conducted with DG JLS revealed these incidents prompted a reconsideration of the current approach and the realisation that a policy based on control and repression exclusively would not only remain ineffective but also violate the Union's very own values and thus do harm to its external image in the world.<sup>19</sup>

From the summer of 2005 onwards, initiatives proposing a closer coordination of migration and development goals proliferated. The Commission (2005a) Communication on “Migration and development: some concrete orientations” was prepared in the wake of the UN High Level Dialogue and, for the first time, addressed “further steps for improving the impact of migration on development” (rather than the other way round). To this end, it outlined four areas of activity: facilitate the flows of remittances; engage diasporas in home country development; promote circular migration and brain circulation; and mitigate the negative effects of brain drain. This highlights the attempt to frame the migration–development nexus in a broader way.

This first communication paved the way for the immediate reactions to the incidents in Ceuta and Melilla and, in particular, the call for a “Global Approach” and closer cooperation with Africa in the area of migration at

the informal European Summit at Hampton Court (GB). Shortly after, the Commission (2005b) issued a Communication entitled “Priority actions for responding to the challenges of migration”. This document set out a series of immediate, practical actions to be taken forward in partnership with source and transit countries. Building on the Commission’s Communication, the European Council adopted the “Global approach to migration: priority actions focusing on Africa and the Mediterranean” in its Conclusions of 16 December 2005, and called upon the Commission to report on progress made in this area in one year’s time.

During 2006, the EU co-organized two broad international conferences with African states to discuss migration issues, one in Rabat (July) and one in Tripoli (November). The main outcome of the Rabat Conference was the adoption of a Declaration with stresses that the signatory states should make “better use of the potential of legal migration and its beneficial effects on the development of countries of origin and host countries” and calls for an Action Plan which seeks to operationalize the key points made in the Declaration. One of the measures proposed therein is the promotion of means “to facilitate circular and temporary migration between countries of origin and destination”. A few months later, a second, bigger conference took place in Tripoli on migration and development that was co-organized between the EU and the African Union. From the EU side, both Commissioners Franco Frattini (DG JLS) and Louis Michel (DG Development) were present, thus underlying the cross-sectoral nature of the theme. The joint Declaration covers a wide range of issues, including legal and illegal migration, migration and development and refugee protection, as well as wider issues of peace and security and human rights.

Despite this activism, implementation of a “Global Approach” proves difficult. The difficulties in implementing the new orientation are illustrated in the Communications that followed. “The Global Approach one year on”, published on 30 November 2006, emphasized the necessity to make “the European Union’s approach truly comprehensive. ... It therefore suggests including other policy areas ... such as legal migration and integration measures” (authors’ own emphasis). Two Communications from May 2007 follow up on these ideas, and show their limits. First, potential concessions in the migration field clearly respond to geopolitical priorities. Following the European Council Conclusions of December 2006, the application of the “Global Approach” shall first be limited to the Eastern and South-Eastern regions neighbouring the EU — countries that, through the ENP, shall enjoy privileged relations with the Union.<sup>20</sup> Secondly, the innovation potential of Commission proposals, such as the promotion of circular migration and mobility partnerships between the Union and third countries, is sometimes more rhetorical than practical.<sup>21</sup>

A closer look at the intended contents of these mobility partnerships confirms the enduring predominance of migration control elements and the near absence of development goals. Starting with the “commitments expected from third countries” for establishing such partnerships, the document lists *inter alia* the commitment to readmission (also of third country



nationals), to the fight against illegal migration and to the improvement of border control. Only one of these commitments can be seen as potentially contributing to development, namely the promotion of productive employment and decent work in the country of origin (Commission 2007b, p. 4). On the side of the EC and participating member states, the list does not contain “expected” commitments but only possible, discretionary ones. These could cover opportunities for economic immigration such as labour quotas or help for matching job offers in the member states in question with job seekers from the third country; they can, however, also cover migration for studies or other forms of training. In addition, member states may decide to provide information on labour market needs, provide pre-departure linguistic or technical training for persons with a concrete employment perspective abroad, develop schemes to facilitate the economic and social reintegration of returning migrants, and take measures to facilitate the transfer of migrants’ remittances. Apart from the discretionary nature of these possible measures, a further limitation of a potential opening of legal migration opportunities in national laws results from the obligation to respect the principle of Community preference for EU citizens. Finally, the document also lists the possibility of measures to address the risk of brain drain and to promote circular or return migration as well as improvement and/or easing of visa procedures (*ibid.*, pp. 5ff.). In short, the Commission documents show that, in continuation of earlier activities, the EU and its member states have more facility in spelling out the necessary contributions of the third countries regarding migration control than to commit themselves to activities that would be potentially beneficial to the development of the third country.

Although migration was scheduled to be a main topic at the EU–Africa Ministerial Conference in December 2007, the EU did not make any new commitments in this field. Iterating earlier declarations, the “Africa–EU partnership on migration, mobility and employment”, adopted on this occasion, merely links up with the goal to implement the Declaration of the Tripoli Conference on Migration and Development, including the “EU–Africa plan of action on trafficking of human beings”, as well as to follow up the 2004 Ouagadougou Declaration and Action Plan on Employment and Poverty Alleviation in Africa.<sup>22</sup>

## Conclusion

Inspired by the international discourse on the migration–development nexus and induced by the inherent deficiencies of an exclusively repressive external migration policy, the EU has started to revise its originally securitarian frame of migration policy to adopt the migration–development nexus and include issues relevant for development, such as legal migration opportunities and the facilitation of remittances. Yet, the review of relevant policy documents reveals an impressive persistence both of the original policy frame and the components of the EU’s external migration policy. Despite a changing rhetoric, the main focus of recent initiatives is still on the aspect of immigration

control and proposals for measures pertinent for development remain not only very vague but also non-committal and discretionary.

Apart from reminding us of the difficulty of changing policy frames once they have become implemented in public policy (see second section above), these results also show that a coordination between development and another policy field can take very different shapes, generating different implications for political action. This general finding is valid for both the international and the EU level. At the international level, the migration–development nexus has been framed differently depending on the institutional context and organizational actors prevailing in a specific policy discourse. The ILO and the GCIM, for example, adopt a rather broad and rights-based frame, whereas the World Bank adopts a more narrow approach emphasizing the financial aspects of migration and the transfer of remittances. Depending on the relative influence of these institutions and herewith of their propagated frames, this means that coherence between development and migration may take many different shapes.

At the EU level, one does not find the same contrast between a rights-based and a money-based approach. Rather, the discourse on migration and development is confronted with a pre-existing securitarian policy frame focusing on the repression of unwanted immigration. Although dramatic events such as those in Ceuta and Melilla seriously challenged the legitimacy and effectiveness of this approach, its ideational focus remained relatively stable in policy making. Thus, policy coordination does not necessarily involve a substitution of predominant policy frames but may just consist in a more or less far-reaching modification or extension of pre-existing ones, embedded in the relevant policy-making institutions. In fact, the more development-focused frames developed by international institutions have not substituted the more securitarian policy frame in the EU but are being partially incorporated in the mix of options in the pursuit of migration policy goals.

These barriers towards greater policy coordination are sustained by the institutional set-up of policy making in the EU. This concerns on the one hand the still not fully communitarized nature of immigration policy, with legal economic migration remaining in the competence of the member states. As mentioned above, vote by unanimity in the Council and the consultation procedure with the Parliament remain valid for economic migration policies, thus posing very high hurdles to the adoption of common measures. This is perpetuated by the fact that the Council deciding on such proposals is composed of the ministers for home affairs and justice who are not only unfamiliar with external relations but can also be referred to as the “policemen of sovereignty” (van Outrive 1995, p. 395) — that is the opponents of supranational liberal rules. Whereas in external migration policy aspects, also the General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) is involved, its influence is limited severely by the fact that only one committee within GAERC is responsible for migration issues, namely the HLWG on asylum and immigration. Given that the latter is composed mainly of JHA officials, it is likely to perpetuate the influence of the JHA Council within

GAERC (Chou 2006, p. 17).<sup>23</sup> Another obstacle to the realization of a broader, more development-focused approach within the EU results from capabilities gaps within the Commission. Whereas DG JLS has managed to increase its staff in recent years, it remains chronically “overworked and understaffed” (Uçarer 2001, p. 7). The same can be said for the new “Cellule” created in DG Development tasked with coordinating the integration of migration issues into the new European Development Fund cycle of 2008–2013. Finally, a third impediment is the strategic importance that immigration openings and visa facilitation are gaining in EU external relations. As the analysis of recent policy proposals has shown, these favour in the first place countries that share privileged ties with the EU, such as those pertaining to the ENP, and not the developing countries further afield.

To conclude, policy coordination is a fascinating field for studying frame-competition and the role of institutional contexts that influence the relative weight of different advocacy coalitions in policy making. As this study shows, there exists not only one policy solution when it comes to realizing a nexus between migration and development, but several, contrasting ones. Whereas ideally, the notion of policy coordination suggests a win–win solution for all policy fields involved, in practice the nexus between one policy field and another may well be less balanced. In contrast to the international discourse on development and migration that emphasizes the broader contribution of a well-managed immigration policy on overarching development goals, in the context of the EU, the nexus tends to emphasize the priorities of receiving countries, that is the attempt at mobilizing development cooperation as a means to realize primarily migration policy goals.

## Notes

1. Multilateral development aid has decreased dramatically during the last decade. This means that world-wide remittance flows exceed total development aid and have become the second-largest — and in some cases even the largest — financial flow to developing countries after foreign direct investment. According to the World Bank (2007), the total flow of recorded migrant remittances to developing countries is estimated to reach \$US240 billion in 2007.
2. This DG covers the fields formerly referred to as “Justice and Home Affairs” (JHA). The re-labelling of the DG’s name is illustrative of these actors’ struggle to balance the security prerogatives inherent in the field with liberal values and goals.
3. In an earlier publication, Hammar and Brochmann (1997) linked migration and development; however, the term migration–development nexus was coined later. For further literature on the migration–development nexus, see Skeldon (1997), COM (2002), the Special Issue of *International Migration* (2002) on this topic, De Haas (2005).
4. It is important to note that in Europe and in the USA, for example, previous decades saw a more “liberal” approach to migration, whereby migration was not primarily perceived as a problem. However, what is new with the migration–development nexus is the explicit positive links between migration and development.
5. It has to be noted that even before the 1990s, certain international institutions such as the IOM and the ILO have long linked migration and development issues in their activities. In addition, migrants themselves have a long tradition of linking migration to development by investing their remittances in such a way as to contribute to development (for example, Italian migrants in Switzerland or Turkish migrants in Germany engaging in “Dorfverschönerungsprojekte”). However, only with the migration–development nexus did a conscious effort emerge to link migration and development in theory as well as in policies, as shall be seen below.

6. This definition is strongly related to the concept of “policy paradigms” used in Hall (1989), the notion of “core beliefs” in Sabatier (1993) or the definition of “référentiels” in Jobert and Muller (1987).
7. For recent analyses, see Huysmans (2006), Lavenex (2006a, 2006b).
8. Agreement could be reached in limited areas such as common guidelines on the admission of students and trainees (2004) and researchers (2005).
9. For further analysis, see Kunz (2008).
10. See the IOM website: [http://www.old.iom.int/en/who/main\\_mission.shtml](http://www.old.iom.int/en/who/main_mission.shtml).
11. See IOM website: [http://www.old.iom.int/en/who/main\\_history.shtml](http://www.old.iom.int/en/who/main_history.shtml).
12. See GCIM website: [www.gcim.org](http://www.gcim.org).
13. See: [http://www.gcim.org/en/a\\_mandate.html](http://www.gcim.org/en/a_mandate.html).
14. For further information about this conference see: [http://www.livelihoods.org/hot\\_topics/migration/remittances.html](http://www.livelihoods.org/hot_topics/migration/remittances.html).
15. See: <http://www.migrationdevelopment.org/index.php?id=11>.
16. See: <http://www.un.org/migration/> [last accessed May 2008].
17. Thus, for example, within the ILO the MIGRANT department focuses on migrant’s rights and social justice and tends to adopt a more rights-based approach, whereas the Social Finance Unit focuses more on remittances and tends to use a narrower approach. Similarly, within the EU, different units adopt different approaches to the migration–development nexus.
18. See: [http://www.europa-eu-un.org/articles/en/article\\_6221\\_en.htm](http://www.europa-eu-un.org/articles/en/article_6221_en.htm).
19. Interview with DG JLS, 16 May 2006.
20. COM (2007) 247 of 16 May 2007.
21. COM (2007) 248 final of 16 May 2007.
22. See: [http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/repository/EAS2007\\_action\\_plan\\_2008\\_2010\\_en.pdf#zoom=100](http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/repository/EAS2007_action_plan_2008_2010_en.pdf#zoom=100).
23. Chou (2006, p. 1) came to a similar result concerning the obstacles to the realization of the migration–development nexus within the EU.

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