

Tackling the consequences of terrorism and violent extremism: A focus on migration

Two non-related framing remarks to animate the discussion, one concerning the refugee discussion, the second concerning migration

Speaking points, Volker Hauck (ECDPM)

*“Tackling the consequences of terrorism and violent extremism: A focus on migration” => For these framing notes, I would like to add “A focus on **migrants and refugees**” ...*

⇒ Useful to make a distinction between **refugees** and (economic) **migrants** – sometimes, in particular in the current discussion in Europe, used interchangeably => two framing remarks to animate the discussion, one concerning the refugee discussion, the second concerning migration

First:

- **A refugee**, is clearly defined by the UN, *“as a person who is outside his or her country of nationality and has a well-founded fear of being persecuted because of her race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group and is unable to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country or return there for fear of prosecution”*. This can be understood as a consequence of, for example, violent conflicts, actors of terrorism, political oppression. Three trends can be noted, according to the 2015 report of UNHCR:
 - First, the situation – as we all know – does not look good.
 - “Wars, conflict and persecution have forced more people than at any other time since records began to flee their homes and seek refuge and safety elsewhere” - Worldwide displacement is at the highest level ever. (UNHCR Global Report 2014)
 - There are currently 19.5 million refugees and 38 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDP’s)
 - 86% of the refugees find refuge in developing countries; a quarter of these in the least developed countries
 - Second, only a fraction of these people can be repatriated to their country of origin (126,800 refugees in 2014)
 - Mainly caused by a number of countries not being able to re-take refugees due to protracted crisis (i.e., Afghanistan; Sudan/South Sudan; etc.)
 - Recurrent breaking of peace settlements within particular countries & regions
 - Third, the duration of the conflicts increases (while it had decreased after 1990s, until early 2010’s)
 - The average duration of so-called 33 ‘protracted refugee situations’ (PRS) is 25 years
 - Up to 2014, less conflicts between states but increase of conflicts within states => increase of deaths due to internal violent conflict/ terrorism more than doubled since 2008
- **The three classical approaches** to offering ‘durable solutions’ in order to deal with the refugee crisis are under pressure:
 - Offering durable solutions through **re-settlement**, is => the amount of refugees surpasses the amount of space offered in resettlement sites by a multitude. In 2014, about 105,200 refugees were admitted for resettlement to 25 countries. Though this is the highest number since 2009 it is only a solution for a small

- fraction of total refugees in need for resettlement (UNHCR estimates over 1 mn in need for resettlement in 2015/16).
- **Repatriation** to the country of origin is also becoming less and less an option => protracted/prolonged conflicts prevent repatriation in many countries
 - **Local integration**: preparedness to integrate refugees is low in refugee-receiving countries, also due to tensions because of limited resources, and security challenges.
- Despite these problems sketched, the **integration-path (third approach)** is growing in refugee-receiving countries and currently discussed intensely at the international level. Positive examples are known from history, where refugees managed to create 'impulses' for economic development, 'agency' to develop host countries culturally and socially, and integrated successfully in a society.
 - Refugee populations offer examples of **bottom-up innovation**, in which crisis affected communities engage in creative, problem-solving processes to address challenges and create opportunities.
 - "Examples from Uganda highlight innovation across both protracted and emergency situations and both urban and rural contexts. They show how, in a country in which refugees have the right to work, there is a strong presence of innovative entrepreneurship, including the use and adaptation of technology. Refugee innovation notably contributes to public goods provision across the refugee and host communities." (Oxford University Refugee Studies Centre – Refugee Innovation – 2015)
 - **Framing remark one**: parliamentarians do have a role in discussing these approaches thoroughly in their respective countries – North and South. Challenges and problems caused by refugees in the short term might become outbalanced and turned into the positive in the medium term if accompanied by adequate integration policies. Though many questions remain while pressures on host country population are high. Research and knowledge networking can help to question and counter existing positions, views and prejudices.

Second:

- **Migration** is understood here as a 'voluntary act' & as an opportunity for migrants, countries of destination and for the countries of origin to prevent their environment to turn fragile and/or develop their societies ...
 - ... though noting, that the term is much less defined than the term 'refugee' – increasing recognition that many people are '**survival migrants**' to escape fragility, societies without perspectives, climate change related problems, threat of conflict, etc. where the term 'voluntary' act becomes a grey-zone.
 - Migrant workers and their families account for about **90% of all international migrants** and it is mainly driven by socio-economic and demographic disparities.
 - In essence, migration should not only be seen from the negative perspective as it has a **strong potential for the development of societies and individuals...**
- The **conditions under which labour migration occurs, and in particular respect for migrant workers' rights, are crucial determinants of its developmental implications**. There are several challenges associated such as exploitation, abuse, brain drain etc. Yet, there are actual and potential benefits of labour migration for labour markets of receiving countries, which can be further developed through labour migration management, labour matching capacities and well designed labour migration schemes.
- Approaching **migration as an opportunity** is also evidenced by the following (World Bank) figures on remittances and foreign aid (2000 compared to 2014):
 - **In 2000**: foreign aid and remittances were at approx. US\$ 90 billion

- **In 2014:** foreign aid had increased to some US\$ 180 billion, while remittances had increased to over US\$ billion 435 = more than doubled!
- Remittances play a great role as they directly impact on **poverty reduction and human development** (in particular for health care and education of children) in countries of origin. Yet, the development potential of remittances remains hindered by the fact that migrants and their families loose billions of dollars annually due to **high transfer costs**.
- Questions also arise on **how the remittances can be used more strategically** to the benefit of development; problems with remittances are abound => non-effective investments; social problems; undermining incentives for endogenous growth strategies; use for luxury consumption goods (in some countries), etc.
- **Innovative ideas** are increasingly discussed to make better use of migrant communities abroad: e.g. setting up private or public-private investment funds for regions or sectors; creation of pension schemes; strengthening linkages between home country and diaspora to give diaspora a political voice back home; etc.
- **Framing remark two:** parliamentarians have a role to play in putting migration as an opportunity on the agenda; generating institutional and strategic frameworks to deal with migration to the benefit of migrants, countries of origin and countries of destination; build capacity, consumer protection and financial sector oversight to protect remittance senders and receivers, linking remittances to other financial services, promote financial inclusion and pass laws to reduce legal barriers to facilitate a better use of remittances (e.g., for investments); setting up effective institutions dealing with the diaspora, designing migration management policies, such as policies for labour-market matching, protection for migrant workers, etc.