

NEWS & NOTES

Selected Developments related to Migration: 2022¹

Ralf Roßkopf²

This is a compilation of news and notes of relevance for the field of migration.

1. EU Action Plan for the Central Mediterranean

The European Commission presented an EU Action Plan on the Central Mediterranean in advance of the Extraordinary Justice and Home Affairs Council of 25 November 2022 (EU Commission, 2022a). The Plan was welcomed by the ministers who expressed their readiness for the implementation and considered possible benefits of similar plans for other main migration routes (EU Home Affairs Council, 2022).

Reiterating that over 90 000 migrants and refugees arrived through the Central Mediterranean Route in 2022 departing mainly from Libya and Tunisia, and originating primarily from Egypt, Tunisia, and Bangladesh, the Plan sets out 20 actions for the three pillars of (1) strengthened cooperation with partner countries and international organizations, (2) a more coordinated approach on search and rescue, as well as (3) the reinforced implementation of the voluntary solidarity mechanism and the Joint Roadmap (EU Commission, 2020a) for the adoption of the proposals under the Pact on Migration and Asylum (EU Commission, 2020b).

2. EU Plan for Attracting Skills and Talent to the EU

The European Commission proposed a comprehensive plan for attracting skills and talent to the EU in its Communication of 27/4/2022 (EU Commission 2022b). The objectives are to meet the demographic challenges in an aging society as reflected on a shrinking working population, to respond to occupational shortages in specific sectors and regions, and to foster a legal pathway for migration to the EU in line with the New Pact on Migration and Asylum (EU Commission, 2020a) and the European Skills Agenda (EU Commission, 2020c).

The plan sets out

“three key pillars of a suggested sustainable EU policy on legal migration:

- a legislative pillar, recasting the Long-Term Residents Directive and the Single Permit Directive, to simplify the procedures for the admission of workers of various skill levels to

¹ This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/) and was accepted for publication on 15/12/2022.

² Dr. Ralf Roßkopf is a professor for Law at the Faculty Applied Social Sciences of the University of Applied Sciences Würzburg-Schweinfurt, Germany, and in the School of Applied Humanities and Languages at the German Jordanian University, Amman, Jordan.

the EU, and the mobility within the EU of workers from non-EU countries that are already in the EU, and improving their rights and their protection from labour exploitation;

- an operational pillar, addressing the challenge of international matching by setting out concrete steps to develop Talent Partnerships with key partner countries and the key features of an EU Talent Pool; and
- a forward-looking pillar, based on three specific priorities for action that should further guide the EU's policy on legal migration: care, youth and innovation" (EU Commission, 2020b: 7-8; footnotes omitted).

3. German Government Agrees on Key Points on the Immigration of Skilled Workers From Third Countries

The German Government has agreed on key points on the immigration of skilled workers from third countries on 30 November 2022 (German Federal Government, 2022a) as a basis for a respective bill expected for March 2022. The strategy on immigration is an element to tackle the severe lack of skilled workers already addressed by the Government's Skilled Worker Strategy, which was adopted just a month before on 12 October 2022 (German Federal Government, 2022b).

According to the Institute for Employment Research (Insitut für Arbeitsmarktforschung – IAB), without external migration and rising labor force participation rates, the number of people available to the German labor market would fall by more than seven million by 2035. On the basis of a necessary positive annual net migration of 330,000 respectively 400,000 persons, the Institute assumes an immigration requirement of 1.64 million respectively 1.79 million persons annually (IAB, 2022). Major obstacles for companies to recruit from abroad are identified with regard to bureaucratic barriers as well as uncertainties related to the accreditation of foreign degrees and qualifications, the needed German language skills and the capability to successfully integrate into the German society (Keita & Konle-Seidl, 2022; Mayer 2021). A further expansion of international recruitment, for example in the context of bilateral placement agreements is recommended, whereas the involvement and support of ministries and universities is considered beneficial in this respect. (IAB, 2022; Roßkopf, 2022).

The German Government's keypoints aim at three pillars to attract skilled workers from abroad, (1) the skilled workers pillar, (2) the experience pillar, and (3) the potential pillar. In times of acute bottlenecks, this would be accompanied by short-term employment even in sectors without specific qualification requirements. These measures are expected to be embedded into an improvement of the relevant framework conditions, including promotion for the German labor market, expanded options for language training in Germany and abroad, optimization and acceleration of accreditation procedures for foreign qualifications as well as an accelerated, digitized and transparent administrative procedure. One of the suggested measures is an offer for vocational training programs with integrated language training, especially in the nursing sector, which are supposed to be located mainly abroad and financed by the industry itself (German Federal Government, 2022a). Unfortunately, the necessary but lacking ministerial and institutional responsibilities for qualification measures abroad (Roßkopf, 2022: 113-114) have not really been addressed so far.

References

- EU Commission. (2020a). *Annexes to the communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on a New Pact on Migration and Asylum of 23/9/2020. Roadmap to implement the New Pact on Migration and Asylum*. COM(2020) 609 final. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:85ff8b4f-ff13-11ea-b44f-01aa75ed71a1.0002.02/DOC_4&format=PDF
- EU Commission. (2020b). *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on a New Pact on Migration and Asylum of 23/9/2020*. COM(2020) 609 final. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:85ff8b4f-ff13-11ea-b44f-01aa75ed71a1.0002.02/DOC_3&format=PDF
- EU Commission. (2020c). *European Skills Agenda for Sustainable Competitiveness, Social Fairness and Resilience*. <https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=22832&langId=en>
- EU Commission. (2022a). *EU Action Plan for the Central Mediterranean*. https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-11/EU%20Action%20Plan%20for%20the%20Central%20Mediterranean_en.pdf
- EU Commission. (2022b). *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions of 27/4/2022. Attracting skills and talent to the EU*. COM(2022) 657 final. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52022DC0657&from=EN>
- EU Home Affairs Council. (2022). *The Extraordinary Home Affairs Council on the situation along all migratory routes and a joint way forward Brussels, 25 November 2022*. Presidency summary. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/60347/fin-pres-summary-migration.pdf>
- German Federal Government. (2022a). *Eckpunkte zur Fachkräfteeinwanderung aus Drittstaaten*. <https://www.bmbf.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/de/2022/221130-eckpunkte-feg.pdf?blob=publicationFile&v=1>
- German Federal Government. (2022b). *Fachkräftestrategie der Bundesregierung*. <https://www.bmas.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/Publikationen/fachkraeftestrategie-der-bundesregierung.pdf?blob=publicationFile&v=7>
- IAB. (2022). *Wie sich eine demografisch bedingte Schrumpfung des Arbeitsmarkts noch abwenden lässt*. <https://www.iab-forum.de/wie-sich-eine-demografisch-bedingte-schrumpfung-des-arbeitsmarkts-noch-abwenden-laesst/>
- Keita, S., & Konle-Seidl, R. (2022a). *Rekrutierung von Fachkräften aus dem Ausland. Einschätzungen zu Praxis und Herausforderungen in deutschen Betrieben. Stellungnahme des IAB zur Anhörung beim Sachverständigenrat zur Begutachtung der gesamtwirtschaftlichen Entwicklung am 13.10.2022*. <https://doku.iab.de/stellungnahme/2022/sn1222.pdf>
- Mayer, M. M. (2021). *Fachkräfteengpässe und Zuwanderung aus Unternehmenssicht in Deutschland 2021. Stärkerer Anstieg als im Vorjahr angenommen*. <https://www.bertelsmannstiftung.de/de/publikationen/publikation/did/fachkraefteengpaesse-und-zuwanderung-aus-unternehmenssicht-in-deutschland-2021-staerkerer-anstieg-als-im-vorjahr-angenommen-all>
- Roßkopf, R. (2022). *Binationale Career Services. Transfer von "Köpfen" in den deutschen Arbeitsmarkt*. *Transfer & Innovation*, 1, 103-116, www.transfer-und-innovation.de/media/gnnboh/yg0wc5/0be28bff09b34be4026621bce526333bc7d9db27.pdf