

Migration and sustainable development

BASHY QURAI SHY

INTER-CULTURAL CONSULTANT - COPENHAGEN

SECRETARY GENERAL - EMISCO -EUROPEAN MUSLIM INITIATIVE FOR SOCIAL COHESION - STRASBOURG

PRESIDENT – ENAR ADVISORY COUNCIL -BRUSSELS



Do we have migration in Europe or we should use the word, Mobility instead?

What is migration and mobility and how can we define these phenomenon?

How it differs from mobility of people?

How many various types of migrations are taking place in Europe?

Do we have sufficient statistic and facts to prove that migration is beneficial, let alone sustainable?

Migration's role in sustainable development of the society - on local, national, regional and EU level?

What benefits are there for the people and states when people move from when place to another?



Realities of migration

Most migrants travel only a short distance.

Migrants traveling long distances usually settle in urban areas.

Most migration occurs in steps.

Most migration is rural to urban.

Each migration flow produces a movement in the opposite direction ("counter flow").

Most migrants are adults.

Most international migrants are young males, while more internal migrants are female.

Impacts of migration

Diffusion: The process through which certain characteristics (e.g., cultural traits, ideas, disease) spread over space and through time.

Relocation Diffusion: Ideas, cultural traits, etc. that move with people from one place to another and do not remain in the point of origin.

Expansion Diffusion: Ideas, cultural traits, etc., that move with people from one place to another but are not lost at the point of origin, such as language.

Cultural markers: Structures or artifacts (e.g., buildings, spiritual places, architectural styles, signs, etc.) that reflect the cultures and histories of those who constructed or occupy them.

So let us leave these questions hanging for a while and look at the question of mobility of people towards Europe commonly termed and understood as immigration.

Positive impact on host countries

Job vacancies and skills gaps can be filled.

Economic growth can be sustained.

Services to an ageing population can be maintained when there are insufficient young people locally.

The pension gap can be filled by the contributions of new young workers and they also pay taxes.

Immigrants bring energy and innovation.
Host countries are enriched by cultural diversity.

Failing schools (and those with falling numbers) can be transformed.

Negative impact on host countries

Depression of wages may occur but this seems to be temporary.

Having workers willing to work for relatively low pay may allow employers to ignore productivity, training and innovation.

Migrants may be exploited.

Increases in population can put pressure on public services.

Unemployment may rise if there are unrestricted numbers of incomers.

There may be integration difficulties and friction with local people.

Large movements of people lead to more security monitoring.

Ease of movement may facilitate organized crime and people trafficking.

Positive impacts on countries of origin

Developing countries benefit from remittances (payments sent home by migrants) that now often outstrip foreign aid.

Unemployment is reduced and young migrants enhance their life prospects.

Returning migrants bring savings, skills and international contacts.

Negative impacts on countries of origin

Economic disadvantage through the loss of young workers

Loss of highly trained people, especially health workers, called Brain Drain

Social problems for children left behind or growing up without a wider family circle

UK survey – benefits of migration

Facilitated growth in the economy

Brought benefits to the tourism industry through the development of new air routes

Had a positive influence on the productivity or efficiency of local workers

Contributed new ideas and a fresh approach to firms

Established greater cultural links with developing nations that will prove useful in growing international trade.

What can be done to manage migration?

Stop describing all mobility

Instead of demanding from periphery countries in Mediterranean and Eastern Europe to establish detention camps, it would help to give substantial economic aid and technical know how to non-EU neighbouring countries

European countries with colonial past should offer compensation.

Individual countries can open recruiting offices in labour exporting countries from where both skilled and unskilled labour can be hired with contract for a specific period.

EU should carry out massive media campaigns in labour exporting countries to tell the factual living conditions in Europe, including racism, Islamophobia, lack of job opportunities and bad housing conditions.

Questions and answers

