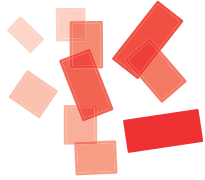# PROGRESSIVE YEARBOOK 2020

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BIG ISSUES

Desecuritise migration to liberalise it

Giacomo Orsini

Since the arrival and residence of selected groups of migrants started being treated as a major security issue, complex management systems have been put in place to curb and control their mobility into Europe. Today, new and interconnected sets of policies operate to deter unwanted people from migrating; detect those crossing the border unauthorised; detain those already in the territory without documentation; and finally, deport them back to their countries of origin. Moving from a critical assessment of the ground-level functioning of each of these 4Ds, I here question the efficiency of such measures and show how they eventually serve to increase societal anxieties towards migration. I thus finally offer a view of how desecuritising and liberalising migration could, instead, solve much of the tension that Europeans experience or feel as a consequence of the numerous so-called 'migration crises' which keep unfolding at Europe's border.

Despite the sharp drop in the number of recorded arrivals of undocumented migrants to Europe, media and political attention was once again focused in 2019 on a series of 'crises' in the Mediterranean. The closed ports policy of Italy's (former) interior minister Matteo Salvini polarised the public and monopolised the European political debate on migration. With NGO and coastguard boats stuck for weeks outside the ports of Sicily with their loads of rescued people on board, European governments argued for weeks about whether and where to relocate the migrants – including children and pregnant women.[1]

In a similar way to the last (too many) years, the arrival of third country nationals (TCNs) was thus treated once again in problematic terms. Dealing with a number of extremely politicised 'crises' unfolding at the border, which attracted enormous media attention, politics could only concentrate on *ad hoc* and eventually short-term solutions. There was, in sum, no questioning of Europe's long-standing repressive approach to the governance of migration. If anything,

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1 Tidey, A. (2019), "NGO ship with 47 migrants docks in Sicily after being stranded at sea for two weeks", *Euronews*, 31 January. Available at: https://www.euronews.com/2019/01/31/ngo-ship-with-47-migrants-docks-in-sicily-after-being-stranded-at-sea-for-two-weeks.

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with anti-migrant parties gaining momentum, political discourse worsened in tone as policies to target unwanted TCNs turned tougher than before.

Since political formations such as Vox in Spain or Fidesz in Hungary understand the immigration of selected groups of foreigners as an existential threat for Europe, they often advocate draconian policies to keep these foreigners out of the continent.[2] However, alternatives coming from other parties – including progressive ones – do not differ significantly. One example comes from the leader of the Spanish Socialist Party (PSOE) Pedro Sánchez. Advocating relocation as the only possibility to deal with the Italian refusal to allow NGO vessels to enter Italian harbours, he implicitly reinforced public perceptions of foreigners as a burden for the host society.[3] In a way, he turned the stances of anti-migrant parties sitting in the opposite section of the Spanish parliament more credible.

Due to such widespread consensus in framing migration as an economic, social, political and even cultural problem,[4] policy responses can only concentrate on keeping unwanted foreigners away from the EU. This means that efforts are made solely to create increasingly restrictive and selective legal and policy environments for international migrants. Starting from this security-focused approach, policy efforts of the last two decades have developed along four main strategies – i.e. the 4Ds of Europe's governance of migration.

National and European policies operate today, both inside and outside the EU, first to *deter* would-be migrants from deciding to move. To this end, authorities set a variety of strategies whose effects are to increase the perceived and actual costs of migrating without documents. Furthermore, thanks to upgraded surveillance at the EU's external border, authorities have concurrently improved their ability to *detect* undocumented foreigners. Moving inside the European territory, several facilities have been established since the 1990s to *detain* unwanted TCNs, and eventually *deport* them back to their country of origin.

Regardless of the ruling coalition, such a combination of strategies has been developed consistently over the last two decades at both the national and EU levels. Yet even by assuming that migrants could constitute a danger for the host societies – which is something contested by much academic research – empirical data suggest restrictions to be scarcely efficient in controlling and managing migration. Rather than reducing perceived and experienced societal risks, the implementation of these restrictions actually serves to (re)produce most of the tensions related to migration in Europe.

Based on the 4Ds model briefly presented above, I here first deconstruct and critically assess European securitised approaches to the governance of migration. Moving from more empirical evaluations, I then offer an alternative – and eventually progressive – option to de-securitise and

2   Fotheringham, A. (2019), "Anti-feminist, anti-migrant: Spain's far-right doubles down", *Aljazeera News,* 26 November. Available at: https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/11/anti-feminist-anti-migrant-spain-doubles-191126180554383.html; Orbán Launches Fidesz EP Campaign: 7-point Programme Against Migration", *Hungary today,* 4 May 2019. Available at: https://hungarytoday.hu/orban-launches-fidesz-ep-campaign-7-point-programme-against-migration/.

3   Sánchez, G. (2019), "El nuevo giro de Sánchez en inmigración: de 'impulsar' un mecanismo de desembarco a negarse a activarlo para el Open Arms", *El Diario*, 8 August. Available at: https://www.eldiario.es/desalambre/Gobierno-soluciones-Comision-Europea-desembarco_0_928807313.html.

4   Balzacq, T., S. Léonard and J. Ruzicka (2016), "'Securitization' revisited: theory and cases", *International Relations* 30(4), pp. 494–531.

liberalise international migration. By marking a real difference from what is promoted by the increasingly popular anti-migrant political formations, this might be the only option to counter undemocratic tendencies in most of the EU. As demonstrated by the Portuguese case for instance, promoting more humane and inclusive migration policies does not imply losing public support.

This discussion builds both on the vast academic literature on the subject and on the primary data that I collected from a number of fieldwork studies conducted since 2008 in some key locations of Europe's prolonged 'migration emergency' – namely Lampedusa, Melilla and Morocco, Malta, the Canary Islands, and the Strait of Gibraltar.

> **Rather than reducing perceived and experienced societal risks, the implementation of restrictions serves to (re)produce most of the tensions related to migration in Europe**

The 4Ds of Europe's securitised governance of migration: A critical assessment

Following the dramatic events of 11 September in New York, the Laeken European Council of December 2001 laid the foundations of today's integrated governance of migration in Europe.[5] Since selected groups of TCNs came to be treated as major public dangers, national and European authorities began developing new and interconnected strategies to limit and control their immigration into the EU.[6] As a result, today a complex governance system operates at the external frontier of the Schengen area of free movement of people, as well as inside and outside the European territory, to perform four main functions.

First, a wide range of policies serve to *deter* would-be immigrants from deciding to move to Europe. For this purpose, authorities have introduced, for instance, new and tougher visa regimes with selected non-EU countries. Similarly, since 1993 authorities have imposed sanctions on private carriers transporting undocumented people across any section of the European external border.[7] More importantly, starting from the 1990s, several international agreements have been signed with countries such as Turkey, Libya, Tunisia, Morocco and Niger. With these deals, the EU and single member states have externalised the control and repression of unauthorised migration abroad.[8]

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5   Hobbing, P. (2005), "Integrated Border Management at the EU Level", Working Documents 227, CEPS, Brussels.
6   Boswell, C. (2007), "Migration Control in Europe after 9/11: Explaining the Absence of Securitization", *Journal of Common Market Studies* 45(3), pp. 589–610.
7   Scholten, S. (2015), *The Privatisation of Immigration Control through Carrier Sanctions: The Role of Private Transport Companies in Dutch and British Immigration Control*, Leiden: Brill Nijhoff.
8   Czaika, M. and M. Hobolt (2016), "Do restrictive asylum and visa policies increase irregular migration into Europe?", *European Union Politics* 17(3), pp. 345-365; Spijkerboer, T. (2018), "Bifurcation of people, bifurcation of law: externalization of migration policy before the EU Court of Justice", *Journal of Refugee Studies* 31(2), pp. 216–239.

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Second, due to the lifting of border checks across member states as a result of the deepening and expanding of Schengen, border surveillance has cumulated at the external frontier of the new area of free movement of people. In order to *detect* unauthorised border crossings there, several surveillance devices such as radars, drones or helicopters, and law enforcement officials have come to be deployed at the outer frontier of the EU – often under the coordination of FRONTEX, today's European border and coast guard agency. In practice, efforts have concentrated on small and remote border (is)lands due to a number of migration-related tragedies that have unfolded there.[9]

Third, as authorities have enhanced deterrence and detection capabilities, they have also established countless facilities to *detain* unauthorised foreigners and limit their mobility.[10] While the terms of migrants' detention vary across member states, there is today no EU country without facilities of this kind in place. As stated by the state secretary for migration of the first government of Pedro Sánchez in Spain, national detention systems for migrants are central to "fight against irregular migration".[11]

Fourth, officially detention is meant to allow authorities to identify undocumented people and eventually *deport* them back to their countries of origin. From a securitised perspective, deportation consists of 'the final act' in the governance of unauthorised migration, since it removes the societal threat from the national territory.[12]

Designed to grant safety to Europeans against the threats brought by undocumented migrants, the 4Ds seem to work to make Europe feel less secure

With migration being framed as a top security issue, an interconnected set of policies has been integrated into system in order to target unauthorised TCNs entering or living inside Europe. While significant differences exist in the specific approaches promoted by distinct parliamentary forces, the actual opportunity to use the 4Ds to govern migration is hardly contested. However, little or no empirical data exist to demonstrate the validity of these policy options to limit and control unauthorised migration. On the contrary, the on-the-ground observations of the micro/local functioning of these strategies reveal how they eventually serve to make migration more dangerous and visible – thus increasing societal anxieties towards undocumented migration. In other words, designed to grant safety to Europeans against the threats brought by undocumented migrants, the 4Ds seem to work to make Europe feel less secure.

9   Orsini, G. (2019a), "Europe's border vs. locals' border: scaling-down the border play/spectacle. Methodo-logical notes from Lampedusa and beyond", *Etnografia e Ricerca Qualitativa 2*, pp. 237-244.

10 Ferrer-Gallardo, X. and A. Albet-Mas (2016), "EU-Limboscapes: Ceuta and the proliferation of migrant de-tention spaces across the European Union", *European Urban and Regional Studies* 23(3), pp. 527–530.

11 Martín, M. (2018),'Culpar a los migrantes de los males de la sociedad es políticamente indecente', *El País,* 18 December. Available at: https://elpais.com/politica/2018/12/17/actualidad/1545062034_673140. html.

12 De Genova, N. (2018), "Afterword. Deportation: The Last Word?" in S. Khosravi (ed), *After Deportation. Ethnographic Perspectives*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 253-266.

In general, it is almost impossible to determine the efficiency of deterrence in stopping potential migrants from deciding to move abroad.[13] Figures relative to Europe certainly do not show any steady decrease in the arrivals of undocumented migrants over the last two decades. Significant fluctuations derive arguably from other factors such as the intensity of conflicts, or national as well as international political (in)stability.[14]

Most of the migrants and asylum seekers whom I met in Lampedusa, Malta or Melilla, came from Libya, Tunisia or Morocco after they had spent years living and working there. Somewhat surprisingly, deterrence was one of the reasons why they decided to move further north in Europe. After these North African countries started collaborating with the EU to manage undocumented migration in their territories, law enforcement, which historically turned a blind eye to the presence of irregular people, suddenly began chasing them.[15] Persecuted by the police and with only limited access to the national labour markets, migrants decided to leave.

Furthermore, as deterrence combines with increased surveillance at the border, people today cross into Europe through more isolated and dangerous lands and waters.[16] One example is the Sicilian Channel and other parts of the Mediterranean where thousands have perished in their attempt to reach the EU.[17] Here, it is not just that deterrence makes detection at the border more complicated. In addition, deterrence plus detection contribute to making Europeans feel less secure.

The numerous tragedies that are generated at the border are frequent reminders of a 'migration emergency' taking place (almost permanently) at the edges of the EU. Because of the extreme visibility of these tragedies, they represent undocumented migration in Europe for politics, the media, and thus the general public. Most 'illegal' residents in the EU are overstayers: they have entered for instance via an airport, and have remained after their visa expired.[18] This means that, despite the obsessive attention on what happens in Lampedusa or Lesbos, what happens there tells little about unauthorised migration in Europe. Additionally, this means that it is not at the border where unauthorised migrants can be found.

Yet increased surveillance at the border means that those unable to obtain a valid permit to enter the EU are forced to put their destinies in the hands of smugglers. This increases business opportunities for criminal organisations, as well as actual insecurity for both migrants

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13 Czaika, M. and H. de Haas (2015), "Evaluating migration policy effectiveness" in A. Triandafyllidou (ed), *Routledge Handbook of Immigration and Refugee Studies*, London: Routledge, pp. 58-64.

14 Brzoska, M. and C. Fröhlich (2016), "Climate change, migration and violent conflict: vulnerabilities, pathways and adaptation strategies", *Migration and Development* 5(2), pp. 190-210; Pries, L. (2019), "The Interplay of Organized Violence and Forced Migration: A Transnational Perspective", in A. E. Feldmann, X. Bada and S. Schütze (eds), *New Migration Patterns in the Americas*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 27-55.

15 Orsini, G., A. Canessa, L. Martinez and J. Ballantine Pereira (2019), "Fixed Lines, Permanent Transitions. International borders, cross-border communities and the transforming experience of otherness", *Journal of Borderland Studies* 34(3), pp. 361-376.

16 Norton Chambers, S., G. Alan Boyce, S. Launius and A. Dinsmore (2019), "Mortality, Surveillance and the Tertiary 'Funnel Effect' on the U.S.-Mexico Border: A Geospatial Modeling of the Geography of Deterrence", *Journal of Borderlands Studies*.

17 Perkowski, N. (2016), "Deaths, interventions, humanitarianism and human rights in the Mediterranean 'migration crisis'", *Mediterranean Politics* 21(2), pp. 331-335.

18 Ambrosini, M. (2018), *Irregular Immigration in Southern Europe. Migration, Diasporas and Citizenship*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

and Europeans.[19] Such considerations become even more controversial if we consider that, despite the many technological advancements and the policy efforts made to enhance surveillance at the border, there remains simply no way to gain substantial control of frontiers.

As recommended by scholars from the University of Palermo, I first went to other tiny ports on the Southern coast of Sicily before moving to Lampedusa. I was told that in these tiny ports I could see "as many Lampedusas as I wanted". Accordingly, the port of Portopalo di Capo Passero – located on the southernmost tip of the island – was littered with numerous wrecks of so-called 'migrant boats'. Locals told me that these wrecks were frequent as people arrived in overcrowded fishing vessels, on board sailing boats and other yachts, or in small tenders pulled to the limits of Italian territorial waters by bigger fishing vessels – the so-called 'mother boats'. In practice, given that search and rescue at sea takes hours, when authorities are busy dealing with one vessel others are meanwhile crossing just close by.[20] While Salvini stopped NGO vessels just outside the ports of Sicily, thousands of other people managed to reach the Italian shores independently by boat. In the very days when the Italian government stopped the Sea Watch 3 with 42 people on board before it could enter the port of Lampedusa, over 300 African and Asian migrants reached the same tiny island.[21]

If border control is complicated at sea, it is no more effective on land. Even the fortified six-metre-high triple fence installed along the border separating the Spanish city of Melilla from Morocco is not enough to guarantee closure and control. This small detached Spanish territory came to the attention of European media when hundreds of sub-Saharan Africans climbed the fences *en masse* to enter Europe unauthorised.[22] As I went there a few weeks after one of these episodes, I was surprised to notice that the residents of the migrant reception centre came mainly from Algeria, China, Bangladesh and Pakistan. According to the director of the centre, this was the normality. As he said, in order to enter Melilla undocumented, people use forged documents and cheat – or bribe – a border guard.[23]

As regards the detention of undocumented migrants, similar considerations apply. Because of the non-criminal nature of undocumented migration – which remains an administrative record in most European countries – there is no evidence demonstrating that, if free, unauthorised migrants would be more prone to commit crime than regular residents.[24] In other words, limiting migrants' freedom does not automatically or implicitly improve public order – or thus

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19 Aronowitz, A. A. (2001), "Smuggling and Trafficking in Human Beings: The Phenomenon, The Markets that Drive It and the Organisations that Promote It", *European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research* 9(2), pp. 163-195.

20 Jumbert, M. G. (2018) "Control or rescue at sea? Aims and limits of border surveillance technologies in the Mediterranean Sea", *Disasters* 42(4), pp. 674-696.

21 Del Frate, C. (2019), "Sea Watch: a Lampedusa arrivati 300 migranti in un mese (oggi altri 40)", *Corriere della Sera,* 26 June. Available at: https://www.corriere.it/cronache/19_giugno_26/caso-sea-watch-lampedusa-arrivati-300-migranti-un-mese-07ebf6b4-981a-11e9-ab34-56b2d57d687f.shtml.

22 Zapata-Barrero, R. and N. D. De Witte (2007), "The Spanish governance of EU borders: Normative questions", *Mediterranean Politics* 12(1), pp. 85-90.

23 Orsini, G., A. Canessa, L. Martinez and J. Ballantine Pereira (2019), "Fixed Lines, Permanent Transitions. International borders, cross-border communities and the transforming experience of otherness", *Journal of Borderland Studies* 34(3), pp. 361-376.

24 Pickering, S. and J. Ham (eds) (2015), *The Routledge Handbook of Crime and International Migration,* London: Routledge.

security – for Europeans. Yet by detaining undocumented migrants behind the bars of detention facilities, authorities project these migrants as public dangers, consequently fuelling society's fears towards foreigners.[25]

However, it could be said that detention facilitates deportation because authorities have full control over the mobility of the deportable foreigner. Nevertheless, data show that only a small number of ordered deportations are actually executed.[26] As a representative of the Maltese government told me, when the authorities from the migrant's country of origin are unwilling or unable to collaborate, identification can become a very complex business. Furthermore, he added, deportation implies the existence of extremely costly repatriation agreements with the countries of origin[27] and the existence of these agreements has reshuffled power relations at the expense of European states – as demonstrated, for instance, with the EU-Turkish agreement of 2016.[28]

Is an alternative governance of migration possible in Europe?

Even by problematising migration as a burden and a risk for host societies, there remains a significant implementation gap to be tackled. It is not only that the EU security-centred governance of migration fails to deliver more control on unwanted migration.

What seems to be the case is that securitised policies are quite central in (re)producing migration as a danger and a threat. Policies developed so far seem to activate a vicious circle where their implementation produces more societal insecurity; this, in turn, increases the public demand for more securitised options and the likelihood of politicians to deliver them.

> **Securitised policies are quite central in (re)producing migration as a danger and a threat**

This might explain why Europe's political imagination has only recently begun deviating from this obsession with security-centred understandings of migration and the governance of it. Over almost two decades, no alternative to the strengthening of the 4Ds has been suggested – let alone implemented. While divergences exist between different political formations, these are about the intensity with which securitised strategies should be implemented.

The New Social Contract for Europe, put together by the Socialists and Democrats Group for the European elections of May 2019, refers to the need to "manage migration better [by opening] safe and legal channels" for people to enter the EU. Yet this statement is merged with

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25 Gold, S. and J. S. Nawin (eds) (2018), *The Routledge International Handbook of Migration Studies*, London: Routledge.

26 "Enforcement of immigration legislation statistics" (2019), *Eurostat*, June. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Enforcement_of_immigration_legislation_statistics.

27 Slominski, P. and F. Trauner (2017), "How do Member States Return Unwanted Migrants? The Strategic (non-) use of 'Europe' during the Migration Crisis", *Journal of Common Market Studies* 56(1), pp. 101-118.

28 Allen, W., B. Anderson, N. Van Hear, M. Sumption, F. Düvell, J. Hough, L. Rose, R. Humphris, and S. Walker (2017), "Who Counts in Crises? The New Geopolitics of International Migration and Refugee Governance", *Geopolitics* 23(1), pp. 217-243.

others referring, for instance, to "cooperation with countries of origin and transit" and the need for Europe to maintain "effective control of its borders".[29] After all, the contract was drafted a couple of months after the Spanish socialist leader signed an agreement with Morocco to return undocumented migrants rescued at sea directly to the Moroccan authorities.[30]

Using the words of an important member of the Walloon Socialist Party (PS) in Belgium – Paul Magnette – "there is not, on the one hand, the Right which is attached to the nation-state and citizenship, and on the other, a naïve, lax or 'cosmopolitan' Left which advocates the opening of all frontiers".[31] While significant differences distinguish the approaches of right and centre-right parties from those proposed by parties on the left and centre-left, the terms of the equation remain the same. Here, for social democrats as well, migration remains somehow problematic and must be handled with a series of differently repressive control strategies.

> **Allowing people to travel regularly would divert most would-be migrants away from smugglers or traffickers**

Somewhat counterintuitively however, a stop to dealing with migrants as a security issue and, as a consequence, the liberalisation of international mobility – that is, allowing people to cross frontiers in an orderly and legal way – can potentially solve most of the tensions that migration to Europe today seems to generate. First of all, it must be understood that contrary to what it is often assumed, no data show that opening up borders implies any automatic and massive increase in immigration. Figures concerning international mobility in Africa for instance show that, similar to most other areas of the world, migration happens mainly within the continent. When deciding to move, people tend to remain close to their countries of origin or they move within national boundaries – i.e. rural/urban migration.[32] This is the case also when relatively high inequalities exist across countries, and borders are left open – as is the case in Europe, for instance. After all, constantly mutating migratory trajectories respond to a variety of factors which are not necessarily related to migration policies per.[33]

While it is unclear whether liberalising migration would imply any sudden and significant growth in the number of TCNs reaching Europe, opening legal paths could potentially solve many of the tensions Europeans feel with respect to migration. First, allowing people to travel

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29 PES Social Democrats, "A New Social Contract for Europe. PES Manifesto 2019". Available at: https://www.pes.eu/export/sites/default/.galleries/Documents-gallery/PES-Manifesto-2019_EN.pdf_2063069299.pdf.

30 Martín, M. (2019), "España acuerda con Marruecos devolver pateras a sus costas", *El País*, 21 February. Available online at: https://elpais.com/politica/2019/02/20/actualidad/1550682280_062643.html.

31 Translated by the author from "Pour Paul Magnette, 'la question migratoire mérite mieux que les caricatures'", *RTL Info*, 25 January 2018. Available online at: https://www.rtl.be/info/monde/france/pour-paul-magnette-la-question-migratoire-merite-mieux-que-les-caricatures--989812.aspx.

32 Lopes, C. (2016), "Migration debates are becoming illogical*", *Africa Cheetah Run. The Former Executive Secretary's Blog*, 15 July. Available at: https://www.uneca.org/es-blog/migration-debates-are-becoming-illogical; Mingels, G. (2019), "Global Migration? Actually, The World Is Staying Home", *Spiegel International*, 17 May. Available online at: http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/why-global-migration-statistics-do-not-add-up-a-1090736.html.

33 Schapendonk, J., I. van Liempt, I. Schwarz and G. Steel (2018), "Re-routing migration geographies: Migrants, trajectories and mobility regimes", *Geoforum*; Crawley, H. and J. Hagen-Zanker (2019), "Deciding Where to go: Policies, People and Perceptions Shaping Destination Preferences", *International Migration* 57(1), pp. 20-35.

regularly would divert most would-be migrants away from smugglers or traffickers – thus undermining the expansion and profitability of criminal networks. Furthermore, to cross the Sahara Desert first, and then the Mediterranean, often takes months or years, and costs thousands of euros for smugglers and the corrupted police.[34] A flight, on the contrary, would cost much less and would allow TCNs to arrive in Europe with more financial capital to be invested, for example, in settling. As a consequence of liberalising migration, at least part of the financial burden would be removed from public administrations which run reception centres in their territories. Importantly, allowing people to travel regularly would also put an end to the many migration-related tragedies taking place on Europe's periphery. It would make it much easier to desecuritise and would normalise national or European media and political debates concerned with unauthorised migration.

More generally, allowing foreigners to enter Europe legally would make the management of migration more orderly and effective. In fact, liberalising migration does not mean removing control on people's international mobility. On the contrary, by registering their cross-border movements, individuals remain identifiable. This, in turn, would facilitate the work of law enforcement agencies, as most migrants would become more easily detectable. After all, when successful, unauthorised migration goes undetected.

What is more, as legally recognised subjects, newcomers will less likely enter informal labour markets or crime – further reducing risks for the host society. One argument which is frequently put forward to sustain the implementation of tougher measures to control migration is that, without restrictions in place, European workers will suffer the unfair competition of cheaper non-European labour. However, these views usually do not account for the social and economic effects of restricting legal mobility. It is because people reside unauthorised in a country that they will most likely work in the informal labour market. Due to the precariousness of their residence permits, they will accept to work under all possible conditions to keep their job and, with it, the right to remain in the country.[35]

On the contrary, liberalising TCN mobility to, and within, Europe could change migratory patterns and reduce risks for national labour markets. First of all, if migration is made cheaper both in financial terms and those of lost human life, people will find it easier to adapt their trajectories to available opportunities. This means that they will eventually move somewhere else if they do not find living conditions satisfying in the destination country. Opening borders would then favour the best match between labour market demands and the availability of workers: unemployed migrants would search for a job elsewhere if they were allowed to move without facing big legal and administrative costs to do so. By contrast, restrictive migration policies go against an efficient distribution of labour because, given the very high human and financial costs of migrating, people will rarely decide to leave a country even when they have found no job there.

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34 Schapendonk, J. (2018), "Navigating the migration industry: migrants moving through an African-European web of facilitation/control", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 44(4), pp. 663-679.

35 Lewis, H. and L. Waite (2019), "Migrant illegality, slavery and exploitative work", in G. Craig, A. Balch, H. Lewis and L. Waite (eds), *The Modern Slavery Agenda: Politics, Policy and Practice in the UK*, Bristol: Policy Press, pp. 219-242.

As we have seen, liberalising international mobility can potentially push the whole of Europe away from the prolonged 'migration crisis' which has monopolised and somewhat paralysed policymaking in Europe. Signals are finally coming, especially from progressive political forces, of attempts to stop (re)producing migration as a risk or a burden for the host society. Yet despite some traces of such attempts to desecuritise migration, policy efforts do not seem to be shifting away from the more traditional – and securitised – approaches which have structured the governance of migration in Europe for at least two decades.

Depending on the specific issue at stake, the arrival and presence of TCNs should be treated merely as a demographic or humanitarian issue, for instance – without having to mobilise keywords in public discourse such as fear, danger or risk. After all, as has been seen, migration is not dangerous *per se*: what turns it risky and problematic in Europe are the securitised policies designed and implemented to govern it thus far.